

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. In 2019, before the outbreak of COVID-19, Hong Kong welcomed more than 55 million visitors. From high-end shopping malls to bustling street bazaars, ancient Chinese temples to towering skyscrapers, neon-lit streets to verdant countryside, Hong Kong is a city of colour and contrast.

- More diversified tourism products are planned to increase Hong Kong tourism's appeal, attract more overnight and high value-added visitors and tap newer markets, once the global COVID-19 pandemic abates.
- 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.

Tourism Attractions

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

- Ocean Park Hong Kong and Hong Kong Disneyland ranked 20th and 21st respectively among theme parks worldwide, according to the latest Themed Entertainment Association's Global Attractions Attendance Report.
- Ocean Park Hong Kong is a world-class marine theme park featuring more than 80 attractions. To further enhance its appeal, the park rolled out a new animal exhibit, Little Meerkat and Giant Tortoise Adventure and green staycation activities such as "Starry Summit Glamping". In 2021, the park launched a new interactive multimedia attraction, "Explorer R" which featured a stimulating mix of virtual games and interactive fun play for kids. Opening September 21, 2021, the new all-weather Water World is the first of its kind in Asia. The 420-room oceanfront luxury resort, the Fullerton Ocean Park Hotel Hong Kong, will open soon. Under a new direction, the theme park aims to transform into a destination focussing on conservation and education, complemented by adventure and leisure elements to enhance visitor experience.
- Hong Kong Disneyland Resort is one of the most popular and best themed resorts in Asia. The resort is taking forward its multi-year expansion plan and has rolled out new attractions, such as the Moana: A Homecoming Celebration show in 2018, Ant-Man and The Wasp: Nano Battle! in 2019 and Castle of Magical Dreams in 2020. More new attractions are planned.

Cruise Terminal

- The state-of-the-art Kai Tak Cruise Terminal has strengthened Hong Kong's position as a leading cruise tourism hub.
- The Terminal comprises spacious passenger and service areas and a 23,000 sq/m rooftop garden. With 360-degree views of Victoria Harbour and an impressive array of amenities, the terminal can handle mega cruise ships. Its flexible, spacious open design offers an attractive events venue.
- Hong Kong is an excellent place for cruise companies to develop fly-cruise business for long-haul cruise passengers who wish to experience Asia.

Culinary Paradise

- The 2021 edition of the *Michelin Guide Hong Kong Macau* features 277 restaurants, including nearly 70 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 Meetings, Incentives, Travels, Conferences and Exhibitions (MICE) destination.

- Hong Kong ranked second in the Best Business City in Asia category in the Business Traveller Asia-Pacific Awards 2020 and the Best City for Meetings in Asia in the Smart Travel Asia Award in 2019.
- Hong Kong's world-class venues can accommodate conventions and exhibitions of different scales.

Main venues

- Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre in Wan Chai
- AsiaWorld-Expo near the airport
- Hong Kong International Trade and Exhibition Centre in Kowloon Bay
- Kai Tak Cruise Terminal in Kai Tak

Events Galore

- The Hong Kong Tourism Board organises popular events such as the International Chinese New Year Night Parade, Hong Kong Winterfest and Hong Kong New Year Countdown Celebrations.
- Hong Kong hosts a wide variety of international sporting events, including the Standard Chartered Hong Kong Marathon and the UCI Track Cycling World Cup-Hong Kong, China.
- The Hong Kong Sevens attracts top teams and thousands of rugby fans from around the world.

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 24 country parks, 22 special areas and six 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 Hong Kong 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.
- Sai Kung in the New Territories is rated the World's 9th "Coolest Neighbourhood" by Time Out magazine in its 2021 Index

Heritage Conservation

There are currently 129 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.

Projects

- North Kowloon Magistracy revitalised into the former Savannah College of Art and Design Hong Kong.
- Mei Ho House transformed into the YHA Mei Ho House Youth Hostel.
- Old Tai Po Police Station, turned into the Green Hub for sustainable living, received Honourable Mentions in the 2011, 2015 and 2016 *UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation*.
- Old Tai O Police Station transformed into the Tai O Heritage Hotel gained 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, the top honour, in the 2017 *UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation*.
- 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.

Other 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 has been revitalised into the Hong Kong News-Expo.
- Former Fanling Magistracy has become the Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups Leadership 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.

Victoria Harbour

By end-2020, 24 km of attractive promenades had been built along both sides of iconic Victoria Harbour, providing residents and visitors vibrant open spaces for a range of events and activities.

Highlights

- The longest promenade (about 5.5 km) linking up the harbourfront in the core business district on the northern shore of Hong Kong Island is decorated with installations by local artistes.
- The dynamic Tsim Sha Tsui Promenade with the historic cross-harbour ferry, 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 were renovated and opened in 2019.

- The nightly Symphony of Lights features skyscrapers on both sides of the harbourfront beaming lights to the accompaniment of music.

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.
- Arts events such as the Art Basel, 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.

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