

You'll get bargains in Singapore

Continued from Page 7

MADE TO ORDER

Custom-made goods require a little more thought and, of course, more time.

Every shopping centre has at least one optical shop, ready to bargain over the price of stylish frames, and to fill your ophthalmologist's prescription in about 24 hours. Expect to pay about half of Canadian prices.

Clothing orders, too, may in a pinch be filled within 24 hours, although a tailor ought to be given at least three days if possible. Men will find tailor shops in almost every shopping centre and hotel arcade, but care needs to be exercised in selecting a competent craftsman - the good ones aren't inexpensive.

Dressmakers' outlets are more widely dispersed around Singapore, and their prices cover a broader range. Rabiah Flemming and Bobby Chng are among the top designers.

Many visitors to Singapore bring back fabrics, in silk or batik, to be made into dresses at home. Arab Street is lined with little shops that overflow onto the sidewalk with their Thai, Chinese and Japanese silks, and batik from Malaysia, all sold by the metre. One shop that seems to be popular with visitors is Mohamed Thamby, 99 Arab St.

SHOPPING TIPS

Here are some guidelines for Singapore shopping:

-Comparison shopping is strongly recommended if you plan to buy expensive items such as cameras or sound equipment. Don't hesitate to haggle.

-Be sure to obtain an international guarantee on such equip-

ment, although merchants may be reluctant to issue one and may even increase the price if you insist upon it. Check to see that it is properly completed and endorsed with the store's stamp.

-Antiques should be more than 80 years old, and the merchant should issue a certificate of antiquity and a receipt for customs purposes. Examine each piece for cracks, chips and repairs.

-You can airmail your purchases home, up to a maximum of 10 kg. Post offices sell protective mailing cartons, in four standard sizes.

-Complaints about merchants should be directed to the Consumer Association of Singapore, Trade Union Annex, Shenton Way, telephone 221-6238. Remember that the city-state is noted for its strict laws and law-enforcement.

-Although Singapore is a major Asian financial centre, Canadian dollars aren't readily accepted, even at banks. Take U.S. funds; travelers cheques get an appreciably higher rate of exchange than greenbacks.

-Duty-free shopping is, of course, available at Changi airport, not only on departure but also on arrival. Prices are fixed. If you run out of time there, air carriers such as Finnair (which flies between Singapore and Toronto via Helsinki) carry many of the same products, including electronics, for duty-free sale in flight.

Other airlines serving Singapore include Air Canada (from Toronto via London and Bombay), British Airways (from Toronto via London) and Cathay Pacific (from Vancouver via Hong Kong).

Your Birthday

ASTRO-GRAPH



BERNICE BEDE OSOL

Larger material returns than usual could be in the offing for you in the year ahead owing to a new surge of enterprise and ambition. In order to be successful, you must be consistent and have continuity of purpose.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23-Dec. 21) Instead of viewing conditions with your inherent optimism today, you might look at the world with a jaundiced eye. You'll do much better if you don't step out of character. Trying to patch up a broken romance? The Astro-Graph Matchmaker can help you to understand what to do to make the relationship work.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) Don't restrict your magnanimous impulses today when dealing with people who are not as well off as you are. This is one of those times when you'll get by being a giver.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 19) An active and possibly extravagant day may be in the offing for you. If your wastefulness is stimulated, it could stem from overlapping frivolous involvements.

PISCES (Feb. 20-March 20) Initially your priorities are likely to be in proper

focus today, but with time you might begin to place your emphasis in less productive areas. Stick to your blueprint.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) Self-effacing thoughts must be dismissed promptly today when evaluating competitive developments. All they offer is second place, and you want to be a winner.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) Ignore inclinations today to down play your own logic in order to give credence to less wise counsel from companions. Your wisdom may be superior.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) Fulfill your own yearnings today instead of trying to please everyone else. You'll discover when you gratify your own needs, you'll also bring joy to others.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) Being too demanding of co-workers today could breed discontentment in the ranks. As long as everyone is working toward the

same goal, give each freedom of action.

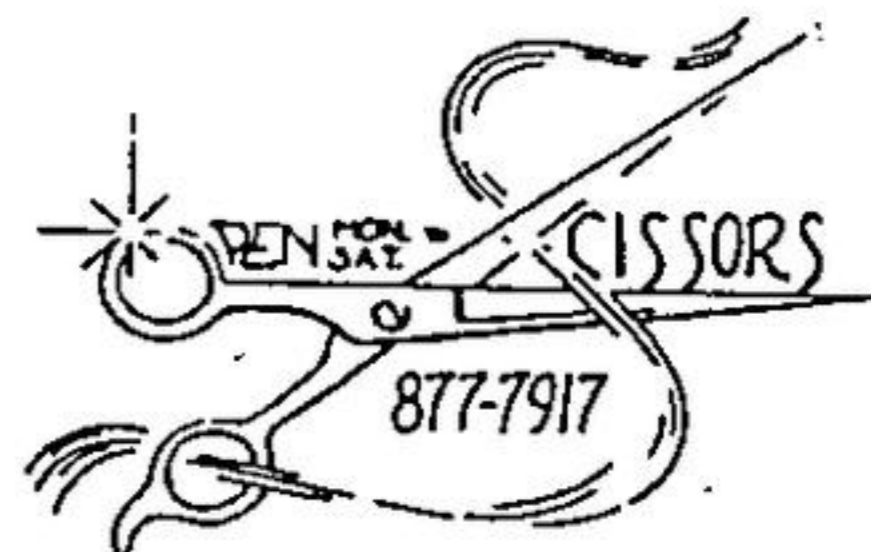
LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) Friends will measure how you treat them today against the way you treat others, so be very careful you do not display partiality. Make all your pals feel equally important.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) In order to avoid a confrontation with your mate today over a major issue, make an effort to reach accord on minor matters first, then resolve the larger one.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23) Let family members and companions have their full say today, because all stand to gain from a democratic exchange of opinions - especially you.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 22) Financial swings could see-saw a bit for you today. You might accumulate from one situation and then fritter away what you have gained with another.

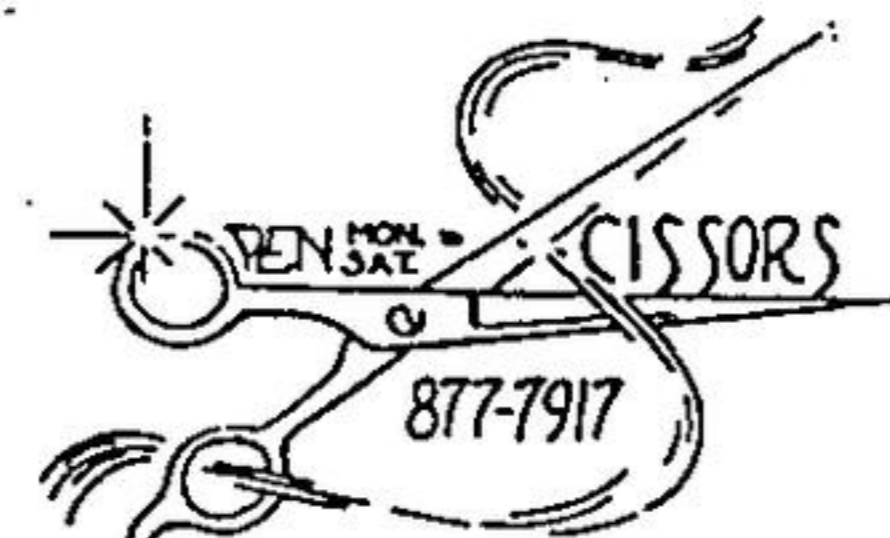
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