



Takeaways

A newsletter by RICE



The black-and-white about being rich

Imagine buying a house. For many of us, the thought stays there—a fantasy, a comforting crutch against the realities of Singapore's housing market.

With the Ridout Road saga seemingly coming to a close this week, Singaporeans have been opinionated on the validity of the claims leveled against ministers K Shanmugam and Vivian Balakrishnan. The black-and-white houses held a black-and-white truth, as Shanmugam stated in an Instagram post that "the findings are clear" from a CPIB report.

What we did learn from the report is that these houses are *expensive*, even just to rent. This week got us thinking about *costs*—the cost of furnishing a home, the cost of working a service job to earn a living, even the cost of attending bucket-list concerts.

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*P.S. We've also learnt some of you found your way here through your friends. If you haven't already, **subscribe** to our weekly newsletter today!*

Riding It Out



Our ministers are paid very well, this we all know. Yet, the numbers out of the CPIB report after the Ridout Road saga winded down are still, well, pretty unbelievable.

TL;DR: it costs a lot to live there. Now, whenever we see social media posts of our ministers breaking bread with locals, we will also know our heartlands look vastly different from theirs.

The Ridout Road Saga Isn't About Corruption. It's About the Optics of Privilege.

Buy Now, Regret Later



To buy, or rent, a home is one thing. There's also furnishing. We're always told to spend within our means (a useful prescription for life, no doubt) but our home, the sanctuary, can be a source of pride for many. We want to live comfortably, and some would even argue that it should be a right and not a privilege. But when the pursuit of modest luxury becomes overwhelming, who's to blame?

**When Home Furnishing
Instalment Plans Land Buyers in
Debt**

Anatomy of a Stan

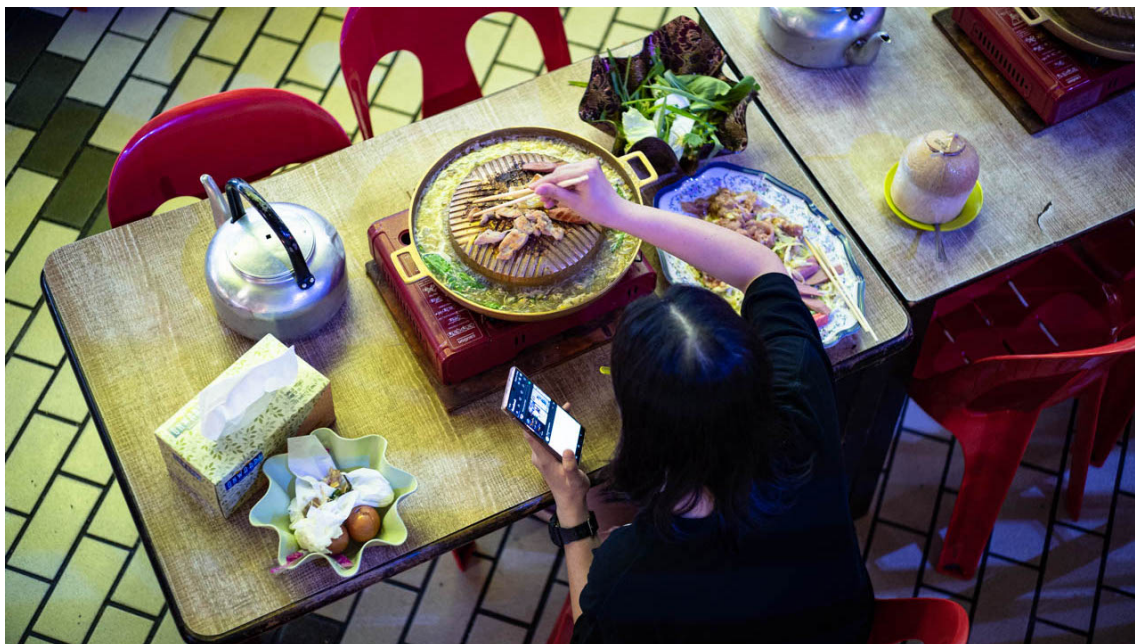


2024 is already promising pop euphoria for Singapore. After we waded through the hysterics of Coldplay's ticket sales, it was soon announced Taylor Swift is coming to our shores. And, yes, she's playing six dates too.

Tickets are not officially out yet. When they are, your social media feeds will undoubtedly be chaotic. It's predictable!

**Notable Traits of the Wild
Singaporean Concert-Goer in Its
Native Habitat**

Local Waiters Losing Patience



Providing great service is an artform. (See: *The Bear*, a terrific series worth streaming. Its first season is on Disney+, with the recent second season landing there next month)

And, as with any work of art, its audience determines its longevity. Aka, some of us can frankly be better at being diners. We asked Singapore's F&B frontliners about what customers can do better to make service better.

**Don't Stack Plates—and Other
Habits Local Waiters Want
Customers to Stop**

Short Grains, or *piping-hot topics by the spoonful.*

- Pink Dot held its first rally post-repeal last weekend. [Here's how it went.](#)
- Ken Lim, who once grimaced for a living on local TV as a Singapore Idol judge, faces [further grim accusations](#) about his professional and personal conduct. (*via Coconuts*)
- For those still in mourning over Golden Mile complex, here's a silver lining: its famous Thai supermarket is [now in Kallang](#). (*via Eatbook*)

- Futsal deposit fees outrageous, residents in Choa Chu Kang argue. (via *The Straits Times*)
 - Ahead of Barbie's upcoming live-action romp, Airbnb offers fans the chance to stay in her mansion. (via *The Guardian*)
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You read their story last week. Now, watch our video interview with Cally and Ching, a Singaporean queer couple starting their own family here.

**A Queer Couple's Struggle to
Start a Family**

We like to go out! We also hate our weather.

But as much as our team is full of contradictions, we simply can't go by our weekend without checking out some things. If you're still deciding on where to go, let us highlight some unmissable events for you:

1. Remember Silent Discos? They're back... at the top of Marina Bay Sands, no less.
2. At Takashimaya, they're holding a Sweet Treats Fest. It's exactly what you think, and exactly what we all need after a week of work.

3. The show's highly-anticipated final season is still a while away, but you can head down to Bugis+ for a dose of Hawkins and the Upside Down with *Stranger Things - The Encounter*.
4. Tickets are flying for this weekend's staging of classic musical *Rent*, which will be performed at SOTA Studio Theatre.
5. Harrison Ford's swan-song outing as Indiana Jones is now screening islandwide, with a supporting cast of *Fleabag*'s Phoebe Waller-Bridge and Mads Mikkelsen.

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