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HONG KONG

A SYMPHONY OF CULTURES



51

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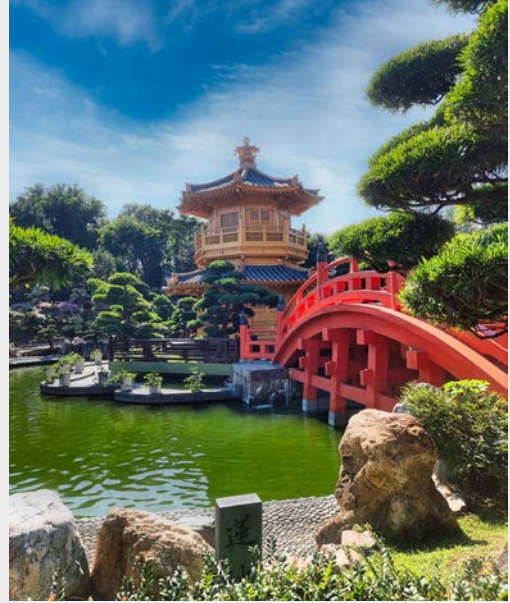
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Hong Kong is a city that never ceases to amaze. Divided between the vibrant **Hong Kong Island** and the chaotic yet fascinating **Kowloon Peninsula**, this metropolis perfectly exemplifies the blend of Asian tradition and modernity. From its imposing skyscrapers to ancestral temples such as **Man Mo** and **Wong Tai Sin**, Hong Kong is an irresistible mix of Western and Eastern influences. Throughout its history,

it has evolved from a fishing port to a prominent global financial centre, all while retaining its authentic soul in every corner.

Thanks to **Cathay Pacific**, we can now fly directly between **Spain** and **Hong Kong** in approximately **12 hours**. It is undoubtedly the perfect excuse to explore this captivating destination.

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Photo: Cathay Pacific

HONG KONG

A symphony of cultures

Text by David Bigorra - photography by Daniel Herrera & David Bigorra



THE GATEWAY TO ASIA IS DIVIDED INTO TWO FASCINATING WORLDS: HONG KONG ISLAND, WITH ITS MODERN AND VIBRANT SKYLINE, AND THE KOWLOON PENINSULA, WHERE TRADITIONAL ROOTS AND LOCAL MARKETS REVEAL THE CITY'S SOUL. FOR THE ADVENTUROUS TRAVELLER, A TEMPLE ROUTE FEATURING 'MAN MO' ON THE ISLAND AND 'WONG TAI SIN' IN KOWLOON OFFERS A SPIRITUAL JOURNEY THAT CONTRASTS WITH THE CITY'S FRENETIC ENERGY, CREATING AN UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCE IN A METROPOLIS FULL OF END-LESS CONTRASTS.



FROM COLONY TO FINANCIAL CENTRE

Hong Kong's journey of resilience and transformation begins in 1842, when this small fishing port in southern China became a British colony after the First Opium War. From that moment, the territory evolved from a remote outpost into one of the world's foremost commercial hubs. Under British rule, Hong Kong thrived, its success driven by its strategic location and open economy. Narrow streets and bustling markets filled with adventurous traders and sailors from across the globe gave rise to a culture where East and West blend seamlessly.

However, the 1960s saw significant social tensions and unrest, highlighting the stark inequalities that were growing. Yet Hong Kong's resilience only intensified. The economic boom of the 1970s and 1980s saw the city transformed into an 'Asian Tiger', with neon lights illuminating the optimism of a region on the rise.



The streets around Central Market retain the essence of Hong Kong's bustling street shopping.

In 1997, the handover of sovereignty to China marked a crucial milestone in Hong Kong's history. Operating under the principle of 'one country, two systems,' Hong Kong retained its autonomy and capitalist way of life. But recent years have brought new challenges, as social movements fight to preserve the city's freedoms against Beijing's increasing influence. Today, Hong Kong stands as a testament to its enduring strength and dynamism—a city where the colonial





Photo: Cathay Pacific

Great panorama of Hong Kong: In the foreground, the Island with Victoria Peak in the background.

past meets the modern present in a fusion of tradition, innovation, and diversity. Forever evolving, Hong Kong looks to the future with determination and hope.

A CITY OF TWO WORLDS

Hong Kong, one of the world's most vibrant cities, is defined not only by its history but also by its unique geography, which divides the territory into two large areas: Hong Kong Island and Kowloon,

along with the New Territories. Though separated by Victoria Harbour, these two sides reveal the city's fascinating duality. On one side, Hong Kong Island serves as the historic heart of the city. Here, in the oldest districts like Central and Sheung Wan, modern skyscrapers blend with traditional markets and century-old temples. This island was where the first British settlers arrived in 1841, and since then, it has remained the epicentre of Hong Kong's economic and political



Victoria Harbour and the bay separate Hong Kong Island from the peninsular area: Kowloon.

development. Its mountainous terrain, crowned by the iconic Victoria Peak, offers some of the world's most impressive views, with Victoria Harbour stretching out below, its waters constantly crisscrossed by boats and ferries.

On the other side of the harbour, Kowloon reveals a different side—more chaotic and authentic, with everyday life pulsing at every corner. Neighbourhoods like Tsim Sha Tsui, Yau Ma Tei, and Mong Kok

are renowned for their street markets, shopping centres, and street food stalls serving the city's finest dishes. In Kowloon, five-star luxury hotels sit side-by-side with the vibrant energy of night markets and neon-lit streets.

Beyond the bustling streets of Kowloon, the New Territories unfold into a vast landscape, blending suburban cities with rural areas, national parks, and traditional villages that still retain their old-world charm.



Partial view of Hong Kong Island at sunset, with the imposing Victoria Peak in the background.

HONG KONG ISLAND

Hong Kong Island is a mosaic of neighbourhoods full of contrasts that reflect the diversity and unique character of this metropolis. Central stands as the financial heart, boasting spectacular skyscrapers, luxury shopping centres, and a vibrant nightlife in Lan Kwai Fong and SoHo, famous for their bars, cutting-edge restaurants, art galleries, and designer shops. Just a short distance away, Sheung

Wan invites visitors to discover a more traditional side of Hong Kong, with herbal medicine markets, antique shops, and historic temples like the Man Mo Temple, which preserves local traditions. Western, meanwhile, offers a more relaxed atmosphere, with hidden temples, local shops, and panoramic viewpoints. Each neighbourhood offers a different experience, from sophisticated modernity to the rich cultural heritage that defines Hong Kong.



The spectacular Bank of China Tower building is visible from anywhere on the island.

CENTRAL: THE EPICENTRE OF EVERYTHING

Central is the financial heart of Hong Kong and one of the island's most iconic districts. Since the British arrived in 1841, Central has been the focal point of urban development. Here, you'll find some of the world's most impressive skyscrapers, such as the Bank of China Tower and the International Finance Centre (IFC), which rise above Victoria Harbour as witnesses to the city's meteoric economic growth.

However, this district is much more than just offices and banks; it is a vibrant blend of history, culture, and modernity.

On its streets, the contrasts are evident. Walking along Hollywood Road, one of Hong Kong's oldest streets, you can discover antique shops, contemporary art galleries, and the renowned Man Mo Temple, a 19th-century Taoist shrine dedicated to the gods of literature and war. Just a short distance away lies Lan



The atmosphere in SoHo changes as night falls into a frenetic bustle of activity where it seems like no one is sleeping.

Kwai Fong, the epicentre of the city's nightlife, where locals and visitors mingle in trendy bars and restaurants. SoHo, with its network of escalators and charming alleyways, offers a wide variety of dining options, from traditional Cantonese cuisine to innovative international fusion.

Central is also famous for its iconic architecture, where the old and the new coexist in harmony. The Legislative Council Building and the Hong Kong

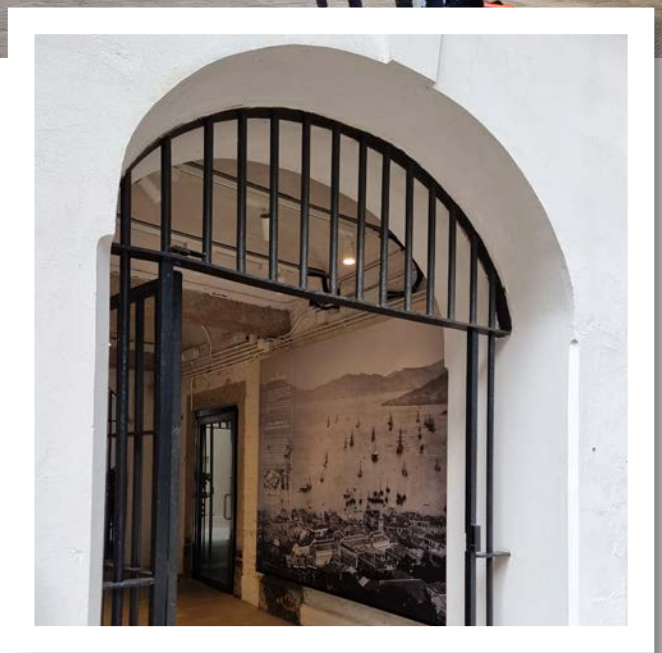
Peace Monument recall its colonial past, while modern shopping centres like the IFC Mall attract shoppers with the latest trends. For travellers, Central is a must-see—a place where you can feel Hong Kong's pulse with every step, from traditional markets to panoramic views from the Peak Tram.

One cannot leave Central without visiting the historic site of Victoria Prison, a testament to the city's colonial past. Built



Central square of Tai Kwun complex

in 1841, it was the first permanent prison in Hong Kong and operated for over 150 years, housing various prisoners from pirates to political activists. Today, the site is part of Tai Kwun, a revitalised cultural complex that also includes the former police station and central court. Visitors can tour the restored cells, explore exhibitions on the prison's history, and enjoy cultural and artistic activities. The site offers a fascinating glimpse into the past while integrating with its dynamic present, blending historical



heritage with contemporary art spaces and gastronomy. It's an ideal place to stroll and discover another side of Hong Kong.



The Western Market Building is quickly identified by the red color of its bricks.

**SHEUNG WAN:
A MEETING OF PAST AND PRESENT**

Sheung Wan, one of Hong Kong's oldest districts, serves as a gateway to the city's past, where Chinese traditions and British colonial heritage intertwine uniquely. Located west of Central, this neighbourhood is a captivating maze of narrow streets and alleyways that invite exploration.

Originally known for its shops selling

Chinese herbs and dried seafood, Sheung Wan retains a nostalgic charm, with century-old stores offering ginseng, bird's nests, and dried mushrooms—products integral to traditional Chinese medicine.

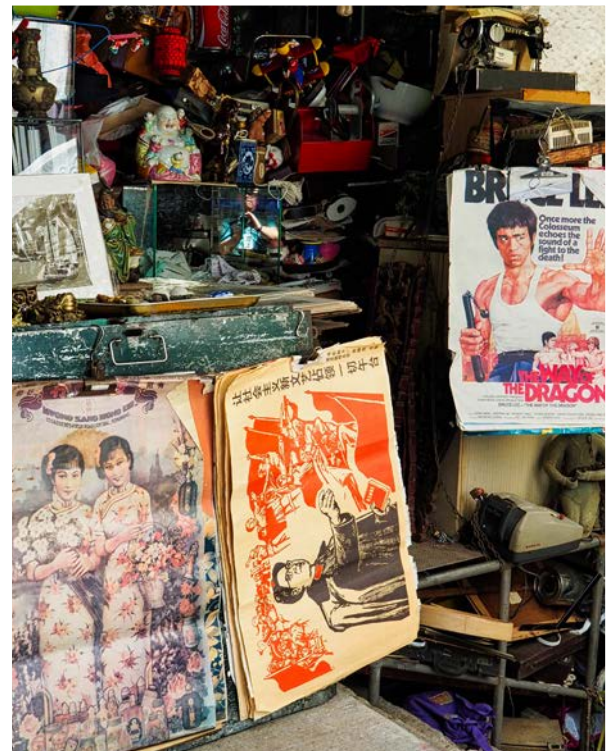
A highlight of Sheung Wan is the Western Market, a red-brick building dating back to 1906, one of the few remaining Edwardian-style markets in the city. Renovated in the 1990s, this market is



Antique shops.

now a hub for crafts and textiles, making it a perfect spot for souvenir hunters. For those interested in Hong Kong's history, a visit to Possession Street is essential; it's where the British Royal Navy officially claimed the island in 1841.

Sheung Wan is also home to the famous Cat Street Market, a paradise for treasure hunters searching for antiques—and the occasional trinket—Asian art, and vintage curiosities.





Traditional egg tarts at one of the new cafes in the Western area.

Right: A vendor at a traditional Chinese medicine herbalist's shop, still using manual scales.

WESTERN:

THE MOST GENUINE ESSENCE OF HONG KONG

Western, known as the most authentic district on the island, offers a glimpse into traditional Hong Kong, often hidden behind the glimmer of skyscrapers. This area, extending **west of Sheung Wan**, is less known to tourists but provides a true sense of local life. Known for its relaxed atmosphere and rich cultural heritage, this neighbourhood is a hidden gem.

At the heart of Western lies **Sai Ying Pun**, where old warehouses and industrial buildings have been transformed into hipster cafés, art galleries, and trendy restaurants while retaining the charm of the past.

Streets like **Des Voeux Road West** are still lined with quaint shops selling authentic traditional Chinese goods, from dried seafood to medicinal herbs, preserving the trade tradition.

THE EASTERN DISTRICTS

Although less touristy, these districts hold just as much interest as the more popular and bustling areas. North Point, known as “Little Shanghai” due to the influx of Shanghainese immigrants in the 1950s, maintains its authentic atmosphere with local markets, traditional shops with a distinctly Chinese character, and the famous Sunbeam Theatre, which still hosts Cantonese opera performances.

Further east, the Eastern District combines residential areas with commercial zones at reasonable prices. Quarry Bay and Taikoo Place stand out for their modern architecture, cafés, and design boutiques, while Fortress Hill and Sai Wan Ho offer harbour views and access to coastal parks. This area is ideal for those looking to experience local day-to-day life away from the tourist buzz, enjoying the authenticity and tranquillity that still characterise this part of Hong Kong.



Making Flight 衝上雲霄

Building after World War II saw diversification into new modes, as international transport took place increasingly by air as well as by sea. Pacific Air Maintenance & Supply Company (PAMAS) was formed in 1947 at Kai Tak Airfield, and soon transformed into the Hong Kong Aircraft Engineering Company (HAECO) in 1950. It would become one of the largest aircraft maintenance, repair and overhaul groups in the world today. In 1946, Cathay Pacific Airways was founded in Hong Kong by two enterprising pilots. Swire invested in the fledgling company in 1948 and oversaw its development into a global airline and Hong Kong's flagship carrier.

二次大戰後，全球航空及海上運輸交通日益頻繁，太古集團積極投入，創建全新多元業務。1947年，太古在香港啟德機場成立太平洋飛機修理補給公司，並於1950年發展為香港飛機工程公司（港機），該公司現已成為全球最大的飛機維修、修理及大修服務集團之一。1946年，兩名滿有抱負的機師於香港成立國泰航空，太古於1948年投資於這家成立不久的公司，並帶領國泰航空發展為一家國際航空公司和香港的旗幟航空公司。



THE SWIRE ARCHIVE CENTRE: THE COMMERCIAL HISTORY OF AN ASIAN GIANT

The Swire Archive Centre, located in Cambridge House at Taikoo Place, is dedicated to preserving and sharing the history of Swire, one of Hong Kong and Southeast Asia's most influential companies. Before moving to this modern centre, the archive was located on the site of an old sugar refinery, the Taikoo Sugar Refinery, which played a key role

in Hong Kong's industrial development in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Founded in 1881 by John Swire & Sons, this refinery was one of the largest in the world at the time and symbolised Swire's economic power in the region.

Swire's history is deeply intertwined with Hong Kong's. Since the company arrived in 1870, it has been a driving force behind the city's economic growth. In addition to the sugar industry, Swire diversified



its operations into transportation, trade, construction, and notably, aviation. This expansion greatly contributed to Hong Kong's transformation into an international hub of commerce and finance. Today, Swire remains one of the region's most influential companies, with significant investments in real estate, maritime commerce, and aviation.

At the Swire Archive Centre, visitors can explore an extensive collection of

historical documents, photographs, objects, and artefacts related to the company's evolution. Through interactive exhibits, the archive offers a fascinating look at how Swire has shaped Hong Kong's development over more than a century.

Among the standout items are old contracts, plans, and photos documenting the construction and expansion of the Taikoo Sugar Refinery,



Photo: Swire Archive Centre

as well as details about the company's early days in the tea and textile trade.

One of the most important sections of the archive is dedicated to Cathay Pacific, the airline founded by Swire in 1946, which has grown to become one of the world's leading and most influential airlines. Swire is the majority shareholder of Cathay Pacific, and its pivotal role in the airline's expansion and consolidation has been crucial. Visitors to the archive

can discover how this historical collaboration propelled Cathay Pacific to become a global aviation benchmark, with a collection that includes everything from significant founding documents to aircraft models and crew uniforms.

The Swire Archive Centre is not only a space to learn about one of Hong Kong's most important companies but also to understand how Swire has shaped the city's economic landscape, especially



through its historic relationship with Cathay Pacific.

What surprises most visitors to this exhibition is the interconnection of a company that seems unknown to the general public with virtually everything surrounding us in Hong Kong and parts of Asia. Not just because of Cathay Pacific, its most visible flagship brand, but also many others, such as Coca-Cola, for which Swire is one of the

largest bottlers and distributors in the Asia-Pacific region. Luxury hotels like The Upper House or EAST in Hong Kong, offering modern and exclusive hospitality experiences, are another visible example of Swire's presence.

Sectors like education, food, maritime transport, logistics, real estate, or engineering are other areas where Swire also maintains an active presence throughout the region.



ESSENTIAL PLACES ON THE ISLAND



We have selected some of the most iconic places on Hong Kong Island that perfectly capture its essence at first glance. Here are our top 6 must-see spots:

1. The Monster Building is a striking sight. Known as Yick Cheong Building, this iconic residential complex symbolises Hong Kong's dense urbanisation. Its cube-shaped labyrinth, with thousands of windows, balconies, and clotheslines stretching towards the sky, offers a glimpse into daily life. In the inner courtyard, vibrant scenes unfold—

neighbours chatting, children playing, and laundry fluttering in the sun.

The contrast between the massive architecture and the intimate moments of everyday life creates a truly unique atmosphere. It's a vibrant microcosm of Hong Kong's urban life, where countless stories intertwine. This striking and multifaceted complex, made up of five interconnected buildings, has attracted photographers, Instagrammers, and filmmakers worldwide, using it as a backdrop for their creative productions.



2. The Peak Tram is much more than just a means of transport. Since 1888, this funicular tram has carried both locals and visitors on an unforgettable journey to the top of Victoria Peak. Riding the tram feels like stepping back in time; the creak of the wood, the squeal of the rails, and the rattle as it climbs the steep slopes evoke a nostalgic feeling, reminiscent of the city's colonial beginnings. During the ascent, the tram tilts so much that the skyscrapers seem to defy gravity, offering surprising views that unfold with every turn. Through the windows, the city reveals itself in all its glory: the lush green hills contrast with the modernity of the urban skyline, and Victoria Harbour glistens in the distance, like a mirror reflecting the city's vibrant energy. Upon reaching the summit, it becomes clear why this is the most visited spot in the city.



From Victoria Peak you can see the grandeur of Hong Kong.

3. Victoria Peak, the highest point on Hong Kong Island, offers two unique experiences that reveal different sides of the vibrant city: one by day, bright and expansive, and another by night, full of charm, magic, and mystery. During the day, the scenic ascent to the Peak provides an unparalleled visual spectacle. The bright sunlight illuminates Victoria Harbour, where towering skyscrapers rise majestically against a clear blue sky, while the sparkling sea shimmers in the distance. From the viewpoint, the

sprawling city unfolds in a mosaic of contrasts: modern glass towers, lush green hills, and the constant buzz of a metropolis in perpetual motion.

The Peak Circle Walk, a well-maintained trail that winds around the mountain, invites visitors to walk amidst lush greenery, offering panoramic views at every step. The crisp, fresh mountain air fills your lungs, and the gentle birdsong completes the peaceful experience.



At night, the views from Victoria Peak are a spectacle of light that mesmerizes visitors.

The **Peak Circle Walk**, a trail that winds around the mountain, invites visitors to walk amidst lush greenery, offering panoramic views at every step. The fresh mountain air fills your lungs, and the birdsong completes the experience.

But when night falls, **Victoria Peak** transforms into a completely different spectacle. The city, bathed in lights, becomes a shimmering tapestry that seems endless. The skyscrapers light up like jewels,

reflecting Hong Kong's energy; the harbour sparkles with glimmers dancing on the water, creating a magical reflection beneath the sky. From the viewpoint, you can feel the serenity of the night as the gentle breeze brushes against your skin, offering a fascinating contrast to the daytime bustle. Visitors find themselves surrounded by the quiet of the mountain, while below, the city continues its vibrant nightlife.

Both experiences, by day and by night,



The Big Wheel is located in Victoria Harbour, next to it, we find the Central Ferry Pier.

make Victoria Peak an absolute must-visit destination. By day, it captures the city's intensity and dynamism; by night, it reveals its most romantic and enigmatic side, allowing visitors to see the city in all its depth and splendour.

4. The Ferris Wheel on the Central waterfront provides a unique vantage point over the city. As the cabin ascends, the view shifts, revealing the harbour, skyscrapers, and distant mountains. By day, the deep

blue of the sea and sky contrasts with the modern skyline. At night, the city becomes a glowing sea of lights, offering a completely different perspective on the harbour.

5. The Central Ferry Pier offers a nostalgic way to cross the harbour to Kowloon. The ferry ride, often preferred over the metro by locals and tourists alike, allows you to observe the harbour's bustling life and the skyscrapers reflected in the water at a relaxed pace, providing a truly authentic experience.

6. **Hong Kong** Island's historic tram is much more than just a simple mode of transport. Known for their narrow shape and "shoe box" appearance, these trams have traversed the city since 1904, becoming silent witnesses to its

transformation. Their peculiar design is a response to the need to navigate the island's narrow streets with agility. Though they are now an essential tourist attraction, the trams remain an efficient means of transport for locals, competing



Photo: Cathay Pacific

with the MTR, but only on the island, not in Kowloon.

Onboard the iconic double-decker tram, each journey becomes a unique ride through bustling neighbourhoods, street

markets, and hidden temples, while the city's noise mingles with the sea breeze. The route winds its way parallel to the harbour, offering a singular experience, though the towering buildings often block the sea views.





Photo: Cathay Pacific

Luxury shops line the streets of Tsim Sha Tsui.

KOWLOON, THE PENINSULAR SIDE

When you think of Hong Kong, its gleaming skyscrapers and vibrant energy likely come to mind. But beyond the island, across the famous Victoria Harbour, lies **Kowloon**, a peninsula that captures the city's most authentic essence. Here, modernity and tradition blend seamlessly, offering travellers a one-of-a-kind experience found nowhere else.

In **Kowloon**, every corner tells a fascinating story. You can leisurely stroll through **Tsim Sha Tsui**, a lively and bustling district filled with shopping centres, international restaurants, and spectacular panoramic views of the iconic Hong Kong skyline. Or you can wander down to the picturesque bay to find the famous **Avenue of Stars**, inspired by the Hollywood Walk of Fame, which pays tribute to legendary Asian film stars while offering one of the best stunning harbour views.



Photo: Cathay Pacific

Symphony of Lights, a unique multimedia show in the world that takes place every night.

Every night at exactly 8:00 p.m., Hong Kong's skyline comes alive with the **Symphony of Lights**, a breathtaking **multimedia show** that blends lights, lasers, and music to create a truly spectacular visual and auditory experience. Recognised worldwide as one of the largest permanent light shows, it illuminates over 40 buildings on both sides of **Victoria Harbour**, highlighting the city's iconic modern architecture.

With synchronised music and stunning special effects, the show vividly tells the captivating story of Hong Kong's vibrant evolution and rich cultural diversity, making each nightly performance feel like a truly unique celebration of the dynamic city. For the best view, crowds often gather along the **Tsim Sha Tsui** waterfront, though many prefer to watch the spectacular show from a harbour cruise, adding an extra layer of magic, wonder, and charm to the experience.



Mong Kok and its surroundings are the authentic traditional commercial heart of Hong Kong.

But **Kowloon** offers more than just modernity. Exploring its traditional neighbourhoods, like **Mong Kok**, reveals the pulse of authentic Hong Kong. The street markets are a feast for the senses—everything from exotic fruits to electronics can be found in these narrow, bustling lanes. The lively atmosphere, the calls of vendors, and the aroma of street food draw visitors in.

One of Kowloon's greatest attractions is its open-air markets, such as the **Ladies Market**

and **Temple Street Night Market**—a paradise for bargain hunters and lovers of local culture. Vendors sell everything from clothing to antiques, with “copies” being a popular draw. The art of bargaining, while less common today, still thrives here.

For those seeking calm, **Kowloon** offers oases of tranquillity. In the heart of the peninsula, **Kowloon Park** is the perfect escape from the city's bustle. This spacious park is ideal for strolling, exercising, or



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廟街
Temple Street

植麗泰健康中心
Plant International Health Centre

雙魚茶館
Shuang Yu Tea House

水月坊
FOOT REFLEXOLOGY
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MING SANG PAWNY SHOP

公寶珠寶
SING JEWELLER
用裝包・飾百

橫丁

廟宇輝煌四海昇平千業

易珠寶錶
收購買賣交換

龍

HELLO TAXI

的士
TAXI



Shops at the Flower Market. Right: Entrance to the Bird Garden.

simply relaxing while watching the birds in their aviary.

Another must-see is the **Flower Market**, a lively open-air market in Kowloon filled with vibrant colours and intoxicating fragrances. Located in the Prince Edward district, it's the ideal spot for nature lovers, gardening enthusiasts, and photographers. From tropical orchids to rare plants, the Flower Market is a sensory delight and a great place to find a unique natural souvenir.

A short walk away is the charming Bird Garden, where local breeders proudly display their songbirds in intricate hand-carved cages. This tranquil garden offers a fascinating glimpse into Hong Kong's centuries-old tradition of walking birds and provides a peaceful and serene retreat from the city's bustling streets. The soft melodies of birdsong and the calming atmosphere make this garden a hidden gem—perhaps the most understated yet surprisingly delightful highlight of Kowloon.





Essential Temple Route

Hong Kong is known for its relentless energy, with its streets ablaze with neon lights and its frenzied pace making it an intriguing destination for travellers. Yet, amid this vibrant urban environment, there are tranquil oases of peace and spirituality: its temples.

These architectural treasures provide a welcome and peaceful respite from the city's hustle and bustle, allowing visitors to immerse themselves in the region's rich history and culture.

A visit to these temples offers a unique opportunity for inner reflection and contemplation, providing a serene contrast to the busy city life. They offer a deeper understanding of beliefs rooted in respect for others and one's surroundings. Discover these essential sanctuaries with us and let yourself be enveloped by the peace they emanate.



Exterior of the Tin Hau temple in Causeway Bay.

TIN HAU CAUSEWAY BAY: THE PROTECTOR OF SAILORS

In the heart of bustling Causeway Bay, one of Hong Kong's busiest shopping areas, stands the Tin Hau Temple, dedicated to the revered goddess of the sea and protector of sailors. Revered by the local fishing community since the 18th century, the temple has undergone several renovations, but its traditional essence remains remarkably intact. Founded in

1747, it reflects the maritime influence on Hong Kong's history, due to its strategic location in the South China Sea which has historically connected it with global trade and navigation.

A visit to this historic temple reminds us of Hong Kong's deep-rooted connection with the vast ocean. Tin Hau provides a peaceful retreat and underscores the importance of faith and divine protection in the lives of sailors and their families.



Interior of the Man Mo Temple.

**MAN MO TEMPLE:
A JOURNEY TO THE DYNASTIC PAST**

Located on Hollywood Road, this iconic temple is among Hong Kong's oldest, established in the 1840s as the city began to develop under British rule. The Man Mo Temple is dedicated to Man, the god of literature, and Mo, the god of war. It served as a place for students to pray for academic success and a venue for resolving disputes before written laws were established.

The architecture of the temple reflects the cultural fusion that characterizes Hong Kong, combining traditional Chinese elements with Western influences from the colonial period. Visitors can observe large incense coils hanging from the ceiling, which can burn for weeks, filling the air with smoke that creates an almost suffocating atmosphere. These coils symbolize ongoing prayers and are a testament to the enduring devotion of the believers.



One of the altars with deities of the temple.

Throughout its history, the Man Mo Temple has been not only a spiritual landmark but also a communal gathering place for the local population. Today, it remains a refuge where people come to seek comfort, especially during the Hungry Ghost Festival, when it is believed that spirits roam the earth and offerings are made to appease them.



A visit to the Man Mo Temple offers a connection to Hong Kong's colonial history

and the ancient beliefs that still endure in the city, all set within a mystical atmosphere.



**HUNG HOM KWUN YUM TEMPLE:
THE GODDESS OF MERCY**

Located in the Hung Hom area, this temple pays homage to Kwun Yum, the goddess of mercy, one of the most beloved figures in

the Chinese pantheon, often regarded as the “people’s goddess.” The worship of Kwun Yum dates back to the Tang dynasty (618-907 AD), when she began to be revered as the protector of the oppressed, the sick, and those in need.



The Kwun Yum Temple has become a popular place among locals seeking spiritual solace and guidance in difficult times. Its design is simple yet imposing, notable for its vivid colors, intricate carvings, and numerous offerings.

Worshippers come to seek favors such as health, protection, and prosperity in a peaceful atmosphere. Additionally, the temple celebrates Kwun Yum's birthday with fervent ceremonies, drawing thousands of devoted people every year.



WONG TAI SIN TEMPLE AND ITS GARDEN: THE SHRINE OF FULFILLED WISHES

The Wong Tai Sin Temple, located in its namesake district of Hong Kong, is one of the city's most iconic and popular temples.

Built in 1921, this sacred site is dedicated to Wong Tai Sin, a Taoist deity renowned for his powers to heal and grant wishes. His reputation as the “god of fulfilled wishes” has made this temple a destination for thousands who seek solutions to issues



related to health, love, fortune, and success. The entrance to the temple impresses with its majestic architecture, featuring curved roofs and vibrant details that evoke traditional Chinese artistry. As visitors

cross the threshold, they are greeted by an atmosphere steeped in spirituality. Worshippers often light incense sticks while practising kau cim, an ancient divination practice where numbered sticks are shaken in a cylinder until one falls out,



with the number then interpreted through temple scriptures to seek divine guidance.

The temple also includes beautiful pavilions, statues, and altars dedicated to various Taoist, Buddhist, and Confucian

deities. Every element reflects the devotion of the local community and the rich spiritual traditions of Chinese culture.

A major highlight of the site is the Garden of Wishes, an adjacent 18,000-square-



metre garden that offers a space of peace and serenity. Designed in the classic style of Chinese gardens, this tranquil paradise is filled with stone bridges, koi ponds, and covered pavilions, all surrounded by lush vegetation. The garden is conceived as a

reflection of the harmony between man and nature, a central tenet of Taoist philosophy. Strolling through its pathways allows visitors to escape the city's hustle and immerse themselves in an environment where natural beauty and spirituality intertwine.



The Wong Tai Sin Temple is not just another spiritual site in Hong Kong; it is also a cultural landmark that invites visitors to connect with a fundamental part of Chinese history and beliefs. It is a place where the spiritual, cultural, and natural worlds converge,

offering a setting for reflection and the search for answers. Each year, during Wong Tai Sin's birthday, grand ceremonies are held, attracting thousands who gather to honour the deity and seek his blessings. It is truly a special moment to experience firsthand.





NAN LIAN GARDEN AND THE PAVILION OF ABSOLUTE PERFECTION: A JOURNEY INTO CHINESE LANDSCAPE ART

Nestled in the bustling Diamond Hill district, Nan Lian Garden is a serene

haven that offers a peaceful retreat from the city's fast pace. Designed according to Tang dynasty (618-907 AD) landscaping principles, this garden is a living masterpiece where every element is thoughtfully arranged to harmonize



human interaction with nature. The classic aesthetics of the meticulously maintained garden stand in striking contrast to the surrounding modern skyscrapers, creating an ideal setting for meditation and contemplation.

At the heart of this tranquil garden lies the Pavilion of Absolute Perfection, an elegant golden structure set amidst a koi-filled pond. Crafted entirely from wood using traditional Chinese techniques and without metal nails, the pavilion embodies



purity and spiritual perfection—core concepts in Buddhist philosophy. Its architectural beauty is complemented by the surrounding landscape, which enhances the sense of calm and invites visitors to escape the urban rush.

The garden's pathways wind through meticulously designed landscapes that appear natural and effortless. Featuring carefully chosen rocks, serene streams, and ancient trees, this miniature landscape aims to capture nature's essence in its



purest form. This meticulous attention to detail reflects Taoist principles of balance and energy flow.

In addition to the main pavilion, the garden boasts several other pavilions,

including a traditional tea house where visitors can enjoy tea in a peaceful, spiritual setting. This experience offers a connection to ancient Chinese culture and a moment to relax while absorbing the garden's tranquil environment.



The red brick walls encircling the garden enhance the sense of seclusion from the outside world, creating a striking contrast between the city's bustle and the garden's serenity. The garden's dedication to preserving Chinese art,

history, and culture is evident in every meticulously curated corner. A small art gallery on the site showcases ancient calligraphy, stone sculptures, and exquisite ceramics, reflecting a deep respect for China's rich cultural heritage



and adding an educational and inspiring dimension to the visit.

Visiting Nan Lian Garden is like stepping back in time, reconnecting with a period when the bond between humans and

nature was sacred. The garden's tranquility and impeccable landscape design provide a respite from the city's hustle, immersing visitors in profound peace and spirituality. For those looking to escape Hong Kong's frenetic pace, this is the perfect place.



CHI LIN NUNNERY: SERENITY IN ARCHITECTURE

Adjacent to Nan Lian Garden, Chi Lin Nunnery is one of Hong Kong's most remarkable architectural and spiritual treasures. Founded in 1934 and renovated

in the 1990s to reflect the Tang dynasty style, the nunnery is constructed entirely of wood, honoring ancient Chinese building techniques without the use of metal nails. This unique approach, combined with its elegant simplicity,





makes the nunnery a gem of traditional engineering and aesthetics.

The nunnery is surrounded by expansive gardens that invite reflection and peace. Walking through its courtyards

and lotus-filled ponds, visitors are transported to an era when harmony with nature was central to spiritual life.

The carefully arranged trees and stones follow principles of Chinese landscaping, ensuring each element is in balance with



its surroundings and in harmony with Buddhist teachings.

The central hall of Chi Lin Nunnery features statues of Buddha and bodhisattvas crafted from gold, wood, and clay. These

figures symbolize the compassion, wisdom, and serenity attained through spiritual practice. The nunnery's serene atmosphere offers a refuge from the city's noise, providing a space for meditation, introspection, and spiritual growth. The



calming sound of water from the ponds and fountains further enhances the tranquil environment, fostering a deeper connection with oneself.

Chi Lin Nunnery serves not only as a place

of worship but also as a cultural venue. It regularly hosts spiritual activities such as sutra recitations, Buddhist ceremonies, and meditation sessions, attracting both devoted practitioners, tourists, and curious visitors. The nunnery is deeply



committed to preserving and promoting traditional Buddhist teachings, making it a significant religious, cultural, and educational site in Hong Kong.

The **Chi Lin Nunnery** complements

the adjacent **Nan Lian Garden**, sharing the same aesthetic and philosophical values. Together, they create a unified and harmonious space of tranquility and spirituality, allowing visitors to experience the deep and



profound connection between nature, architecture, and religion.

The peace found in these unique city spaces can make you momentarily forget that you're in a bustling financial

hub like Hong Kong. It is an unparalleled experience that few places can offer. Be sure to set aside an entire morning to fully appreciate its beauty, tranquility, serenity, and the profound sense of harmony it inspires.





**TIN HAU TEMPLE AT REPULSE BAY:
THE SEA GODDESS ON THE MOST FAMOUS BEACH**

Situated on the renowned Repulse Bay beach, the Tin Hau Temple honors Tin Hau, the sea goddess and protector of

sailors. Built in the early 20th century, this charming and historic temple stands out for its stunning oceanfront location, beautifully reinforcing its spiritual connection to the surrounding waters the goddess oversees.



The temple features traditional Chinese architecture with gracefully curved roofs adorned with colorful mosaics and intricate sculptures depicting mythological scenes. The seaside setting and the gentle sea breeze create a

unique and serene atmosphere where spirituality merges seamlessly with natural beauty. The striking contrast between the temple's tranquility and the lively beach environment makes for a truly memorable visit.



Mountains of Lantau Island with a partial view of the Zhuhai Bridge connecting Hong Kong and Macau.

THE OUTSKIRTS: LANTAU ISLAND

Lantau Island, the largest in Hong Kong and easily accessible by metro, was originally home to small fishing villages. Over the years, the island has developed into a prominent tourist attraction while maintaining its traditional essence. Its landscape is dominated by remarkably beautiful imposing mountains, verdant valleys, and tranquil coastlines, offering a striking contrast to the bustling city life.

Historically, Lantau's strategic location near the harbour made it a key player in maritime trade. From the island, visitors can enjoy excellent views of Hong Kong International Airport and the famous Zhuhai Bridge, which spans 55 km and connects Hong Kong with Macau via tunnels and bridges. These infrastructure developments have made access to Lantau easier, enhancing its popularity as a destination while preserving its rural charm in many areas.



Photo: Cathay Pacific

Gondolas of the Ngong Ping 360 panoramic cable car that runs around Lantau Island.

Lantau is ideal for those looking to disconnect from urban life and immerse themselves in a tranquil natural setting.

Lantau Peak, the second highest in Hong Kong, is one of the island's most prominent and breathtaking points, ideal for avid hiking enthusiasts. Reaching its summit rewards visitors with panoramic and spectacular views of the island and the iconic Big Buddha, a major spiritual symbol of Hong Kong.

From the profound spirituality emanating from **Po Lin Monastery** to the modern allure of **Hong Kong Disneyland**, Lantau Island offers a unique and captivating blend of activities that appeal to all types of discerning travellers. As tourism on Lantau continues to rise, the island maintains its distinct essence, providing a serene refuge for those seeking harmony between nature, history, and culture. Allocating half a day to ascend its summit is truly worthwhile.



The Ngong Ping 360 Cable Car starts its journey in Tung Chung Bay right next to the airport.

NGONG PING 360: SPECTACULAR VIEWS

The Ngong Ping 360 cable car is one of the most breathtaking ways to reach the famous Big Buddha on Lantau Island. Connecting Tung Chung with the Ngong Ping plateau, this modern cable car offers a panoramic journey that enchants all who ride in its cabins. Since its opening in 2006, the cable car has become an iconic attraction, blending the thrill of heights with the tranquility of natural views.

Over nearly 6 kilometres of route, visitors are treated to unparalleled views of the island. The journey provides a unique aerial perspective of Tung Chung Bay, the lush mountainous landscape of Lantau, and the South China Sea. On clear days, the views extend to the horizon, contrasting the island's pristine nature with Hong Kong's modern skyscrapers in the distance.

The Ngong Ping 360 offers various types of



Views from the top of the mountain.

cabins, including the Crystal Cabin with a transparent glass floor, allowing riders to see the terrain beneath their feet. This feature enhances the thrill of the journey, offering an immersive experience surrounded by the natural wonders of Lantau.



Beyond the views, the cable car is a practical and exciting way to access Ngong Ping Village, the Big Buddha, and Po Lin Monastery. It efficiently covers the considerable distance between

these sites, saving visitors time while providing an unforgettable journey. Upon reaching the top, the serene and spiritual atmosphere is magnified, making it a memorable experience.



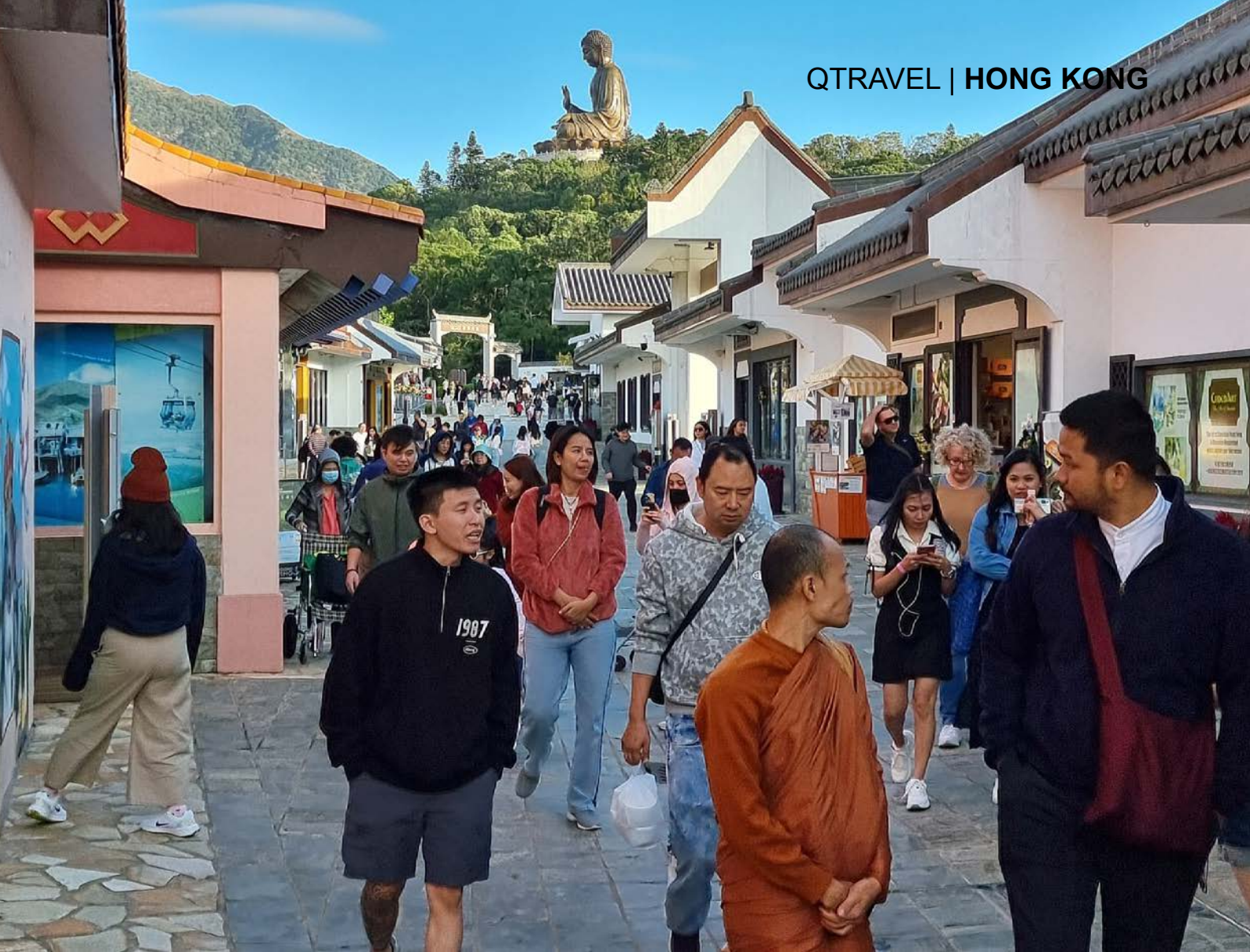
Ngong Ping Village is a small tent village that faithfully reproduces traditional architecture.

**NGONG PING VILLAGE:
TRADITION AND SPIRITUALITY**

Located on the Ngong Ping plateau, Ngong Ping Village is a picturesque settlement designed to immerse visitors in the rich culture and spirituality of Lantau Island. The village combines traditional elements with modern touches, creating a relaxed and welcoming atmosphere. Although relatively newly built, it reflects traditional Chinese architecture with low-

rise buildings, curved roofs, and earth-toned details that harmonize with the mountainous surroundings.

Ngong Ping Village is also known for its bustling craft market, where visitors can purchase everything from traditional souvenirs to local artworks. The restaurants offer a delightful sampling of local cuisine, allowing guests to enjoy dishes such as dim sum or Chinese tea in a peaceful setting.



To access the Big Buddha you have to go through the entire Ngong Ping Village.

While often seen as a stop before visiting the Big Buddha or Po Lin Monastery, Ngong Ping Village has its own charm and provides a complete cultural experience.

TIAN TAN BIG BUDDHA

The Tian Tan Big Buddha, located on the Ngong Ping plateau, is one of Hong Kong's most iconic attractions and a revered spiritual symbol for both locals and tourists. Inaugurated in 1993, this

majestic bronze statue stands 34 metres high and weighs over 250 tons, making it one of the largest seated Buddhas in the world. Its imposing presence atop a hill symbolizes harmony between humanity, nature, and religion.

Inspired by Beijing's Temple of Heaven, the Big Buddha's circular, pagoda-shaped base provides both stability and grandeur. To reach the feet of the Buddha, visitors must climb a staircase of 268 steps.



Final section of the 268 steps that must be climbed to reach the Great Buddha.

Although the ascent can be challenging, the effort is rewarded with the serene surroundings and panoramic views of the mountains and Po Lin Monastery.

The statue is surrounded by six smaller bronze figures known as the Offerings of the Six Devas, holding flowers, incense, lamps, and other symbolic objects in gratitude and devotion to the Buddha. These details enhance the spiritual atmosphere and offer an opportunity for reflection.

The Big Buddha, as made of bronze and weighing about 250 tonnes, it took several years to complete, with construction starting in 1990 and finishing in 1993. The statue isn't just big in size; it's also significant symbolically. It represents Buddha Shakyamuni, the founder of Buddhism, and faces north, believed to offer spiritual protection to the country and its people.

Interestingly, the statue was funded with support from the Chinese government as a



Around the Great Buddha we find bronze statues of the Six Devas in a gesture of offering to Buddha.

gesture of respect for Buddhism and Hong Kong's culture. So, visiting the Big Buddha isn't just about seeing an impressive piece of art; it's also about experiencing a piece of living history and spirituality.

The Big Buddha is not only a tourist attraction but also an important pilgrimage site for Buddhists. At its base, an exhibition hall houses Buddhist relics, including a small piece of Buddha's bone, allowing visitors to learn more about

the statue's history and significance. This space deepens the message of peace and harmony it embodies.

During festivals such as Buddha's Birthday, the site comes alive with special ceremonies and spiritual celebrations, attracting devotees from around the world. The statue continually reminds visitors of Buddhist values like compassion and wisdom, providing a peaceful retreat amidst nature.



Panoramic view of Po Lin Monastery.

PO LIN MONASTERY: A SPIRITUAL REFUGE

The Po Lin Monastery, founded in 1906 by monks from Jiangsu province, is one of Hong Kong's most significant Buddhist temples. From its humble beginnings, it has grown into an internationally renowned spiritual center. Surrounded by Lantau's mountains and overlooking the majestic Tian Tan Big Buddha, the monastery offers a peaceful and serene environment ideal for meditation and retreat.

The **Po Lin Monastery** is famous for its impressive temples and pavilions, adorned with intricate architectural details and vibrant ornaments. The Hall of the Great Treasure, housing statues of Buddha and bodhisattvas—symbols of compassion and wisdom—stands out. The ever-burning incense and the monks' chants create a deeply spiritual atmosphere conducive to reflection.

One of the monastery's most notable



Entrance arch to Po Lin Monastery at sunset.

features is its grand entrance gate, which is adorned with intricate carvings and offers a glimpse of the rich cultural heritage of the site. The monastery's Main Shrine Hall houses a collection of impressive statues, including those of the Buddha and other revered figures in Buddhism.

The monastery is also known for its vegetarian restaurant, offering visitors a chance to sample Buddhist cuisine made from simple, fresh ingredients. This reflects

the Buddhist philosophy of respecting all living beings.

During festivals, thousands of devotees gather to participate in religious ceremonies and processions honoring Siddhartha Gautama's teachings. For those seeking introspection, the monastery provides opportunities to join meditation retreats and Buddhist study programs, immersing visitors in the teachings and practices of Buddhism in a peaceful environment.



Photo: Cathay Pacific

GETTING TO HONG KONG: CATHAY PACIFIC

Cathay Pacific, Hong Kong's flagship airline, is known for its commitment to excellence in service and its extensive

network of global destinations. **Founded in 1946**, the company has earned a solid reputation as **one of the best airlines in the world**, offering a premium flight experience in both economy and more exclusive classes.



From Spain, **Cathay Pacific** connects directly from the cities of **Madrid** (on Sundays, Tuesdays, and Fridays) and **Barcelona** (seasonal direct flight) to its hub at Hong Kong International Airport, a strategic point for travellers wishing to

explore Asia or continue their journey to other international destinations. These routes have become key options for those seeking fast, efficient, and comfortable connections to Asian cities like Tokyo, Singapore, Shanghai, and Bangkok, or



Cabina de clase turista del Airbus 350 de Cathay Pacific.

even more distant destinations in Oceania, such as Sydney or Melbourne.

Flights from **Madrid** offer a direct gateway to the heart of Asia, with schedules designed to maximise connections to other destinations.

Additionally, the onboard experience is thoughtfully designed to cater to both business travellers and tourists. **Cathay Pacific** is renowned for its comfortable

seating, top-class in-flight entertainment service, and a gastronomic selection that includes menus thoughtfully adapted to different cultural preferences.

On the other hand, flights from **Barcelona**, both direct and with a stopover, also provide a convenient and efficient option for travellers looking to fly east. With its modern fleet of aircraft, the airline ensures a safe and pleasant experience on every leg of the journey.

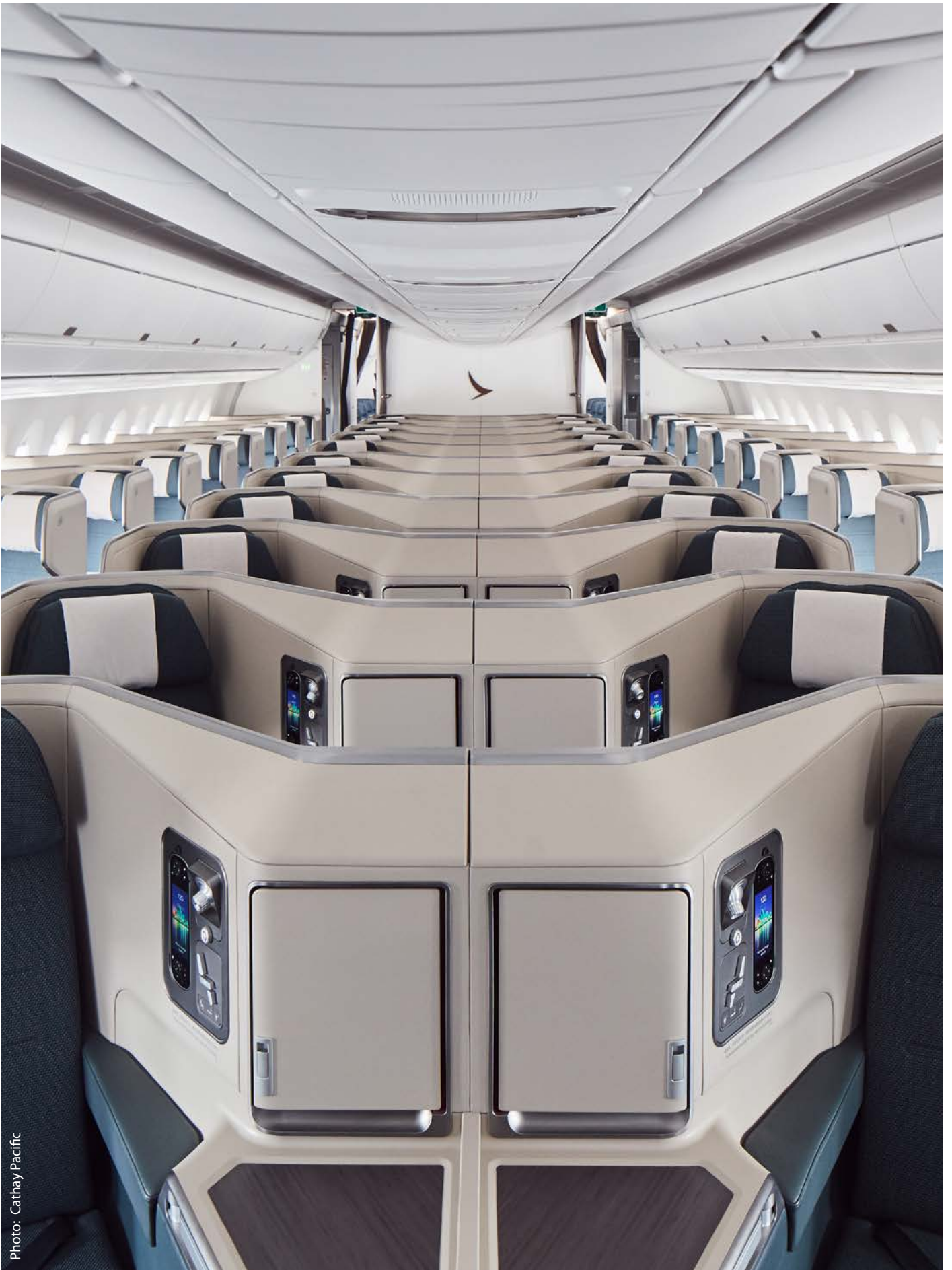


Photo: Cathay Pacific

Cathay Pacific Airbus 350 business class cabin.



Examples of seats in Economy Class (upper) and Premium Economy Class (lower).

Passengers can enjoy discreet luxury and personalised service that have made **Cathay Pacific** a popular choice among frequent travellers.

CATHAY PACIFIC, AN AWARD-WINNING AIRLINE

In the **2024 World Airline Awards**, **Cathay Pacific ranked fifth** among the World's Best Airlines, an improvement of three positions from the previous year. It also won the award for **Best Economy**

Class Airline and was named the **World's Cleanest Airline**.

Additionally, the airline was recognized as the **3rd Best Premium Airline** in June by **AirlineRatings**, climbing six positions from last year. These accolades reflect the airline's dedication to excellence for its passengers.

Looking ahead, **Cathay Pacific** plans to introduce **new products over the next**



Examples of Cathay Pacific's award-winning onboard cuisine in Business Class and First Class.

three years. The ***Aria Suite***, a revamped **business class** experience, will be followed by **new premium economy** seats and a renovation of the award-winning economy class on its Boeing 777-300ER aircraft by year-end. The airline will also soon offer free Wi-Fi for business class customers and Diamond members. Additionally, starting this July, **Cathay Pacific** will increase cabin crew on select flights to further enhance its highly praised onboard service.

EATING ON BOARD

When you travel with **Cathay Pacific**, you'll discover an onboard menu crafted specifically to ensure you arrive feeling revitalised.

Their in-flight reflect a commitment to sourcing the highest quality ingredients, meticulous preparation, and dishes created with exceptional attention to detail. **Cathay Pacific** is dedicated to delivering unforgettable dining experiences in the sky.



Studio room at The Upper House hotel.

THE UPPER HOUSE HOTEL: DISCREET LUXURY IN HONG KONG

Located in the Admiralty district, **The Upper House** is a haven of tranquility amidst the bustling city of Hong Kong. This award-winning hotel is recognized as one of the world's most exclusive luxury destinations, featuring prominently in prestigious lists such as "Asia's Best Hotels" and "**Best Luxury Hotels**" by Condé Nast Traveler and Travel + Leisure.

Designed by the renowned architect Andre Fu, **The Upper House** showcases contemporary minimalism and discreet luxury. Each room and suite offers serene views of Victoria Harbour and the city skyline through floor-to-ceiling windows. The use of natural materials like limestone, bamboo, and silk creates a warm and inviting atmosphere. Every detail, from the spa-style bathrooms to state-of-the-art technology, is meticulously crafted for discerning travelers.



Rooms at The Upper House hotel.

The hotel features **117 rooms**, all with spectacular views of the harbour or the island, including 21 suites, a Penthouse, and the André Fu Suite, starting at nearly 70 square metres, the largest in Hong Kong.

The hotel's prime location puts guests within easy reach of major tourist attractions, luxury shopping, and vibrant nightlife. The Admiralty MTR Station nearby ensures effortless access to all parts of the city, making it an ideal base

for both business and leisure. What guests appreciate most about the hotel's location is the tranquility of the area and the privileged views from the rooms.

The warm and inviting **Sky Lounge**, featuring a central fireplace, welcomes guests day and night and hosts the world-renowned series of talks, Up Close.

Dining at **The Upper House** is exceptional. The exclusive restaurant,



Salisterra restaurant dining room.

Salisterra, located on the **49th floor**. Salisterra is the essence of the sea and the land. This contemporary Mediterranean menu, showcases dishes with authentic ingredients both familiar and far-flung. Guided by chef Ricardo Chaneton's time in Denia, Spain on the coast of Costa Blanca and Menton, France in Côte d'Azur, his passion for the region's cuisine is driven by his Italian heritage and love for cooking from the heart. The flavours and cooking styles are inspired by the

distinct seasonality and traditions of the Mediterranean, brought to you within the beauty and comfort of our dining room.

Salistarra Bar, also on the 49th floor, provides a refined setting for artisanal cocktails. Sip elegant and deceptively simple tipples curated by mixologist Gail Lanorias while immersing yourself in vibrant evenings. Salisterra Bar is distinguished by the long bar in rustic Brazilian burgundy marble.



Hotel atrium. Right: Sky Lounge. Bottom: Lobby.

Additional amenities include a 24-hour gym, personalized wellness programs, and exclusive concierge services.

The Upper House is more than just a luxury hotel; it's a sanctuary where every detail is designed to offer a personalized guest experience. Its blend of prime location, elegant design, exceptional cuisine, and unique services makes it the ultimate choice for those seeking the best of Hong Kong.





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EL PRIMER PROGRAMA DE TURISMO DE LA TELEVISIÓN EN ESPAÑA

Dirigido y presentado por Fernando Valmaseda. Dos horas de emociones, de experiencias, de sensaciones y de destinos nacionales e internacionales, de pueblos, gastronomía, escapadas y propuestas, de análisis de la actualidad y de entrevistas a los grandes protagonistas del sector.

