

Discovering The Streets of George Town

1 Penang Museum

Welcome! Our discovery of Penang's rich historical and cultural heritage continues in the **American Express-Penang Heritage Trail 2**. Our route, starting at the **Penang Museum**, showcases some significant landmarks and buildings located outside the first American Express-Penang Heritage Trail.

The Penang Museum is open from 9am to 5pm six days a week (closed on Fridays). A bronze statue of Captain Francis Light, the British colonialist who established George Town and the British trading post on Penang Island in 1786, stands prominently in front of the building. Within its compound is the Museum Shop, occupying an old carriage that was once part of the Penang Hill funicular railway. It is open from 11am to 5pm. The Museum itself is housed in the former premises of the Penang Free School founded in 1816 on the same site. The present building was constructed in two stages, in 1896 and 1906. The Penang Free School moved out in 1927 and the Hutchings School then moved in. The museum, which opened in 1965 only occupies half the building as the eastern half was destroyed during bomb raids in World War II. The Penang Museum reopened with new displays in September 1997 after a major renovation. The exhibits are organised to display Penang's communities, customs and costumes, historic places such as the harbour, Fort Cornwallis, the streets of Penang, municipal history, the Penang Riots, the Japanese Occupation, houses of worship and traditional trades. Enlargements of old photographs take you on a journey down memory lane. Special rooms are set aside for displays of the Captain Robert Smith paintings, the William Daniell engravings and the Straits Chinese collections, including a bridal chamber. Among the few original collections is an exhibition of hand-written Qur'ans and old Malay weapons from the family of the late Dato' Haji Fathil Basheer.

Leaving the museum, turn left and you will come to a large, twin-towered church.

2 Cathedral of the Assumption

Lebuh Farquhar

Shortly after Captain Francis Light arrived on Penang Island in 1786, he arranged for the first Roman Catholic community to be brought over by ship from the parish in Kuala Kedah. This community was made up of descendants of

European settlers who had intermarried with the Burmese and Siamese. Due to political persecution, they had emigrated from Phuket and Ligor to Kedah, before moving to Penang. Several Eurasian Catholics were recruited into Light's early administration. The Church of the Assumption, originally founded at Church Street by Father Garnault in 1786, was so named because the first group of Roman Catholic Eurasians from Kedah landed in Penang in 1786 on the eve of the Feast of the Assumption. The church moved to Farquhar Street in 1857, where it occupied a temporary building on the site of the present Convent Orphanage. The present church building and the adjacent presbytery were erected by Father Manissol. When it opened in 1861, it could accommodate 1,200 members of the Assumption parish. In 1955, when the church was raised to the status of the Cathedral of the Diocese of Penang, the sanctuary was renovated to set up the seat for the first Bishop of Penang, the Right Reverend Monsignor Francis Chan. The Catholic community around the church has now dwindled to a few homes along Argus Lane, behind the cathedral, including a 19th century Anglo-Indian bungalow adjoining the church compound.

From the church, turn left into Lorong Love. You will pass a large school building on your right, at the corner of Lebuh Farquhar and Lorong Love.

Saint Xavier's Institution

Lebuh Farquhar

Saint Xavier's Institution is the oldest Roman Catholic school for boys in Malaysia. Founded by the La Salle Brothers in the 1850s, it was run by Irish members of the Order well into modern times. The 19th century Moorish-style building was used as a Japanese naval base during World War II, until it was bombed by the Allied Forces' B-29s toward the close of the war. The school was reopened in the present building in 1954. The narrow junction where Lorong Love intersects with Lorong Stewart and Lebuh Muntri marks the heart of a charming historic area. This old neighbourhood once had a significant Eurasian community, and street names such as Lorong Love and Lorong Stewart are reminiscent of that era. Just before the turn of the century, the middle-class Chinese community began moving into the neighbourhood in larger numbers. The Straits Chinese shophouses in this area, dating from the 1880s to 1910s, are some of the largest and finest in Penang.

Continue along Lorong Love, past the Cantonese Merchant's Association at 13 Lorong Love. Then turn left into Lorong Stewart and continue east as far as 26A Lorong Stewart to visit the office of the Penang Heritage Trust.

3 Hainanese Mariners' Lodge/ Penang Heritage Trust

26A Lorong Stewart

The Hainanese Mariners' Lodge accommodated itinerant Hainanese mariners and some of their families. The house was put up for rent by some of the remaining old sailors in 1998. The Penang Heritage Trust took a lease on the house and undertook a low-budget renovation to turn the shophouse into its office now run by members and volunteers. Visitors looking for information on heritage sites, projects, tours and accommodation are welcome. The trust has a gift shop, selling heritage-related souvenirs such as antiques, books, prints, postcards, T-shirts and bags. It also has a resource library and a small display on current urban conservation projects in Penang.

Walking back to the junction of Lorong Love and Lorong Stewart, turn left and proceed south to the Carpenters' Guild temple. On your left, you will pass the San Sui Hooi Koon, a Cantonese district association, at 43 Lorong Love. Next to it is a workshop called Lim Tan Tin Mahjong at 45 Lorong Love, which manufactures mahjong tiles and Chinese dice. A few doors down is the Soon Tuck Wool Koon.

Soon Tuck Wool Koon

51 Lorong Love

This Cantonese district association was founded in 1838. Its present premises was refurbished in 1928. Many of the Soon Tuck men were butchers, while its women were domestic servants known as mah cheh. The Carpenters' Guild is located across the road, next to the Shih Chung School.

4 Carpenters' Guild

70 Lorong Love

The Carpenters' Guild temple, or Loo Pun Hong, is dedicated to Lo Pan, patron deity of carpenters and other building artisans. Many of Penang's heritage buildings were constructed by members of this guild, which was the predecessor of today's associations of building professionals. Chinese artisan guilds were set up in accordance with Confucian principles and perpetuated the master-apprentice system of training. In the 19th century, all Cantonese carpenters and builders coming from China would first call at the Carpenters' Guild in Penang before proceeding to other parts of the peninsula to work. While some sojourners returned to China after completing their contracts, others settled here and passed on their ancient trade, leaving their descendants to form the backbone of the building trades today. Efforts are under way by the Penang Heritage Trust to restore the Carpenters' Guild temple and to ensure that the traditions of craftsmanship are passed on to the next generation.

Return to the earlier junction of Lorong Love and Lorong Stewart and turn left on to Lebuh Muntri. Walk past the Penang Tailor's Association at 13 Lebuh Muntri, and the Leong Seh Kah Meow at 31 Lebuh Muntri. The latter is a clan temple for those with the surname Leong. It is no longer maintained as a temple, as the premises has been converted into a printing shop. After this, you will come across a grey temple that houses the Goldsmiths' Guild.

Goldsmiths' Guild

41 Lebuh Muntri

The Goldsmiths' Guild or Ta Kam Hong, founded in 1832, is the oldest and largest guild for goldsmiths in Malaysia. The present guild temple on Muntri Street was built in 1903. The temple is dedicated to Wu Ching, the patron deity of goldsmiths. Like the Carpenters' Guild, the artisans belonging to the Goldsmiths' Guild also hail from Toi Shan district in Guangdong province and speak the Sining dialect. Both guild temples reflect a kind of Cantonese-style architecture, which had developed in colonial urban settings. The decorative centrepiece of the temple's front hall is an impressive old bonsai plant. Across the road from the Ta Kam Hong is a large Art Deco/early modern building dated 1955, at 36 Lebuh Muntri. It was formerly the premises of the Lam Wah Ee charity hospital. The hospital has now been converted into a warehouse, with only a small government health clinic retained at the back. A few doors down is the Sao Lim Athletic Association, at 42 Lebuh Muntri, where the Shaolin school of martial arts is taught. A Chinese physiotherapist here attends to people with bone and muscular ailments. Walk back to the other side of the left side of the road, and you will find the Penang Restaurants and Tea Shops Association (Koo Soo Kwong Choon Ton) at 59 Lebuh Muntri. Further down is a row of mews, perpendicular to the street, which now houses about a dozen families. The Institute of Chinese Physicians can be found at 69 Muntri Street, and further down the road is the Penang home of Chan Kim Boon alias Batu Gantung.

Home of Batu Gantung

75 Lebuh Muntri

Chan Kim Boon (1851-1920) was one of the great figures of Baba-Malay literature at the turn of the century. Born in Penang but working out of Singapore, he translated Chinese classics such as 'Three Kingdoms', 'The Monkey' and 'Water Margin' into Baba Malay, a patois with words from Malay and the Fujian dialect. His witty translations reflected his own taste for satire. An example of this was his celebrated pen-name 'Batu Gantung', (literally, 'Hanging Rock') which mystified his Singaporean friends. In fact, it was the name of a cemetery in Penang, which he chose as his permanent address in the hereafter.

Further down the road is the King Wan Association at 85 Lebuh Muntri and the Penang & Province Wellesley Cafe Association at 91 Lebuh Muntri, formed by Hainanese coffeshop operators.

King Wan Association

91 Lebuh Muntri

The King Wan Association started out as the first union of Chinese shopkeepers and clerical workers in Penang. It was founded in 1923 to fight for benefits such as Sunday holidays and better salaries. After being banned, the union was revived in 1926 with the name 'King Wan', which means 'Warning the Stubborn'.

On your left you will come to the Hainan Temple, a large grey temple with a fancy stone gate decorated with swirling dragon columns.

5 Hainan Temple

Lebuh Muntri

The temple, called Thean Ho Keong or Temple of the Heavenly Queen, was founded before 1866 and the present building dates from 1895. It is dedicated to the goddess Mar Chor, the patron saint of seafarers. Goats are slaughtered during the deity's feast days. It is a common temple for the different migrant groups from the island of Hainan in South China, now called Kheng Chew or Hainan province. To celebrate its centenary in 1995, the 100-year-old temple was completely remodelled by craftsmen from China with elaborate stone carvings and swirling dragon pillars, in accordance to the trustees' idea of what a Chinese temple should look like.

When the Hainan men migrated to Penang late in the 19th century, the key occupations were dominated by other Chinese dialect groups, and so they turned to niche occupations by becoming sailors or cooks. Some Hainanese cooks first served in European and Straits Chinese households before branching out to open their own coffeshops and restaurants. To the east of the temple is the Hainan Provincial Association or Kheng Chew Hooi Koon premises. On the other side at 143 Lebuh Muntri is the association school, Aik Hua, which was built in 1913 and extended in 1919, then rebuilt in 1955 in Art Deco/early modern style. The temple itself was extensively renovated and further embellished in 1995 when the Hainan association celebrated its anniversary.

Next to the Aik Hua School is another Cantonese district association, the Woo Ning Wooli Koon, at 145 Muntri Street. Across the road is the Hong Kong Shoe Store at 102 Lebuh Muntri, an old-fashioned shop where you can order shoes or slippers with beadwork covers. At the junction with Lebuh Leith, turn left and proceed to the Bengali Mosque.

6 Bengali Mosque

Lebuh Leith

The Indians from Bengal first came to Penang in the late 18th century as 'sepoy' and convicts with the East India Company. Francis Light also brought out some 'Bengal farmers' from Calcutta to encourage agricultural enterprise on the island. While the early Bengalis hailed from Bengal, the term 'Bengali' soon came to apply to other northern Indians who travelled overland to Calcutta in West Bengal and then sailed to Penang.

The mosque is believed to have been founded in 1803, on a site granted by the East India Company during George Leith's term as Lieutenant-Governor of Penang. Urdu was probably the principal language used in this mosque, although in certain periods the dwindling Urdu-speaking population was overshadowed by an increase in Tamil worshippers. Today, the Masjid Bengali has become a base for the Tablighi movement, and the main languages used here are Malay and Tamil.

Turn back along Lebuh Leith, and walk past the junction of Lebuh Leith and Lebuh Muntri. You will pass several lovely mansions and bungalows, including the Cathy Hotel on your right, a heritage hotel offering mid-budget accommodation. Leith Street has been dubbed the 'Hakka Millionaire's Row', because several prominent Hakkas had their homes here. You will come to a palatial Chinese residence on your left commonly known as 'The Blue Mansion'.

7 Cheong Fatt Tze Mansion

Lebuh Leith

Cheong Fatt Tze was the Hakka name of the powerful Nanyang industrialist who was also known as Chang Pi Shih (in the Mandarin language) alias Thio Taww Siat (Fujian dialect). He became a Mandarin of the Highest Order in the government of China. Regarded as one of the most prominent historic personalities of the East, Cheong was the Qing Government's Consul-General in Singapore, a director of China's first modern bank and first railway, and Special Trade Commissioner for Southeast Asia. His importance was acknowledged by flags flown at half-mast by Dutch and British Governments when he died. The China-born Hakka came as a penniless immigrant to the island of Java. Prospering from Dutch contracts in Sumatra, he ran steamships plying between Medan in North Sumatra and Penang. He moved his base to Penang in the early 1890s, where he served as the Qing government's Vice-Consul (the highest post in Penang), representing the Chinese of Malaysia and the Dutch Indies, before being promoted to Consul-General in Singapore. In Penang, he built his family home and donated generously to Chung Hwa Confucian School, the Kek Lok Si Temple, and many other causes. He continued to expand his empire of trading, shipping, opium, agriculture and mining in Southeast Asia. In China, he was director of China's railway works and its first modern banking institution and at one point even became economic advisor to the Empress Dowager. Just before his death in 1916, he undertook a mission to America on behalf of Yuan Shi-Kai's Republican government, for which the New York Times dubbed him 'China's Rockefeller'. The new owners of the Cheong Fatt Tze Mansion have carried out a Grade I restoration over the last few years, and the monument is now ready for viewing. Tours of the Cheong Fatt Tze Mansion are offered at 11am on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays. Across the road are five blue

shophouses which were formerly the servants' quarters attached to the Cheong Fatt Tze Mansion. They have undergone renovation and adaptive reuse to become food and beverage outlets. Next to this, at the junction of Lebuh Leith and Lebuh Farquhar is Leong Fee's Mansion.

Leong Fee's Mansion

Lebuh Leith

Leong Fee (1857-1911) is the Hakka name of the tycoon also known as Liang Pi Joo (in the Mandarin language). A friend of Cheong Fatt Tze, he was the Qing Government's fourth Vice-Consul in Penang from 1902 to 1908 and a member of the Perak State Council till his death in 1911. He was a wealthy miner and an educational philanthropist. The tin mines he owned in Tambun, Perak, employed European engineers in the 19th century and were among the first to introduce open cast mining with modern machinery. This mansion at 7 Lebuh Leith was built around the turn of the century. Although it was described as 'built in the latest European style', the mansion is a westernised form of a courtyard house with a pair of enclosed courtyards on either side of a central aisle. It is decorated with Victorian elements such as cast iron balconies, and is distinguished by its imported slate roof. After the war, Leong Fee's Mansion served as the St Xavier's Institution for a number of years. The mansion now belongs to the Christian Brothers and has been leased to an art school in recent years.

From Lebuh Leith, turn onto Lebuh Farquhar and proceed west until you come to the junction of Jalan Penang. On your left, next to the petrol station, is a grey bungalow with an old garden setting.

8 Residence of Ku Din Ku Meh

20 Jalan Penang

Ku Din Ku Meh was born in Anak Bukit, Kedah around 1848. He started his career at 14 as head of Kedah Prisons. Ku Din was a literary man, fluent in Malay and Thai. He was known to have transcribed a book of laws in 1894. His diary and some jawi records pertaining to his administration in Setul (Santok) are now kept in the Thai National Archives in Bangkok. In 1897, Sultan Abdul Hamid Halim Shah of Kedah appointed him the High Commissioner of Setul. At the time, Setul, Kayang and Phuket were provinces of Kedah under the domination of Siam. Setul later became a part of southern Thailand under the Treaty of Bangkok in 1909. Ku Din was highly regarded as an administrator, judging by the various advances which he introduced to Setul in the areas of administration, agriculture, trade and commerce, and education. In 1902, Ku Din assumed the title 'Raja of Setul' and used the name Tengku Baharuddin bin Tunku Meh. During his time, the local ports of Setul traded actively with Rangoon and Penang. Ku Din himself owned several shipping vessels exporting goods such as birds' nests, timber and coconuts from south Thailand to Penang. Ku Din married a woman from Penang, and had his trading office in this town house on Jalan Penang. The Siamese government retained Ku Din Ku Meh in his position until he retired in 1916. He passed away in 1932 and was entombed in Setul.

Return to the junction of Jalan Penang and Lebuh Farquhar and take a left turn. Walk around the petrol station until you reach an open gate of the Christian Cemetery.

9 Christian Cemetery

Jalan Sultan Ahmad Shah

The Christian Cemetery along Jalan Sultan Ahmad Shah (formerly Northam Road) deserves to be explored at leisure. Shaded by frangipani trees, it is the final resting place of Penang's European pioneers such as Francis Light, several early governors, Stamford Raffles' brother-in-law

Quintin Dick Thomas, James Scott, David Brown of Glugor Estate, Reverend Hutchings, the Reverend Thomas Beighton of the London Missionary Society, George Earl, author of *Eastern Seas*, and James Richardson Logan, editor of the *Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia* (also called *Logan's Journals*). Many of them died of some mysterious tropical fever, probably malaria, brought about by the widespread clearing of forests. Another personality buried here is a young officer named Thomas Leonowens, whose widow Anna Leonowens became a schoolmistress in Siam in the 19th century. Her romanticised account of her life in the East inspired the play and film 'The King and I' and more recently 'Anna and the King' which was partially filmed in Penang. Over 30 Chinese graves dating from the 1860s to the 1880s may have belonged to Christian Hakkas who came to Penang after the Taiping Rebellion in China. In 1994 the Penang Heritage Trust, as part of an effort to spruce up the Christian Cemetery, whitewashed and re-inked the tombs. Today, a signboard near the entrance shows the location of the tombs of Light and other notables.

Taking a little detour, you can come out of the Christian Cemetery through the western front gate onto Jalan Sultan Ahmad Shah. Here you will get a glimpse of two fine examples of Penang's early suburban villas. The first is the peach-coloured villa of Leong Yin Kea, the son of Leong Fee. The Italianate villa by the sea, with decorative mosaic panels, was designed by Charles Miller of the architectural firm of Stark & McNeill in 1926. Leong Yin Kean seems to have inherited his aesthetic sense from his father Leong Fee, whose mansion is found on Lebuh Leith. The second is the Shih Chung School, a unique Anglo-Chinese mansion. This was Cheah Tek Soon's residence, built in the 1880s, and at various times used as the Chinese Residence, a hotel and a school. In its original five-storey form, it had a striking multi-tier pagoda shape. Getting back into the Christian Cemetery, you can enter a small doorway in the southern wall of the cemetery. This takes you past the small Roman Catholic cemetery on the other side of the wall where the early Sisters of the Holy Infant Jesus were buried.

10 Saint Francis Xavier Church

Jalan Penang

Bishop Boucho, who was responsible for encouraging the founding of education missions in Penang, also started an Indian parish in 1857. The Tamil-speaking Catholics used the cemetery chapel for their first 10 years. The Saint Francis Xavier Church was then built in 1867 on land donated by the Godfrey family to the Church of the Assumption. The church is named after Saint Francis Xavier, the famous 'Apostle of the Indies' who brought Christianity to the non-European peoples of Portuguese Malacca in the 16th century.

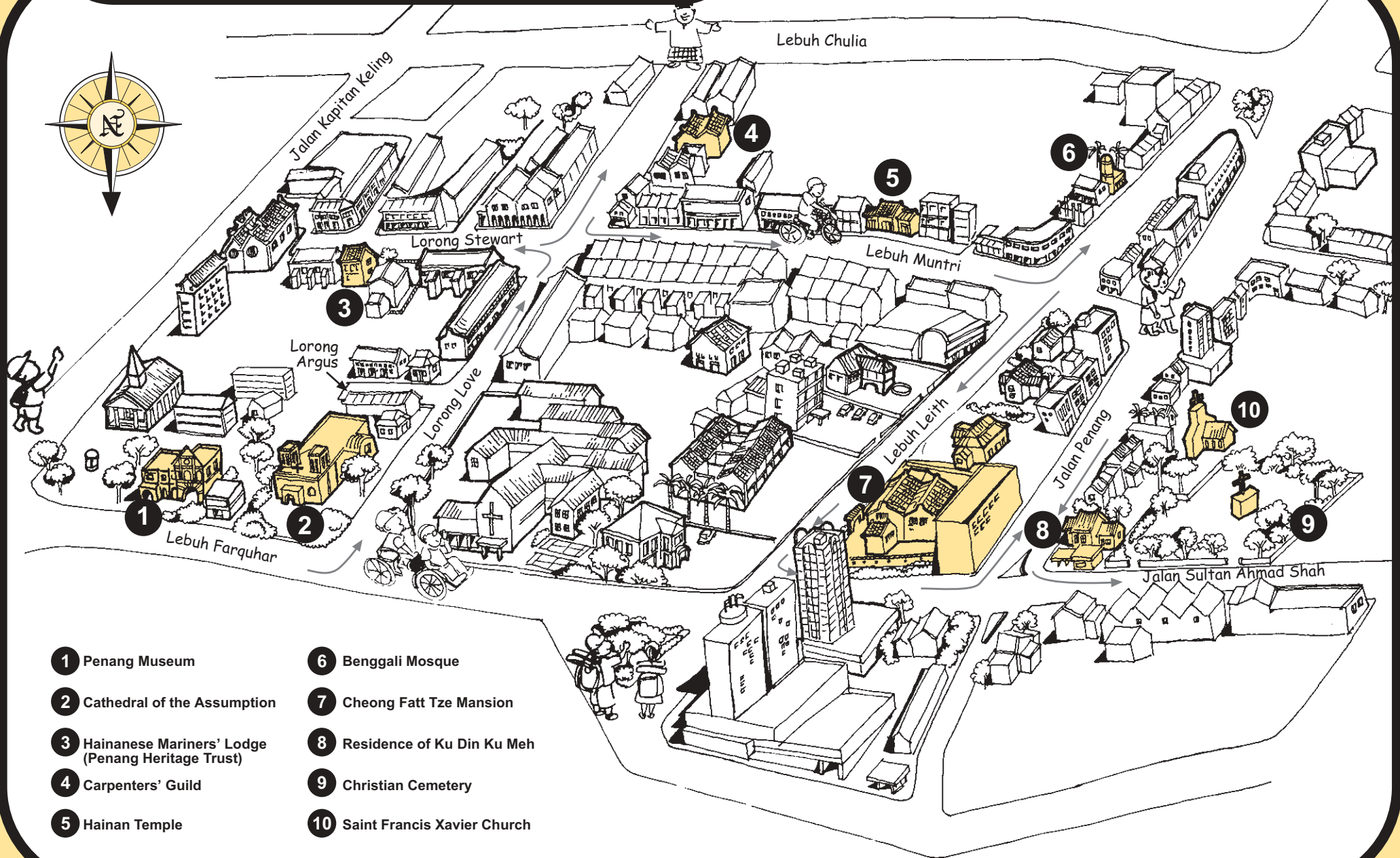
Walk back through the church grounds to Jalan Penang. You might see a fleet of trishaws parked outside the Catholic Information Service. Since this is the last stop of this trail, you have some options for your next steps, depending on the time of day.

OPTION 1 - Head back to Lebuh Leith, where you can enjoy a drink, lunch or dinner at 20 Leith Street or Jaipur Court, one of the restaurants occupying the premises opposite the Cheong Fatt Tze Mansion.

OPTION 2 - Head back east along Lebuh Chulia, where you will find a number of travel agencies, antique, curio and rattan craft shops, framing shops, cheap cafes and hotels that are usually listed in the backpackers' guides. Just before you get to Jalan Masjid Kapitan Keling, take a left turn to Lorong Chulia. Have lunch or dinner at a traditional Hainanese cafe called Sin Kheng An. This place is well patronised by locals, a sure sign that its food is as good as its ambience. If you decide to sit upstairs, food will be taken up to you by a 'dumb waiter'. Lebuh Chulia is on the main route for buses that take you to Komtar and from there to other parts of the island.

OPTION 3 - Take a trishaw down to Jalan Penang, and turn into the Campbell Street Mall, a semi-pedestrianised shopping street with a wide range of shops selling textiles, Chinese herbs and teas, and a choice of Indian Muslim or Chinese restaurants. Or proceed to the Chowrasta Market further down Jalan Penang, where you can find local products like nutmeg, durian cake and shrimp paste sold at reasonable prices.

Penang Heritage Trail 2



1 Penang Museum

2 Cathedral of the Assumption

3 Hainanese Mariners' Lodge
(Penang Heritage Trust)

4 Carpenters' Guild

5 Hainan Temple

6 Benggali Mosque

7 Cheong Fatt Tze Mansion

8 Residence of Ku Din Ku Meh

9 Christian Cemetery

10 Saint Francis Xavier Church

HERITAGE CONSERVATION IN PENANG

George Town, the capital of the state of Penang, has one of the largest collections of 19th and early 20th century buildings in Southeast Asia. It is a living historic city, with inner city communities, places of worship, guilds, wet markets and bazaars, traditional trades and retail shops, trishaw peddlers and hawkers. Since 1948, George Town's heritage buildings had been protected under a Rent Control Act. A 1994 census showed that Penang had 12,453 rent control premises with 8,259 located in the heart of George Town. With the repeal of Rent Control by 31 December 1999, tenants who have lived in the inner city for the last 50 years face potential dislocation. A whole historic environment, community and way of life may disappear forever.

Penang's citizens strongly identify with the historic areas of Penang, and trace their roots to the inner city which was the first place where most of their forebears settled after arriving at the port of Penang. As the starting point of Penang's multicultural community, the inner city of George Town has many houses of worship, guilds, mosques, temples, clanhouses, district associations, sanghams and lodges which are Penang's 'open museums' of migration and cultural history. Several organisations have come together to launch an 'I Love Old Penang' campaign, with a signature campaign and materials distributed in four major local languages, Bahasa Malaysia, English, Mandarin and Tamil. The government, civil society, businesses and citizens of Penang are working together to protect Penang's heritage for future generations.

PENANG HERITAGE TRUST

Formed in 1986, the Penang Heritage Trust is a registered charity and non-governmental organisation (NGO) dedicated to promoting Penang's cultural and built heritage. It organises talks and workshops and publishes a monthly newsletter. It also organises fund-raising events such as street festivals and antique fairs.

The Penang Heritage Trust's initiatives and projects include:

- Promoting the George Town Inner City as a zone of heritage protection, and working with the authorities to get George Town, Penang nominated to UNESCO's World Heritage list.
- Promoting the restoration of Suffolk House, Penang's first government house.
- Supervising the restoration of the Carpenter's Guild at Lorong Love, the guild temple of Penang's traditional Cantonese artisans, and promoting the revival of craftsmanship.
- Continuing the restoration and maintenance of the Christian Cemetery, Jalan Sultan Ahmad Shah.
- Promoting community participation in the revitalisation of historic Muslim endowment properties.
- Identifying heritage sites and collecting local history.
- Giving advice on various aspects of restoration work to homeowners, developers, and others who wish to restore or renovate their properties.

- Organising public awareness programmes such as talks and tours for Penangites, visitors and schoolchildren.
- Facilitating cultural educational programmes and exchanges for built environment, history and anthropology students and academics studying Penang's heritage.
- Co-operating with the other organisations in Malaysia involved in conservation work, networking with heritage organisations in other countries, and serving as the secretariat for the Asia & West Pacific Network for Urban Conservation.

In 1998, the Penang Heritage Trust moved into the present premises at 26A Stewart Lane to be in a better position to promote the conservation of the built heritage and traditional urban communities of Inner City George Town, during the transitional period of the Repeal of Rent Control.

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AMERICAN EXPRESS-PENANG HERITAGE TRAIL

This is part of a series of Heritage Trails initiated by American Express to promote heritage awareness in various cities of Malaysia: Penang, Malacca, Kuching and Kuala Lumpur.



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