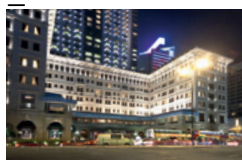


# HONG KONG

A unique city of temples and feng shui amid fine dining venues and gleaming high rises, Hong Kong is ingrained with Chinese tradition polished off with more than 150 years of British colonialism

## Pillow talk

The trusty clan of leading hotel chains are all here along with a number of boutique properties.



## The Peninsula

The iconic Peninsula is the place to stay for a traditional Hong Kong experience. The legendary Grande Dame of the Far East was built in 1928 and a recent revamp has brought contemporary elegance combined with old world glamour to this prestigious hotel.

## Mandarin Oriental

For an upscale retreat, check into the Landmark Mandarin Oriental; the smallest



of the group's three properties on the island, the Landmark has the largest suites in Hong Kong but the atmosphere is discreet.



## The Ritz Carlton

The Ritz Carlton is one of the world's tallest hotels and offers spectacular views and a stunning pool on the 118th floor.

## Upper House hotel

Slightly lower is the super chic Upper House hotel. With paperless check in and a cool café at the top, the Upper House is an effortlessly hip place with accommodation starting on Level 38 so views are still spectacular.

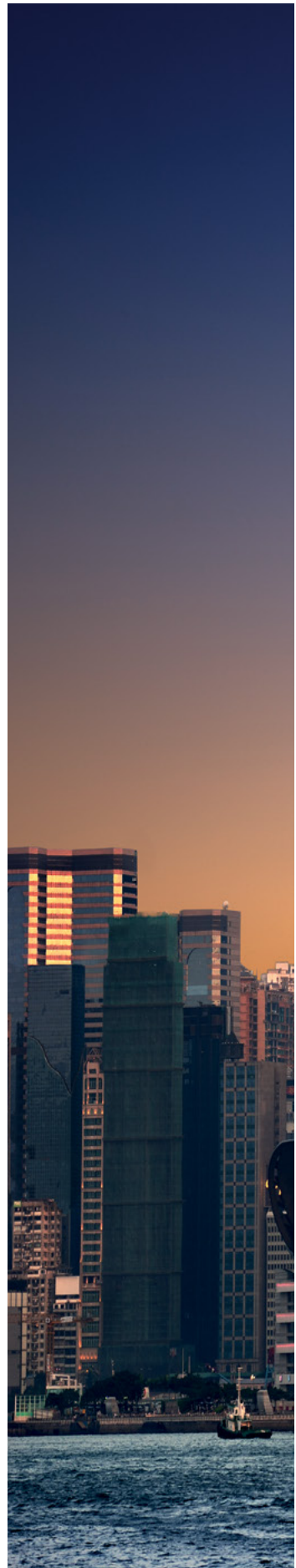
## Tai O Heritage Hotel

Down at sea level on Lantau Island is the boutique Tai O Heritage Hotel. Housed in what was formerly a marine police station dating back to 1902, the hotel has just nine rooms and sits amid the Tai O fishing village – a sea community built on stilts.

## Eat, drink + dance

Some of the best food is found in hotels where celebrity chefs

by Miriam Cain









are something of a flourishing breed and Michelin-stars abound. Try Alain Ducasse' **Spoon** at the InterContinental, or its Japanese **Nobu**; head to **Caprice** at the Four Seasons, or the swanky **Lung King Heen** serving authentic Cantonese; cross the water to Macao to sample **Robuchon a Galera**, or the impeccably sleek **WasabiSabi**.



As well as booking a table at the fine dining venues, simply wandering along the Kai Chiu Road, Park Sha Road, Lan Fong Road, Hysan Avenue, Hoi Ping Road, Yun Ping Road and Yiu Wa Street offers up a veritable feast of Asian delights. If you are in the city on a Sunday scoring a table at a dim sum house such as **Tim Ho Wan** is a must.

Bars come in all shapes and sizes, and again, many of the best bars and lounges are located in the top hotels. The **Felix** is one of the coolest bars in the city; designed by Philippe Starck, the bar sits on the 28th floor of the Peninsula Hotel and has spectacular views over the impressive Hong Kong skyline. The **Charter Lounge**



#### At a glance

##### Best travel time

Autumn is usually the driest and coolest and the best time to visit Hong Kong. Summers are hot and humid.

##### Currency

The Hong Kong Dollar  
Language Cantonese and English

Vibe Work hard, play hard

at the Ritz Carlton is the place to head for a traditional atmosphere.

Head to Minden Avenue and **Cloudnine** to see the cool karaoke crowd strutting their stuff. For a quieter affair enjoy a glass of wine on **Courtney's** leafy terrace just over the road. Lan Kwai Fong is where you will find the city's legendary nightlife scene, and when it gets too raucous, there are plenty of terraces and

rooftop patios where you can sit back and enjoy the cooling breeze and fantastic harbour views.

#### Do + discover

Despite its designer boutiques and glitzy hotels, the city's most popular attractions belong to Mother Nature. Take in the views from Victoria Peak's panoramic viewing platform above the city before heading down to discover small wonders

hidden down side streets. The Peak is the highest mountain on Hong Kong Island and was a signalling post for ships in the 19th century. Today it boasts superb views and beautiful nature walks, as well as a tower with shops and restaurants.

From the Yuen Po Street Bird Garden to the traditional medicine lanes in Sheung Wan, there is so much to be discovered on foot. Give your feet a break;





hop on a tram and watch the colourful panorama unfold as markets spill out on to the streets and store-fronts of old-school barber shops and local food stores come alive with locals. For an alternative view, take the eight-minute Star Ferry across the harbour to Kowloon in early evening when the skyline is illuminated by the Symphony of Lights laser show. Or cruise over during

the day and spend time discovering Lantau Island where the Giant Buddha, Po Lin Monastery and Wisdom path all offer an alternative to the bustling city.

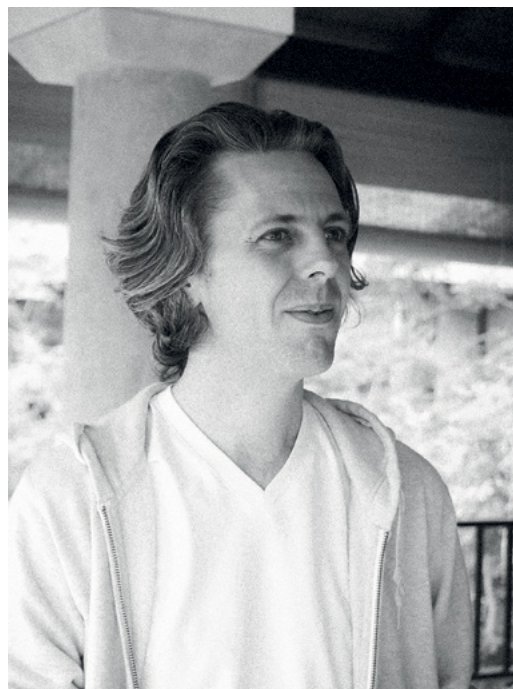
#### See + shop

Shopping is a favourite pastime for almost everyone in Hong Kong and every designer worth their salt can be found in the array of boutiques across town. Head to Paterson Street, Great George Street, Kingston Street, Sharp Street and Percival Street for the most exclusive brands. Alternatively, huge malls are popular places to shop. Make your way to Causeway Bay, Lanham Place, Pacific Place and The Peak Tower where retail therapy abounds. Head to Central district and you will find boutiques and antiques in the trendy SoHo shopping district, and for hip and stylish artefacts, head further west to NoHo.

Bargain hunters should head to Mong Kok's Ladies Market and Temple Street Night Market, where you can have your fortune told and find just about everything from Chinese knick-knacks to bargain-priced silks.

Thanks to developments in the art scene attracting high profile galleries to Hong Kong the city has had creative awakening in recent years. Head to Sheung Wan and discover the latest in contemporary international art.

## Insider guide



#### Sylvain Holtermann

Although, I have been living in Hong Kong for nearly 20 years now, this place never ceases to amaze me. It is a great mix of vibrant urban culture, lush tropical nature, high-tech efficiency and ancient traditions.

To get a good sense of the ever-buzzing activity and feel the city heart beat, immerse yourself in the flow of shoppers and diners in Causeway Bay. If you're looking for a more peaceful experience, take a walk along the historical trail in the Sheung Wan area. The old Hong Kong is slowly fading but you can still catch a glimpse of it in the streets around the Man Mo Temple on Hollywood Road. Hong Kong has some amazing temples; the Pak Tai Temple at the back of Stone Nullah Lane in Wan Chai is one of my favourite.

Another great thing in Hong Kong is the amazing food scene. I highly recommend sampling the rich diversity of Chinese cuisine. For a true local experience, I like to go for dim sum at Tsui Hang Village in Causeway Bay and to Yung Kee in Central for its delicious roast goose dishes. Hong Kong is also a paradise for seafood and fish lovers and while you will find many great speciality restaurants around town, I like to catch a ferry to Sok Kwu Wan on Lamma Island to treat myself to a simple yet delicious fresh-out-of-the-water steamed fish.

To break away from the crowd and get away from the city, I usually head to the Sai Kung Country Park where you will find the territories most pristine beaches. Set against a stunning backdrop of untouched nature, the beaches of Long Kei Wan and Dai Long Wan are easily accessible by sea or on foot. In addition, Dai Long Wan sees some good surf during the autumn and winter months.

#### Profile

Sylvain Holtermann is a French photographer and a lecturer at the University of Hong Kong. He has been living in Hong Kong since 1995.