

ABOUT RIVER SAFARI

River Safari is Asia's first and only river-themed wildlife park, and is the newest addition to Wildlife Reserves Singapore's portfolio of award-winning parks. Occupying 12 hectares, it houses one of the world's largest collections of freshwater animals. The park is home to over 150 plant species and 5,000 animal specimens representing 300 animal species.

Highlights

A large part of the park is designed to profile freshwater habitats from iconic rivers of the world such as the Amazon River, Mekong River and River Nile. River Safari will take visitors on a journey to discover the unique aquatic and terrestrial animals from eight river habitats as well as the cultures that surround these rivers. Visitors can stroll through freshwater galleries, enter walk-through exhibits and embark on a boat ride to learn about the fascinating flora and fauna of river habitats.

Animal attractions in the park include river giants and megafishes such as the giant river otter, giant salamander, giant freshwater stingray and the critically endangered Mekong giant catfish, all housed in themed exhibits representing each river zone. River Safari is also home to a pair of giant pandas that resides in a climate-controlled exhibit along the Yangtze River zone.

With eight river habitats in one park, visitors can enjoy an immersive experience into the world of rivers and the wildlife they support, and appreciate the importance of freshwater ecosystem conservation.

Main Galleries and Special Exhibits

- The park offers close encounters with fascinating river inhabitants, some of which include river giants and megafishes such as
 - Giant river otter – world's largest otter; up to 1.8m in length and 34kg in weight
 - Chinese giant salamander – world's largest amphibian; up to 1.8m in length
 - Mekong giant catfish – world's largest scaleless freshwater fish; up to 3m in length and 295kg in weight
 - Arapaima – world's largest scaled freshwater fish; up to 2.75m in length and 200kg in weight
 - Giant freshwater stingray – up to 5m in length and 600 kg in weight
 - Alligator gar – up to 3m in length and 140kg in weight
- The Amazon Flooded Forest houses the world's largest freshwater aquarium with a volume of 2,000m³. It has the world's largest viewing panel for a freshwater aquarium measuring 22 metres (L) by 4 metres (H), providing visitors with an immersive Amazonian underwater forest experience. Over 18 animal species, including the manatee and arapaima, are featured in this aquatic display.
- River Safari is the first park in Asia to display the giant river otter – the world's largest otter – to be housed in the Amazon River zone. The park is also one of only three institutes outside of the Amazon to display the red howler monkey.
- The 1,500m² Giant Panda Forest at the Yangtze River zone is the largest of its kind in Southeast Asia. This S\$8.6 million exhibit simulates the bears' natural habitat with lush plants, boulders and water features. The temperature is kept between 18-22 degrees Celsius year-round to ensure the pandas' comfort.
- (Coming Soon) The Amazon River Quest, a boat ride which meanders through a 483m man-made river, brings visitors up-close to over 30 animal species that live along the edges of the Amazon River including the jaguar, Brazilian tapir, capybara and giant anteater.

Education and Conservation

In recent years, habitat loss and degradation, water extraction, over-exploitation and pollution threaten the planet's freshwater ecosystems and their associated biological resources. Biodiversity in freshwater habitats is disappearing at a faster rate than marine and forest environments. By bringing visitors up-close to the fascinating underwater and terrestrial animals that live in such ecosystems, River Safari aims to highlight the importance of freshwater ecosystems and inspire positive actions for conserving them.

River Safari will play an important role in global captive breeding programmes, ensuring the long-term survival of endangered and threatened species such as the manatee and the giant river otter. Through captive breeding programmes, the park hopes to contribute to the population of endangered freshwater species. The park is also planning research initiatives, such as a tagging and tracking project for giant freshwater stingrays in Thailand, to contribute to the conservation of endangered animal species in their native habitat.

A dynamic range of interactive in-park activities such as enrichment programmes, interdisciplinary trails and workshops that enliven the learning experience for both teachers and students will soon be available at River Safari. Set within River Safari, these immersive programmes engage the senses and are filled with various hands-on activities to make learning an enthralling journey.

Conceptualisation and Design

The idea of a River Safari started out as a simple aquarium exhibit. In 1996, it was thought that a freshwater aquarium with an extensive collection of fish and flora would complement the offerings of the Singapore Zoo and Night Safari, at the same time, highlight the pristine, freshwater surroundings of Upper Seletar Reservoir.

The idea of the Amazon Flooded Forest was developed – a place that would give visitors a breathtaking view of the underwater forest and its wildlife inhabitants. As a result of extensive research and various study trips to aquariums all over the world, the idea grew to include other iconic rivers of the world, and eventually evolved into River Safari in 2006, with the inclusion of a boat ride and greater emphasis on river eco-systems and cultures.

The park is designed to recreate the sights and sounds of each river zone from exhibit design to the represented animal collection to help visitors learn about the cultures and wildlife, and to inspire them to contribute to conservation efforts.

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Green Construction

River Safari is the first attraction in Singapore conferred with the Building and Construction Authority's (BCA) Green Mark Platinum Award in the Park category.

The park is designed and developed with utmost concern for the environment, particularly the Mandai Nature Reserve area where it is situated. River Safari brings together the best in zoological architecture and design, with state-of-the-art exhibit artistry and technology. Every exhibit design surpasses standards set by the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums.

As the park is situated by the Seletar Reservoir, one of Singapore's water catchment areas, architects and engineers had to take care to avoid any potential disruption to water supply. Control measures were put in place to ensure minimal soil erosion and to manage steep terrains.

At the same time, mitigating measures were required to minimise disruption to existing habitats around the area. The welfare of existing inhabitants in the area was of utmost priority. Green corridors for such wild animals were created and maintained.

Part of the many engineering features was the construction of bioswales, which are landscape drainways integrated into urban landscape design. They are designed to collect rainwater runoff from roofs and footpaths. Impurities in the rainwater are removed when it passes through plants and soil. Bioswales provide clean homes for native animals such as frogs, dragonflies and other aquatic animals.

Shopping

- **House of Kai Kai and Jia Jia:** Located outside the Giant Panda Forest, this bamboo-themed shop houses exclusive Kai Kai and Jia Jia plush toys, t-shirts, mugs and other panda merchandise. The shop opens daily from 9.00am to 6.00pm.
- **River Safari Shop:** Located at the Entrance Plaza of River Safari, this retail store is themed after the Amazon Flooded Forest, with interiors that replicate the underwater forest filled with submerged giant tree roots and vegetation. Visitors will find plenty of eye-catching mementoes to remind them of their visit like t-shirts, plush toys, exclusive animal crafts, and more. The shop opens daily from 9.00am to 7.00pm.

Dining

- **Mama Panda Kitchen:** Located outside the Giant Panda Forest, this eatery features Szechuan-inspired cuisine such as Bamboo Rice, Prawn Dumplings and panda-shaped buns or 'paos'. Mama Panda Kitchen opens daily from 9.30am to 6.00pm.

Special features:

- Kids dining area with panda-themed chairs and tables
- Private dining area with a view of the Giant Panda Forest for a memorable dining experience (e-mail event.sales@wrs.com.sg or call 6360 8560 for reservations)

- **River Safari Tea House:** Located at the Entrance Plaza, this restaurant features tantalising cuisines from the various Chinese dialect groups in Singapore. Visitors can savour over 60 dishes including Dim Sum, Hainanese Chicken Rice and Fried Hokkien Noodle, all set in a quaint teahouse setting.

The restaurant opens daily from 8.30am to 10.00pm. A Dim Sum menu is available from 8.30am to 11.00am and a full menu from 11.00am onwards.

Special feature:

- Private dining area for 15 people (e-mail event.sales@wrs.com.sg or call 6360 8560 for reservations)

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