If an underground mall wants to do well, there must be things that draw people there. In other words, people must see it as a destination rather than just a thoroughfare.

Assistant Professor Muhammad Fazaidi Rehman from the Department of Real Estate at the National University of Singapore says it is not surprising that the MRT has developed slowly down under.

"As a young city, we are still developing underground. Once underground malls provide a seamless shopping experience, they will take off," he says.

More going under
The signs are promising — despite the extra expense. There are at least five new underground malls in Singapore. Each underground mall is expected to cost between $200 million and $300 million.

"By 2010, we will have about five underground malls in Singapore," says Mr Fazaidi. "This is going to be a real boost for the city's retail sector."

TALK BACK
Which is your favourite underground shopping mall? Share your views with us.

Assuming you've enjoyed this article, would you like to share your thoughts on the subject with other readers? Please feel free to leave a comment below.
UNDERGROUND AGENTS

Don't treat them as throughfares. HANNAH TAN and GLADYS CHUNG make a pitstop at the three down-under malls for a walkabout

DOHY XCHANGE
Where: Outside Dhoby Ghaut MRT central station. Exit the station and you take the North South line (red line). The Dhoby Ghaut station is on the circle line between the Dhoby Ghaut and Dhoby Ghaut Woodhouse stations. Alternatively, you can cross the road from Plaza Singapore, enter the MRT station and you will see it.
Total retail space: 80,000 sq ft
Opening hours: Mon to Fri, 7.30am to 9pm, Sat, Sun & hols, 10am to 9pm

What's Hot
- Donuts (HSI-39). We hit your latest Lolita get-up here if you are interested in Japanese food. The place is open from 7.30am to 9pm daily and 10am to 10pm on Fri. There is plenty of Japanese food on offer, from coffee to noodles, and they have a range of Japanese food, which is open until 10pm daily.
- Sandwiches (HSI-19). Dark chocolate-covered coffee beans, toasted bread and a selection of Japanese food. You can also find a range of Japanese food, including coffee, noodles and a selection of Japanese food.
- Lemon (HSI-39). Seated in the middle of a Japanese restaurant, this is the perfect place for a quick bite. You can find a range of Japanese food, including coffee, noodles and a selection of Japanese food.

What's Not
- Up to 40 per cent of the shops are not open.
- Easy to miss if you do not know where to look.
- Lack of seating. At peak times, there's only the Japanese fast food outlet Pepper Lunch.

Walkability: 🎈🎈🎈

CITYLINK MALL
Where: A suburban, air-conditioned passageway that starts from City Hall MRT Station and connects with the Orchard MRT Station. It is located between Orchard Road and City Shopping Centre. With wide, airy and well-lit passageways, you hardly even notice that you're underground.
Total retail space: 50,000 sq ft

What's Hot
- Bonsai Trees (HSI-38), above: Bringing bugs, power and certain decorative items made from natural materials to life. $10, $15 and $20, all of which are available in different sizes and designs.
- HIN (HSI-38). For all of those who love office supplies, this is the perfect place. You can find a range of office supplies, including pens, pencils and erasers, all of which are available in different sizes and designs.
- Print (HSI-38). A range of stationery in fun, colorful designs. You can also find a range of office supplies, including pens, pencils and erasers, all of which are available in different sizes and designs.
- Pins (HSI-38). Fun and affordable gifts for the office.