

DESTINATION DETAILS

HONG KONG:

The bustling city of Hong Kong was just a collection of fishing villages when claimed by Britain in 1842 following the First Opium War with China. This failed attempt by the Ching Dynasty to stop the British trading in opium led to Hong Kong being ceded to Britain under the Treaty of Nanking that year. The Kowloon Peninsula was handed over in 1860 and a 99-year lease on the New Territories, comprising the area north of Kowloon up to the Shenzhen River plus 235 outlying islands, was granted in 1898.

Under the unique principle of 'One Country, Two Systems', Hong Kong returned to Chinese sovereignty on 1 July 1997 as a Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China. This arrangement allows Hong Kong to enjoy a high degree of autonomy, retaining its capitalist system, independent judiciary and rule of law, free trade and freedom of speech.

Hong Kong's magnificent harbour has been the key to its development as a trading port and entrepôt for China, progressing through an industrial era to become a leading financial and services centre in Asia. The unique blend of eastern and western influences, matched by diverse attractions and stunning countryside, has also made Hong Kong Asia's prime tourist destination.

Seasons

Hong Kong has a subtropical climate with distinct seasons. Typhoon season is May to November. When a typhoon is approaching, warnings are broadcast on TV and radio, and signals indicate its significance, the latest position and expected movement of the centre of the tropical cyclone, information on the wind strength, rainfall and sea level in the territory. When typhoon signal 8 is hoisted, businesses and shops close down and flights may be cancelled. There is a separate warning for heavy rain.

Spring

March to May

Temperature and humidity are rising. Evenings can be cool.

Summer

June to August

Hot, humid and sunny, with occasional showers and thunderstorms. The temperature can exceed 31°C.

Autumn

September to November

There are pleasant breezes, plenty of sunshine and comfortable temperatures. Many people regard these as the best months of the year to visit Hong Kong.

Winter

December to February

Cool, dry and cloudy, with occasional cold fronts. The temperature can drop below 10°C in urban areas.

Places to See

Hong Kong is a minefield of pleasure; there is something for everyone. **Victoria Harbour** is where most people start their tour of the island. The star ferry ride is an iconic Hong Kong experience, especially at nights when the Symphony of Lights light up the harbour. Beach lovers will love the atmosphere at Repulse Bay, where you can enjoy a long lazy afternoon stroll or sunbathe.

Stanley New Street and **Stanley Market Road** are great for shoppers and those who want to get a feel of the streets. With the best bargains and the latest trends, the place is abuzz with sounds. Try windsurfing at the beachside and you will be swept away in no time! Adventure lovers will be amazed at Hong Kong's countryside. Unknown and untouched, there is much and more to do for those who love the great outdoors. Hikers will enjoy starting off from routes at the **Upper Peak Tram Station** which leads you to the peak along Lugard and Harlech roads, for a surprisingly easy climb through wilderness.

The New Territories has activities for those who want to have fun over the long weekend. The **Tai Po Waterfront Park** gives you a view of the Tolo Harbour. Enjoy the rides and later visit the **Tai Po Market** on Fu Shin Street. Nothing could beat finishing the day gorging on delicious street snacks just like the locals.

Heritage trails near the Western District, the **Peak Route** and the **Sheung Wan Route** offer a view of the city's fast vanishing heritage sites. The **Central Police Station** compound, the **Tung Wah Museum**, the **University Hall** and the **King Yin Li mansion** are sights you cannot miss.