

# Hostelworld Guide for Hong Kong



Enjoying a spectacular waterside setting, and home to one of the world's most famous skylines, Hong Kong is one of the most vibrant, dazzling, and electric (literally) cities in the world. Neon signs advertising everything from restaurants to foot massages decorate Kowloon's streets, while it is the skyscrapers that provide the sparkle after dark on Hong Kong Island. It's also one of the busiest places on earth with a population of 7 million people sharing a very small land mass. Take a visit in your stride, if you get the chance.

## In this Guide...

- Useful Information
- After Dark
- Places to Eat
- Top Attractions
- Budget Tips
- Where to Shop



## The Essentials

### Getting There

**By plane:** Hong Kong International Airport is 45km from the city centre.

An efficient train service operates between there and the city centre, the journey costing HK\$100.

**By train:** If your journey to Hong Kong is on a train you will arrive in either KCR Station in Kowloon or in Hong Kong Station in Central, Hong Kong Island.

**By bus:** There are various bus companies operating services to Hong Kong from neighbouring parts of China.

### Getting Around

**On foot:** Various parts of both Kowloon and Hong Kong Island are easily explorable on foot but you will need to use public transport at some stage during your stay.

**By ferry:** Hong Kong's 'Star Ferry' operate ferries between Kowloon and various parts of Hong Kong Island.

The short journey is the cheapest way to travel between both islands.

**By metro:** There are five metro lines in operation, two of which cross the harbour.

A one-day pass costs HK\$20, and single journeys cost between HK\$4 and HK\$26. These are efficient and easy to use.

### Hong Kong facts

**Name:** Hong Kong means 'fragrant harbour' in Cantonese.

**Population:** With its population of over 7 million, Hong Kong is one of the most densely populated cities on the planet.

**Location:** Hong Kong, which is a special administrative region of the People's Republic of China, is located on the south coast of China.

**Area:** The city of Hong Kong covers an area of just over 1,100 kilometres squared.

## Climate

Hong Kong's climate is sub-tropical meaning it has distinct seasons. It rarely gets very cold with temperatures hovering around the teens in winter. Spring sees humidity and temperatures rising, while it is hot and humid in summer. November and December are widely regarded as the best times to visit because this is when the skies are blue and humidity is low.

### Average Monthly Stats

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
C	10.5	15	17.5	21.5	25.5	27.5	28.5	28.5	27	25	20.5	17.5
MM	33	46	74	137	292	394	381	367	257	114	43	31
☀	5	4	3	4	5	5	8	6	6	7	7	6

C: Average Temp Centigrade

MM: Average Rainfall

☀: Average Hrs Sunshine

### Good to know...

**Language:** Chinese (Cantonese) and English  
**Currency:** Hong Kong Dollar (HKD)  
**Electricity:** 220 Volts, 50 cycles  
**Area Code:** 852 (Hong Kong)  
**Emergency Codes:** Ambulance/Fire/Police 999  
**Time Zone:** GMT + 8  
**Central Post Offices:** 2 Connaught Place (Hong Kong Island) / Gr Fl, Hermes House, 10 Middle Road (Kowloon)  
**Main Tourist Offices:** Causeway Bay MTR Station (Hong Kong Island) / Star Ferry Concourse (Kowloon)

### Consulates

**USA:** (852) 25239011  
**UK:** (852) 29013000  
**Canada:** (852) 37194700  
**Australia:** (852) 28278881  
**South Africa:** +852 25773279  
**Ireland:** (852) 25274897  
**Germany:** (852) 21058788  
**Spain:** (852) 25253041  
**Italy:** (852) 25220033  
**New Zealand:** (852) 25255044  
**France:** (852) 37529900

## Cheap Eats

**Zhing Nong, G/F 23A Lock Road, Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon** Zhing Nong is a favourite among locals despite being just yards from the touristy Nathan Road. Here you can find Sichuan and Shanghai cuisine, along with noodles and dumplings. The latter are scrumptious. *Open daily from 8am-3am.*

**Macau, G/F 25-27 Lock Road, Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon** Macau is a busy eatery that specialises in Macanese cuisine - a unique blend of southern Chinese and Portuguese cuisine that is usually only found in Macau. Noodles feature prominently throughout the menu while most of the meat is roasted. *Open daily from 6.30am-2am.*

**Al Dente, G/F, 16 Staunton Street, Soho, Hong Kong Island** Restaurants in Hong Kong's Soho district don't tend usually lend themselves to backpackers but prices on Al Dente's menu are surprisingly affordable. Specialising in Italian fare, there is a wide range of pasta dishes and pizza for around the HK\$80 mark. It's small too which creates a nice ambiance. *Open daily from 11am-11pm.*

### On the 'Lock'



Soaked with restaurants on either side, Lock Road is the best road for eating out in the Tsim Sha Tsui area of Kowloon. Running parallel to Nathan Road, not only will you find eateries specialising in Asian cuisine, you'll also find a Turkish restaurant and even a stall dishing out snacks for less than HK\$20 at the Haiphong Road end for when you're really broke.

**Aberdeen Seafood Restaurant, G/F 105 Woosung St, Yau Ma Tei, Kowloon** If some shopping at the Temple Street night market leaves you peckish, try out this seafood restaurant which is just around the corner. The vast menu has everything you might expect along with other, more interesting dishes such as 'fish stomach stew' and 'pigeon head'. *Open daily from 5.30pm-close.*

## After Dark

**Lux, G/F 30-32 D'Aguilar St, Lan Kwai Fong, Hong Kong Island** Slick, stylish and sometimes sexy, Lux enjoys the best of both worlds - a bar where you can enjoy a drink while watching the world go by, and a dancefloor where you can shake your money-maker to the tunes being spun by the resident DJs. *Open daily from 11am-4am.*

**Buddha Lounge, L/G Amber Lodge, 23 Hollywood Road, Hong Kong Island** Want a cool bar in the lively Soho area but want to chill out? If so, Buddha Lounge is where to go. This darkly-lit basement bar is extremely intimate and is the place to go if you want to catch up rather than get down. They have great drinks promos available each night including cheap shooters and more. *Open Mon-Sat from 7pm-close.*

### Gay / Lesbian Hong Kong

Hong Kong's gay scene has changed dramatically over the last decade and there are now lots of gay venues around the city. **Volume** (LG/F 83-85 Hollywood Rd, Central, Hong Kong Is.) is one of the city's newest gay bars while **Bliss Club & Lounge** (1 Elgin St, Central, Hong Kong Is.) is one of the chicest gay clubs. Favourite gay nights include Thursdays in **Chemical Suzy** (G/F, AWT Centre, Austin Avenue, Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon) and Fridays in **Club 97** (9 Lan Kwai Fong, Central, Hong Kong Is.)

**Delaney's, L/G Mary Building, 71-77 Peking Road, Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon** There are many Irish bars in Hong Kong, but this one is proud to be the first to serve a pint of Ireland's most famous tippie, Guinness. It also does food, is a good place to go for sporting events and, if you're there at the weekend, is where to go for live 'diddle-ei' music! *Open daily from 10am-4am.*

**New Derby, Shop G-1, G/F, Valley Centre, 80-82 Morrison Hill Road, Hong Kong Island** Not far from Hong Kong's very own Times Square, this is a small bar with a lot of character. Different to the bars around the lively Lan Kwai Fong area, if you're looking to chat more than 'cha cha cha', take a seat here. *Open daily from 12 noon-2am.*

**Club Cixi, G/F Hing Building, cnr Wyndham Street & Wellington Street, Central, Hong Kong Island** Claiming to be 'dedicated to staging regular music and events', this bar/club is one of the few venues in the Lan Kwai Fong area that has live music regularly. *Open daily from 10am-4am.*

## Don't Miss

**Victoria Peak** Reached by a tram that has been operating since May, 1888, 'The Peak' affords anybody who goes there the best views in the city. The journey to the viewing point 396m above sea level takes ten minutes and is worth doing both during the day and at night. *Peak Tram open daily from 7am-midnight; HK\$56 return trip.*

**Trip on a Star Ferry** Operating since the 1920s, Hong Kong's Star Ferries are as much an attraction as a mode of transport. No trip to Hong Kong is complete without a trip across Victoria Harbour on one. *Operating daily from 6.30am-11.30am; admission varies.*

### A big, big Buddha



**Tian Tan Buddha, Lantau Island** Also known as the 'Big Buddha', Tian Tan Buddha is one of the largest outdoor Buddhas in the world. Every day thousands flock to it - some to worship and others to take up space on their digital cameras. To get to the Buddha you must embark on a highly enjoyable cable car ride on 'Ngong Ping 360'. *Open Mon-Fri from 10am-6pm, Sat & Sun 10am-6.30pm; cable car ride HK\$107 return.*

**Hong Kong Museum of Art, 10 Salisbury Road, Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon** Housing over 14,000 art objects, including Chinese paintings and calligraphy works, antique Chinese treasures and pieces by local artists, the Hong Kong Museum of Art is the city's flagship art gallery. *Open Sun-Wed, Fri & Sat from 10am-6pm; admission HK\$10.*

**Ocean Park, Ocean Park Rd, Hong Kong Island** One of two theme parks in Hong Kong (the other is home to a very famous mouse), Ocean Park is touristy as hell but still fun. As expected, there's a rollercoaster ride but there's also a marine aspect to the park with dolphins and sharks on show. *Open daily from 9am-6.30pm; admission HK\$250.*

## Mark Your Calendar

**January - City Fringe Festival** Hosted by Hong Kong's Fringe Club, Hong Kong's annual fringe festival sees performances from all forms of the arts take place in a number of venues, but most take place in 'The Fringe Club' itself.

**January/February - Chinese New Year** Easily the most important holiday on the calendar, Hong Kong is a great place to ring in the Chinese New Year. Highlights include the parade at Wan Chai Harbourfront on the opening day of celebrations and a fireworks display on the second.

**February/March - Hong Kong Arts Festival** This annual festival, first held in 1973, is the year's biggest arts festival. Each year the programme features dance, performing arts, theatre and music performed by local and international artists.

**February/March - Hong Kong Marathon** Hong Kong's annual long-distance race sees over 5,000 athletes compete against each other for prize money of over US\$80,000. The race starts on Nathan Road and passes by many of the city's best known landmarks before finishing at Golden Bauhinia Square, Wanchai.

**March/April - Hong Kong Film Festival** Hong Kong's annual film festival, usually taking place over Easter, gets bigger and bigger every year. Each year it showcases over 200 films from home and abroad.

**April - Birthday of Tin Hau** As Tin Hau is the Chinese Goddess of the Sea, her birthday is celebrated well in Hong Kong. The centre of the festivities is the fishing village of Sai Kung but other areas of the city celebrate her birthday also.

**May - Birthday of Lord Buddha** The birthday of Lord Buddha is celebrated throughout Hong Kong but the statue of Tian Tan on Lantau Island is undoubtedly the best place to witness buddhas celebrating their God's birthday.

**June - Tuen Ng** Also known as the 'Dragon Boat Festival', this festival commemorates Qu Yuan, a national hero who drowned himself in the Mi Lo River during the 3rd century BC, in protest against a corrupt government. The focus of the festival is on dragon boat races.

**September - Mid-Autumn Festival** This harvest festival is also known as the 'Moon Festival'. One of the most important days on the Chinese calendar, it sees bright lanterns, Dragon Dances and more.

## Neighbourhood Watch

**Mong Kok, Kowloon** Jump on a red-line metro bound for Tsuen Wan in Tsim Sha Tsui station and within minutes you'll be transported to 'Mong Kok', the area where locals visit for electrical bargains. Here you won't get hassled by the hawkers that line the tourist trodden Nathan Road. It's best visited at night to see it in all its neon glory.

**Soho / Lan Kwai Fong, Hong Kong Island** Hong Kong may not seem like the party capital of the world upon first inspection, but ask anyone where you should go to let your hair down and you'll be told the above districts. Located side by side, Soho has lots of cool little restaurants, many of which are located on Staunton St. Lan Kwai Fong is packed with bars more than anything and its streets are also noticeably younger than those around Soho.

**Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon** As you stroll up Nathan Road in Tsim Sha Tsui it soon dawns upon you that there are many people in this world who don't respect other people's personal space. 'COPY WATCH€ COPY HANDBAG€' Hawkers literally step in your path to shout the above sales pitches right in your face. Still worth a visit though, for the Avenue of Stars and the view of Hong Kong Island's skyline.

## Get away from it all



**Repulse Bay, Hong Kong Island** As it can sometimes get unbearably crowded in Hong Kong, Repulse Bay provides the perfect getaway for visitors. Home to the island's most popular beach, there are some great vantage points of the bay in the area, not to mention the vantage points from the beach itself. Many of the city's 'beautiful people' can be found here also, making it great for people-watching.

**Aberdeen, Hong Kong Island** Aberdeen is a famous fishing port. It is best known for its floating seafood restaurants, the most famous being the 'Jumbo Floating Restaurant'.

## Retail Therapy

**Nathan Road, Kowloon** Nathan Road is one of Hong Kong's most famous roads. Lining it are stores sporting bright neon lights and stocking everything from clothes to toiletries. But in particular, many are brimming with the latest digital cameras and cell/mobile phones at particularly tempting prices. Just watch out for people advertising their fake products right in your face. Literally.

## It's not all neon lights...



**Temple Street Night Market, Kowloon** Hong Kong's busiest night market is where to go for those bargains Asia is famous for. Stalls are covered with clothes, watches, leather goods and more. Their authenticity can be argued though, along with their prices as bargaining is the key here - take prices as mere guidelines. *Open daily from 4pm-midnight.*

**Mong Kok, Kowloon** As mentioned in the previous section, Mong Kok is where those who reside in Hong Kong go to for their electrical goods. If you're one who likes to fit in with the locals, Sai Yeung Choi St South is a good place to start. This street east of Nathan Road is brimming with electrical stores. It isn't only electrical goods on offer though, with clothes stores and more also found here.

**Times Square Shopping Mall, 1 Matheson St, Causeway Bay, Hong Kong Island** Sharing its name with a ferociously famous landmark in New York, this shopping mall is difficult to miss due to its twin towers, a landmark in Hong Kong in their own right. Once inside you have no less than 16 floors to shop in, eat in, and relax in. There's even a cinema here. *Open daily from 10am-10pm.*

**Harbour City Shopping Mall, 3 - 27 Canton Road, Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon** This is another entertainment melting pot. 700 shops can be found here. They rub shoulders with 50 restaurants and two cinemas. *Open daily from 10am-9pm.*

## Budget Tips

**Soak up some culture on a Wednesday** If your trip to Hong Kong is over a Wednesday, leave this the day for museums when many are free. These include the **Hong Kong Museum of History** (100 Chatham Rd. South) **Hong Kong Museum of Art** (10 Salisbury Rd.) and the **Hong Kong Science Museum** (2 Science Museum Rd.), all in the Tsim Sha Tsui area of Kowloon.

**Chill out in Hong Kong's parks** Hong Kong is a notoriously busy city and, at times, it can all become a bit too much. When that happens you need to retreat to one of the city's parks. **Kowloon Park** in Tsim Sha Tsui provides one such retreat while over on Hong Kong Island **Victoria Park** in Causeway Bay is where to go to get away from it all.

**Stroll along the Avenue of Stars** Located at the Tsim Sha Tsui promenade in Kowloon, Hong Kong's Avenue of Stars pays tribute to its most famous actors and actresses. Begin to read some of the names of the stars below you and you'll soon realise you don't recognise them. But don't let this put you off - this is one of the best places to get some shots of Hong Kong's famous skyline.


**Enjoy a view for free** If you don't fancy splashing out on a return ticket to Victoria Peak, for panoramic views of Hong Kong visit the public viewing gallery at the Bank of China Tower (1 Garden Rd, Central, Hong Kong Is.). Admission is free.


## A symphony for sore eyes




**Catch the nightly laser show** Each night at 8pm sharp a light show over Victoria Harbour is put on for the thousands of tourists that flock to Hong Kong. The fifteen-minute show, titled 'A Symphony of Lights', sees lasers, searchlights and coloured lights shine from over 40 buildings on both sides of the harbour. The best place to catch the show is on the Avenue of Stars.


## A Day in Hong Kong...


 Start the day by taking the tram up to 'The Peak' for breathtaking views of Hong Kong Island's skyline and Victoria Harbour.


 Upon your return from The Peak take some time out to explore Hong Kong Island. Gaze up at its skyscrapers and wander through Statue Square.


 Take a 'Star Ferry' across Victoria Harbour to Kowloon. The ferries have been operating in Hong Kong for years and no trip to the city is complete without getting on one.





 Go for a stroll up Hong Kong's famous Nathan Rd. Take a left on to Haiphong Rd and another on to Lock Rd. Go for lunch in one of its numerous restaurants.

 Walk back down towards the harbour and visit the Hong Kong Museum of Art. Admire the Chinese paintings, calligraphy and more.

 Take a stroll along the Avenue of Stars. Admire Hong Kong's skyline before picking a spot to watch 'The Symphony of Lights' at 8pm.

 Make your way back to Hong Kong Island and go straight to Soho. Find Staunton Street and enjoy a meal in 'Al Dente', an affordable Italian restaurant with good food.

 Around Soho you will find some of Hong Kong's cooler bars. One of these is Buddha Lounge on Hollywood Road. It's perfect for a few quiet ones before going dancing.

 Take the short stroll from Soho to Lan Kwai Fong, Hong Kong's most vibrant neighbourhood. Finish the night off in one of its many bars or clubs.