HONG KONG Walks
Eight Cultural and Historical Journeys

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DISCOVER HONG KONG AR walks app series

Enjoy urban distractions, rustic retreats, cultural discoveries, historical insights and more in three apps designed with self-guided tours, offline maps, augmented reality (AR) and other features to help independent travellers journey deep into the heart of Asia’s world city.

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A bustling metropolis and a haven for natural beauty; a city where rich Chinese tradition co-exists with cutting-edge global innovation; a place where the ancient and modern live side by side: Asia’s world city gives you a tremendous variety of unique travel experiences in one compact destination.

The eight self-guided walks in this book are designed to take you into the heart of Hong Kong; to experience its fascinating past and feel the pulse of its vibrant present. Along the way you will walk from neighbourhoods of shops dispensing ancient remedies to ones where chic bars and restaurants draw a glamorous clientele. You’ll find elegant colonial architectural gems in between iconic modern skyscrapers. You’ll squeeze into teeming street markets and relax in soothing gardens. You’ll take time out in incense-filled temples and state-of-the-art shopping malls. And you’ll stand before the walls of centuries-old villages and the breathtaking skyline of Victoria Harbour.

In Hong Kong, every moment is an opportunity to experience a different world. And these journeys will ensure you make the most of it.

Happy travels!
Central & Western District

TRAVEL THROUGH TIME
CENTRAL & WESTERN DISTRICT

Catch intriguing glimpses of daily life in Hong Kong with a stroll through time in the Central & Western District. Starting in the Western area, you’ll discover a world of wonder where the hustle and bustle of this modern city mingle with the colourful age-old traditions of yesterday. Here, among the dried seafood and Chinese herb shops, you’ll see traditions of the past that remain vibrant today. As you continue along the walk, you’ll experience time through the ages ending in Central, the financial heart of Hong Kong, full of energy and dynamism. Its modern towers of steel and glass symbolise Hong Kong’s success.

Note: Sections of this tour involve walks up steep hills which could be strenuous for some people.

MTR Sheung Wan Station Exit B, turn right, walk about three minutes.

1. Western Market & Sheung Wan Fong

The Western Market, an Edwardian-style building originally housing the waterfront Harbour Office when built in 1906, later became a food market before closing in 1988. Two years later, it was declared a historical monument, renovated and then re-opened in 1991 with themed shops. Next to it is a compass-like piazza named Sheung Wan Fong – a convenient spot from which to set off on your voyage of discovery of the surrounding Sheung Wan area packed with its traditional trades and unique assortment of shops. The Western Market is open daily 10am to midnight. Enquiries +852 6029 2675.

Walk along Morrison Street, turn right into Wing Lok Street.

2. Ginseng and Bird’s Nest Street* / Dried Seafood Street* / Herbal Medicine Street*
【參茸燕窩街】* / 【海味街】* / 【藥材街】*

Wing Lok Street and Bonham Strand West are lined with specialty shops selling ginseng and bird’s nest. Previously known as Nam Pak Hong after the Nam Pak Hong Chamber of Commerce (North-South Chamber of Commerce) located there.

At the end of Wing Lok Street, turn left into Des Voeux Road West. Discover the surprising varieties of exotic dried seafood available on this street. You’ll find rare and expensive items gathered from around the world.

Walk along Des Voeux Road West, turn left into Ko Shing Street. This is the wholesale centre of Hong Kong’s thriving herbal medicine trade. It is renowned for its wide selection of herbal medicine and shops with experienced staff.

* Most shops are closed on Sundays & public holidays.
Did you know…
Possession Street, also known as Shui Hang Hau, is where the British first landed when they arrived in Hong Kong in 1841 and called the spot Possession Cape. As the population grew in this area, a road was built and was named Possession Street.

Walk back to Des Voeux Road West, turn right into Bonham Strand West. Then continue along Bonham Strand West, turn right into Possession Street, walk up the sloping street and turn left into Hollywood Road. Turn left at Lok Ku Road, then right onto Upper Lascar Row.

3. Hollywood Road (Antiques Street) / Upper Lascar Row (Cat Street)
荷李活道 / 摩羅上街【古董街】

Hollywood Road which links Sheung Wan to Central – and the nearby Upper Lascar Row often referred to as “Cat Street” – are famous for their curio and antiques shops. They can help you arrange getting large items back home.

Walk back uphill to Hollywood Road, turn left and walk to Man Mo Temple.

4. Man Mo Temple
文武廟

One of the first traditional-style temples built during the colonial era, Man Mo Temple pays homage to the Taoist gods of literature (‘Man’) and war (‘Mo’). There is also a statue of Pau Kung, the god of justice, and another of Shing Wong, the god of the city. The plaques near the entrance give an interesting perspective on the history of the temple and its gods. The temple’s historical relics include a bronze bell dated 1847 and imperial sedan chairs made in 1862. It was declared a monument in 2010. Open daily 8am to 6pm. Enquiries +852 2540 0350. (Free admission)

Did you know…
If you want to know what the future holds, you can shake fortune sticks out of a bamboo cylinder available in the temple. Read an English translation of the old sayings inscribed on the sticks in the book ‘Man Mo Temple’, on sale in the temple.

Continue walking east along Hollywood Road to the Central – Mid-Levels Escalator, take the escalator up to Staunton Street and the SoHo area.

Did you know…
At 800-metres long, Central – Mid-Levels Escalator is the world’s longest covered escalator. It links Des Voeux Road Central near the harbour to Conduit Road in the Mid-Levels. The escalator is a convenient way to see the bustling city hillside which contains great restaurants and shops. Travelling the entire length takes about 20 minutes. The escalator runs one-way downhill from 6am to 10am, and then uphill from 10:20am to midnight. The escalator is a transit link for residents of the Mid-Levels. It is best to use it after 9am when the morning rush hour is over. Please be careful when the escalator is wet.

5. SoHo
荷南美食區

This lively dining district takes its name from its location, South of Hollywood Road. SoHo consists of Shelley Street, Elgin Street, Peel Street, Staunton Street, and Old Bailey Street. Within this area you will find coffee shops, funky bars and also a variety of chic restaurants offering a huge range of international cuisine, including Nepalese, Italian, Dutch, Spanish, Mexican, Chinese and East-West fusion.
Walk down the steps beside the escalator and turn right onto Hollywood Road, which will merge into Wyndham Street. Follow the signs into Lan Kwai Fong.

6. Lan Kwai Fong

When the lights go down, the ‘in crowd’ heads for Lan Kwai Fong, a buzzing centre of clubs, bars and restaurants. A must for night owls and people-watchers.

Walk up D’Aguilar Street, cross Wyndham Street and turn left into Lower Albert Road past the Fringe Club, and follow the directional signs to Duddell Street.

7. Duddell Street Steps & Gas Lamps

These fine wide stone steps connect Ice House Street with Duddell Street and Queen’s Road Central beyond. The lamps at the head and foot of the steps, built between 1875 and 1889, are the only four gas lamps remaining in Hong Kong and are turned on daily at 6pm.

Walk along Duddell Street, cross Queen’s Road Central and walk into Ice House Street, turn right at Des Voeux Road Central and walk to the Old Supreme Court Building.

8. Old Supreme Court Building

The Old Supreme Court Building was opened 15 January 1912. However, this two-storey neo-classical granite structure was renamed the Legislative Council Building in 1985 and served as such until 15 July 2011. The building will be converted into the new offices of the Court of Final Appeal, while the Legislative Council has been moved to the new Central Government Complex at Tamar in Admiralty. (Not open to the public).

Walk along Jackson Road to Chater Road and then turn to Man Yiu Street. Walk to the Central pier 8 along Man Yiu Street for around 10-15 minutes to the Museum.

9. Hong Kong Maritime Museum

The Hong Kong Maritime Museum, located at Central Ferry Pier 8, tells the rich story of the connection between the people of Hong Kong and the sea through exhibits, interactive displays, presentations and tours. With more than 2,000 years of seafaring history, there is something for everyone.

The Museum opens from 9:30am to 5:30pm Monday to Friday and 10am to 7pm on weekends and public holidays. Closed on the first two days of Chinese New Year. Enquiries +852 3713 2500.
A CENTURY OF ARCHITECTURE
GARDEN ROAD LEISURE WALK

The Central district is at the heart of Hong Kong’s development from the 19th century to modern day and is where the headquarters of the government and the city’s financial centre are located. Garden Road abounds in culturally significant buildings steeped in Hong Kong’s rich heritage, also located here are many modern buildings designed by some of the world’s top architects.

Follow this walk and you’ll experience Hong Kong’s colonial past coming to life, with architecture dating back more than 150 years. You will see the centre of the current administration, including the residence of the Chief Executive plus iconic buildings that house some of Hong Kong’s leading commercial and financial giants. You can travel along Hong Kong’s historic timeline of more than a hundred years, and enjoy the rich culture on offer, at your own pace.

1. Flagstaff House (Museum of Tea Ware)

Flagstaff House in Hong Kong Park, Central, is the oldest existing Western building in Hong Kong. Built in 1846, it was formerly known as Headquarters House. The building was renamed Flagstaff House around 1932, and remained the office and residence of the Commander of the British Forces until 1978. In 1984, it was converted into the Museum of Tea Ware, displaying tea ware and related materials from a variety of periods. Open 10am to 6pm and closed on Tuesdays (except public holidays) and the first two days of Chinese New Year. Enquiries +852 2869 0690. (Free admission)

Follow the directional signs inside the park to Rawlinson House (Park Management Office and Cotton Tree Drive Marriage Registry).

2. Rawlinson House (Park Management Office and Cotton Tree Drive Marriage Registry)

Rawlinson House was built in the early 20th century as the residence of the Deputy Commander of the British Forces in the old Victoria Barracks. It was preserved and listed as a Grade 1 Historic Building and is now used as the Cotton Tree Drive Marriage Registry and the Park Management Office.
Walk up along Cotton Tree Drive. Turn right to the Lower Peak Tram Terminus when you pass the Hong Kong Squash Centre.

3. Peak Tram 山頂纜車

The Peak Tram has been in operation since 1888 taking people up an incline so steep that buildings appear like they are leaning at a 45-degree angle! Find out more at the Peak Tram Historical Gallery located at Lower Peak Tram Terminus. Open daily 7am to midnight. Enquiries +852 2522 0922.

Walk along Garden Road to the Helena May Building.

4. The Helena May Building 梅夫人婦女會大樓

The Helena May Building was built in 1914, officially opened in 1916, and was used as a hostel for women. During the Second World War, the building was occupied by Japanese troops. It was reopened in 1947. Enquiries +852 2522 6766. (The building is only open to the public on special occasions. Guided tours in English and Cantonese are available on certain Saturday mornings. Advance registration is required. Call or email reception@helenamay.com.)

Did you know...

St Joseph’s College was founded in 1875, and is a government subsidised Catholic boys’ school. It had been relocated several times, and moved to its present location in 1918.

St Joseph’s Church is located next to the Helena May Building.

5. St Joseph’s Church 聖約瑟堂

St Joseph’s Church, built in 1871, has survived the onslaughts of the Second World War plus numerous typhoons. The church was demolished and rebuilt in the mid 20th century. Open daily 7am to 7pm. Enquiries +852 2522 3992. (Free admission)

Cross Garden Road via the footbridge to get to the Hong Kong Zoological & Botanical Gardens.

6. Hong Kong Zoological & Botanical Gardens 香港動植物公園

Located opposite to the Government House, construction of these beautiful gardens started in 1860 and was fully completed in 1871. They are open every day and are a popular place to join locals as they perform their early morning tai chi exercises. There are more than 1,000 plant species in the garden and a zoo with various species of birds, mammals and reptiles. The Green House/Education and Exhibition Centre open daily from 9am to 4:30pm. Enquiries +852 2530 0154. (Free admission)

Cross Upper Albert Road to Government House.

7. Government House 香港禮賓府

Government House was formerly the office and residence of Governors of Hong Kong. Construction works started in 1851 and took four years to complete. It was originally built in the Georgian style. During the Japanese occupation, a dominant central tower was constructed to link the two original buildings; the roofs were also modified to add in more Japanese flavour, thus diminishing the strong European style of the mansion. Government House is now the residence and office of the Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. (Not open to the public except on special occasions. Please contact the Government House enquiries number at +852 2878 3300)
Walk along Upper Albert Road to the Central Government Offices.

8. Central Government Offices 中區政府合署

The Central Government Offices located on Lower Albert Road include the East, Main and West wings. The complex was completed in 1957 by the British colonial government. Most of the offices had been relocated to the new Central Government Complex at Tamar by end 2011. (Not open to the public)

Walk along Garden Road to St John’s Cathedral.

9. St John’s Cathedral 聖約翰座堂

St John’s Cathedral is the oldest surviving Western ecclesiastical building in Hong Kong. Built in the 13th-century gothic style, construction was completed in 1849. St John’s Cathedral was declared a monument in 1996. Open daily 7am to 6pm. Enquiries +852 2523 4157. (Free admission)

Just beyond the St John’s Cathedral is the Former French Mission Building (The Court of Final Appeal).

10. Former French Mission Building (The Court of Final Appeal) 前法國外方傳道會大樓 (終審法院)

The former French Mission Building on Battery Path, Central, was built in 1917. A chapel is incorporated in the north-west corner with its cupola projecting above the roof. The three-storey building is constructed in granite and red bricks in neo-classical style. It is now used as the Hong Kong Court of Final Appeal. (Not open to the public)

Walk back to Garden Road via Battery Path, and down to the Bank of China Tower.

11. Bank of China Tower 中銀大廈

This spectacular, 70-storey, prism-like structure is the work of the renowned American-Chinese architect I. M. Pei and, at a height of 367.4 metres, is one of the tallest buildings in Hong Kong. Its asymmetrical form is pure geometry, and has been compared to a bamboo plant, which extends its trunk successively higher with each new burst of growth. There is a viewing deck on 43/F. Open to the public free of charge from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday and 9am to 1pm on Saturdays. Closed on Sundays and public holidays. Enquiries +852 2826 6888.

Cross Queen’s Road Central to the HSBC Main Building.

12. HSBC Main Building 匯豐總行大廈

The HSBC Main Building is the first building of its size in Hong Kong constructed entirely of structural steel without any reinforced concrete in the inner core. Designed by the acclaimed British architect Lord Norman Foster, the HSBC Main Building in Central, is a marvel of modern architectural design. On a more traditional note, it is believed that rubbing the paws of the two bronze lions that have guarded the portals of the bank since 1935 will bring good luck. (Not open to the public)
EVLUVEMENT OF A FISHING VILLAGE
SHAU KEI WAN

In olden times, Shau Kei Wan (Shau Kei means pail and Wan means bay) provided a haven for ships and served as a typhoon shelter for fishermen. Down through the years, the area became a centre for shipbuilding and a number of temples dedicated to popular fisherfolk deities such as Tin Hau and Tam Kung sprang up. You can still visit them today and they provide great colour at festival time.

1. Shing Wong Temple 城隍廟

The temple was originally called Fook Tak Tsz. It was built in 1877 and expanded in 1974. It is quite popular with local residents, being situated very near the Shau Kei Wan Tram Terminus. Open daily 8am to 5pm. Enquiries +852 3718 6888 (Head Office); +852 2569 2837 (Shing Wong Temple). (Free admission)

Did you know...
Shau Kei Wan Tram Terminus
Located at the junction of Shau Kei Wan Main Street East and Kam Wa Street, this is the eastern end of the line built in 1904 that runs to Kennedy Town in the west.

Walk along Shau Kei Wan Main Street East to Miu Tung Street, The Tin Hau Temple is on your right.

2. Tin Hau Temple 天后廟

This small Tin Hau Temple dedicated to the Goddess of the Sea dates back to 1873. You’ll find a collection of well preserved murals, woodcarvings and Shek Wan pottery in the temple. Open daily 8am to 5pm. Enquiries +852 3718 6888 (Head Office); +852 2569 1264 (Tin Hau Temple). (Free admission)

Did you know...
Shau Kei Wan Main Street East
This street was originally the waterfront. In the 1860s, to crack down on pirates hiding here, the Hong Kong Government decided to clean up the area by building houses and stores on the two sides of the road. The old houses have since been replaced by modern high-rises and shops.
Walk along Shau Kei Wan Main Street East, turn right to A Kung Ngam Village Road and proceed along Tung Wong Road to reach Yuk Wong Temple.

3. Yuk Wong Temple 玉皇寶殿

This temple was originally a shrine built in the mid-19th century by people from Mainland China who worked in a nearby stone quarry. In the early 1900s, the shrine was expanded into a small temple. Open daily 8am to 5pm. Enquiries +852 3718 6888 (Head Office); +852 2967 9605 (Yuk Wong Temple). (Free admission)

Follow the directional signs, cross Tung Hei Road. Turn right and you will see the Hong Kong Museum of Coastal Defence in front of you.

4. Hong Kong Museum of Coastal Defence 香港海防博物館

The Lei Yue Mun Fort built by the British in 1887 to defend Hong Kong against invasion by sea is home to an intriguing exhibition of military memorabilia covering the 600 years from the Ming and Qing periods. It sits perched on the heights overlooking the narrow strip of water at Lei Yue Mun, now famous for its seafood restaurants. The 34,200-square-metre Museum of Coastal Defence features a Reception Area, Redoubt and Historical Trail that paint a vivid picture of Britain’s readiness to defend Hong Kong against any aggressors. Open daily (March – September) 10am to 6pm; (October – February) 10am to 5pm. Closed on Thursdays (except public holidays) and during the first two days of Chinese New Year. Enquiries +852 2569 1500. (Free on Wednesdays)

Walk back along the Tam Kung Temple Road, and follow the directional signs to Tam Kung Temple.

5. Tam Kung Temple 譚公仙聖廟

One of the few deities known only to Hong Kong, Tam Kung is also a patron of fishermen. This temple is over 100 years old and was renovated in 2002, with the original design being preserved. Besides the statue of Tam Kung, there is a small wooden junk and a dragon boat inside the temple. Open daily 8am to 5pm. Enquiries +852 2569 2559. (Free admission)

Did you know...
Birthday of Tam Kung
The birthday of Tam Kung falls on the 8th day of the 4th Lunar month. For many years, locals held an annual procession to commemorate the time when many people were saved from a plague with all the colour and pageantry of its origins.
CORNUCOPIA OF DELIGHTS
TSIM SHA TSUI

Tsim Sha Tsui is a tourist’s dream come true, offering everything visitors need for a trip of a lifetime. It is home to a variety of chic restaurants offering a huge range of international cuisines, plenty of large modern shopping malls, historic buildings, fascinating museums and the Hong Kong Cultural Centre. The scenic waterfront promenade offers some of the best views of Victoria Harbour and the mesmerising Hong Kong skyline.

1. Hillwood Soho
Hillwood Soho in Tsim Sha Tsui is a hangout favoured by locals, with a fun collection of bars and a selection of restaurants featuring Asian cuisine.

2. Knutsford Terrace / Knutsford Steps
Befitting an international eating mecca, this district is packed with people savouring the culinary delights that Hong Kong has to offer.
Walk along Knutsford Terrace and turn left and then right along Kimberley Road. Walk to the end of the street and turn right.

3. Former Kowloon British School (Antiquities and Monuments Office)
前九龍英童學校 (古物古蹟辦事處)

This architectural gem opened in 1902 is the oldest surviving school building constructed for foreign residents of Hong Kong. The building is a unique Victorian structure adapted to local climate conditions with wide verandas, high ceilings and a pitched roof. Today it houses the Antiquities and Monuments Office. Guided tour in Cantonese is available on every Friday afternoon (except public holidays). Otherwise, building is not open to the public. Enquiries +852 2208 4407.

4. St Andrew’s Church
聖安德烈堂

St Andrew’s Church stands next to the Former Kowloon British School.

This Anglican church has had a strong evangelical tradition for the past 100 years. Early worshippers would arrive by rickshaws, cabs and sedan chairs! Accounts of the time reported that, ‘It was a great occasion for many Christians in Kowloon and their friends in Hong Kong. The church is open to the public for prayer on weekdays between 8:30am and 5:30, except when there are activities. Enquiries +852 2367 1478. (Free admission)

Cross Nathan Road to Park Lane Shopper’s Boulevard.

5. Park Lane Shopper’s Boulevard
柏麗購物大道

Bustling with shoppers day and night, this distinctive shopping mall offers a variety of local and international brand-name stores.

Go inside Kowloon Park from the entrance next to the Mosque. Follow the signs to the Hong Kong Heritage Discovery Centre.

6. Hong Kong Heritage Discovery Centre
香港文物探知館

The Hong Kong Heritage Discovery Centre consists of two blocks of buildings constructed circa 1910. It served as barracks for the British Army and the temporary home of the Hong Kong Museum of History. The Hong Kong Heritage Discovery Centre includes a Thematic Exhibition Gallery, Lecture Hall, Reference Library and Activity Room. Open 10am to 6pm Monday to Friday and 10am to 7pm on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays. Closed on Thursdays (except public holidays) and the first two days of the Lunar New Year. Enquiries +852 2208 4400. (Free admission)
Leave Kowloon Park by the same way you entered. Walk along Nathan Road towards the waterfront. Enter at MTR East Tsim Sha Tsui Station Exit L3, go through the pedestrian tunnel to Exit J, and follow the directional signs to the Avenue of Stars.

7. Avenue of Stars
星光大道

At Asia’s first Avenue of Stars, you can see plaques, hand prints and statues honouring celebrities from the silver screen, and those behind the camera. There is also bronze statue of the legendary kung fu action star Bruce Lee. Find out all you need to know about the 100-year development of this Hollywood of Asia and enjoy the star-studded harbour views.

Did you know…
You can enjoy A Symphony of Lights along the Avenue of Stars every night at 8pm. This spectacular multimedia show, named the world’s largest permanent light and sound show by Guinness World Records, combines lights and narration while featuring more than 40 buildings on both sides of Victoria Harbour. The facades of buildings are decked out in lights that, at the flick of a switch, glow in a myriad of colours depicting Hong Kong’s dynamic pulse.

6. The Tsim Sha Tsui is home of many fascinating museums.

Walk back along the promenade to the Hong Kong Museum of Art, the Hong Kong Space Museum and the Hong Kong Cultural Centre.

8. Hong Kong Cultural Centre 香港文化中心 / Hong Kong Space Museum 香港太空館 / Hong Kong Museum of Art 香港藝術館

The Hong Kong Cultural Centre is one of the city’s main performing arts venues. Hong Kong Cultural Centre is open daily 9am to 11pm. Enquiries +852 2734 2009. (Free admission)

The Hong Kong Space Museum offers astronomy exhibits and the Stanley Ho Space Theatre is capable of projecting full-dome animation and movies with ultra-high definition images. Hong Kong Space Museum is open 1pm to 9pm Monday to Friday, and 10am to 9pm on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays. Closed on Tuesdays (except public holidays) and the first two days of the Lunar New Year. Enquiries +852 2721 0226. (Free admission to exhibition halls on Wednesdays)

The adjacent Hong Kong Museum of Art features Chinese antiquities, fine art, calligraphy and special exhibitions. Hong Kong Museum of Art is open 10am to 6pm Monday to Friday and 10am to 7pm on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays. Closed on Thursdays (except public holidays) and the first two days of the Lunar New Year. Enquiries +852 2721 0116. (Free admission on Wednesdays)

Did you know…
At the Star Ferry Pier you’ll find the HKTB Visitor Centre where you can get the answer to any question you might have about Hong Kong.
9. Clock Tower

Part of the original Kowloon-Canton Railway terminus, the Clock Tower was completed and came into operation in 1921. This is a landmark from the Age of Steam.

10. 1881 Heritage

Located on Canton Road, Tsim Sha Tsui, 1881 Heritage covers 130,000 square feet. It features a shopping mall, a heritage hotel, and an exhibition hall. The original site of 1881 Heritage was occupied by the Hong Kong Marine Police as headquarters from 1880s to 1996. Most of the Victorian-style buildings on the site including the Former Marine Police Headquarters Main Building, Former Stable Block and the Former Time Ball Tower epitomise the city’s rich colonial history and were declared monuments by the Antiquities and Monuments Office in 1994, as proof of their historical significance. To make a reservation for the free guided tours, please call +852 2926 8000. (Free admission)

11. Harbour City

Harbour City is one of the largest shopping and entertainment centres in Hong Kong with more than 450 shops and restaurants offering local and international brands. Open daily 10am to 10pm. Enquiries +852 2118 8666.

Adjacent to Harbour City, you’ll find many leading international brands’ stores along Canton Road and Peking Road. Strolling along the streets, visitors will enjoy an unrivalled luxury shopping experience.

Did you know...

Star Ferry

This floating icon, operating between Hong Kong Island and Kowloon since 1898, is a delight for both children and adults, offering stunning panoramic views of the surrounding harbour.
MARKETS FOR LEISURE AND PLEASURE
YAU MA TEI & MONG KOK

For an experience of local Chinese lifestyles, you need to look no further than Yau Ma Tei and Mong Kok.

Walking through this unique section of Hong Kong is an exciting and memorable experience any time of the day or night. You’ll love the ambience and the great deals you can get on souvenirs, clothing, electronic goods and much more.

MTR Prince Edward Station Exit C2. Walk along Prince Edward Road West to Lai Chi Kok Road. Proceed along Lai Chi Kok Road until you reach Lui Seng Chun.

1. Lui Seng Chun 雷生春

Once an old Chinese shophouse or tong lau, Lui Seng Chun is a Grade 1 historic pre-WWII building featuring a prewar verandah-type style of construction. In 2008, Hong Kong Baptist University with financial assistance from the government revitalized the building transforming it into the Hong Kong Baptist University School of Chinese Medicine – Lui Seng Chun. The building includes a herbal tea shop on the ground floor as well as a display introducing the old Lui Seng Chun. The remainder of the building is dedicated to the practice of traditional Chinese medicine.

The ground floor display areas are open free of charge from 9am to 1pm and 2pm to 8pm from Monday to Saturday, and 9am to 1pm on Sundays. Closed on public holidays. Free guided tours to other floors are available by registration. For details, please visit http://scm.hkbu.edu.hk/lsc or call +852 3411 0628.

Walk along Lai Chi Kok Road to MTR Prince Edward Station Exit B1. Proceed along Prince Edward Road West to Yuen Po Street Bird Garden. Pass through the garden to the junction of Yuen Po Street and Flower Market Road. At the end of the road, get on Prince Edward Road West and walk along Tung Choi Street until you reach the Goldfish Market.
2. Yuen Po Street Bird Garden / Flower Market / Goldfish Market
園圃街雀鳥花園/花墟/通菜街(北段)【金魚街】

The charming Chinese-style garden on Yuen Po Street includes some 70 songbird stalls as well as courtyards and moon gates. Look and listen, but it’s wise to avoid contact with the birds. The Bird Market is open daily 7am to 8pm. The colourful Flower Market sells everything from Dutch tulips to exotic orchids. Open daily from 7am to 7pm. Known as Goldfish Market, the shops on nearby Tung Choi Street not only sell aquariums, corals and exotic fish but also pets and reptiles. Open daily 10:30am to 10 pm.

Did you know…
Some Interesting Street Names
You can glimpse the past history of Mong Kok by checking street signs. The names are a colourful reminder of the bygone days. There is Yuen Po Street (Vegetable Patch Street), Sai Yeung Choi Street (Watercress Street) and Yuen Ngai Street. Nothing remains of the old Mong Kok village but these street names.

Walk along Fa Yuen Street to Mong Kok Road, turn right and cross the road to reach another section of Tung Choi Street, walk to Argyle Street and cross the road to reach the starting point of the Ladies’ Market.

4. Ladies’ Market
通菜街 (南段)【女人街】

Ladies’ Market has something for everyone with bargain-priced items, including men’s and women’s clothing, knick-knacks, watches and beauty products. Beside the street stalls are Hong Kong-style cafes that offer local favourites. Open daily noon to 11:30pm.

Walk through the Ladies’ Market to its end at Dundas Street. Turn right and walk to the junction of Shanghai Street and Waterloo Road.

5. Yau Ma Tei Theatre
油麻地戲院

Built in 1930, the Yau Ma Tei Theatre is the only surviving pre-war cinema building in the urban area of Hong Kong. The theatre closed down in 1998 and was listed as a historic building in the same year.

Now, the building has been reopened as a venue dedicated to Cantonese opera and features young up-and-coming performers. And, some of the shows come with English surtitles, so non-Cantonese speakers can also enjoy the action on stage.

After your visit to the theatre, don’t miss the attractive red brick building on the opposite side of Shanghai Street, which houses the theatre’s administration offices. Yau Ma Tei Theatre is open daily 1pm to 8pm. Enquiries +852 2264 8108. (Free admission)
Walk along the Shanghai Street.

6. Shanghai Street 上海街

This is one of the city's oldest streets. Look for shops selling Chinese-style wedding clothes which feature stunning embroidery. Once there were many of these shops, now just a few remain. It's also a great place to pick up bargain kitchenware. Purchases here are practical (and affordable), with piles upon piles of inexpensive kitchenware on sale. Expect to find local staples, such as traditional thick chopping boards and bamboo steaming baskets used for dim sum.

Continue along Shanghai Street, turn right at Kansu Street to the Jade Market.

7. Jade Market / Jade Street 玉器市場/玉器街

About 400 registered stall-owners sell amulets, ornaments, necklaces and trinkets made from the revered green stone. This is a fun place to browse and to buy an inexpensive memento of your visit, but think twice about buying anything costly unless you are a jade expert. Open daily 10am to 5pm.

Nearby is Jade Street, located on Canton Road between Kansu Street and Jordan Road, where shops are open 10am to 4pm Monday to Saturday. A giant jade stone weighing three tons has been placed at the junction of Canton Road and Jordan Road as a landmark.

Did you know...

Many Chinese people believe that jade can protect you from evil spirits and calm your emotions. That's why they buy tiny jade bracelets for their babies.

Go back to Shanghai Street, walk north to the junction of Shanghai and Public Square streets, turn right and walk to the Tin Hau Temple.

8. Tin Hau Temple 天后廟

This temple is dedicated to the Goddess of Seafarers, Tin Hau. Its location in the middle of urban Yau Ma Tei might seem odd, but long ago, before massive reclamation, it was on the harbour front. The water has receded, but people continue to worship Tin Hau here. Open daily 9am to 5pm. Enquiries +852 2385 0759. (Free admission)

Walk up Temple Street, across from the temple.

9. Temple Street Night Market 廟街夜市

This is the famous night market, open daily 4pm to midnight, where you can find all kinds of bargains, including casual clothes and curios. You'll also often see fortune tellers, Cantonese opera singers and professional Chinese chess players. The market becomes busy after sunset. Two New Chinese Pai Laus (archway) have been erected at its junctions with Jordan Road and Kansu Street.

When the sun goes down, the bargains come out at the Temple Street Night Market.
A POPULAR TEMPLE & A CITY TRANSFORMED
WONG TAI SIN & KOWLOON CITY

Wong Tai Sin District gets its name from the famous Sik Sik Yuen Wong Tai Sin Temple, the area’s most prominent landmark. Other places of interest include the Hau Wong Temple dating back to the Qing dynasty and Nan Lian Garden, which is built in the ancient Tang dynasty style.

The neighbouring Kowloon City District used to contain the Kowloon Walled City, which was torn down in 1994 and replaced by a lovely park of the same name.

Right nearby are a series of 10 streets packed with upwards of 200 local eateries, all serving up the delicious tastes of Hong Kong.

Take MTR to Diamond Hill Station. Leave the station by Exit C2 and follow the directional signs pointing to the Nan Lian Garden.

1. Nan Lian Garden and Chi Lin Nunnery

This classical landscaped garden is a scenic oasis in Diamond Hill spanning some 35,000 square metres. Styled to mimic a Tang dynasty (AD 618 - 907) garden, its Lotus Pond and Blue Pond are the main attractions, with other water features, hillocks, old trees, ornamental rocks and ancient timber architectures providing a picturesque complement. Strolling along a one-way circular route, visitors will see the beautiful landscape unfolding with each step.

Visitors can top off a walk with a bite to eat at Chi Lin Vegetarian in Long Men Lou, for a genuine and delicious meat-free meal. Walkers can also appreciate Chinese tea-drinking culture and etiquette at the Pine Teahouse, Song Cha Xie, inside this lovely green haven. The garden is open daily from 7am to 9pm. Enquiries +852 3658 9366. (Free admission)

Next to Nan Lian Garden sits the Chi Lin Nunnery. Established in 1934 and also renovated to the Tang dynasty style in 1990, Chi Lin Nunnery is a large temple complex of elegant wooden architecture, treasured Buddhist relics and soul-soothing lotus ponds. The complex also includes a series of temple halls, some of which contain gilded and wooden statues representing divinities such as the Shakyamuni Buddha and bodhisattvas. The temple hall area opens daily 9am to 4:30pm. The Lotus Garden opens daily 7am to 7pm. Enquiries +852 2354 1888. (Free admission)
2. Sik Sik Yuen Wong Tai Sin Temple  
(Wong Tai Sin) 稽色園黃大仙祠 (黃大仙)

This is one of the most popular temples in Hong Kong. According to legend, Wong Tai Sin is able to ‘make every wish come true upon request’. The temple is home to three different religions: Taoism, Buddhism and Confucianism. The temple containing Wong Tai Sin’s portrait is where worshippers pray for good fortune through offerings and divine guidance as well as through fortune telling.

Other points of interest:
The five buildings and structures representing the ‘Five Geomantic Elements’ of Fung Shui: the Bronze Pavilion (Metal), the Archives Hall (Wood), the Fountain (Water), the Yue Heung Shrine (Fire) and the Earth Wall (Earth). Open daily from 7am to 5:30pm. (The Tai Shui Yuenchen Hall is open daily 8am to 5pm). Enquiries +852 2327 8141. (Free admission except the Tai Shui Yuenchen Hall)

3. Hau Wong Temple  
侯王廟

One of the legends surrounding this temple, built in 1730 during the Qing dynasty says, it was to commemorate a Chinese general who had helped the last Song Emperor to escape the invading forces to Kowloon. Another legend says it was dedicated to a local inhabitant who had cured the last emperor of the Southern Song dynasty. The temple is home to a wealth of cultural artifacts including groups of reliefs on the walls, Chinese calligraphy and a number of plaques. Open daily 8am to 5pm. Enquiries +852 3718 6888 (Head Office); +852 2336 0375 (Hau Wong Temple). (Free admission)

4. Kowloon Walled City Park  
九龍寨城公園

The Kowloon Walled City Park sits on the site of the Kowloon Walled City, which by a quirk of history remained outside British jurisdiction after Hong Kong became a colony.

The South Gate of this Chinese-style park remnants with the original stone plaques and the pre-war concrete relics fully demonstrate the evolution of the City. The yamen, or administrative building, which is one of the very few surviving structures of its kind in South China, has been restored and preserved in-situ. Other significant surviving relics include two cannons (made in 1802) which are positioned at either end of the Yamen’s front yard. The Garden of the Chinese Zodiac, the Chess Garden, the Mountain View Pavilion, the Kuixing Pavilion and Guibi Rock, Eight Floral Walks and the Garden of Four Seasons are six other landscape features worth appreciation. Open daily 6:30am to 11pm. Enquiries +852 2716 9962. (Free admission)

5. Kowloon City Food District  
九龍城美食區

A group of around 10 streets bounded by Prince Edward Road West, Junction Road and Carpenter Road is where you can find around 200 inexpensive and often family-run eateries serving local favourites, Southeast Asian dishes as well as cuisines from around the world.

Take the Green Minibus 25M on Sa Po Road (beside Regal Oriental Hotel) to MTR Kowloon Tong Station and take the MTR train back to your hotel or other sightseeing destinations.

Did you know…
Former Kai Tak Airport

The hair-raising landings at the former international airport at Kai Tak are a thing of the past with its former runway having been redeveloped into a state-of-the-art cruise terminal. The cruise terminal roof top garden is open to the public and free of charge.
Yuen Long, located in the northwest New Territories, has been transformed from a market town into a modern new town filled with residential and commercial developments. But the district still harbours incredible vestiges of Hong Kong’s past. Many heritage sites are still well preserved. The various centuries-old ancestral halls provide a rich vein of information about the early clan settlers in the New Territories. All of these heritage sites offer a wonderful way to literally step back in time and revisit the early days of Asia’s world city.

**Did you know…**

Ping Shan Heritage Trail

Originally Ping Shan was used to denote a number of villages situated below the Ping Shan Police Station. These included Sheung Cheung Wai, Kiu Tau Wai, Fui Sha Wai, Hang Tau Tsuen, Hang Mei Tsuen, Hung Uk Tsuen and Tong Fong Tsuen. But now, Ping Shan covers a much larger area.

1. **Tsui Sing Lau Pagoda**

Hong Kong’s oldest pagoda, it is believed to have been built in about 1486. The three-storey, green brick building is hexagonal shaped and stands 13 metres high. The top floor of the pagoda is home to Fui Shing (Champion Star) who is believed to be the deity in charge of success or failure in examinations. You will also see auspicious sayings inscribed on each floor. Open daily 9am to 1pm and 2pm to 5pm. Closed on Tuesdays and some public holidays. (Free admission)

Follow the ‘Ping Shan Heritage Trail’ sign. Turn left and walk in the direction of the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals Kwok Yat Wai College. Follow the sign to Sheung Cheung Wai.
2. Shrine of the Earthgod

Just before you enter Sheung Cheung Wai, you will come across a shrine dedicated to the Earthgod, She Kung, the deity that villagers believe protects their villages and homes. The shrines are usually simple brick structures on which pieces of stone are placed to symbolise the presence of the god.

3. Sheung Cheung Wai

This 200-year-old walled village is the only such village along the entire heritage trail. It consists of rows of symmetrical houses enclosed by a green brick wall. The gatehouse, shrines and some of the old houses are still standing. Part of the wall has been demolished but enough remains to give a good taste of a traditional Chinese walled village. Sheung Cheung Wai is private property and not open to the public.

4. Yeung Hau Temple

Located in Hang Tau Tsuen, this temple is dedicated to the deity Hau Wong. The exact date of construction is unknown but renovations were undertaken in 1963 and 1991. The temple is divided into three bays housing the statues of Hau Wong, Kam Fa (Patron Saint of Expectant Mothers) and To Tei (God of the Earth).
5. Tang Ancestral Hall
鄧氏宗祠

First constructed in 1273, this Tang clan Ancestral Hall is a magnificent three-hall structure with two internal courtyards, and is one of the finest examples of such a building in Hong Kong. Worth noting is the elevated pathway in the front courtyard indicating that one of the Tang clansmen held a high-ranking position in the Imperial government. Open daily 9am to 1pm and 2pm to 5pm. Closed during the first three days of the Lunar New Year.

Yu Kiu Ancestral Hall is next to the Tang Ancestral Hall.

6. Yu Kiu Ancestral Hall
愈喬二公祠

Situated immediately to the south of the Tang Ancestral Hall, it was constructed in the early 16th century by two 11th generation Tang clan brothers. Apart from being an ancestral hall it also served as a school for kids in the Ping Shan villages. The layout and design of this building is identical to the Tang Ancestral Hall with its three halls and two internal courtyards. Open daily 9am to 1pm and 2pm to 5pm. Closed during the first three days of the Lunar New Year.

7. Kun Ting Study Hall
覲廷書室

Used both for ancestor worship and as a study hall, this 1870s edifice is a stunning piece of craftsmanship. It is a two-hall building with an enclosed courtyard, noteworthy for its finely carved granite columns and granite block base along the facade. The distinguished design of the ancestral hall inside the Study Hall reflects the work of skilled craftsmen of that period. (Open daily 9am to 1pm and 2pm to 5pm. Closed during the first three days of the Lunar New Year.)

Follow the sign to Kun Ting Study Hall and Ching Shu Hin. Enter the Kun Ting Study Hall from the side entrance.

Ching Shu Hin is next to the Kun Ting Study Hall.

8. Ching Shu Hin
清暑軒

This 1874 building was intended as a guesthouse for prominent scholars and visitors. It is a memorable feast for the eyes, decorated with carved panels, murals, patterned grilles, carved brackets and plaster mouldings – fully demonstrating the grandeur and elegance of a rich Chinese family’s residence. (Open daily 9am to 1pm and 2pm to 5pm. Closed during the first three days of the Lunar New Year.)
Turn left to Ping Ha Road. Walk along the road and the Hung Shing Temple is next to Hang Mei Tsuen Park.

9. Hung Shing Temple
洪聖宮

Hung Shing is widely worshipped, particularly by fishermen and people whose livelihoods depend upon the sea. The temple, built by the Tang clan in 1767, is a simple two-hall building with an open courtyard in between – unlike most other temples in Hong Kong, where the open courtyards are roofed over to form incense towers.

Did you know...
Retrace your steps and follow the signs to the Light Rail Hang Mei Tsuen Station, take Route 761P and alight at Tai Tong Road Station. Here you will discover a wonderful world of hidden treasures in Yuen Long. See pages 57-58 for further details.

Hidden Treasures of Yuen Long

Traditional Treats

Yuen Long is regarded as a good place to try traditional local and Chinese foods. Two in particular are strongly associated with this area.

1. Big Bowl Feast

Poon choi, or ‘Big Bowl Feast’, is a type of food served in wooden basins rather than traditional porcelain or metal. The tradition dates back to the late Sung dynasty (960-1279). Many people visit the New Territories just to try this age-old delicacy.

A huge amount of ingredients are layered in a large bowl and eaten communally. One big bowl feast could include pork, beef, lamb, abalone, chicken, duck, shrimp, crab, various mushrooms, Chinese radish and tofu in nine to 12 layers – enough to satisfy a group of 10 to 12 people. The ingredients are not mixed; the bowl’s contents are eaten layer by layer.

Legend has it that the dish was invented when a Southern Sung dynasty emperor took refuge in the New Territories when the empire was invaded by Mongol forces. The local villagers took all the best food that was available to them and sent it to the emperor in large washbasins. Whatever the true origin of poon choi, it has become a food experience unique to Hong Kong and is listed as part of the city’s intangible cultural heritage.

Tai Wing Wah Restaurant (大榮華酒樓) in Yuen Long has experienced poon choi chefs and is a popular place to try this dish. You can find it on On Ning Road (you’ll need to pre-order at least one day in advance).
2. Wife Cakes

The delightfully-named wife cakes are buns filled with sweet winter melon paste. Legend has it that when the winter-melon puffs made by a woman in Guangdong Province were highly praised in public, her husband proudly declared that there were his wife’s cakes. The name ‘wife cake’ stuck.

In Hong Kong, back when the New Territories was a day trip away from the urban areas, it was de rigueur for visitors to Yuen Long to buy wife cakes to take home. Today, a lot of the city’s wife cakes are baked in Yuen Long, so this is still considered the place to get the freshest batches.
WALLED VILLAGE
FANLING

With the rapid development of Fanling, the fields are pretty much gone, and the New Town is now filled with residential and commercial blocks. Culture and heritage buffs will be delighted with the cornucopia of treasures to see, including a stunning Taoist temple and a number of walled villages. It’s also fun to walk around in the nearby shopping mall and check out the local eateries and shops for a real slice of modern-day Hong Kong life.

1. Fung Ying Seen Koon
蓬瀛仙館

Dominating the skyline from its commanding site on a hillside overlooking the New Territories town of Fanling, the temple is a superb example of Taoist design and craftsmanship. Open daily 8:30am to 5pm. Enquiries +852 2669 9186. (Free admission)

Go back to MTR Fanling Station and follow the sign to ‘Luen Wo Hui’. Turn left and go downstairs to the Green Minibus station and take Green Minibus 54K to Lung Yeuk Tau and alight at Shung Him Tong.

2. Shung Him Tong
崇謙堂

Hakka Lutherans founded this village in 1901 after escaping persecution. Of note is the fine Tsung Kyam Church (Tsung Kyam is the Hakka pronunciation of Shung Him), the only church with services in Hakka. Shung Him Tong is private property and not open to the public.

Did you know...
A Prestigious Marriage
During the 12th century, a Tang clan man rescued a young girl fleeing the invading Mongols. When she grew up, he arranged for her to marry his son. When peace and security was restored, she informed her husband that she was in fact related to royalty and was the daughter of the Emperor. Luckily, the Emperor was inclined to look favourably on the marriage and let it stand, giving her husband a suitable title and large estate to provide for his daughter. Most of the Tangs resident in the New Territories today are descended from their five sons.
Walk along the route to Ma Wat Wai, which is next to Ma Wat Wai children’s playground.

3. Ma Wat Wai 麻笏圍

At Ma Wat Wai, check out the gatehouse with its gun platform over the gate, dating back to about 1740. It’s made of thick plated wrought iron in two leaves with allows air to circulate and provides a good deal of strength at the same time. Access to the village is through a single narrow gate on the northwest side. The entrance gate of Ma Wat Wai became a Declared Monument in 1994.

Walk along the route to Lo Wai.

4. Lo Wai 老圍

This old walled village is a must-visit in Lung Yeuk Tau, featuring thick walls accessible only through the single narrow gateway on the east side. The walls and the gatehouse have been restored recently and are Declared Monuments. The gatehouse contains a shrine to the Earthgod and has a gun platform above, but the village’s small canon is no longer. Several old houses within the walled village are still occupied. To avoid disturbing local residents, the interior of Lo Wai is not open to the public. Open daily 9am to 5pm (Lo Wai entrance).

Did you know…
Lung Yeuk Tau Heritage Trail
The Sung dynasty Princess and her Tang clan husband settled in Lung Yeuk Tau in the 13th century. Today his descendants occupy 11 villages in the area, five of which are walled.

Walk along the route to Tang Chung Ling Ancestral Hall.

5. The Tang Chung Ling Ancestral Hall 松嶺鄧公祠

This Declared Monument is a superb building, originally built in 1570 and rebuilt around 1700. It includes an Ancestral Hall that is a perfect example of the ‘Gentry Ancestral Hall’ or a hall for the descendants of some high officials (in this case the descendents of the Song Princess and her husband). The building is decorated with magnificent artworks and the construction style is elegant. There is also an Imperial Tablet dedicated to the Sung Princess and her husband, the only such tablet in Hong Kong. Open daily 9am to 1pm and 2pm to 5pm. Closed on Tuesdays and some public holidays.

Tin Hau Temple is next to the Tang Chung Ling Ancestral Hall.

6. Tin Hau Temple 天后宮

The local Tin Hau Temple is an excellent piece of workmanship, entirely traditional in form and decoration. It was last restored in 1981. Tin Hau, protector of fishermen and one of Hong Kong’s most popular deities, is in the Main Hall while Kam Fa, goddess of childbirth, is in the side hall. Note the magnificent wall orchid that has been growing for the past 70 years.

Open daily 9am to 5pm.

Take Green Minibus 54K back to MTR Fanling Station and take MTR back to town.
Sai Ying Pun Station will open 1st quarter of 2015

Hong Kong International Airport Visitor Centre
Buffer Halls A and B, Arrivals Level, Terminal 1
8am - 9pm daily

Hong Kong Island Visitor Centre
The Peak Piazza (between The Peak Tower and The Peak Galleria)
11am - 8pm daily

Kowloon Visitor Centre
Star Ferry Concourse, Tsim Sha Tsui
8am - 8pm daily

Lo Wu Information Centre
Arrival Hall, 2/F, Lo Wu Terminal Building

Visitor Hotline: +852 2508 1234
9am - 6pm daily

Website: DiscoverHongKong.com

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