

The Museum

The Peranakan Museum showcases the world's finest and most comprehensive Peranakan collection in displays that trace the main episodes of Peranakan life.

Feast your eyes on the beauty of Peranakan objects displayed with state-of-the-art audio and visual effects. Children will have an exciting time discovering Peranakan culture through interactive multimedia stations.

Gallery 1: Origins

Who am I?

Peranakan communities as diverse as the Jawi Peranakan (Peranakan Indian Muslim), the Chitty Melaka (Peranakan Indian) and the Baba (Peranakan Chinese), are all recognised as "Peranakan" in the widest sense of the word. In Singapore, the majority of Peranakans are Peranakan Chinese.

Historically, the most common term for Peranakan Chinese communities was *Baba*, used both for the community as a whole and more specifically for men from the community. Ladies were called *Nonya* and we often get the combined term *Baba-Nonya*.

Galleries 2 - 5 : Wedding

Getting married over 12 days!

What do rituals like the coming of age (Chiu Thau) and the exchange of gifts (Lap Chai) mean to the Peranakans? Explore the significance of the elaborate 12-day Peranakan wedding spread over four galleries.

Marriage brings two Peranakan families together, and hopefully results in an heir to carry on the family name. Important wedding rites, a wedding procession and the celebration of a new-born are featured over four galleries. Magnificent jewellery, furniture and beadwork specially made for the wedding are also showcased.

Galleries 6: Nonya

When I was just a little girl, I asked my mother, what will I be?

Nonyas were trained for married life from a young age. They were expected to devote long hours to learn and perfect the art of beadwork and embroidery from their elders. Discover the intricacies of traditional tools and techniques used by the Nonyas in their textile arts.

The Nonya's attire of choice, the sarong kebaya, is featured in a colourful display. See how shifting perceptions about femininity have influenced this beautiful traditional dress over time.

Gallery 7: Religion

Gods and Ancestors

Traditionally Peranakans embraced a mixture of Daoism, Buddhism, ancestral worship and folk beliefs. The supernatural realm was a world populated by gods, ancestors and spirits, both good and evil. Peranakans sought to gain favour and pacify these spiritual forces with rites and offerings. Find out how these beliefs evolved in the face of change

Please note that young children and sensitive individuals may find the section on death and mourning disturbing.

Gallery 8 (Level 3): Public Life
Making a difference

Enter into the realm of commerce, politics and social affairs. Many Peranakans had active and engaged lives outside their homes. Meet the men and women who made an impact, in their own ways, in the larger society. Babas who were prominent public figures and philanthropists include Singapore pioneers, Tan Kim Seng and Lim Kim San.

Gallery 9 (Level 3): Food and Feasting
Food glorious food!

Your Peranakan experience will not be complete without a preview of the cuisine and Peranakan dining customs. Here, you will see the unique “Tok Panjang” porcelain dinner service for the traditional feast held during weddings and special occasions.

One of the most comprehensive porcelain exhibits are displayed to spice up your visit. Also see how the heart of a Peranakan home, the kitchen, comes alive in a sound and light show.

Gallery 10 (Level 3): Conversations
Back to the future

In the concluding gallery of the museum, we revisit the meaning of the term ‘Peranakan’. Some Peranakans discuss how the culture has evolved over time, and what the future holds for the modern-day Peranakan.

Special Exhibition Galleries (Levels 2 and 3)
These galleries will feature changing exhibitions.