



SOMETHING'S AFOOT IN SINGAPORE

A spa and wellness aficionado approached us with a rather intriguing challenge. Footloose and fancy-free on a jaunt through South East Asia, he wanted to learn about Singapore's famous reflexology movement. Whilst most of us are naturally well versed in the world of wellness, this particular request ran deeper, and, with a tight timeline, required our trip planners to really think on their feet.

From the outset it was clear we needed to step beyond the luxury hotel spa and the conveyor belt approach at fluorescent-lit shopping malls. Instead, we curated unique encounters that took our client on a fascinating exploration of Singapore's thriving reflexology movement. We retraced its steps through history, from the founding fathers to the bright young therapists of tomorrow. In the process we uncovered a fascinating sub-culture that permeates every echelon of Singaporean society.

The journey started with Dr Jimi Tan, the grand master of Singaporean reflexology, and the perfect authority to provide insight into

its very foundations. Starting his career on Singapore's backstreets, Dr Tan worked tirelessly to transform society's perception of the therapy. Originally considered a pursuit of the lower class, he shifted mainstream views and turned foot reflexology into a chic and stylish spa experience. Two decades later, Dr Tan's Kenko reflexology brand operates in 40 outlets across 4 countries.

At Singapore's Association of the Visually Handicapped, we explored a more philanthropic angle on the subject: Here reflexology has transformed the lives of some of Singapore's blind residents, training them in new skills, building confidence, and providing them with a unique opportunity to contribute to their communities.

Moving on to Singapore's Underwater World we learned how a particular species of fish has adapted to become a world-wide reflexology phenomenon. A marine biologist, together with an in-house reflexologist from the Aquarium's very own spa, provided the scientific backdrop, whilst a swarm of 'Doctor Fish' went to work on our client's feet.

Finally we delved into the future of reflexology at one of Singapore's leading spa academies. Buoyed by the booming industry and inspired by success stories like Dr Tan, we met students and interns who were eager to talk about their studies and discoveries, and share their dreams and aspirations.

As with every Brown + Hudson journey, we emphasised space and flexibility throughout this short discovery, allowing our client to make it his own. Experiences were curated based on both his original requirements as well as those that we thought would complement and enhance the story. Each individual we involved was briefed in advance as to our client's particular needs, wishes and desires, ensuring that his reflexology experience fit him perfectly.

If you have a burning interest in a specialised subject matter you would like to explore on a journey, why not call our Trip Planning Team on +44 203 358 0110 to discuss? We are always more than happy to put in the leg work and come up with creative solutions that don't toe the line of what is 'usual and normal' in travel.

If you would like to hear more of our stories, sign up to our newsletter, the 'Little Brown Book of Travel', or follow us on Facebook.

