

On a Hong Kong High

Hong Kong is just an eight-and-a-bit-hour plane ride away from our sandy shores and you know what? No matter how much people might rave about its funky boutique shopping, its bustling nightlife – or how the buckets of weird fish-parts glisten and reflect those strings of neon-lights above in an unbelievably beautiful, yet stinky fashion – nothing can prepare you for how it really is, when you're standing there in person. Here's our humble opinion on how to make the most of it...



Taste sensations

You'll find tiny bakeries with delicious sweet and savory treats from as little as HK \$4 a piece – if you're looking for a cheap breakfast – and it's well worth stopping for a roadside fresh fruit smoothie as a mid-morning snack. But when it comes to dining out in style, you can't beat Hutong, on the 28th floor of One Peking in Tsim Sha Tsui. The Northern Chinese food is expensive and exquisite (the Szechwan crab could start a fire, watch out), but the birdcages that adorn the ceilings and the carved wooden walls give it an atmosphere that's priceless as you take in a bird's eye view of that shimmering metropolis. For those who've ever dreamed of slurping veggies from a bathtub (?) Modern Toilet (Portland Road, Mongkok) offers themed dining that could get you a little 'flushed'.

For a real experience, nab a place on a junk and get someone to sail you out to the Rainbow Rooms. Its inexpensive yet amazing spread of fresh seafood in casual outdoor surroundings makes this a definite Hong Kong hot spot.



Louise and friend enjoying the best cocktail ever!

Get your liver ready

Prepare to say "This is the best cocktail I've ever had," and mean it. Stanton Street's Feather Boa is a former antiques store, serving up strawberry and chocolate daiquiris to die for (around HK \$75). Combine them with its candlelit ambiance, walls of aqua-marine and tassled lampshades and you could well lose a night in here. You'll be unable to resist the pull of main drag, Lan Kwai Fong – a strip of bars from which excitable expats spill out onto the street, creating one big party. Don't miss Al's Diner, either. This is the place for you if you're into slurping jelly shots (HK \$38) off a random stranger as he dances with a stuffed tiger zipped into his pants and thinks wearing bunny ears is going to make you love him (true fact).



Don't forget the camera

If little old ladies selling bicycle parts and fish heads from their doorsteps is something you fancy an

ogle at, take the ferry out to Cheung Chau Island for the day (HK \$11). Well worth a wander, this quirky island grants a look at real local life. It's home to a substantial fishing fleet and on the other side, the beach plays host to energetic kite and wind-surfers. You also won't want to miss a glimpse of the infamous, 250 tonne Big Buddha at Lantau Island – although in rough weather, you won't much like the cable car ride up there. Don't look down! Some of the best spots for snapping are undoubtedly from Victoria Peak on a clear day. A panoramic view of Hong Kong, Kowloon and Victoria Harbor puts the city's unique location into perfect perspective.

Get your Zzzzz

Staying in the city center is your best bet. Hotel Jia in Causeway Bay is Hong Kong's hippest boutique hotel (from HK \$2000 a night). Also try the comfy Salisbury YMCS (from HK \$1,166 a night), or The Harbourview (from HK \$770 a night).

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