

Asia's best discotheque

22-Dec-01, Marc Faber

On my way to Switzerland - after a brief stop over in Bangkok, where Nana Plaza is still one of the best entertainment venues (go to Hollywood One on the second floor for an excellent show with some spice) - I spent a few days in Singapore where two of my oldest friends from Hong Kong who now live in Singapore own Zouk ([official website](#)), in my opinion, Asia's best disco.

I have been traveling to Singapore for the last 27 years and I have to say that its nightlife has always impressed me - contrary to the conventional wisdom. Singapore always had a number of discos, bars, high-class nightclubs, escort services, which provided locals and visitors with a wide variety of choices. Moreover, because of Singapore's relatively strict application and enforcement of laws, it is perfectly safe to go out in Singapore. (In general, I find Asian nightlife very safe, but some prudence is in order in the Philippines, Indonesia and Thailand.) Now, for a while Singapore's entertainment industry lagged somewhat behind other places in Asia, but in recent years it seems to me that the Singapore Government has become more lenient and tolerant toward how leisure time is spent and, actually encourages the development of Singapore as a regional cultural and entertainment hub. A new impressive Opera House and Theatre is under construction, art exhibitions and performances are actively promoted and the nightlife is flourishing.

The disco Zouk - located in an alley off Havelock Road - was opened about - I guess 12 years ago - by my friend Lincoln Cheng, with whom I used to go boating and hunting at night in Hong Kong in the 1970s. Lincoln is a high tech buff and coming from a very prominent Hong Kong family he also had, right from the start, the necessary financial means to invest in all the latest audio equipment. In other words, unlike other discos, which are usually financially on shaky grounds, he had the money to overcome the downs of the disco business, which occur from time to time and built what I consider a hugely successful entertainment business.

At present Zouk, is licensed for a nightly capacity of 3,500 people who sit outside or inside at either Zouk or Velvet - the latter catering for the more affluent and mature patrons. A disco of this size would be impossible in Hong Kong because of the disruptions created by the triads who would want to seize "part of the action". In Singapore, however, where internal security is by far the best in Asia this is not a problem. Thus, if you are passing through Singapore I recommend you to enjoy its thriving nightlife. Start at Brix in the basement of the Hyatt Hotel around 10.30 pm, move on to Orchard Tower, where you will find on each of its floor a collection of swinging girls - to put it mildly -coming from all over Asia and then move on to Zouk or Velvet (in the same complex) shortly before 1 am. I just like to mention that Singapore is home some of Asia's best Hotels, such as Raffles, Shangrila, Westin, and the recently opened Fullerton, which is a piece of art having been converted from the old Singapore Post office building into a hotel by my friend Robert Ng who owns Hong Kong listed property developer Sino Land.