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A New Way To Go

Spending time as a family is one of the perks of travelling together and now, exploring the city together has been made easier with TopoTogo, an interactive book and app creation for travelling families!

words *supriya nair* photos *courtesy of topotogo*

The Creation

Created by the team who brought us 'The Little Nyonya's Dreams' at Night Festival 2015, a Little Guide and its Little Map injects fun for families to explore places together. As children nowadays become increasingly tech-savvy, the creators imagined an app that works like a pop-up book on smartphones and tablets. Thanks to TopoTogo, children are able to maneuver between their book guides and devices for exploring.

As a creation that is a first-of-its-kind, their methods have been tested

across three different focus groups of children in English, Mandarin and French with the interactions between the app and the audience proving effective, enriching and educational.

The Team

The creators consist of a broadcast journalist, a former Disney business strategist, an illustrator who has published more than 40 children's books and many other members guided by the love for kids, detailed stories, and quality design. The delightful narrations are done by broadcast specialists Sharanjit Leyl (English), Evelyn Tan (Mandarin),

Carrie Nooten (French), and Jun Fujita (Japanese).

How Does It Work?

When you download the free app, you just have to scan the TopoCard which is sold with the Little Guide and all contents will be unlocked! Within the app is Lily, a little nyonya tour guide, created to help you and your child discover Malay & Peranakan cultures and, Singaporean delicacies. Visit Sri Veeramakaliamman temple, Thian Hock Keng temple and Marina Bay, and understand the history behind of many heritage buildings and why animals and plants are essential to



Singapore. Using family-friendly trails, hidden local haunts and fun facts for children, this is the ultimate tool created for exploring families!

Little Guide

Since the team of creators are also parents who believe in learning through paper as well using modern methods, the Little Guide comes with a map and an introduction of Lily, the digital tour guide, and her family. It also includes a brief history of Singapore and other facts about our 'little red dot'. Including the TopoCard for extra app features, the Little Guide also contains fun facts, games, and a travel journal for your kid to enjoy.

The app is a 2-in-1 product as it is made to be a travel app for parents and an educational app for kids. Made for dual user experience, parents will be able to use the app together with their kids. Switching from the kids' menu has never

been easier. The app can also be used on two devices at the same time too, so parents and kids can share the information they have learnt with each other as they explore Singapore through TopoTogo.

The family friendly trails are formulated to include activities, meals and kid-friendly routes to make the family experience all the more enriching. Since kids love their technology, clever interactions have been created to help them learn about Singapore's history, important landmarks, cultures and nature, all told through 150 stories and audio guides. The information is presented in an original manner that enables it to be used as tools for teachers to complement classroom curriculums.

The creators have introduced relatable characters that children can identify with, to help kids grasp what they are discovering. The app also helps grown-ups plan

their trip. The TopoCard works in just three easy steps: download the free app, scan to unlock and start exploring. The app works on phones and tablets and no roaming is needed. TopoTogo works for any family, be it if tourists, expats or locals.

For local families, TopoTogo can help enrich your child's knowledge of Singapore's history, adding to the lessons taught in school. Renew your child's enthusiasm for Singapore's heritage. It's also a great way for your child to practice their Mandarin while exploring Singapore. Expat families can make use of TopoTogo's recommendations of activities and places to help their kids assimilate into Singaporean culture and be better acquainted with their Singaporean peers. Tourist families will be able to enjoy TopoTogo's tailor-made trails and their We Love directory of locations that are popular among locals. **L**

TRAVELLING THRILLS

Here are some tips to enrich your travel experience for you and your family!

PATIENCE IS A VIRTUE

Sometimes when things don't go your way, try not to sweat the small stuff and make use of what is available instead. This goes for both parents and kids!

ENGAGE WITH LOCALS

From meeting them to trying out their delicacies, interacting with the locals will enrich your experience and you never know what you might learn!

PHOTOGRAPH EVERYTHING

There is no better way to document your sight-seeing experience than taking lovely pictures together with your family to look back on and share with other people when you get back.

BE OPEN-MINDED

Approach different cultures with empathy and without judgement, even if you don't understand the reasons behind certain ideas or attitudes.

