

# Essay on It Is A Mistake for Everyone to Be on Holiday at The Same Time. What Holiday Experience, Or Experiences, Pleasant or Otherwise Do You Recall?

It was around Christmas when I went down to Singapore with a couple of friends. We planned to spend two days doing some shopping and sight-seeing. My friend Ah Keong managed to borrow his father's car so we can get around in Singapore easily.

As it turned out, the trip we made was anything but easy. We were foolish enough to visit one of the most densely populated areas in the world during the peak holiday season. The trip from Kuala Lumpur to Johore Bahru took us a good ten hours! Never had I seen such incredible lines of traffic along the highway. It seemed everybody was going to Singapore. Similarly, the line heading the opposite direction made it look as though everybody was going to Kuala Lumpur too!

So we plodded along at snail-pace bumper-toe- bumper. It did not do much good for the beaten-up old car we were in. We had to stop in a few small towns to top up the overheating radiator.

At the causeway, we waited another hour before we finally could cross over to Singapore Island. It was already nine o'clock in. the night. Fortunately, Ah Keong knew the roads well so we did not get lost.

We had planned to stay in a small hotel so that we did not have to spend .too much. Alas, all the cheaper hotels were full up: We spent a good hour hunting for a hotel. Finally, we managed to get one that cost us three times more than what we had wanted. By that time we were too tired to argue. In fact, we were lucky even to get a room. Almost all the hotels were booked solid. We-gratefully accepted what

we could get.

Singapore city is like a huge shopping complex. Drove of people congregated in the shops spending what seemed to be endless amounts of money. We went around doing our shopping the next day with a somewhat reduced vigour.- Our funds were considerably cut down by our hotel charges.

There were people everywhere. Queues for buses and taxis were endless. The shops were filled with people. The streets were choked with traffic. The air was thick with fumes and my ears were numbed by the clamor all around me. The scene was not unlike Kuala Lumpur during Hari Raya season. I was jostled, stepped on, pushed, pulled and knocked. By the time the day ended I was extremely glad to get back to the hotel to lay my battered body on the "oh-so-lovely" bed. The day had been very hectic, a mixture of pleasant and unpleasant experiences. The spirit of the season was fantastic, the physical aspect was less .so. We looked as though we had been in the middle of a riot. In fact, we were in situations not dissimilar from such a thing.

The trip back was just as tiring. The customs check. took a couple of hours. We put on our best behavior and declared everything we bought. We did not want to irritate the already overworked and irritable customs officers.

Finally, we made it back home after three grueling days of traveling and shopping. What an experience it had been. I would definitely not like to be caught in such a situation, or situations, again. In a sea of water, you can swim. In a sea of people, you can only choke.

I, for one, will never want to choke again in any sea of people. I am wiser now and take my holidays only when people are working. As far

as traveling is concerned I travel only outside festive seasons. Never again will I be packed like a sardine in an overloaded bus, nor will I be manhandled in an elevator, nor simply to be in a middle of crowd unable to see more than six inches in any direction.

Holidays are meant to be wonderful and pleasant. To have everyone on holiday at the same time destroys its wonder and pleasantness. It is definitely a mistake.