



SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION (SAR)

Hong Kong is a SAR of China and does not have a capital city. However, Victoria is sometimes considered the de facto capital, as it was historically the administrative center during British rule.

Macau is also a SAR of China and does not have an official capital city. However, the Macau Peninsula is the historical and administrative center of the region.

SIZE

Hong Kong Inland area: 1,110 km²

Macau Inland area: 33 km²

GEOGRAPHICAL SITUATION

Hong Kong lies on China's southeastern coast, bordering the South China Sea. Its coastline is deeply indented, featuring numerous bays, inlets, and more than 260 islands. Approximately 75% of its land consists of hills and mountainous terrain.

Macau sits on China's southern coast, along the western edge of the Pearl River Delta, overlooking the South China Sea. While its terrain is now mostly flat due to land reclamation, it was originally hilly, particularly in the Coloane and Taipa areas.

POPULATION

Hong Kong's population is estimated to be around 7.4 million. The population density is 6,792/km².

Macau's population is estimated to be approximately 722,000. Macau is one of the most densely populated regions globally, boasting a density of approximately 24,067 people per square kilometres.

LANGUAGE

Hong Kong has two official languages, Chinese and English, with Cantonese being the primary spoken language among locals. English is widely used in business, government, and education, while Mandarin has been gaining popularity due to closer ties with mainland China.

Macau has two official languages, Chinese and Portuguese, with Cantonese being the dominant spoken language among locals. While Portuguese is limited in daily use, it remains present in legal, governmental, and historical contexts.

CURRENCY

The currency of **Hong Kong** is the Hong Kong Dollar (HKD), which is symbolized as \$ or HK\$. As of March 2025, the exchange rate is approximately:

- 1 USD = 7.77 HKD
- 1 EURO = 8.39 HKD

The currency of **Hong Kong** is the Macanese Pataca (MOP). As of March 2025, the exchange rate is approximately:

- 1 USD = 8.01 MOP
- 1 EURO = 8.57 MOP

Most ATMs in Hong Kong and Macau accept foreign cards, especially those affiliated with major international networks. Hong Kong and Macau are highly cashless cities, and credit cards are widely accepted in most places, but having some cash for small transactions is still recommended for small purchases in some areas.

Please note that some hotels may need an imprint of your credit card as a deposit during your stay, which is a normal procedure. However, this deposit can be made in cash and will be refunded upon check-out.

CLIMATE

- **Spring** (March - May) is characterized by warm temperatures ranging from 17°C to 26°C, with increasing humidity. The weather is generally mild but can be foggy and drizzly, especially in the mornings and along coastal areas. As the season progresses, humidity levels rise, making the air feel warmer.
- **Summer** (June – September) is hot and extremely humid, with temperatures ranging from 26°C to 33°C. The season brings frequent thunderstorms and heavy rainfall, especially in the afternoons. Typhoon season peaks between July and September, occasionally causing strong winds and heavy downpours.
- **Autumn** (October - December) is considered the best time to visit due to its pleasant, sunny weather and lower humidity. Temperatures range from 19°C to 28°C, creating a comfortable atmosphere for outdoor activities and sightseeing. The skies are generally clear, and rainfall is minimal, making it an ideal season for exploring the nature trails, beaches, and festivals.
- **Winter** (January – February) is mild and dry, with temperatures ranging from 12°C to 20°C. Rainfall is minimal, and the air is much less humid compared to other seasons. However, occasional cold fronts from China can bring cooler temperatures, especially at night.

LOCAL TIME

Hong Kong and Macau are 8 hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time.

ELECTRICITY

The standard voltage is 220 volts.

British-style plugs, Type G with three rectangular prongs, is the same type used in the UK.



WATER

Tap water in **Hong Kong** is safe to drink as it meets World Health Organization (WHO) standards; however, due to old pipes in many buildings, it is recommended to boil the water or use a filter before drinking. While locals may drink tap water after filtration, visitors often prefer bottled water, which is widely available at convenience stores like 7-Eleven and Circle K.

Tap water in **Macau** is not recommended for direct drinking due to possible contamination from old pipes. It is best to boil the water before drinking or opt for bottled water, which is widely available in supermarkets and convenience stores. Most hotels and restaurants provide filtered or bottled water for guests to ensure safety.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Both Hong Kong and Macau have well-developed telecommunications networks with 4G and 5G coverage. Free Wi-Fi is widely available in public areas, malls, and transport hubs.

Prepaid services can be acquired at Convenience Stores, Mobile Shops or service counters at airports.

Hong Kong and Macau have separate mobile networks, meaning a Hong Kong SIM card won't work in Macau without international roaming. For seamless connectivity across both regions, travelers can opt for a Greater Bay Area SIM,

which provides coverage in Hong Kong, Macau, and Mainland China without the need for additional roaming charges.

HEALTH & MEDICAL FACILITIES

Both Hong Kong and Macau have high-quality medical facilities with English-speaking doctors, especially in private hospitals and clinics. Public hospitals are cost-effective but often have extended waiting periods, whereas private hospitals charge higher fees but provide quicker service and premium amenities.

In **Hong Kong**, some well-known hospitals include Queen Mary Hospital in Pok Fu Lam, Prince of Wales Hospital in Sha Tin, and Gleneagles Hospital Hong Kong in Cyberport. In **Macau**, major medical facilities include Conde S. Januário Hospital and University Hospital (Kiang Wu Hospital), both located on the Macau Peninsula, as well as Macau University Hospital, which offers advanced healthcare services.

TRANSPORTATION

Here are the means of transport for the two regions:

Hong Kong:

- Metro, one of the most popular means of transport
- Buses: red buses (the most common), minibuses and double-decker buses.
- The streetcar, nicknamed “Ding Ding”, is a historic means of transport in Hong Kong, mainly used on Hong Kong Island.
- Ferries between Hong Kong and the surrounding islands, and to Macau.
- Cabs and bicycles

Macau:

- Buses, the main means of transport
- Cabs
- The historic tramway, but it is rather limited and covers only a small area of the city.
- Ferries

DRIVING

An International Driving Permit may be used to drive around Hong Kong, while a local driving permit may be required in Macau. Driving in Hong Kong and Macau can be challenging due to dense traffic and limited parking. Car rentals are available but not recommended for tourists due to efficient MTR, buses, and taxis.

CUISINE

Hong Kong's cooking style is primarily based on Cantonese cuisine, while also incorporating influences from British, Western, and Southeast Asian flavors, and is renowned for its balance and harmony. Dishes are commonly seasoned and marinated with soy sauce, oyster sauce, and hoisin sauce. Staples like rice, noodles, seafood, and Chinese-style BBQ meats play a central role in the cuisine. Traditional meals are typically shared, with multiple dishes placed at the center of the table. Signature dishes include Dim Sum, a traditional Cantonese brunch featuring bite-sized delicacies, roast meats, wonton noodles, egg tarts, and Hong Kong-style milk tea. Popular alcoholic beverages include beer, whisky, and baijiu, a strong Chinese grain spirit.

Macanese cooking is a unique fusion of Portuguese, Cantonese, African, and Indian influences, known for its bold flavors, rich spices, and slow-cooking techniques. Common ingredients include olive oil, garlic, chili, vinegar, and aromatic spices like cinnamon, turmeric, and paprika. As a coastal city, Macau heavily incorporates seafood into both Macanese and Portuguese cuisine. Meals are typically served family-style, with multiple shared dishes enjoyed together. Signature dishes include the Portuguese egg tart, Minchi (a savory mix of minced beef or pork, potatoes, and a fried egg over rice), pork chop bun, and Bacalhau, a traditional Portuguese salted cod dish. Popular alcoholic beverages include Portuguese wine, beer, and baijiu, a strong Chinese grain spirit.

CUSTOMS AND HABITS

A handshake is a common greeting, often accompanied by a slight nod as a sign of respect. In business settings, exchanging business cards is an important practice, and they should be given and received with both hands as a gesture of politeness and professionalism. Meals are typically served family-style, with dishes shared among everyone at the table. Leaving a small amount of food on your plate signals that you are full, whereas finishing everything may suggest you want more. It is considered polite to pour tea for others before serving yourself, demonstrating respect and hospitality. When someone pours tea for you, gently tapping your fingers on the table is a customary way to express gratitude.

SHOPPING

Macau is a great destination for duty-free shopping, while **Hong Kong** offers a diverse shopping experience, ranging from local markets to luxury malls. Credit cards and mobile payments are widely accepted in major establishments, but it's always good to carry some cash for small purchases and street markets. Bargaining is common in markets and independent shops, but not in malls or branded stores. When negotiating, start by offering 50–70% of the initial price and gradually work your way up. If the price isn't right, walking away might encourage the seller to lower their price to close the sale.

TIPPING

Tipping is not heavily practiced in Hong Kong & Macau, but small gestures of appreciation are always welcome. Restaurants often add a 10% service charge, but if not included, a 5–10% tip is appreciated.

ACCESS

Please find below a list of carriers offering services into **Hong Kong**:

- ✓ Cathay Pacific
- ✓ United Airlines
- ✓ American Airlines
- ✓ Austrian Airlines
- ✓ Qantas

Please find below a list of carriers offering services into **Macau**:

- ✓ Air Macau
- ✓ China Eastern Airlines
- ✓ Xiamen Airlines
- ✓ Starlux Airlines
- ✓ Philippine Airlines
- ✓ Thai AirAsia and Thai Lion Air
- ✓ Tigerair Taiwan

VISA AND PASSPORT

Hong Kong allows visa-free entry for 90 days for citizens of over 141 countries. Macau allows visa-free entry for 90 days for citizens of over 113 countries.

BEFORE GOING

Travelers are advised to seek medical advice about vaccinations. Specialised travel-medicine clinics are the best source of information. Most vaccines don't produce immunity until at least two weeks after they're given, so visit a doctor four to eight weeks before departure.

For safety reasons, we advise travelers not to leave valuables in vehicles during their journey.