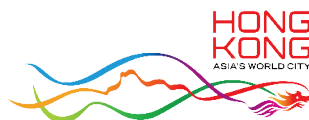


Come together

Hong Kong: the world's hub for culture and commerce



1/5 Hosting the world

A HUB FOR MAJOR EVENTS

Best-in-class venues, hotels and infrastructure

wonder there is such a clamour to be here. Just as the ferries are a dazzling link between shores, Hong Kong is also a link between East and West, a strategic hub for global business and cultural events supported by best-in-class venues, hotels and infrastructure.

In 2025, the opening of the Kai Tak Sports Park will spark a new wave of sporting tournaments, culminating in November with the co-hosting of the 15th National Games of the People's Republic of China. Such events will only serve to further improve the quality of life for the countless entrepreneurs and opportunity seekers drawn here by a growing GDP, low crime rate and vibrant culture.

A record number of startups are supported by a thriving network of incubators, accelerators and co-working spaces, while established international businesses increasingly shift operations to take advantage of a deep global talent pool and a simple tax system with low rates. Hong Kong is among the top 10 of the IMD's World Talent Ranking 2024, thanks to a new admission regime that embraces global talents of different profiles, including the Quality Migrant Admission Scheme for highly-skilled individuals and the Technology Talent Admission Scheme for R&D in that sector. Operated efficiently under the Chinese government's "one country, two systems" principle, Hong Kong has retained its unique personality while remaining a welcoming hub for Asia and beyond.

Clockwise from top left: The pearlescent façade of Kai Tak Stadium, part of Kai Tak Sports Park; Hong Kong has a convenient public transport network; morning commuters; dramatic harbour views

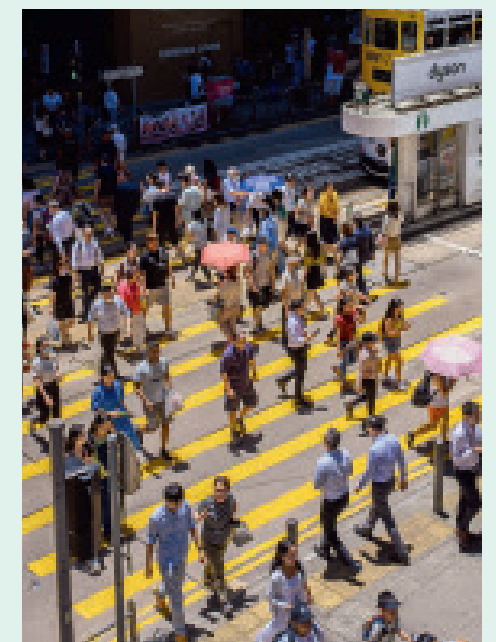
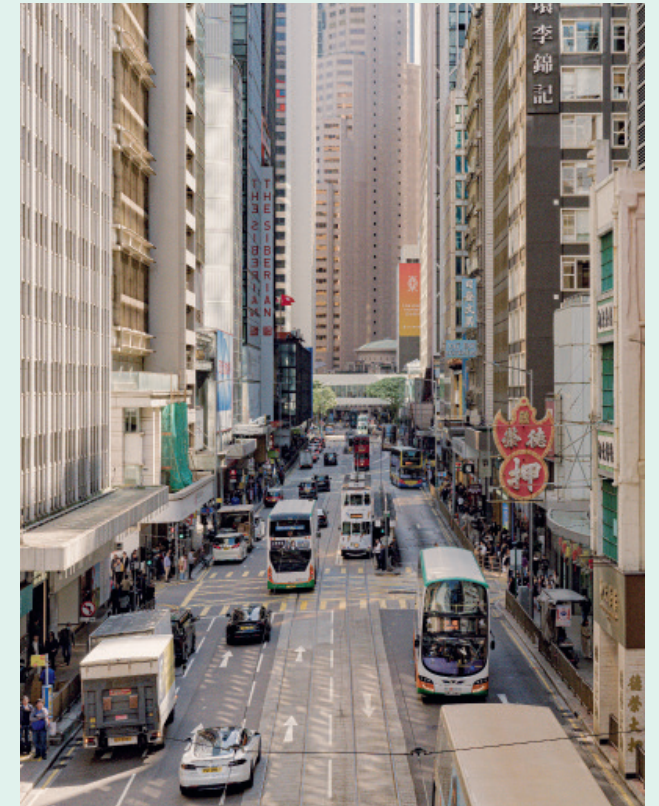
A Hong Kong ferry is one of the world's most magical forms of public transport. Whether crossing between Tsim Sha Tsui and Central or North Point and Kowloon City, these trips encapsulate all that is great about the city.

Look out one side to see the skyscrapers of Central, framed by a stunning backdrop of Hong Kong Island's peaks. In the other direction lie the twinkling lights of Kowloon Peninsula, the waterfront museums and night markets that attract visitors and locals alike.

From this floating perspective, you are reminded of the vastness of Hong Kong's surrounding topography and the narrow distances between so many world-class businesses and institutions. The ferry is only about a 10-minute journey yet it acts as a bridge between worlds: work and pleasure, beauty and function, natural and manmade – dichotomies that might cause friction elsewhere, simply spark inspiration here. And the work-life balance is good. Hong Kong might have the most skyscrapers of any city in the world, but it also has the highest life expectancy. No

HONG KONG IN NUMBERS

674,165 Number of non-PRC nationals living in the city (as of December 2023)



2/5

Active investment

A HUB FOR SPORTING ACHIEVEMENT

A development to set new global standards

READY FOR TAKEOFF

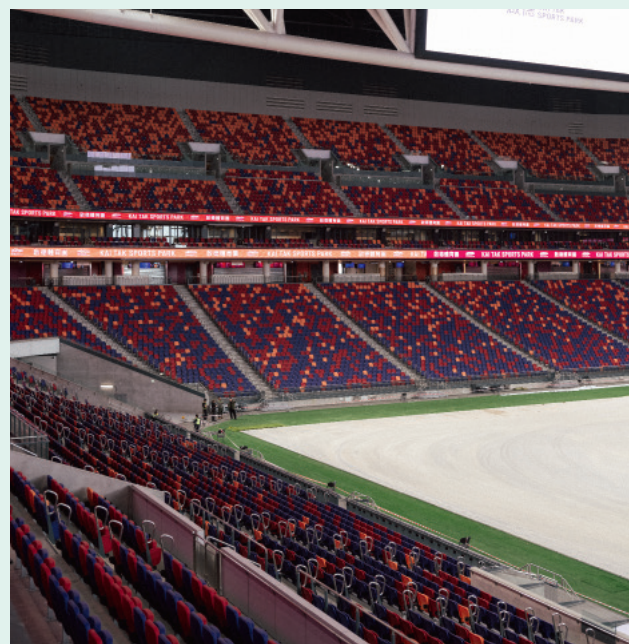
Kai Tak Sports Park

The old Kai Tak Airport was a thrilling proposition for pilots and passengers alike, with flight paths that skimmed Hong Kong rooftops and a runway that stretched out into Kowloon Bay. More than 25 years after the last flight departed, one of the dense city's prime harbourfront locations has found a new purpose.

Kai Tak Sports Park officially opened its doors in March 2025, bolstering the local government's bid to become the "events capital of Asia". Set against the backdrop of Kowloon's majestic Lion Rock, this new sports, entertainment and leisure precinct was designed by Populous, the award-winning architecture firm behind high-profile projects such as London's Wembley Stadium and the Las Vegas Sphere. Facilities across the 28-hectare site include a 5,000-seat Youth Sports Ground, a multipurpose indoor arena with 10,000 mostly retractable or removable seats, plenty of retail space and F&B options, and the park's crown jewel: a 50,000-seat main stadium inspired by Hong Kong's nickname, the Pearl of the Orient.

To translate this wondrous title into a physical structure, Populous created a pearlescent façade with 27,000 panels that reflect the light and, when viewed from different angles, shift from purple to cobalt blue. A retractable, soundproof roof can be opened in 20-30 minutes, while a flexible pitch system has natural and artificial surfaces.

Crucially, Kai Tak Sports Park is more than just a stage for international events. Its purpose extends into the neighbourhoods of Kowloon City, To Kwa Wan and Kai Tak, where new private residences and public housing have already popped up. Landscaped gardens, paths and playgrounds provide residents with an oasis in which to escape from the bustle of the surrounding metropolis.



POPULOUS DESIGN LEAD

Richard Breslin

Where do you start designing a 28-hectare site?

We spent several months doing background research and an assessment of what such a precinct meant in the context of Kai Tak and Kowloon Bay, as well as what it meant more broadly for Hong Kong and Asia. Hong Kong has a very special relationship with its harbour, so we started to look at introducing these design tools and mechanisms to draw people through that precinct.

The park sits on the site of the old airport. How did you incorporate that history into your design?

Kai Tak precinct is hugely important for that whole

southeast China region: the trade, the history and so forth. So we've designed a very strong art and cultural programme. There's an old red-and-white-checked PARB (precision approach radar building) that was overgrown and falling apart but we included it in the site. It now has a model of the old airport and a water play area for kids next to it. There are similar sites throughout the precinct.

The main stadium is the centrepiece of the park. What design features are you most proud of?

The element that excites us is the seating bowl. During Hong Kong Sevens, it goes crazy in the south stand of the old stadium. That's the heartbeat, where the most colourful characters are. We wanted to recreate that, so the new stadium has a 5,000-seat south stand.

Was there a degree of benchmarking involved?

For the roof, we looked at Marvel Stadium in Melbourne and Principality Stadium in Cardiff. For the seating bowl, Suncorp Stadium in Brisbane was one, Tottenham Hotspur Stadium in London was another. We did a tour with the client in 2019. They wanted to understand these places and it makes our jobs a lot easier if we can take them. So it's benchmarking in a way, but it's actually beyond that. It's about giving people a common understanding of the principles that we're working towards.

HONG KONG IN NUMBERS

50,000

Capacity of main stadium at the new Kai Tak Sports Park

3/5

Leading the way

A HUB FOR DYNAMIC ENTREPRENEURS

Top talent on Hong Kong's nurturing environment

FOUNDER, THE FABRICK LAB

Elaine Yan Ling Ng

How do you turn the taste of whisky into a vibrant, multisensory experience? Well, first, you call Elaine Yan Ling Ng. That's what historic whisky producer Macallan did in 2024 when it wanted to create an installation at Macallan House on Hong Kong's vibrant Stanley Street.

Ng is the founder of The Fabrick Lab, which experiments with materials and collaborates with engineers to create bold and unusual installations. At Macallan House, she unveiled an art piece composed of woven textiles, LED lights and 200 3D-printed polycarbonate elements. The display morphed according to the stage of the whisky's ageing process and swirled as visitors swilled their glasses.

The Fabrick Lab has built a reputation for telling stories about brands that resonate in unexpected ways, often using colour, sound, light and texture. Ng began her career studying textiles at London's Central Saint Martins, before bringing her vision back to Hong Kong. "Geographically, it's great for business," she says. The Fabrick Lab's clients are mainly in Europe and China, while the consultancy arm of her work requires trips across Asia. The city's proximity to manufacturing hubs in mainland China was also a major draw.

In 2015, Ng's studio obtained funding from the Design Trust to develop a sustainability project. "Hong Kong has made it a lot easier, especially recently, for entrepreneurs," she says. Taxation is low and government investment opens doors for creatives whose work pushes boundaries.

Today Ng has international clients including Swarovski and UBS, while also establishing a strong reputation at home in Hong Kong. "There's an openness to ideas here that is so important for the work that we do," she says.



HONG KONG IN NUMBERS

4,694

Total number of startups (in 2024)

CEO, OVOLO HOTELS

Girish Jhunjhnuwala

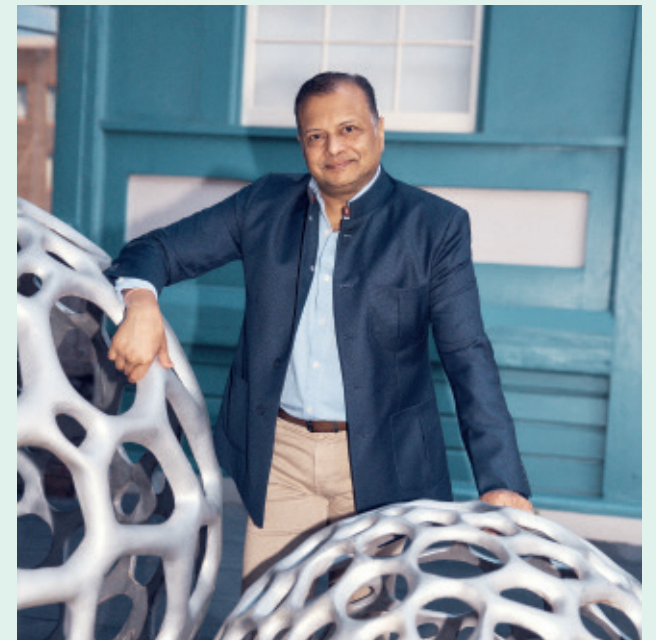
In 2002, Girish Jhunjhnuwala spotted a "for sale" sign on a corner property in Hong Kong's Central district. It was opposite the house that he had grown up in and, conveniently, he'd just sold his family's watch business, so he was in the market for a new venture.

The era was ripe with opportunity in Hong Kong and Jhunjhnuwala had spotted a gap in the market: serviced apartments designed for the countless global travellers passing through the city.

The house would become Ovolo's first property, one that would kickstart Jhunjhnuwala's mission to reshape independent hospitality in Asia and beyond. When the global financial crisis rocked the world, Ovolo shifted focus to hotels but Jhunjhnuwala's vision – for a fun, comfortable and modern city base with a distinct emphasis on design – remained constant.

"We didn't see anyone else doing what we were doing," he says today. "At the time, everyone was charging for wi-fi; we gave it to guests for free. We gave them free breakfast. The minibar was complimentary. We created spaces for people to socialise, to relax. No one was doing anything like this in Hong Kong – or anywhere else nearby."

Ovolo Hotels remains proudly headquartered in the city's Central district, using it as a base to expand the brand



further. "We noticed that Australians really liked what we were doing," says Jhunjhnuwala. "So, we decided to go to them." In 2013, an outpost opened in the artsy laneways of Melbourne's East End, which was soon followed by properties in Sydney, Canberra, and Brisbane. Today, the company operates 10 hotels in Hong Kong, Australia and Indonesia.

While it hasn't been the easiest few years for Hong Kong's hospitality industry, Jhunjhnuwala is hugely optimistic for what the future has in store. "Tourism is coming back," he says. "We have a lot on the horizon."

Far from unsubstantiated optimism, Jhunjhnuwala's claim is built on a clear understanding of the many benefits of his home city. "Here in Hong Kong, we've got the transportation, the infrastructure, the rule of law – and the food," he says, proudly. "I always think, 'Why would I want to be anywhere else?' We've got it all."

24 hours in Hong Kong

A HUB FOR LIVING BETTER

A local's tour of culture, food and sights

MORNING

1

In a city as bustling and dense as Hong Kong, 24 hours can easily pass in the blink of an eye. Maximise your time in this magical city with Monocle's one-day itinerary. Start your day the right way with a stroll in Kowloon Walled City Park. Located on the former site of an infamous slum that was demolished in the 1990s, the 3.1-hectare park offers a welcome escape from the bustle of the metropolis. Its design draws inspiration from the Qing dynasty-era gardens of Jiangnan. Features include the Mountain View Pavilion, which looks up to Lion Rock, and a garden with sculptures depicting the 12 signs of the Chinese zodiac.

2

After your stroll, treat yourself to a fragrant cup of coffee at Tai Wo Tang, one of Hong Kong's most distinctive cafés. Much like the park, the coffee shop

has a colourful history, sharing a name with a Chinese medicine dispensary that once occupied the site. When that shop closed in 2017, the current owners soon took over. They converted the space into a coffee shop while preserving the historic interiors, giving patrons a chance to travel back in time while sipping a flat white.

3

If you want a spot of culture, take a red taxi to Central, Hong Kong's private gallery district. Gagosian's sleek space has shows by global names such as Anselm Kiefer and Pierre-Auguste Renoir, while Pearl Lam Galleries showcases the work of leading international artists.



Kowloon Walled City Park is dotted with pavilions

AFTERNOON

1

From Central, head to Wan Chai on the iconic tram, which started operation in 1904 and is affectionately known by locals as "ding ding". After browsing the expanded selection of clothing, luggage, homeware and gifts at the Monocle Shop on St Francis Street, explore Lee Tung Avenue, a photogenic part of Wan Chai, before wandering the street markets that spread out toward Wan Chai Road.

2

While you're in the neighbourhood, drop by My Cup of Tea, where you'll find one of the best egg sandos in town.

Sandwiched between two slices of white bread are eggs scrambled to fluffy perfection. For an extra hit of umami, try the corned beef option.

3

To perfectly complement your lunch, head to Causeway Bay's Shari Shari for *kakigori*, a shaved-ice dessert. Founder Shingo Take imports both ice and seasonal fruits from his native Japan to meet the demand for his sweet and flavourful concoctions.



Pick up quality print titles at The Monocle Shop

EVENING

1

Sunset is the perfect time to take in Hong Kong's skyline. Start at East Coast Park Precinct where the promenade extends from Causeway Bay back to Central, via the public-art-dotted Tamar Park and Golden Bauhinia Square, home to a daily flag-raising ceremony. At Central Pier, the 60-metre-high Hong Kong Observation Wheel offers panoramic views of Kowloon across the harbour.

2

After a long walk, treat yourself to some premium calories at Yardbird. Beloved by gourmets and chefs alike, the

Michelin-starred *izakaya* and bar serves the city's best yakitori. From miso breast and ume thigh to neck skin and gizzard, if it is a part of the chicken, they serve it.

3

End your evening at Kinsman, a new cocktail bar that has quickly become Soho favourite. The brainchild of F&B enthusiast and writer Gavin Yeung, Kinsman's extensive cocktail menu is themed around traditional Hong Kong and Chinese flavours. The menu on Monocle's visit included the "Afternoon in Swatow", a twist on a Talisker 10 whisky fat-wash with Chiuchow beef stock and artisanal coffee from Sang Roastery.



Kinsman cocktail bar is a Soho favourite

4/5

Attracting talent

A HUB FOR CULTURAL EXCHANGE

World-class institutions harbouring cultural dialogue



HONG KONG IN NUMBERS

200+

Major international events in the city (in 2024)

MAINLAND TREASURES

Hong Kong Palace Museum

With its signature bronze ceiling, an ode to Beijing Palace’s gold roofs, Hong Kong Palace Museum has been showcasing objects from China and abroad since 2022.

A collaborative project with Beijing’s Palace Museum, this exceptional institution allows visitors to explore a unique selection of prized antiques and art objects without having to travel to mainland China. The museum’s aim, says deputy director of curatorial, collection and programming Dr Daisy Wang (*pictured*), is to “create a lively dialogue between the past and the present”.

With more than 1,500 loans and about 220 objects categorised as “grade-one national treasures” (an official



classification that forbids some being displayed outside China), the museum’s nine galleries house valuables from Beijing’s Forbidden City, including portraiture, enamelware and jewellery. Many underwent complex protocols and logistics to be displayed in Hong Kong, an unprecedented new “guinea pig” model, says Wang.

These mainland treasures are complemented by generous donations from collectors in Hong Kong, including rare imperial porcelain and Ming furniture. A 400-seat auditorium for conferences and vast atriums with windows overlooking the harbour add to the sense of a venue that provides an essential cultural hub for the world.

FOUR WALLS TO INSPIRE

Tai Kwun

Tai Kwun is a former police compound, home to Hong Kong’s first prison. The site was revitalised by Herzog & de Meuron, reopening in 2018 as a public centre for heritage and arts.

Yet despite the addition of two new buildings, visitors can still travel back in time via documents, timelines and anecdotes that explore the history of the Central site and the wider arts-and-crafts scene in an immersive way.

One of those new buildings is JC Contemporary, a sleek arts centre frequented by a younger audience attending contemporary exhibitions and annual art book fairs.



Its modern steel-and-concrete exterior uses recycled industrial materials that echo the masonry blocks of the site’s historic buildings.

Tai Kwun’s exhibition programme often utilises that blend of modern and heritage architecture, developing work that responds to the various spaces. “Pretopia” by Polish artist Alicja Kwade, for example, pairs nine works from across her career with newly commissioned installations tailored to the history and architecture of F Hall. “The more you see, the more you know,” says Tai Kwun’s head of art, Pi Li (*pictured*). “Go to the museum first and we’ll try our best to make your experience meaningful and remarkable.”

BRIDGING EAST AND WEST
Hong Kong Museum of Art

Established in 1962, Hong Kong Museum of Art (HKMoA) was the city’s first public art museum, yet it continues to figure on lists of the world’s most popular art institutions.

HKMoA’s curatorial concept centres on making traditional art appealing to everyone, especially younger visitors, via interactive and engaging ways. For example, an in-museum personality test (also available online) allows visitors to determine their personality type and search for work on display that might resonate.

The displays include signature ink-and-oil paintings by modern Chinese master Wu Guanzhong, whose aesthetic



reflects his admiration for nature and thoughts about life. Excerpts from Wu’s writing offer an insightful first-person take on the late artist’s work.

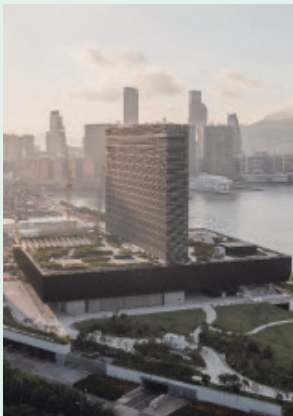
The museum’s director, Dr Maria Mok (*pictured*), says HKMoA’s success lies in its ambition to build a “bridge that links the East and West, the mainstream and the fringe, to curate this rich world of contrast with a Hong Kong viewpoint”. With a renovated glass façade, visitors can take a leisurely stroll through the light-filled corridors when pausing to reflect on the art.

ON THE WATERFRONT
M+

Located on Victoria Harbour waterfront, Asia’s first contemporary visual culture museum, M+, brings Hong Kong local talents and curatorship to a global audience.

Through art, video, design and architecture, M+ tells stories of Asian contemporary arts that are yet to be fully reflected in museums in the West, according to museum director Suhanya Raffel (*pictured*).

The museum’s striking terracotta-tile-clad tower has a dynamic LED system on the south façade that displays M+ content, an eye-catching addition to the city’s buzzing night skyline. Food lovers should book a table at the



tower’s third-floor restaurant, Mosu Hong Kong, for an unforgettable fine-dining experience. Surrounding the venue is WestK Art Park, a stunning waterfront green space for leisurely walks, music shows and sunset views.

Back inside, M+’s impressive temporary exhibitions emphasise multicultural dialogue. September sees the opening of collaborative displays with Germany’s Haus der Kunst München and The National Art Center, Tokyo, while “Picasso for Asia: A Conversation”, co-curated with Musée National Picasso-Paris, opens in March. More than 60 of the Spanish artist’s masterpieces will share space with 80 works by artists from across Asia and its diaspora.

5/5
Base desires

A HUB FOR GLOBAL EXPANSION
Why major companies are setting up HQs in HK



HONG KONG IN NUMBERS

9,960 Businesses with parent companies located outside the city (in 2024)

LAYING DOWN THE LAW
DAC Beachcroft

After 13 years in Singapore, UK-based law firm DAC Beachcroft expanded its Asian network at the request of its clients, launching a Hong Kong office in 2024.

Spearheaded by partners Ross Risby and Wai Yue Loh (pictured), this latest venture strengthens the firm’s commitment to delivering high-level legal services in Asia while meeting the rising demand for a global outlook.

Insurance is the cornerstone of DAC Beachcroft’s business, contributing two-thirds of its global revenue. Risby leads the insurance practice in Hong Kong and emphasises the city’s strategic importance. “Global



players are doing their insurance all over the world, but clients really want us in both Hong Kong and Singapore so that we can assist them at each end.”

DAC Beachcroft’s Hong Kong office has also created an opportunity to grow its shipping practice. “Hong Kong, London and Singapore are the three jurisdictions where disputes arising from shipping are to be resolved,” says Loh, who heads the firm’s shipping and international trade divisions. “If one is capable of servicing these three jurisdictions then the whole chain is covered.” In a legal landscape where agility and expertise is paramount, DAC Beachcroft’s Hong Kong expansion sets a confident tone.

CONNECTING KEY MARKETS
Qraft Technologies

As the world embraces AI, Qraft Technologies is one startup spearheading its rollout in the finance sector.

Founded in South Korea in 2016, the company provides advanced tools for financial institutions to improve performance. This plays out in two key strands of business: AI-generated investment signals and large language models that optimise work environments.

When the time came for global expansion, Hong Kong was chosen for Qraft Technologies’ next Asia outpost. From this base, Francis Geeseok OH (pictured), the company’s COO and APAC CEO, oversees a multidisciplinary team



that drives connections with Asia and beyond. “Hong Kong has been recognised as a financial hub for many decades,” says Geeseok OH. “The benefit is being able to communicate with global and regional heads of the big institutions, investment banks and asset managers.”

Qraft Technologies’s goal in Hong Kong is an acceleration of global business expansion, something that Geeseok OH says is aided by the city’s unique East-meets-West history. This presence also underscores the city’s readiness to take the lead on AI across sectors. For companies like Qraft Technologies, Hong Kong is not just a base but a launchpad for shaping the future of finance.

THE ART OF DIPLOMACY
Bonhams

For Bonhams, Hong Kong represents more than just a desirable address – it’s a natural home for the auction house’s new Asia headquarters.

The city’s mix of cultural vibrancy, financial prowess and strategic connectivity has made it an essential thread in the fabric of the global art market. Nestled within Six Pacific Place, a new towering development in Wan Chai, Bonhams’ state-of-the-art hub is a testament to its commitment to the region. The three-storey facility opened in 2024 and includes an expansive gallery, a saleroom and flexible office spaces to rival the auction house’s established offices in London, Paris and New York.



“Hong Kong has a very strategic value proposition for art industry players,” says Julia Hu (pictured), managing director of Bonhams Asia. “It is a tax-free trade zone, has a lot of HNWIs, and the logistical facilities are very mature. Lastly, Hong Kong is close to all of Asia.”

With its new headquarters, Bonhams’ Hong Kong sales reached HK\$670m (€83.5m) in 2024, a year-on-year increase of 18 per cent. Another key factor in this rise is a new type of collector. Since 2019, 35 per cent of Bonhams’ Hong Kong sales have come from millennial and Gen Z buyers. “There’s a young generation poised to usher in a new era for the auction industry,” says Hu.



Hong Kong highlights

Ten top international events in 2025

1

Art Central 2025

Returning for its tenth edition, this cornerstone of Hong Kong Art Week majors on performance, installation and video art.

26–30 March

2

Hong Kong Sevens

With 72 brief games in three days, this compact rugby tournament will be one of the first events held at Kai Tak Sports Park.

28–30 March

3

Art Basel Hong Kong 2025

Works from 242 contemporary art galleries will be joined this year by a new public film programme curated by non-profit Para Site.

28–30 March

4

49th Hong Kong International Film Festival

One of Asia's oldest red-carpet events attracts international talent and provides a platform for young Chinese filmmakers.

10–21 April

5

French May Arts Fest

Gallic arts festival satisfying Hong Kong's large expat community with food, films and further cultural delights from la République.

1–31 May

6

Asia Summit on Global Health

Annual thought-leadership forum where more than 150 exhibitors share innovations and investment opportunities in healthcare.

26–27 May

7

International Dragon Boat Races

A long canoe race (*pictured*) with an equally long and proud history. The action is best enjoyed from Tsim Sha Tsui East Promenade.

7–8 June

8

Tai Hang Fire Dragon Dance

The streets become illuminated by a fiery 67-metre-long dragon, which is made of incense sticks that are given out as blessings.

October (tbc)

9

HKTDC Hong Kong International Lighting Fair

The larger autumn edition of this biannual event spotlights elegant designs and the latest technology.

27–30 October

10

Clockenflap

Hong Kong's premier outdoor festival mixes homegrown art with international A-list musical acts.

5–7 December



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Hong Kong events
and opportunities