

ABOUT RIVER SAFARI

River Safari, the newest addition to Wildlife Reserves Singapore's portfolio of award-winning parks, is Asia's first and only river-themed wildlife park. Occupying 12 hectares and developed at S\$160 million, the park is home to 400 plant species and over 7,500 aquatic and terrestrial animals representing close to 240 species, including one of the world's largest collections of freshwater animals.

River Safari aims to inspire visitors to appreciate and protect fragile freshwater ecosystems, and is home to threatened species such as the giant panda, manatee and Mekong giant catfish. These magnificent animals are housed in themed exhibits that mirror iconic rivers of the world from the Mississippi to the Amazon. River Safari sees approximately 1 million visitors annually, and is the first attraction in Singapore conferred with the Building and Construction Authority's Green Mark Platinum Award in the park category.

Highlights

River Safari is designed to profile freshwater habitats from iconic rivers of the world such as the Amazon River, Mekong River and River Nile. Visitors will discover the unique aquatic and terrestrial animals from iconic river habitats as well as the cultures surrounding these rivers. Visitors can stroll along freshwater aquariums, enter walk-through exhibits and embark on boat rides to learn about the fascinating flora and fauna of river habitats. 85% of the park's animal collection can be viewed on foot while the rest is seen on the Amazon River Quest boat ride.

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 thematic 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.

Visitors can enjoy an immersive experience into the world of rivers and the wildlife they support, and appreciate the importance of freshwater ecosystem conservation.

Star Attractions and Unique 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 – one of the world's largest freshwater fish; up to 3m in length and 295kg in weight
 - Giant freshwater stingray – believed to be the world's largest and heaviest freshwater fish; up to 5m in length and 600 kg in weight
 - Arapaima – world's largest scaled freshwater fish; up to 2.75m in length and 200kg 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 and home to River Safari's animal icon—Canola the manatee. 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 only park in Asia to display the giant river otter – the world's largest otter – housed in the Amazon River zone. The park is also one of only three institutes outside the Amazon to display the red howler monkey.
- The 1,500m² Giant Panda Forest at the Yangtze River zone is home to a pair of giant pandas and red pandas. Built at a cost of S\$8.6 million, the exhibit simulates the bears' natural habitat with lush plants, boulders and water features. The temperature is kept between 16-24 degrees Celsius year-round to ensure the pandas' comfort.
- The Amazon River Quest, a 10-minute boat ride which meanders through a 483m man-made river, brings visitors up-close to nearly 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 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; 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 then 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, with the inclusion of a boat rides 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 10.00am to 6.30pm.
- **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 11.00am to 7.00pm.

Café/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 10.30am to 6.30pm.

Special features:

- Kids dining area with panda-themed chairs and tables
 - Private dining area with a view of the Giant Panda Forest (e-mail event.sales@wrs.com.sg or call 6360 8560 for reservations)
- **Starbucks:** Located at the Entrance Plaza. Open daily from 8.00am to 7.00pm.

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