

Big Changes

Major upgrades at Singapore's Changi Airport enhance the travel experience. BY LISA MATTE

Just in time for its 50th anniversary, Changi Airport is upping the ante with infrastructure improvements designed to enhance the 21st-century traveler experience.

In March, Changi Airport Group, the management company that oversees airport operations, awarded a \$238 million contract to Takenaka Corp. for projects related to the expansion of Terminal 1. Takenaka was involved in the 2012 upgrade of T1, in addition to upgrades at T2 in 2006 and ongoing construction of T4.

This most recent project, slated for completion in 2019, involves revamping the departure check-in hall, including the installation of two new check-in ports to increase processing capacity. While travelers may experience some minor inconvenience due to the necessary closure of five retail and dining venues during the second quarter of 2015, the closures will expedite the renovation timetable. The T1 project also includes upgrades to the terminal's baggage handling system, moving from semi-automatic to fully automatic, which enhances sorting capability to enable a streamlined self check-in and bag-drop procedure.

T1 redevelopment coincides with the construction of Jewel Changi Airport, a joint venture between Changi Airport Group and CapitaMalls Asia. The mixed-use complex, to be located in front of T1 on land previously used as an open-air parking lot, will feature visitor attractions, retail outlets, a hotel and facilities for airport operations.

When the stunning glass-and-steel structure opens in late 2018, the 10-story complex (five above ground and five below ground) will lure visitors with shopping, dining and attractions set amid lush greenery — Jewel will showcase almost 237,000 square feet of indoor landscaping, including Forest Valley, a five-story garden featuring thousands of trees, plants, ferns, shrubs and waterfalls. Located at the core of the complex, a 130-foot indoor waterfall will set a relaxing tone during daylight hours and transform to a captivating light and sound show in the evening.

Throughout its 50th anniversary year, dubbed SG50, Changi Airport plans a line-up of events centered on the theme "Changi, I'm Home." Features include displays showcasing curated icons and artifacts, and a campaign to encourage Singaporeans to share their memories via an online photo-sharing contest.

Changi Airport is the world's sixth-busiest airport for international traffic. It served a record 54.1 million passengers from around the globe in 2014.



FRESH DESIGN: Changi Airport departures hall (top), and arrival sign with a beautifully manicured display of live plants (bottom)

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