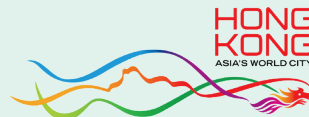

HONG KONG

Home of global competition



Co-hosting the 15th National Games of the People's Republic of China provides an opportunity for Hong Kong to restate its reputation as a top international events hub

Brand Hong Kong × Monocle

1/5 The Host City

ESTABLISH A BASE

Why infrastructure and connectivity set Hong Kong apart



HONG KONG

Asia's sports hub

Much of Hong Kong's appeal rests on its dual nature: a city framed by mountains, East meeting West, commerce and culture. That versatility now underpins its ambitions in sport too. Part arena, part entertainment grounds, Kai Tak Sports Park is central to the government's wider plan to make the city an even stronger draw for global events.

For decades, Hong Kong has been synonymous with rugby sevens. Today, the city's sporting calendar is expanding with football, fencing and tennis having already graced venues in Kai Tak Sports Park. "It is set to host an exciting line-up of large-scale events, including the long-awaited 15th National Games," says Rosanna Law, Hong Kong's Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism.

The ambition is backed with investment. In the 2025-26 financial year, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government has earmarked HK\$9.2bn (€1bn) for promoting sports development. The goal is not just to host more events but to train athletes representing Hong Kong, China and foster a broader culture of sports and entertainment. "This experience provides a valuable blueprint for future large-scale events, instills a lasting passion for sport in the community and paves the way for more medals in major sports games," adds Law.

Kai Tak Sports Park is designed with the community in mind. Its open spaces and dining quarter draw in residents as much as tourists, while its architecture and location encourage everyday encounters. This, alongside an impressive transport network, shows Hong Kong's ambition to balance international appeal with local liveability. As Law sees it, the combination of infrastructure, experience and ambition is what sets the city apart. The next chapter, she says, will further establish Hong Kong as a global hub where sport, culture and community meet.

Clockwise from left: Kai Tak Stadium sits at the heart of Kai Tak Sports Park; Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, Rosanna Law; the stadium's pearlescent façade; residents are drawn to the Park





KAI TAK SPORTS PARK
A triumphant start

In March, a Cathay Pacific Airbus A350 flew low over Kai Tak, commemorating a century of aviation at the site of the Kai Tak Airport, which operated from 1925 to 1998.

The flypast during the 2025 rugby sevens tournament was also a curtain-raiser for the area’s next chapter, heralding the first mega event at the new Kai Tak Sports Park. The 28-hectare site was designed as more than just a stadium, and its first year has shown just how well that ambition has been realised. “It’s been a big achievement,” says John Sharkey, CEO of Kai Tak Sports Park. “We’ve had a million people coming to the stadium in the first five months and 7 million across the wider precinct.”

The concerts, including those from Coldplay and G.E.M., have proven the stadium’s acoustics, while July’s Football Festival brought crowds to their feet. For Sharkey, the highlights are sporting ones. Liverpool, AC Milan, Arsenal and Tottenham Hotspur played at the stadium, including the first North London derby outside of the UK.

Sharkey points out that attendance at training sessions often exceeded that of the matches in other cities – a talking point in Europe, North America and Australia – and underlined the appetite for sport in the city. “Kai Tak is off to a really good start,” says Sharkey. “We’ve hosted sport, community sports, entertainment and destination events. It’s been a really good launch for us.”

Clockwise from left: AC Milan play in the Hong Kong Football Festival 2025; Kai Tak Youth Sports Ground; Kai Tak Sports Park CEO John Sharkey; Kai Tak Sports Park is well connected by the efficient MTR



GREATER BAY AREA
Connecting people



The National Games of the People’s Republic of China is the country’s largest multi-sport event, held every four years and drawing top athletes to compete on a grand stage. The 15th edition takes place in Hong Kong for the first time with focal venues including Kai Tak Sports Park.

The 15th National Games, co-hosted with Guangdong and Macau, will highlight Hong Kong’s strong connectivity to the Greater Bay Area sporting network. The two-week event will test not only the athletes but also the city’s transport networks, venues and hospitality infrastructure. From the high-speed rail link with Guangzhou and the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge to ferries and flights, the National Games will show how seamlessly the city is connected to its neighbours.

“China is one of the world’s strongest sporting nations,” says Rosanna Law, Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism. “Hosting the National Games allows the public to witness top athletes from the Mainland and Hong Kong excel on the nation’s largest stage. It will foster immense pride, strengthen national identity and inspire younger generations to participate, ultimately enriching Hong Kong’s sports culture.”

Eight competition events will be hosted in Hong Kong, providing a showcase of the city’s organisational expertise and facilities. But the impact will be felt beyond sport. By co-hosting the National Games, Hong Kong reinforces its role in promoting the region’s competitiveness on an international scale. “This experience allows Hong Kong to present its charm as Asia’s world city,” says Law. “We will continue to leverage Kai Tak’s strengths to attract more world-class mega events and boost the development of sports and mega events in Hong Kong.”



2/5

An Eventful Year

PLAN YOUR NEXT VISIT

Twelve months of world-class sporting events in Hong Kong



HONG KONG CALENDAR Forthcoming highlights

International sporting occasions are increasingly influencing global travel. Hong Kong plays host to many of the region's most anticipated events, from marathons and sailing races to a unique bun-scrambling contest.

1

VICTORIA HARBOUR RACE

22 November

One of the world's most iconic skylines, Hong Kong's Victoria Harbour is also among the region's busiest waterways. But this traffic comes to a standstill when 4,000 swimmers are given the opportunity to compete in the annual Victoria Harbour Race, a 1km-long course from Wan Chai's Golden Bauhinia Square Public Pier to Tsim Sha Tsui's Avenue of Stars. Both are prime locations for spectators, but Wan Chai Temporary Promenade also has a great view.

hkharbourrace.com

2

AROUND THE ISLAND RACE

13 December

Organised by Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club in collaboration with the Hong Kong, China Rowing Association, the Around the Island Race dates back to 1864, when six boats first navigated the 45km course. Today, more than 200 vessels set sail, from keelboats and dinghies to beachcats and cruisers. They are manned by more than 1,500 crew, including members of Hong Kong's numerous yacht, sailing and rowing clubs, as well as overseas competitors.

rhkyc.org.hk

3

HONG KONG MARATHON

18 January 2026

The annual Hong Kong Marathon is the city's largest annual long-distance running event, attracting



Clockwise from far left: the Hong Kong Marathon passes some of the city's most impressive landmarks; swimmers prepare for the Victoria Harbour Race; Around the Island Race crews make a splash

international athletes and local competitors. Three categories of race – 10km, half-marathon and full marathon – draw 74,000 participants, who run along some of Hong Kong’s most famous roads and infrastructures, including Nathan Road, Ting Kau Bridge and the Western Harbour Crossing. Whether breaking records, setting personal bests or donning fun costumes, the Hong Kong Marathon has something for everyone.
hkmarathon.com

4

HONG KONG SEVENS
17-19 April 2026

Possibly the city’s most popular sporting event of the year, the Hong Kong Sevens is also one of the biggest tournaments in the World Rugby Sevens Series calendar. This year saw the tournament move from its longtime home of Hong Kong Stadium to the new Kai Tak Stadium, increasing crowd capacity to 50,000. Next year is the tournament’s 50th anniversary with 24 teams from all corners of the globe competing in more than 70 matches.
hksevns.com

5

CHEUNG CHAU BUN FESTIVAL
24 May 2026

Inscribed on the intangible cultural heritage list since 2011, this traditional Chinese festival is unique to Hong Kong’s outlying island of Cheung Chau. Held on the eighth day of the fourth month of the Chinese calendar, the “Bun Carnival” includes a Bun Scrambling Final where contestants snatch buns from a tower erected on the soccer pitch of the Pak Tai Temple playground. The festivity attracts a crowd of more than 10,000 to Cheung Chau each year, flooding the island’s decorated streets.
cheung-chau.com

6

DRAGON BOAT RACES
From 19 June 2026

The Dragon Boat Festival (or Tuen Ng) falls on the fifth day of the fifth month of each Chinese calendar year – a public holiday in Hong Kong. Each boat is adorned with a dragon’s head on its bow, and rowers paddle in perfect synchronicity to the beat of a drum. Races are staged everywhere from Stanley to Sha Tin, but the largest – the Hong Kong International Dragon Boat Races – takes place on the Tsim Sha Tsui waterfront. More than 100 local and international teams compete in the waters of the scenic Victoria Harbour, celebrating a Chinese cultural tradition that dates back more than a thousand years.



3/5 Game Faces

MEET THE TEAM

Interviews with three key players in the National Games

**HEAD, NATIONAL GAMES COORDINATION
OFFICE (HONG KONG)**
Yeung Tak-keung

What makes Hong Kong an ideal host city?

Hong Kong is an international city. We have very good connections with other parts of the world and very good IT infrastructure and transport networks, including the Mass Transit Railway (MTR), bus and ferry services, which are very convenient and affordable, so we have always been a hub for conventions and exhibitions. But we did not have a world-class stadium until now, so Kai Tak Sports Park has quickly become a landmark for Hong Kong and the region.

Was the potential for success on home soil part of the appeal of Hong Kong co-hosting the National Games?

Hong Kong’s sports culture has improved a lot because the government invests in promoting it. Our athletes are doing well in international events, but it’s rare for them to compete in front of a home crowd. So, this time, we are hosting the National Games. We chose to host sports in which we think we would be competitive, so we should be able to see top performances from our athletes.

What are your ambitions for the National Games?

Competition is the core of the Games. So, we want to provide a stage for athletes to perform their best and have an exciting competition in Hong Kong. And we want to cooperate closely with Guangdong and Macau to promote the Greater Bay Area. We want to demonstrate our capabilities to host world-class events in the future. If the National Games is successful, the potential is unlimited.



Clockwise from bottom left: the Dragon Boat Races; the Bun Scrambling Final in Cheung Chau; Hong Kong Rugby Sevens; Yeung Tak-keung, head of the National Games Coordination Office (Hong Kong)



VOLUNTEER, 15TH NATIONAL GAMES
OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA
Raymond Yip Chak-yan

How proud are you to be a part of the first National Games to be hosted in Hong Kong?

As a member of our motherland and a Hong Konger, I am particularly excited and proud to be part of this premier national event on our doorstep.

Which events are you looking forward to the most?

I am looking forward to the fencing in which Hong Kong excelled at the 2020 and 2024 Summer Olympics. For the first time in Hong Kong's history, our team won gold medals in fencing in two Olympic Games in a row. I hope that our athletes will continue to scale new heights at the 15th National Games.

What do you hope visitors take away from their experience of the National Games?

I hope that they come away convinced that Hong Kong has all the necessary core competences and conditions to host mega cultural and sport events, in the same way that we have firmly established our leading reputation for organising world-class trade fairs and business events.

SWIMMER, 15TH NATIONAL GAMES
OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA
Cindy Cheung

How has living in Hong Kong helped your ambitions to become an Olympic swimmer?

Having access to multiple world-class swimming facilities, particularly in the Hong Kong Sports Institute, enables me to refine my techniques and enhance my performance with advanced equipment. The growing passion for sports among citizens has also fostered my personal growth, exemplified by the University of Hong Kong's support for my dual career path.

You are majoring in psychology. Do your studies offer an advantage when it comes to understanding your sport?

Mental strength is crucial to my performance. The challenges of being a student athlete resonate deeply with the topics I study, such as motivations and goal setting.

Will the chance to compete at home give you an edge?

I am honoured to represent Hong Kong in the National Games. Although the swimming events take place in Shenzhen, its proximity allows me to feel more at ease in the venue, which can positively impact my performance.



4/5
Sporting Legacy

LOOK TO THE FUTURE

Why there is more than the Games on Hong Kong's horizon



Capitalising on the Games

Built on the former site of Hong Kong’s airport, Kai Tak Sports Park has transformed Kowloon East into one of the city’s most dynamic new districts.

But beyond the high-profile visitors, the Sports Park has also integrated neatly into the neighbourhood and the wider city. “We’ve succeeded in bringing the local community together,” says Kai Tak Sports Park CEO John Sharkey. “The key is that we’ve got some big pulls: lifestyle, shopping and sport, culture and art tours.”

The question of legacy is central. Co-hosting the 15th National Games of the People’s Republic of China will be a defining moment for Hong Kong, but it is what comes next that will shape the city’s long-term positioning. The Games will reinforce Hong Kong’s reputation as a place that people come to not only for sporting spectacle but also for the quality of life.

Families can spend time at the playgrounds EpicLand or Playfield 5. Others drop by for the gallery tours or make use of the jogging and cycling paths or open courts. The result is a destination that appeals as much to casual visitors as it does diehard sports fans.

“We want it to be a neighbourhood that you can come and interact with,” says Sharkey. “It’s a place to participate in community sport, shop, and do fitness activities. We’re focused on the Dining Cove and the East Village, and how we can make that a more engaging space.” Sharkey says that the sports park has been a driver for economic growth. “There are careers here. We had more than 1,000 people coming to look at job opportunities working for Kai Tak Sports Park events in the latest recruitment campaign.”

Other cities around the world have shown how powerful these multipurpose spaces can be. London’s Olympic Park, redeveloped after the 2012 Summer Olympics, has helped bring new life to an under-served part of the city while Singapore’s Sports Hub has shown how leisure, retail and community facilities can come together in one place. Like these projects, Kai Tak Sports Park has set new standards, helping the city to shine on the world stage while enhancing daily life for its residents.



5/5 Active Pursuits

GET YOURSELF MOVING

A guide to Hong Kong's premier wellness destinations

1

BEST TRAIL RUNNING ROUTE

With hundreds of named peaks, many of which are easily accessible from the city centre, Hong Kong is a prime location for trail running. Among the very best is Tai Mo Shan, an extinct volcano that trumps the city's other peaks in both altitude and magnitude. One of the most popular routes starts at Rotary Park, which offers views from the New Territories to Victoria Harbour, and extends 4km to the mountain's weather radar station. The route also passes the scenic Tai Mo Shan Lookout, overlooking the Yuen Long plain.



Runners can enjoy Hong Kong's panoramic views



2

TOP OUTDOOR SWIMMING SPOT

As a coastal city, Hong Kong has an abundance of beaches. The Leisure and Cultural Services Department manages 42 of them and one of the standouts, beloved by both locals and expats alike, is Shek O. This long beach is located on the east coast of Hong Kong Island's Southern District and is easily reached by public transport from Shau Kei Wan. It's equipped with changing rooms, showers and a barbecue area, as well as plenty of cafés and dining spots in the nearby village.

3

BEST HIKING TRAIL

At 869 metres, Lantau Island's Sunset Peak is the third highest in Hong Kong. It's also home to one of the most scenic hiking trails in the city, providing views of the nearby Lantau Peak, the outlying Soko Islands and Cheung Sha – Hong Kong's longest beach. As the name suggests, Sunset Peak is a great viewpoint at twilight, especially in late autumn, when gentle fields of silvergrass flourish along the trail. Weather conditions are optimal in March and April, with the added benefit of fewer crowds.



Silvergrass fields flourish on Sunset Peak hikes



4

BEST PARK FOR TAI CHI

The ancient martial art of Tai Chi remains a popular practice in Hong Kong, combining the benefits of both exercise and meditation. Many gather in groups during early mornings to engage in this activity in public spaces like Victoria Park, the largest park on Hong Kong Island. Nestled within Causeway Bay, this 19-hectare area is also equipped with indoor and outdoor sports facilities, such as tennis courts, football pitches, basketball courts and an impressive swimming pool complex.



5

TOP CYCLING ROUTE

With dedicated bicycle lanes throughout the New Territories, cycling is a great way to explore Hong Kong's northern region. The 55km track from Tuen Mun to Sha Tin offers both breathtaking natural scenery of the area's parks, wetlands and mountains, and an authentic cultural experience through heritage sites and historical buildings such as the Che Kung Temple in Sha Tin (pictured). The route also passes the Hakka walled village of Tsang Tai Uk, and the Tai Fu Tai Mansion, which dates to the Qing dynasty.

6

BEST WATERSPORTS DESTINATION

Often referred to as "Hong Kong's back garden", Sai Kung is dotted with fishing villages, pristine beaches and scenic hiking trails. Unique geological formations also make it a top destination for locals and visitors alike. Spots such as Sharp Island – which features everything from beaches to coral and rock formations in a 2.5-kilometre-long stretch – is also the go-to for all things watersports, whether you're looking to kayak, paddleboard, snorkel or scuba dive. Best of all, it is just 15 minutes by boat from Sai Kung Pier.



Sharp Island is part of "Hong Kong's back garden"

7

TOP ROCK CLIMBING SPOT

Located off the eastern coast of Hong Kong is Tung Lung Chau, a 2.4 sq km island offering three main rock climbing areas on its northeastern shore. The most popular is the Technical Wall by the cliffs below Tung Lung Fort, while to the south is Sea Gully, a rock face hanging above an ocean inlet. The third, the appropriately named Big Wall, is a vertical cliff positioned above a sea cave. Tung Lung Chau is accessible, from Sai Wan Ho's typhoon shelter and Sam Ka Tsuen's pier, by public ferry – although they only operate on weekends and public holidays. Alternatively, private speedboats can be hired to truly arrive in style.

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The cliffs around Tung Lung Fort are one of many great rock climbing destinations in Hong Kong