

# Top Tourist Destination

## Overview

With a unique blend of East and West, old and new, Hong Kong has long been one of Asia's top tourist destinations. From high-end shopping malls to bustling street bazaars, ancient Chinese temples to towering skyscrapers, historic trams to high-speed trains, Hong Kong is a city of colour and contrast.

- Hong Kong will build its brand as a premier destination for business and tourism through better use of social and natural resources, a variety of mega events, thematic annual conferences, and by integrating opportunities created by industry development.
- New themed tours, featuring heritage, art and culture, authentic experiences, green tours and cruise tours will be developed.
- Major events such as the equestrian Longines Masters of Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Rugby Sevens enhance the city's appeal.
- The Characteristic Local Tourism Incentive Scheme provides more in-depth itinerary design, training, etc, with a view to encouraging the trade to develop more thematic tours to showcase the diversified cultural landscape of Hong Kong.
- Enhance the Hong Kong "M" Mark System to support the hosting of at least 10 major international sports events in Hong Kong annually.
- Continuous support for MICE (meetings, incentive travels, conventions and exhibitions) tourism to attract high value-added visitors and consolidate Hong Kong's position as the region's premier MICE destination.

## "Hello Hong Kong"

To bolster Hong Kong's economic and business advantages, the Government launched a large-scale global promotional campaign themed "Hello Hong Kong" in early 2023. The campaign aims to showcase and promote the city's bright new economic prospects, new cultural vision and new travel experience to draw more business travellers and tourists.

## "Night Vibes Hong Kong"

The "Night Vibes Hong Kong" campaign stages a wealth of diversified night-time events with local characteristics all over the city starting from mid-September 2023, covering entertainment, arts, culture, consumption and more to create a dynamic vibe for citizens and tourists to feel the vibrancy and energy of Hong Kong's nightlife.

## Tourism Attractions

Hong Kong continues to develop the tourism sector by expanding its world-class attractions.

- **Ocean Park** is a public recreational, educational and conservational park, and also a major resort and leisure destination in Hong Kong, featuring diversified attractions including animal exhibits, all weather indoor and outdoor Water World, etc. The park is taking forward its future strategy to transform itself into a destination that focuses on conservation and education, grounded in nature and complemented by adventure and leisure elements to enhance visitor experience.

- **Hong Kong Disneyland Resort** is one of the most popular themed resorts in Asia. The resort is taking forward its multi-year expansion plan and has rolled out various new attractions in recent years, including the "Castle of Magical Dreams" unveiled in 2020, "Follow Your Dreams" daytime stage show in 2021, "Momentous" nighttime spectacular in 2022, and the world's first ever and largest "World of Frozen" in 2023. Looking ahead, more new attractions are coming on stream, including a "Marvel" super heroes themed area.
- **Peak Tram** has over 130 years of history and is one of the most popular tourist attractions in Hong Kong. Its upgrading plan was already completed in 2022. Apart from having new tramcars with carrying capacity up to 210 passengers, the lower terminus in Central has been expanded into a covered and temperature-controlled waiting area which can accommodate up to about 1,300 passengers while the upper terminus at the Peak has also been renovated. These have significantly enhanced the service and visitor experience offered by Peak Tram.

### **Cruise Terminal**

- The state-of-the-art Kai Tak Cruise Terminal began operating in 2013.
- The Terminal consists of spacious waiting and service areas for passengers and a 23,000 sq m rooftop garden with panoramic views of the Victoria Harbour. Equipped with an impressive array of amenities, the terminal is capable of receiving mega cruise ships. It is also an ideal event venue with flexible and open design.
- Hong Kong is an excellent place for cruise lines to develop fly-cruise business for long-haul cruise passengers who wish to explore Asia.

### **Culinary Paradise**

- The 16th edition of the MICHELIN Guide Hong Kong & Macau features 214 restaurants, including 79 Michelin-starred restaurants in Hong Kong.
- Many inexpensive restaurants and street stalls offering local tastes make Hong Kong's Michelin restaurants some of the most affordable in the world.

### **Asia's Top MICE Destination**

Hong Kong is Asia's premier MICE destination.

- Hong Kong ranked third in the Best Business City in World category in the 2023 Business Traveller Asia-Pacific Awards and the Best City for Meetings in the Best of the Decade Awards (2010-2019) by Smart Travel Asia.
- Hong Kong's world-class venues can accommodate conventions and exhibitions (C&E) of different scales.
- To consolidate the city's status as a premier venue for large-scale international C&E activities, the Government is taking forward the AsiaWorld-Expo Phase 2 project, together with the Wan Chai North redevelopment project near the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (HKCEC), to substantially increase large-scale C&E spaces. Thematic financial forums will also be organised, such as the Global Financial Leaders' Investment Summit and the Wealth for Good in Hong Kong Summit.
- The Government launched the \$1.4-billion Incentive Scheme for Recurrent Exhibitions in July 2023 for three years to attract exhibitions to be recurrently staged in Hong Kong. It is expected to provide incentives to over 200 exhibitions.

Main venues:

- HKCEC in Wan Chai
- AsiaWorld-Expo on Lantau Island, close to the airport
- Hong Kong International Trade and Exhibition Centre in Kowloon Bay
- Kai Tak Cruise Terminal in Kowloon

### **Events Galore**

- The Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB) organises popular events every year, such as Hong Kong International Dragon Boat Races, Harbour Chill Carnival, Hong Kong Cyclothon, Hong Kong Wine & Dine Festival – Taste Around Town, Hong Kong WinterFest, Hong Kong New Year Countdown Celebrations and International Chinese New Year Night Parade.
- Hong Kong hosts a wide variety of international sporting events, including the Standard Chartered Hong Kong Marathon and the UCI Track Cycling Nations Cup-Hong Kong, China.
- Arts events such as the Art Basel Hong Kong, Art Central, Hong Kong International Film Festival, Le French May, International Arts Carnival and World Cultures Festival enhance the city's reputation as a hub for arts and culture in Asia.
- The Hong Kong Sevens attracts top teams and thousands of rugby fans from around the world.
- The Tourism Commission has launched a number of projects enriched with art, heritage, creative and green tourism characteristics, such as "Sai Kung Hoi Arts Festival", "Design District Hong Kong", "City in Time" and "Enhancement of Hiking Trails" in recent years, and is working at full steam to roll out another phase of these projects.
- In redoubled efforts to soft-sell Hong Kong, the HKTB will promote immersive, in-depth tourism with themes like "Citywalk", and promote young-adult focused activities such as hiking, cycling, stand-up paddle-boarding, trail running and stargazing in the wilderness.

### **Eco-tourism**

Hong Kong offers a spectacular range of natural scenery within easy reach of urban areas. About 40 per cent of Hong Kong's land mass has been designated as country parks and special areas.

- There are 25 country parks, 22 special areas and seven marine parks with scenic hills, woodlands, reservoirs and coastline, most of them easily accessible.
- The stunning Hong Kong UNESCO Global Geopark showcases ancient geological landscapes.
- There are numerous hiking trails, outlying islands and other green attractions for nature lovers.
- Many hiking trails are easily accessible from urban areas.
- The 100-kilometre MacLehose Trail was listed on NatGeo's World's Best Hikes: 20 Dream Trails.
- To offer new experience of green and heritage tourism to visitors in the coming few years, the Government has been upgrading the facilities of the Hong Kong Wetland Park and enhancing progressively the tourism supporting facilities of 20 hiking trails within country parks which are popular and with tourism appeal.
- The Sha Tau Kok Frontier Closed Area is also being opened for sightseeing progressively to promote cultural and eco-tourism of Sha Tau Kok and nearby outlying islands.

### **Heritage Conservation**

There are currently 134 declared monuments, including historic buildings, ancient forts, rock carvings and archaeological sites.

- The Revitalising Historic Buildings Through Partnership Scheme encourages non-profit-making organisations to transform government-owned historic buildings into cultural landmarks, preserving their integrity while enhancing their utility.

#### **Awarded projects:**

- Mei Ho House transformed into the YHA Mei Ho House Youth Hostel which received an Honourable Mention in the 2015 UNESCO Awards.
- Old Tai Po Police Station, turned into the Green Hub for sustainable living, received an Honourable Mention in the 2016 UNESCO Awards.
- Old Tai O Police Station transformed into the Tai O Heritage Hotel, earning the Award of Merit in the 2013 UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation.
- The revitalisation of the Blue House Cluster into the Viva Blue House received the Award of Excellence in the 2017 UNESCO Awards.

#### **Other completed projects under the Scheme include:**

- Former Lai Chi Kok Hospital which has become the Jao Tsung-I Academy.
- Lui Seng Chun has become the Hong Kong Baptist University School of Chinese Medicine Lui Seng Chun.
- Stone Houses has been revitalised into the Stone Houses Family Garden.
- Bridges Street Market in Central has been revitalised into the Hong Kong News-Expo.
- Former Fanling Magistracy has become the Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups Leadership Institute.
- Haw Par Mansion, with its private garden built in the 1930s by "Tiger Balm King" Aw Boon Haw, has been revitalised into Haw Par Music, promoting Chinese and Western music training and public programmes.
- No. 12 School Street has been revitalised into the Tai Hang Fire Dragon Heritage Centre, which introduces the history and culture of the Tai Hang Fire Dragon and promotes traditional Hakka culture.
- Old Dairy Farm Senior Staff Quarters has been revitalised into the Pokfulam Farm, which reveals the history and operation of the Old Dairy Farm, and presents the culture of Pokfulam village and the surrounding area.
- Lady Ho Tung Welfare Centre has been revitalised into the Lady Ho Tung Welfare Centre Eco-Learn Institute.

Apart from the Revitalisation Scheme, other built heritage conservation projects include:

- The Former Police Married Quarters on Hollywood Road in Central has been revitalised into a creative industries landmark, PMQ.
- The Central Police Station Compound, dating from the mid-19th century, has been revitalised and transformed into Tai Kwun – Centre for Heritage and Arts ("Big Station" in Cantonese), a vibrant centre for heritage and contemporary arts and culture.
- The Former Explosives Magazine Compound of the Old Victoria Barracks, built between 1843 and 1874 by the British Army, now houses the Asia Society Hong Kong Centre. This cultural, artistic, and intellectual hub won the prestigious 2016 Institute Honor Awards for Architecture from the American Institute of Architects.

- The Central Market offers a variety of community and festive events for the public after its revitalisation.

### **Victoria Harbour**

Attractive promenades spanning a total of around 27km have been built along both sides of iconic Victoria Harbour, providing residents and visitors with easily accessible vibrant open spaces for a range of events and activities.

### **Highlights:**

- The longest promenade (about 7.4km) linking up the harbourfront from Shek Tong Tsui to the East Coast Park Precinct is decorated with installations by local artistes.
- The dynamic Tsim Sha Tsui Promenade with the historic cross-harbour ferry pier, cruise berthing facility, large-scale indoor and outdoor performing venues, Hong Kong Museum of Art and Avenue of Stars, and a variety of cultural, retail and food and beverage facilities.
- The Tourism Commission is working with HKTB to revamp "A Symphony of Lights" light and sound show. HKTB will, in conjunction with festivals and major events, regularly organise pyrotechnics and drone shows with different themes and designs. These shows will add vibrancy and create a joyful atmosphere in the evening to attract locals and visitors to enjoy the shows.

### **Festivals**

Hong Kong celebrates Western and Eastern festivals with equal enthusiasm.

- Lunar New Year and the Mid-Autumn Festival are major festivals. There are also unique local festivals such as the Cheung Chau Jiao Festival (Bun Festival), Tai O Dragon Boat Water Parade, Tai Hang Fire Dragon Dance and Yu Lan Ghost Festival. Also popular are Western festivities such as Christmas, Easter, Halloween, Valentine's Day and Oktoberfest.

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