

Standard Hong Kong Island Tour Commentary

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Introduction

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. My name is _____ and I am your tourist guide on this tour of Hong Kong Island. The tour covers Central, Admiralty, Wan Chai, Causeway Bay, Victoria Peak, Repulse Bay, Deep Water Bay, Stanley, Aberdeen and Western District.

If you have any questions, please feel free to let me know either now or during the tour.

Background information of Hong Kong

I'll begin by giving you some background information about Hong Kong. The territory comprises Hong Kong Island, Kowloon Peninsula, the New Territories and 262 outlying islands, making a total land area of slightly more than 1,104 square kilometres. Steep mountains and strong planning controls have led to most of the population being housed in about 270 square kilometers (less than 25% of the territory) of urban development, while over 400 square kilometers (about 40% of the territory) have been protected as country parks or conservation areas.

At mid-2012, the population of Hong Kong is about 7.15 million including 0.22 million mobile residents, some 93.6 percent of whom are Chinese. The population density is 6,620 persons per square kilometers. The local dialect is Cantonese, which is used throughout the neighboring mainland Chinese province of Guangdong, Mandarin (Putonghua) is also widely use now. The official languages of Hong Kong are Chinese and English.

The name "Hong Kong" is usually translated as "Fragrant Harbour", and there are several theories to its original meaning. "Fragrant Harbour" is thought to refer to the scent produced by the sandalwood and joss stick factories situated here before Hong Kong became a British colony in 1842. The name "Kowloon" means "nine dragons". The name arises from a legend about the boy Emperor Ping, the last emperor of the Sung Dynasty, who fled from advancing Mongol invaders and took refuge in Kowloon about 700 years ago. He asked his chamberlain the name of the place and was told it was called "nine dragons" and it was named after the surrounding hills. When the Emperor pointed out there were only eight hills, the chamberlain reminded him that he, the emperor, was himself a dragon.

In Chinese mythology, the dragon is a benevolent creature which is capable of bringing good fortune and of giving protection. It is said to reside in the hills and is a symbol of royalty. A dragon with five claws on each foot, represents the emperor. In imperial days, such a design was reserved exclusively for decorations in the imperial residences.

Source:

<http://www.gov.hk/en/about/abouthk/facts.htm>

http://www.gov.hk/en/about/abouthk/docs/2012HK_in_Brief.pdf

Section 1 – Central District, Wan Chai and Causeway Bay

City Hall

Hong Kong's first City Hall was opened in 1869 and demolished in 1933. The present City Hall was open in March 1962. Its facilities include a theatre, a concert hall, a recital hall, an exhibition and art gallery, lecture rooms and public libraries. It maintains an important link in the international arts scene that contributes to the convergence of the Eastern and Western cultures.

Recognized by the general public as one of Hong Kong's most prominent centre of culture and arts, the Hong Kong City Hall embodies a history of important cultural events and is synonymous with the development of culture in Hong Kong. Milestone events, such as the early Hong Kong Festival, the First Hong Kong Arts Festival in 1973, the First Asian Arts Festival in 1976, the First International Film Festival in 1977, and the First International Arts Carnival in 1982, all had their inaugurations at the City Hall. This has testified to the eminence of the City Hall in the international arts scene. Its significant role in promoting cultural exchanges undoubtedly merits the pride of Hong Kong people.

Besides the City Hall, the Hong Kong Cultural Centre in Tsim Sha Tsui in Kowloon and the Coliseum in Hung Hom in Kowloon are two other important venues for cultural performance. The Government has proceeded a master plan for an arts, cultural and entertainment district on the reclaimed West Kowloon waterfront. The new world-class cultural quarter "West Kowloon Cultural District" on West Kowloon waterfront will become the landmark of Hong Kong, the project targeted to complete in 2014-2015.

The City Hall also has a marriage registry where you can see happy young newly-weds posing for the camera. Other than the usual marriage of being witnessed by government officials, marriages are also considered legal if performed in a church or a Taoist Temple. Fusion of western and traditional Chinese wedding practices is widely found in Hong Kong.

Marriage registration in Hong Kong is governed by the Marriage Ordinance. All marriages contracted under the ordinance involve the voluntary union for life of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others. There is no residential or nationality requirement for the marrying parties but neither of them can be under the age of 16 years.

Normally, the Registrar of Marriages should be given at least 15 days' notice of an intended marriage and the marriage must take place within three months of the giving of the notice. A marriage has to take place at a marriage registry by a Registrar; or in a licensed place of worship by a competent minister or at any other place in Hong Kong by a civil celebrant of marriages.

Source:

<http://www.lcsd.gov.hk/CE/CulturalService/CityHall/en/index.php>

<http://www.gov.hk/en/residents/immigration/bdmreg/marriage/gettingmarried.htm>

http://www.wkcda.hk/en/architectural_competition/artspavilion_design_competition/index.html

Star Ferry

The world-famous Star Ferry has provided an inexpensive, convenient cross-harbour passenger service since 1898. The company took its name from the vessels it acquired, which all bore the name "Star". There are Star Ferry routes between Central on Hong Kong Island and Tsim Sha Tsui, and Wan Chai on Hong Kong Island and Tsim Sha Tsui. There are 9 diesel-electric vessels and together they carry more than 21.7 million passengers each year.

In addition to ferry services, Star Ferry launched the only licensed harbour tour (Star Ferry's Harbour Tour) in Hong Kong in July 2003. The one-hour journey starts in Tsimshatsui and goes on to Central and Wanchai before returning to Tsimshatsui, allowing visitors to take in a variety of harbour views at leisure.

Starting from 12 November 2006, due to the pier relocation for Central Reclamation Phase III, Star Ferry continues its ferry services at the Central Star Ferry Pier (Central Pier No. 7). The Central Star

Ferry Pier with its elegant clock tower is the re-creation of a distinctive building reinforcing the history and character of the Star Ferry with its identity as an important landmark at the new waterfront in Central.

Source:

<http://www.starferry.com.hk/>

Queen's Pier

The pier's primary role was ceremonial. It was the traditional landing place of successive governors, who would arrive at Central on board the official Governor's Yacht which would dock at Queen's Pier. From the 1960s, governors would inspect a guard of honour at Edinburgh Place, followed by the swearing-in at City Hall.

The pier's secondary role was as a public pier, where pleasure craft were allowed to dock. Tour boats offering a view of the Kowloon side of the harbour used the pier for passenger boarding. Up to 1978, it was the winning line for the annual cross-harbour swimming race. As the ceremonies declined, the pier's secondary purpose became the main one: people met and strolled in the area; some fished.

On 26 April 2007, the pier was closed in order to facilitate land reclamation in Central.

Chinese People's Liberation Army Forces Hong Kong Building

The 28-storey building was formerly Prince of Wales Building and its compound used to be HMS Tamar, the joint headquarters of the British armed forces in Hong Kong. It is now a military base of the People's Liberation Army (PLA).

A farewell ceremony for the British Governor of Hong Kong, Chris Patten, was held here just prior to the handover of sovereignty of Hong Kong to China.

The curious inverted pyramid design at the base of the Prince of Wales building is a security feature, which enables it to be easily sealed off in an emergency.

HMS Tamar was sometimes referred to as a "stone frigate", as it was officially designated a Royal Navy ship, although actually, as you can see, it was firmly land-based! Originally, however, there was a ship called HMS Tamar, which was anchored in the harbour and on which Royal Navy personnel serving in Hong Kong lived.

During the colonial era, the Royal Navy patrolled Hong Kong's territorial waters in co-operation with the Marine Police to prevent smuggling and illegal immigration from China and elsewhere. It also took part in search and rescue operations, both inside and outside territorial waters.

The PLA is stationed in Hong Kong primarily to assist the Hong Kong Government in maintaining national defense, security and stability. And as with the Royal Navy, and other British armed force stationed in Hong Kong, the PLA helps the police prevent illegal immigration.

In addition to the former HMS Tamar site, the PLA has taken over British armed forces facilities at Stanley in the far south of Hong Kong Island, Shek Kong in the New Territories, and Stonecutters Island in the harbour.

Central Government Complexes

The building with a hollow design is the Central Government Complex and is the new location for the offices of the Government of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

The new government building uses neither Chinese nor European government building designs, but instead it is a mix of postmodern architecture and low-frills international design.

The complex houses the Office of the Chief Executive of Hong Kong, the Legislative Council of Hong Kong and two Central Government Offices. There is a walkway on the top connecting the East Wing and West Wings of the government offices. This structure makes the whole complex look like a door when it is viewed from a distance. This reflects that "doors are always open" in the government offices.

The open space on the podium is a public park - Tamar Park. Most of the park is covered with large pieces of lawn, like green carpet. It is to reflect that "lands are always green".

Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre

The Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre or HKCEC in brief puts Hong Kong in an excellent position to host major international conventions, exhibitions and trade fairs. The centre has also been voted to be the best convention centre in the world as well as in Asia-Pacific region by many major international convention and business travel magazines.

Take a look at the roof of the Centre, it is in the shape of a seabird with its wings spread out and ready to take a flight over the harbour. This becomes an iconic landmark in the skyline of Hong Kong.

Opened in November 1988, and expanded twice in 1997 and 2009, the Centre houses six exhibition halls, two multi-purpose halls, two theatres, fifty-two meeting rooms and other multi-functional rental space. With a venue for every event size and occasion, the HKCEC can host exhibitions as well as major conventions and multiple smaller events at one time.

The HKCEC also includes provisions for video-conferencing, teleconferencing, satellite links, and simultaneous interpretation in up to eight languages, audio-visual equipment, foyer registration space, and event signage.

There are seven restaurants from Hong Kong style bistro to fine dining restaurant serving Chinese and international cuisine.

The HKCEC is adjacent and connected to the Convention Plaza which also includes the Renaissance Hong Kong Harbour View Hotel, the Grand Hyatt Hong Kong, a 39-storey office tower, a 46-storey serviced apartment tower and a shopping arcade.

The cost of the HKCEC when it first opened in 1988 was approximately HK\$1.6 billion (US\$207 million), not including land cost. The first expansion completed in 1997 costs HK\$4.8 billion (US\$620 million), including site reclamation which began in June 1994; and the second expansion completed in 2009 costs HK\$1.4 billion (US\$180 million).

The location of the Centre at the Wanchai North harbour front provides a spectacular backdrop to events; it is also very close to the Hong Kong's Central Business District.

To name a few of the high profile events held at the HKCEC, it included the Hong Kong Handover Ceremony held in July 1997 and the Sixth WTO Ministerial Conference in December 2005.

Source:
<http://www.hkcec.com>

The Handover Ceremony

July 1, 1997, marked the beginning of Hong Kong's new era as a Special Administrative Region (SAR) of the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the end of 156 years of British administration.

This new chapter in history was marked by a solemn and dignified Handover Ceremony, which began shortly before midnight on June 30.

The Handover Ceremony was held in the Grand Foyer of the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre and began at 11.30 pm. It included military guards of honor and military bands from China and Britain, plus speeches by President Jiang Zemin and the Prince of Wales. Just before midnight, the British and Hong Kong flags were lowered. At the stroke of midnight, the Chinese national and HKSAR regional flags were raised. The ceremony was witnessed by 4,000 invited guests, including senior representatives from China and Britain, ministers from more than 40 countries and representatives from more than 40 international organizations. Leaders of government in Hong Kong, as well as a wide cross-section of leading local and overseas business and community leaders also attended. Some 6,500 local and overseas media representatives covered the event, which was beamed to a worldwide television audience in the hundreds of millions.

Reunification Monument

The monument was erected on 1 July 1999, exactly 2 years after the handover and is composed of 3 parts – the pedestal, the pillar and the head – with a total height of about 20 meters and a width of 1.6 meters. The pedestal and the pillar are made of granite and the head is forged from bronze. There are Chinese and English versions of inscription engraved separately on the east and west facing sides of the pedestal.

The name of the monument is written by President Jiang Zemin (Presidency 1993-2003) and engraved on the façade of the pillar. The bottom part of the pillar is square in shape and gradually rounded off towards the top. It is made up of 206 overlapping stone slabs, each of which representing a year between 1842 and 2047. Light-colored granite is used for the 6 circular slabs representing 1842, 1860, 1982, 1984 and 1990. A glass ring with built-in lighting marks the unification of Hong Kong with China in 1997. The monument is illuminated on 4 sides by spotlights.

At the top of the head, spotlights pointing to the sky are installed at the central part to symbolize that Hong Kong will continue to flourish 50 years after returning to the motherland. The cost is HK\$9.68 million.

The monument is temporary erected on the north-west of the HKCEC while at the north-east stands the sculpture “Forever Blooming Bauhinia”, a gift from the Central People’s Government to commemorate the return of Hong Kong to China.

Golden Bauhinia Square

Golden Bauhinia Square is the location of the official flag raising ceremony. The national flag and the flag of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) are being hoisted from 8:00am to 6:00pm daily. Police have been responsible for flag-raising every day at Golden Bauhinia Square. This ceremony is performed by Hong Kong police officers in ceremonial uniform and includes the playing of the national anthem. The enhanced version of the ceremony includes a flag-raising party of Hong Kong police officers accompanied by a rifle unit, both wearing full uniform. The ceremony will include the playing of the national anthem by the Police Band followed by a 10-minute musical performance by the Police Pipe Band. Meanwhile, special and elaborated flag raising ceremony arrangements will be implemented for celebrations for the anniversary of the establishment of the HKSAR on July 1 and the National Day on October 1.

The Golden Bauhinia Sculpture is the gift from The State Council of The People’s Republic of China, celebrating the establishment of the Special Administrative Region of Hong Kong. The Sculpture is a

blooming Bauhinia, which is the city flower of Hong Kong, symbolizing the prosperity and stability of the Territory.

Wan Chai

Originally a serene small bay, which gives its name Wan Chai ("small" "bay" in Cantonese), the district now prides itself with numerous state-of-the-art architecture. Much of the Wan Chai waterfront was reclaimed from the harbour during the past 20 years. With the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts, the Hong Kong Arts Centre, the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre and host of new office buildings the area has become one of Hong Kong's most important new cultural and commercial centre.

And the Wan Chai waterfront is well served by an extensive road and flyover system linking it to Central in the west and Causeway Bay in the east.

The older part of Wanchai is tucked at the foot of the hill, it was once the settlements of the indigenous residents of Hong Kong. You can still find lively street markets, century old temples and tenement houses hidden amongst new high rises.

The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts

The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts, established by Government Ordinance in 1984, is a leading tertiary institution in performing arts in Asia. It provides professional undergraduate education and practice-based postgraduate studies in Dance, Drama, Film and Television, Music, Theatre and Entertainment Arts, and Chinese Traditional Theatre. Its education philosophy reflects the cultural diversity of Hong Kong with emphasis on Chinese and Western traditions, and interdisciplinary learning.

The Academy has the following Schools/discipline: School of Dance, School of Drama, School of Film and Television, School of Music, School of Theatre and Entertainment Arts and Chinese Traditional Theatre.

The Academy houses a complex of performance venues which are considered to be amongst the best in the world for their design and up-to-date equipment. The performance venues of the Academy are managed by a Venues Division which provides in-house technical, customer services and box office support for the Academy's own productions as well as for external hirers such as professional companies. Academy student performances are open to the public.

Source:
<http://www.hkapa.edu>

Central Plaza

This 78-storey building is Central Plaza. At a height of 374 meters, or 1,228 feet,. There is a colourful timepiece at the top of Central Plaza called Lighttime. It indicates the time by changing the colours in a regular sequence, synchronized with the Observatory clock. It consists of four neon bands, each representing 15 minutes and changing colour on the quarter hour. It processes according to a fixed six-hour colour cycle; they are red, silver, purple, gold, pink, and green. It operates from 6:00pm to 6:45 am daily.

Source:
<http://www.centralplaza.com.hk/eng/index.php>

Old Wan Chai and World of Suzie Wong

Old Wan Chai was used by Richard Mason as the setting for his novel the World of Suzie Wong, which tells the story of a Wan Chai bargirl. The novel was made into a highly successful film in 1960 and, of course, the star was a Chinese girl from Hong Kong. Nancy Kwan.

With the march of time and the American withdrawal from Vietnam which ended the frequent visits of American warships on rest and recreation leave, many of the bars and nightclubs in the area closed. Those that remain do not have quite the glamour portrayed in the film, yet they are worth a visit for a glimpse of local colour.

Cross Harbour Tunnels

The rectangular building with the advertising billboards on its side across the road is the ventilation tower at the northern end of the Cross Harbour Tunnel.

The tunnel is 1.9 kilometres long. It was built by private enterprise at a cost of HK\$320 million (about US\$41 million), with participation from the Government as a shareholder and opened in August 1972.

The twin tubes of the tunnel, each with two lanes, are made up of 15 sections. Each section is about 133 metres long. The tunnel rests in a man-made trench on the seabed and at the lowest point its road surface is about 24 metres below sea level. Following the expiry of the franchise on August 31, 1999, the tunnel was vest in the Government.

The tunnel is the world's busiest 4-lane tunnel; it was used by about of 120,000 vehicles each day. The Cross Harbour Tunnel is very busy during peak hours. Attempts have been made by the tunnel's management to ease the congestion, including the introduction of an automatic toll collection system.

A second cross-harbour tunnel, known as the Eastern Harbour Crossing, was opened in September 1989 to ease traffic congestion. The tunnel is 2.2 kilometres long. It connects Quarry Bay in the east of Hong Kong Island with Cha Kwo Ling in the Kowloon Peninsula. This new tunnel has a direct link to the Eastern Corridor freeway on Hong Kong Island to improve the traffic flow. A third cross-harbour tunnel, the Western Harbour Crossing links the Western part of the territory, opened in April 1997. The six-lane tunnel constitutes a key part of the highway network serving the airport at Chek Lap Kok. Its project cost HK\$ 7 billion and measures 1.36 kilometres long.

Noon Day Gun

In the small enclosure beside the typhoon shelter is the Noon Day Gun. It belongs to one of Hong Kong's most famous trading houses, Jardine, Matheson & Company Limited, which established its godowns in this area in 1841. It is fired each day to mark noon.

There is a popular story behind the gun, which says it was originally fired to salute the arrival or departure of ships carrying Jardine tai pans, or chairmen. Such salutes, the story continues, were reserved for senior Royal Navy officers and Jardines was penalized for its transgression by being required to fire the gun each day at noon as a time signal for the people of Hong Kong. A bell was rung eight times before the firing, symbolizing time to release from work, as in the old tradition..

Today the gun is fired by Jardine staff daily. Other than the daily noon firing, the firing at midnight on New Year's eve is also marked as a major countdown activity in town.

Although Hong Kong returned to China in 1997, the old British tradition of Noon Day Gun still goes on as usual.

The Jardine Matheson Group has kindly offered this legendary ceremony to the Hong Kong Community Chest for fund-raising purpose since 1989. By making a donation of HK\$33,000 or more, donors can perform this world famous legend to celebrate joyful moments while bringing forth their love and care to the needy in Hong Kong. In addition to firing the gun, contributors receive the shell they fired with their name engraved on it as a souvenir.

The Hong Kong Community Chest is one of Hong Kong's main charitable organizations.

Source:

http://www.comchest.org/en/how/how_01_01_01_02.aspx?DocumentId=47

Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club

The Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club (RHKYC) is one of the oldest sports clubs in Hong Kong. The long history dates back to 1890, when Hong Kong Corinthian Sailing Club was formed by a small group of young rowing enthusiasts. The Club was later renamed the Royal Hong Kong Club in 1893. The Club built its Clubhouse on Kellett Island in 1938 and was opened officially in 1940 by the then Acting Governor, Lieutenant General Sir E. F. Norton In 1951. A causeway was built to give access to Kellett Island by means other than water. With the completion of the Cross Harbour Tunnel in 1972, the outline of Kellett Island ceased to exist although the name remained.

.This is the only club in Hong Kong to keep the prefix "Royal" in its English name after the handover in 1997, but the Chinese prefix of Royal or 皇家 was dropped.

The RHKYC provides sailing and rowing courses for members and non-members at various levels to nurture the development of these two core sports. It organizes the annual Hong Kong to Macau Race and the biennial International South China Sea Race.

Source:

<http://www.rhkyc.org.hk/History.aspx>

Causeway Bay Typhoon Shelter

Typhoon shelters are built for marine vessels to get shelter from typhoon or stormy weather. Causeway Bay Typhoon Shelter was the first typhoon shelter in Hong Kong. The original typhoon shelter was built after the 1874 typhoon, at the present location,, to provide shelter for fishing boats during storms. It was completed in 1883 with a breakwater only 427 metres (1,400 feet) long. On 18 September 1906, a typhoon struck Hong Kong, destroying 3,653 boats and killing 15,000 people, most of them fishermen. The Government carried out expansion works on the typhoon shelter in 1908, deepening it by 3 metres (9 feet) and expanded it to 30 hectares (75 acres). In 1953 the typhoon shelter was moved northwards to its present site and the original typhoon shelter was reclaimed to provide land for Victoria Park. The new typhoon shelter had a size of 26 hectares (65 acres). However, reclamation projects which started in the typhoon shelter during the late 1960s to construct the Cross Harbour Tunnel decreased the size of the typhoon shelter.

Since 2009, much of the shelter has been used as a working area for construction of the Central-Wan Chai Bypass and an underground road, and scheduled for completion in 2017. Now, large barges and cranes are berthing side by side with the fishing boats.

During the 1960's to 70's, Causeway Bay Typhoon Shelter was a popular night entertainment area where visitors could hire a sampan for a leisurely cruise in the sheltered bay. Entertainment was provided by other sampan owners who carried young singers on board, visitors could call them forward to perform for them. There were also sampan owners who built a kitchen on board and they cooked for the visitors. Famous dishes were spicy crab and fish ball noodles. Due to hygiene concern

and more night entertainment available on land, the typhoon shelter type of night entertainment faded out in the 80's.

Today, you can go to bars and karaokes for singing and proper restaurants for typhoon shelter spicy crabs.

Section 2 –Causeway Bay and Tai Hang Road

Victoria Park

Victoria Park occupied an area of 19 hectares and built in 1955 on reclamation and opens in 1957. A statue to the memory of Queen Victoria, after whom the park is named, is located here.

Victoria Park is one of Hong Kong's largest public recreation areas. It has tennis courts, mini-soccer pitches, outdoor basketball courts, Bowling Green, model boat pool, centre lawn and a new swimming pool complex opened in September 2013. The new complex is suitable for hosting local, regional and international competitions of sports such as swimming, diving, water polo and synchronized swimming.

A Pebble Walking Trail (foot reflexology stone path) is installed at the Park. Every organ of our body can be revealed in the reflective area of our feet. This area is able to tell you your present health status. By touching softly at the organ of the foot, we then know immediately whether the organ is functioning properly or not. Hence, we stimulate by massaging the related part of the organ to enhance the working of the mechanism, circulating the flow of the blood. It improves our faculty of the body, attaining the goal of curing us or building up our physical body stronger.

On the eve of Chinese New Year and for much of the New Year holidays a large area of the park is given over to a plant and flower market. This is visited by tens of thousands of people, either to buy plants and flowers to decorate their homes over the festive period or just to be a part of the cheerful, jostling crowd. Popular plants and flowers at the market include chrysanthemums, daffodils, peach and plum blossoms, and orange-bearing kumquat bushes.

On the night of the Mid-Autumn Festival the park is alive with the colours of festival lanterns. Families, many with children who have been allowed to stay up late for the occasion, bring picnics to the park and eat them by the light of lanterns they have hung in trees.

Traditional lanterns are made of brightly coloured cellophane or paper on wire frames shaped to resemble birds, fish or other animals or inanimate objects such as spaceships, aero planes or submarines. They dangle from slim bamboo canes on short pieces of wire or string and are illuminated from within by small candles. In recent years all plastic lanterns with battery-operated bulbs for illumination have become increasingly popular.

The annual Hong Kong Brands & Products Expo also attracts tens of thousands of visitors locally and from overseas to explore the newest merchandise from local brands.

Source:
<http://www.lcsd.gov.hk/parks/vp/en/index.php>

Hong Kong Central Library

The 12-storey high building occupies a gross area of 9,400 sq. metres and a floor area of 33,800 sq. metres. The construction cost is HK\$690 million. It is the biggest library facility among the Hong Kong Public Libraries System.

The arch-shaped entrance at the front elevation of the Hong Kong Central Library represents the Gate to Knowledge, while the graphics in the shape of triangle, square and circle denote different meanings. The circle stands for the sky, the square for the land and the triangle for accumulation of knowledge.

With its commissioning in May 2001, the Hong Kong Central Library not only provides a full range of

library facilities on a larger scale, but also provides comprehensive reference and information services to a fuller extent. Other major facilities include self-charging terminals, bookdrop service, information kiosks and Multimedia Information System.

Source:

<http://www.hkpl.gov.hk/hkcl/eng/aboutus/index.html>

Lai Tak Tsuen

The Lai Tak Tsuen, named after Hong Kong Government Officer, Michael Wright, who had served the Government of Hong Kong for more than 30 years, is a public housing estate built in 1975, it is one of the first public housing developments in Hong Kong. It was the second self-funded rental project of the Hong Kong Housing Society.

The estate consists of three residential blocks, with 2,677 flats. The population of the housing estate is currently about 11,000. The estate also has carparks, shops, market stalls, a kindergarten, a children's centre, a youth centre, an elderly centre, a library, basketball court and a children's playground.

Section 3 – Tai Hang Road and Aw Boon Haw Gardens

Aw Boon Haw Gardens

Formerly known as Tiger Balm Gardens, but renamed in honour of one of its creators, the Aw Boon Haw Gardens are reminiscent of both Disneyland and Madame Tussaud's Chamber of Horrors.

The gardens cover an area of 3.2 hectares (8 acres), and were built in 1935 by 2 Chinese brothers - nicknamed the "Tiger" and the "Leopard" – who made a fortune from Tiger Balm oil, a pungent "cure all" popular throughout South-East Asia.

Costing HK\$16 million (about US\$2.04 million), the gardens include pagodas, pavilions, statues and grottoes - many of them brightly coloured and relating ancient legends. The seven-storey white pagoda, - the "Tiger Pagoda" - is visible from the road, and is the trademark of the gardens.

Architecturally, the Mansion was built in the Chinese Renaissance style with a blend of Western and Chinese construction methods and architectural theory. The plan is, however, more Western being roughly symmetrical with the adoption of porches, bay windows and fireplaces. Internally, there are beautiful painted glass windows from Italy, carvings and mouldings, gilded with gold and murals showing Indian and Burmese influence. Over the years there have not been many changes to the Mansion, and its authentic appearance is retained.

The Mansion is a reinforced concrete construction. Floor plates of G/F and 1/F are about 650 m² each. Penthouse on the roof is about 80 m² and the Lower G/F is about 390 m². There is a private garden in front of the Mansion which could be restored to an attractive ornamental garden. The social value and local interest of the Mansion lie in its representation of a residence of a rich and powerful merchant family in the 1930s and a focal point of Chinese culture in Hong Kong.

The Tiger Balm Garden has been demolished. The Mansion together with its private garden has been preserved and passed to Government since 2001.

Source:
<http://www.heritage.gov.hk/en/hpm/background.htm>

Hong Kong Stadium

The Stadium opened in March 1994. it can accommodate a maximum of 46,000 spectators depending on the event configuration. 40,000 are situated in the stands and an additional temporary 6,000 can be located on the field area. The latter can all be seated on marked chairs placed on top of Terraplas (the pitch protection system).

It's a great venue for a variety of significant and successful events, which include the annual Rugby Sevens, the Lunar New Year soccer tournaments, the Manchester United Exhibition Match, the National Day Celebration Show, charity events such as the Walk for Millions, as well as a number of musical and religious events.

The safety and the comfort of all visitors is of prime importance and this is reflected in the facilities and procedures designed for safe crowd control. On any event day there is a fully manned Event Control Centre which is jointly managed with the police and acts as the decision making centre for effective crowd control. As an international venue the stadium has all the necessary facilities to accommodate the smallest to largest events, including team and official locker rooms, VIP dressing rooms, promoter's offices, catering and hospitality areas, extensive press and T.V. facilities, state-of-the-art Diamond Vision Screen and most importantly a fully trained and qualified work team who take pride in the stadium and the success of your event.

Source:
<http://www.lcsd.gov.hk/stadium/hks/en/index.php>

Hong Kong Rugby Sevens

The Hong Kong Sevens is considered the premier tournament on the IRB Sevens World Series rugby sevens competition. The Hong Kong Sevens is the sixth tournament on the IRB Sevens World Series (following the USA Sevens), and is held annually in Hong Kong on a weekend in late March. The tournament spans three days, beginning on a Friday and concluding on Sunday. The tournament is organized each year by the Hong Kong Rugby Football Union

The Hong Kong Sevens were an influential force in the modernization of rugby union, for example, the Hong Kong Sevens were one of the first rugby union tournaments to attract major sponsorship, when the airline Cathay Pacific sponsored the 1976 tournament. They also provided a level of cosmopolitan international competition, which tended not to exist in rugby before the first Rugby World Cup in 1987, especially since Hong Kong was not seen as one of the "Big Eight", and other than some involvement with France, the Commonwealth teams tended to be notoriously clannish.

The Hong Kong Rugby Sevens is traditionally one of if not the biggest event on the Hong Kong sporting calendar. As such, there is a tremendous party atmosphere, with the involvement of the entire rugby-playing community. For spectators, particular emphasis on the South Stand, where hordes of rugby fans dress up and dance for most of the duration. Activities that typically ensue as the weekend progresses include the throwing of empty beer jugs around the South Stand, Mexican waves, and streakers running across the pitch. Outside the stadium, the 'Sevens Village' at the Indian Recreation Club nearby is an alternative venue to gather and watch matches on giant screens, eat and drink to excess while matches are in progress; and after the match, partying continues with champagne and live music and DJs in the champagne tent.

Since 2007 the South Stand has been made officially accessible to over-18s only, due to its hyper and somewhat provocative atmosphere. Streakier were formally arrested. In addition, following an incident in 2010 when one spectator invaded the pitch, climbed onto the crossbars at the south end of the stadium before dodging back into the stands and disappearing, organizers stepped up security and announced a zero-tolerance policy of invaders in 2011. Out of concerns for safety, the local Rugby Union sent out notification that anyone entering the playing area who should not enter would be arrested by the police, instead of just being ejected from the arena.

Source:

<http://www.hksevens.com/eng/home.php>

Section 4 – Tai Hang Road, Jardine’s Lookout

Jardine’s Lookout

Jardine’s Lookout is a mountain and a residential area on the Hong Kong Island in Hong Kong at an altitude of about 433 meters. Nearby hills include Mount Nicholson, Violet Hill and Mount Butler etc.

It is named after William Jardine, founder of Jardine Matheson. It was from here, in the days of the sailing ships, that a watch was kept for the first glimpse of the sails of the firm’s clippers coming from India and London. As soon as a vessel was signalled, a fast whaleboat was sent out to collect Jardines’ mails. The correspondence was rushed back to the office so that the directors could have the first possible information on the world’s markets.

Due to its scenic view and low population density, it has been considered an upper-class neighborhood in Hong Kong. It is also known as the Mid-Levels East. The area is a localized gated community with large detached houses in private lots and more moderate townhouses. Low-rise and high-rise apartments make up the rest of the community. In 2011, the area had a population of about 15,000. This community is conveniently linked with public transportation and well-equipped with facilities. Jardine’s Lookout is only a 10-minute drive to Central and 5 to Causeway Bay, where the Cross Harbor Tunnel is located, making travel to the Kowloon side easy.

Jardine’s Lookout has its own supermarket, deli, florists, post office and many small provisions stores. French and Japanese International Schools are nearby. Canadian International School and Chinese International School are also not far away.

Real Estate Market in Hong Kong

Hong Kong has one of the highest real estate prices in the world. The government does not have any restrictions on buying and selling real estate. Properties can be registered under individuals or companies. Transactions are usually deal through Real estate agencies and they charged 1% commission to both buyers and sellers. For rental, both landlord and tenant has to pay half of monthly rent to agencies as commission.

In 2013, due to continuous rising of the real estate prices, the government rolled out policies such as to avoid speculators to maintain the market so that users can purchase their properties. The policies include raising the stamp duty from HK\$200 to 1.5% of estate price for properties under HK\$2 million, stamp duty for non-residential properties payable once offer agreement was signed and reduced mortgage loan rate.

Fire Dragon Dance in Tai Hang

The Tai Hang Fire Dragon has its origin in 1880. At that time, Tai Hang was only a small Hakka village and the villagers, most of them farmers and fishermen, led a simple and peaceful life. The tale started when the villagers once killed a serpent in a stormy night, but in the next morning, the dead body of the serpent had disappeared. A few days later, a plague spread out in Tai Hang and many people died of infection. Meanwhile, a village elder saw Buddha one night in his dream and was told to perform a Fire Dragon Dance and to burn fire crackers in the Mid-Autumn Festival. The sulphur in the fire crackers drove away the disease and the villagers were saved. Since then, every year the Tai Hang residents would perform the Fire Dragon Dance for three nights in the Mid-Autumn Festival in memory of the incident. The Fire Dragon is altogether 220 feet long with its body divided into 32 segments, all of which are stuffed with straw and stuck full of incense sticks , So it is known as the “ Fire-Dragon ” .

The Cheung Chau Jiao Festival, the Tai O dragon boat water parade, the Yu Lan Ghost Festival, together with the Tai Hang fire dragon dance have been added to the third national intangible cultural heritage list. In 2009 They come under the Social Practices, Rituals & Festive Events category in the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Source:

<http://www.taihangfiredragon.hk/home.htm>

<http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201106/03/P201106030233.htm>

Section 5 – Hong Kong Adventist Hospital, Stubb’s Road Lookout

Hong Kong Adventist Hospital

The round building is the Hong Kong Adventist Hospital, which opened in 1971. The Hong Kong Adventist Hospital is part of the Adventist Health global network of over 160 hospitals with the common goal of providing premiere "compassionate personalized care" to patients in all parts of the world. Many of the patients, we well as the physicians, nurse and other staff come from outside Hong Kong.

Facilities and services include a catheterization laboratory, cardio-pulmonary function laboratory, heart surgery room, intensive care unit, out-patient clinic and diagnostic imaging. The hospital is a non-profit institution which relies on patients' fee for day-to-day running costs as well as buying new equipment, updating facilities and expanding services.

There are 13 private hospitals in Hong Kong and they took up about 20% of the patients.

The top three fatal diseases in Hong Kong are cancer, heart disease and pneumonia.

Source:

<http://www.hkah.org.hk>

Medical Scheme

In 2011, there are about 35,000 beds in public and private hospitals in Hong Kong, or about five beds per thousand people. The total number of doctors is about 10,000, or 1.5 doctors to every thousand people. Also, the total number of nurses is 44,000, or 6.4 nurses to every thousand people.

The demand for hospital services is high, as reflected by the consistently large attendance at out-patient and specialist clinics.

Medical charges in public hospitals are low, reflecting a 96% substantial subsidy from public funds. In 2013, the charge for consultation at a general out-patient clinic was HK\$45, while that at a specialist clinic was HK\$100 for first consultation and HK\$60 thereafter. HK\$100 would be charged for emergency room service. Patients in the general wards of government hospitals are charged a fee of HK\$100 a day with a HK\$50 admission fee. It covers meals, medicine, laboratory tests, surgery and any other treatment that may be required. In addition, all the medical fees could be waived to patients with economic difficulties.

Services at maternity and child-health centres are free, as are certain other specialized services, such as tuberculosis screening and treatment provided by chest clinics, treatment of sexually transmitted diseases at social hygiene clinics, and treatment at accident and emergency departments.

For non-residents, the charge for emergency room service is HK\$990 and HK\$4,680 per day in general ward.

All public hospitals are managed by the Hospital Authority.

Source:

http://www.gov.hk/en/about/abouthk/factsheets/docs/public_health.pdf

http://www.ha.org.hk/visitor/ha_visitor_index.asp?Parent_ID=10044&Content_ID=10045&Ver=HTML

Stubbs Road Lookout Point

This lookout affords excellent views of the harbour, the Kowloon Peninsula, and many places on the north shore of Hong Kong Island, including Happy Valley Racecourse, Causeway Bay, Wan Chai and Central. The map board at the lookout will help you locate all the points of interest.

Stubbs Road and colonial names

Stubbs Road was named after Sir Reginald Edward Stubbs who served as governor of Hong Kong from 1919 to 1925. There are many roads named after governors such as Hennessy, Robinson, MacDonald and Des Voeux. Furthermore, some were named after Prime Minister (Pitt, Aberdeen) and Royal Families (Prince Edward, Princess Margaret, King's, Queen's). The first road named after Chinese is Lei Yuen Street (Mr. Kam Lei Yuen). There were voices from the community of whether to keep these colonial names or not after the handover and the final decision was all names were kept as these are part of our unique colonial history.

Section 6 – Magazine Gap Road, Peak Road

Victoria Peak

There are two Chinese names for Victoria Peak; Tai Ping Shan, meaning the Mountain of Great Peace, and Tse Ki Shan, meaning the Mountain of the Hoisted Flag. It also known as Mount Austin. The Peak, which rises to 554 meters above sea level, The summit is occupied by a radio telecommunications facility and is closed to the public. However, the surrounding area of public parks and high-value residential land is the area that is normally meant by the name The Peak. It is a major tourist attraction that offers views over Central, Victoria Harbour, Lamma Island and the surrounding islands.

There are well over seven million local and overseas visitors to the Peak each year, mainly for the unforgettable views of the city and the harbour, but also for the numerous interesting walks that start here. The viewing deck has coin operated telescopes that the visitors can use to enjoy the cityscape. The number of visitors led to the construction of two major leisure and shopping centres, the Peak Tower and the Peak Galleria, situated adjacent to each other.

Victoria Peak Garden is located on the site of Mountain Lodge, the Governor's old summer residence, and is the closest publicly accessible point to the summit. It can be reached from Victoria Gap by walking up Mount Austin Road, a climb of about 150 metres. Another popular walk is the level loop along Lugard Road, giving good views of Hong Kong's Central district and Kowloon, and then returning via Harlech Road, encircling the summit at the level of the Peak Tower. There are several restaurants on Victoria Peak, most of which are located in the two shopping centres. However, the Peak Lookout Restaurant, is housed in an older and more traditional building which was originally a spacious house for engineers working on the Peak Tramway. It was rebuilt in 1901 as a stop area for sedan chairs, but was re-opened as a restaurant in 1947. In addition to being a major tourist attraction for Hong Kong, The Peak is also the summit of Hong Kong's property market. At the peak of The Peak, properties are more precious than anywhere else in the world. Most of the super rich in Hong Kong - including Cheung Kong (Holdings) chairman Li Ka-shing and the Kwok brothers of Sun Hung Kai Properties - live in detached houses in Island South or The Peak.

Police Museum

The Police Museum was opened in 1988 and is popular at weekends. It has a total floor area of 570 sq.m. in which over 700 exhibits are displayed.

The Museum is divided into five galleries:

- Orientation Gallery describes the general history of the Force through historical photographs, historical archives, uniforms, equipment, firearms and other artifacts;
- Triad Societies and Narcotics Gallery features the history of local Triad Societies, the scope of their activities and the beliefs and rituals that have been known to be practised by members. This gallery also highlights the narcotic problem in Hong Kong through the display of replica drugs, drug smoking and trafficking paraphernalia and an example of a heroin manufacturing laboratory;
- Police Then & Now Gallery gives an overview of the transformation of Hong Kong Police Force over 160 years by exploring several areas of interest;
- Current Exhibition Gallery;
- Heroin Factory specially displays a heroin production site which was dismantled by the Police in 1980s.

The museum is open from 9am to 5pm Wednesday to Sunday; from 2pm to 5pm on Tuesdays; and is closed on Monday and public holidays.

Source:

http://www.police.gov.hk/ppp_en/01_about_us/pm.html

Hong Kong Police

The Hong Kong Police is one of the best-trained, most highly motivated and dedicated police forces in the world. International law enforcement bodies rank it among the most professional of its kind. It has also, to an almost unprecedented extent in Asia, won the trust and faith of the people it was created to serve.

The HKP is one of the largest city police forces; in size it rivals the Metropolitan Police of London and the New York Police Department. As for equipment, purpose-built community police stations, modern communications, computerized criminal records and other hi-tech aids to fight crime, the force is unrivalled.

This significant expenditure on infrastructure and equipment is important. But the major contribution to Hong Kong's envied status as a society in which the average man and woman, their families and property are protected comes not from anything money can buy, but from the men and women in police ranks. It is on their trusty shoulders the burden squarely rests. And their dedication and professionalism that create the true solid foundations for our city's reputation as a safe and secure community.

In April 1969, the men and women of the Force received a rare honour. The Queen bestowed the title Royal to the Hong Kong Police and Princess Alexandra became Commandant-General of both the regular and auxiliary forces.

Source:

http://www.police.gov.hk/ppp_en/01_about_us/

Hong Kong Auxiliary Police

The Hong Kong Auxiliary Police Force (HKAPF) comprises volunteers from all walks of life and has a proud history dating back to its establishment in 1914. The role and organization of the HKAPF have been constantly modified to keep pace with changing circumstances. In November 1998, the Force Committee on Auxiliary Police (FCAP), comprising both regular and auxiliary members, was formed to conduct a comprehensive review of the HKAPF with a view to optimizing the management and operational deployment of its members. Recommendations were endorsed by the Commissioner of Police and implemented at the end of March 1999.

The original role of the HKAPF as a trained manpower reserve to support the regular force during times of emergencies has been maintained. The HKAPF continues to render the form and amount of support as determined by the Commissioner of Police in accordance with prevailing operational priorities. Its organization and command have been modified to enhance integration with the regular force. The establishment is distributed to five land Police Regions in numbers proportional to the uniform branch establishment of each Region. Recruitment of volunteers to join the HKAPF is continuing to ensure the vitality and youthfulness of the Force.

The FCAP continues to function as a standing committee for the formulation of policies relating to the role, establishment, structure and command, personnel, deployment and training of the HKAPF. Police Headquarters (Support Wing), is responsible for determining and promulgating policies relating to the role, deployment and operational efficiency of the HKAPF. The Auxiliary Support Bureau is formed in June 2001 to provide support services at the Force level to both regular and auxiliary members with regard to the HKAPF. The Bureau is responsible for the administration, management and basic/continuation training of all auxiliary members.

Source:

http://www.police.gov.hk/ppp_en/11_useful_info/aux_police/index.html

Section 7 –Peak Road, Ho Tung Garden

Traffic to the Peak

The peak area was always one of the favourite locations for expatriates to stay during the colonial era and even nowadays. Due to the landscape and hill slopes, access to the peak was always a challenge for engineers.

Peak Road

The road we are traveling on is Peak Road. It will take us towards the south side of the island, and on the way there will be views of Aberdeen, which we will visit later.

In the 1870s, when there was of course no air-conditioning, Governor Sir Richard Macdonnell began spending the hottest and most humid months of the year in the relative cool and dry of the peak.

With the opening of the Peak Tram in May 1888, many expatriate businessmen and civil servants began living on the Peak and the area developed into an enclave of the Hong Kong elite.

Very few of the elegant, colonial-style homes built on the Peak remain today, although many companies and the government continue to house senior employees in the area.

(The European Reservation Ordinance, passed in 1888, prevented Chinese people from living on the Peak until its abolition at the time of the Second World War).

Peak Tram

The Peak Tram is Hong Kong's oldest form of mechanical transport and was opened to the public in 1888 after three years of construction. It provided the main route to the Peak until the opening of the old Peak Road in 1924.

The boilers and steam engine which operated the tram were replaced with an electrical system in 1926, and in 1989 that system was replaced with the latest microprocessor-controlled electrical system. The new system, from Switzerland, meets the highest safety and efficiency standards.

Journey time between the lower terminus and the upper Peak Tram terminus, which is some 396 meter (some 1,302 feet) above sea level, is about 8 minutes, and the sharpest incline is about 45 degrees. 2 articulated tramcars, one of which moves uphill while the other moves down, have a capacity of 120 passengers each and together they can carry over 11,000 passengers daily.

There are 5 stations between the lower and upper termini with a sign at each stating its height above sea level. The views along the way are breathtaking – of Victoria Harbour and Kowloon, the coast of the island between Central, Wan Chai and Causeway Bay, wooded slopes on either side of the track dotted here and there with luxury houses and apartment blocks, and much more.

And it is well worth making the trip by night as well as by day in order to see Hong Kong alive with multi-coloured electronic light.

Source:

http://www.thepeak.com.hk/en/5_5_2.asp

Sedan Chair Race

The Sedan chairs and "Matilda" are as much a part of Hong Kong's heritage as Victoria Harbour and sailing clippers. The Matilda International Hospital, as it is known today, was founded by successful Hong Kong businessman and philanthropist Granville Sharp. When he died in August 1899, his will stipulated that after family legacies, the residue of his estate was to be used "...to build and maintain a hospital to the glory of God and the good of man in loving memory of my sainted wife, Matilda Lincoln, the same to be called Matilda Hospital."

The concept of sedan chairs was chosen because they and rickshaws were the only means of transportation to the Hospital when it first opened in 1907. Thus the First Sedan Chair Race was created by Nurse Joyce Smith and inaugurated in 1975 with four entrants running for "The Matilda Hospital Shield". In 2012, 38 years later, 44 teams participated from a wide cross section of Hong Kong's schools, clubs, associations and corporations competing for numerous trophies and raising funds for charity. The fund raised goes to support charitable organizations that generally do not receive assistance from the Hong Kong Community Chest, Hong Kong Jockey Club or the Government – none go to the Matilda International Hospital.

The Annual Event "Sedan Chair Race" itself is exciting and fun – teams set off at intervals and finish to a crowd of cheering and admiration. Live entertainment, games, fantastic bargains, and a wide array of food and drinks make for an enjoyable Bazaar for children and adults. All proceeds go towards the fundraising target for the charities. The money raised from this annual event benefits around 30 local charities.

To date, the Sedan Chair Race has raised over \$63.3 million for Hong Kong charities with Granville Sharp's legacy of Matilda continuing its support to Hong Kong's needy. The Sedan Chair Charities Fund Committee work hard to ensure this event continues as part of Hong Kong sporting calendar and heritage.

Source:

http://www.thepeak.com.hk/en/5_5_2.asp

Lamma Island

Lamma is the third largest of Hong Kong's islands – after Lantau, and Hong Kong Island. Lamma has an area of 13.5 square kilometres, less than a tenth the area of Lantau; and is 7 km long and 6 km wide. With a population of only around 6000, it has a distinctly rural character, very different to Hong Kong city. Apart from one place, the power station, there are no cars on Lamma, just motorized carts that transport construction materials and so on.

Lamma Island is perhaps best known for its seafood, laid back atmosphere and its community of Westerners. Yung Shue Wan is home to many young expatriates seeking a more relaxed Hong Kong lifestyle. Their number appears to have dwindled since the 1997 Handover of Hong Kong to China, partly because the British no longer enjoy the automatic privilege of working here without a work visa. Still, Western-style cafes, pubs and "new age" shops have transformed the village into a tranquil Bohemian refuge. Sok Kwu Wan on its eastern shore - is famous for its open-air waterfront seafood restaurants. Public ferries departing from Pier 7 in Central provide easy access to the island.

And if you're familiar with films such as Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon, maybe keep a lookout for someone looking like movie star Chow Yun-fat. Chow Yun-fat was born and grew up here – at Tung O, on the south coast – and very occasionally pops back to visit. His mother still lives on Lamma – and at least one islander claims to sometimes see his younger brother, who looks very like Chow Yun-fat.

Yung Shue Wan

Archaeologists have discovered artifacts showing Lamma has been inhabited for at least six thousand years. Here at Yung Shue Wan, six thousand years ago, there were two small, tidal inlets – to either side of the low hill you can see [in around centre of village; visible from at least the ferry pier]. During the Bronze Age, from 1200 to 400 BC, this was evidently home to the Yueh people, whose livelihoods were heavily dependent on the sea.

Over time, the inlets silted up, and the land was converted to agriculture. Though fishing remained important, the Punti – Cantonese – people arrived from the north, and rice farming became more widespread in Hong Kong; here at Yung Shue Wan, by late in the 19th century the economy included fruit orchards, hemp cultivation and dyeing, charcoal working and seafood processing. Also, many young men worked as sailors.

During the 1960s and 1970s, as Hong Kong rapidly expanded, Yung Shue Wan made a switch to market gardening, in response to the growing demand for vegetables. Cottage industries also developed, mainly painting plastic goods as Hong Kong became a manufacturing centre. Though both market gardens and cottage industries have since faded because of competition from elsewhere, you will see that they survive, though are more specialized, and help give Lamma its own, unique character.

Power station; Wind Turbine

This road seems wide for Lamma, and it leads to the west, to the power station.

It's mainly a coal-burning plant, and was built in three stages, the first of which was completed in 1984. It supplies electricity to Lamma and Hong Kong Island, and is owned by Hong Kong Electric.

Though the tall smoke stacks, especially, are very obvious from much of Lamma, the power station seems rather cut-off from the island, and has its own ferries, including a car ferry that transports the trucks and other vehicles used there.

Hong Kong's first commercial scale wind turbine was built by Hong Kong Electric Company, standing majestically atop Tai Ling and opened in February 2006 . The hub will be 45 metres high, and the rotor blades will have a diameter of 52 metres; the turbine's overall maximum height – when a turbine blade is directly above the hub – will be around 71 metres.

Sok Kwu Wan

Out on the water of Sok Kwu Wan or Picnic Bay are the rafts of fish farmers, where fish fry are fed until they're big enough to be sold in the market. There is an over 150-year-old Tin Hau Temple dedicated to Goddess of Sea can be found there.

Sok Kwu Wan is dominated by seafood restaurants, which cater mainly to people living across in the city, especially on Hong Kong Island. When the weather is good, many people like to set out for an evening junk trip, and come here for a seafood feast. Because clientele is mainly city folk, you'll find there are extensive wine lists, and even a shop selling cigars, which are hardly typical of South China coastal restaurants that mainly cater to fishermen and their families! I write, as a Cheung Chau resident; prices a darn sight higher too.

Occupying an area of over 20,000 sq feet on a floating raft, the Lamma Fisher folk Village comprises authentic fishing junk, traditional dragon boats, an exhibition hall, themed folklore booths, fishing rafts and dwellings. The village showcases of the local fisher folk culture and the history of fishery industry in the Hong Kong.

Section 8 –Ho Tung Garden to The Peak

Ho Tung Garden

While the property is known by the name of 'Ho Tung Gardens' after its original owner, the property's alternative given Chinese name is "Hui Kok Yuen" – an amalgam of names of Ho and his second wife, Clara. Hotung's alternative Chinese name Hui-sang ; his wife was Cheung Lin-kok.

The site is about 110,000 square meters was originally known as "The Falls", because of a stream in the vicinity. Originally owned by C.D. Wilkinson, the site was sold to Ho in about 1923 or 1924. Its street address at the time was 82 Aberdeen Road and was changed in 1924 to No. 254. Later, it became No. 75 Peak Road. Lease plans of 1923 and 1928 indicate that the mansion of Ho Tung Garden was built on the foundations of "The Falls".

The 400 square meters residence was constructed between 1927 and 1938 in a Chinese Renaissance style. Within the extensive gardens are a pavilion and a 5-storey pagoda, built with reinforced concrete and Chinese roof-tiles. One of the pavilions in the gardens also house calligraphy by Qing Dynasty officials, Zeng Guofan and Zuo Zongtang.

According to the Peak Reservation Ordinance, only Europeans were allowed to live on Victoria Peak. Hotung, who was half-European and half-Chinese, was already living on the Peak when the law was enacted. Ho had a retreat on The Peak named "The Neuk", at 48 Aberdeen Road, Ho never lived in Ho Tung Gardens.

The Garden was commandeered as a military base to fight the Japanese Imperial Army in 1941. Parts of the structure, including the roof, were damaged in heavy fighting and the building became dilapidated thereafter. In 1946, Hotung sought compensation from the government for the damage; the building was then renovated several times. The property has been extensively modified.

Hotung's son, Robert, lived on the property between the 1960s and 1990s, and ownership passed onto granddaughter Ho Min-kwan in 2003. She applied for permission to redevelop in mid-2010; technical approval was gained from the Buildings Department in December 2010 as it satisfied planning requirements. According to building plan submitted, 11 blocks of four-storey houses would be built; a total floor area would be 6,000 square meters. The case came before the Antiquities Advisory Board in July 2010, where it was declared a Grade 1 historic site, although such declaration does not confer statutory protection. In late January 2011, the Government of Hong Kong invoked the Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance for the fourth time in history, declared it "a proposed historic monument", thus imposing a 12-month moratorium on redevelopment of the site, pending negotiations with the owner. In October 2011, two government consultancies reports, by experts at the University of Hong Kong and submitted to the Antiquity Advisory Board, concluded that it has high historical and architectural value. In 24 October 2011, the Antiquities Advisory Board approved the government proposal to declare the Ho Tung Gardens on the Peak a monument. Bernard Chan, Chairman of the AAB argued to preserve the mansions because "The choice of a very Chinese-looking style of architecture for the new house in 1927 ... was a statement that a racial barrier was being broken. It was also a declaration by Hotung that he was different from his neighbors, who were only living in the colony temporarily before going home." However, some other architectural historians believe that the mansion is an ordinary piece of architecture at the time that cannot be compared with other examples of "Chinese Renaissance" architecture such as King Yin Lane and Haw Par Mansion.

In December 2011, the government announced that it would declare Hotung Gardens a protected monument prior to the expiry of the temporary injunctive declaration made in January. This puts the government at loggerheads with the site's owner, who insists on retaining the site and living in one of the ten units she wishes to have built there. Ho Min-kwan argues that the existing main building is "unexceptional ... does not have the requisite historical or architectural value or authenticity; it is not a

rare example of an architectural style, and it is not a distinctive building structure." She also notes that her grandfather never lived there, and that the main building has now been converted into six apartments.

The government announced in early December 2012 that it would not declare the house a monument after all. The secretary for development admitted a policy failure and said the government believed that "not everyone would agree with spending billions of dollars of public money on private heritage sites" – the valuation was between HK\$3 and 7 billion.

The Hill District Reservation Ordinance

The Hill District Reservation Ordinance, commonly called the Peak Reservation Ordinance, was a racially based zoning law that reserved part of the Victoria Peak as a place of residence to non-Chinese people except with the consent of the Governor-in-Council. The law was in force from 1904 to 1930. According to Government record, it was "in order that a healthy place of residence may be preserved for all those who are accustomed to a temperate climate and to whom life in the tropics presents the disadvantage of an unnatural environment". Contemporary historians' views toward the Ordinance vary, with some attributes the Ordinance to the plague, whereas others attributing it to racial segregation or social status. The debate on the second reading of the Bill is recorded in the Hong Kong Hansard, which shows that the two Chinese members, Ho Kai and Wei Yuk, did not oppose the Bill but a minority of the "leading Chinese" in the community were against it.

In 1894, the deadly Third Pandemic of Bubonic plague spread from China to Hong Kong, causing 100,000 deaths in Canton alone within two months. Dr. Gomes da Silva, the Principal Medical Officer of Macao, in recording the sanitary condition of the Chinese population, observed that they usually threw house refuse into the street, where it accumulated until such time as the torrential summer rains and the overflow of the Pearl River cleared it away. A study by City University of Hong Kong also attributes the spread of plague to the hygiene and sanitary condition among local population at the time. Governor of Hong Kong Sir William Robinson reported to the British Government that "the filthy habits of life amongst the 210,000 Chinese who reside here have rendered Hong Kong liable to the invasion and development of the germ of the bubonic plague."

In the late 1890s, Europeans who resided in the City of Victoria gradually moved to places of higher altitude to evade such living conditions. But as the Chinese population continued to increase in the city, and the Europeans were reaching Victoria Peak thus could not move any higher, the Hong Kong Government decided to reserve the Peak for Europeans and other non-Chinese. The 1904 Government Gazette explained that such reservation of the district was to address such concerns over the health of European people. Between 1894-1929, the plague caused 24,000 case of infection in Hong Kong, of which 90% were fatal. In 1929, the plague was eradicated and the law was repealed in 1930.

Some historians believe the Hill District Reservation Ordinance is a law based on social segregation as its goal. At the time one's social status was measured by the altitude of one's residence. One incidental benefit that came with the law included the reservation of the Peak Tram at certain hours of the day. From 8 to 10am, the tram service was for top officials, first class passengers only, thus guaranteed good commute time. The front seat of the tram was always reserved for the governor, who further accorded its desirable social status by building a summer retreat, the Mountain Lodge. The Peak at the time was referred to by the British as "Little England". Many of the upper-middle class household members would have a dozen to 20 Chinese servants.

Ho Tung proposed to abandon the ordinance and finally abandoned after the Second World War. Wu Ting Fong was the first Chinese to reside in the Peak

Luxurious homes

The beautiful house in this area mostly belongs to the rich and famous people in town. This area is one of the favourite locations to reside in due to good Fung Shui (see supplementary information). The Fung Shui concept believes that if a house is built on a location with a hill or mountain at the back and faces water, it will bring good luck to the residents. This area has the peak and Victoria Harbour or South China Sea to match this configuration.

Section 9 –The Peak (walking tour)

Peak Tower and Peak Galleria

British architect Terry Farrell designed the Peak Tower, opened in May 1997. It replaced the original tower, which was opened in 1972 and demolished in July 1993. The new tower has seven-levels with entertainment facilities unique to Hong Kong, retail outlets and restaurants.

The Madame Tussaud's Museum in August 2000, invested around HK\$120 million, adds the attractiveness of the Peak. The museum features over 100 life-like was portraits displayed in themed areas. It includes Hong Kong Glamour, Historic and National heroes, Music Icon, World Premier, The Champions and SCREAM favourites such as Princess Diana, Michael Jackson, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Beckham and Hong Kong movie stars Jackie Chan, Bruce Lee and Michelle Yeow are also found in the museum. A new area "Fantasy Kingdom" was opened in September 2013 which added 30% more exhibition space to the venue.

Completed in late 1993, the Peak Galleria features 3 levels of commercial accommodation and an atrium. Both Hong Kong and foreign products are sold in the shops of the Galleria, while a wide range of cuisine is available in its restaurants and cafes. The basement of the Galleria is given over to a large private car park, which has space for about 500 vehicles.

Lion's Pavilion

The Chinese style lookout platform is the Lion's Pavilion built by the Lion's Club and offers an excellent view of the V-shaped Victoria Harbour.

HSBC Main Building

The Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation (HSBC) established in Hong Kong in March 1865 and in Shanghai one month later. The bank is the founding member of the HSBC Group. It is the group's flagship in the Asia-Pacific region and the largest bank incorporated in Hong Kong. It is also one of the three note-issuing banks in Hong Kong, accounting for more than 64% notes in circulation.

The 52-storey HSBC (Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation) headquarters was completed in November 1985. The building is 178.8 meters in height and 18.8 meters below ground level. The air-conditioner system is located 75 meters below the ground, and the air is cooled by seawater pumped from Victoria Harbour. On the top of the building, a mirrored 'sun scoop' reflects sunlight down through the atrium to the floor of a public plaza below.

The building was created by a British architect, Sir Norman Foster, and has won numerous awards for its design. The requirement to build in excess of a million square feet in a short time-scale suggested a high degree of prefabrication, including factory-finished modules made in Japan, Britain and United States, while the need to build downwards and upwards simultaneously led to the adoption of a suspension structure, which used bridge-building technology to form the supporting structures. From the outset the Bank placed a high priority on flexibility. The master structure allows another radical move, pushing the service cores to the perimeter to create deep-plan floors around a ten-storey atrium.

The building is one of the most expensive in Hong Kong, costing about HK\$5 billion in 1980. The bank incorporated in March 1865 in Hong Kong. It is now the territory's largest local bank and is the second largest banking group in the world.

Notice the bronze lions at the entrance which has guarded the bank since 1935. The highest level of Fung Shui expertise was necessary to advice on their installation outside the present building when the first phase was completed in June 1985. The bronze lions at the group's headquarters in Canary Wharf, London are molded by the lions in Hong Kong. You can see the images of the building on the bank notes issued by the HSBC bank.

The Center

The Center is an 80-storey commercial building completed in 1998 (the 4th, 14th, 24th, 34th, 44th, 54th, 64th, and 74th floors are skipped). The building is 350 meters in height and is designed by local architect Dennis Lau. The three satellite dishes at the top of the building keep tenants in touch with the world at large.

The building is well known for its state-of-the-art computerized external lighting system. Colors change transitively on the silver curtain wall from around 6pm to mid-night. A special "Christmas tree patterns" would be projected for 5 minutes every half an hour from December 15 to 31. So, the building would become a giant Christmas tree, colored in green and red. Moreover, a "fireworks patterns" would be projected for thirty minutes at the mid-night on Christmas Eve, New Year Eve, Chinese New Year Eve, and as well as during the fireworks show on Victoria Harbour on the second night of Chinese New Year. "Sparkling fireworks" would be shown on the building. It enriches the skyline in Central

Bank of China Tower

The spectacular 70-storey prism-like structure dominating the skyline of Central is the Bank of China Tower. The tower was completed in May 1990, at 368 metres in height.

Designed by acclaimed American-Chinese architect I.M. Pei, the inspiration of his design is derived from the elegant poise of bamboo; its sectioned trunk being propelled higher and higher by each new growth. The building's blue-glass walls and triangular glass facade also make it one of the most photographed buildings in the city.

The 6,700 square metre site on which the tower sites was bought by the Bank of China from the Hong Kong Government at the height of the property boom in 1982 at a "friendship price " of HK\$1.1 billion.

The price was considered to be far below the market value and a give-away to China, The Bank of China occupies the first 19 floors and the top four floors of the tower. The remaining floors are leased out as office space.

When plans for the tower were unveiled in 1982 the hope was that it would open on 08 august 1988, an auspicious date in view of the many lucky numbers eight within it. But work delays meant that only the topping out ceremony was held on that date and that the opening did not take place until 17 May, 1990.

The Bank of China Tower is said to be the most distinguished high structure owned by China and a symbol of China's growing influence in Hong Kong.

The Bank of China issue Hong Kong currency in notes of five denominations – 1,000, 500,100, 50 and 20 dollars. It is one of three note-issuing banks in Hong Kong, the others being the HSBC and the Standard Chartered Bank

There is an observation gallery on the 43rd floor of the tower. You can have a panoramic view of the Victoria Harbor on the North and midlevels on the South. The gallery opens from 9am to 5pm on weekdays and 9am to 1pm on Saturday. It is closed on public holidays. Admission is free.

Citibank Plaza

Citibank Plaza is a twin-tower development with an asymmetrical configuration, rising to 50 and 40-storey and forming a L-shape that embraces an open plaza in front. The plaza is designed by architect Rocco Sen Kee Yim. It was completed in 1992, and was awarded a Silver Medal by the Hong Kong Institute of Architects.

The asymmetrical massing of the twin-tower is a tacit acknowledgement, which also shows respect for the step-back profile of the Bank of China Tower, and the selected external finishes ensure a visual compatibility in surface texture and color. The expression of the new towers complements their neighbor through deliberate contrast rather than conformity that interact to compose a dynamic whole.

Lippo Centre

The glittering and multi-faced twin towers appear to have Koala bears clinging to them are the prestigious Lippo Centre. The two eight-sided towers rise 42 and 46-storey respectively above a 4-storey podium.

Bought in February 1987, before their completion, by Australian entrepreneur Alan Bond for HK\$1,900 million, the towers were formerly called the Bong Centre.

In 1989 a Japanese company bought the towers for HK\$3,250 million, and in October 1992 they were renamed the Lippo Centre.

Paul Rudolph, a renowned American architect, whose aim was to blend sculptural form and modern technology to create a monumental exterior with a varied and functional interior. Rudolph segregated pedestrian and vehicular traffic at the building into separate levels and the projecting office floors can be likened to tree branches reaching for space, air, and sun. Clad in solar-reflective curtain wall, the towers have been compared to faceted jewels.

Standard Chartered Bank

The 45-storey Standard Chartered Bank headquarters, opened in May 1990, was designed by Remo Riva of P & T Architects and Engineers and built by Gammon-Nishimatsu Joint Venture.

The building is 191 meters height and is coated in pink granite. The floor area diminishes at storey 21,27,33,39 and 43, and the smallest usable floor area is 350 square meters, the largest 710 square meters. The bank is also one of the note issuing bank in Hong Kong.

Tsim Sha Tsui

Tsim Sha Tsui is the cultural, shopping and commercial hub of Kowloon.

In Chinese each syllable is represented by a written character, so "Tsim Sha Tsui" is actually three words or characters translated as "sharp sandy point". Although the Kowloon peninsula has retained

some of its original pointed shape, the sandy spit of land that gave Tsim Sha Tsui its name has long since disappeared.

Tsim Sha Tsui Waterfront Promenade

Much of the seafront along Tsim Sha Tsui and Tsim Sha Tsui East is a promenade and public garden offering strollers an unobstructed view of the north shore of Hong Kong Island. The promenade is become a new attraction known as "The Avenue of Stars" where you can experience the magic of Hong Kong movies. Opening 28 April 2004, this beautifully designed attraction pays tribute to the stars of Hong Kong's films who have thrilled audiences around the world. It features Commemorative plaques, some featuring handprints of your favourite film stars, honouring those who made Hong Kong the Hollywood of the East; Milestones of the Hong Kong film industry; and Hong Kong Film Awards sculpture.

With dramatic vistas of the world-famous Victoria Harbour and dazzling Hong Kong Island skyline, the Avenue of Stars is the best place to watch the multimedia light-and-sound show "A Symphony of Lights". The Show combines special interactive light and musical effects to tell the story of Hong Kong through showcasing the 40 buildings along the both sides of Victoria Harbour.

Named as the 'World's Largest Permanent Light and Sound Show' by Guinness World Records, coloured lights, laser beams and searchlights perform in an unforgettable all-round spectacle synchronised to music and narration that celebrates the energy, spirit and diversity of Hong Kong. There are five main themes: Awakening, Energy, Heritage, Partnership, and the finale, Celebration. Spectators can listen to the show's music and English narration at the Avenue of Stars every Monday, Wednesday & Friday night.

Note: When Tropical Cyclone Warning Signals No. 3 or above or Red/Black Warning Signal is issued at or after 3pm on the Show day, the Show will be suspended. No show will be staged even if the Signals are removed before 8pm on that day.

West Kowloon Reclamation

The West Kowloon Reclamation is the largest single reclamation ever undertaken in the urban area. The 334 hectares (about 825 acres) of reclaimed land have increased by one third the area of the Kowloon peninsula. The waterfront from Yau Ma Tei to Lai Chi Kok has been extended by as much as 1 kilometre (0.62 mile).

The reclamation provides space for recreation, Government facilities, and private and public housing projects that will house more than 90,000 people. The reclamation is also the location of new MTR and Airport Express stations, the West Kowloon Expressway and the entrance to the Western Harbour Crossing. The two railway stations – Kowloon Station and Olympic Station – are also being developed as commercial/residential sites.

About 4,500 residential flats, 8 office towers, and hotels are being built on the Kowloon Station site; another 5,250 residential flats, 4 office towers, and hotels are scheduled for the Olympic Station site.

Given the dense population of Hong Kong - and its bustling commercial activities - reclamation is one of the only solutions to provide land for more living space. For example, the new airport project alone had resulted in the creation of more than 1,800 hectares (4,450 acres) of new land. Tung Chung New Town, the "gateway" to the new airport, is typical of developments built on reclaimed land.

International Commerce Center (ICC) & Sky 100

Developed by Sun Hung Kai Properties, the ICC is the tallest building in Hong Kong and stands 490 meters with 118 storeys. On Level 100 is the Sky 100 observation deck which opens to the public with an admission charge. The visitors can reach 100th floor in a high speed elevator in a minute.

The ICC has introduced a Light and Music show on April 2013 and the show was recognized with a Guinness World Record as the largest and sound show on a single building. The show combines music and story in LED lights on two façades of ICC facing the harbour totalling 50,000 square metres. The show plays every night at 7:45pm and 9pm.

Source:

<http://www.shkp-icc.com/>

<http://www.sky100.com.hk/>

<http://icclightshow.com.hk/>

Yau Ma Tei Typhoon Shelter

Yau Ma Tei was once a sparsely populated farmland; its name translates as “place of sesame seed oil”. Today it is a maze of side roads packed with fascinating street scenes that reveal many aspects of the traditional Chinese urban lifestyle in Hong Kong.

The Yau Ma Tei Typhoon Shelter is one of the 13 typhoon shelters in Hong Kong. These sheltered anchorages provide protection for boats during the typhoon season, which lasts from late April to early October. The former Yau Ma Tei typhoon shelter has been filled in as part of the West Kowloon Reclamation. There is a “New Yau Ma Tei Typhoon Shelter”, but in name only, as it’s now some distance to the northwest in Tai Kok Tsui.

Clock Tower

Built in 1915, the Clock Tower facing the Star Ferry Concourse in Tsim Sha Tsui is all that remains of the original Kowloon-Canton Railway (KCR) terminus. The Clock Tower is 44 metres (144 ft) high and was declared a monument in 1990. It is square in plan and topped with a graceful colonnaded cupola.

Once operated by separate motors, the four clock faces could not be synchronized and the use of a bell to sound the time was discontinued in 1950. In 1975, the railway terminus was relocated further east in Hung Hom. The other old structures around the Clock Tower were demolished to make way for the Hong Kong Cultural Centre.

Harbour City

This is Hong Kong's largest inter-connected shopping mall, incorporating Ocean Terminal, The Hongkong Hotel Shopping Arcade, Ocean Centre, The Gateway and Ocean Galleries. It is also linked by a pedestrian bridge to Silvercord Centre and other shopping malls on the east side of Canton Road. Cruise liners still moor at Ocean Terminal, though the major marine entry point in this area is now the China Ferry Terminal, which opened in 1988. This newer terminal is at the north end of Harbour City, adjacent to the China Hong Kong City shopping complex. For movie buffs, the first Planet Hollywood in Asia opened here in May 1994. Designed to satisfy the desire for film, food and fantasy, all under one roof, patrons can enjoy movie clips while they dine in rooms inspired by the films of Sylvester Stallone, Arnold Schwarzenegger and Bruce Lee. The restaurant was closed in 1999.

One of Hong Kong's two Hard Rock Cafés was in this area from 1998-2008. It served up burgers and shakes as well as great music, amid its signature collection of rock 'n' roll memorabilia. In the evening

a live band is featured, along with a DJ. Souvenirs bearing the famous Hard Rock Café logo are available at the restaurant. The other Hard Rock Café is located in Lan Kwai Fong in Central.

Hong Kong Cultural Centre

Rising behind the Clock Tower on the Tsim Sha Tsui waterfront you will see the wing-shaped, salmon-coloured Hong Kong Cultural Centre. Built at a cost of some HK\$ 600 million (about US\$77 million,) the centre was officially opened in November 1989 by the Prince and Princess of Wales. The Hong Kong Cultural Centre has since established itself as a major performing arts venue, attracting leading artists from all over the world. It is also renowned for staging such international musicals *Phantom of the Opera*, *Les Miserables* and *Joseph and his Amazing Technicolour Dream Coat*.

The Cultural Centre has three major performing venues: a 2,085-seat Concert Hall, a Grand Theatre with more than 1,700 seats, and an intimate Studio Theatre. There is also an exhibition area, extensive rehearsal facilities and a performing arts shop.

Hong Kong Space Museum

The dome-shaped building - just east of the Cultural Centre – near the Tsim Sha Tsui waterfront is the Hong Kong Space Museum. This is one of the most advanced planetariums in the world. It houses a Hall of Astronomy, Hall of Space Sciences, an Exhibition Hall and the Space Theatre.

Sky shows and Omnimax films featuring science and nature themes are other features, Omnimax audiences lie back in comfortable reclining seats and experience amazingly realistic films projected on the domed ceiling.

Mongkok

Like Yau Ma Tei, Mong Kok is where you can catch a glimpse of the real Hong Kong. Literally translated as "busy corner", the area is not only peppered with unique markets but once held the record as the world's most densely populated urban area - but that is hardly surprising. Pay a visit to its MTR station during rush hour and see for yourself.

Nathan Road

Tsim Sha Tsui is one of Hong Kong's most popular shopping and entertainment areas. Nathan Road, which begins alongside the Peninsula Hotel and runs northwards, is the area's busiest thoroughfare. This was the first real road ever built on the Kowloon peninsula; it was completed at the beginning of the 20th century by order of then governor Sir Matthew Nathan.

At the time the road was called "Nathan's Folly" because no one foresaw any possibility that the barren land of Kowloon would one day be developed. Today many shops, hotels, nightclubs and other attractions are found along the southern reaches of Nathan Road, and this area is popularly known as "The Golden Mile".

Section 10 –The Peak, Magazine Gap Road, Peak Road

Pokfulam Reservoir

Hong Kong has no natural rivers or lakes to speak of and for a long time depended exclusively upon rainfall stored in reservoirs for its supply of fresh water.

On 29 February 1860, Mr. Rawling suggested the construction of a 30 million-gallon reservoir in the Pokfulam valley region for storing rainwater. The proposal was to build a dam across the Pokfulam valley and to collect rainwater in the reservoir. In addition, 2 inter-connected storage tanks - one in Bonham Road and one in Robinson Road - were to be built. This water supply scheme also included the building of 30 small sized fountains and 125 fire hydrants.

After accepting Rawling's scheme, the Government officially on 10 July 1860 enacted the relevant legislation and declared its dedication to provide a fresh water supply to the people of Hong Kong.

The amount originally allocated for the construction of the first reservoir, was 23,417 pounds, but the Government revised this figure downward with an attempt to save money. The storage capacity of the reservoir was correspondingly reduced from the original 30 million gallons to 2 million gallons. Many critics voiced concerns that a reservoir of this size could not solve the water supply problem. In 1863, Hong Kong's daily consumption of water was 500,000 gallons and the Pokfulam Reservoir could at best only provide 4 days of water to the community. Thus the reservoir, once it was completed, was found to be grossly inadequate. There was therefore the need for constructing a higher dam to enlarge the reservoir.

In 1877, after the completion of several expansion projects, the reservoir's capacity had increased to 68 million gallons and the catchment area had been extended to 416 acres.

Since Pokfulam Reservoir was completed in 1877, many other reservoirs have been built, the largest of them Plover Cove, completed in 1967, and High Island, completed in 1977.

Both reservoirs are in the New Territories, the area of Hong Kong between Kowloon and the border, and were built by damming off areas of sea.

The sea water was pumped from the reservoirs and residual salt was flushed from them to make them fit for use.

All the reservoirs are located within the country park area in Hong Kong. To open up the countryside for the greater enjoyment of the population, the Country Parks Ordinance was enacted in 1976 to provide a legal framework for the designation, development and management of Country Parks and Special Areas. Over 13 million visitors were recorded in 2012 at the country parks and activities ranged from leisure walking, fishing, fitness exercises, hiking, barbecuing, mountain biking to family picnics and camping.

Water Supply of Hong Kong

When Hong Kong was first colonized, a few hundred British traders set up a commercial base in Central - the then City of Victoria. The water supply came from hillside streams and rivulets, as well as from subterranean water sources. It was said that waterfalls in the Pokfulam area and streams flowing in the Aberdeen area were the sources of water used by the British merchants.

The majority of the Chinese residents relied on nearby streams or dugout wells to solve their water supply problem. In order to meet their daily needs and to irrigate their fields, the indigenous

inhabitants constructed bamboo aqueducts to lead water from mountain streams to their homes and fields. At that time Europeans usually dug private wells near their homes to obtain water for daily use.

The earliest governmental record concerning fresh water provisions to its departments was found in 1848. In 1851, the Government also set aside 52 pounds for sinking five wells. However it was revealed in 1852 that the Government had only spent 47 pounds and 4 shillings to dig four wells.

Hong Kong people suffered serious drought in 1929, a 7 stages severity of water restrictions was carried out. In the first half 19th century, the imposition of Stage III Water Restriction was a regular event in Hong Kong – water supply from 6 a.m. to 9 a.m. and from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., a total of 6 hours of supply.

The ever-growing population and business activities sharply increased the water consumption in Hong Kong. Unfortunately, Hong Kong experienced the most severe drought from 1963 -1964. The reservoirs in Hong Kong only had 51% of capacity, the Government was forced to exercise water rationing on 2 May 1963. This allowed the public 3 hours of water supply every day. On 16 May, the restrictions were further tightened so people only received 4 hours of water provision on alternate days.

By June 1, the water stored in reservoirs had declined to only 1.7% of the total capacity. The Government declared that it could only supply water to the public for 4 hours, every 4 days. Restrictions remained in force for nearly a year until 27 May 1964, when Typhoon Viola struck Hong Kong, bringing with it heavy downpours.

The fishery and agricultural sectors were destroyed by the drought, killing virtually all the greenery and poultry products of the New Territories. It also adversely affected the commercial and industrial environment, and according to estimates from the Joint Association of Hong Kong and Kowloon Trade Unions, there were 19 trades that either reduced production or stopped altogether. Moreover, with extremely short time available for water to be collected, neighbors sometimes quarreled. Such quarrels often ended up with injuries, casualties or even loss of life.

Today, Hong Kong's average annual rainfall of 2,214 millimeters is insufficient to meet current demand for fresh water and for this reason China is the most important source and will remain so for some time.

China has been piping fresh water to Hong Kong since the 1960s, originally at a rate of 22.7 million cubic meters a year, now at more than 720 million cubic meters a year. The long-term supply of Dongjiang water to Hong Kong to cope with future development under the existing agreements has also been reassured by retaining the ultimate annual supply quantity of 1,100 million cubic metres while the target date for achieving this projection will be subject to further review..

A desalination plant on the seafront at Lok On Pai in the New Territories was opened in 1975. However, its construction coincided with world oil crisis and it became too expensive to run except in an emergency. The government dismantled the plant in 1989.

Source:

http://www.wsd.gov.hk/en/water_resources/raw_water_sources/water_sources_in_hong_kong/water_from_dongjiang_at_guangdong/index.html

Pokfulam Country Park & native plant species

The Pokfulam Country Park is a 270-hectare sylvan sanctuary encompassing the Pokfulam Reservoir. This picturesque country park is set in the foothills of Victoria Peak. In the valley, Stage 1 of the Hong Kong Trail begins its scenic route along Harlech Road. There is a spectacular view of Victoria Harbour. On weekends and holidays, the circular hill path that trails along Lugard Road and Harlech Road is a favourite hike for Peak visitors. From here, you can walk down to the verdant Pokfulam valley, where lush woodlands and placid water to keep you cool even on the hottest day.

Strolling along the wooded path, you are greeted by beautiful landscape of hills and waters, with views across Island South, the Pokfulam Reservoir and surrounding forests. Pokfulam Country Park is very popular with morning walkers. At dawn when the air is fresh, people come here to jog, walk, exercise or simply to see familiar faces. To nearby residents, this green haven is a cherished back garden.

The 2.2 km Pokfulam Native Tree Walk features Hong Kong's native plant species. Winding along Lugard Road by the Peak Galleria, this short route takes about 45 minutes to complete. While admiring the beauty of nature, you also take in superb vistas of Victoria Harbour and the urban districts on both sides. A perfect juxtaposition of natural landscape and architectural wonders, where country and city stand side by side, Hong Kong lives up to her name as Asia's world city. Along the tree walk you find interesting flora species like Chinese Hackberry (*Celtis sinensis*), Ivy Tree (*Schefflera heptaphylla*), Lance-leaved Sterculia (*Sterculia lanceolata*), Turn-in-the-wind (*Mallotus paniculatus*), Silver-back Artocarpus (*Artocarpus hypargyreus*), Reevesia (*Reevesia thyrsoidea*), Woodland Elaeocarpus (*Elaeocarpus sylvestris*), Acronychia (*Acronychia pedunculata*), Morris's Persimmon (*Diospyros morrisiana*), Chinese Banyan (*Ficus microcarpa*), Mountain Tallow Tree (*Sapium discolor*), Camphor Tree (*Cinnamomum camphora*), Pond Spice (*Litsea glutinosa*), Short-flowered Machilus (*Machilus breviflora*) and Hong Kong Gordonia (*Gordonia axillaris*).

Source:

http://www.afcd.gov.hk/english/country/cou_vis/cou_vis_cou/cou_vis_cou_pfl/cou_vis_cou_pfl.html

Four Storey Mansion

It was told that the four storey mansion stood at the junction was owned by a wealthy businessman who has four wives. To avoid arguments and embarrassments between them, this house was designed in such a way that each wife has her own floors with individual entrances so that the chances of bumping onto each other were reduces.

Marriage Act 1971 & Great Qing Legal Code

The Great Qing Legal Code also known as the Qing Code or Ta Tsing Leu Lee (in Hong Kong law), was the legal code of Qing (Ching) dynasty (1644–1912). The code was based on the Ming legal system, which was kept largely intact.

It was not until 1971 that the Marriage Act enforced that marriage with concubines were very common in Hong Kong under the Great Qing Legal Code.

Section 11 –Peak Road, Stubb’s Road Lookout

Victoria Harbour

Victoria Harbour is one of the world’s best three natural harbours; the other two are San Francisco and Rio de Janeiro. Hong Kong’s most important asset, after its people, is its magnificent deep-water harbour, one of the world’s busiest harbours in terms of vessel, cargo and passenger throughput. It handles about 90% of the territory’s trade by weight.

The international financial center that Hong Kong is today has been transformed from what until the 18th century was a humble fishing village. Standing at the gateway to south China, Hong Kong was valued in the 18th century as a good shelter and a source of fresh water supply for foreign vessels on their way to Guangzhou, China. Hong Kong’s political development to a British colony in the mid 18th century brought rapid progress to Hong Kong, which flourished first as a port, then as an entreport from the 19th century until today.

Hong Kong lies at the mouth of the Pearl River Delta and is at the center of the Asia-Pacific Rim, a region where economy is growing at a phenomenal pace. Hong Kong is also positioned in the junction of two different forms of maritime transport – the large ocean-going vessels from the Pacific Ocean and the smaller river tradecraft from the Pearl River. Victoria Harbour is the only modern, fully developed deep-water harbour between Singapore and Shanghai, and it makes Hong Kong a focal point of all maritime trading activities in Southern China.

In 2012, Hong Kong handled a total of 23.12 million Twenty-foot Equivalent Units of containers (TEUs), maintaining its status as the largest container port serving southern China and the third busiest port in the world. Some 383,350 vessels arrived in and departed from Hong Kong during the year, carrying 269 million tonnes of cargo and about 28.52 million passengers. Most of these passengers commuted on a highly efficient fleet of high-speed ferries, including jetfoils and catamarans, to and from Macao and ports on the Mainland, making Hong Kong a port with one of the world’s largest number of high-speed craft.

Hong Kong is a modern, well equipped deep-water port serving two main types of maritime transport: ocean-going vessels from all parts of the world and coastal and river-trade vessels from the Pearl River. A daily average of around 84 ocean-going vessels and nearly 440 river-trade vessels arrive at the port; and many high-speed ferries and local craft work in, or pass through the harbour. Hong Kong’s ship turnaround performance is among the best in the world: the average turnaround time for container vessels at the container terminals is estimated to be about 10 hours.

Some ships may moor in the middle of the harbour by buoys. The Marine Department maintains 17 moorings throughout the harbour, and they are suitable for 137m – 183m ships.

Cargo lighters will line up by the side of the ship to load or unload cargo. The lighters will normally use quarry facilities at the public cargo areas provided by the government for shore delivery.

The river trade crafts transport cargoes between Hong Kong and ports in the Pearl River Delta making use of various waterways.

Hong Kong is strategically located both in relation to China and the nearby Asian Countries. It is also the only modern deep water harbour between Singapore and Shanghai, it becomes a very important shipping centre, an entreport and also a port for China and world trade.

The Marine Department is responsible for the day-to-day administration of the port. Its main function is to ensure safe operation of the port and all Hong Kong waters. The Marine Police patrol the harbour and Hong Kong’s sea boundary. They are responsible to stop smuggling, illegal immigration by sea, and search and rescue in Hong Kong and adjacent waters.

Hong Kong has maintained its reputation as a register of high quality. Hong Kong-registered ships continue to have a very low detention rate under Port State Control inspections. By April 2002, Hong Kong had reached a record high of 17 million gross tons and ranked as one of the top 10 world-class ship registers.

Trading Port

In 2012, Hong Kong has been ranked the world's freest economy by the Heritage Foundation for the 18th consecutive year since the index was first published in 1995.

According to the 2012 Index of Economic Freedom, Hong Kong scores 89.9 (on a scale from 0 to 100), well above the world average of 59.5. Among the 10 economic freedom factors assessed, Hong Kong ranks first in financial and trade freedom, second in investment freedom and property rights, and third in business freedom.

The Heritage Foundation commended Hong Kong's tax system as simple and efficient. It also considered monetary stability well maintained in Hong Kong. The Heritage Foundation further complimented Hong Kong's high-quality legal framework, which provides effective protection of property rights and strong support for the rule of law. In addition, Hong Kong's regulatory efficiency and openness to global commerce strongly support entrepreneurial dynamism, while overall macroeconomic stability minimizes uncertainty. Moreover, there is little tolerance of corruption in Hong Kong.

The Heritage Foundation also noted that Hong Kong's economic interaction with the Mainland has become more intense and sophisticated, chiefly through strengthened financial linkages, and financial markets that are extremely well capitalized.

The study ranks the degree of economic freedom of 179 economies around the world. The 10 factors assessed are business freedom, trade freedom, fiscal freedom, government spending, monetary freedom, investment freedom, financial freedom, property rights, freedom from corruption and labour freedom. Singapore and Australia remain second and third respectively according to the Index of Economic Freedom.

Source:

<http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201201/12/P201201120303.htm>

Kai Tak Cruise Terminal

Built on the old Kai Tak Airport's runway, the Kai Tak Cruise Terminal opened in mid-2013, providing a gateway to Hong Kong, and from Hong Kong to Asia. It can accommodate cruise ships up to 450 meters long.

The terminal soft launched for a cruise operation in June, and open to the public from September 2013. It will provide efficient services for cruise lines and their guests, and be an enjoyable destination for visitors and locals. The Kai Tak Cruise Terminal is open for berth bookings by cruise lines from mid-2013, when the first berth will be in operation. The second berth will be ready in mid-2014. The terminal will be able to accommodate two mega cruise ships with a gross tonnage of up to 220,000 tons when fully commissioned. Above the terminal, you'll find the rooftop garden which offers spectacular views of the city skyline.

Source:

<http://www.kaitakcruiseterminal.com.hk/>

Section 12 –Stubb’s Road Lookout, Hong Kong Cricket Club

English School Foundation

The English Schools Foundation was established by the Hong Kong Government in 1967. ESF currently operates five secondary schools, nine primary schools and a school for students with special educational needs across Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and the New Territories. Two “all through” Private Independent Schools and four kindergartens are operated by ESF’s affiliated company, ESF Educational Services Limited (ESL), which also offers English language classes and sports activities.

ESF started in 1967 with just two schools – Island School and Beacon Hill School. Over the years, other well-established schools, such as King George V and Quarry Bay School, became part of ESF. In addition, some new schools were purpose-built to meet growing demand. These include Sha Tin College (opened in 1982) and West Island School (1991).

The curriculum, leading to the International Baccalaureate (IB), is adapted to Hong Kong and the Asia Pacific region. ESF’s teachers are highly qualified, with experience of the UK, Australian and other international school systems. School facilities are safe, secure and of the highest standards. All schools offer a broad range of out-of-school activities in Hong Kong and overseas. ESF schools are strongly supported by thriving and dynamic parent-teacher associations.

The 13,000 students in ESF schools and the 4,000 in the PIS and the kindergartens include over 50 different nationalities. About 70% of our students have parents who are permanent residents of Hong Kong.

Source:

<http://www.esf.edu.hk/about-esf/overview>

Bradbury School

Bradbury School offers a caring environment which provides children with an all-round education of the very highest quality. The calibre of staff and the positive, encouraging approach in our classrooms produce outstanding results. The school encourages the children to become independent thinkers who are curious about the world around them and who develop the skills to become learners and leaders in a 21st century global environment. The school makes provision for children with moderate learning difficulties through a Learning Support Centre.

King Yin Lei (a.k.a. Viva Villa, Ultamia, Hei Lo)

The beautiful house with red brick walls and green tiled roof is the King Yin Lei. Built in the 1930s, it was owned by overseas Chinese from Australia, Mr. Shum Yat-choi, until 1979, when it was sold for HK\$24 million to a local Chinese candy businessman, Mr. Yow Che-Man.

The mansion is typical of Chinese architecture and tradition, with the green of the roof tiles symbolizing wealth, and the red of the wall symbolizing happiness. The owner has developed a rich collection of bonsai trees set amidst ornamental steatite, or soapstone.

The building is important in signifying the historical development of Hong Kong. As one of the luxurious historic houses located along the hillside of Hong Kong Island, the building reflects the rising status and growing wealth of the Chinese community in Hong Kong. It also represents an earlier phase of Hong Kong history when the upper-class residential area took shape in the Mid-Levels.

The facade of the building has been a popular spot for taking photographs by visitors. The social value of the building also lies in the role it played in the film heritage and entertainment industry of

Hong Kong. The mansion has been featured in films of international renown such as "Soldier of Fortune" (starring Clark Gable) and a locally produced television series "Delightful Dream of the Capital" (starring Lisa Wang). These examples reflect the high scenic character of the site. The building was sold to its last owner in August 2007, and works to remove the roof tiles, stone features and window frames were noticed on site in early September 2007. Full restoration of Kin Yin Lei commenced in September 2008 and was completed in December 2010.

Source:

http://www.amo.gov.hk/en/monuments_85.php

Save King Yin Lei Campaign

The property was offered for sale in early 2004. Despite claims that it was likely that the new buyer would demolish the property and redevelop it, the Government of Hong Kong did not act.

The Conservancy Association of Hong Kong, a heritage advocacy group, wrote to the Secretary for Home Affairs in April 2004 requesting him to consider declaring the mansion a monument under the Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance. The Association also organized a "Save King Yin Lei Campaign" in June and generated public discussion. Yau Mok Shing then announced that he would not sell the building for the moment.

The Government of Hong Kong did not act to preserve the building, arguing that it was private property and had not utilized its allocated land mass to the fullest. If the government was to declare it a historical building, thus forbidding the demolition and any further development on the site, it would have to pay a large amount of compensation to the owner, in the millions.

The owner wrote to the government on the preservation of the site but received no reply, after which the Secretary for Development Carrie Lam admitted it was insensitive of her department not to do so.

On 11 September 2007, dump trucks were spotted at the site. Parts of the roof were removed. All three Chinese characters on a front gate plaque were chiseled away by workers. The Conservancy Association of Hong Kong expressed disappointment that the government had not been able to preserve the estate. When the start of demolition was reported in the Hong Kong media, the government declared the site a proposed monument and ordered a work stoppage.

On 25 January 2008, the government reached a preliminary understanding with the owner on a possible preservation option for the mansion. Under the agreement, the owner will surrender King Yin Lei's entire site to the government after restoration. Subject to the necessary town planning approval, the government would grant an adjacent man-made slope site of a size similar to King Yin Lei to the owner for development, subject to the same plot ratio of 0.5 and a height restriction of three storeys.

Happy Valley Racecourse

Horse racing is the only sport in Hong Kong on which betting is permitted. The Hong Kong Jockey Club, a non-profit organization set up in 1884, runs the Happy Valley Racecourse and Sha Tin Racecourse.

Early British residents introduced horse racing to Hong Kong and the first races were held in Happy Valley on 17 & 18 December 1846. The site of the present Happy Valley racecourse was originally a swamp, where, because it was the only flat land on the island, the first settlers lived. However, malaria and other diseases soon forced them to move out. In the Mid-1840s the marshland was drained and the residents set up a racecourse in the area they called "Happy Valley". The original racecourse offered only bamboo matched grandstands. On 26th February 1918 these burned to the ground in a tragic fire started by the charcoal fires of hawkers. More than 600 people lost their lives. When races

resumed temporary shelters replaced the stands. In 1931 a pair of permanent three-storey stands were constructed.

In 1957, these were replaced by two seven-storey structures that were expanded in 1969 to become part of today's viewing stands. The entire racecourse was closed for redevelopment in 1994 and reopened in late 1995. Happy Valley now provides all-turf racing on a much wider track - the new one is 30 metres wide - and the notoriously tight bends have been smoothed out as well.

Initially there was one race meeting a year, usually at Chinese New Year, and this quickly became the year's most important social event. Today, the horse-racing season lasts from September to June; meetings are usually held on Wednesday evenings, Saturday or Sunday afternoons and on certain public holidays.

Night racing started in 1973, and in the same year the Government authorized the Club to set up off-course betting (OCB) centres to help combat illegal bookmaking. The following year a telephone betting service was started. These also function as ticket outlets for the Mark Six Lottery - another legal form of gambling operated by the Jockey Club.

The Hong Kong Jockey Club uses its net proceeds to support community and charitable projects, and is the major source of funding for such undertakings. It donates hundred of millions of dollars to build schools, clinics and other public institutions. It has also financed such major public projects as Ocean Park, The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts, The University of Science and Technology, and Hong Kong Park. In 1960, in recognition of its great contributions to Hong Kong society, the Jockey Club was granted "Royal" as a prefix. However, in July 1996, in anticipation of the return of Hong Kong to Chinese sovereignty on 1st July 1997, the name Hong Kong Jockey Club was resumed.

Hong Kong Tennis Center

This is Wong Nei Chung Gap Road and on our left is the Hong Kong Tennis Center. Owned by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, the center is the largest of its kind in Hong Kong.

The center is situated on 2 levels: on the upper one are 11 hard courts, 2 practice walls, a sunken garden with fountain and a service building with dressing rooms and showers; while the lower one are 6 hard courts.

Hong Kong Cricket Club

Just past the Tennis Training Center is the Hong Kong Cricket Club. Until the mid-1970s the club was in Central, on the site now occupied by Chater Garden.

A detailed account of cricket in Hong Kong since 1841, nowadays, there are three cricket associations in Hong Kong. Cricket in Hong Kong today is played 35 over (Saturday League) and 50 over (Sunday League), organized by the Hong Kong Cricket Association.

Cricket has always been popular amongst Hong Kong's expatriates, and now young locals are becoming interested in the game too.

Section 13 – Hong Kong Cricket Club, Estralita

Sports & Recreation in Hong Kong

The Cricket Club and Tennis Center are built and managed by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (formerly the Urban Council). The department provides high quality facilities to the community and promotes Hong Kong sports.

The first gold medal of international games in Hong Kong history was in 1986 during the Asian Games in Bowling. The first Olympic gold medal was won by Lee Lai San in 1996 in wind surfing.

Hong Kong also did well in the Paralympic Games by achieving 5 gold 3 silver and 3 bronze medals in the 2008 Beijing Paralympic Games.

2008 Beijing Olympic Games

Hong Kong is one of the torch relay cities of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games and was also the host city for the Equestrian Events.

Equestrian Sport in Hong Kong

Hong Kong has about 2,000 people actively involved in different equestrian activities, ranging from leisure, competitive, to rehab riding.

About 1,500 people take riding lessons at the nine riding schools in Hong Kong. Every year, retired racehorses in Hong Kong are supplied by Hong Kong Jockey Club (HKJC) to the riding schools for riding lessons. The HKJC runs three public riding schools and its private riding school at the Beas River Country Club. There is a 4.8 Km riding trail in Pokfulam.

Although riding is not a common sport in Hong Kong, public interest in riding has increased these few years due to the city's staging of the 2008 Olympic and Paralympic Equestrian Events. All three public riding schools are currently over-subscribed, and a further 20% increase in applications is anticipated in the upcoming years. With over 2,000 people on the schools' waiting lists, new applicants may have to wait for up to 3 years before they can enroll in riding lessons.

Each year about 30 to 40 local and international equestrian competitions take place in Hong Kong, mostly at facilities in Beas River. Through these competitions, Hong Kong riders have the opportunity to share experience and compete with more experienced, internationally renowned riders.

The Hong Kong Olympic Equestrian Venue (Sha Tin)

Hong Kong's first-ever Olympic venue, the Hong Kong Olympic Equestrian Venue (Shatin), was handed over by The Hong Kong Jockey Club to the organizers of the Olympic Equestrian Events - Equestrian Events (Hong Kong) of the Games of the XXIX Olympiad Company Limited (the Equestrian Company) on 26 May 2008. Major construction work on the Shatin venue is now completed. The Equestrian Company will oversee the final phase, including Olympic image and look dress-up of the venue.

The Hong Kong Olympic Equestrian Venue (Shatin) is where Dressage and Jumping discipline of the Olympic equestrian competitions will be staged between 9 and 21 August in its 80 x 100 m all-weather sand arena. The all-weather surface main arena, which has hi-tech floodlighting appropriate for High Definition TV broadcasting, has grandstand seating for around 18,000 spectators.

The venue also includes six-star air-conditioned accommodation for the horses, a dedicated Equine Clinic and Farriery, 13 training arenas - including the first Olympic air-conditioned indoor training arena - a cross-country training track and a gallop track, as well as a bridle path for relaxation.

Four equine cooling stations, including misting tents and plentiful supplies of chilled water, are located around the venue to cool the Olympic horses after training or competition. Mobile cooling units, another unique feature, will also be in use throughout the Olympics and Paralympics.

The Club's Equine Hospital will also be on-call for treatment of the Olympic horses throughout the Games period, while the Club's Racing Laboratory, the only on-site equine testing facility in Olympic history, will test samples from the Olympic horses, with fastest ever turn-round promised.

The Hong Kong Olympic Equestrian Venue (Beas River)

The Hong Kong Olympic Equestrian Venue at Beas River, where the Cross-Country discipline will be held on 11 August, will be handed over to the Equestrian Company in July. It is converted from Hong Kong Jockey Club's Beas River Country Club and the adjacent Hong Kong Golf Club.

Six-star stables

The air-conditioned stables at the Hong Kong Olympic Venue in Sha Tin are ready to greet the Olympic horses, with the first to arrive in the city on July 27.

To tie in with the green theme of the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games, the stalls are constructed from engineered wood made of sustainable bamboo and the rubber flooring is made from recycled tyres. All Olympic stable waste will be sent to a vermicomposting plant where millions of earthworms will transform the stable waste into environmentally friendly, organic fertilizer.

The Olympic stable complex comprises four blocks of air-conditioned stables, offering 224 stalls for accommodating Olympic horses. Each stall measures 3.6 x 3.6 m which is larger than Olympic standard. Separate reserve stables, also air-conditioned, are available for 25 horses. Horse welfare is a top priority, so the horses - and their grooms - have been provided with every possible amenity to ensure a spacious and comfortable living environment.

The security features in the stabling complex include closed circuit television cameras in every barn. Special sensors fitted on the main doors add another layer of security to this restricted access zone.

To ensure safe environment for the horses, the stable's design is avoiding any sharp or bulging objects. Even the knobs for nozzles of the shower were hidden inside the wall.

The Shatin Stable is the first venue in Hong Kong to have an indoor sand ground for the horses to relax.

2009 East Asian Games

In 2003 Hong Kong, Chinese Taipei and Mongolia entered the bidding process as potential host cities for the 5th East Asian games. Mongolia subsequently withdrew and Hong Kong was selected as the host.

The Legislative Council had approved the government spending of HK\$123 million for the games in 2006. The total expenditure for the games is estimated to be HK\$240 million. The estimated total revenue is also HK\$240 million, including HK\$123 million government funding, HK\$43 million from ticket and merchandise sales and HK\$74 million from cash sponsorship.

During the 2005 East Asian Games in Macau, a competition was held to determine the logo for the 5th East Asian Games. A fireworks emblem was selected. The design makes reference to the five Olympic rings, and the sparkling fireworks symbolize the energy of athletes striving to fulfill their potential and to achieve sporting excellence.

A slogan contest was held at the Asian Games in 2006 and the winning suggestion was "Be the Legend" fitting well with the ideals of athletes reaching their potential and achieving legendary victories. The event song is You are the Legend.

The event has two fluffy mascots, "Dony" and "Ami". Fire and lion are the creative elements for the design. Fire has many different forms and radiates light and heat, representing the flexibility of Hong Kong people. Lion is the symbol for strength and confidence. Below the Lion Rock, Hong Kong people nurtured a mutually helping and continuously striving spirit.

A torch relay was held on August 29 as part of the 100-day Countdown. The relay held the theme "Light the way to the EAG". The torch is a curvy cylinder with a square top and round bottom. It resembles the horn of an ox as 2009 is the year of the Ox. They create the patterns of "Lucky Clouds" to put forward the concept of yin and yang. This also conveys the message that Hong Kong is a place where the Chinese and Western cultures meet.

There were nine participation countries/areas for the game and Hong Kong achieves 110 medals including 26 gold, 31 silver and 53 bronze. China is the top of the medal list with 232 medals.

Southern District

The Southern District is one of the 18 districts of Hong Kong. It is located in the southern part of Hong Kong Island. It had a population of about 278,000 in 2011. The Southern District faces the South China Sea at the south, and is backed by hills and reservoirs, designated as Country Parks, at the north. The eastern half of the district is semi-rural, with some of Hong Kong's most popular beaches. The western half of the district is partly residential and partly industrial. The residents of Southern District vary from the Chinese majority to the community of expats. The eastern half containing areas such as Stanley and Repulse Bay is especially popular among expats and affluent locals because of the combination of its close proximity to Central and the wholesome environment. The western half of Southern district is more urbanized and areas such as Aberdeen containing more housing developments than the eastern half. Tourist attractions within the district include Aberdeen's floating restaurants and fishing harbour; the Ocean Park; the swimming beach of Repulse Bay; The Home of Teresa Teng; the souvenir market and the Hong Kong Maritime Museum at Stanley.

It is served by Pokfulam Road, Aberdeen Tunnel, Wong Nai Chung Gap Road and Tai Tam Road. The proposed MTR West Island Line and South Island Line will also be built to help serve the western half of the area. There are currently no proposed routes to Stanley or Repulse Bay due to the large number of buses that serve those destinations.

Section 14 –Estralita, Repulse Bay

Estralita

The lovely Spanish-style house on the right used to be called Air House and was the official residence of the Air commodore of the British Royal Air Force in Hong Kong.

The present owner of the house is a wealthy Chinese merchant, the chairman of Chow Tai Fook Jewellery Company and New World Development Company. He renamed it Estralita after buying it in 1971. The house overlooks Deep Water Bay and is surrounded by delightful gardens with a swimming pool and a tennis court.

Other than his beautiful house, Mr. Cheng is also famous of his car's license plate which has the number "8888". The number "8" Cantonese pronunciation sounds like "rich" and "wealthy" which may be the dream of many people. He spent one million to get this number in a license plate auction.

Vehicle license plate in Hong Kong

Some special license plate numbers are up for auction and the most expensive one is the number "18" (symbolizing for sure to get wealthy) with a record of 16.5 million. 2nd highest is "9" (means longevity) sold for 13 million. The license plate "1" is reserved for the Commissioner for Police and the Chief Executive's car carries a plate with Hong Kong bauhinia emblem.

To provide more choices of vehicle registration marks to vehicle owners, the Government introduced a Personalized Vehicle Registration Marks (PVRMs) Scheme. Under the Scheme, a vehicle owner can choose his/her preferred vehicle registration mark, apply to the Transport Department (TD) and use it upon approval following a bidding exercise. The applications for and allocation of personalized vehicle registration mark are subject to the Road Traffic (Registration and Licensing of Vehicles) Regulations.

Source:

http://www.td.gov.hk/en/public_services/personalized_vehicle_registration_marks_scheme/

The Repulse Bay Apartment Complex (site of the old Repulse Bay Hotel) and Veranda Restaurant

The Repulse Bay area is one of the most expensive housing areas in Hong Kong. The prices are matched only by the Peak.

The site of the Repulse Bay apartment complex is the same site where Hong Kong's famous Repulse Bay Hotel used to stand. Opened in 1920 and closed in 1980's, and over the years many international celebrities - George Bernard Shaw, Marlon Brando, Dame Margot Fonteyn – were guests at the hotel. Prince (now King) Juan Carlos of Spain and his bride, Princess Sophia of the Hellenes, spent their honeymoon here. The elegant building was captured on such films as Coming Home and Love is a Many Splendored Thing.

The hotel was the last stronghold against the Japanese invasion of Hong Kong Island during WW2, and many expatriates sought refuge there until the British gave it up after a long and bloody battle.

In 1982 at the height of the property market boom, the hotel was torn down. Developers wanted to build a more profitable luxury apartment complex.

The architects of the residential portion of the Repulse Bay Complex gave the apartment building a curvilinear wall facing the beach to maximize the panoramic views of the South China Sea. Another unique feature is large voids in the structure that allow the green hill behind to be incorporated into the visual composition of the main façade. These voids are developed as “sky gardens.”

The Repulse Bay apartment complex is a magnificent home environment surrounded by greenery and just metres from the sands and the sweeping bay. The Repulse Bay offers luxurious unfurnished and serviced apartments for short and long term lease. It consists of four blocks with two offering stunning sea view. The size of the apartments range from 977 to 5,868 square feet (91 to 545 square metres). Residents can also use the club house facilities which include gym, outdoor 30-metre swimming pool, indoor 25-metre heated swimming pool, outdoor tennis courts, squash court, aerobics and dance rooms, pool table, Jacuzzi, sauna, solarium and steam rooms.

Below the apartment block is the Repulse Bay Shopping Arcade, housed in a colonial building of old Repulse Bay Hotel. The Arcade features a selection of upscale and unique brands and services in various categories, including gourmet food and wine, day spa, fine art, bookstore, home decoration, fashion, medical, physiotherapy and dental centres, as well as children's toys and clothing.

One of Hong Kong's best restaurants, The Verandah is located inside the shopping arcade. The Verandah maintains the relaxed and spacious atmosphere of the original Repulse Bay Hotel. The Verandah's celebrated signature dishes — and its traditional English Afternoon Tea and Sunday Brunch — remain on its bill of fare.

129 Repulse Bay Road

The building on 129 Repulse Bay Road is a new landmark on the south side of Hong Kong Island.

The site (10,570 sq m or 113,775 sq ft), originally housed as government quarters, was bought by a renowned local developer The Chinachem group in a government public land in August 1997, right after the reunification of Hong Kong to China.

The design of the building is in the shape of a lily, a masterpiece by world-renowned architect Lord Norman Foster. Lord Foster resembled this building in the form of a naturally grown “lily” blossoming out of the hillside backdrop of “The Twins” peak. The uniquely forwarding inclined structure, curvilinear both vertically and horizontally, which oval shape made each units of its 30 floors commanded breathe taking panoramic view of the beach and its blue waters.

Originally designed as a top graded residential apartment tower, the development is now in the process of applying for modification as a superbly luxurious hotel. When the application is successful, it is a reintroduction of a luxurious hotel at Repulse Bay as back in the colonial era there was a hotel at the site of the Repulse and Verandah Restaurant.

Section 15 – Repulse Bay (walking tour)

Statues of Tin Hau and Kwun Yum at Repulse Bay

Two grand statues stood 10 meters tall of the goddesses Tin Hau and Kwun Yum - stand within the Life Saving Club compound at the eastern end of Repulse Bay Beach. The goddesses are believed to protect seafarers, fisherfolk and swimmers.

Tin Hau, the Queen of Heaven, is the guardian and patroness of all seafarers. Hong Kong, as a port depending for part of its livelihood on the fishing industry, naturally has many temples dedicated to her.

There are always elaborate celebrations to mark Tin Hau's birthday, which falls in April or May on the 23rd day of the 3rd moon of the Chinese Lunar Calendar. It is an important festival for all fisherfolk, and they decorate their vessels - large and small - with brightly coloured flags and streamers.

Many boats sail to Joss House Bay at the eastern end of Victoria Harbour to mark the festival. There, at the Tai Miu Temple, colourful ceremonies are held.

At other temples statues of the goddess are taken out and paraded through the streets. And in Yuen Long in the New Territories, there is an elaborate street parade with lion and dragon dances, acrobatic shows, float processions and other attractions. The Hong Kong Tourism Board organizes special tours so visitors may experience these colourful celebrations.

The full name of Kwun Yum is Kwun Sai Yum, or "One Who Listens to Human Voices", but she is more commonly known as the Goddess of Mercy.

Kwun Yum, originally a male god in Indian Buddhism, was canonized in female form by Chinese Buddhists and is said to appear to people needing comfort. Celebrations on her behalf are held on three occasions each year: her birth, her accession to sainthood and her entry into heaven.

Statues of other gods and goddess

The common image of the God of Wealth is usually dressed in a Mandarin costume which is said to be the God of Wealth of literature. The God of Wealth in Repulse Bay has an image of a General which belongs to the martial arts side. The correct way to touch the statue is to start from the head, the hand and down to the gold bullion.

The bridge is "Longevity Bridge" which believes one can gain 3 days of extra life when he walks on the bridge once.

If you want to get a son or daughter, make sure you touch to Happy Buddha statue to get his blessing.

Section 16 – Repulse Bay, Stanley

Stanley

Stanley is located on a small peninsula at the southernmost point of Hong Kong Island. At the time the island was ceded to Britain in 1842, Stanley was one of its main fishing villages and one of its largest communities.

Stanley was originally called *Chuck Chu* - or “Robbers' Lair” - by the Hakka people. In Cantonese the name is pronounced *Chek Chu*. In 1845 the area was renamed in honour of Lord Stanley, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, although today many Chinese people still call it by its old name.

Another interpretation of *Chek Chu* is "Red Pillar". A legend tells of villagers erecting such a pillar to welcome home a village son who had come first in the Imperial Civil Service Examination and would therefore become an important official in the imperial government.

There are 2 main centers of population in the Stanley area: Ma Hang Village and Stanley Village.

Ma Hang Village is surrounded by steep, heavily vegetated slopes that climb to the exclusive residential area of Chung Hom Kok and to Stanley Gap Road and Stanley Knoll.

The Hong Kong Housing Authority secured a circa 10–hectare (25-acre) site adjacent to Ma Hang Village on which it built a complex to re-house the many squatters living in and around the village. Residents have views of Stanley Bay, but the complex has been kept low to better blend in with the surroundings and not interrupt the views of Chung Hom Kok residents. The project was built in three phases. The first - completed in 1996 - provides about 660 homes. The second and third phases - completed at the end of 1998 - provides about 1,200 homes.

A likely adjunct to the Ma Hang complex is Murray House. This British army officers' quarters built of local granite on a then waterfront site in 1848, was carefully dismantled in 1982 to make way for the construction of the Bank of China Tower.

Designed by Major Aldrich and Lieutenant Collinson of the Royal Engineers, the three-storey Murray Barracks is one of the oldest surviving colonial buildings in Hong Kong. The cost to re-erect it and build the adjacent housing complex totals about HK\$764 million (US\$98 million)..

There are 3 beaches in and around Stanley: Stanley Beach, where the few remaining fisher folk in the area moor their junks and sampans, Stanley Main Beach and Saint Stephen's beach, both of which are manned by lifeguards and have refreshment stands and toilet facilities.

Stanley Prison, one of Hong Kong's largest maximum-security prisons, is also in Stanley. It houses prisoners under sentence of death and those serving life or long-term sentences. Stanley Prison was built in 1938 and accommodates up to 1,605 male offenders.

Old Stanley Police Station

The Old Stanley Police Station was a police station constructed in 1859 in Stanley, Hong Kong Island. It is now the oldest remaining police station building in Hong Kong, and was declared a monument.

The British Army, during the early years of the colonial era, used the station from time to time in conjunction with the police because of its strategic position as the most southerly outpost on Hong Kong Island. During the Japanese Occupation, the Japanese Gendarmerie used the police station as a local headquarters and a mortuary was built onto the building.

After the war, the building reverted to its original use and served as a police station until 1974. Since then it has had a number of unrelated uses including a sub-office of the Southern District Office, a restaurant, and currently it is used as a supermarket.

There have been various attempts to have the government discontinue its commercial use, and to utilize it for some official function. One recent suggestion was to use it as a branch of the Hong Kong Police Museum.

Hong Kong Correctional Services Museum

Hong Kong Correctional Services Museum is located at 45 Tung Tau Wan Road, Stanley, Hong Kong. It was originally housed in the Staff Training Institute of Hong Kong Correctional Services Department. Today it is housed in a two-storey building next to the parade ground of the Staff Training Institute. It has an area of 480 square metres with a collection of over 600 artifacts representing some 170 odd years of history.

The museum comprises ten galleries with one mock gallows and two mock cells. A mock guard tower stands on top of the building and highlights the theme of the museum. An annex for presentation of correctional and rehabilitative services and for the display of handicrafts produced by prisoners was added to the museum several years ago. Outside the annex is a 200 square metre lookout point for visitors to savour the scenery of Tai Tam Bay.

The museum is under the management of the Correctional Services Department Staff Training Institute.

Source:

<http://www.csd.gov.hk/emuseum/>

Section 17 – Stanley walking tour

Stanley Main Street (Stanley Market)

Stanley is one of Hong Kong's most popular destinations. The open market is packed with bargain-hunters from all over the world haggling with shopkeepers and stallholders after swooping on items of clothing, accessories, souvenirs, ornaments and Oriental knick-knacks.

Stanley Village

On Stanley Village Main Street there are two banks, pubs, beauty parlours, incense stalls, restaurants and fast food shops. One of the restaurants is of a traditional design that has all but vanished from Hong Kong. There are also street-side food and refreshment stalls.

Stanley Village has a reputation of offering some great buys at low prices. Stanley Market - located on and around Stanley Main Street- has narrow lanes lined with small shops selling the latest in fashion and clothing, including overruns of designer jeans and sportswear, leather and silk clothing in Western sizes, household goods, brassware, foodstuffs, porcelain and many other items. Unlike other markets in Hong Kong - where dickering for the best price is expected – at Stanley Market most of the prices are fixed. Opening hours are from 10am to 7pm daily.

Tin Hau Temple in Stanley

At a corner of Stanley Main Street approaching Ma Hang Village is a temple built in 1767 and dedicated to Tin Hau, Goddess of the Sea and protector of fisherfolk. During the Second World War, as Japanese planes bombed Stanley Village, frightened residents sought shelter in the temple. A bomb fell outside but did not explode. It was believed that the goddess had worked a miracle to save the lives of those inside.

On a side wall of the temple hangs the skin of a tiger, said to have been shot near the village by Japanese soldiers during the war-time occupation of Hong Kong.

Stanley Plaza

Stanley Plaza is a total shopping and lifestyle experience, with a design inspired by its unique waterfront location on the southeast side of Hong Kong Island.

This unique leisure and shopping destination offers local and overseas visitors a huge variety of shops and restaurants, a piazza with spacious amphitheatre and children's playground.

Well integrated with the Stanley main street waterfront and historic Murray House, Stanley Plaza provides convenient access to nearby tourist spots such as Tin Hau Temple and Stanley Ma Hang Park.

Stanley Plaza is also dog-friendly shopping centre, equipped with facilities that make it a favourite with dog lovers.

Source:

https://www.stanleyplaza.com/en/about_us/the_new_stanley_plaza.asp

Murray House and Blake Pier

Murray House is a Victorian-era building in Stanley in Hong Kong. Originally built in the present-day business district of Central in 1844 as officers' quarters of the Murray Barracks,[1] the building was relocated to the south of Hong Kong Island during the 2000s.

Murray House was one of the oldest surviving public buildings in Hong Kong. Similar to many of its contemporaries from the early colonial era, it was designed in Classical architecture style. The heavy stone walls (with flat arched opening) are located on the ground floor to give a sense of stability, while the lighter Doric and Ionic columns are placed on the floors above to allow better ventilation. All floors have verandas on all sides in response to the local subtropical/monsoons climate.

Murray House was built in 1844 as officers' quarters of the Murray Barracks[1] during the early years of British rule. It was named after Sir George Murray, the British Master-General of the Ordnance at the time of construction. The designer and constructor were Major Aldrich and Lieutenant Collinson of the Royal Engineers.

During the Japanese occupation of Hong Kong, the building was used as the command centre by the Japanese military police. It was a venue for executing Chinese citizens during the 44-month Japanese occupation.

After World War II, several government departments used the building as offices, including the Rating and Valuation Department, starting in 1965. The building was believed to be haunted and was officially exorcised twice by the government.

In 1982, the historical landmark was dismantled to yield to the new Bank of China Tower. Over 3,000 building blocks were labelled and catalogued for future restoration. In 1990, the Housing Department proposed the resurrection of the building in Stanley. The building was restored in 2001 and reopened in 2002.

Blake Pier at Stanley is a public pier in Stanley. The name originally referred to Blake Pier, Central, a ferry pier in Central, Hong Kong. The pier was named after Sir Henry Arthur Blake, the twelfth governor of Hong Kong. It was originally located at the site of the Central Reclamation Phase 1 project.

The top structure of the pier was later transferred to the open-air oval theatre in Morse Park, in between Wong Tai Sin and Lok Fu, Kowloon. In 2006, the structure was once again transferred next to the Murray House in Stanley, itself dismantled brick by brick and relocated from Central. The pier was re-commissioned in Stanley on 31 July 2007.

The pier has one kai-to route travelling between Aberdeen and Po Toi Island.

Section 18 – Stanley, Deep Water Bay

Repulse Bay

Repulse Bay is a popular beach area and expensive beach-front residential area.

The bay was named after HMS Repulse which was stationed at the bay at one point. During the Battle of Hong Kong in World War II, Repulse Bay was an important strategic location.

In the 1910s, Repulse Bay was developed into a beach, and the Repulse Bay Hotel was built in 1920 and demolished in 1980's. To attract swimmers, a bus route from Central to Repulse Bay was created, and now stands as one of Hong Kong's oldest bus routes. During the Battle of Hong Kong in World War II, Repulse Bay was an important strategic location.

The beach at Repulse Bay, like most of Hong Kong's beaches, does not have rolling surf. Instead, the water is usually very calm, making it suitable for children.

Most of Hong Kong's popular beaches are maintained by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department. They provide lifeguards, first-aid posts, changing rooms and refreshment kiosks. Water quality at beaches maintained by the Department is regularly monitored and the results made known to the public.

The line of buoys off the beach holds the shark exclusion net. More than 10 beaches maintained by the Department are protected by such nets, although shark attacks are extremely rare in Hong Kong.

The Repulse Bay (site of the old Repulse Bay Hotel) and Veranda Restaurant

The Repulse Bay area is one of the most expensive housing areas in Hong Kong. The prices are matched only by the Peak.

Built on the site of Hong Kong's famous Repulse Bay Hotel, The Repulse Bay is a magnificent home environment surrounded by greenery and just metres from the sands and the sweeping bay. The building is known for its square "hole", purportedly added for fung shui purpose. The Repulse Bay offers luxurious unfurnished and serviced apartments for short and long term lease. It consists of four blocks with two offering stunning sea view. The size of the apartments range from 977 to 5,868 square feet (91 to 545 square metres). Residents can also use the club house facilities which include gym, outdoor 30-metre swimming pool, indoor 25-metre heated swimming pool, outdoor tennis courts, squash court, aerobics and dance rooms, pool table, Jacuzzi, sauna, solarium and steam rooms.

Below the apartment block is the Repulse Bay Shopping Arcade, housed in a colonial building of old Repulse Bay Hotel. The Arcade features a selection of upscale and unique brands and services in various categories, including gourmet food and wine, day spa, fine art, bookstore, home decoration, fashion, medical, physiotherapy and dental centres, as well as children's toys and clothing.

One of Hong Kong's best restaurants, The Verandah is located inside the shopping arcade. The Verandah maintains the relaxed and spacious atmosphere of the original Repulse Bay Hotel. The Verandah's celebrated signature dishes — and its traditional English Afternoon Tea and Sunday Brunch — remain on its bill of fare.

Deep Water Bay

Deep Water Bay - the name is a direct translation from the Chinese - *Shum Shui Wan*.

Deep Water Bay, together with Repulse Bay, Shek O and Big Wave Bay – are all extremely popular bathing beaches in the south side of Hong Kong Island. Those who live in Kowloon and the New Territories will commute a long way just for a swim some of the best beaches on this side of the island. The BBQ site next to the bay is one of the many BBQ sites built by the government to provide a comfortable and convenient environment for BBQ lovers.

Section 19 – Deep Water Bay, Ocean Park

Golf Course at Deep Water Bay

This beautiful golf course opposite to Deep Water Bay is a nine-hole par golf course of the Hong Kong Golf Club. The first lease for the land at Deep Water Bay was agreed with Government in September 1898. A Clubhouse was erected in this same year. Members used to ride round to the course in boats or ride ponies over Wong Nai Chong Gap, whilst the caddies walked carrying the clubs and picnic supplies.

Tourists are welcome - as visitors-cum-members - Monday to Friday, with the exception of public holidays, from 9.00 a.m. to 2.00 p.m. Advance reservations are not accepted, so if you would like to play a round of golf, arrive early.

The Club also owns three 18-hole courses near Fanling in the New Territories. They are well-patronized by members and are host to the annual Hong Kong Open Golf Championship, which attracts well-known golfers from all over the world.

Other golf courses that welcome tourists on weekdays are located at Sai Kung in the New Territories and Discovery Bay Resort on Lantau Island. The golf club at Shek O, on the eastern end of Hong Kong Island, is reserved exclusively for members.

You might recognize parts of the Deep Water Bay shoreline and some of the houses if you've seen the old movie *Love Is a Many Splendoured Thing*; some scenes were shot in this part of Deep Water Bay.

Source:
<http://www.hkgolfclub.org/golf.php?s=3&ss=302&c=30203>

Ocean Park

Ocean Park is Hong Kong's premier marine life theme park. The park offers a diverse selection of world-class marine attractions, mechanical rides and shows.

The Park is divided by two sections: the Waterfront at the bottom of the mountain and the Summit. There are two modes of transportation to enable you to move between the Waterfront and the Summit. You may take the cable car and travel for 1.5 km from one end to the other. The ride offers not only a convenient but also a scenic route between these two areas, with spectacular panoramic views of the southern side of Hong Kong and the South China Sea. Or you can take the Ocean Express train, the first of its kind high-speed funicular express train, from the Waterfront to the Summit in less than 3 minutes.

There is an outdoor escalator, the second longest outdoor escalator in the world stretching over 225 metres, connecting the Summit with Tai Shue Wan, the second exit of the Park

The Waterfront features an Aqua themed area called Aqua City, the Amazing Asian Animals themed-area; a children's area called Whiskers Harbour and an array of refreshment and retail facilities.

Aqua City features a three-level Grand Aquarium. Here you will find some of the ocean's most bizarre creatures live - 5,000 fish from over 400 species meet you eye-to-eye!

The Amazing Asian Animals include the Red Pandas, a debut in Hong Kong, the giant pandas Ying Ying and Le Le and a pair of Monkeys from Sichuan called Le Le and Hu Hu. There is also a viewing

pavilion at Goldfish Treasures where you can find hundreds of shimmering goldfish, including some of the latest and rarest species.

For the bird watchers, the Panda Village offers a great opportunity to spot Ocean Park's avian friends high above the trees, as well as visit some delightful Asian Small-clawed Otters.

Children will love the Whiskers Harbour, an area made especially for them, with a large and exciting array of kid-sized and kid-oriented rides. The whole family can join in at the Whiskers Theatre, where live shows is staged every day.

There is also a Dolphin University, which also encompasses Ocean Park's dolphin breeding centre, where you can learn more about the hidden lives of dolphins, as well as the efforts underway to conserve these intelligent marine mammals.

At the Summit, you can go into the Polar Adventure to feel the chill of the North and South Pole, or journey down river rapids to discover the beautiful Rainforest. The dolphins and sea lions of Ocean Park are kept in the Marine World.

The Ocean Theatre is a family favourite where dolphins and sea lions participate in lively daily shows. You will be amazed how talented the marine mammals can be. There are 4 shows daily.

At the unique Sea Jelly Spectacular, you get to see 1,000 beautiful sea jellies set against stunning music and multimedia displays.

As one of the tallest observation towers in Southeast Asia, the Ocean Park Tower boasts a 360° gently rotating viewing room 72 metres above ground and it offers a good view of the Southern side of Hong Kong, Aberdeen and the outlying islands.

And Pacific Pier brings a slice of the sunny Californian coast to Hong Kong, complete with an interactive underwater exhibit view of the sea lions at play.

Ocean Park is popular with the young people because of its many thrill rides. The Dragon is one of the many thrilling mechanical rides on Summit ranking among the world's longest and fastest roller coaster. Mine Train is another roller coaster at the park, it takes you to the Wild West on a train that's out of control. Besides the roller coasters, there are other mechanical rides such as Ferris Wheel and The Abyss Turbo Drop, it raises you up to 185 feet height (20 floors), and drops you straight down in free fall. All in 5 seconds! For a less frenetic form of fun, guests can also go to the Marine Land nearby.

There are also good dining areas in the Park. You can get local snacks at the Hong Kong-style café or to dine with a view of the sea at the Terrace Cafe or the Bayview Restaurant. The latest addition to Ocean Park's eateries is the Panda Café (on the Summit), a uniquely panda-themed indoor and outdoor café sure to delight the entire family.

One way to enjoy the Park is to start your day by visiting the attractions on the Summit, then enjoy your lunch in either the Summit or at the Waterfront. You then spend the rest of the day in the Waterfront and ends with a water fountain show - The Symbio, held nightly at 7 pm.

Symbio is a multi-media nighttime spectacular featuring fire, water, pyrotechnics, music and animation at the Aqua City Lagoon! The whole area is transformed into a stage for the world's first 360° water screen show. It features two 9m-tall dragons over dancing fountains and against lighting and sound effects.

Ocean Park was officially opened in January 1977, 36 years ago. It was built at a cost of HK\$150 million funded by the Hong Kong Jockey Club with land provided for free by the Hong Kong Government. Between 1982 and 1984, the Hong Kong Jockey Club allocated a further HK \$240 million to fund the Park's second phase of development. The Park underwent a significant transformation and upgrades from 2006-2012 under a Master Redevelopment Plan (MRP) for Ocean Park.

The park has consistently rejuvenated and reinvented itself to better serve its guests, establishing itself as a significant tourist attraction both locally and abroad. In 2006, Forbes.com named Ocean Park one of the "10 Most Popular Amusement Parks in the World", and in 2007, Forbes Traveler ranked Ocean Park as one of the "50 Most Visited Tourist Attractions in the world".

You won't be surprised that this popular park received over 5 million guests visit each year.

Source:

<http://www.oceanpark.com.hk/html/en/home/>

Section 20 – Ocean Park, Ap Lei Chau

The Police College

The Police Training School was established in 1984 to provide basic training for new recruits, inform policemen of new legislation and procedures, and provide various tailor-made courses for experienced policemen. Many training exercises take place on the hillside behind the school, including mock pursuits and wilderness hikes.

The basic training period for constables is 24 weeks, for inspectors 36 weeks. The courses cover criminal law, social studies, police and court procedures, drill, firearms, first aid, and physical fitness including swimming, life-saving and self-defense.

Inspectors also study management theory, practical leadership and languages, including colloquial Cantonese for expatriate inspectors and functional English for local inspectors.

The tailor-made courses for experienced policemen include marine studies, road traffic studies, financial investigation and instructional work.

Facilities at the Police Training School are being expanded and improved to meet increasing demand. Today the Hong Kong Police Force has more than 38,600 staff, including auxiliary policemen and civilian staff. In addition to maintaining general law and order, the police are now also responsible for patrolling the border with mainland China.

The School restructured and renamed to The Police College in 2006.

The Foundation Training Centre is based at Aberdeen and provides a wide range of training from basic recruit training to professional training, such as firearms instructor training. It aims to provide highly professional training to enable the trainees to excel in all fields. To this end, the Centre continues to explore opportunities for joint ventures with reputable institutions, both local and overseas, to ensure that the training provided by the Centre is professional and up-to-date.

To cater for the changing needs of the community, the Centre closely liaises with other Centres within the Police College, as well as other Formations within the Force, to ensure that the training programmes which meet the needs of our frontline police officers and the society are being provided in a timely manner.

The Professional Development Learning Centre (PDLC) plays an integral part in developing professional police officers and leaders, so that the Force can continue to rise above the challenges of the 21st century.

The Specialized Services Training Centre (SSTC), headed by a Senior Superintendent, comprises four functional divisions and three subsidiary Centres, viz. Detective Training Centre, Police Driving and Traffic Training Centre and Research Centre. SSTC aims to professionalize the learning initiatives and to effectively develop the Force's competencies and individual capabilities.

The Centre provides a wide range of specialized and generic competency training such as detective training, police driving and traffic training, language training and instructors' training.

Source:

http://www.police.gov.hk/ppp_en/07_police_college/about_us.html

Jumbo Floating Restaurant

The world-renowned Jumbo Floating Restaurant was established in Aberdeen in October of 1976. Since it opened, it has been visited by over 30 million people, winning even the patronage of Queen Elizabeth II and superstars like John Wayne, Yul Brynner, William Holden.

The "Jumbo Kingdom" comprises two gaily-painted pleasure boats, respectively "Jumbo" and "Tai Pak". With a total area of 45,000 sq. feet and seats for 2,300 persons and 300 staffs, Jumbo Kingdom is believed to be the grandest floating restaurant in the world and eligible to enter into the World's Record. Its design after the imperial palace of ancient China is most welcomed by foreign tourists.

Among the two boats, "Jumbo" tops the other in scale. It is 76 meters long, 22 meters wide and 28 meters high with 3,300-ton displacement and can accommodate over 2000 guests". "Tai Pak" has the longest history with its fame resounded all over since the 50's and 60's.

Jumbo Floating Restaurant is famous for seafood and has its own large-scale pool that accommodates over 60 kinds of seafood. To ensure freshness and hygiene, it has also installed a "UV Light Sea Water Sterilizing System", the biggest of its kind in Hong Kong. Our experienced chefs will prepare over 100 kinds of palatable seafood cooking following the specific requirements and individual customers. We also provide Cantonese cuisine and local fishes to satisfy various flavors.

In support of environmental protection, Jumbo Floating Restaurant has invested over HK\$18 million in 1996 in the building of a waste water treatment barge and devices, which is the largest of its kind in Southeast Asia. Besides, due care had been exercised in choosing fire-proof and heat-resistant materials for the building and decoration work of this grand "Seafood Kingdom".

On the rooftop of the floating restaurant, a western dining outlet "Top Deck" is ready to offer another kind of dining experience to patrons.

Wong Chuk Hang

Wong Chuk Hang means "yellow bamboo low-land" in Chinese. This could indicate that the area was once marshland because, although bamboo is usually green, it becomes yellow when grown in water-logged soil.

In recent years the area has been developed as an industrial district and the neighbouring public housing estates provide homes for many of its workers.

Ap Lei Chau

From Aberdeen, on the south side of Hong Kong Island, what appears to be a hill in the bay is actually part of an island called Ap Lei Chau, or "Duck's Tongue Island", after its original shape (which has since been altered by reclamation.)

The 230-metre (755-ft) Ap Lei Chau Bridge links Aberdeen with the island. Opened in 1980, the bridge was the first to join Hong Kong with an offshore island. It has transformed the once-sleepy island community into a bustling extension of urban Hong Kong.

For boat enthusiasts, the shipyards around Ap Lei Chau are a paradise. Many kinds of small craft are still constructed here - including, of course, junks. The boat wrights are skilled carpenters who have added electric drills to their traditional woodworking tools. Diesel engines, which have almost wholly replaced picturesque sails, are also repaired here.

Scrap yards convert steel from derelict vessels into reinforcing rods for new concrete buildings - a fate suffered by the once-great liner Queen Elizabeth I, which caught fire and sank in Victoria Harbour in 1972. Various other steel products for industry, such as window frames, are also produced here.

South Horizons

The urban areas of Hong Kong have for years been among the most densely populated in the world. No matter how stressful it is, though, city living does have its conveniences; and it is only since the concept of the garden city was introduced that people have been offered a genuine alternative.

True to this concept, South Horizons is designed with the "garden city" concept with high-rises in low density. Together with an array of recreational facilities on the podium floors, South Horizons exemplifies professional town planning.

The total site area of the whole development of South Horizons is around 155,000 sq.m., 34 blocks with a total number of 9,812 units in four phases. The buildings range from 30 to 42 storeys with flats at different sizes ranging from 55 sq.m. to 105 sq.m. Built on the site of Hong Kong Electric's power stations, South Horizons is developed as a "Garden City" by Hutchison Whampoa Property Group.

Source:

<http://www.hwpg.com/en/properties/p57.asp>

Section 21 – Ap Lei Chau, Pokfulam

Aberdeen

Aberdeen was named after Lord Aberdeen, the foreign secretary who presided over the birth of Hong Kong as a British colony in 1842. The Chinese name of Aberdeen is 香港仔. Hong Kong was once a British colony, it is not at all strange to find many roads, buildings, schools and hospitals bearing the names of the royal family members and the former governors. Aberdeen is a fishing village and outlying opposite to it is the island called Ap Lei Chau, where Hong Kong's oldest ship building industry still thrives.

The government has designated the water area between Aberdeen and Ap Lei Chau as a typhoon shelter, and built breakwaters on the west and the east entrances to the typhoon shelter. Hundreds of fishing boats, big and small, come into the typhoon shelter during typhoon and during Chinese New Year holidays. Although reclamation of the waterfront has cut down the size of the typhoon shelter, the activities of the local fishing folks and their traditional lifestyles remain reminiscent of the golden years. The waterway here was reputed to be the birthplace of dragon boat racing. Until today, the annual dragon boat races are still held here in Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter during the Tuen Ng Festival (usually in June).

Wong Chuk Hang and Industry in Hong Kong

Wong Chuk Hung is a light industry area, and the buildings in this area are all factory buildings. Several restaurant groups have established food factories here.

The manufacturing sector in Hong Kong has undergone a substantial restructuring process during the 1980s and early 1990s. Hong Kong now has a large trans-boundary manufacturing base which combines high value-added and technology-intensive manufacturing processes in the territory with land-and labour-intensive processes in the southern part of the Mainland and other economies. In 2011, manufacturing accounted for 1.6 per cent of the GDP. In 2012, employment in manufacturing took up 3.0 per cent of the total employment.

The most significant Four Key Industries in Hong Kong are financial services, trading and logistics, tourism, and professional and producer services, and they have been the driving force of Hong Kong's economic growth, providing an impetus to growth of other sectors and creating employment.

Hong Kong's continuing economic success owes much to a simple tax structure and low tax rates, a versatile and industrious workforce, an excellent infrastructure, free flow of capital and information, the rule of law, the Government's firm commitment to free trade and free enterprise, and, of course, for having one of the world's finest natural harbours.

As to the power behind Hong Kong, the men and women who make up its workforce, their wages are calculated either by time - hourly, daily or monthly. With effect from 1 May 2011, Statutory Minimum Wage (SMW) has come into force. With effect from 1 May 2013, the SMW rate is revised from \$28 per hour to \$30 per hour. The monetary cap on the requirement of employers keeping records of the total number of hours worked by employees is also revised from \$11,500 per month to \$12,300 per month with effect from 1 May 2013.

The Employment Ordinance provides for benefits and entitlements for employees including statutory holidays, annual leave, rest days, maternity leave, sickness allowance, severance pay and long service pay.

And some employers provide their employees with fringe benefits such as subsidized meals, good-attendance bonuses, free or subsidized medical treatment, and transport to and from work.

From December 1, 2002 onwards, employees, and the self-employed persons aged between 18 and 65 in Hong Kong are required to join the Mandatory Provident Fund Scheme. MPF is an employment-

based retirement protection system. Mandatory contributions are calculated on the basis of 5% of an employee's relevant income, with the employer matching the employee's contribution. Self-employed persons also have to contribute 5% of their relevant income. They can choose to make contributions on a monthly basis or a yearly basis. Scheme members can withdraw their accrued benefits in a lump sum at the age of 65.

Children under 15 are required to complete the nine-year free education system, and therefore are prohibited from all industrial employment until they reach that age.

Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter

Hong Kong is hit by tropical cyclones in the summer months and strong winds from seasonal monsoons in the winter months. To provide safe shelter to the floating population, the government has designated quiet bays along the coast as typhoon shelters. Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter has long been a refuge for local fishing vessels.

In the Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter, the breakwaters were built in the west, off Shek Pai Wan and also in the east, off Sham Wan. The breakwaters are built from concrete blocks or rocks of uneven sizes and surface, which are to reduce current movement outside the break waters while the sea inside remains calm.

On the western approach of the Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter off Shek Pai Wan, fishing boats line up according to the buoys set by the Marine Department. Three to five boats are seen lining up side by side, and are neatly tied together in a small cluster.

On the eastern approach of the typhoon shelter off Sham Wan, you can see expensive and luxurious pleasure yachts belonging to the members of the two clubs - Aberdeen Boat Club and Aberdeen Marina Club.

In the centre of the typhoon shelter, you will find the two large floating restaurants. The Jumbo Floating Restaurant resembles a floating palace that catches the sight of every visitor,

The typhoon shelter is frequented by small wooden motorized boats called "sampans", which literally means three pieces of wooden planks. These sampans are the most important type of transportation used by the fishing folks to commute around the floating community. They are also referred as "Water Taxis". Visitors can take a sampan ride around the typhoon shelter to explore the fishing village and to experience the traditional lifestyles of the fishing folks.

History of floating restaurants

The earliest form of "offshore dining" in Aberdeen began within the fishing community during the 1920s to 1930s. For a community that would hardly leave their junks, not even during typhoons, having family gatherings at a restaurant on shore was simply out of the question.

Capitalizing on the special needs of this community, an owner of a grocery store in Ap Lei Chau began to offer catering services. The food was prepared in a kitchen on the shore and then was delivered to the fishermen's junks by a boat. It was an overnight success, and the business evolved into the first floating banquet in 1940. Every time there was a party on a fisherman's house boat, a kitchen boat would berth side by side with the house boat packed with party guests. Cooking was done on the kitchen boat and hot food would be delivered to the house boat .

In 1950, someone turned a small vessel into a seafood restaurant and fishermen were attracted to go board to dine. This whole new concept of "off shore dining" just took off from there. In 1952, the first custom-made seafood restaurant opened for business in Aberdeen. The restaurant named Tai Pak

Floating Restaurant, built on a 105 ft long boat, became a new sensation in Hong Kong, not only because of its luxurious decor, but also of the fresh catch and wide range of Chinese cuisine it offered. In no time, tourists from around the world began to flock to Hong Kong for this new found interest and culinary experience.

The heyday of the floating seafood restaurant came in the 1970s and 80's, with two more custom-built floating restaurants, the Sea Palace and the Jumbo Seafood Restaurant, entered the market. The Jumbo Restaurant, the biggest ever built, gradually gained the upper hand and earned most of the market share. In the early 1980s, the management group behind the restaurant acquired its main competitors, the Tai Pak and the Sea Palace.

Until today, the Jumbo Seafood Restaurant and the Tai Pak Restaurant are still floating here for all to relish new array of culinary delights, such as dim sum and tea testing.,

Wah Fu Estate and Wak Kwai Estate

Wah Fu Estate, overlooking Lamma Island, is home to about 31,000 persons and is one of the largest estates managed by the Hong Kong Housing Authority. On a site of 10 hectares (24 acres) , it was built on a new town concept in 1967 and was renovated in around 2003. There are schools, shops, banks, a market, medical and dental clinics, a post office and a public library.

Adjacent to it is Wah Kwai Estate, another public housing estate. The estate consists of 6 residential buildings built in 1990 and 1991.

The Hong Kong Housing Authority is a statutory body responsible for providing accommodation for everybody entitled to public housing. Those entitled to public housing are mainly families displaced from unauthorized structures on land needed for development, those living in dangerous tenement buildings and families made homeless by natural disasters. Each year the biggest share of the public housing allocation goes to waiting list applicants who are living in unsatisfactory conditions.

Section 22 – Pokfulam, University of Hong Kong

Cyberport

Cyberport is a creative digital community with a cluster of technology and digital content tenants. It is wholly owned by the Hong Kong SAR Government.

The site of Cyberport is 24 hectares at Telegraph Bay on the southern side of Hong Kong Island. On the site, there are four intelligent office buildings, housing over 100 companies of different sizes and at different stages of development. These companies will specialize in the application of advanced IT to the development of services and multimedia content to support businesses and industries ranging from finance, through trading, advertising and entertainment, to communications.

The goal is to transform Hong Kong to a digitally inclusive society and Cyberport to an ICT hub (information and communications technology hub) serving Hong Kong and the Asia Pacific region. Cyberport is committed to nurture ICT industry start-ups and entrepreneurs, driving collaboration with tenants and investors to create business opportunities, and accelerating ICT adoption at all levels of the community in order to build a more technologically savvy society.

Source:

<http://www.cyberport.com.hk/en/>

Hong Kong Chinese Christian Churches Union Pok Fu Lam Road Cemetery

The Hong Kong Chinese Christian Churches Union Pok Fu Lam Road Cemetery also known as Pok Fu Lam Cemetery or Chinese Christian Cemetery was built in 1882. It is a cemetery under the Hong Kong Chinese Christian Churches Union.. It is a cemetery consisting of terraces on the hillside, interconnected with staircases, making it a magnificent view.

The Hong Kong Chinese Christian Churches Union has always functioned on the funds raised by church members. Similarly, the cemetery was built with the funds provided by supporting Christian churches in Hong Kong. A priest from the Chinese Christian Union introduced the idea of creating a cemetery to cater to the needs of fellow Christians, therefore the Union applied to the government in 1882. When the application was approved, the cemetery was built in a large scale starting from the higher contours downwards. From Pok Fu Lam Road, the cemetery was extended to Victoria Road.

Pokfulam

Pokfulam derives its name from the woods that used to provide habitat for a species of bird.

The Waterfall Bay in Pokfulam, was the place from where foreign ships took their fresh water in the days before Hong Kong was ceded to Britain.

Pok Fu Lam can claim several *firsts* in the history of Hong Kong: It was the place where Hong Kong's floral emblem, *Bauhinia blakeana*, was first discovered; the site for Hong Kong's first reservoir, Pokfulam Reservoir, (completed in 1883), and the site for Hong Kong's first dairy farm established in 1885. The farm supplied not only milk, but cattle to Hong Kong, and later became Dairy Farm. However, it no longer exists in Pok Fu Lam.

While the farm no longer exists, the two cow sheds that remain continue to exist serving other purposes. They are between the Vocational Training Center and the much older Béthanie. Béthanie and the cow sheds are presently administered by the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts, The APA uses Béthanie and the cow sheds for various educational purposes, but also lends the chapel in

Béthanie to St. John's Cathedral (Anglican) as the locale for Emmanuel Church - Pokfulam, a daughter (subordinate) church serving the west of Hong Kong island.

The oldest village on Hong Kong Island, Pokfulam Village is right opposite to the former dairy farm. Pokfulam Village has been inhabited for at least 250 years, or since the time of the Ching Dynasty.

Chi Fu Fa Yuen and Pokfulam Gardens are private housing estates built on land previously used as pasture by the Dairy Farm Company. The estates include shops, restaurants and sporting facilities and are largely inhabited by middle-class families.

Bauhinia blakeana

Bauhinia blakeana is commonly known as Bauhinia by dropping its botanical name.

Bauhinia was seen incidentally by a French Priest in 1908 when he strolled along the waterfront of Pokfulam. The orchid-like bauhinia is elegant and can be easily grown. Westerners called it "Poor man's orchid" in the early time.

Bauhinia blakeana was adopted as the floral emblem of Hong Kong by the Urban Council in 1965. Since 1997 the flower appears on Hong Kong's coat of arm, its flag and its coins; its Chinese name has also been frequent

Bauhinia is easily distinguished by its distinctive twin-lobed heart shaped large leaves. In Hong Kong the leaf is known as the "clever leaf" (聰明葉), and is regarded as a symbol of wisdom. Some people use the leaves to make bookmarks in the hope that they will bring them good luck in their studies. The trees bear flowers from November to March. When Bauhinia is in bloom, it is easily recognized by the pinkish purple color.

They are found everywhere in Hong Kong, cultivated in parks and roadsides, as well as growing in the hills. The trees are around seven meter tall and the average age is forty years. Bauhinia does not require much for the environment but sunshine and gently wind and big spaces. 65,000 pieces of the trees are recorded in Hong Kong.

Queen Mary Hospital

The hospital was founded in 1937 as a public hospital, and its first building was opened that year by Andrew Caldecott, the then Governor of Hong Kong. The hospital was named after Queen Mary, widow of King George V of the United Kingdom.

The hospital was greatly expanded over the years, with two major expansion projects completed in 1955 and 1983. Queen Mary Hospital's main ward tower, Block K, is the tallest hospital building in Asia at 137 metres (28 storeys), and is the third tallest in the world, behind London's Guy's Hospital and Houston's O'Quinn Medical Tower at St. Luke's Hospital.

Queen Mary Hospital is a general and teaching hospital. It has around 1,400 beds and serves all of Hong Kong Island.

In addition to providing a 24-hour accident and emergency service and standard clinical and ancillary services, the hospital carries out services requiring advanced technology such as organ transplants, care of patients suffering from cancer, and assisted reproduction. The hospital also has a training school for nurses.

Source:

<http://www3.ha.org.hk/qmh/index.htm>

Chinese Medicine

In Hong Kong, we are lucky to get medical treatments from the best of two worlds - western and Chinese medicine. Chinese herbal medicine is said to cure almost any ailment. Herbal cough medicine and flu medicine are quite effective, especially during the early stages of infection. Lately, some doctors have become interested in possible herbal cures for cancer. Perhaps the best known of all Chinese medicine is ginseng, which is said to improve blood circulation and promote longevity.

When you consult a Chinese medicine practitioner, the diagnosis usually involves an examination of complexion, the eyes, the tongue, and pulse rate. A detailed discussion with the patient about his health is also an important part of diagnosis. From the diagnosis, a prescription of herbal medicine with exact portion is written. The patient will then take it to a herbal medicine shop to buy all the herbs on the prescription. Chinese herbal medicine usually comes in dried form and is ground down and boiled in water to make a tea. Like all medicines, such tea rarely tastes good.

To become a Chinese herbal medicine practitioner, one has to get a license. According to the Chinese Medicine Ordinance, any person who wishes to be registered as a registered Chinese medicine practitioner shall undertake and pass the Licensing Examination conducted by the Chinese Medicine Council of Hong Kong. To be eligible to undertake the Licensing Examination, one should have satisfactorily completed such undergraduate degree course of training in Chinese medicine practice or its equivalent..

As of June 2013, there are 6,558 registered Chinese medicine practitioners.

Source:

http://www.cmd.gov.hk/html/eng/important_info/regulation.html

Section 23 – University of Hong Kong, Pokfulam Road, Des Voeux Road West (Western Police Station)

The University of Hong Kong

The University of Hong Kong, situated on the slopes above Pokfulam Road, is the oldest university in Hong Kong. Established in 1911 on land granted by the government, the university was originally a merger of the College of Medicine and the Institute of Technology. One famous student at the university was China's revolutionary leader Dr Sun Yat-sen, founder of the Republic of China who overthrew the Chinese monarchy in 1911.

When the university was founded, there were just three faculties: Engineering, Medicine and Arts. Today, with the addition of Architecture, Dentistry, Education, Law, Science and Social Science, there is a total of nine faculties.

The governance of the university and the structure of its degree courses are based mainly on the British system. The university has more than 10,800 full-time and 3,200 part-time students.

Source:
<http://www.hku.hk/>

Possession Point and Hong Kong's Colonization

Hong Kong was known to the British and other sailors en route to Canton before 1841 as a safe anchorage, and it was where they would stop and take on fresh water from the waterfall at Waterfall Bay in Pokfulam.

During the hostilities of the Opium War in 1839, traders and their families had been made to withdraw from their usual base in Macau; and they lived aboard ships sheltering in Hong Kong harbour. To Captain Charles Elliot, the British Plenipotentiary, the island seemed an ideal alternative to Macau.

The first landing in Hong Kong was made by Commander (later Captain Sir Edward) Belcher RN and party of the Royal Navy on 26th January 1841 when they proceeded to drink a toast to Her Majesty Queen Victoria.

The following day, they returned to hoist the Union Jack at Possession Point, claiming it for the British Crown, but nothing remains now to show where that event took place. Today, the place is named "Shui Hang Hau Street" Chinese government was incensed by what had happened and Commissioner Keshen, who had ceded the island to the British, was put in chains and taken to the capital, Beijing, in disgrace.

The following year, the Treaty of Nanjing was signed aboard the British flagship HMS Cornwallis anchored in the Yangzi River near the city of Nanjing. This treaty ceded Hong Kong Island in perpetuity to "Her Britannic Majesty, Queen Victoria, Her Heirs and Her Successors".

Captain Elliot, however, far from being praised for bringing about his country's acquisition, was recalled to England, then banished in disgrace to become Charge d'Affaires to the Republic of Texas.

Hong Kong Island was scornfully described by Foreign Secretary Lord Palmerston as "a barren rock with nary a house upon it".

Section 24 –Des Voeux Road West (Western Police Station), Western Market, Macau Ferry Terminal

Western Police Station (a.k.a. No. 7 station)

In the early days, a number system was assigned to the police stations on Hong Kong Island.

Station No. 1 – located in Causeway Bay at the junction of Leighton Road and Percival Street operated from 1853 to mid-1930

Station No. 2 – start operation in 1868, originally located on Johnston Road in Wan Chai and moved to new location on Gloucester Road in 1932 after the reclamation

Station No. 3 – start operation in 1847, located on Queen's Road East in Wan Chai. The Wan Chai Post Office, which is a declared historic monument, was built on the same site after the station demolished in 1905.

Station No. 4 – start operation in 1863 near Admiralty barracks

Station No. 5 – operated between 1857 to 1921, this station located in Queen's Road Central and Wellington Street was once used as headquarter of the fire fighters

Station No. 6 – start operation in 1869 and replaced by the new building in 1886 at Gough Hill in the Victoria Peak. The old building was used as dormitory for officers until 1930. The station is now the Peak Police Station

Station No. 7 – the first building came in operation in 1858 and was located on Queen's Road West near Pokfulam Road. The station moved to the seamen quarter on Des Voeux Road West in 1902. In 1952, the station moved into its new location at Des Voeux Road West and Western Street until today while the previous location was rebuilt into police quarters.

Station No. 8 – Located on Tai Ping Shan area and the nearby streets "Station Street" and "Upper Station Street" were named after this station. The whole area has to be rebuilt after a plague broke out and the station was moved to the Hospital Road nearby until the new building was built in 1928 near High Street. The building was rebuilt in 1935 and is now the headquarter for criminal investigation for Hong Kong Island precinct.

Station No. 9 – start operation in 1853 and located on Caine Road

There are only 3 stations still remains today, the No. 2 station which was the Wan Chai Police Station, the No.7 station which is the Western Police Station and the No. 8 station which is the Criminal Investigation headquarter. A map dated 1870 in the Land Department clearly marked the locations of all the nine stations and the number system can be traced as early as 1870.

Other than the 9 stations on Hong Kong Island, the Central Police Station(a.k.a. General Station) located on Hollywood Road was not include in this number station. The Central Police Station was in operation in 1864 and it was the headquarter for the police force on the island.

After the establishment of the police force in 1844, there are many other police stations set up in other areas on the island and in Kowloon, such as Stanley station in 1859, Pokfulam station in 1861, Shaukiwan station in 1872 and Yaumatei Station in 1873. However theses stations were not included in the number system.

Western District and Nan Pak Hong

This is one of the oldest settlements in Hong Kong. When the British landed on the Island in 1841, a few hundred people already inhabited an area at the foot of a hill, making a living from farming and fishing. Those people called the hill that rose above them Tai Ping Shan ("Mountain of Great Peace"), and a Tai Ping Shan Street still exists. Tai Pin Shan is the Chinese name for the Victoria Peak. "

Today, Western is primarily a residential area. Major commercial activity is clustering along the two sides of the tram line and spooking out to a few lanes behind it. The shops here are renowned for the dried seafood so it is also called Dried Seafood Street. You will find expensive dried abalone, dried scallops, shark's fins and dried fish stomach etc. Dried seafood is common ingredient in Chinese cooking and traditional tonics.

The nearby streets (Wing Lok Street, Ko Shing Street, Bonham Street) are renowned for Chinese tonic ingredients – ginseng and bird's nest – which are believed by some to hold the key to a better complexion, more energy and a longer life. Here you will see display of deer antlers, dried sea horses and genitalia of particular animals and ginseng root.

The merchants in this area not only have their retail business but also wholesale business with many parts of China and South East Asian countries. The business of trading with markets in the North and those in the South is known collectively as Nam Pak Hong in Chinese. Such activity has been active in part of town since the 1850's.

Western Market

The building was originally the old Western Market (North Block), built in 1906. The building is in Edwardian style which was popular in England from 1901 to 1918. The walls are covered with red brick and granite. ,

It is listed by Antiquities and Monuments Office (AMO) as one of the Declared Monuments. It is the oldest market building surviving in Hong Kong.

Since It ceased operating as wet market 1989 , it has been converted to house some themed restaurant and boutique shops. You can find art pieces from China, vintage European watches, bus model and fabrics.

The upper level is a fabric mart, where stalls of several fabric merchants were formerly located in a nearby lane. Like many such narrow alleys, "cloth lane" disappeared during the construction of the new high-rise commercial buildings

Western Harbour Crossing

The huge concrete structure near the waterfront marks the entrance to the harbour tunnel called the West Harbour Crossing. On the other side of the harbour in Kowloon, you can see a similar structure. The tunnel was opened for traffic in 30 April, 1997. With a length of 1.36 kilometres, the tunnel is built with three lanes of traffic moving in each direction, and it was designed to accommodate 180,000 vehicles a day, many more than the first cross-harbour tunnel.

The Western Harbour Crossing is the third cross-harbour crossing, it links the western part of Hong Kong Island with the Western Corridor on Kowloon and leads to the airport at Chek Lap Kok. It is used on average by 58,000 vehicles daily.

Section 25 – Macau Ferry Terminal, City Hall

Macau Ferry Terminal and Shun Tak Center

Located on the waterfront, the shimmering twin-tower structure with red beams is the Shun Tak Centre. The twin-tower was built in 1985, composed by two 41-storey commercial building and a 3-storey shopping mall.

The Hong Kong-Macau Ferry Terminal is located at the lower floor of the building. Every year, millions of passengers make use of this ferry terminal to travel between Hong Kong and the Pearl River Delta cities including Zhuhai and Macau. They go through immigration and custom clearances at the Hong Kong-Macau Ferry Terminal. The terminal has 13 gates for high-speed jetfoils and 66 immigration counters.

There is a helipad on the raised podium between the twin towers. An average of 50 scheduled daily helicopter flights between Hong Kong and Macau are operated at the terminal. It takes only 15 minutes to fly by helicopter between Hong Kong and Macau.

Central District

Central District is the political, administrative and financial hub and home to some fantastic skyscrapers. Central is previously known as Victoria, this is 'downtown' Hong Kong and you get into this district by taking the MTR to Central station to Airport Express Line to Hong Kong District. The classic way to get to Central is the Star Ferry from Tsim Sha Tsui.

Here in Central, most banks and multi-national companies have their head offices here. Hong Kong is Asia's most popular city for international business. Its enduring appeal is built on political stability, the rule of law, free market principles, free flow of information, and English as the language of business.

International Finance Centre (IFC)

The IFC is one of the biggest projects in Hong Kong in the new millennium, the whole project costs over HK\$20 billion. It is designed by world renowned architect Cesar Pelli and local architect Rocco Sen Kee Yim.

IFC includes two office towers (39-storey One IFC, and 88-storey Two IFC), the Four Seasons Hotel and luxury suite hotel Four Seasons Place, and the 4-storey IFC Mall.

The building may look familiar to you if you are a movie goer. Two IFC was filmed in Angelina Jolie's Tomb Raider 2. It was a hair raising stunt when she just plunged out of the IFC from the top.

Hong Kong Station and Airport Express Line

The Airport Express Line from the Hong Kong International Airport terminates at the Hong Kong Station, an underground station of IFC. There are five stations in total along the Airport Express Line: Hong Kong, Kowloon, Tsing Yi, Airport and Asia World Expo. Both Hong Kong and Kowloon station offers in-town check-in services and free shuttle bus to major hotels. It takes about 24 minutes to arrive at Airport Station from Hong Kong Station and it runs on an interval of 12-minutes.

Exchange Square

Exchange Square comprises two 52-level towers and one 32 –level tower, all rising from a two-level podium. Below the podium is the Central Bus Terminus..

This site in a very prime location of central business district was acquired by the Hong Kong Land Company in February 1982 at the then record-breaking price of HK\$475 million. Hong Kong Land is among the top real estate companies in the world and owns several prime property in Central. Exchange Square provides the services and facilities a business needs in order to operate internationally around the clock, 365 days a year. An important feature is centralized information and communications system that serves tenants on a shared resources basis.

Among Exchange Square's prominent tenants is the Hong Kong Stock Exchange, Canadian Consulate and Japanese Consulate.

Statue Square

The Statue Square was built for the celebration of Queen Victoria's golden jubilee in 1887. Other than the bronze statue of Queen Victoria, the statues of King Edward VIII, Queen Alexandra, King George VI, and Queen Mary were also placed at the Square. Therefore, the square was formerly called Royal Square. Today, all the royal statues have been relocated to different parks in Hong Kong. The only statue at its centre is the statue of an early manager of Hongkong & Shanghai Banking Corporation (now known as HSBC) - Sir Thomas Jackson.

Thousands of domestic helpers from the Philippines gather at Statue Square at weekends and public holidays to enjoy its gardens and fountains and at these time roads in the area are closed to vehicular traffic.

Cenotaph and Remembrance Day

Adjacent to the Statue Square is the Cenotaph. Constructed in 1923, the monument commemorates the sacrifices of members of the armed forces or civilians in the two World Wars. It is an exact replica of the Cenotaph on Whitehall in London, UK except that this one in Hong Kong has eight Chinese characters on it.

A memorial ceremony is held on Remembrance Sunday, the second Sunday in November every year. The ceremony is organized by the Royal British Legion (HK & China Branch) and the Hong Kong Ex-Servicemen's Association. It is attended by various Government officials and different religious bodies.

Although Hong Kong is no longer a member of the Commonwealth of Nations from 1997, the memorial service still resembles those in many other Commonwealth countries. The service includes the sounding of "Last Post," two minutes of silence, the sounding of "Reveille", the laying of wreaths, prayers, and ends with a recitation of the "Ode of Remembrance".

The Hong Kong Police Force Pipe Band continues to perform their ceremonial duty at the service.

Mandarin Oriental, Hong Kong

The Mandarin Oriental, Hong Kong was built in the early 1963. The hotel has 470 rooms, half facing the city view to the south and the other half facing Victoria Harbour . There are also 71 individually designed suites. It is consistently rated as one of the world's top hotels. Two of the hotel restaurants have been awarded Michelin stars - The Pierre by the legendary French chef Pierre Gagnaire and the Mandarin Grill Bar.

To ensure that the hotel maintained its reputation into the 21st century, the hotel group decided in 2005 to completely renovate the property. The plans included reconfiguring many of the dining and public areas, and enclosing the balconies with a new, modern curtain wall that would enlarge the guestrooms. The hotel closed on December 28, 2005 and re-opened on September 28, 2006 for carrying the renovation work.

Cheung Kong Center

The 62-storey Cheung Kong Center is 290 meters in height. Completed in 1998, Cheung Kong Center is the headquarter for renowned property tycoon Li Ka-Shing's Cheung Kong Group. This modern architecture was designed by world-renowned architects Leo A Daly and Cesar Pelli. At night, the building is illuminated by a computer-controlled external lighting system. Different patterns are projected on the building during festive seasons.

Cheung Kong Holdings is a property development and strategic investment company. It is one of the largest developers in Hong Kong for residential, commercial and industrial properties - developed about one in twelve private residences in Hong Kong.

The company is the largest shareholder of Hutchison Whampoa Limited holding a 49.9% interest. With origins dating back to the 19th century, Hutchison is a Hong Kong-based conglomerate which operates five core businesses in 41 countries: ports and related services; telecommunications; property and hotels; retail and manufacturing; and energy and infrastructure.

Old Supreme Court

The splendid domed and colonnaded building beyond the square is the former Supreme Court building where all major trials used to take place. The foundation stone was laid in 1903 and construction was completed in 1912.

Its handsome granite pillars and pediment carving of the Statue of Justice (the Greek Goddess of Justice, Themis) who is blindfolded and holding her scales are typical of late Victoria architecture. Under the statue is the inscription "Erected AD MDCCCCX" (Erected AD 1910).

The building, a declared monument, was renovated in the 1980s to house the Legislative Council, Hong Kong's law making body, from 1985 to 2011, and before that it housed the former Supreme Court. In 2011 the Legislative Council was moved to the Central Government Complex, Tamar, and the now vacant building will revert to a judicial function, housing the Court of Final Appeal from 2015 onwards.

Hong Kong courts, from the highest down, are the Final Court of Appeal, the High Court (which includes the Court of Appeal and Court of First Instance), District Courts, and Magistrates' and various specialized courts English and Chinese are used side by side in the courts. There are also nine special magistrates who deal with minor offences of a routine nature, such as littering, hawking and traffic offences.

Because of reversion of sovereignty over Hong Kong to China, our laws which were written only in English, have been translated into Chinese. This large and difficult task was started some years ago, with the first Chinese text of legislation being declared authentic in July 1992. All texts have now been declared authentic.

USEFUL TOPICS

Good Fung Shui

"The Dragon is Turning Its Head To Greet The Ancestors

The term *fung shui* - means Wind and Water in Chinese. This term is originated from an ancient Chinese book called Book for Burial@ written in around 265 AD. This book, describing the features of landscapes which will generate good *fung shui*, contains the following sentence:

The energy of the dragon will be dissipated by the wind and will stop at the boundary of the water.

The words *fung shui* - Wind and Water are extracted from this famous sentence.

The sentence tells us two important criteria in finding a good *fung shui* place, firstly, the place must be sheltered from strong wind, secondly it must be near the boundary of water. In *fung shui*, we believe that there are prosperous energies existing in the mountain range, which we called dragon. To preserve such prosperous energy, the place must have shelter or natural protections against strong wind. Also the dragon is moving forward until it reaches water, as such, the boundary of water signifies the resting place of the dragon. When the dragon stops. So a place with good *fung shui* place must meet these two requirements, it must be sheltered on all four sides, front, back, left and right. And it must situate near water or open space.

The natural shelter from the four sides is usually symbolized by auspicious animals. The protection in front is called the phoenix; at the back is the tortoise, with tiger on the right dragon on the left.

The landscape of Hong Kong exactly meets the criteria of a good *fung shui*. The heart of Hong Kong is in the Kowloon Peninsula and the Central District. These are very well sheltered by tall mountains in the North, ending at the Lion Rock before descending to form the Kowloon Peninsula, to the left of Kowloon there is the Kowloon Peak, to the right the tiger arm is represented by the Lantau Peak, and in front we have the beautiful Victoria Peak. So Kowloon Peninsula and Central are well sheltered from all sides and the Victoria Harbour forms the boundary of water signaling the stoppage of the dragons and preserving the prosperous energies on both sides of the harbour.

The mountains of Kowloon originate from a massive range called Kun Lun Shan in the west of China. It enters New Territories in the NE of Kowloon. One arm extended south to form the Lion Rock, another arm extended eastwards to form the Kowloon Peak. The Kowloon Peak descends into the sea and pass through the narrow gap called Lei Yue Mun. Then it rises up on Hong Kong Island and move westwards, eventually stops at the Victoria Peak. So the Victoria Peak is considered to be the head of the dragon that turns back to face NE, as if the dragon is turning its head to look back to the motherland. This beautiful configuration is called "The Dragon is turning its head to greet its ancestors" and has strong Fung Shui implication.

The two important districts - Central District on Hong Kong Island and Mongkok to Tsim Sha Tsui of the dragon will conserve.

Hong Kong's Public Transport System

Hong Kong's public transport system is one of the busiest in the world. Its buses and minibuses, taxis, trams, railways and ferries carry millions of passengers a day over a vast network of roads, flyovers, tunnels, railway tracks and waterways.

In the early days of Hong Kong, the most common mode of public transport was by water. This was as much for the movement of people as it was for goods. Stone steps led up from the water's edge on the north shore of Hong Kong Island to the streets above where sedan chairs, licensed to operate like taxis are today, waited to pick up passengers bound for Victoria Peak, Happy Valley and other parts of the Island. These stone steps can still be seen today -- no longer at the water's edge but starting from Queen's Road in Central District, showing the extent of land wrested from the sea over the past century.

The first power-driven form of land transport in Hong Kong was the Peak Tram, which came into operation in 1888 and connected Central District with Victoria Peak. Lateral stations were built to enable people to get to their houses on foot or by sedan chair and pony trap. Trams were introduced in 1904 along the northern shore of Hong Kong Island, linking the western end of the Island to the eastern side. The Kowloon-Canton Railway (KCR) Corporation began operating in 1910. The 1920s saw motor vehicles in use as a means of public transport. It was, however, another 50 years before the entry in the late 1970s of the Mass Transit Railway (MTR), a major link in the transport chain. This was augmented by the Light Rail Transit (LRT) in September 1988. Today, there is an integrated system of transport throughout the territory, enabling commuters and visitors to use a variety of land and water transport to get them to their destinations.

Peak Tram

A ride on Hong Kong's Peak Tram is definitely recommended for first-time visitors. The funicular railway plays one of the world's steepest gradients and, as you are pulled skywards, you see Hong Kong's towering blocks of buildings sliding away at weird angles! The Peak Tram ascends to a height of 396 metres. Once at the Upper Terminus on Victoria Peak, you are afforded magnificent vistas of Hong Kong Island, Victoria Harbour and the Kowloon Peninsula stretching away as far as the eye can see. At night, the view is breathtaking, with the city's lights sparkling in the distance like jewels. Visitors can take a walk around the Peak area or browse among the arts and crafts displays in the boutiques at the terminus. The Peak Cafe is a great stop for a meal or a snack, and the Peak Galleria and new Peak Tower for shops, restaurants and recreational facilities.

The Peak Tram's Lower Terminus is on Garden Road, just a short walk from the Hongkong Shanghai Bank building, or there is a free shuttle bus service available from the "Star" Ferry concourse in Central. The Peak Tram operates every 15 minutes from 7:00am to midnight daily.

Tram

Another interesting and extremely popular mode of transport for visitors is the tram. This Hong Kong Island electric tram system was found in 1904. It is known affectionately and is the only all-double-decker tram system in the world. For HK\$2.3, one can trundle from Kennedy Town in the western reaches of Hong Kong Island to Shau Kei Wan at the eastern end, passing through the Western, Central and Wan Chai Districts, Causeway Bay, North Point and Quarry Bay. An extra loop takes in Happy Valley and the racecourse.

The top deck of a tram is excellent for sightseeing; from here the tram-rider can see the bustle of street markets and the brilliant neon signs of the numerous shops along the tram route -- shops which sell anything from Chinese medicine, clothing and household appliances through cameras and optical goods to school supplies and dried seafood. A tram ride also provides a fascinating glimpse into the daily life of the city as it passes apartment houses and office buildings, restaurants and beauty salons, stores and stalls, and parks and sports grounds, with merchants and shoppers, students, housewives and working people going about their business. Special antique trams can be hired for private parties and sightseeing tours by groups if arrangements are made with Hong Kong Tramways in advance.

Star Ferry

Many Hollywood films have imbued a romantic aura to the "Star" Ferries plying Victoria Harbour, and the introduction of the MTR, with its three cross-harbour tunnel routes, has not diminished their appeal as a mode of transport for visitors. The ferry crossing between Tsim Sha Tsui on the Kowloon Peninsula and Central District on Hong Kong Island takes eight minutes and is an excellent way of appreciating the busy harbour traffic and seeing the skyline of Hong Kong. The trip is especially memorable at sunset or when a full moon hangs over the sky like a huge pearl. With the ride costing only HK\$2.5 (Mon-Fri); \$3.4 (Sat, Sun & PH) for adults taking the top deck and HK\$ 2 (Mon-Fri); \$2.80 (Sat, Sun & PH) on the lower deck, and with buses, minibuses and taxis waiting at the other end to take the commuter to other parts of the territory, the trip is magnificent and definitely another of Hong Kong's bargains. The "Star" Ferry also operates a service between Tsim Sha Tsui and Wan Chai, where the ferry stops close to the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre.

Public ferry

Those wishing to visit the outlying islands can take a double- or triple-deck ferry or a hovercraft from the ferry piers in Central District. In addition, vehicular ferries and several cross-harbour passenger services operate from the pier. Ferries can also be hired for large parties and evening cruises around Victoria Harbour.

Mass Transit Railway

The Mass Transit Railway, or MTR as it is usually called, is Hong Kong's underground transport system. The MTR is a heavily used railway system consisting of nine lines:

Island Line -running between Sheung Wan to Chai Wan

Tsuen Wan Line - running between Tsuen Wan to Central

Kwun Tong Line - running between Yau Ma Tei to Tiu Keng Leng

Tseung Kwan O Line - running between Po Lam and North Point

Ma On Shan Line – running between Tai Wai and Wu Kai Sha

Tung Chung Line - running between Hong Kong to Tung Chung

Disneyland Resort Line – Auto piloted running between Sunny Bay and Disneyland

East Rail Line – Running between Hung Hom and Lo Wu or Lok Ma Chau

West Rail Line – Running between Hung Hom and Tuen Mun

The total route length of the MTR is currently about 175 kilometres and comprises more than 80 stations.

The Airport Express provides services between central Hong Kong and Hong Kong International Airport and AsiaWorld-Expo, on a route spanning 35.2 kilometres.

In 2012, there were about 4.26 million passenger trips daily on the MTR and Airport Express networks. Light Rail, which spans a route network of 36.2 kilometres with 68 stops, serves the northwest New Territories. It carried about 456,900 passengers daily in 2012.

Public bus

Hong Kong's four franchised bus companies run high-capacity double-deck and single-deck buses throughout the territory. These buses operate both in the urban areas and in remote rural areas in the New Territories and on Lantau Island. Passengers pay a fixed fare when they board the bus. Many of the companies' buses are air-conditioned, making a bus ride even more comfortable.

Minibus

Sixteen-seater cream-and-green minibuses -- or Public Light Buses -- also run on scheduled routes in various parts of the territory, while cream-and-red minibuses operate on non-scheduled routes. These buses can stop to pick up or set down passengers anywhere where it is legal to do so -- passengers tell the driver where they want to get off as they approach their destination.

Green minibuses operate on fixed routes and frequency at fixed fares. By end June 2013, there were 71 main green minibus routes on Hong Kong Island, 78 in Kowloon and 197 in the New Territories, employing a total of 3 087 vehicles. Red minibuses carry about 348 200 passengers a day, while green minibuses carry about 1,508,800 passengers daily.

Taxi

Playing one of the key roles in Hong Kong public transport, taxi provides a convenient personalized point-to-point transport service. The taxis in the urban areas are red; those in the New Territories are green, while those on Lantau Island are blue.

Urban taxis operate throughout Hong Kong (except Tung Chung Road and roads in south Lantau). NT taxis are fundamentally confined to rural areas in the New Territories, the airport and are permitted to serve certain locations in the urban area through specified routes. Lantau taxis operate only on Lantau Island.

Passengers taking a taxi from the Kowloon Peninsula to Hong Kong Island -- or vice-versa -- are required to pay, on top of the fare shown on the meter, the return cross-harbour tunnel fee. Those passengers using other tunnels, such as the Aberdeen Tunnel, are required to pay the one-way tunnel fee in addition to the fare indicated.

For the visitor who has the time and the inclination, traveling by public transport is an inexpensive and fun way of discovering Hong Kong's many charms.

Government House

Government House was completed in 1855 and was the official residence of British governors in Hong Kong and was first occupied by the territory's fourth governor, Sir John Bowring.

The governors before Sir John lived in a number of temporary residences, including one in Spring Garden Lane on the Wan Chai waterfront. Spring Garden Lane still exists, but is now well inland in the heart of Wan Chai due to reclamation of the harbour.

A permanent Government House became a more pressing issue when Hong Kong's third Governor, Samuel George Bonham, was taking his family with him to the territory.

Bonham took office in March 1848. He brought forward Charles Cleverly to handle the Government House project. Cleverly later became a prominent local figure and had been presented with a cup for his improvement to the racecourse at Happy Valley.

Cleverly's design is of neo-classical characters. Columns or pilasters are seen on all four sides of Government House. The gate-lodge and main entrance face south towards Victoria Peak. At ground level, an open verandah leads past offices through a pillared hall the height of the house.

A ballroom was added to Government House in 1891, and by 1908 electric fans were installed to cool the building. In the public garden opposite, a regimental band played once or twice a week.

During the Second World War, the Japanese occupation in Hong Kong lasted for three years and eight months. The Japanese Governor who lived in the house decided to remodel it to incorporate traditional Japanese architecture. A tower was added where the covered stairway used to be, while the old stone exterior was replaced with the elaborate oriental white stucco we see today.

After the war the British Governor Sir Mark Young occupied the house again. The tatami mats were removed and the Japanese style bathrooms replaced.

Starting from 1968, the gardens and grounds of Government House have been opened to the public for one day each spring, when azalea shrubs are at their best. After the Handover, it increases to four times a year, including the spring opening. The Government House will open 6 times a year in 2003. Dates of the open days are to be announced by the Government. Families and photographic aficionados equipped with the most advanced technology flock to Government House for the genuine photo opportunities. It also attracts much media attention.

The last residents of Government House were the family of ex-Governor Mr. Christopher Patten and his two "royal" puppies - Whisky and Soda.

After the Pattens have moved out, prominent local architect Mr. Ho Tao renovated the house. Wallpaper was changed and the interior of the house was graced by paintings of different genres.

Since the Handover, the Chief Executive, Mr. Tung Chee-hwa, has decided to continue living in his apartment in Mid Levels as he feels that it would be a more appropriate way to mark the beginning of a new era after the establishment of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR). The Government House, however, remains an important venue for official functions of the HKSAR Government. It is frequently used by the Chief Executive and Mrs. Tung to receive foreign dignitaries and prominent figures in the community, such as the American President Mr. Bill Clinton and King Harald V of Norway. The building was renamed in mid 1999 as "the Guest House" in Chinese, whereas its English name remains unchanged.

Central-Mid-Levels Escalator

The Central-Mid-Levels Escalator, the longest covered outdoor escalator system in the world, provides easy access to and from downtown, as well as fascinating insights into the diverse street life. The escalator is in service since October 1993, costing HK\$ 250 million.

Along the Mid-Levels Escalator, discover Central's most fascinating nooks and crannies. Twenty escalators and three "travelators" comprise this 800-metre-long outdoor "people mover" which took two-and-a-half years to complete. From the elevated walkway on Connaught Road Central on the northern shore of Hong Kong Island, the escalator climbs uphill via Hollywood Road, famous for its antique shop, to Conduct Road, an up-market residential area at the mid level of Victoria Peak. There are 29 entry and exit points along the way and the ride. It takes about 20 minutes to travel from one end to the other. But with the variety of city life to be seen along the way, it is 20 minutes well spent! The escalator operates one-way downhill from 6:00a.m. to 10:00a.m. and then uphill from 10:00a.m. to midnight. The system is used by about 85,000 pedestrian trips daily in late 2010.

Hong Kong Park

The park occupies 8 hectares of the site of the former Victoria Barracks and is bounded by Cotton Tree Drive, Kennedy Road and Queensway. It was opened in May 1991 by the British governor of Hong Kong, Sir David Wilson.

Developed with the aim of preserving the natural environment, the park contains many of the trees and plants, which abounded in the barracks. It has a number of special attractions, including a walk-in aviary, a multi-climate greenhouse, a landscaped garden, a Tai Chi garden, a visual-arts center and some spectacular fountains. The Flagstaff House Museum of Tea Ware and a squash courts complex are also in the park

The Cotton Tree Drive Marriage Registry is also located at the Hong Kong Park. (For information of the marriage registries in Hong Kong, please refer to the information on page 7, under Central and Western District)

Flagstaff House Museum of Tea Ware

The building was built in 1841 and first known as Headquarters House. It is one of the oldest surviving colonial-style buildings in Hong Kong. It was renamed Flagship House in 1932 and was the offices and residence of the Commander of British Forces in Hong Kong from 1846 until 1978. The building was declared to be a monument in 1989.

In 1978, Flagstaff House was used as a temporary residence of the governor while his official residence, Government House in Upper Albert Road, was being renovated.

Flagstaff House has been home to the Museum of Tea Ware, since 1984, which specializes in housing, studying and displaying tea ware. It has a collection of more than 500 items, among which the Yixing teapot is the most representative. Permanent displays of historic tea utensils include porcelain and earthenware tea sets, ewers and water pots. Besides exhibitions, the Flagstaff House Museum of Tea Ware also holds regular demonstrations and lecture programs for promoting Chinese tea drinking culture. Admission is free. Daily 10:00am – 6:00pm. Closed on Tuesdays (except public holidays) Closed at 5:00pm on Christmas Eve and Chinese New Year's Eve. Closed on the first two days of Chinese New Year

French International School

The striking complex on the hillside is the French International School. Built in 1983, the school won the annual award in 1984 from the Hong Kong Institute of Architecture. The design brief of the school called for the inclusion of 2 educational streams, French and English, with a full range of educational and recreational facilities for kindergarten, primary and secondary levels.

Though the sloping site was difficult to develop, the height variables gave the architect the opportunity to terrace the school in such a way that its roofs became readily accessible play areas and its fabulous surrounding views remained unobstructed.

In the French school system, the character of a classroom is very much influenced by the teacher and the pupils. Thus the standard classroom is homey, with a relaxed atmosphere. The common-room areas also contain all the elements of a home, with kitchen, dining, and living space, so that the teachers do not have to work in a conventional office-like setting.

International schools form an important social infrastructure of Hong Kong to maintain its status as an international business centre and a vibrant and cosmopolitan community. In 2002, there were 70

international schools offering different curricula such as American, Australian, British, Canadian, French, German-Swiss, Japanese, Korean and Singaporean, providing a total of 31 000 places. Of these international schools, 23 operated up to secondary level and 38 at primary level. There were 38 kindergartens and a special school.

Happy Valley Racecourse

Since the first Plenipotentiary's Cup of 1846, horse racing has been one of the most popular sports in Hong Kong. The Hong Kong Jockey Club, a non-profit making organization, was set up in 1884 and it runs the Happy Valley Racecourse and Sha Tin Racecourse.

The site of the present Happy Valley racecourse was originally a swamp where, because it was the only flat land on the island, the first settlers lived. However, malaria and other diseases soon forced them to move out. In the Mid 1840s, the marshland was drained and the residents set up a racecourse in the area they called "Happy Valley". The original racecourse offered only bamboo grandstands which were burned down in the tragic fire on 26th February 1918 when the charcoal fires of hawkers caught on to the bamboo structures, more than 600 people died. Temporary shelters replaced stands. In the 1931, two three-storey permanent stands were constructed.

In 1957, these were replaced by two seven-storey buildings, which were expanded in 1969 to become part of today's viewing stands. Then, the racing course was closed for redevelopment in 1994 and was reopened in late 1995. It provides all-turf racing on a much wider track, the new one is 30 metre wide, and with a smoothing out of Happy Valley's notoriously tight bends.

Early British residents introduced racing in Hong Kong. The first races were held on 17 & 18 December 1846. The site of the present Happy Valley racecourse was originally a swamp around which the early residents lived. However, malaria and other diseases soon forced them to move and in the mid-1840s the swamp was drained and a racecourse built.

Initially there was one race meeting a year, usually at Chinese New Year, and this quickly became the year's most important social event. Today, the horseracing season last from September to June and meetings are usually held on Wednesday evenings, Saturday or Sunday afternoons and on certain public holidays.

Night racing started in 1973, and in the same year the Government authorized the Club to set up off-course betting (OCB) centres to help combat illegal bookmaking. The following year a telephone betting service was started. Today, there are 119 Off-course Betting Branches. These also function as ticket outlets for the Mark Six Lottery - another legal betting form of gambling operated by the Jockey Club.

Hong Kong International Races is one of the most celebrated racing occasions in the world, drawing contenders from far and wide. Already the third richest day's racing in the world, the HKIR received the added fillip in June 2002 of having the Hong Kong Sprint elevated to join the other three races in International Group One, and Hong Kong now hosts one of the few multiple Group One race days in the world. The HKIR is held in December every year.

The Audemars Piguet QE II Cup held in March is included in the World Series Racing Championship, making Hong Kong the only jurisdiction, apart from the United States, to host more than one leg of the Series.

The first Hong Kong Derby was run in 1878 at Happy Valley. The Hong Kong Derby is unique compared with other racing jurisdictions. The Derby almost everywhere else is contested by three-year-olds over a distance of 2400m. In Hong Kong it is for four-year-old horses over 2000m. The reason for the age difference is due to Hong Kong's position as a confluence for racehorses bred in

the Northern and Southern Hemispheres and the need to bring their relative maturity into line. Three-year-old imports also need sufficient time to acclimatize to life in Hong Kong

The Hong Kong Jockey Club uses its net proceeds to help community and charitable projects and is the major source of funding for such undertakings. Over HK\$1 billion was allocated every year by the Charities Trust to 147 charitable organizations and community projects for building schools, clinics and other public institutions. It also financed big public projects such as Ocean Park, the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts, the University of Science and Technology, and Hong Kong Park. Actually, in recognition of its contributions to Hong Kong society, the Club was granted a Royal prefix in 1960. However, the Club has been renamed HONG KONG JOCKEY CLUB in July 1996 due to the return of the sovereignty to China on 1 July 1997.

Hong Kong Racing Museum

The museum opened in October 1996. It locates in the Happy Valley Race Court and it is 7000 square feet in size with a striking view of the race court. The museum dedicates in horse and horsing racing history of Hong Kong, with eight galleries, a showcase cinema, and a souvenir shop.

Admission is free.

Mondays to Sundays 12:00 noon - 7:00pm

Night Race meetings 12:00 noon - 9:00pm

Sikh Temple

The Sikhs came to Hong Kong from the Punjab, in North India, as part of the British Armed Forces in the 19th century. Because of their generally strong physique, they also formed a large segment of the Hong Kong Police Force before World War II.

Today, there are about 8,000 Sikhs in Hong Kong; members of the community are engaged in a variety of occupations. The centre of their religious and cultural activities is the Sikh Temple. A special feature of the temple, which was established in 1901, is the provision of free meals and short-term accommodation for overseas visitors of any faith.

Religious services, which include hymn-singing, readings from the Guru Granth (the Sikh Holy Book) and sermons by the priest, are held every Sunday morning. The temple houses a library containing a selection of books on the Sikh religion and culture, and runs a 'Starters' school for Indian children aged between four and six to prepare them for English primary schools in Hong Kong.

Customs

Armchair Graves

There are many "Omega" graves on Hong Kong hillsides - especially in the New Territories - so called because their shape resembles the Greek letter of the same name. Sometimes they are also known as "armchair" or "horseshoe" graves. All of these graves are sited according to *fung shui* - a system of partly scientific, partly superstitious beliefs whereby the Chinese attempt to live in harmony with nature, both during life and in death.

A *fung shui* geomancer is usually consulted as to the best location to place a grave, which is not necessarily near the village in which the deceased person lived. The location is very important, and finding the best site can cost a family quite a lot of money. Amongst other things it is believed the site of the grave will influence the fortunes of the deceased's descendants in generations to come. Usually the best *fung shui* orientation for a grave is against a mountainside looking toward the sea. If this is not available the grave may be set against a mountain facing the deceased's village.

At certain times of the year graves are visited by the descendents. In the spring, on Ching Ming (which falls in April), and in the autumn, on Chung Yeung (usually in October), the family of the deceased will pay homage at the grave.

The descendants will also bring such offerings as a selection of poultry – perhaps chicken, duck or goose – as well as some pork, oranges, and incense sticks (also known as "joss" sticks). They will squat beside the grave to pray and offer these items to the deceased's spirit, then stand and bow three times.

Indigenous villagers still retain the right to be buried in hillside graves, but due to the shortage of land in Hong Kong the government now encourages cremation.

Dim Dang

Dim Dang (點燈, lighting a lamp) is an age-old custom practised among traditional clans in the New Territories when baby boy is born. In Cantonese, the pronunciation of "baby boy" (Ding, 丁) is similar to the one for "lamp" (Dang, 燈).

For this ceremony, the parents of a boy born during the past year light a lantern and hang it on a crossbeam in the family's ancestral hall, often in an old walled village (圍村). The boy's name is written on the bottom of the lantern while a lot of auspicious words and statements cover the surface. The lantern remains there from the 1st day to the 15th day of the 1st Chinese lunar month.

On the evening of the 15th day, the family invites fellow clansmen to a feast, which in certain circumstances is paid for by the clan's capital fund. Called "Yam Ding Dzau" (飲丁酒, drink to celebrate the birth of a baby boy), the feast usually comprises dishes in the style of "Poon Tsoi" (盆菜, a big got of mixed food) or nine big separate dishes of food. After the feast, the family gets the lantern down from the crossbeam and takes it home. The baby boy is then recognized by the clan as a member, and is granted the rights to inherit property from his forefather.

Fung Shui in Hong Kong

Fung shui literally means "wind" and "water" but the body of knowledge known as fung shui is a combination of Chinese religion and superstition which arose from a reverence for nature. Essentially, fung shui is used to configure those things built by humans - such as cities, houses, even graves – so that they are in harmony with nature.

In fung shui the most important rooms in a house are the living room, kitchen and master bedroom. The position of these rooms in relation to the front door will determine the harmony of the whole house.

Also in fung shui, the harmony of a shop or business can be maximised by having the entrance on the corner of an intersection.

When you are in Hong Kong, look out for its very special lions. They represent thousand-year-old traditional beliefs. You will find a pair of them crouched outside the headquarters of the Hongkong Shanghai Banking Corporation. One of the modern world's most expensive buildings, this high-tech high-rise is a hive of dramatic and tradition-challenging architectural and engineering concepts.

Nevertheless, the well being of the bank's pair of old bronze lions was a top priority. They had been rescued from a scrap yard in Japan at the end of WW2, where they had been shipped by the Japanese Occupation forces to be melted down for ammunition. If you look closely you will see the shrapnel scars they still bear.

Hong Kong breathed easier once the bank's guardian statues had been relocated on the pavement alongside the new bank's open-plan ground-floor entrance. You may also have noticed the paving of the bank's ground floor; it a combination of flat and slightly ramped surfaces. One theory is that the floor was so configured to represent the regular wave pattern of a calm sea.

To many of the bank's customers, the security of closed-circuit television, human guards, computer password codes and black light machines was not enough. The bronze lions were the real security -- protecting the bank's entrance from water-borne dangers in Hong Kong harbour. Once they were back on duty, all would be well.

Consequently, the bank ensured that a respected expert advise exactly when and where to place the lions in the most auspicious positions. This expert was a geomancer, a master of the ancient metaphysical science of fung shui.

You will find another pair of lions – this time carved of granite - guarding the main doors of the "old" Bank of China immediately to the east of the Hongkong Shanghai Bank headquarters.

The translation of its name -- "wind-water" -- provides a clue to fung shui's meaning. Believers set out to balance the elements of Nature, and the spirit of the yin (female and passive) and the yang (male and active) forces that control the natural world. Through balance comes a harmonious environment.

Few Hong Kong Chinese people will flout fung shui ideas, and many non-Chinese have learned to pay more than lip service to them. Western architects, town planners, interior decorators and highway engineers often find that a fung shui master's involvement in a project does more than give local people peace of mind. It gives the Westerners good reasons for adjusting their own ideas.

To benefit from good fung shui, your ideal home should face in the right direction -- usually southwards, overlooking untroubled water. It will have a gently-sloped hillside behind it and smooth-flowing water running down the hill away from it. Your doors must not open directly to the outside world -- otherwise evil spirits could easily enter or your good luck could flow away. For similar reasons, beds and sofas cannot face doorways. "Lucky" corners of rooms, especially "money corners", must also be guarded and decorated with the right sort of "money tree". Certain big-leaved indoor plants will thus help you accumulate money and good luck in handsome batches. Choose luck-bringing plants with many small leaves and you will gain frequent little blessings. Woe betide your fortune and health if you neglect the plants!

How can you ever hope to be lucky if your home has no sea view and you therefore cannot see your good fortune floating on calm seas? Bringing the water indoors solves the problem. You must have an aquarium in an auspicious spot. The fish tank's water must circulate, because bubbling aeration is better for the fish and for your fung shui. It signifies that Nature is regularly replenishing your good luck and financial fortune. That is why the ideal Chinese home has the natural beauty of a stream flowing past it into a lake or the sea. After all, who would want an aquarium or pool of stagnant water that would evaporate or turn foul?

The fish in the tank must be special too -- the right sort of goldfish or carp in the right numbers and with the appropriate colours -- while the lighting which illuminates them, and your money trees, must be at the right angle.

When you note that many modern Hong Kong apartments also have ancestral altars and little joss stick-smoked shrines for the kitchen and earth gods, you may wonder whether appeals for supernatural assistance are overdone. A traditional family, however, believes that one can never have enough supernatural "insurance." Oddly, to Western minds, that traditional family will rarely think of paying premiums on a normal Western-style insurance policy: if you've pleased the gods, Nature and your ancestors, why give away money to strangers?!

Any visitor who travels in Hong Kong's rural New Territories can see verdant signs of fung shui beliefs. Behind most old village clusters of farmers' cottages, is a green and dense wood. This is a fung shui grove and truly a magic plantation.

Whenever a rural home or family settlement was established in Hong Kong, special trees were planted on the slopes behind it. Though the villagers might deforest the surrounding countryside for firewood or lumber, their magic grove would never be violated.

Naturally, they admired its beauty, partly because they had created it, and they welcomed its fruit, berries and medicinal bark and leaves. Above all else though, it was good fung shui and the factors explaining why it would always be lucky were obvious. The grove protected the villagers' homes from wintry northern winds and rains. Its leaves cleansed their air and cooled them in the summer, while crucial for farming communities, the trees helped prevent soil erosion. Nature had indeed been helped to achieve a harmonious balance that benefitted humans and Nature itself.

In modern downtown Hong Kong, visitors may not see magic groves, except in Leisure and Cultural Services Department parklands, but they will see evidence of other uses of fung shui. Change your foreign currency at a Hang Seng Bank branch and it is likely you will find yourself walking through diagonally-aligned doors that never face directly onto the street.

Why? Well, fortunately, evil spirits are not too intelligent. They can move only in straight lines, which is why you will find many other offices compelling you to turn sideways when you enter them. Others trick the spirits and guard their good fortune by erecting "baffle" walls or partitions in front of their entrances. A pragmatic Westerner might imagine that such building designs are just meant to keep out draughts and inclement weather. In part they are; the fung shui angle is a traditional way of ensuring that no generation ever ignores such basic common sense.

The basis of fung shui is metaphysical and rooted in ancient Chinese folk culture. In the 12th Century AD, scholars systematized ancient classical writings on the subject, establishing meticulous mathematical principles and formulae through which the laws of life forces could be divined. A geomancer takes many years to learn how to interpret the formulae, which he or she "reads" from a geomantic compass or from an astrolabe. The compass is a wood or clay disc coated with lacquer and inscribed with intricate concentric circles and Chinese characters.

The magnetic compass in the centre of the disc is the key to divination and a geomancer is akin to a spiritual surveyor. The stars come into his work, naturally a detailed knowledge of astrology, as well as numerology, is essential. Different schools of fung shui emphasize different aspects. For example

the famous school of Kiangsi, which stressed the importance of landscape features and their resemblance to animate and inanimate objects, was known as the School of Forms.

Villagers in the New Territories still believe that each hill is a dragon at rest. Disturb him and bad luck will strike. To avoid waking a vengeful dragon, road-builders of old went around him. A tunnel was unthinkable, as it would damage the dragon's spine. When Hong Kong needed modern highways, old ideas had to be overcome. Being pragmatic folk, villagers faced with a dragon's wrath and the threat of bad fung shui agreed to accept monetary compensation or relocation to new housing.

The British colonial authorities, whose administration of Hong Kong was based on a tolerance of ancient customs, paid out a fortune over the years to insure that highways and New Towns, reservoirs and tunnels were built in keeping with traditional beliefs. Locally respected geomancers were regarded as "project consultants". At times when bad luck did hamper a project, construction workers would down tools until a Taoist priest put the dragon back into a restful sleep or exorcised bad spirits. Noxious vapours wreak havoc on Nature's balance and many Hong Kong homeowners would never live in sight of a graveyard, temple or church. Certain parts of Hong Kong are notoriously less expensive than others for those reasons. Houses built on sites known to have been mass graves for plague victims may seem like bargains in the property pages of newspapers: buy one and try to sell it, and you will soon be aware of the enduring belief in fung shui!

Any employer seeking good labour relations does not ignore fung shui. Radio Television Hong Kong was no exception. When its employees felt that bad fung shui had struck Broadcasting House because it was believed wartime graves lay beneath its foundations, rather than relocate the whole building, it was agreed to close its front door permanently, thus keeping out the evil spirits. Everybody had to use the back door -- even the Director of Broadcasting.

Similarly, householders on buildings' lower floors dread the thought of a road ramp or flyover appearing outside their windows, or even across the road from their building. The School of Forms sees the elevated road as a knife cutting across a building's life force and fung shui masters will be busy telling anxious householders how to build baffles or take spiritual precautions. An old-time favourite short-cut to good luck is to hang octagonal-shaped "bat gua" mirrors outside one's home to deflect the evil spirits.

Threatened with bad fung shui, many Hong Kong families will redress the spiritual imbalance by leading "better" lives through sending anonymous donations to charities, becoming vegetarians or pursuing high ideals. Then good luck will not desert them; it could come to them more strongly than it would to less-deserving persons in the same position.

Prevention is naturally better than cure, so Hong Kong people will avoid living or working in places with bad fung shui. Just as a Westerner may respond to "vibes" in the air, Hong Kong's Chinese people will sense what is bad fung shui and have similar negative reactions. If an important job or business deal is at stake, he or she will call in a geomancer or a knowledgeable relative or friend to try and deflect the evil.

In the West few need a surveyor to tell them that houses should never be "built on sand". In Hong Kong, traditionalists do not need a geomancer to advise them that houses should never be built at the foot of a hill. It is the "tail of a dragon" and even a sleeping dragon may twitch his tail! Modern geotechnical experts have no trouble accepting such ancient advice and old maps of Hong Kong illustrate the uncanny accuracy of such fung shui teachings -- the territory's fault lines were left well alone.

The same applies to many valleys, even in an age when the evil-bringing spirit of mosquitoes was not known. In the early years of the colony, British troops, Western traders and immigrant Chinese workers threw caution to the wind and settled in a malaria-infested open area ironically dubbed Happy Valley. There were probably no geomancers around then. Hundreds of Valley-dwellers fell sick and died, as the many cemeteries in Happy Valley's prove.

In any land of climatic extremes, respect for Nature's forces dominates the local folk culture. When combined as it is in Hong Kong with a belief that a person's fate can be changed, the principles of fung shui do not set out to "control" the elements. They endeavour to help a person better cope with invisible, supernatural life forces by understanding them. Like bamboo, a person can bend with the wind or float with the tide. If neither is possible, then one had better be sure that negative life forces will pass by one's family.

As you walk around Hong Kong, look at the bank entrances and home sites. The chances are that you will feel much more comfortable going through a maze-like bank entrance that would be avoided by robbers seeking a quick getaway. And it is a sure bet you'll admire hillside homes with ocean views but sheltered from the summer sun and winter cold.

Giant Bowl Feast "Pun Choi"

This is a famous traditional way of preparing and serving food at rural community banquets in southern China. Different kinds of delicious cooked foods, usually eight separate dishes of poultry, sea food and vegetables, are layered, one above the other, in a deep basin. Each "giant bowl" is then served to tables of eight to ten people gathered inside the ancestral hall or in the open communal area of a traditional village. The diners are free to choose the kinds of food they like best directly from the bowl. For the rural community, a "Pun Choi" banquet not only enhances the festive atmosphere, but also adds a sense of coziness and cohesion between the relatives and friends taking part. A great advantage of "Pun Choi" is that food can be prepared at home and then easily carried to the banquet venue, which usually has no cooking facilities.

There are three types of "Pun Choi" feast. For a *generous* banquet, two giant bowls and four petit plates are served. The four plates include deep fried eel or oysters, mushrooms and abalone in soup, fish balls and chicken. Then turnip, bean curd skin, fried bean curd puffs, pork, crispy pork skin, dried squid, dried oysters and prawns are layered and served in the two giant bowls. For a *formal* banquet, the two giant bowls have layers of prawns, oysters, preserved dried eel, dried squid, chicken, pork, pork skin and turnip, but not the four petit plates. A *normal* banquet will have just one giant bowl containing the same eight dishes served at a formal banquet.

The most famous "Pun Choi" is in the Yuen Long District in the New Territories. Members of the local clans, no matter where they live - perhaps they have moved over to Hong Kong Island, for example - will come back to their ancestral villages to take part in these celebration banquets.

Marriage Ceremonies

Despite the adoption - and adaptation - of certain features of Western marriages, modern-day Chinese marriages in Hong Kong still follow many venerable traditions.

For a really traditional marriage, a go-between presents a gift from the would-be bridegroom's family to the family of the prospective bride. If the gift is accepted, serious discussions on a possible betrothal take place and an astrologer casts both parties' horoscopes to check for compatibility. If for any reason one family is not satisfied with the other, excuses may be made after comparing the horoscopes. But if there are no objections a dowry for the bride is negotiated, with much of the dowry made up of the expenditure on a wedding feast. Then an auspicious wedding date is chosen with the help of an astrologer or soothsayer.

Before and at the wedding, the bride and groom *kow tow* or bow to their grandparents and parents, in that order, after these have presented them with *laissee* (red packets containing lucky money), which symbolise a bright future and everlasting happiness. The red packets are just like those distributed during Chinese New Year by the senior members of a family to their children and unmarried relatives. Visitors to Hong Kong will be able to recognize wedding parties. Cars are bedecked with bows of coloured ribbon and the bride is ornately dressed.

While strolling along the streets in Wanchai, Western and Causeway Bay on Hong Kong Island or Shanghai Street in Kowloon, one can often spot traditional wedding shops. Here one may buy exquisitely embroidered red or silver traditional bridal outfits, as well as pink or red sheets, pillows and coverlets with which to set up housekeeping.

Numbers

Every society has lucky numbers but the Cantonese almost live by them. Virtually every number has a special meaning derived from the word association its sound creates. Such homonym word plays are inevitable in a dialect that has relatively few different-sounding syllables, but up to seven tone levels to distinguish each of the many meanings a single syllable may represent. Thus the number 3 (*saam*) sounds like "life" (*sang*); the much-loved number 8 (*bat*) represents "prosperity" (*fat*), while 9 (*gau*) is "longevity" or "eternity" (also *gau*).

Lucky or auspicious numbers may be combined. For instance 162 stands for "easy all the way"; 163 stands for "live (or be born) all the way" and 168 stands for "prosperity all the way". Many other combinations are possible. The least-favoured number is 4 (*sei*), which sounds just like the word for "death".

Pragmatism, as usual, means more than numbers. There are four starting positions at both of Hong Kong's high-tech racetracks; and numerals 4 (death), 14 (sure to die) and 24 (easy to die) have not been deleted from the 47 numbers one may select in the Jockey Club's twice-weekly multi-million-dollar Mark Six lottery. In one way the Cantonese are less superstitious than Westerners - 4th and 14th floors in Hong Kong's buildings seldom disappear as do 13th floors in the West.

It is said, though, that some architects and property developers deliberately confuse evil spirits by slipping a mezzanine floor into a building. (It is also claimed this is done to confuse tenants as well.) Yet, whenever possible, fate is not tempted: Hong Kong's leading television broadcasting company – a leading symbol of Hong Kong's technological advancement and sophistication - never really celebrated its 14th birthday. One year after it celebrated its 13th birthday it welcomed the coming of its 15th year of market leadership!

The importance of numbers in Hong Kong's Shanghainese community is immediately evident in old-fashioned urban areas: a visitor can see many shops and restaurants that include numbers in their name signs. The sound of the numbers conveys a message to potential customers.

The Hong Kong Government exploits superstition about numbers for a good cause when it auctions lucky-number car registration plates, raising millions of dollars for charity. One British cigarette-manufacturing company long held a major market share in the region because of its "555" brand name. Even telephone and fax numbers are "lucky" and subscribers are delighted if the number they have been arbitrarily assigned by the telephone company includes at least one auspicious 8.

The number 8 is particularly valued by the Cantonese, and the superstitious nature of Hong Kong society has even been accepted by modern mainland China. Although the central government of the People's Republic of China disapproves of superstitions, it was willing to arrange for its new Bank of China Hong Kong headquarters to have a formal topping-out ceremony on a very auspicious day – 8/8/1988. This rare and rich combination of 8s, albeit according to the Western calendar, was assumed by Hong Kong people to presage extraordinary good luck.

Even international hotel groups adjust their pricing policy to suit Hong Kong's beliefs; HK\$88 set menus are frequently found in hotels and restaurants.

Nine Bowls Feast

The Nine Bowls Feast is a traditional type of banquet held in the walled villages of the New Territories. They are usually held to mark special occasions and important celebrations. The Feast is so called because the menu features nine courses - each served in one of nine big bowls - shared by a table of eight persons. There are floral patterns printed on the bowls, and many restaurant owners have begun collecting these bowls to ensure the Nine Bowls Feast retains its original style.

The ingredients of the Nine Bowls Feast were generally what the farmers had grown themselves. One thing in common was that there would be no beef, as farmers would never want to slaughter the buffalo that had been working so hard for them in the fields. For villages closer to the sea or a river, fresh fish or marine products will be served. For those villages in mountain areas, dried seafood products were commonly used. Another interesting way of serving this feast was to place all nine bowls on the table at once instead of serving one course after another.

The nine courses that are commonly served in most village Bowl Feasts in the Guangdong coastal area are:

Roast Pig

Whole roast pig is usually first offered to gods or ancestors during ceremonies. The pig is chopped into bite-size pieces and is always the first course.

Chicken

Having a dish of chicken is considered to be a treat in the villages, as the poultry raised is usually intended for sale. There were many ways of preparing the chicken; the most traditional way was to cook it with soy sauce and brown sugar. In the old days villagers fermented their own soy sauce from soya beans. The first brewing was usually reserved for cooking or seasoning on special occasions.

Duck

Another kind of poultry which may be prepared in different ways - braised or roasted. Many restaurant- roasted ducks are served as they are more tasty.

Shrimp

Coastal villages use marine shrimp/prawns while the inland villages use shrimp bred in their fish ponds. The seasonings for this dish are fresh ginger, black beans, spring onions and orange peel. Because shrimp are bred in water it belongs to the "cooling" food elements, while a spice like ginger is considered "heating" and will balance the *yin* and *yang* of the dish.

Fish Balls

It is common to blend in some *Fat Choi* ("black hair fungus") with the fish when making fish balls. This makes the balls look more attractive and colourful. This course will be cooked with vegetables in a soup stock that can be used as the soup course in a banquet menu.

Dried Eels with Radish

This dish is also cooked by stewing, as it takes a long time for dried eels to soften. The large white Oriental radish is a good "absorbent" for the tasty sauce coming from the stewing of the eels.

Sweet and Sour Pork

This is the only dish with a slightly sour taste. Traditionally, the villagers prepared this dish using spareribs. In many restaurants today, only lean meat is used.

Pig Skin with Dried Squid

The villagers waste nothing, and make good use of every part of the animal. The pig skin was also a very good 'absorber' of the tasty squid after hours of stewing with oyster sauce, ginger, garlic and spring onions.

Dried Mushrooms in Oyster Sauce

This quasi-vegetarian dish freshens up the appetite. It is cooked by braising dried mushrooms with oyster sauce and peanut oil until the mushrooms are soft and tender.

Festivals

Buddha Festival

The Buddha Festival celebrates the birthday of Buddha. The founder of Buddhism was Sakyamuni (釋迦牟尼). He was born on the 8th day of the 4th month of the lunar year in 6 BC in a palace in Nepal, near the Indian border. Although he was a prince with great wealth and material comfort, he was upset when he saw his people suffering from aging, illness and death.

Seeking the answer to ultimate salvation and happiness, Siddhartha left his palace and went wandering for six years. After meditating for a long time beneath a linden tree, he finally achieved enlightenment. Then, he went back to his country to preach. According to the doctrines of Buddhism, man's desire for material things is the main cause of sufferings. The three other "evil characteristics" are anger, greed and obsession. Buddhist temples throughout Hong Kong celebrate and hold rituals during the Buddha Festival. During the ceremony, the disciples will pour water on the Buddha statue to signify the ritual of bathing the Buddha. In some countries where Buddhism is the official religion, government officials are involved in certain ceremonies.

Dragon Boat Festival - International Races

The Shing Mun River is the water artery of the New Town of Sha Tin, flowing north-east through town into Tolo Harbour. The river has also been the venue of the annual International Races of the Dragon Boat Festival since 1996. The first international race was held in 1976 in the bay at Shau Kei Wan on Hong Kong Island.

The rowing competition combines an exhilarating, fast-paced sporting event with an ancient tradition. The festival usually falls between May and July. A dragon boat is a long-keeled "canoe" paddled by 30 or more rowers, with a drummer and a steersman at the ends of the boat.

Some 2,000 years ago a Chinese national hero, Qu Yuan, drowned himself in China's Mi Lo River in Hunan Province to protest the corrupt government. Legend says that villagers raced their boats towards him in a vain attempt to save his life, slapping the water with their paddles, beating drums and throwing rice dumplings wrapped in bamboo leaves into the river to stop fish from nibbling his body. This gave rise to the Tuen Ng (Dragon Boat) Festival and the custom of rowing these unique boats. The sport has become popular internationally and is a spectacular test of skill and strength.

In addition to the Tuen Ng Festival, rowing activities take place all year round along the Shing Mun River. Just next to the Sha Tin Racecourse, there is a water sports centre where paddlers are able to enjoy customised rowing holidays.

Festivals in Hong Kong

One distinct advantage of being a city where East meets West is that Hong Kong has two sets of festivals and holidays -- one from the Western solar calendar and the other from the Chinese lunar calendar. So we celebrate both Christmas and the Chinese Lunar New Year; Easter as well as Buddha's birthday.

The Chinese traditionally follow the lunar calendar, which helps predict the tides and determines planting schedules for agriculture. It is more complicated than the solar calendar and requires more adjustments to keep it accurate. For example, an additional *month* occurs during leap years to make up for the uneven number of days in non-leap years.

The lunar calendar marks the passing of the four seasons. The spring equinox kicks off the season of vitality; the winter solstice is more popular, as farmers can enjoy a break from a year of hard work.

The solstice used to be celebrated with a great feast, and this custom is still practised by many Chinese families.

In addition, Chinese festivals also celebrate legends and historical events such as the Mid-Autumn and Dragon Boat Festivals.

The Chinese Lunar New Year is the most important holiday on the calendar. The actual date varies according to lunar cycles. The city glows with colourful light displays illuminating the facades of buildings. There is a festive air, usually a fireworks display over Victoria Harbour, a waterfront parade and all-night flower markets. It is a true Chinese family celebration, as everyone buys new clothes, eats traditional sweets and adults give children lucky red packets containing money (known as *lai see*.)

The Spring Lantern Festival, held on the 15th day of the first month of the Chinese lunar calendar, marks the end of Chinese Lunar New Year celebrations and is often referred to as “Chinese Valentine's Day” because markets selling lanterns were a favourite rendezvous for young couples.

The tiny island of Cheung Chau hosts the world's only "**Bun Festival**", a Taoist religious event that attracts throngs of visitors. Bamboo poles are lashed together into enormous conical towers, which are then covered with many hundreds of sweet buns. A festive procession with children in traditional costumes swaying above the crowds is also part of the eight-day celebration.

In June when the weather turns humid and hot, we celebrate the **Dragon Boat (or Tuen Ng) Festival**. According to Chinese legend, it is in honour of Qu Yuan, a hero who drowned himself 2,300 years ago to protest government corruption. This is a traditional celebration which is now combined with a fast-paced international sporting event, making the festival one of our most exciting spectacles. Local teams and crews from around the world race long, slender canoe-like boats to the sound of on-board drums. The beating of drums and the furious paddling were supposed to scare hungry fish from nibbling on Qu Yuan's body.

The colourful **Mid-Autumn Festival**, usually in September, honours the harvest moon and commemorates the spirit of 14th-century rebels. Legend says the rebels spread the call of revolt by hiding secret messages in cakes to escape detection. Today during the festival people contemplate the new moon, and eat special “moon cakes” (made of ground lotus seeds, sesame seeds and preserved duck's egg yolk). Families take colourful lanterns shaped like animals, aeroplanes, etc. to Victoria Park, The Peak and the beaches around Hong Kong, where they often have an evening picnic.

Locals also celebrate Western events and festivals such as Christmas and New Year, as well as such arts festivals as the Hong Kong Arts Festival and its accompanying City Festival (formerly known as the Fringe Festival), the Hong Kong International Film Festival and the Festival of Asian Arts.

Hong Kong's Industry

In the 1960s Hong Kong industry was still mainly focussed on re-exports. Later it began to develop tertiary production – designing its own products and manufacturing them to near-completion. Today, although the emphasis is on Hong Kong as a services center for South East Asia, the territory still retains a strong production base in tertiary and other specific types of production – especially in the areas of textiles and clothing, its largest industries.

Indeed, textiles and clothing are Hong Kong's main foreign-exchange earners, accounting for some 39% of domestic exports by value, and employing 35% of the manufacturing workforce.

Hong Kong has a reputation for free enterprise and trade, for low taxes, an industrious workforce and excellent communications, not to mention having one of the world's finest natural harbours.

From its very earliest days, the Hong Kong Government has always been committed to a *laissez-faire* policy, regarding it as the best way to encourage trade and commerce.

The power behind Hong Kong is the men and women who make up its workforce. Wages are calculated either by time - hourly, daily or monthly - or on a piece-rate basis. Many employees enjoy a year-end bonus of at least one month's pay. This is usually paid at Chinese New Year and can be most welcome for paying income taxes, which fall due at around that time.

The Employment Ordinance provides for benefits and entitlements for employees, including statutory holidays, annual leave, rest days, maternity leave, sickness allowance, severance pay and long service pay. Some employers provide their employees with such fringe benefits as subsidized meals, good-attendance bonuses, free or subsidized medical treatment, and transport to and from work.

Children under 15 are required to complete the nine-year free education system, and are therefore prohibited from all industrial employment until they reach that age.

Fish Farming

The land area devoted to fishponds has gradually declined because of the increasing urbanization of the New Territories. Fish ponds in use total 1,130 hectares and are located mainly in the north-western New Territories. The majority of fish farms are engaged in carp polyculture (bighead carp, silver carp, common carp and grass carp) in combination with tilapia or grey mullet. Other cultured species include jade perch, seabreams and spotted scat. In 2012, pond fish culture yielded some 2,306 tonnes of fish, or 3 per cent of local freshwater fish consumption. Marine fish culture has developed considerably in the past decade. Young fish captured from their natural environment, as well as imported fish fingerlings, are reared in cages suspended from rafts in sheltered bays throughout Hong Kong.

Fisheries Industries

Fresh fish is one of Hong Kong's most important primary products. In 2012, fish caught and fish reared in ponds and floating cages at sea amounted to about 159,000 tonnes with a value of \$2.5 billion.

Hong Kong's fishing fleet consists of some 3,990 vessels, manned by about 8,800 local fishermen and some 4,600 Mainland deckhands. The predominant fishing method is trawling, which accounted for 88 per cent of fish caught, weighing about 136,000 tonnes. Other methods include lining, gill netting and purse-seining. The total catch in 2012 weighed 155,230 tonnes and had an estimated wholesale value of \$2.32 billion. The industry provided some 57,000 tonnes of fish for local consumption during the year.

Manufacturing Industries

Manufacturing industries first developed on a large scale in Hong Kong in the 1950s and are characterized by small-scale firms, mostly operating from premises in multi-storey buildings, and manufacturing light consumer goods for export.

Hong Kong's products go to almost every part of the world. Since the 1950s the United States has been the largest market for Hong Kong. But due to China's adoption, in 1979, of an open-door economic policy, economic links between Hong Kong and China have rapidly increased. Today, China is one of Hong Kong's largest customers.

For many years, manufacturing was Hong Kong's most important economic sector, but it lost its dominant position in the 1980s. During those years manufacturers started to shift labour-intensive jobs to mainland China to take advantage of lower land and labour costs. This has enabled them to compete with other developing countries where operating costs are also generally lower.

Standing out from various other types of production, the textile and clothing industry is Hong Kong's major foreign-exchange earner. Together this field produces some 40 percent of all domestic exports (by value) and employs 32 per cent of our total industrial workforce. Products range from simple accessories to expensive, high-quality fashion wear.

People in Hong Kong

Boat People

The term "boat people" is usually understood by visitors to Hong Kong to refer to political refugees – most often from Viet Nam – who have arrived here in small boats to seek asylum. But for local people the term refers to the indigenous peoples who live on their fishing boats - as they have for centuries – anchored in various harbours around the region.

As of 1st July 1999 this marine population accounted for 0.2% of the total population of Hong Kong, or around 0.01 million. The Hong Kong fishing fleet comprises some 4,800 vessels; 3,500 of them are motorized and manned by more than 21,600 fishermen. Their vessels are spread throughout 7 typhoon shelters and Aberdeen harbour. These fisherfolk have a unique way of life and generally belong to the Tanka or Hoklo ethnic groups..

Tanka has been translated as "egg family" and folk etymology has it that the Tanka used to pay their taxes with eggs instead of money, an explanation the Tankas themselves refute. It is believed the

Tankas made their homes in the South China coastal region long before the Cantonese moved into the area, and that they may well be descended from the Yueh tribe, who were probably also the ancestors of the modern Vietnamese. Another theory is that the Tankas are indigenous to the Pearl River Delta. Tankas dislike this name, given to them by the Cantonese, and usually refer to themselves as Sui Sheung Yan or "water folk".

The Hoklos came from the north of Guangdong Province around Swatow, and from the coastal province of Fukien. Established Hoklo communities live on Cheung Chau and Peng Chau islands.

Tankas and Hoklos can be distinguished by their hats. The Hoklo hats look rather like a Spanish peasant's hat, while those worn by Tankas have a round brim with a crown. Their boats are also different; the Hoklo craft lies lower in the water and has a higher stern.

The fisherfolk are a self-contained community and it is said that some never set foot on dry land. At one time they were forbidden to settle ashore, to marry land dwellers or to sit for the Imperial Civil Service Examinations. Today education is provided for the children of fishermen at four schools run by the Fish Marketing Organization.

The floating population is shrinking for many reasons. Due to the continuous modernization of the fishing fleet, many non-productive family members have moved into apartments on land. Often the younger generation prefers a more stable job on land rather than the career of their ancestors. And some fishermen have changed professions to avoid disputes over territorial waters.

The fishing industry supplies more than 72% of the seafood & 11% of the pond fish consumed in Hong Kong. About a quarter of the fleet operates out of Aberdeen - the smaller boats on coastal waters in and around Hong Kong, the larger ones on waters four or five days' sailing time away. Some boats are allowed to fish in mainland China's inshore waters on condition that they trade a percentage of their catch for Chinese goods. Most boats work year-round, apart from Chinese New Year, when nearly all of Hong Kong shuts down.

Many of the larger fishing boats have sophisticated navigation and communication equipment, such as echo sounders, radar-telephones and satellite-navigation systems.

Expatriates

Expatriates live throughout Hong Kong and work at all levels. Americans, Britons, Indians, Japanese, Thais and Filipinos predominate, and there are some 180,000 of the latter, mostly working as domestic helpers. The average contract of a Filipina "amah" domestic helper is two years, and includes free return air travel, accommodation, board and a monthly salary. Many Filipinos earn more in Hong Kong than they could in the Philippines and most remit money home to their families.

Many expatriate professionals live in the Repulse Bay area. They tend to be senior executives on one-to-four-year contracts with fringe benefits including paid passage, home leave, subsidized housing and free medical care.

Five Great Clans

In the New Territories, it is quite possible to find a village in which all inhabitants have the same surname. These villagers might belong to the same clan. There are five clans which, some argue, once dominated the New Territories.

The Tangs were here first and maintained their Imperial connections until the end of the last century. Legends identify the clan's founding father as Tang Foo, an imperial magistrate who decided to retire in Hong Kong rather than in the troubled northern area of the Guangdong Province. So at the end of the 11th century, he made his home in Kam Tin.

The Tang clan has at least five separate walled villages in the area. They stand as proud relics of Hong Kong's longest-established clan of Cantonese settlers.

The four other immigrant clans who also acquired land in what is now Hong Kong were the **Man, Hau, Pang and Liu** clans. Some of them also claimed connections with the Imperial Court.

The **Man** clan, for instance, proudly displays two honorific boards recording the accolades the Qing Dynasty Emperor Guangxu gave to Man Chung-luen and his father in the 19th century. The boards can be viewed in the famous Tai Fu Tai (meaning "The Official's Residence,") the rural mansion which Man Chung-luen built in 1865.

Tai Fu Tai stands in the Man clan's village of San Tin in the northwest corner of the New Territories. Finely restored, it is a handsomely proportioned gentlemen-scholar's home, combining traditional Chinese architecture with 19th century Western decorative influences.

The **Hau** clan arrived soon after the Tangs - between the 11th and 15th centuries - and settled near what is present day Sheung Shui. The **Pang** clan is thought to have arrived from central Jiangsu

Province and settled around Fanling during the Sung Dynasty. They were followed by the **Liu** clan in the 15th century and the Man clan a century later.

Some of these properties have been carefully restored and are open to the public. For example, the Liu clan's ancestral hall, Liu Man Shek Tong, built in 1751, can now be seen in its former glory.

Hakka

The Hakka - literally "guest people" - are relative newcomers to the Hong Kong region. Because the Cantonese-speaking Punti arrived starting in the 12th century, they had already taken the most fertile land, leaving the Hakka to farm poorer land in the foothills. The Hakka have their own dialect, dress and customs. Hakka women can be identified by their flat, crownless hats with a black ruffle all around the brim that acts as a sunshade and keeps away mosquitoes and flies.

It's believed the Hakka originally came from northern China, around the Yellow River Basin. They were driven southwards when their homeland was invaded in the 3rd Century. They were thought to have settled in the New Territories no earlier than the 17th Century. Many Hakka continued their migration to other parts of Southeast Asia, where communities of Hakka still flourish today.

Religion

Buddha's Birthday

Buddha's birthday - the eighth day of the fourth moon of the Chinese lunar calendar (usually in May) – has only recently become a public holiday in Hong Kong. Many Chinese consider themselves Buddhists, although not with the same devotion and dedication one might find in Thailand or Burma. In Hong Kong the religion seems to attract more women than men.

There are many Buddhist temples in Hong Kong, but in Chinese traditional religion the distinctions between Buddhism and Taoism can be blurred, with deities of both faiths honoured side by side.

The Hong Kong Buddhist Association organizes public worship services to mark Buddha's birthday, and these have attracted several hundred thousand of the faithful.

Beliefs

Fisherfolk are quite religious and on Ap Lei Chau there is an interesting temple dedicated to Hung Shing. Hung Shing is said to be able to forecast the weather. He lived more than 1,000 years ago but is still greatly venerated by the fisherfolk, even though many have turned to Tin Hau, Goddess of the Sea, in recent years.

People in the know disregard the official weather forecasts and rely on information from acquaintances among the water people. Even owners of pleasure craft fitted with the most sophisticated devices still consult their boat boys as to the weather situation before setting out. The boat people can frequently forecast a typhoon quite accurately as far ahead as a week before the official meteorologists.

Temples and Religions

If you are looking for something spiritual, the area of Fanling is a good place to visit. You will notice a building with an impressive yellow tile roof: this is the Kun Chung Buddhist Monastery. Next to it is a Taoist temple called Fung Ying Sin Koon, which means the "temple of paradise".

Although Hong Kong is a busy trading, industrial and commercial centre, it does have its spiritual side. Many people are followers of Buddhism and Taoism. Their devotion is apparent during colourful, noisy festivals and on the 1st and 15th days of each lunar month when tradition prescribes certain rituals to venerate ones ancestors..

There are some 600 Chinese temples and monasteries in Hong Kong. Half of them are Buddhist and about 200 are Taoist. The remainder is a blending of both - usually predominately Taoist, but including Buddhist beliefs and practices. Statues of the divinities of both religions are displayed on the same altar. Many worshippers regard both religions as one. Others cannot put a name to their religion and may just say that they worship their ancestors and the various gods.

It may be difficult for visitors to understand the rather loose structure of Chinese traditional beliefs, especially as what is believed can vary from family to family or person to person. For example,

Chinese women seem to be more religious than Chinese men. and many more women follow Buddhism than do men. Therefore the wife often determines the religion of the household, and she will naturally have greater influence over the religion of her children.

Worship Rituals in Chinese Temples

When a temple in Hong Kong is identified as a miao or a shi, it is usually Buddhist. When it is called a guan it is always Taoist. Not counting street altars and private altars in shops and homes, there are more than 600 Buddhist and Taoist temples in Hong Kong, including some which pre-dated the founding of the colony in 1841.

According to the beliefs of Chinese traditional religion, temples are where spirits of the deities reside, although only their earthen or wooden images are visible. Temples are also repositories for spiritual tablets - wooden plaques on which names of those ancestors whose spirits reside there are inscribed. Even though they may be recent restorations, temples are usually made of the local grey-green brick with steeply-pitched tile roofs typical of traditional Chinese architecture. Roof ridges are often adorned with glazed porcelain figures of cats, dogs and fish.

The main hall is often filled with smoke from the incense being burned as offerings to ancestors and gods.

As in most Asian religions, worship is an individual occasion rather than a group activity. There is no intermediary or any particular time; instead, people drop by throughout the day to light candles, burn incense and make brief offerings and requests. They are either asking for guidance regarding a decision, requesting favours such as the warding off illness and misfortune or showing their respect.

The simplest offering is three sticks of burning incense clasped in folded hands: it is said this offering represents one stick for heaven, one for the earth (or the underworld) and one for the human race (or oneself). Incense is traditionally offered at dawn and dusk to household guardians, and you'll see sticks smouldering in niches set in doorways. Next up on the list of offerings is wine and fruits. Anything red, gold, or orange is considered auspicious; hence the abundance of apples and oranges.

Most elaborate are the massive food offerings made three times a year: for Chinese Lunar New Year, for Ching Ming (the grave sweeping festival), and the celebration of one's local or patron deity. These offerings might include whole chickens and fish, jars of golden cooking oil, or plates of pork or vegetables. The supreme offering is a whole roast suckling pig, which is basted with a sugary glaze to attain the auspicious golden-red shade and is said to protect from sickness and misfortune.

Offerings are deposited briefly on tables in front of the altar so that the spirits may imbibe their essence, then they're carried off for consumption by the donor family.