



SUMMIT SPREAD. Tubs of kimchi-flavored ice cream are offered as an option at the dining area of the international media center in Singapore. The tiny city-state of Singapore hosted its largest media contingent ever for the recent summit between U.S. President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. (AP Photo/ Yong Teck Lim)

Singapore postcard: Tasting coconut, chicken rice, spice

By Annabelle Liang
The Associated Press

SINGAPORE — The tiny city-state of Singapore hosted its largest media contingent ever for the recent summit between U.S. President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. They were well fed, if nothing else.

The sprawling 23,000-square-foot facility built for an annual Formula One race was refurbished to handle about 3,000 journalists covering the summit.

It was a good distance from the actual summit venue, and some intrepid journalists moved from the media center to try to get closer to the action. Hundreds of journalists also gathered outside the hotels where Trump and Kim stayed.

The police, though, stepped up checks and surveillance in designated “special event areas” around the Capella Singapore hotel, where the summit was held, and the leaders’ temporary residences, Kim’s St. Regis Singapore and Trump’s Shangri-La Hotel. The media center was part of Singapore’s \$15 million bill for the summit, the bulk of which went to security.

And then there was the food.

Bathe naked with strangers? Welcome to a Japanese bathhouse

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local culture, make sure you try a sento too. Just follow the rules so you’ll fit in. At a typical bath, here’s the routine:

- Leave your shoes in an outside locker.
 - Pay the fee. If you haven’t brought your own soap and shampoo, you can buy small bottles and rent towels. You’ll be given one large towel and a small one.
 - Go through the entrance for your gender. (You might want to memorize the characters for “man” and “woman” in advance.)
 - In the changing room, undress and put your clothes in a locker. This part should feel familiar to anyone who’s been to a gym.
 - Leave the big towel in the locker but take the small one with you. Use it for washing and/or to dry yourself a bit after your bath so you don’t drip onto the changing room floor.
 - The bathroom has individual washing stations. The basin is the traditional way to wash and rinse yourself, but now there are also hand sprayers.
 - Wash thoroughly. The bath is just for soaking; since the water there is shared, you’re expected to be clean first. Be careful not to splash your neighbors.
 - Tie up long hair. You don’t want it to dangle into the shared bath.
- Now you’re ready to soak!

Singapore, arguably the food capital of Asia, treated journalists to a spread of more than 20 local and international favorites at meal times.

There were quintessential Singaporean dishes, such as toast with a coconut and egg jam, chicken rice, and thick vermicelli in a spicy broth made with dried shrimp.

Chia Chi Wei, a journalist from Taiwan and first-time visitor to Singapore, tried the famous chicken rice during a break: “I heard so much about it. It was very delicious.”

The Common Good Company, a group of local eateries, offered ice cream made with kimchi, a spicy Korean staple.

“I cannot remember an event that is as historic, as big, as global,” said its director, Wong Peck Lin. “What event is there in our history that has as many journalists from around the world all trained on Singapore?”

Belgian journalist Tom Van de Weghe arrived in the media center, luggage in hand, after a 30-hour journey.

“The food is amazing. Who is paying for all this?” he said.

Local businesses, it turns out, sponsored the lavish spread, according to the city-state’s Ministry of Communications and Information.

At this point, you’ll still be carrying your small towel, which brings up another rule: never put your towel into the bath. If you’ve seen Japanese bathing on television, people are usually covered with towels, but that is only for filming. The most traditional thing to do with the small towel is fold it and rest it on your head while you’re bathing.

Finally, sento and onsen have traditionally prohibited tattoos, which are associated with organized crime. These restrictions are loosening, though. Sento are usually fine with them, but super sento and onsen resorts may not be, so check in advance.



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Comment at swcorridorplan.org through Monday July 30, 2018

The Southwest Corridor Steering Committee is scheduled to hold a **public hearing 6 p.m. Thursday July 26** at Tigard Town Hall, 13125 SW Hall Blvd., Tigard.

Submit comments | swcorridorplan.org | swcorridorDEIS@oregonmetro.gov | 503-797-1888 or TDD 503-797-1804 | Metro SW Corridor, 600 NE Grand Ave., Portland, OR 97232.

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