

Hong Kong's pull lies in its many modern attractions, its glamorous atmosphere, and its culinary traditions. Anywhere you go in the city is proof of its pride in being Asia's World City.

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# HONG

# KONG

I've lost track of time standing on the deck of the Aqua Luna Harbour Cruise, a traditional Chinese wooden boat, while taking in the city lights from the streets and the skyscrapers glistening beneath the stars. As far as the eye can see, the metropolis gleams as though made of diamonds.



**E**/ A breeze touches my face, nudging me awake, and I take that as my cue to move on from Victoria Harbour in Tsim Sha Tsui, towards Kowloon, one of the earlier stops the boat makes on its journey to explore the different regions, in a place that calls itself Asia's World City.

#### From Window Shopping to Actual Shopping!

Hong Kong, without a doubt, has plenty of interesting features going for it. There's something magnetic about the place; something interesting awaits on every corner. This time, I succumb to

the draw of Avenue of Stars, a tourist destination inspired by the Walk of Fame in Hollywood, United States. I make my way past the handprints and signatures of Hong Kong's celebrities before stopping at one of the most sought-after photo spots: the Statue of Bruce Lee, dedicated to the Hong Kong-born actor. Scenes from his many legendary action films fill my head.

From there, I move on towards K11 MUSEA, a nearby cultural and retail centre that showcases contemporary interior design, and is known for its "giant diamond" that dominates the

1. Mongkok is one of Hong Kong's most popular and comprehensive shopping areas. From cosmetics to computers, you can find everything here.



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atrium. Not wanting to waste time, I went to explore the night market at Temple Street, a place not to be missed by anyone looking to buy local fashion and to sample the vast array of local snacks. Still in the mood for more shopping, I took the Mass Transit Railway (MTR) and crossed over to Causeway Bay on Hong Kong Island, one of the city's most modern areas, and home to a plethora of luxury shopping malls.

I follow the signs toward Times Square and Hyasan Place to check out their retail offerings, and make sure I stop over at Casetify to browse through a variety of premium smartphone accessories. Having found my phone case and strap of choice, I took the Hong Kong Tramways, affectionately known as "Ding Ding" by locals, to see another side of Hong Kong, beyond retail therapy. The double-decked trams have been operating since 1904, and run between east and west, along the north coast of Hong Kong Island. The night was young and I intended to catch a horse race at Happy Valley Racecourse - an excursion that proved to be no less thrilling than a rock concert.

#### An Exploration of Taste in A Global City

As an Indonesian journalist who used to be based in Taipei, I was naturally one of the many people around the world who delighted in the news of Hong Kong's reopening, after imposing strict border control during the COVID-19 pandemic. Like a wild horse prancing around,

I was determined to explore every iconic tourist destination possible. With an Octopus card in hand (Hong Kong's electronic money), I could access all kinds of public transport, to see a different side of what this metropolis had to offer.

There's more to Hong Kong than tall glamorous buildings. On Lantau Island, a Tian Tan Buddha statue made of 250 tonnes of bronze stands 34 metres tall. To get there from the city centre, I headed for the Tung Chung Cable Car Terminal before taking a 25-minute gondola trip to Ngong Ping Village, and then walked for approximately 10 minutes to the Buddha statue. While in Lantau, I also made time to see Hong Kong Disneyland. It seems most visitors of this legendary destination explore the theme park late in the day to witness its iconic fireworks show at night.

Having completed the city's must-sees, I stop by its must-eats, and was ready to explore as many tasty local delicacies as I could find. There's a queue outside of the Bakehouse in Causeway Bay, which sells sourdough egg tarts, but the weather was chilly and I was craving something more akin to "comfort food" territory. My choice fell on a bowl of meatball soup at Man Fai Octopus Ball Noodles, which, contrary to its name, sells an array of meatballs - from squid, and seaweed, to fishballs and other fillings. Yan Wo Dou Bun Chong at Causeway Bay

**2.** Ding Ding, Hong Kong's favourite tram for both locals and tourists, has been in operation for 120 years!

**3.** Hong Kong has 9,000 high-rise buildings, including over 4,000 skyscrapers taller than 100 metres.

**4.** Kowloon's famous Temple Street night market is accessible via the Red Gate. In addition to pleasant shopping, you may take a gastronomic tour.



“*There are many more stops to be made around the Central area, but I had to stop myself. After all, tomorrow is another day. There are plenty of reasons for me to come back.*

also offered delightful, filling snacks like fish tofu and tofu pudding with an assortment of toppings. Yummy!

As a sweet-toothed person, it was hard to resist indulging in a bowl of red bean “soup” and mango sago desserts at Auntie Sweet in the Wan Chai area. It’s called “soup” as the shaved ice eventually melts and turns into sweet, soupy goodness. I’d meant this as a snack, but by my last spoonful, I found myself stuffed. I suppose I could walk it off, but just a few steps away, my eyes were glued to a “cha chaan teng”, a local café known as Café Match Box. Who was I to resist their popular Hong Kong Milk Tea? Around me, people walked by with this very drink and I smiled, feeling validated.

It’s a challenge exercising any sort of restraint, especially around Causeway Bay. After all, how was I supposed to resist the classic Luk Yu Tea House? First established in 1933, the place has since risen to fame for its

dim sum and Cantonese dishes such as dumplings and bao buns. And then there’s King’s Dimsum, whose bao buns come with a generous serving of salted egg cream. Towards the Central area, you will find The Demon Celebrity restaurant. It recently received a Michelin star, a nod to the creativity and innovative mindset presenting Cantonese delicacies. Among its most popular dishes is the fried pork intestine stuffed with minced cuttlefish and black truffle.

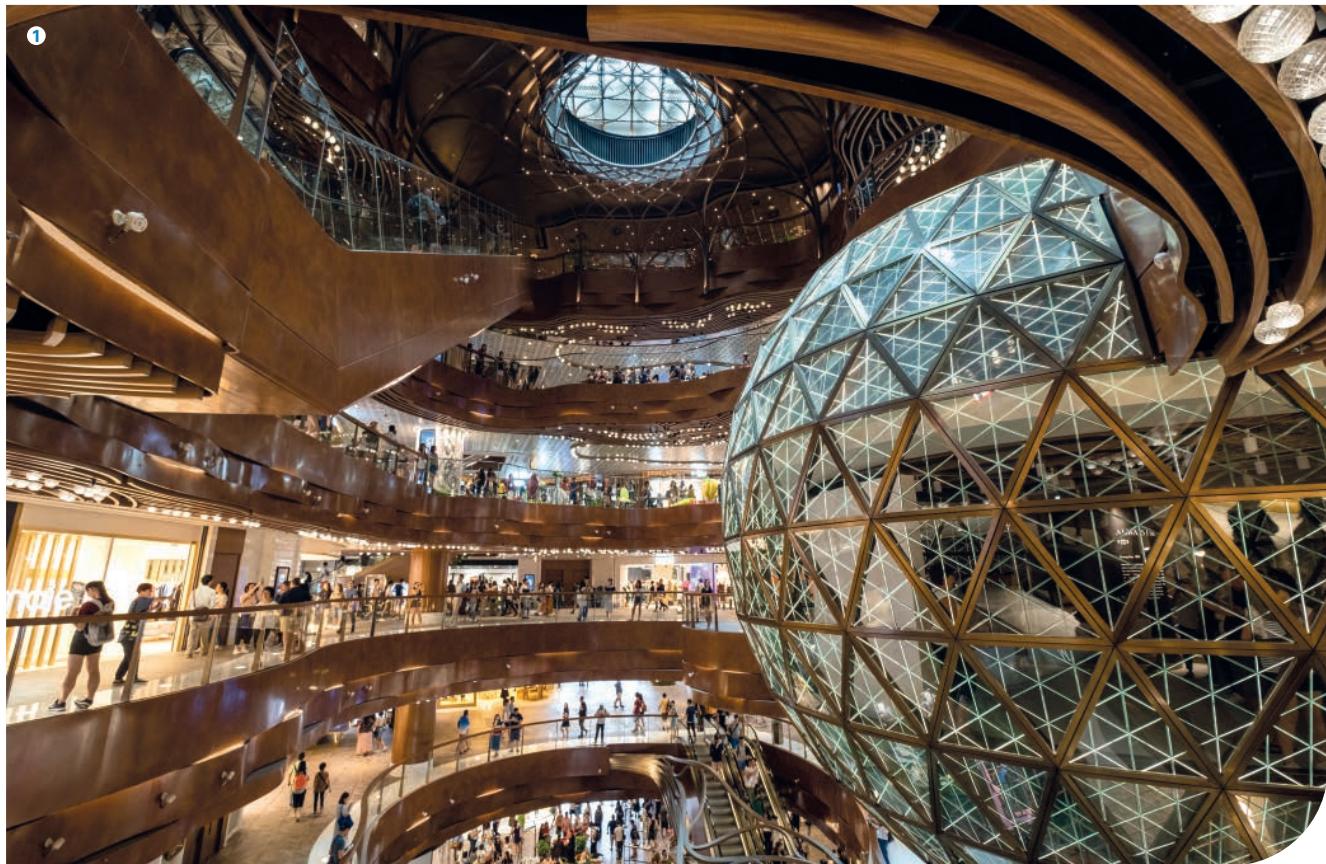
There are many more stops to be made around the Central area, but I had to stop myself. After all, tomorrow is another day. There are plenty of reasons for me to come back. Namely, The Chairman serves Cantonese dishes, such as crab steamed in Huadiao wine, a dish native to Eastern China. Restaurants: Godenya and Nagamoto, on the other hand, are known for serving delicious Japanese cuisine, further strengthening Hong Kong’s reputation as a World City that never sleeps, forever calling for travellers to come back. And so I will.

**1.** *It's fun to enjoy the panoramic view of Global City from the deck of the junk, which has been cruising Victoria Harbour since 1955.*





Salah satu gedung pencakar langit di Hong Kong pernah menjadi "bintang" film *Skyscraper* (2018) dengan aktor Dwyane "The Rock" Johnson sebagai pemeran utama.



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1. "Berlian raksasa" di dalam K11 MUSEA. Pusat perbelanjaan yang megah dan nyeni ini disebut juga "Silicon Valley of Culture."

2. Patung Bruce Lee di Avenue of Stars. Pada Juli 2023 lalu, diperlengati setengah abad kepergian sang aktor laga.

**Entah sudah berapa lama saya berdiri di dek Aqua Luna Harbour Cruise, kapal kayu tradisional Tiongkok, seraya menikmati gemerlap cahaya lampu jalanan dan gedung pencakar langit yang berpayung gemintang di angkasa. Sejauh mata memandang tampak panorama khas metropolitan yang bagai berkilauan serupa butiran berlian.**

1/ Semiril angin yang menyentuh wajah seolah menyadarkan saya untuk segera beranjak dari Victoria Harbour di kawasan Tsim Sha Tsui, Pulau Kowloon, tempat *junk* berlayar yang menjadi salah satu titik awal menyusuri berbagai tempat lain di kawasan yang menabalkan diri sebagai Kota Global di Asia.

**Ya Jalan-jalan, Ya Belanja!**  
Harus diakui, Hong Kong memang menarik! Segala sisinya seolah memiliki magnet. Kali ini, kaki saya bagai terseret ke Avenue of Stars, destinasi wisata yang terinspirasi oleh *Walk of Fame* di Hollywood, Amerika Serikat. Saya berjalan seraya mengagumi deretan jejak telapak tangan maupun tanda

tangan para pesohor Hong Kong. Hingga langkah terhenti di depan salah satu objek foto favorit, Statue of Bruce Lee, patung aktor bela diri ternama kelahiran Hong Kong. Sontak isi kepala saya dipenuhi potongan adegan laga dari film-filmnya yang melegenda.

Saya segera bergeser ke pusat perbelanjaan yang berlokasi tidak jauh, K11 MUSEA, yang menyimpan "berlian raksasa" di dalam gedungnya yang berarsitektur dan berdesain interior kontemporer. Tentu saja, saya tidak menya-nyiakan kesempatan untuk mengeksplorasi pasar malam di Temple Street, salah satu tempat yang tak kalah menarik untuk membeli pakaian dan jajanan lokal. Hasrat berbelanja masih



1. Sisi lain Hong Kong dengan lalu lalang tram yang mengingatkan pada suasana seabad silam.



## 5 senses: sight

**Lunar New Year**  
E/ Lunar New Year is one of Hong Kong's biggest nights. This year, indulge in the festivities as you welcome the Year of the Dragon. Red lanterns adorn corners of the city and lion dances are everywhere when visiting in the week of 10 February 2024, the first day of the new year for the Chinese community all over the world. Head to the local temple and light an incense, or visit a traditional market to soak up the local culture.

II Salah satu festival terbesar Hong Kong, sambutlah Tahun Naga di kota ini. Hiasan lampu merah dan tarian barongsai bisa Anda temukan ketika mengunjungi kota ini di pekan 10 Februari 2024, hari pertama tahun baru bagi komunitas Tionghoa di seluruh dunia. Bakar dupa di kelenteng setempat dan kunjungi pasar tradisional untuk menyerapi budaya lokal.

“

Ya, Hong Kong memang bukan sekadar bangunan megah. Di Pulau Lantau, ada patung Tian Tan Buddha setinggi 34 meter dan terbuat lebih dari 250 ton perunggu.

menggelora, saya pun menyeberang dengan Mass Transit Railway (MTR) ke Causeway Bay di Pulau Hong Kong. Inilah salah satu area termodern Hong Kong yang dijejali berbagai mall.

Saya mengikuti penanda jalan menuju Times Square dan Hysan Place untuk telusur retail. Lalu, mampir sejenak di Casetify untuk memilih aksesoris premium smartphone. Puas berbelanja phone case dan strap, saya naik Hong Kong Tramways atau dikenal sebagai Ding Ding oleh warga setempat, untuk melihat sisi lain Hong Kong yang lebih dari sekadar surga belanja. Saya melanjutkan perjalanan, naik tram dua tingkat yang telah beroperasi sejak 1904 pada zaman kolonial Inggris. *Night is still young*, masih ada waktu untuk menyaksikan balap kuda di Happy Valley Racecourse. Seru! Layaknya menyaksikan konser musik rock!

### Jelajah Rasa di Kota Global

Saya, jurnalis asal Indonesia yang sempat menetap di Taipei, termasuk salah satu warga dunia yang bersuka cita saat Hong Kong kembali membuka pintu selebar-lebarnya bagi para pelancong, setelah menutupnya rapat-rapat

selama pandemik COVID-19. Bagai kuda liar yang melesak ke sana kemari, dengan semangat menggebu, saya menjelajahi satu per satu destinasi wisata yang ikonik. Berbekal uang elektronik Octopus, saya bisa dengan mudah mengakses transportasi publik, untuk melihat sisi lain provinsi swatantra di tenggara Tiongkok ini.

Ya, Hong Kong memang bukan sekadar bangunan megah. Di Pulau Lantau, ada patung Tian Tan Buddha setinggi 34 meter dan terbuat lebih dari 250 ton perunggu. Untuk menjangkaunya mudah saja: dari pusat kota, saya berangkat ke Tung Chung Cable Car Terminal. Setelah itu, naik gondola selama sekitar 25 menit, dilanjutkan berjalan kurang lebih sepuluh menit ke patung Buddha dari Desa Ngong Ping. Mumpung masih di Lantau, saya menyempatkan ke Hong Kong Disneyland. Rata-rata pengunjung destinasi legendaris ini memilih untuk berkelilingi taman bermain hingga menyaksikan pertunjukan kembang api di malam hari.

Usai menyambangi beberapa tempat wajib kunjung, kini, saatnya menyinggahi tempat-tempat yang menyajikan hidangan dan kreasi





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Jembatan (juga terowongan),  
sang primadona penyeberangan  
darat, salah satunya Jembatan Tsing  
Ma yang menghubungkan Hong  
Kong dengan Pulau Lantau.

“ Ya, memang sesulit itu menahan diri tidak lapar mata dan kalap jajan, terutama di Causeway Bay.



Comfort food seperti sup bakso dengan beragam varian isi, hangat sekaligus mengenyangkan.

lokal. Saya melihat antrean mengular di luar cabang Bakehouse di Causeway Bay yang menjual tar telur dari sourdough. Hmm, agaknya *comfort food* lebih cocok untuk sejenak mengusir hawa dingin. Saya memilih sup bakso—termasuk bakso cumi, rumput laut, dan isian lain yang ada di Man Fai Octopus Ball Noodles. Tahu isi ikan dan puding tahu dengan berbagai pilihan *topping* di Yan Wo Dou Bun Chong cabang Causeway Bay pun mengenyangkan dan ringan di perut. *Yummy!*

Sebagai penggemar *dessert*, tentu saja saya tidak melewatkannya sup kacang merah, sup mangga dan sagu di Auntie Sweet di daerah Wan Chai. Ini disebut sup lantaran es serut yang mencair lambat laun menyerupai kuah. Sekalipun makanan ringan, saya merasa cukup kenyang. Saya makin berenergi untuk melanjutkan perjalanan. Tetapi baru beberapa langkah membakar kalori, mata saya tertumbuk pada cha chaan teng atau kafe lokal Cafe Match Box.

Ah, siapa juga yang bisa menahan diri tidak lapar mata dan kalap jajan, terutama di Causeway Bay. Betapa tidak, di sini, ada Luk Yu Tea House, restoran klasik yang sudah berdiri sejak 1933 dan terkenal dengan sajian *dim sum*, beragam sajian ala Kanton antara lain pangsit dan bakpao. Selain itu, juga ada King's Dimsum yang menyuguhkan bakpao dengan krim telur asin melimpah. Berlanjut ke kawasan Central, ada restoran The Demon Celebrity yang baru-baru ini meraih bintang Michelin berkat kreativitasnya menghadirkan inovasi kuliner Kanton, antara lain usus “nangu” goreng yang diisi sotong cincang dan truffle.

Sebetulnya masih ada beberapa restoran di kawasan Central yang wajib

dikunjungi. Tetapi saya harus berhenti makan sebelum kenyang, bukan? Lagipula masih ada hari esok. Tak ada alasan untuk tidak kembali lagi ke sini, menyinggahi The Chairman yang menyajikan masakan Kanton antara lain kepiting kukus dengan wine Huadiao asli Tiongkok Timur. Ada pula Godenya dan Nagamoto yang sama-sama menghadirkan menu khas Jepang. Keduanya turut mengukuhkan reputasi Hong Kong sebagai Kota Global yang nyaris tidak pernah tidur dan terus memagnet para pelancong dengan kilauannya. Saya pasti kembali!

#### Getting there

**HKG** Garuda Indonesia operates 7 flights every week to Hong Kong. Flight time from Cengkareng is 4 hours and 10 minutes.