



HONG KONG: A MONOCLE CITY SURVEY

A guide to the businesses, entrepreneurs, infrastructure, media and culture that make Hong Kong the bustling world city of Asia

BUSINESS | TRANSPORT | LOGISTICS | CULTURE | MEDIA | DESIGN | ARCHITECTURE
PROPERTY | RETAIL | FOOD | DRINK | HOTELS

Food, Drink & Hotels

Impeccable hospitality service was practically invented in Hong Kong, so you know you're in for a relaxing and decadent time in any of the city's top hotels, as well as the multitude of top-grade restaurants serving everything from New York pasta plates to local dim-sum. After dinner, head upwards to one of the city's stunning roof-top bars.

Top 15 bars and restaurants

- 01 Best ambience:**
Luk Yu Tea House
An institution run by several generations all at once and on the same shift, the combination of great food, inimitable staff and bustling ambience is priceless. 24-26 Stanley Street, Central, +852 2523 1970
- 02 Best newcomer no.1:**
TBLS
Western comfort food served up as fine dining and desserts that'll have you waiting in line down on Hollywood Road. 7/F, 31 Hollywood Road, Central, +852 2544 3433
- 03 Best Italian:**
Posto Pubblico
This New York-style Italian osteria is attracting a good-looking Hong Kong crowd by serving good old-fashioned pasta and pouring proper drinks from the bar. G/F, 28 Elgin Street, Central, +852 2577 7160
- 04 Best dim-sum:**
Metropol
Every lunch-hour is ram-packed and loud but you won't find better pork buns anywhere. 4/F United Centre, 95 Queensway, Central, +852 2865 1988
- 05 Best wine and cheese:**
Classified Café
Has Hong Kong's first cheese room and a good wine selection to match. 108 Hollywood Road, Sheung Wan, +852 2525 3454
- 06 Best private kitchen:**
Yellow Door
Tops the charts of Hong Kong's private kitchens with its local fare. 37 Cochrane Street, Central, +852 2858 6555
- 07 Best boozier:**
The Pawn
Found in a sympathetically



- 01 Yellow Door
- 02 Staff at Classified Café
- 03 Metropol
- 04 Dim-sum at Metropol
- 05 Cheese board at Classified Café
- 06 Exterior of Classified Café
- 07 Seafood at San Shing market
- 08 TBLS
- 09 Food at TBLS
- 10 Sevva



01 Growth industry: Since organic farming took off here 10 years ago, the number of local farms has grown from 10 to 320. The organic farms are spread out across the New Territories with produce sold in street markets throughout the city.

02 Monks' milk: Hong Kong's Trappist monks have been producing the city's favourite milk since the 1960s. Known locally as cross milk or priest milk, it's produced in the north of the New Territories and sold in a signature glass bottle with a red cross.

03 Eastern feast: Hong Kong is home to over 11,000 restaurants, including two three-Michelin-starred and 32 one-starred restaurants, many of which are street stalls or hole-in-the-wall-type outlets where you can eat gourmet food for as little as €5.

renovated old pawn-broker, The Pawn serves excellent British dishes and well-pulled pints. 62 Johnston Road, Wan Chai, +852 2866 3444

08 Best newcomer no. 2:
Sugar
Lounging on the roof of Swire's new East hotel in North Point, Sugar is a breezy and authentic alternative to Central's monopoly on nightlife. 32/F, East Hotel, 29 Tai Koo Shing Road, +852 3968 3738

09 Best roof-top:
Sevva
Possibly the best and definitely the biggest roof-top bar in Hong Kong, Sevva's L-shaped deck is constantly heaving with beautiful revellers. 25/F, Prince's Building, 10 Chater Road, Central, +852 2537 1388

10 Best authentic experience:
Java Road Market
Workers at this North Point market head for the top floor to eat fresh produce cooked to order. Cooked Food Centre: Java Road, North Point

11 Best leisurely lunch:
Island Tang
David Tang's splendidly leathery wood-panelled and mirror-walled dining room serves some of the best dim-sum in the city.

Shop 222, The Galleria, 9 Queen's Road, Central, +852 2526 8798

12 Best G&T:
The Foreign Correspondents' Club
The FCC has all you need for a lazy Sunday afternoon: great selection of reading material, colonial ambience and perfectly stirred G&Ts. 2 Lower Albert Road, Central, +852 2521 1511

13 Best beef:
Wagyu Kaiseki Den
Perhaps a tad over the top in exclusivity, but we couldn't resist the bank of individually owned refrigerators holding enormous Kobe steaks brought from Japan for valued patrons. UG/F Central Park Hotel, 263 Hollywood Road, Sheung Wan, +852 2851 2820

14 Best sea-food:
San Shing market
Head out to San Shing Hui in the New Territories for freshly caught prawns and scallops – any of the nearby restaurants will cook up the catch for you.

15 Best boogie:
Azure
Another great roof-top club – just don't get stuck in the rowdy crowd around Lai Kwai Fong on your way here. 29/F Hotel LKF, 33 Wyndham Street, Central, +852 3518 9330 — LL/ST



Profile: Que Vinh Dang

Chef Que Vinh Dang opened TBLS at the end of January – weekend tables are already booked out two months in advance.

"Hong Kong's culinary scene is relatively new as far as western cuisine goes. Since it's such a big, metropolitan city there's a large gap between home-grown and imported talent but I think that'll change in the next couple of years.

I grew up in New York and went to culinary school there. My first big restaurant gig was at Union Pacific – a three-starred restaurant. I wanted to bring some of my fine dining experience here but not make it too posh. I'm not trying to do anything groundbreaking, I just want to have a place where I can cook what I like to eat and hopefully that translates to the diners.

I get my produce from the Central Market around the corner from here. The produce comes mainly from the New Territories – there are lots of organic farms out there. I change the menu once a month to keep it exciting." — L.L.

Snack export



Hong-Kongers refer to their favourite local snack as "crack in a bun" and for good reason – the baked, sweetish *cha siu baau* bun, stuffed with succulent roast pork, is a potent pick-me-up for any time of the day. An east-meets-west fusion – the yeast-bread is a colonial legacy that no one wants to see go – the buns are sold at street markets, cafés and dim-sum lunch restaurants throughout the city. We'd like to see these little energisers in corner shops and vending machines everywhere from Melbourne to Madrid. — L.L.

Cosy calling: The Hong Kong hotel market is ticking along nicely, but it would welcome a few smaller-scale mom-n-pop-style guest-houses.

Hotels

It is rare for a city to enjoy such high standards of service. According to the HK Association for Customer Service Excellence the service sector contributes 92 per cent of the city's GDP with hospitality accounting for 3.4 per cent and employing over 190,000. Two of the world's hospitality benchmarks, The Peninsula and The Mandarin, were founded in Hong Kong and three more of the world's best – Langham, Shangri-La and Swire – are headquartered here.

Shangri-La

Guests are met by the comforting Shangri-La 'S' flying 56-storeys above Central and Kowloon. This icon represents excellence and opulence. shangri-la.com

Mandarin Oriental

Since the original opened in 1963, solid design, superior service and international outlook have defined each property. mandarinoriental.com

The Langham

The Langham is a hotel in the grand European tradition that recently completed a US\$22m (€16m) renovation of 150 of its Grand rooms. langhamhotels.com

The Peninsula

After gaining a 30-storey tower in 1994, the building thankfully lost none of its charm. peninsula.com

Grand Hyatt

John Morford's very grand Hyatt design is a luxury city staple in the very centre of Central. hyatt.com

Ritz Carlton

Set to open in November, the Ritz Carlton on the 102nd-118th floors of the ICC building will strengthen Kowloon's hospitality credentials. ritzcarlton.com — ST

Monocle's top hotel picks

- 01 **Butlers** Butler service at the Grand Hyatt – sounds fluffy but it's addictive
- 02 **Value suites** The suites at the Jia – good value and discreet
- 03 **Hotel bar** Drinks at the Landmark Mandarin
- 04 **Soak and scrub** The Upper House's expansive bathrooms
- 05 **Design** John Morford's rooms on the Grand Hyatt's Plateau level
- 06 **Service culture** The fierce competition that keeps service consistently high
- 07 **Wedding parties** Witnessing local weekend wedding spectacles
- 08 **Concierge** The Mandarin's outstanding concierge desk
- 09 **Taking a dip** Poolside on a Saturday at the Four Seasons
- 10 **A welcome** Escalate at The Upper House



01



03



04



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06

- 01 Terrace at The Upper House
- 02 The Upper House interior
- 03 Mandarin Oriental suite
- 04 Bed at The Langham
- 05 Shangri-La service staff
- 06 Poolside at Shangri-La



02



Q&A Brian Williams

Swire Hotels opened its first hotel, The Opposite House, in October 2009 in Beijing. In Hong Kong, it recently opened East and The Upper House, where Monocle spoke to its CEO.

Hong Kong is home to the regional HQs of the best hotels in the world. What does Swire bring to the mix? We know our market; there's a customer who doesn't want to be anonymous in a hotel but wants to associate himself with the people who work there. We do our training programmes around that.

You used to work at the Mandarin Oriental. What experience have you brought to The Upper House? What we've done here is make a contemporary hotel with the backbone of a traditional five-star hotel. But the front appears a little bit more relaxed, more today. — LL