



nileGUIDE

ALL YOU NEED TO PLAN YOUR PERFECT TRIP



The Best hotels in Hong Kong

Hong Kong, 1 Day

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Guide Description



AUTHOR NOTE: Find peace and revitalise yourself in these best hotels in Hong Kong. The rolls royce of all hotels in Hong Kong is no doubt the luxury Peninsula Hotel. The best boutique hotel mentioned in Hong Kong magazine is Jia. The rooms at InterContinental Hotel and Island Shangri-La Hong Kong are perfect for looking at the magnificent views of Victoria harbour. Set in the central business district of Hong Kong, the Ritz Carlton and the Landmark Mandarin Oriental Hong Kong are top award winning choices for business conferences and gorgeous dining. The best hotel deals can be found at the Holiday Inn Hong Kong in Tsim Sha Tsui Golden Mile with the most central tourist location.

Itinerary Overview

things to do
restaurants
hotels
nightlife

Day 1 - Hong Kong

	The Peninsula Grande Dame of Hong Kong Hotels
	Hotel InterContinental Hong Kong One of the World's Leading five star Hotels
	Landmark Mandarin Oriental Haute Luxury hotel
	Ritz-Carlton (The) Elegance and stunning views from a five star hotel
	Island Shangri-La Hong Kong Prestigious business and leisure hotel
	Grand Hyatt Hong Kong top five star hotels, stuffed with famous restaurants and top of the range facilities.
	Jia chic Philippe Starck accommodation
	Langham Hotel Luxury and hip with fancy amenities
	Holiday Inn Golden Mile Always booked out because of its location on Nathan Road

Day 1 - Hong Kong

QUICK NOTE

contact:

tel: 866/382-8388 in the U.S.

fax: 852/2722 4170

<http://www.peninsula.com>

location:

Salisbury Road
Hong Kong

1 The Peninsula

DESCRIPTION: This is Hong Kong's most famous hotel, the place to stay if you are an incurable romantic and have a penchant for the historical. Built in 1928, it exudes elegance, from its white-gloved doormen and one of the world's largest limousine fleets of Rolls-Royces to its ornate lobby, reminiscent of a Parisian palace and Hong Kong's foremost spot for afternoon tea and people-watching. After The Peninsula lost its fabled view of the harbor following construction of the unsightly Space Museum across the street, it remedied the problem in 1993 with a 32-story tower providing fantastic harbor views from guest rooms and its top-floor restaurant Felix, designed by Philippe Starck. Spacious rooms (with a minimum of 41 sq. m/441 sq. ft.) -- so wonderfully equipped that even jaded travelers are likely to be impressed -- include headphones for both radio and TV; tightly focused bedside reading lights designed to keep sleeping partners happy; telephones and control panels on both sides of gigantic beds; a display panel showing outdoor temperature and humidity; mood lighting; and a box in the closet where attendants can place your morning newspaper or take your dirty shoes for complimentary cleaning. Each huge bathroom is equipped with its own TV, hands-free phone (which automatically mutes the TV or radio and digitally filters the sound of running water), and two sinks, both with a magnifying mirror. It's worth the extra money to spring for a stunning harbor view in the tower if you can afford it, since views facing the back are a disappointment and those in the older part of the hotel are marred by the Space Museum. For the culture-minded, The Peninsula offers classes on everything from tai chi and feng shui to cooking; for the travel-weary, its spa focuses on the journey to rejuvenation with views of the harbor from its sauna. I absolutely love this place. **Facilities:** 6 restaurants, including Gaddi's, Felix, and Spring Moon; 2 bars; lounge; gorgeous indoor pool w/sun terrace overlooking the harbor; health club; spa; concierge; business center; designer-brand shopping arcade; 24-hr. room service; babysitting; in-house nurse; practice music room w/grand piano. In room: A/C, satellite TV/DVD/CD w/free in-house movies, fax (silent, w/personal fax number), minibar, hair dryer, safe, free Wi-Fi and high-speed Internet access. © Frommer's



Hotels.com

contact:

tel: 800/327-0200 in the U.S.

and Canada

fax: 852/2739 4546

<http://www.hongkong-ic.intercontinental.com>

location:

18 Salisbury Rd

2 Hotel InterContinental Hong Kong

DESCRIPTION: Whereas The Peninsula, across the street, is the grand old dame of Hong Kong's hotels, the InterContinental is like its youthful, contemporary cousin. It exudes a relaxed, informal atmosphere despite its stylish digs, with almost half its guests hailing from North America. It also boasts what may well be the best views of Victoria Harbour and Hong Kong Island from Tsim Sha Tsui. In fact, you can't get much



Hotels.com

Hong Kong

closer to the water than this: Built in 1980 of polished rose granite and rising 17 stories, the hotel is located right on the water's edge. Its unfussy lobby, with a soaring glass facade and unobstructed views of harbor activity, is one of Hong Kong's best venues for afternoon tea or evening cocktails. Great views are also trademarks of its guest rooms, 70% of which command sweeping vistas of the harbor with floor-to-ceiling and wall-to-wall windows (the remaining -- and less expensive but larger -- rooms face the outdoor swimming pool and landscaped sun terrace). In-room standouts include an air purification system and huge walk-in closets adjoining the bathrooms (you can shower and get dressed without disturbing another guest in the room). Other notable hotel features are its high-rated restaurants; a health-conscious menu available from room service or at Harbourside; a state-of-the-art spa renowned for its outdoor cabanas and jet-lag, anti-cellulite, and Oriental healing treatments; harbor views from outdoor whirlpools and the pool's sun terrace; free tai chi and yoga classes for hotel guests; and Wi-Fi that enables guests to access the Internet even from poolside. **Facilities:** 5 restaurants, including Spoon by Alain Ducasse, Yan Toh Heen, Nobu, and STEAK HOUSE winebar + grill; lounge; bar; outdoor pool w/underwater music; Jacuzzis overlooking Victoria Harbour; fitness room (24 hr.); spa; concierge; business center; upscale shopping arcade; 24-hr. room service; babysitting; house doctor. In room: A/C, satellite TV/DVD/CD w/keyboard for Internet access and on-demand pay movies, minibar, coffeemaker, hair dryer, safe, Wi-Fi, iPod docking station. © Frommer's

contact:

tel: 800/526-6567 in the U.S. and Canada
fax: 852/2132 0199
<http://www.mandarinoriental.com>

location:

15 Queen's Rd
Hong Kong

3 Landmark Mandarin Oriental

DESCRIPTION: This small hotel eschews the boutique label because it doesn't scrimp on size, with rooms that flaunt both space and strikingly contemporary decor. Located atop the Landmark shopping complex and popular with designers who have shops there, it exudes a laid-back, refined atmosphere, with lobby seating grouped in a library setting and a stylish bar attracting a well-heeled crowd. Other diversions are limited to a spa with a Zen-like atmosphere and workout rooms for yoga and Pilates, as well as a chic restaurant serving innovative European cuisine. Though the Lan Kwai Fong nightlife district is within staggering distance, it's hard to imagine guests who can afford to stay here taking advantage of it. Rather, the big focus is on state-of-the-art guest rooms, which measure 42 or 56 sq. m (452 or 603 sq. ft.) and are priced accordingly. Both feature high-tech phones that include hands-free speakerphones and display text messages, walk-in closets, yoga mats, and fresh flowers providing splashes of color. But it's the stunning, glass-walled bathrooms, which take up about a third of the room's space, that take the cake. Big enough to live in, they have two separate vanities and dual sinks, shower stall, another TV, and a huge, round tub (in the larger rooms, the tub measures 2m/6.5 ft. across). Unfortunately, surrounding buildings can make guests feel like they're living in a fish bowl. One unwitting guest closed the sheers immediately upon check-in but forgot to close the block-out drapes later when taking her nighttime bath, discovering her faux pas only the next morning. Needless



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to say, there are no views from this hotel, though the same may not be said, perhaps, for office workers across the street. © Frommer's

contact:

tel: +852 2877 6666
fax: +852 2877 6778
http://www.ritzcarlton.com/hotels/hong_kong/

location:

3 Connaught Road
Hong Kong Hong Kong

4 **Ritz-Carlton (The)**

DESCRIPTION: Stunning views of Victoria Harbour or Victoria Peak are offered in all rooms of the centrally located Ritz-Carlton. From the deluxe suites, the rich and the beautiful can watch ferries ply their routes while the attending butler provides pampering service. This tasteful five-star hotel is renowned for its great location and exquisite service. © wcities.com



contact:

tel: 800/942-5050 in the U.S. and Canada
fax: 852/2521 8742
<http://www.shangri-la.com>

location:

Pacific Place, Supreme Court Road
Hong Kong Hong Kong

5 **Island Shangri-La Hong Kong**

DESCRIPTION: Hong Kong Island's tallest hotel (measured from sea level) offers the ultimate in extravagance and luxury, rivaling the grand hotels in Paris or London: It's one of my favorite hotels in the world. More than 700 Viennese chandeliers, lush Tai Ping carpets, artistic flower arrangements, and more than 500 paintings and artworks adorn the hotel. A 17-story atrium, which stretches from the 39th to the 56th floors, features a marvelous 16-story-high Chinese painting, drawn by 40 artists from Beijing and believed to be the largest landscape painting in the world. Also in the atrium are a private lounge open only to hotel guests and a two-story old-world-style library. The hotel itself is enhanced by the connecting Pacific Place with its many options in dining; across the street is Hong Kong Park. Rooms, all of which ring the atrium and measure 41 sq. m (441 sq. ft.) or more, face either the Peak or spectacular Victoria Harbour. Oversize bathrooms are equipped with two sinks and separate tub and shower areas (harbor-view rooms only), bidet, LCD TVs, and even jewelry boxes. Fresh flowers are another nice touch. Guests paying rack rates receive such additional services as free transportation from and to the airport, free laundry service and dry cleaning throughout their stay, complimentary American or continental breakfast, free local telephone calls and Internet access, and 6pm late checkout. **Facilities:** 6 restaurants, including Petrus and café TOO; lounge; outdoor heated pool big enough for swimming laps; health club (24 hr.); spa; concierge; business center; adjoining shopping arcade; 24-hr. room service; babysitting; executive-level rooms; medical clinic; free shuttle to Queen's Pier in Central and Convention Centre. © Frommer's



Hotels.com

contact:

tel: 800/233-1234 in the U.S.
and Canada
fax: 852/2802 0677
<http://www.hongkong.grand.hyatt.com>

location:

1 Harbour Rd
Hong Kong

6 Grand Hyatt Hong Kong

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

The hotel is connected to the Hong Kong trade and convention center so you can get to your tradeshow. Honestly though, there is enough to keep you occupied so we recommend to just enjoy the facilities unless the pull to hit Lockhart road overwhelms you.

DESCRIPTION: Walking into the lobby of this hotel is like walking into the Bavarian castle of a modern-day King Ludwig, a lobby so palatial that the word "understatement" has certainly never been uttered within its walls. Decorated to resemble the salon of a 1930s Art Deco luxury ocean liner, it literally flaunts space, with huge black granite columns, massive flower arrangements, palm trees, bubbling fountains, and statuettes. It's not the kind of place you want to be seen on a bad hair day. Located on the waterfront adjacent to the Convention Centre and a 5-minute walk from the Wan Chai Star Ferry pier that delivers passengers to Tsim Sha Tsui, it offers smart-looking, contemporary rooms, some 75% with a full harbor view (the rest have a view of Hong Kong's largest outdoor hotel pool and garden, with partial glimpses of the harbor). Pluses are the slide-out clothes rack in the closet and coffee-table books, which impart a homey atmosphere. For extra pampering, travelers can choose to stay at Plateau, a residential spa with 14 guest rooms (and nine treatment rooms), where guests can enjoy a massage, manicure, and a soak in an infinity bathtub without leaving the privacy of their room (doubles here start at HK\$7,000/US\$909/£454, including breakfast). They should, however, venture at least as far as the spa's sauna, which boasts a view of the harbor. The must try is the poolside grill's bubbly brunch for around \$400 offering sumptuous buffet spreads and grilled specialties year-round (weather permitting). **Facilities:** 5 restaurants, including Grissini and One Harbour Road; lounge; champagne bar; club w/live music; 50m outdoor heated pool (shared w/adjacent Renaissance Harbour View Hotel and open year-round); children's splash pool and playground; golf-driving range; 2 outdoor lit tennis courts; 2 squash courts; health club; spa; jogging track; concierge; business center; salon; 24-hr. room service; babysitting; free shuttle to Central, Causeway Bay, and Admiralty © Frommer's



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contact:

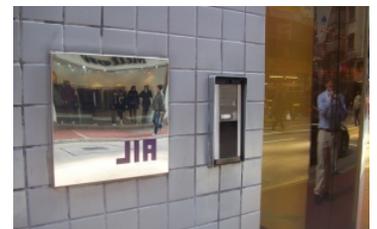
tel: 852/3196 9000
fax: 852/3196 9001
<http://www.jiahongkong.com>

location:

1-5 Irving St
Hong Kong

7 Jia

DESCRIPTION: Travelers who are allergic to ugly hotel rooms will want to head straight to Hong Kong's first -- and still hippest -- boutique hotel, opened in 2004 by a Singaporean 20-something entrepreneur and designed by Philippe Starck. From the moment guests step into the low-key lobby with its teak wood floors, white sheer curtains, and whimsical furniture and are greeted by staff in chic Shanghai Tang-designed uniforms,



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they know this is no ordinary abode. Stylish rooms (35 sq. m/380 sq. ft.), bathed in white and divided into living, dining, and working areas, feature kitchens and home theater units with surround sound. One- and two-bedroom suites are also available. Guests enjoy free local telephone calls, free Internet access, complimentary continental breakfast and cocktail hour, free access to a local gym, and access to both Kee, a private members' club, and the VIP area of Dragon-i. I wouldn't be surprised if some people check in and never move out, especially with this incentive: Long-staying guests get a free massage. © Frommer's

contact:

tel: 800/223-6800 in the U.S.
and Canada
fax: 852/2375 6611
<http://hongkong.langhamhotels.com>

location:

8 Peking Rd
Hong Kong

8 **Langham Hotel**

DESCRIPTION: This affiliate of London's historic Langham Hotel and Hong Kong's only member of the Leading Hotels of the World is conveniently located a couple of blocks inland from the harbor, just a few minutes' walk from the Star Ferry and huge Harbour City shopping complex. Its lobby exudes a classic Italian atmosphere, with chandeliers, marble floor, a hand-painted dome ceiling, and lots of artwork and statues that give it the atmosphere of an art gallery, including glass art by American artist Dale Chihuly and paintings from mainland China. Photos of old Hong Kong adorn corridor walls and rooms. Its restaurants, which include a renowned Cantonese venue, an American deli, and a fun seafood restaurant, are well respected among locals. Contemporary rooms are small but comfortable, with bedside control panels that allow guests to adjust air-conditioning, select a TV or radio program, call up messages or the hotel bill on the television screen, and switch on a "Do Not Disturb" light that automatically disconnects the door chime. Touch-screen phones allow guests to even browse the Internet. Unfortunately, none of its rooms have harbor views. Take solace instead in the deep soaking tubs in newly renovated Grand Rooms, where you can watch television while you soak. **Facilities:** 4 restaurants, including T'ang Court and Main St. Deli; bar; lounge; rooftop outdoor pool and Jacuzzi year-round; health club (24 hr.); concierge; business center (24 hr.); shopping arcade; 24-hr. room service; babysitting; executive-level rooms; doctor on call © Frommer's



Hotels.com

contact:

tel: 800/465-4329 in the U.S.
and Canada
fax: 852/2369 8016
<http://www.holiday-inn.com/hongkong-gldn>

location:

50 Nathan Rd
Hong Kong

9 **Holiday Inn Golden Mile**

DESCRIPTION: Named after the "golden mile of shopping" on Nathan Road, this Holiday Inn has a great location right in the heart of bustling Tsim Sha Tsui, about a 6-minute walk from the Star Ferry and with an MTR subway station right across the street. Maybe that's why it's popular with tour groups, mainly from North America and China, which can make the lobby rather crowded, noisy, and bothersome. However, it's a good bet also for families because of the heated pool and the fact that children 19 and under can eat free in hotel restaurants. Rooms, decorated in Ming blue or Oriental red with Chinese-influenced accents on everything from the drapes to the TV



cabinets, impart a warm, cozy feeling and are fairly large for Tsim Sha Tsui, featuring either a king-size bed or two double beds. Although rooms boast floor-to-ceiling windows, views are blocked by adjacent buildings; those facing the unsightly Chungking Mansion are glazed (believe me, it's better this way). Those facing Mody Road are brighter but noisier; try to get a room on a high floor. All in all, this is a functional hotel in a convenient location. © Frommer's

Hong Kong Snapshot

Local Info

Cosmopolitan, international and a vivid city of the future, boasting an astonishing blend of beautiful mountain parks and vibrant modern architecture. Crowded, chaotic, but always charismatic, Hong Kong remains the gateway to China, and remains renowned as the 'Pearl of the Orient'.

Which country is Hong Kong in? Is Hong Kong part of China?

The handover of Hong Kong took place in 1997 and since then Hong Kong has been a Special Administrative Region belonging to China but its colonial roots and British influence on all walks of life can still be seen easily. Under the 'One country two systems' slogan, Hong Kongers have gotten used to the laissez faire attitude of the Hong Kong Government in juxtaposition to China. As one of the freest economies in the world, nearly seven million people are crammed and make a living from the mere 1,100 square kilometres that make up the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR). Hong Kong is second to Tokyo in terms of population density. The pace of life is quick and Hong Kong is renowned for its efficiency and rush hour traffic.

What does Hong Kong mean?

The official language in Hong Kong is Cantonese rather than mandarin but English is commonly spoken as all. In Cantonese, which is a different dialect from Mandarin, 'Hong Kong' mirrors the Cantonese pronunciation 'Heung Gong' meaning fragrant harbour. The name stems from the fact that Hong Kong's harbour used to be a humid sleepy fishing village with plenty of boats parked around the harbour.

The skyline of Hong Kong is one of the most awe inspiring and panoramic in the world. Some of Hong Kong's favourite skyscrapers include but are not limited to the HSBC building, Bank of China Tower, IFC and Central Plaza complimented by numerous high rise residential apartments. Not just a city of skyscrapers, there is also lush countryside in Sai Kung, Tai Mo Shan and small rural communities in Peng Chau, Cheung Chau as well as Lamma Island.

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Restaurants Insights

Hong Kong is dubbed as a culinary heaven not for no good reason, the food is a paradise, tantalizingly diverse and innovative. From sophisticated fine dining in Eastern, Western, Fusion as well as international buffets to street food outlets serving local delicacies, there is something for everyone and every budget and food is available everywhere you go at every corner and at all hours. If you want to spring for a dream meal you can do that too. The vast majority of Hong Kong's 10,000 odd restaurants serve Cantonese food, of course. Cantonese is by far the most popular Chinese cuisine in Hong Kong, but Chiu Chow, Shanghainese, Sichuanese and Northern are also widely available. Because of Hong Kong's close proximity to China, Hong Kong Restaurants are incredibly blessed with an army of incredible and artistic culinary Chinese chefs who pride themselves in their innovative and artistic culinary skills, serving up signature dishes from around China.

For a real dining experience in Hong Kong, eating out in the street cafes and stalls is a must. At these informal outlets, and Temple street night market is especially worth a mention where you can experience local dai pai dong food in the surrounding streets. Famous throughout Hong Kong and beyond, the 'greasy goose' restaurants at Yue Kee Sham Tseng have been popular for many years. The famous Sham Tseng Roast goose is specially air dried for some hours after initial basting with honey, oil and spices. This process, apparently, helps to crisp the skin and makes the flesh moist and tender. Sham Tseng siu ngor (roast goose) is renowned all over Hong Kong and weekend evenings are especially popular times to visit Sham Tseng, and the goose restaurants are one of those perennial local favourites that too many visitors to Hong Kong never see or experience. Well worth trying!

One of Tsim Sha Tsui's most popular venues for late night tong shui (Chinese sweet soups), Honeymoon Dessert has been around for years and packs in the crowds, especially on weekends when

he queue for a table can easily stretch out into the street. Yet another popular one is Tong Pak Fu Like many culinary phenomena that newcomers either love or loathe, Chinese tong shui must be tried at least a few times before a firm like it or not decision can be reached.

In fact, all the flavours of the world are showcased here. Japanese food is the most popular Asian food after Chinese, and a plethora of Japanese restaurants with famous international brand names such as Nobu and Zuma have opened their doors here to the well heeled crowds. In contrast, there are inexpensive Japanese cafes and small outlets like Yoshinoya and Genryoku Sushi serving an array of Japanese street food Japanese style.

Authentic Thai tastes can be surprisingly difficult to find, and many enthusiasts find a culinary pilgrimage to Orchid Thai Food every so often is well worth the journey. It is unsurprisingly most patronized by expat Thais and those Hong Kong Chinese who appreciate the authenticity on offer here.

If you are having a bad noodle day, don't despair: you've in fact come to the right place- Hong Kong is where East eats West and you'll find bangers and mash at the Stag's Head, lasagne at Fat Angelo's as well as Curry Chicken at Gaylord's before you can say 'beef congee'. Central is the best pick for Western Restaurants, especially Soho, though you'll find a fair few offering alfresco dining in Tsim Sha Tsui's Knutsford Terrace.

© NileGuide

Nightlife Insights

Soho is the place to be for the lively atmosphere of Hong Kong nightlife. Chic restaurants, upbeat bars and cafes, make a beeline for South of Hollywood Road, or Soho for short. The area consists of Stanton's Wine bar and Cafe, Drop, Prive as well as the Fringe Club.

While Soho has its appeal to a younger expat crowd by day and night, Lan Kwai Fong by D'Arguilar Street in Central is the place to be when the lights are low and you are in the party mood. The place is buzzing with clubs, funky bars, pubs and restaurants that swell up with crowds of merrymakers and drinkers partying till the

Hong Kong Snapshot continued

crack of dawn. It is party central for the 'in crowds and night owls'.

Although Wanchai had a reputation during the Vietnam War as an anything goes red light district, today it's mainly a centre for shopping, business and more upmarket entertainment. If you want to see how far Wanchai has come, check out Klong Bar, ang grill and La Bamba. Royal Arms retains some of its old character with hostess bars along Lockhart Road, and part upbeat fun with lots of zippy club action and late night cover band venues at the western ends of Jaffe and Lockhart Road.

Yau Ma Tei is well known for all manner of cheap and cheerful items, from inexpensive clothing to copy watches to plastic toys and gadgets. Temple Street is still a lot of fun to wander around if you want to see the local Hong Kong nightlife and is as popular with locals out for a low cost nightlife in Kowloon as tourists. To the right of Temple Street are complexes which house a plethora of English speaking, tourist friendly fortune tellers. The temple has a curious arrangement whereby the individual worshiper draws the lost but not the slip of paper explaining what the lot means. This is where fortune tellers come in to give you a vague interpretation.

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Things to Do Insights

Hong Kong culture:

What to do in Hong Kong?

All right, so you have settled into your hotel, you have ordered room service, you are all set for your big meeting tomorrow and you are bored. What to do? Never fear, the answer is here! Movies, dance, music, museums or horse racing, one thing is for sure: Hong Kong will not disappoint.

Hong Kong traditions:

Cantonese Opera: Shriill Pleasure In a style that critics describe as "the sound of cats mating to music," the proud tradition of Cantonese Opera is alive and well in Hong Kong. Actually, learning a little about this art form beforehand, and getting a synopsis of the plot, can make watching Cantonese Opera very rewarding. The costumes and stylised gestures, along with the often acrobatic dancing and high-pitched

singing, make for a unique entertainment experience.

There are several varieties of Chinese Opera, but the Cantonese style tends to have the most outstanding physical choreography. The form is now taught in a special program at the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts, and performances can be seen at many venues around town. Civic Theatres such as the Shatin Town Hall, or the North District Town Hall will happily provide more information. In addition, there is often a major opera company performing at the annual Hong Kong Arts Festival in February and March.

Canto Pop: What It Is, and How to Avoid It

Canto Pop is the term used to describe Hong Kong's particular brand of pop music. Think Celine Dion meets Karaoke. Sugary, and generally composed of bland tunes that rip off mid-70s hits by the Eagles, it is definitely an acquired taste! However, if a good, clean melodic puppy-love tune is the order of the day, then Canto Pop is the answer.

The best way to hear Canto Pop is to ride the local buses, on which loudspeakers pipe in local radio broadcasts. For anyone hankering after a live performance, there are the occasional concerts at the Hong Kong Coliseum or the Queen Elizabeth Stadium by huge stars like Faye Wong, Andy Lau or Leon Lai.

Dance: Something for Everyone Most of the city's arts festivals feature dance as a major component. Whether it be ballet, modern dance or the traditional Chinese Lion Dance, there is usually lots of movement to be found at venues such as the Hong Kong Arts Centre, Shatin Town Hall, Kwai Tsing Theatre, and Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts.

The Hong Kong Ballet performs strong renditions of classical ballets, while the City Contemporary Dance Company creates modern, innovative pieces. The colourful Lion Dance is usually performed at the opening of new businesses, at weddings or at other events where the organizers want to ward off evil spirits. Chinese New Year is a great time to see a lion dance on the street or near a temple.

Theatre: What a Buzz Aside from the many major international touring productions that stop off in Hong Kong, there is lots going on in the local theatre

scene, both in Cantonese and English. The Fringe Club is the hub of theatre activity in town. It also puts on the annual City Festival, a multi-disciplinary festival that features a blend of up-and-coming theatre artists with more well-known performers. In addition, the Kwai Tsing Theatre lines up a challenging season of new commissioned works as well as classics.

Movies: Everybody was Kung-fu

Fighting Most people think Hong Kong cinema is all about violence and martial arts and they are right, for the most part. Heroes such as Bruce Lee and Jackie Chan have spawned a whole slew of violent martial arts films with overblown tragic plots and fast action.

Aside from seeing the latest films, sitting in a big, comfy, air-conditioned theatre, such as the AMC Festival Walk, can also be a great way to escape the heat of summer.

As well as all the usual cinematic offerings, there is a strong indie film scene, mainly featured at the Hong Kong International Film Festival, while art house and foreign films can be found at venues such as the Goethe-Institut (mainly German films) and the Broadway Cinemateque.

Museums and Galleries: So Much to Do, So Little Time

From the scientific rigours of the Space Museum to the modern art installations in the galleries at the Fringe Club, from the informative and unique Law Uk Folk Museum to the bizarre (and definitely worth a visit) Police Museum, there is no shortage of cultural venues in Hong Kong. Of course, there is also the Hong Kong Cultural Centre, and the fantastic Marine Land at Ocean Park, and a quick stroll through Central will reveal many intriguing little antique stores and galleries, so take your pick! Those who dismissively suggest that modern Hong Kong gives no attention to its own past should visit the Hong Kong History Museum. The Hong Kong Story is justifiably one of the museum's most popular permanent exhibits, and remains one of the best ways to gain a broad overview of Hong Kong's past. Well-curated thematic galleries take the visitor through various stages of Hong Kong's development.

Horse Races To experience the complete insanity of a crowd in Hong Kong, a visit to one of the city's horse-racing tracks—the Happy Valley Racecourse or the Shatin Racecourse—is a must. Intense gambling

Hong Kong Snapshot continued

and socializing mixed with the excitement of first-rate horse racing; who knows who will be the winner. No group of people enjoys a flutter as much as Hong Kong, and horse racing worth more than \$1 billion annually, remains the most popular form of gambling in Hong Kong. Be prepared for a lot of noise at the races. If you are in Hong Kong for less than 21 days and are over 18 years old, its best to buy a tourist ticket, which allows you to jump the queue, sit in the members enclosure and walk around next to the finish area.

Essential Booking Information Cityline:
(+852) 2314 4228 URBTIX:(+852) 2734
9009 Hong Kong Tourist Association:(+852)
2508 1234
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Travel Tips

Getting There:

By Air:

Hong Kong International Airport has, since its inception, been awarded the World's best airport year after year and the Hong Kong Chek Lap Kok airport second to Chicago's O' Hare airport in terms of passenger traffic and the amount of cargo it handles. Offering 14 hour service on numerous airlines to destinations around the globe. Because of Hong Kong's geographical location as the gateway to China, plenty choose to stopover in Hong Kong and spend a few days touring the city when transferring flights.

There are a number of transit services that provide transportation from Hong Kong International Airport to destinations in and around urban Hong Kong. From the airport, there are MTR Airport Express trains(+852 2881 8888/<http://www.mtr.com.hk/prehome/index.html>), as well as a number of Cityflyer buses that are bound to cover the location that you want to get to. Limousines are definitely abundant and of course taxis will get you to the city in less than an hour.

Hong Kong MTR:

The MTR train comes every 2 minutes so there is no such thing as missing the train in Hong Kong. Getting around Hong Kong and visiting any point of interest couldn't be easier with the quick, clean and efficient MTR. Burgeoning demand has led to the steady increase of MTR lines and currently the MTR consists of ten lines. The three major lines are the blue Island line, the

red Tsuen Wan line and the green Kwun Tong line. Rail service to and from the New Territories is provided by East Rail as well as the Ma On Shan line, West rail and the Light Rail Transit System.

Taxis:

Red taxis serve urban Hong Kong Island and Kowloon, while the New Territories ones are green and the Lantau taxis are only allowed to travel on Lantau Island and nowhere else. Taxi flags start at HKD 18 and crossing there are cross harbour tolls.

By Bus:

Double decker buses that are found throughout London are ubiquitous in Hong Kong. Hong Kong bus service is reliable and so interconnected that it is impossible to find a place that isn't serviced by a bus or mini bus of some kind. Single as well as double decker buses are operated by KMB(Kowloon Motor Bus), New World First Bus, and Citybus. The quickest if not the best way to see which bus you want to take by asking anyone waiting at the bus stop and they will be sure to point you to the right bus.

By Mini bus:

Green mini buses cover Hong Kong, Kowloon and the New Territories and are by far one of the most local Hong Kong way of getting to places. Hong Kong is all about speed and when people find that buses take too long or stops too frequently along the line, there will then be a minibus route that most people want to get to but are not patient enough to wait for the bus. It is the unspoken and unwritten rule that when you want to get off the mini buses you must yell out to the driver that you want to get off before the stop.

Red Mini buses are a lot more flexible in their routes and the driver is free to choose and operate 24 hours, they also cover both Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and the New Territories.

By Ferry:

The Star Ferry used to be the only form of transport if you wanted to travel between the Kowloon Peninsula and Hong Kong Island but not its role is slowly reduced to a popular sightseeing trip for families and tourists alike. Named one of the fifty things to do in a lifetime by the National Geographic Magazine, the Star Ferry takes you to and from Tsim Sha Tsui to Wanchai

and Central and vice versa. There are also Hung Hom to Central and Hung Hom to Wanchai routes which serve locals as well as tourists. The two most frequented lines are the Tsim Sha Tsui to Central and Tsim Sha Tsui to Wanchai ferry lines. Star Ferry tours of the harbour are also recommended.

Getting Around:

An Octopus card is all that you need, a stored value ticket which is found in every single Hong Konger's wallet. With its growing functionality as instant cash at various supermarkets and convenience stores, it primarily enables you to save the hassle of rummaging for exact change and waiting for the person in front of you to get their change as you board all transport. Octopus cards can be used on all forms of public transport in Hong Kong and the one and only exception is taxis.

Second only to Tokyo in terms of interconnectness, the Hong Kong transportation system is a marvel for it allows over seven million people to get to places in under an hour's time in orderly fashion. The MTR is the easiest way of getting around Hong Kong and a map of the Hong Kong rail system is all you need. Otherwise buses and mini buses are the perfect way to accessing areas that are not covered by the MTR and there are always taxis.

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Fun Facts

1. Fun Fact: The household size has decreased from 4.3 to 3 over the past three decades.
2. Interesting Fact: To many Hong Kong people, their dreams are to own a home.
3. Public transport fun fact: 7 in 10 people take buses and 35% take taxis every week.
4. Fun fact about travel: the number of people taking an air trip outside Hong Kong has leapfrogged 7 times in 30 years from 4% in 1975 to 30% in 2009.
5. Random Fact about shopping: Jusco and Sogo are among the top 3 department stores visited.
6. True fact or False fact? Hong Konger's personal income increased 16 times in 30 years.

Hong Kong Snapshot continued

7. Interesting fact: Cha Charn Teng (Hong Kong styled cafe) unique in Hong Kong are visited by half of people in Hong Kong on a weekly basis.

8. Another Interesting fact about Hong Kong dining habits: More and more people frequently visit fast food restaurants,

outpacing their visits to other types of restaurant.

9. Weird fact: The first McDonalds offered customers the very first American Big Mac in Hong Kong was located at Paterson Street, Causeway Bay in 1975.

10. Fun fact: The world's longest outdoor covered escalator system leading from Central to the Mid-Levels was up and running in 1993.

11. Interesting fact: The Big Buddha on Lantau Island, the world's tallest outdoor seated bronze statue was unveiled in 1993.

12. Random Fact: Hong Kongers are renowned for being hard working, fast, flexible and energetic. Hong Kongers have among the world's highest cinema attendance per capita.

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