

Hong Kong’s Magic Touch

Hong Kong’s tourism industry is at its best for the past two years. Since 2005, its “Hong Kong – Live it! Love It!” campaign, the Hong Kong Tourism Board has successfully promoted the country as a must visit destination for both business and leisure travelers. It has also capitalized on multi-destination tourism so as to develop new markets.

When is the best time to visit Hong Kong? The country has been an all-year-round destination for most tourists. From mid-September to the end of February the climate is mild, while the weather from May to mid-September is very humid and warm. However, typhoon is also greatly experienced in between May to November.

Basic Facts:

Official Name: Hong Kong Special Administrative Region or simply Hong Kong
 Abbreviation: HK
 Currency: Hong Kong Dollar (1HKD=PHP5.42 and 1USD=HKD7.79)
 Population: 6.8 million (95% are Chinese)
 Language: Cantonese (English is widely used as well)
 Type of Government: Limited Democracy

**Top Tourists Destinations:
 Victoria Peak, Repulse Bay and HK’s Theme Parks**



One of the most evident landmarks in Hong Kong is Victoria Peak. It was only in 1888 when the area was considered as the peak. There are 2 available cars that can carry up to 72 passengers and take you all the up the peak. The best time to go to Victoria Peak is in a clear day wherein you will get to enjoy the view from the afternoon until dusk and night time.

Repulse Bay is the most famous beach in Hong Kong. Its name is derived from its Chinese name meaning Shallow Water Bay. During summer, the bay is overcrowded with people. The best time to visit the bay is during the month of November.

Disneyland and Ocean Park offers world-class facilities for families who want to enjoy and to have fun. Disneyland’s main attractions are Mainstreet USA, Fantasy land, Adventure land, and Tomorrow land. There are various restaurants inside the theme park that will cater to your food cravings plus two Disney style hotels that will make your stay more memorable. As for Ocean Park, the theme park combines both adventure and education for its visitors. It has the dolphin and lion show at the Ocean Theatre for animal enthusiasts.

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Festivals

A. Chinese New Year

The most widely celebrated festival in Hong Kong, the Chinese New Year. During the celebration the streets in Hong Kong turns out to be one big street party full of people rummaging to the crowd and the markets. This event is celebrated during the first month of the lunar calendar which falls on February.

B. Mid-Autumn Festival

Also known as the Moon Festival, this is the much awaited event of most kids in Hong Kong. It's the time of the year when it is time to eat moon cakes, to play with lanterns and candles, and to watch the moon. The event itself is observed on 15th day of the 8th month based on the lunar calendar which usually falls sometime in September.

C. Dragon Boat Festival

Celebrated on the 5th day of the 5th month rooted from the lunar calendar, the Dragon Boat Festival falls on the month of June. The most popular activity during this festival is the Dragon Boat race which takes place in almost all of Hong Kong's water areas. The festival was believed to have originated when a loyal servant of the king committed suicide and jumped and drowned himself in the ocean. To save him from drowning and to be eaten by sea creatures, they created noise in the water.

To Do's in Hong Kong

- * Take the Shining Star Harbour Cruise
- * Visit the Hong Kong Museum of Arts, Space Museum and the Avenue of Arts
- * Play and learn at Ocean Park, the theme park combines education and amusement
- * Enjoy Hong Kong Disneyland with your loved ones
- * Appreciate HK's live music (jazz, blues, folk) together with good food at local restaurants
- * Shopping at the largest arcades Pacific Place, City Plaza, Times Square, Festival Walk, Harbour City/Ocean Terminal/Gateway. Local department stores are Wing On and Lane Crawford.

Gallery



Celebrating Chinese New Year in the streets of HK



Kids love the Moon Festival



The Famous Dragon Boat Race

TRIVIA

- *Hong Kong means fragrant harbour
- *Kowloon, one of the country's mainland, means Nine Dragons
- *The numbers 2, 3, 6, 8 and 9 are Chinese's lucky numbers. While the unlucky numbers 1, 4 and 7 sound like the Chinese word for death

Travel Bits

2nd International Medical Conference

Last November 19 to 23, the Department of Tourism hosted the 2nd International Medical Conference at the Hotel Intercontinental Manila in Makati City. The said conference aimed at developing medical tourism in and out of the Philippines. Around 250 delegates from 23 countries attended the four-day event. DOT also organized a tour of several hospitals like St. Lukes Medical Center, The Medical City, World City Medical Center, and Asian Hospital and Medical Center. The tour also showcased the country's best practices in the field of medical tourism.

Japan's Security Measures

Last November 20, Japan started implementing the electronic fingerprint system and taking photographs of all foreign visitors. Visitors from 16 years old and above are all now required to undergo the procedure as a way of implementing a stricter security measure for possible terrorist attacks. The United States is known to enforce a similar system since the September 11 attack.

Dolphins as a Holiday Treat

Besides its famous Underground River and amazing beaches, Puerto Princesa now boasts of Dolphins as an additional attraction to its tourism industry. Led by Mayor Edward Hagedorn, the local government launched its new campaign with over a hundred guests. The government expects tourist arrivals to increase because of this development, especially the holiday season is just around the corner. There are over a hundred bottle-nosed dolphins roaming around the waters. A money back guarantee of Php750 (promotional rate) will be given if a visitor doesn't see any dolphins. Soon to follow is the campaign for Whale Shark Tours.

*Happy, happy Christmas,
that can win us back to the
delusions of our childhood
days, recall to the old man
the pleasures of his youth,
and transport the traveler
back to his own fireside
and quiet home!*

- Charles Dickens

Machine Readable Passports Now Available

Last September 17, 2007, the Department of Foreign Affairs has started processing Machine Readable Passport (MRPs) to the public. Initially offered to government employees, migrant workers, and senior citizens, the MRPs are now available for first time passport applicants and renewals.

As a requirement of the International Civil Aviation Organization, the MRPs comply with international standards and almost all countries use this. The technology enables for faster processing in the immigration counters, accurate record keeping, and faster checking

Sizzling Holiday Deals

Eva Air

Fly to Los Angeles for as low as USD530/pax. Ticketing period until Dec. 15

only. Travel should be completed immediately until Dec. 31.

China Airlines

Fly to Los Angeles, Seattle or any West Coast City for as low as USD600/pax or Fly to Honolulu for as low as USD580/pax or Fly to Vancouver for as low as USD600/pax on board China Airlines.

Thai Airways

Fly to Bangkok for as low as USD258/pax. Ticketing and Travel period until Dec. 31 only.

Cathay Pacific

Fly to New York for as low as USD890/pax. Ticketing until Dec. 15. Travel must be before Dec.15. Or Fly to Hong Kong for only USD200/pax. Ticketing and Travel must be completed by Dec. 15.

MERRY CHRISTMAS!!!



Philippine Airlines

Fly from any domestic destination to Los Angeles or San Francisco for only USD653/pax. Ticketing period until Dec. 20 only. Travel must be completed by Dec. 23.

Fly to Los Angeles or San Francisco for only USD578/pax. Ticketing period until Dec. 25. Travel must be completed by Dec. 25.

Continental Airlines

Fly to Saipan for as low as USD257/pax. Ticketing and travel until Dec. 31.

Fly to Honolulu for only USD535/pax. Or to Newark for only USD628/pax. Ticketing is until Dec. 22. Travel must be on or before Dec. 29.

***Fares quoted above are EXCLUSIVE of taxes.

***For inquiries, please call 8537471 or 8538280 and look for PEEWEE.