

# INTRODUCTION

## 1) Background

In many people's minds, Hong Kong is the "Pearl of the Orient" and a compact cosmopolitan city of skyscrapers and shopping arcades. Whether it is the foreign tourists or the locals, they always envision activities like shopping and sightseeing as the tourists' ultimate activities. Renowned landmarks like the Peak and Tsing Ma Bridge are seen as the must-goes and final stops on their itineraries.

However, few seem to realize the city has its peculiar and exotic side. With its rich cultural diversity, more than 260 outlying islands, 100 walking trails, 4 marine parks, Hong Kong promises wonderful landscapes, dramatic and stunning rock formations, craggy mountains, quaint villages, inviting flora and fauna, abundant cultural heritage which cater for not only the interests of the shoppers but also the most adventurous explorers. It is well worth the efforts to explore these charming rural retreats in Hong Kong.

The aim of this project is to examine these adventurous places in Hong Kong. As there are many hotels tourists can choose from in Tsim Sha Tsui, we will start our exploration of these adventurous places from there.



# **B) Definitions and our understanding of**

## **Adventure Tourism**

### **Definitions**

According to the information given by Queensland Tourism Board, adventure tourism can be classified into two main categories, namely

- i) Hard adventure tourism
- ii) Soft adventure tourism

There is a distinction between the two kinds of adventure tourism. For hard adventure tourism, it combines a unique experience in an outdoor setting with excitement and a degree of risk. It frequently demands physical exertion as well as a level of skill.

Soft adventure tourism, on the other hand, also focuses on providing a unique outdoor experience or “adventure”. However, it involves only a minor element of risk, little physical exertion, and limited skills. It is often educational and discovery, the environment, heritage and indigenous culture are common aspects. Eco-tourism can be considered a sub-set of adventure tourism.

### **Our understanding of “adventure tourism”**

From the definitions given on the above, it is obvious that adventure tourism comes in many forms and may vary from one place to another. For some it can be a thrilling white water rafting experience in the fast flowing waters of some of the wildest rivers, whereas for others it can be walking through wild rocky hills.

Despite the different forms of adventure tourism prevalent in different places, they, to the best of our understanding, share one thing in common, i.e., adventure tourism should be a kind of travel linked to recreation services and/or activities that take place in an outdoor land based setting.

An adventure traveler should

- 1) Always have a yearning for adventure, a sense of fun and a wish to escape from the humdrum of mainstream tourism.
- 2) Expect to experience activities of varying degrees of risk and excitement, and are looking for personal growth and achievement.
- 3) Respond to a wide array of travel motivators including adventure, excitement, outdoor recreation, physical activity, personal challenge, opportunity for educational experience, and environmental conservation

### **C. Exploration of the four elements of adventure tourism in HK**

When we apply the concept of adventure tourism to the context of Hong Kong, we find the territory a wonderland of abundant and diverse adventurous elements. Whether it is the dramatic rock formations, different geological features, marine organisms and habitats or rich cultural heritage, etc, they all promise great potential for both hard and soft adventure tourism to take place and develop. For easy reference, we categorize these elements in four main domains and have them symbolized in four colours. They are

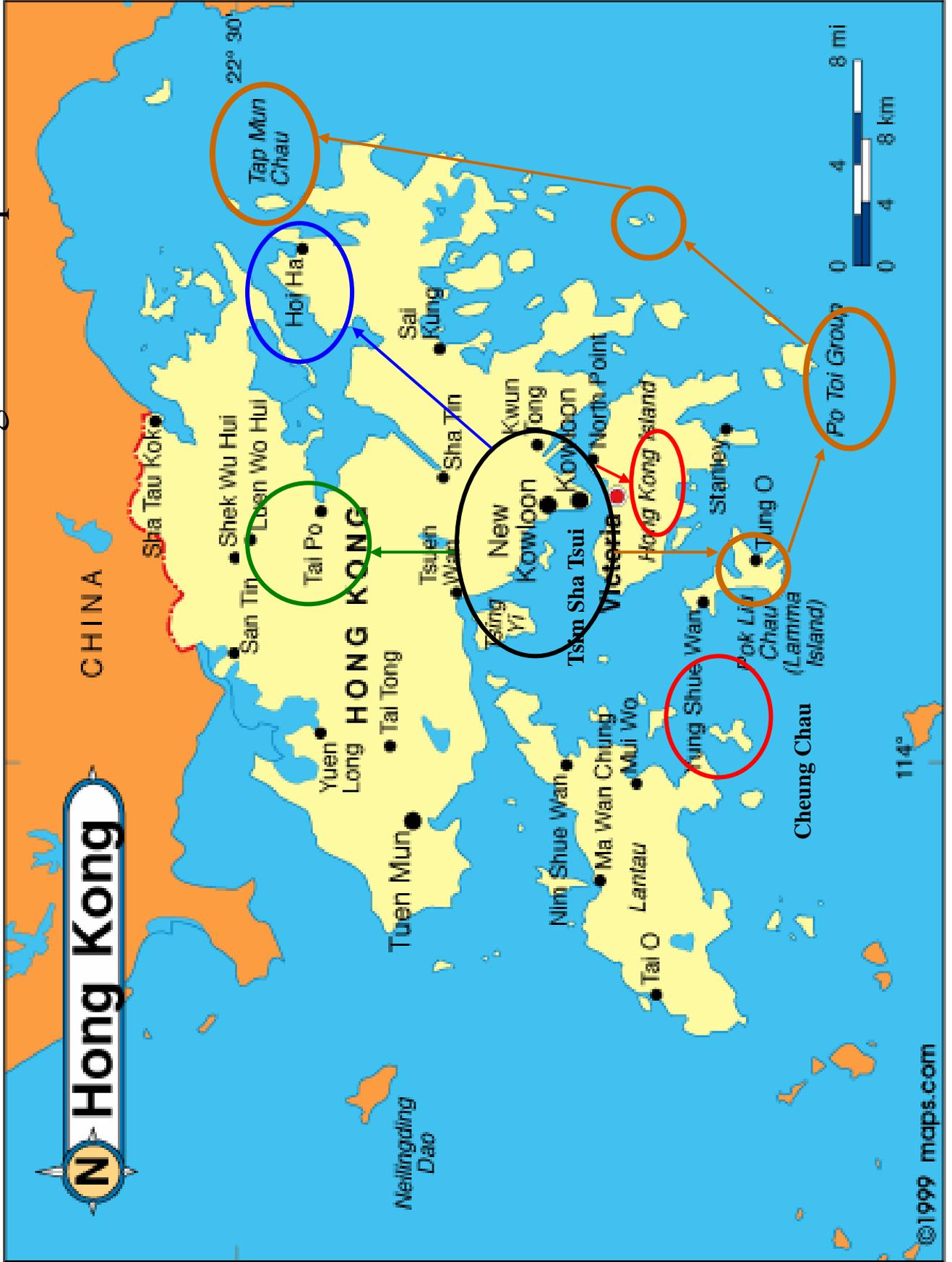
#### Representation

- Brown:**                      **Rock Climbing and watching the dramatic rock formations and geological features**  
(as brown resembles the colour of sand and hills)
- Green:**                      **Treking and exploring the wetlands and walking trails**  
(As green resembles the colour of trees and leaves)
- Blue:**                      **Exploring the marine parks and reserves**  
(As blue resembles the colour of seawater)
- Red:**                      **Venturing the city streets and festivities of Bun Festival on Cheung Chau**  
(As red is an auspicious and lucky color in Chinese tradition)

# Proposed Itinerary for a 6-Day Adventure Tour

Day 1	<u>Rock Climbing</u> ✧ Ninepin Group
Day 2	<u>Rock Watching</u> ✧ Tung Ping Chau and Lamma Island ✧ Po Toi Island and Tap Mun
Day 3	<u>Marine Exploration</u> ✧ Double Heaven Marine Park ✧ Ho Ha Wan Marine Park
Day 4	<u>Wetlands and Walking Trail</u> ✧ McLehose Trail ✧ Tai Po Mangrove (Day walk) & Nature Reserve (Night walk)
Day 5	<u>Cultural exploration</u> ✧ Bun Festival on Cheung Chau Island
Day 6	<u>Cultural exploration</u> ✧ Footprints on City Streets

Where are the destinations and how to go to these places?



## **DAY 1: Rock Climbing**

### **Rock Climbing**

Hong Kong is geographically compact and many outlying islands in the territory feature steeply sloping hills and cliffs which are great arenas for rock climbing.

#### **Suggested destination: Ninepin Group**

Ninepin Group is a group of 29 islands of which the unique landscape amazes the most daring adventurers. Located at the eastern tip of Hong Kong, the Group is made up of the North Ninepin Island, South Ninepin Island and East Ninepin Island and other inlets. They are all uninhabited remote inlands deserted for a long time.

### **Attractions: Magnificent hexagonal vertical Rhyolite columns**

The appeal of the islands lie in their extraordinary geological formation, Rhyolite (流紋岩), which was formed after a volcano near Sai Kung erupted violently about 140 million years ago, with large amount of volcanic ash was ejected, deposited and cooled as a result.

Resembling the honeycomb of giant bees, the cooling down of very hot volcanic ash and shrinking formed these spectacular six-sided columns on the islands. The outcome is the numerous magnificent-looking vertical blocks of tuff and hexagonal columns erecting upright on the cliffs that support little vegetation growth but presents an extraordinarily stunning view of the islands.

To the most daring adventurous travelers, exploring new height is a unique experience to be had. As these trips are physically assertive and involve different levels of risks and challenges, they can fulfill their inner urge to take risks and get pleasure in conquering something totally unknown and unexplored. It conveys a sense of challenges to his spirit and gives a fillip to their unbound imaginations; it also gives up a chance to admire the greatness and power of nature.

**Level of difficulty: \*\*\*\*\***

**Safety tips:**

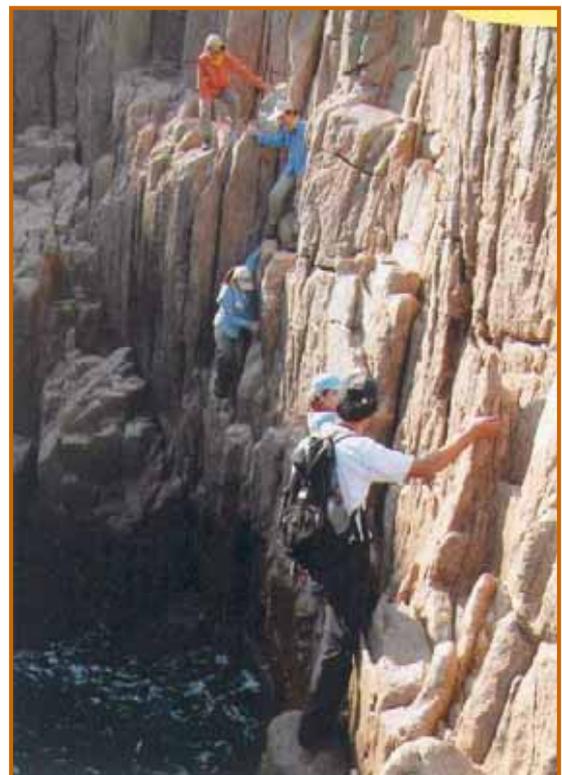
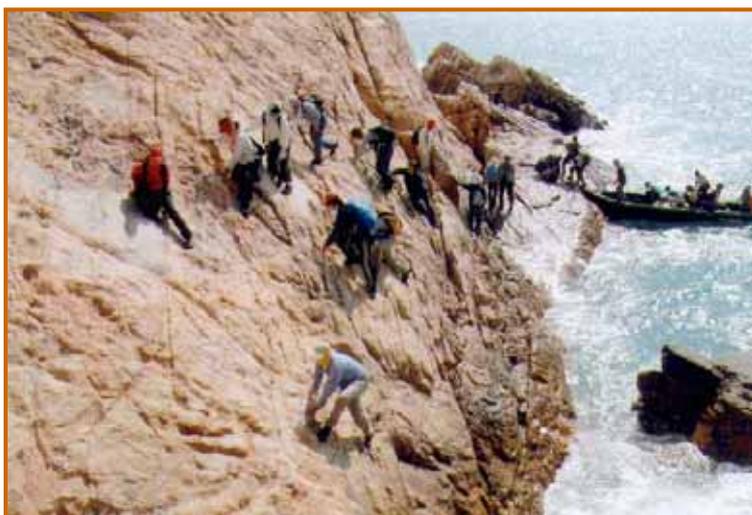
- 1. Qualified mountaineering equipment must be well prepared in advance.**
- 2. Sufficient water can prevent heat stroke.**
- 3. Must not work alone but in group.**
- 4. Keep an eye on the weather forecast.**



Breath-taking moments.



Amazing views and from the hexagonal rock pillars!!



## **DAY 2: Rock Watching**

Rock watching is another adventure tour for the geology lovers. When rock outcrops get routinely savaged by wind and waves coming off the Sea, the rocks get gradually eroded and sculpted into different shapes. Consequently, many dramatic rock formations are created.

As time goes by, people use their imagination and associate these rocks with different objects. The rocks are then given evocative names based on their resemblance to different features. Gradually, watching and admiring these dramatic rock formations become an adventurous activity for hikers.

The trips to these islands are adventurous not only in the sense that walking up the hills are risky and physically demanding but at the same time, they promise expedition to our hearts and discovery of nature's wonders. While we are wandering on these islands, we can open our hearts and let our imagination fly. Through this mental gymnastics activity, we can look at the rocks in a different perspective and visualize the turtles, the monks, and even the unicorns and castles on the clouds with no boundaries.

### **Suggested destination: Tung Ping Chau and Lamma Island Po Toi and Tap Mun**

#### **i) Tung Ping Chau and Lamma Island**

Tung Ping Chau is a crescent-shaped outlying island at the most eastern end of Hong Kong's waters. It got its name as viewing it from a distance on a boat; it looks like a "flat" huge floating bed on the sea.

The island is sometimes nicknamed "the loneliest island" as it is more than 10 km away from any other part of Hong Kong but almost within swimming reach of the coast of Guangdong. However the far distance away from the hustle and bustle of city life, along with its unique landscape, make the island be named the best of Hong Kong's four famous natural sights and another amazing arena for rock climbing and rock watching.

Do you think the Tung Ping Chau looks like a floating bed?



## **Attractions: Unique geological feature- shale or siltstone**

The whole island of Tung Ping Chau is made up of very unique stratum called the Ping Chau Formation, which is the result of great natural forces. Consequently, layers of red “shale” or “siltstone” with perfect flat beddings, are formed and various strange rock formations stand majestically on the coastal area.

### **What is shale?**

“Shale” is formed from layers of volcanic and sedimentary rock tilting down to the sea. After ages, it is divided into layers and the land is finally uplifted and exposed on land above sea level, forming low cliffs on the west coast. Together with the erosion of continuous wind and water, the layers and layers of siltstone eventually get sculpted into their own well stratified patterns and become the landmark of the island.

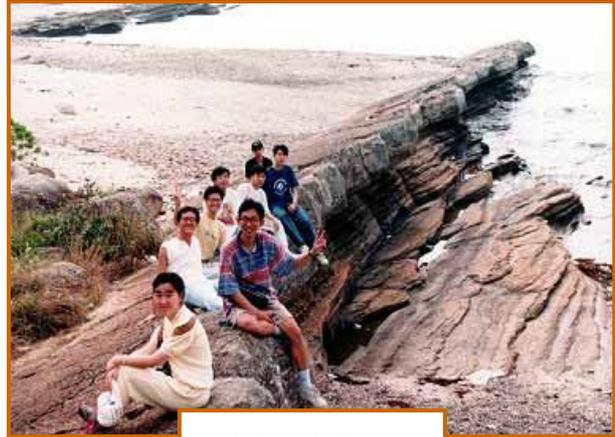
Excitement seekers with good physical strength excitement seekers will not want to miss the the chance to climb up the twin Watchtower Rocks, which are two sea stacks measuring 7-8 metres standing magnificently on the wave cut platform. The two Lego-like giant rocks look inviting and gives us a great sense of challenge to conquer them.

Another strange feature is “Lan Kwo Shui”, which means literally “difficult to pass the water”. As the name suggests, it is a razor-sharp cliff with little room for footing. Visitors can find sheer thrill and excitement when walking past the cliff, especially at high tide.

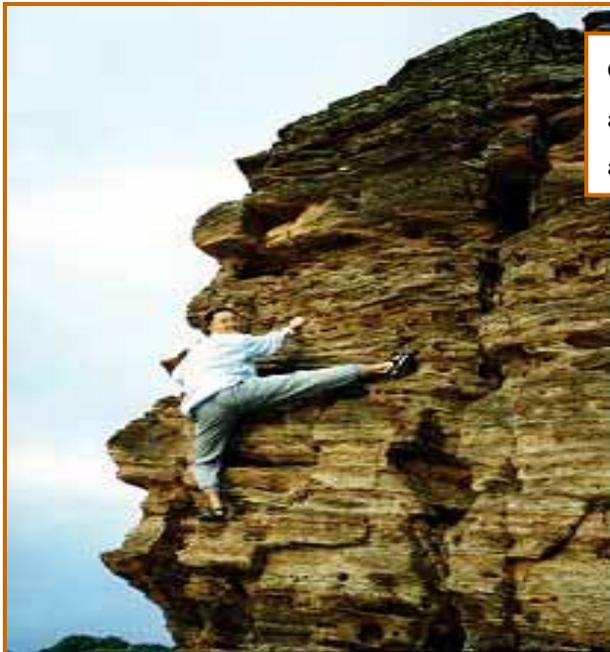
Apart from the unique rock formations, the abandoned villages and the beaches are also its main attractions. The island and its surrounding waters were officially declared a marine park in 2001. The water here is some of the cleanest in Hong Kong and the coast is dominated by brown, red and green algal beds which are considered as the best algal beds in Hong Kong. Diving and other aquatic activity facilities can be rented on the island.



A fragment of shale



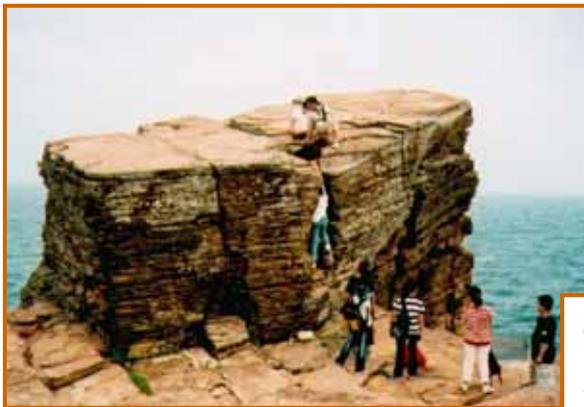
A daring challenge



Getting to know nature and a sense of achievement are travel motivators of adventure tourism.



The shale looks just like a large dragon and its so-called "Lung Lok Shui" (in Chinese, it means the Dragon (ie Lung) goes to the sea).



Great thrill and satisfaction to conquer the great rocks

Lamma Island, also known as the “Po Liu hau”, is the third largest island in HK’s territory and is only surpassed by Lantau Island and Hong Kong Island. It is just off the south of the Hong Kong Island with a total area of 14 square km. Although it has been developed into an expatriates’ community with European-style cafes and restaurants, The island distinguished itself with interesting rocks formations



Rabbit Rock



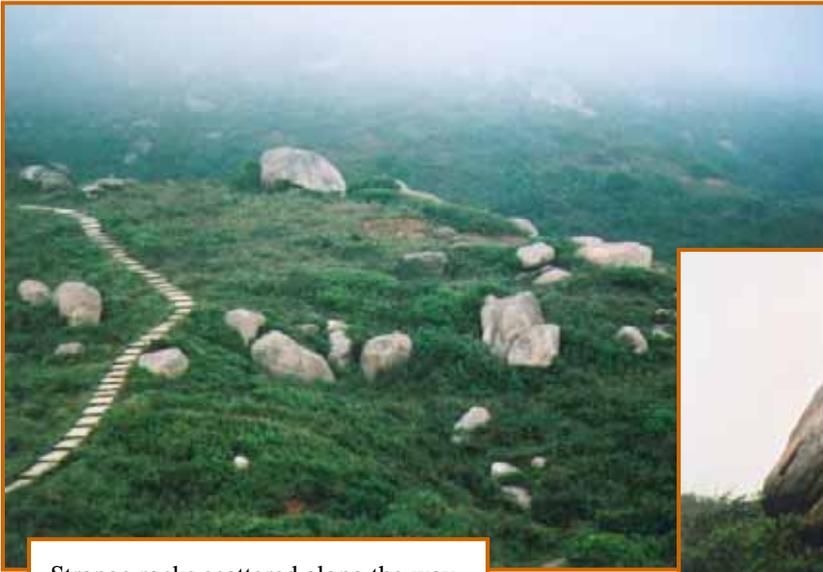
The Landing Dog

### **Attractions: Strange Rock formations and Archaeological remnants**

Apart from the inviting rock formations, the island is a place for archaeology explorers as in the 1950s, archaeologists found that community was formed and lived around Sham Wan in the southern part of the island as early as in 4000BC.

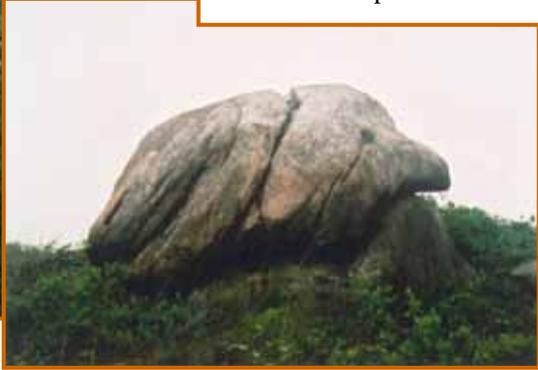
Another must-go for the adventurous travelers is the Kamikaze Cave- also known as Shinyo (literally meaning shaking the ocean). The Cave was said to have been built by the Japanese soldiers, when they occupied Hong Kong during the Second World War for the purpose of housing fast boats that were supposed to launch kamikaze attacks on Allied shipping. It would be real fun to go deep into the cave and imagine what the the wartime condition was like at that time.

Its historical value, together with its distinguished rock formations and geological features make it a popular destination among adventurers.

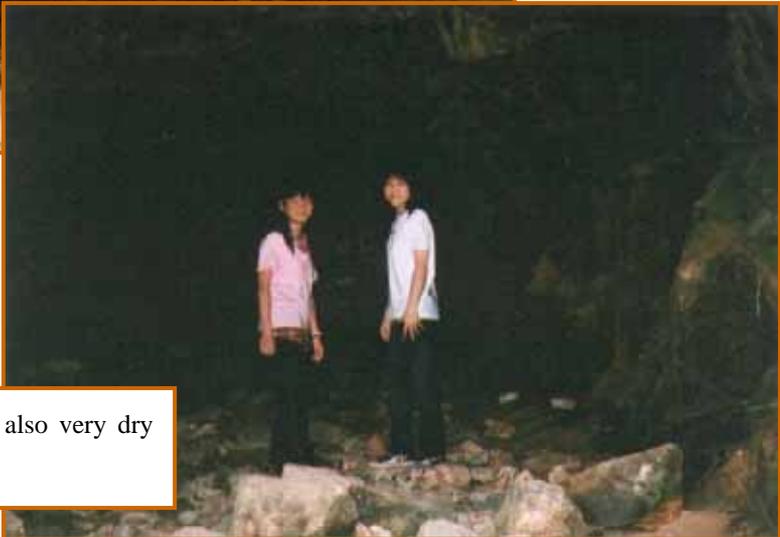


Strange rocks scattered along the way

Use your imagination – Does it look like a dolphin?



The famous Kamikaze Cave which was built by the Japanese soldiers in WWII to house the attack fast boats.

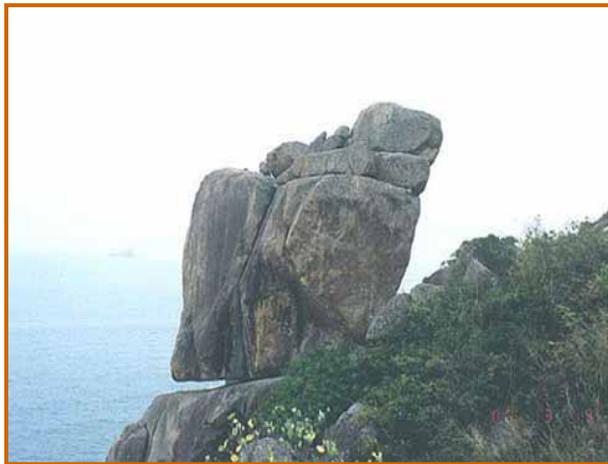


It is very dark but also very dry and clean inside

## ii) Po Toi Island and Tap Mun

“Po Toi” is a small desolated rocky island lying just three kilometers off the southeastern tip of Hong Kong Island. As the island forms the most southerly point of Hong Kong’s territory, it is also nicknamed the "South Pole" of Hong Kong.

The total area of the island is only about 4 square kilometers and there are only a handful of permanent residents living on the island, the remoteness makes it an ideal place for adventure exploration.



Sea Snail Rock

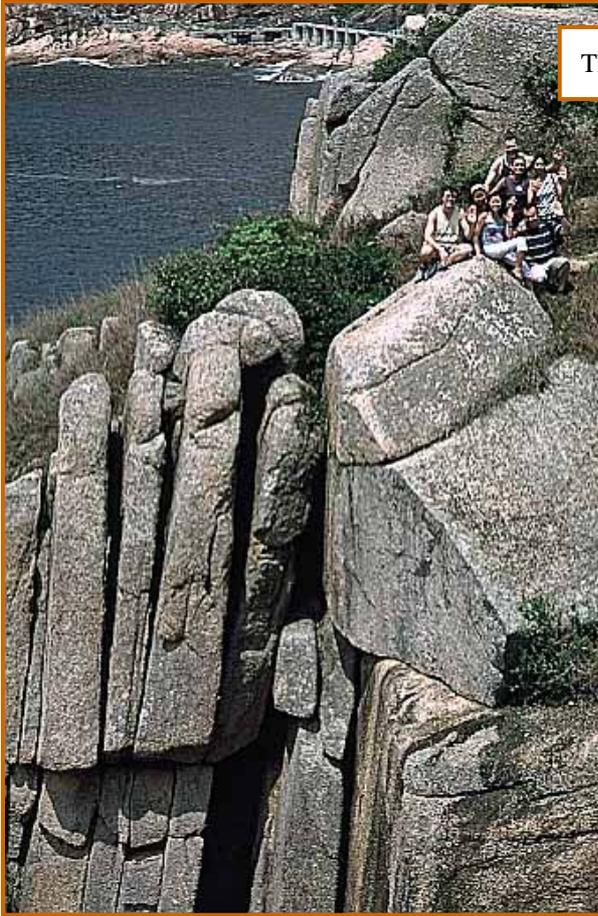


Dragon-head Rock

### Attractions: Strange Rock formations and “Old Mo’s House”

Just like the other four islands aforementioned, Po Toi is well known for its stunning rock formations and has been the haven for hiking teams over the years. The interesting rock formations which have been given evocative names based on their resemblances to different features stimulate explorers’ imagination and make the island a popular tourist destination for tour groups and individual adventurers.

Apart from the rocks, ruined buildings are common to be seen on Po Toi. The island is made even more inviting to adventurers with its two landmarks, i.e., “Old Mo’s House” and the now automatic lighthouse. “Old-Mo’s House”, also known as the “Ghost House”, is a ruined building where Japanese soldiers stayed during the Second World War. It was rumoured that the all the members of Mo’s family vanished one night and wailing sound could be heard from the House. Its ruggedness and sense of desolation heightens its gloomy atmosphere and seems inviting to adventurers.

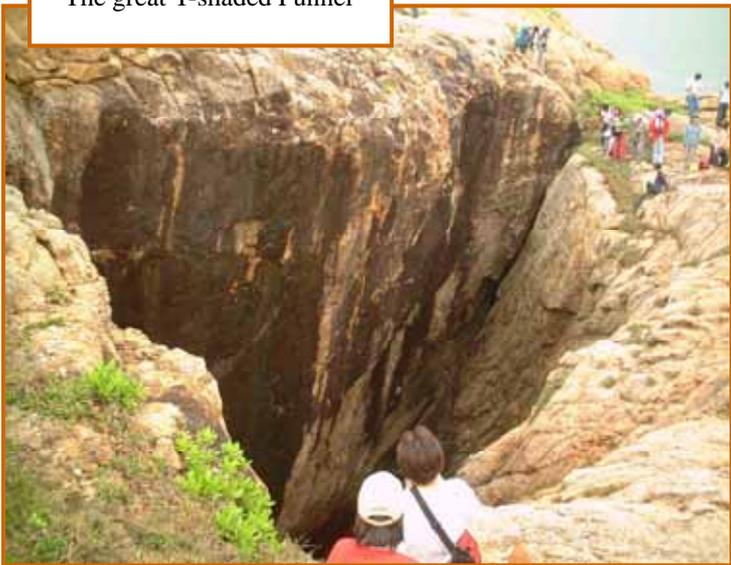


The famous Buddha's Palm

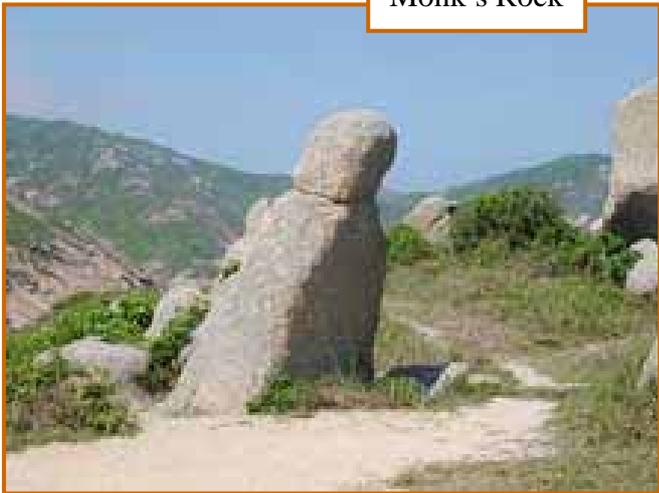


Mo's House

The great Y-shaped Funnel



Monk's Rock



Tap Mun, or Tap Mun Chau in full, is a small island at the far east of Hong Kong. The name (in Chinese "Tap" means pagoda and "Mun" means door) was given because of the many large rocks lying along the costal line, emulating many pagodas guarding the water entrance to the Hong Kong territories.

The island is located in Mirs bay and is 1.76 square kilometres in size. On top of its relatively small area of less than 2 square kilometers, the island is also flat, with the highest point of the island being only 125 meters above sea level. Because of the short and easy routes, it is an idea place for family hiking.

Historical records show that the fishing village has been there since the early 17th century. About 200 people lived on the island in 1898, and by 1960 had increased to 1,955. Today, culture and natural greenery remain, with various picturesque spots linked together forming a trail around the island.

### **Attraction: Sunrise Pavilion and Balanced Rock**

Thanks to its small area and clear signage, a circuit tour around the island gives travelers an opportunity to experience the local life. A five-minute walk from the left of the Tin Hau Temple will promise the first breath-taking attraction at the Hill Top that will catch your eyesight, i.e., the Sun Rise Pavilion. In front of it is the unblocked view facing east to the Mirs Bay. This area is also a perfect campsite for nature lovers to gaze stars at night and view the sun rise in the next morning.

Not far from the Hill Top is the renowned Balanced Rock, which gives the energetic adventurers a chance for more strenuous exercise. One can carefully trek down the pebble beach and then climb to the top of the two precariously balanced boulders. It will be strenuous and challenging enough for the most energetic adventurers.

**Level of difficulty: \*\*\*\***

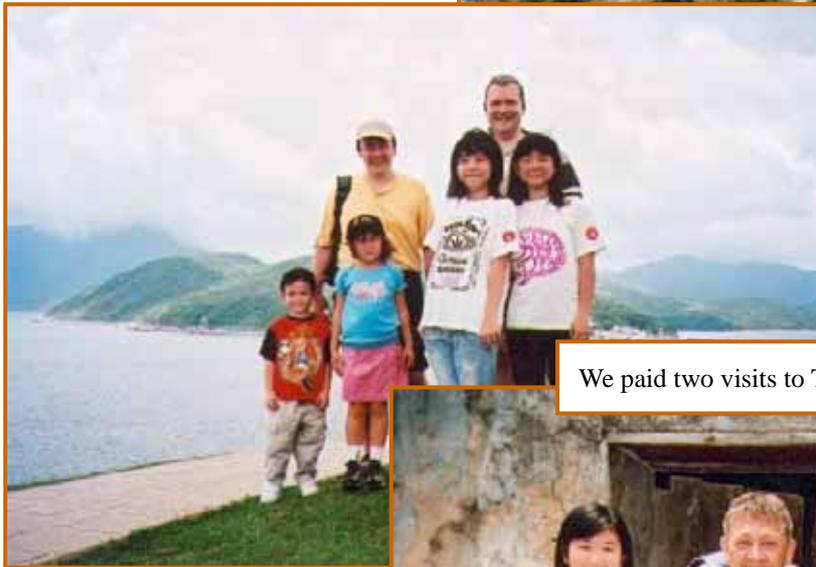
#### **Safety tips:**

- A. It is usually less strenuous than rock climbing but suitable clothing and sneakers, especially raincoats, should be well prepared in advance.**
- B. Sufficient water can prevent heat stroke.**
- C. Must not work alone but in group**
- D. Keep an eye on the weather forecast.**

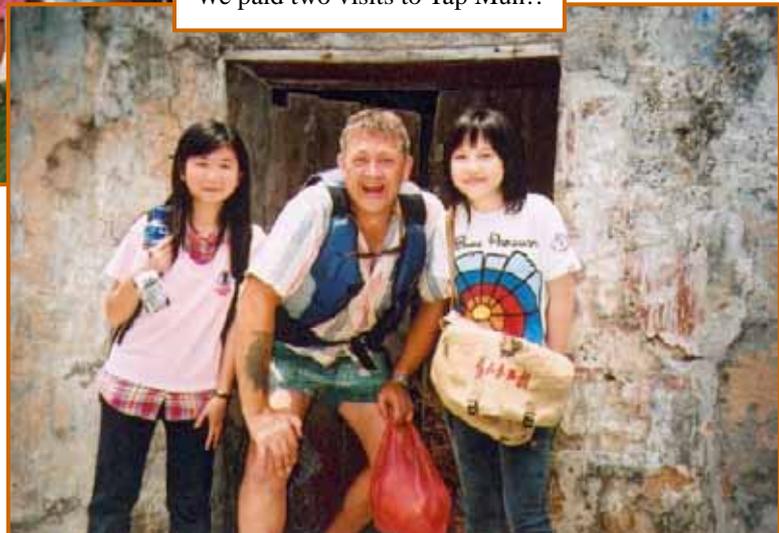
The famous "Balanced Rock" on Tap Mun.



Different forms of soft adventure tourism – hiking and exploring a deserted village remnant can both be journeys of great discovery.



We paid two visits to Tap Mun!!



## DAY 3 : Marine Parks and Marine Organisms

Geographically speaking, Hong Kong is surrounded by sea and has a sea surface area of about 1 650 sq. km.

As Hong Kong lies within the sub-tropical area on the southern coast of China at the estuary of Pearl River, the territory is affected by the seasonal fluctuations of warm, cold water and monsoon weather conditions. All these favourable conditions give rise to the abundant treasure box of marine animals inhabiting in the HK waters. An admixture of tropical and temperate forms like corals, sea grasses, fishes and dolphins are all common scenes in HK.

To protect and conserve the marine reserves and biodiversity, the Marine Parks Ordinance Cap. 476 was enacted in 1995 which provides for the designation, control and management of marine parks and marine reserves. Under the law, four marine parks have been constructed, namely

- i) Yan Chau Tong Marine Park
- ii) Hoi Ha Marine Park
- iii) Tung Ping Chau Marine Park
- iv) Sha Chau and Lung Kwu Chau Marine Park

For the sea lovers, the barely developed marine environment promises many beautiful places to explore and the sheer thrill of watching the rich flora and fauna in their natural habitat is unparalleled in the adventurous travelers' eyes.



## **Suggested destination: i) Double Haven (Yan Chau Tong) – A Haven of Peace and Tranquility**

The Yan Chau Tong Marine Park is located on the north east coast of Plover Cove Country Park which was designated on 5 July 1996. With a total sea area of about 680 hectares, the Park is an ideal place for sightseeing and discovery as a wide variety of landforms, such as bays, projecting headlands, peninsulas, rock cliffs, sand pits and beaches can be found within. Some local people even appreciate this area and called it "Mini Kweilin" in Hong Kong.

### **Attractions: Diverse ecology of Yan Chau Tong Marine Parks**

The Yan Chau Tong Marine Park is diverse in both biology and habits and famous for three important coastal ecological habitats, they are

#### 1. Sea-grass bed

Sea-grass is a marine flowering plant that grows on sandy and muddy substrate.

The plant carries great ecological value as it can function to prevent the loss of coastal sand and mud. It also provides shelter for juvenile and larvae of most fishes and marine invertebrates and serves as food for some marine lives such as sea urchin and fishes.

Yan Chau Tong is the site with the best covers of marine eel grass in Hong Kong.

Dwarf Eel Grass



## 2. Mangrove

Mangrove plays a prominent role in the ecosystem as it acts as the nursery grounds for juvenile of fishes and other marine invertebrates. Two important mangrove areas are located at Lai Chi Wo and Sam A Tsuen within Yan Chau Tong. All the eight species of true mangrove found in Hong Kong were recorded at Lai Chi Wo.

## 3. Coral community

Lai Chi Wo has an amazingly rich diversity of hard corals and thirty-seven species of hard corals were recorded. It is one of the best coral growing sites known in Yan Chau Tong Marine Park. The dominant species in the shallow coastal water are *Platygyra* sp. and *Favia* sp. hard corals.



Jelly Fish

## ii) Hoi Ha Wan Marine Park

Hoi Ha Wan Marine Park is a sheltered bay located north of the Sai Kung West Country Park. Covering an area of about 260 hectares, the park is one of the first batch of Marine Parks established in Hong Kong and was designated in 1996.

### Attraction: Coral communities and Lime Kiln remnants



### Coral communities and other marine lives

It is well known that Hoi Ha Wan Marine Park has lush coral communities. As Hoi Ha Wan Marine Park is a sheltered bay with superb water quality, it provides a good marine environment for housing a great variety of marine organisms. Fifty-nine out of 88 stony coral species recorded in Hong Kong can be found in this marine park. Hard corals of *Cyphastrea* spp., *Echinophyllia* spp., *Favia* spp., *Favites* spp., *Goniopora* spp., *Leptastrea* spp., are dominating in either one or more coral sites within the Marine Park.

Over 120 species of reef-associated fishes have been recorded in this Marine Park. Furthermore, records of wide variety of marine animals in this marine park such as starfish and jellyfish, further demonstrates its ecological significance and makes the park an adventurous place for sea lovers.



## Historical remnants

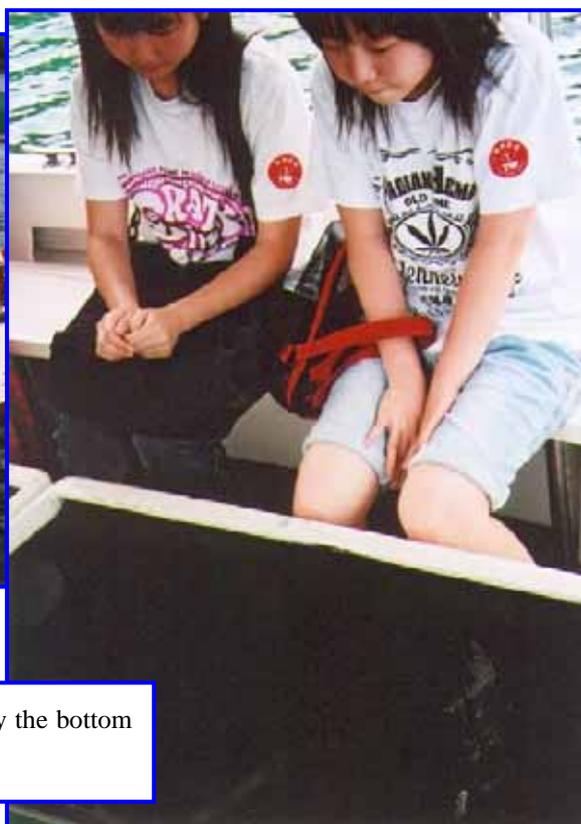
Apart from the marine treasures, another famous scenic heritage spot in Hoi Ha Wan is the remnants of lime kiln. Lime kiln industry was one of the oldest industries (1800 - 1939) in Hong Kong which refined lime from either oyster shells or coral skeletons for construction and agricultural uses.

There are now totally 4 lime kilns in Hoi Ha Wan but only 2 remain relatively intact. They are located on the eastern shore of inner Hoi Ha Wan. The prosperity of this industry in Hoi Ha Wan area reflects the history and longevity of coral communities within the Park.

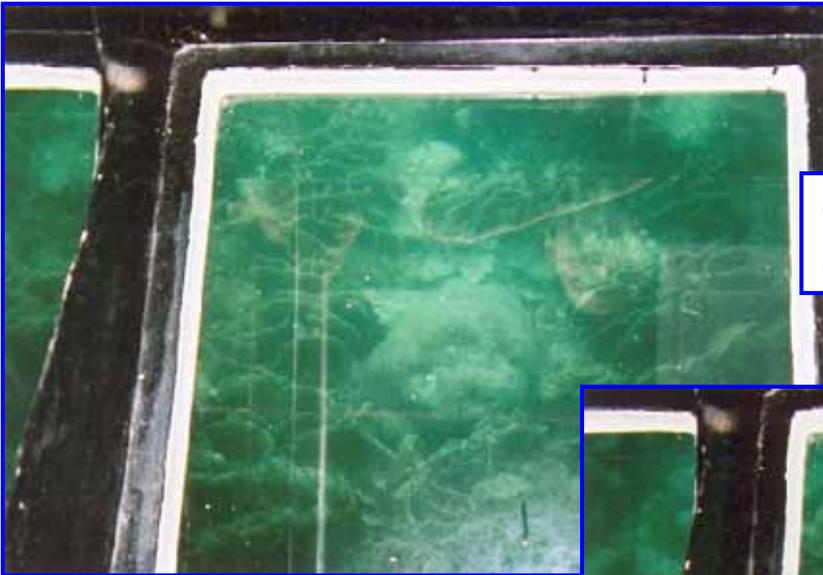
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### Safety tips:

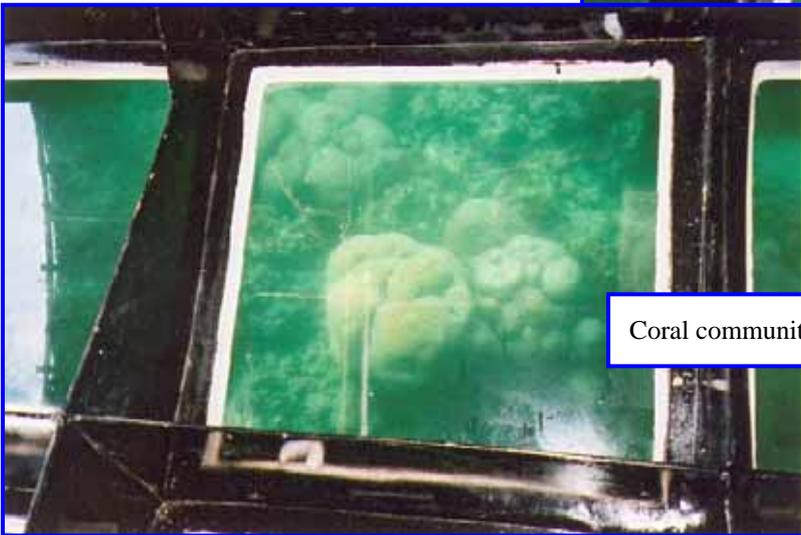
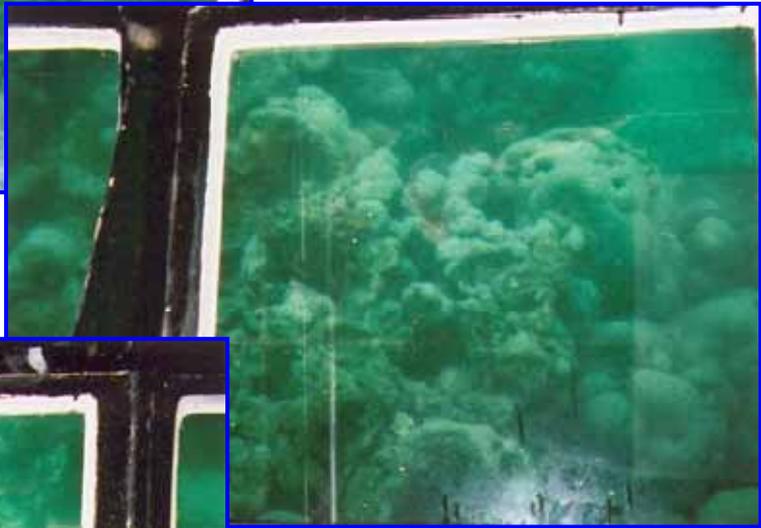
- A. Get medication and plastic bags ready in case of seasick.**
- B. Sufficient water can prevent heat stroke.**
- C. Must not work alone but in group**
- D. Keep an eye on the weather forecast.**
- E. Be a conscientious traveler and do not take away marine organism, coral and shell.**



Visitors on a glass-bottomed vessel are watching attentively the bottom of the sea and exploring the beautiful coral communities.



Corals are great habitats and preying grounds for other marine animals.



Coral communities of different colors and shapes



Can you see the sea cucumber in the middle of the picture?



Abundant algae beds and seaweeds along the sea shore



Cacti – an exotic plant found at the marine park

Dead corals are washed onto the shore by sea waves



## **DAY 4: Wetland and Walking Trails**

**Trekking is an appealing activity in many adventurous travelers' eyes. The long exhaustive walking trips not only lay a test on the trekkers' perseverance but also promise them a chance to explore the striking natural beauty on the way.**

To cater for the interest of these adventure explorers, Hong Kong has four long-distance trails, namely a) the MacLehose Trail, b) the Lantau Trail, c) the Hong Kong Trail and d) the Wilson Trail, which are all well-signposted and easy to follow. Among them, the MacLehose Trail, a ten-staged 100 kilometre-long Country Parks hiking trail, is the most world famous and offers memorable countryside experiences

### **i) MORNING: The MacLehose Trail – Trail of Discovery**

The MacLehose Trail, a 100 kilometre-long Country Parks hiking trail, is divided into ten stages. As it covers the vast majority of the SAR land area, it allows the trekkers to experience the most varied countryside. The east coast, where the Trail begins, is deeply indented and wild. The central mountains, which the MacLehose Trail crosses, include many of Hong Kong highest peaks. Finally, the western part, where the Trail winds to its end, has impressive valley reservoirs.

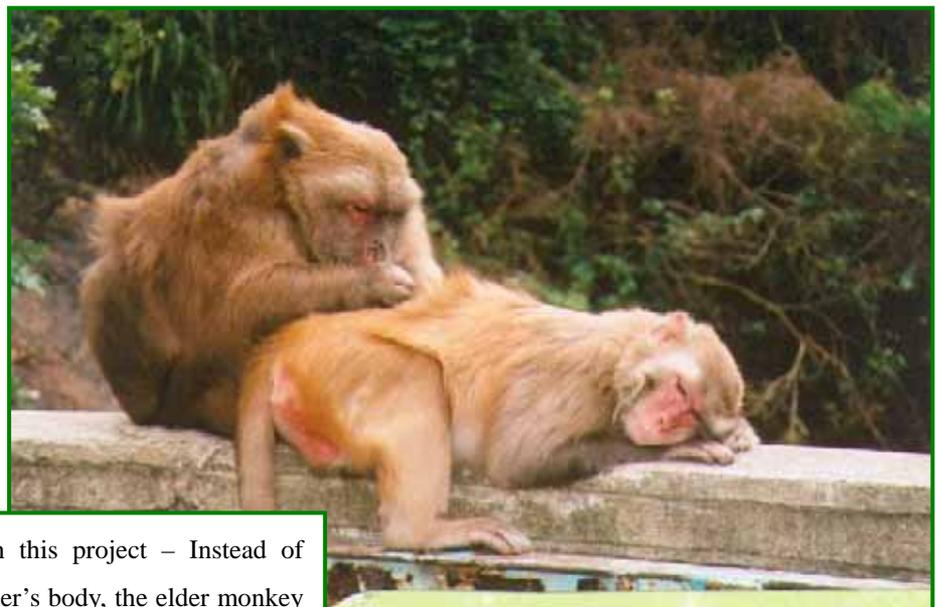
### **Attractions: Let's play hide-and-peek with Monkey King and its fellows!!!**

Among the ten stages, we find Stage Six most adventurous as the Golden Peak Park is a natural habitat of indigenous monkeys! They are seen sunbathing, chasing one another or wandering around the Reservoir area. On top of the breath-taking lush greenery and natural beauty of scenery, travelers can therefore watch the lifestyle of our ancestors in a close distance. This is a very exciting adventure as when you walk along, you might find the monkeys also keeping an eye on you and suddenly they vanish in a second!

As suggested in the definition of “soft adventure tourism” by the Queensland Tourism Board, soft adventure tourism should respond to a number of motivators like adventure, outdoor recreation, physical activity, personal challenge, opportunity for educational experience, and environmental conservation, getting close to the animals in the wild can be an educational experience for us to learn how to respect animals’ right of survival and how to live with them in harmony.



An adventure to play hide-and –seek with the monkeys



The best photo we like in this project – Instead of catching fleas from its partner’s body, the elder monkey are indeed looking for salt crystals to eat as a food supplement. We deem it the greatest discovery we have made in so many trips.

A kind visitor from England expressed great amusement at the sight of so many monkeys. Education for her grandchild too.

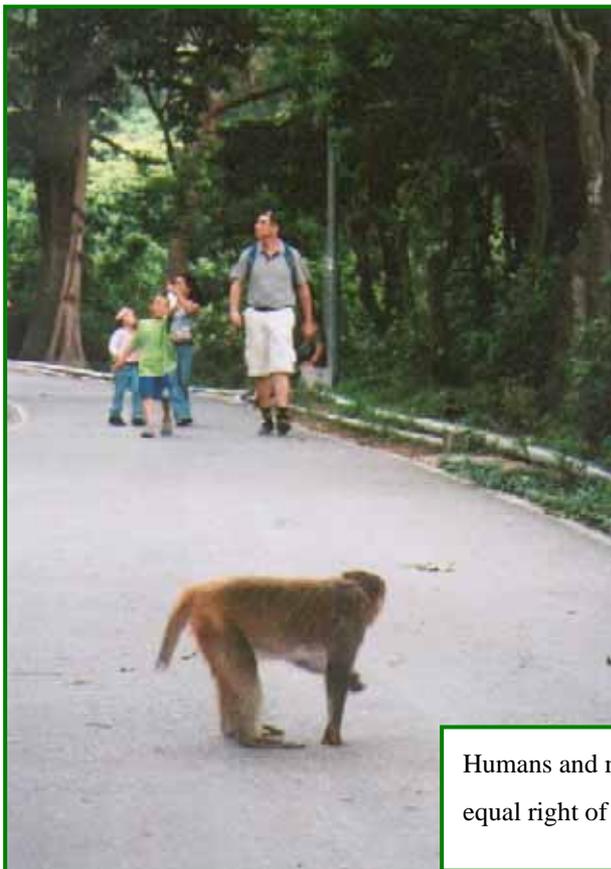


Really exciting to get so close to our ancestors





We can learn how to respect animals and live with them in harmony in the exploration process.



Humans and monkeys are both mammals sharing equal right of survival on earth.

i) AFTERNOON AND EVENING: Tin Kok

**Day Walk – Mangrove in Ting Kok**

When talking about wetlands, people may immediately think of Mai Po or Long Yuen. Yet few realize that a wealth of life is also nurtured in the mangrove in Ting Kok, Tai Po, which has been designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department.

Located at Plover Cove in Tai Po, Ting Kok is the fourth largest mangrove site in Hong Kong. More than ten mangrove species grow there and it is one of the few sites in Hong Kong with a large population of *Lumnitzera racemosa* (欖李).

What is Mangrove?

Mangrove is unique inter-tidal wetland ecosystem found in sheltered tropical and subtropical shores. It plays an important ecological role in a number of ways.

- 1) It provides diverse habitats, breeding sites and feeding grounds for a large variety of coastal species.
- 2) It protects shorelines from erosion due to currents, waves, wind and rain.
- 3) It supplies food and feed for fisheries and aqua-culture e.g. Gei wai in Mai Po.
- 4) The fallen leaves of mangroves are important food for shrimps, crabs and fishes. The leaves also serve vital links in the wetland food web.
- 5) It is a source of food as leaves and fruits of *Avicennia marina* can be used for honey and fodder production.

In other words, mangrove plays a significant role in maintaining the stability and ecological balance of coastal and marine ecosystems.

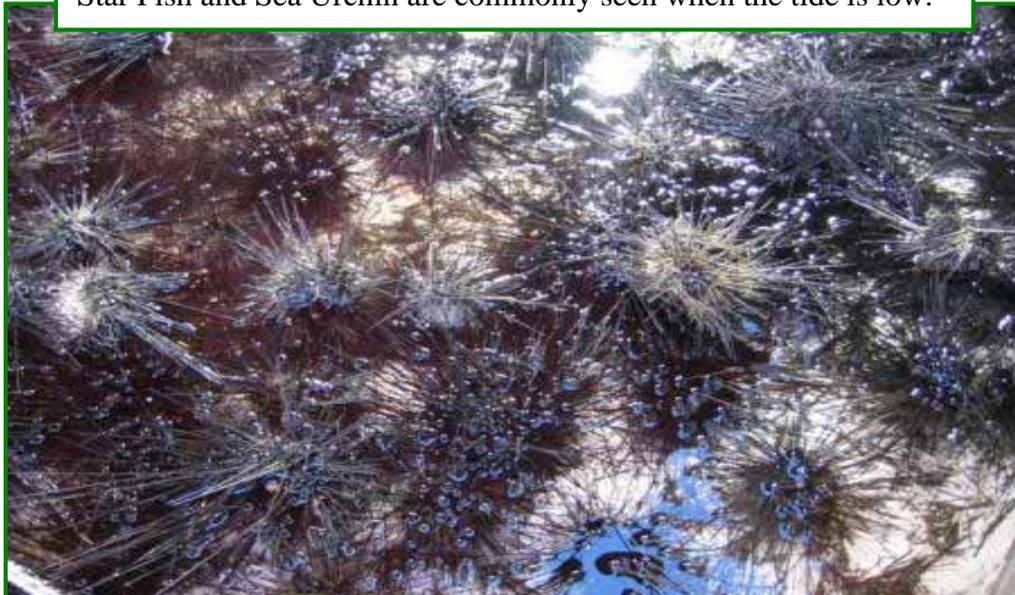


In the Ting Kok Mangrove, coastal plants like *Kandelia* with slender droppers, *Avicennia marina* (海欖雌) with distinct finger-like aerial roots, *Excoecaria agallocha* (海漆), etc are commonly found. Numerous small and intricate spaces provide shelter and breeding grounds for diverse marine organisms like sea snails, clams, fiddler crabs and mudskippers. When the tide is low, starfish, sea urchins and sea cucumber can be found on shore.

As suggested by the definition of soft adventure tourism, it is an educational and recreational journey to witness how the mangroves (紅樹林) fight against waves and tides, protecting the whole eco family. The extraordinary fauna and flora allow the nature lovers to explore and discover the wonder of mother nature.



Star Fish and Sea Urchin are commonly seen when the tide is low.





Bruguiera gymnorrhiza – a common plantation at the mangrove area.



Special aerial roots developed to facilitate easy respiration.



The seeds of Kandelia will drop onto the ground and germinates. Adventure tourism allows us to witness this peculiar way of plant reproduction.



Exploring the biodiversity at coastal area can be great adventure for kids to learn about nature.



Hunting for clams and other marine organisms at the Coastal area is just like treasure hunting.



The coastal area is a wonderland abundant in crabs and seashells worth exploring.

## **Night Walk - Tai Po Kau**

Tai Po Kau, a specially protected area in the New Territories, is widely regarded as Hong Kong's richest and most ecologically important forest. Indeed, it was one of the first areas to be reforested and is consequently now one of the oldest and best maintained woodlands in the territory. The area of the reserve is 460 hectares, and covers the long-established forestry plantations. The plantations extend from the eastern slopes of Tso Shan (Grassy Hill ) down to Tai Po Road.

### **Attractions: Befriend with toads and fireflies in the dark!!**

Being heavily wooded, with more than 100 different species of native trees (many labelled by the forestry department), shrubs, ferns and woodland plants, it is now home to numerous species of wildlife including pangolin, civets and barking deer. You may well also run into heavily equipped bird watchers and even a few woodland birds unique to the area. In late winter and early spring there are many beautiful butterflies.

But what attracts the adventurous travelers most is a night walk through the plantation as they can find an array of plants organisms around you in a dark surrounding. Apart from moths and Fireflies can be found at the water catchment area and different kinds of frogs can be seen welcoming you at the junction of the roads. Wild mushrooms and numerous kinds of plants are common scenes in the area. The night walk experience is both exciting and enlightening as it leads you to discovery of how we can live with the other creatures on earth in harmony.



Mature Woodland

Level of difficulty: \*\*

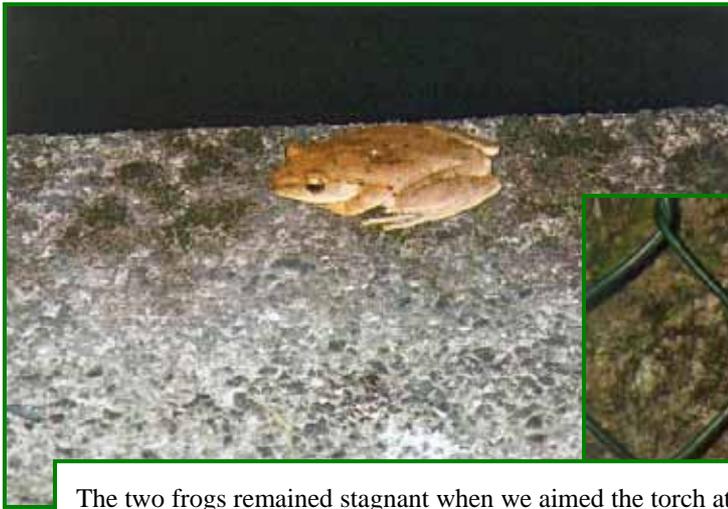
**Safety tips:**

- A. Do not get too close to unfamiliar plants and animals.**
- B. Get medication and plastic bags ready in case of seasick.**
- C. Sufficient water can prevent heat stroke.**
- D. Must not work alone but in group**
- E. Keep an eye on the weather forecast.**
- F. Be a conscientious traveler and do not take away marine organism, coral and shell.**



Ferns and wild mushrooms are common plants in the woodland.





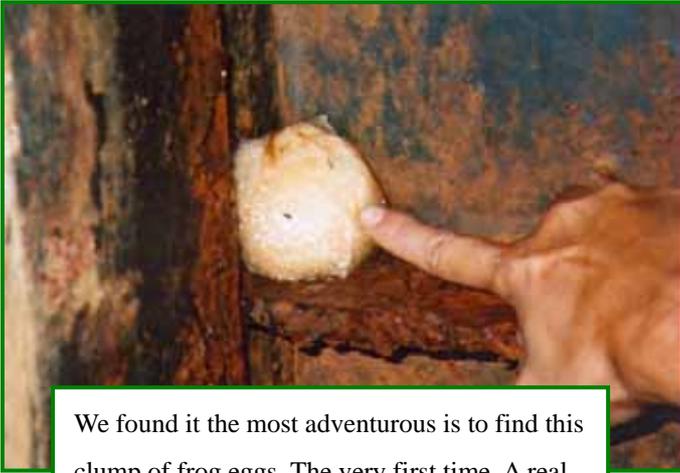
The two frogs remained stagnant when we aimed the torch at them.



Can you name these two types of frogs? The one below is a toad! We were really overjoyed when making this great discovery!



Asian Common Toad



We found it the most adventurous is to find this clump of frog eggs. The very first time. A real eye-opener.



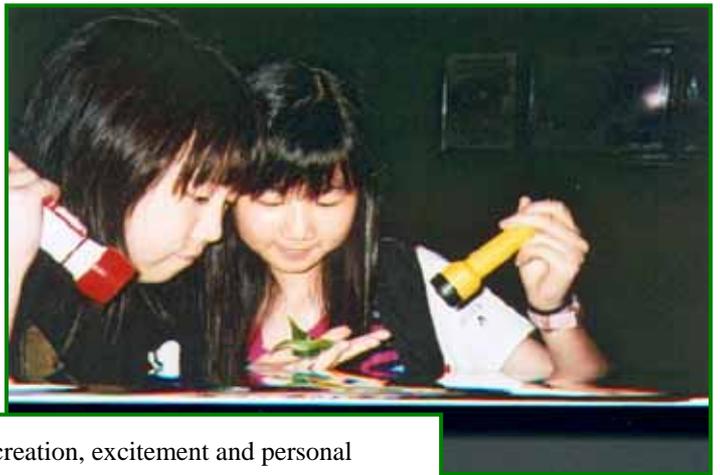
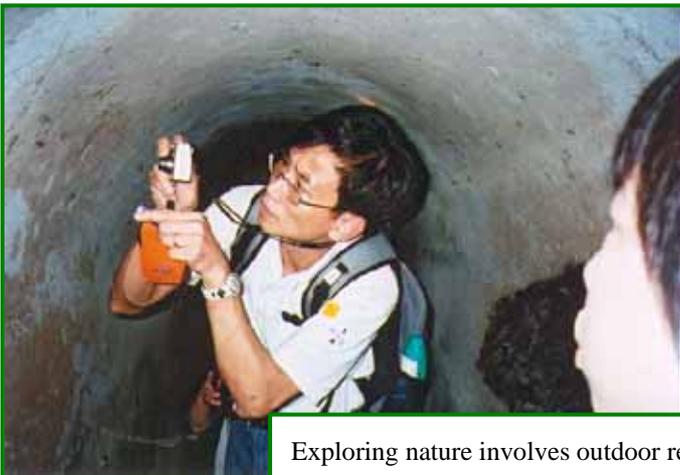
The eggs are then hatched into these ting tadpoles.



The cocoon of a moth



The larvae of a firefly.



Exploring nature involves outdoor recreation, excitement and personal achievement – all important travel motivators for adventure tourism.

## **DAY 5 & 6 : Cultural Exploration**

Apart from the lush green scenery and natural beauty, the city streets and 260 outlying islands display exuberant cultural heritage which is enlightening and educational to the explorers.

### **DAY 5: Cheung Chau**

Cheung Chau is a tiny dumbbell-shaped island located about 12 kilometers south of the Hong Kong Island. Meaning “Long Island” in Cantonese, it is one of the most popular islands in HK as it promises a mixture of the traditional and modern cultures. While the island is always packed with holiday makers and becomes a colourful Mediterranean style promenade, the traditional rituals and culture fascinate the inquisitive explorers and help them gain an insight into what life is like in traditional Chinese communities.

#### **Attraction: The Parade and The Bun Festival**

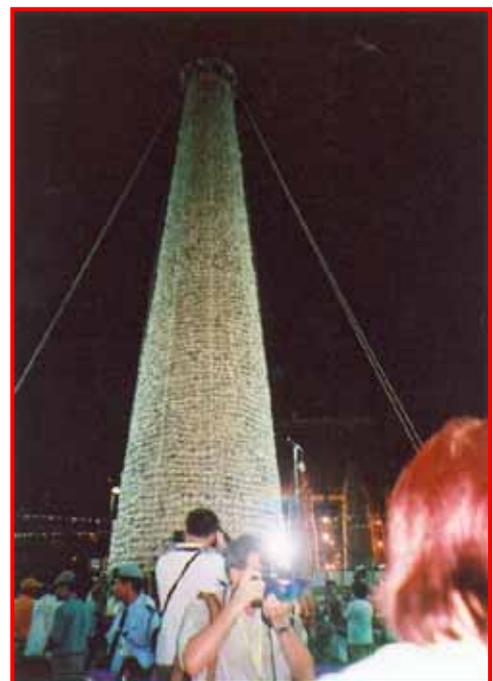
Said to have a hundred years of history, the Bun Festival is one of the most joyous festivals on the island.

Every year in May, all people on the island must keep in vegetarian diet for three days, until the festival climaxes with a large, colourful street procession, which features costumed children on stilts in a carnival atmosphere that winds its way through the streets. This ritual was said to have originated from a plague on the island hundreds of years ago. Since then, villagers disguised themselves as different deities and walked around the island to drive away the evil spirits responsible for the plague.

The most spectacular feature of these programmes is the bun towers – enormous bamboo towers studded with white Chinese sweet bun and effigies of three gods dominate the grounds near the Pak Tai Temple, where the main festivities take place. The tradition has it that the locals should scamper up the bamboo bun tower and grab as many buns as they can. As the buns are believed to have been blessed by gods, they symbolize good fortune and longevity. They would then be distributed to those who did not join in the competition.

The festival was ceased after an accident in 1978, when the bamboo structure of the bun tower bent in the middle and half fell. However, after years of negotiation, the festival was revived and has brought life to the whole island again.

Involving ourselves in the festival atmosphere in such cultural rituals is an adventure itself as we can get exposed to the exotic practice, norms and taboos of a particular place. It promises cultural discovery and familiarization with the indigenous culture. A sense of joy and excitement is attained when we get to know something foreign to our own culture.





A colorful parade of children dressed in traditional Chinese costumes.



Chinese legendary characters brought to life.



Adventure tourism does not necessarily involve strenuous physical exercise – Cultural exploration promises a sense of fun and discovery, thus personal growth as well.

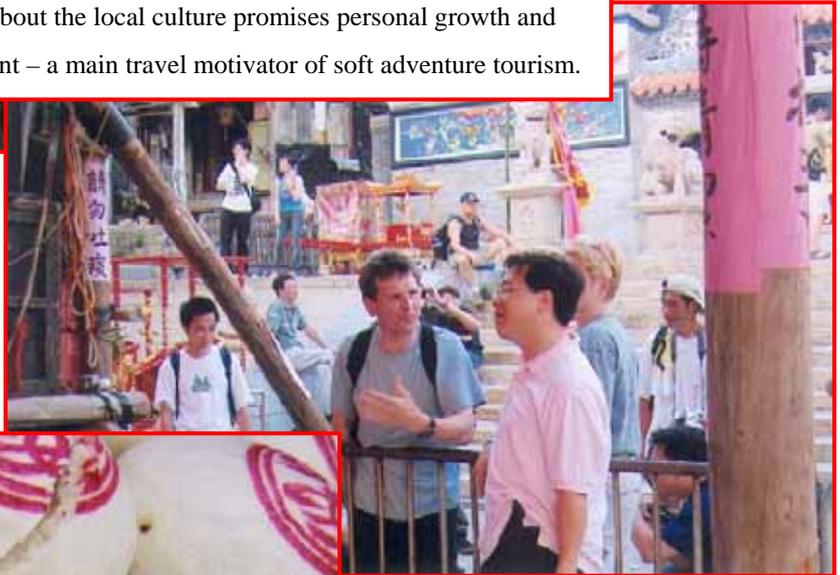


When in Rome, do as Romans do – the best way to explore the indigenous culture.





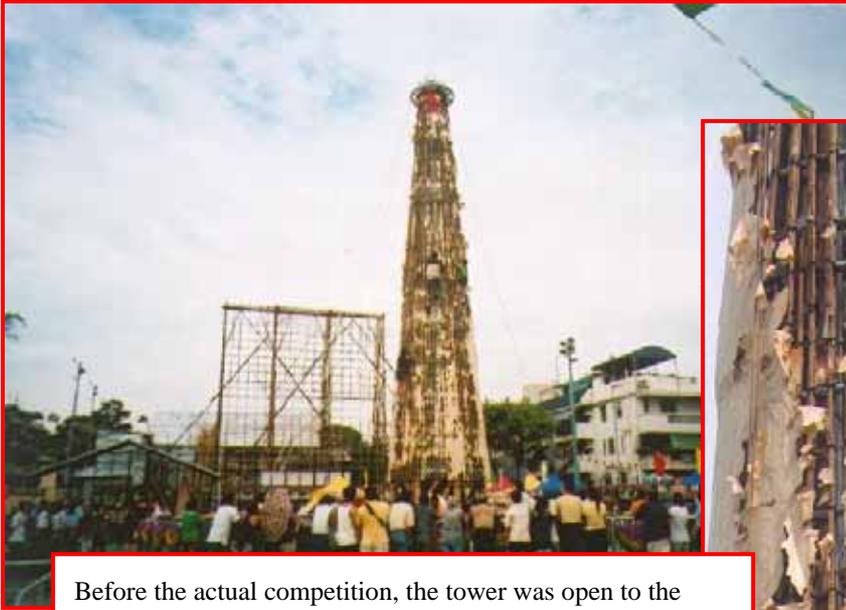
Learning about the local culture promises personal growth and achievement – a main travel motivator of soft adventure tourism.



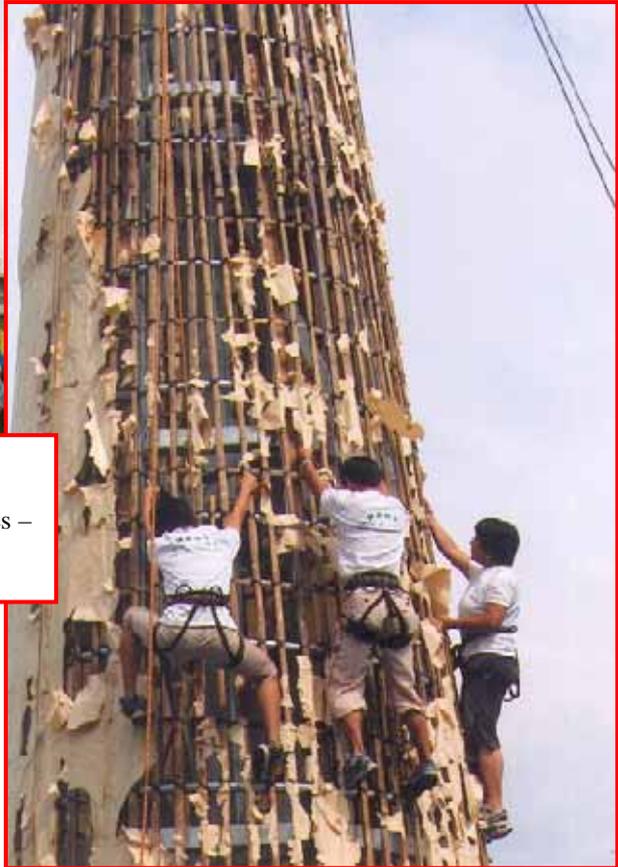
Chinese white buns - Can you see the sweet lotus seed puree stuffing inside?

A hundred buns signify a hundred blessings.





Before the actual competition, the tower was open to the public for a trial climbing under the supervision of coaches – A real test of your skill and courage!



The giant bun tower erected near the North Emperor temple.



The exciting competition is under way!

## **DAY 6: Venturing the city streets**

### i) Wanchai- a Diverse Environment

The Wanchai District is a unique fusion of the old and the new. Once a barren, rocky bay on HK Island until 1921, when reclamation began, it has developed from a residential area to a prime centre of business, conventions, exhibitions, cultural and sports activities, entertainment and shopping.

The 78-storey Central Plaza, for example, is the fourth tallest building in Asia, The Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, which looks like a seagull taking flight in Victoria Harbour was the venue of the historic ceremony for Hong Kong's reunion with China in 1997. Shopaholics continue to make their pilgrims to Times Square is now one of Hong Kong island's most important transport, cultural and economic hubs.

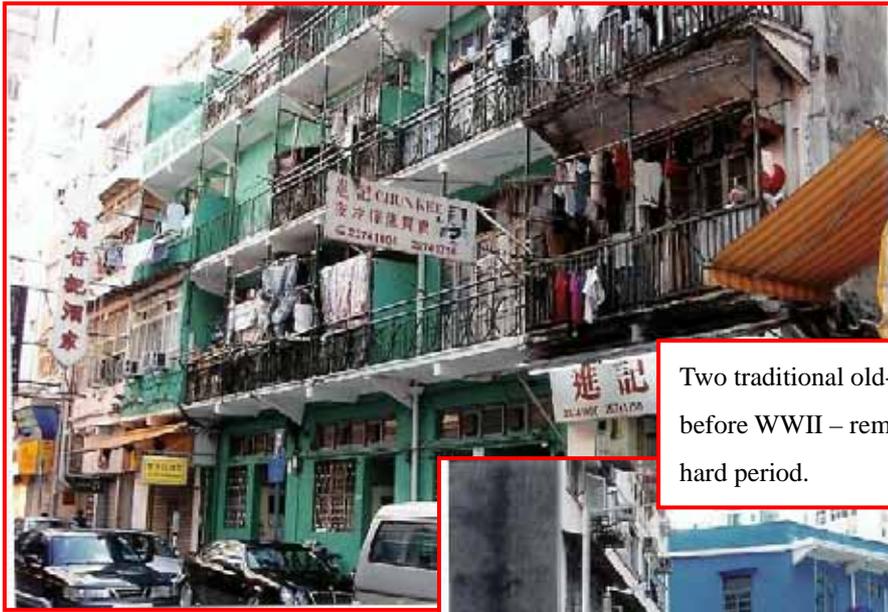
### **Attractions : old-style traditional buildings**

Despite these world acclaimed district landmarks, traditional buildings stand side by side with their young counterparts in harmony and makes the city a mixing pot of old and new.

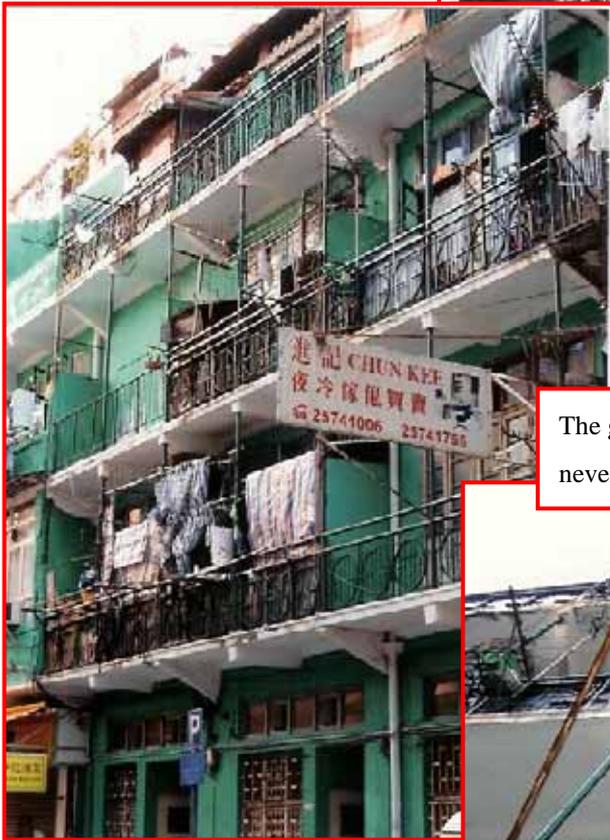
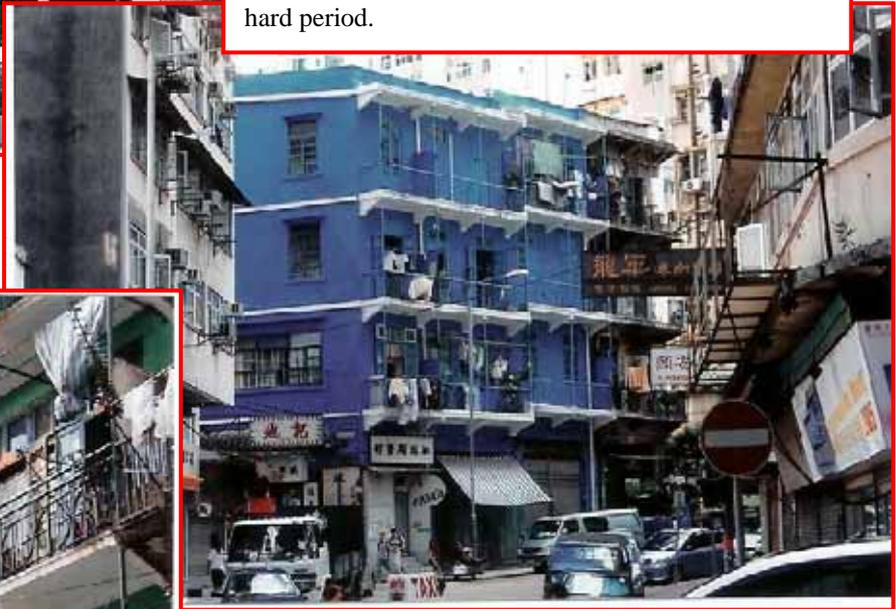
One of the historic relics is the Old Wanchai Post Office, a charming Chinese-styled building. Built in 1912-1913 and was opened as Hong Kong's first post office in 1915 with a simple pitched-roof structure, gable ends and mouldings, the building is now a declared monument. It is also the home of the Resource Centre of the Environmental Protection Department.

No 3, Mallory Street is another spot worth venturing. The site included 10 4-storey shop-houses built in traditional style with unique wooden staircase in 1920s. With its rustic bars and balcony can hardly be found nowadays, it stands out among the high-rise commercial buildings and seem to witness the development of the district. However, it is a pity that under the Revitalisation Project of the Urban Renewal Authority, a large part of it will be demolished or refurbished.

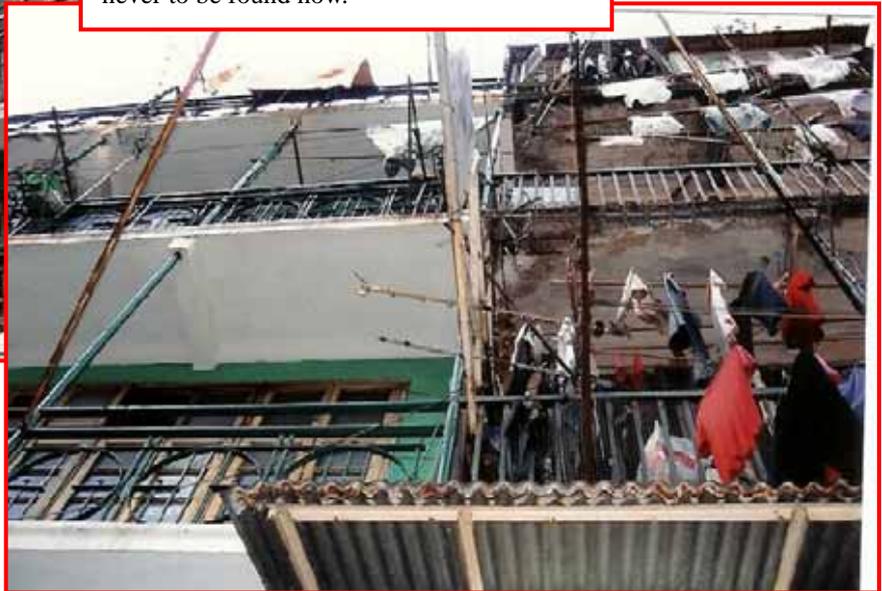
The glimpses at these places help us visualize what life was like before the Second World War and reminiscences HK's past history. It is a discovery of our own identity and origin.



Two traditional old-style building built in 1920s, i.e., before WWII – remind us what life was like in that hard period.



The green rustic bars and big balcony – never to be found now.



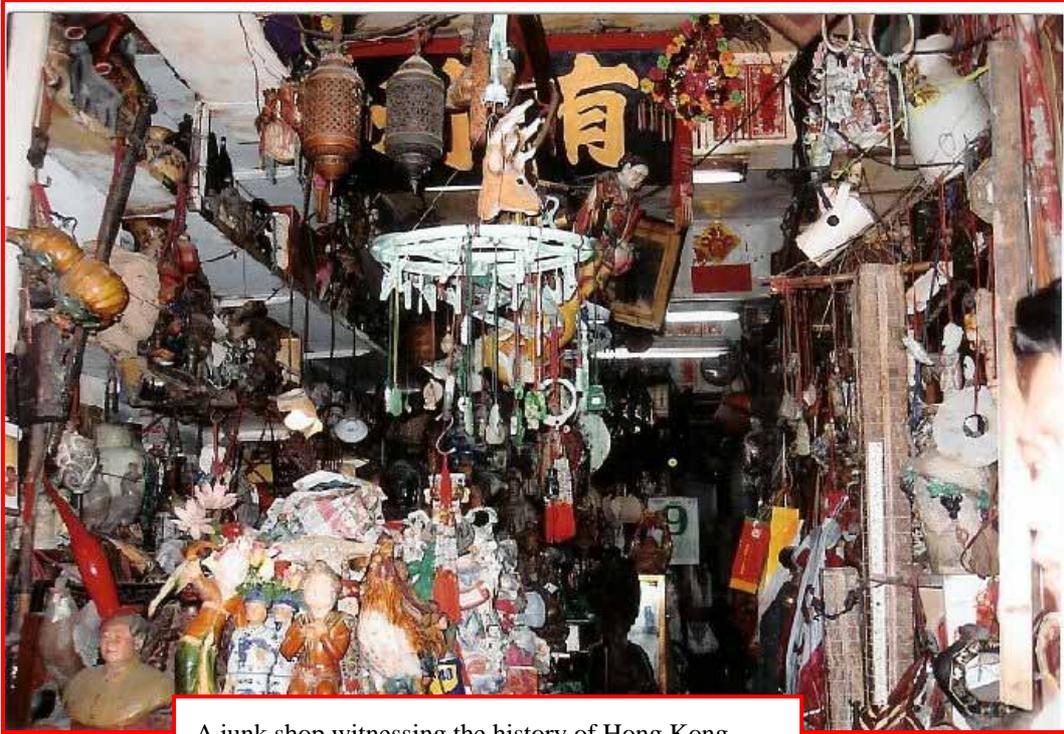


The wooden staircase in Mallory Street – relic of past history.

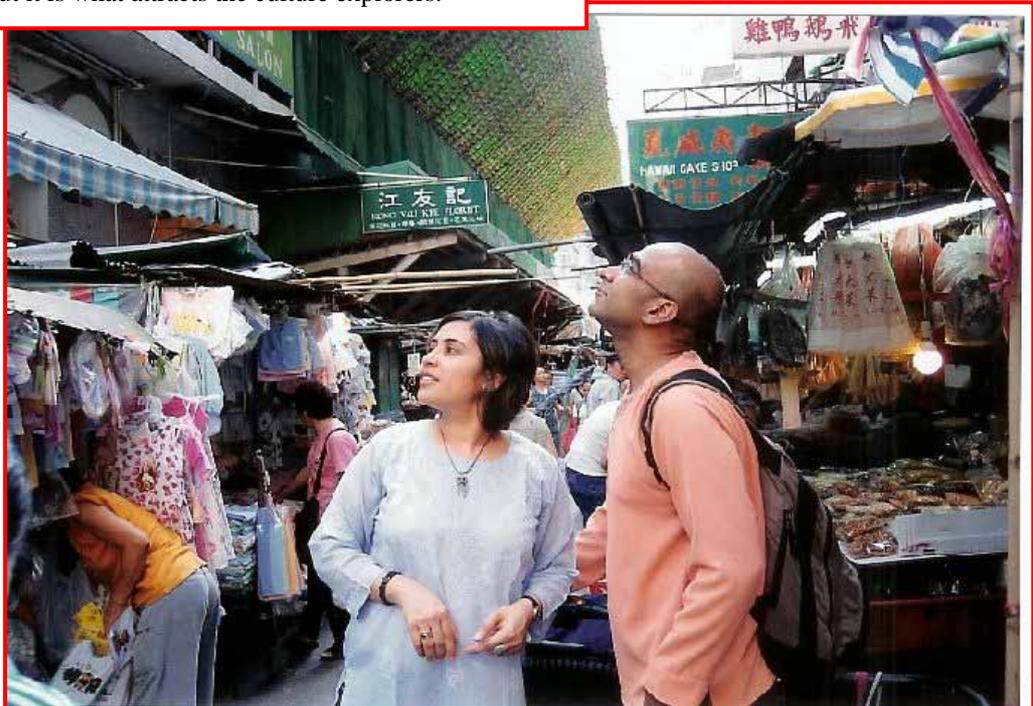


Wedding Card Street in Wanchai – gonna be part of history soon due to the Urban Renewal Project.





A junk shop witnessing the history of Hong Kong.  
But it is what attracts the culture explorers.



### Attraction: Lover's Rock

Adventure tourists who are still single can go and visit the Lover's Rock, which is said to be mysteriously effective in helping the unmarried find their ideal matches. On any lucky day in the lunar calendar, you may find dozens of believers gather to worship the stone.



Lover's Rock



### Attraction: “Da Siu Yan”

And when you walk along the busy street in Wanchai, you may be amazed by the sight of an old lady practicing the Chinese ritual of “Da Siu Yan”, which means hitting and cursing those people of a disadvantage to you. What you need to do is tell her the name of your enemy and pay her forty to fifty dollars. The old lady will then prepare some paper money for the dead and write the name of your enemy on the back of a paper man. She will then hit it heavily with a shoe, while cursing it with the most evil words.



## **Sham Shui Po**

Situated at the northwestern part of the Kowloon Peninsula, Sham Shui Po District covers an area of about 1047 hectares and is most heavily poverty stricken, having the lowest median monthly domestic household income (\$14000). It has the highest percentage of elderly over 65 years (15.7%). The percentage of new arrivals is also very high (11.2%). However, it gives us a glimpse of what life is really like behind the veil of prosperity for the majority of citizens in Hong Kong.

### **Attraction : Apliu Street**

“Apliu” means “Duck shed” in Chinese. It is also the name of the famous flea market in Sham Shui Po. The items sold there are mainly electrical devices, electronic products and the like; you can find antique clocks, old coins and other aged relics. With luck, you might pick up a rare antique for a song.

### **Attraction2: Snacks Soup and Turtle Jelly**

A more adventurous experience will be to savour the Snake Soup Turtle Jelly in Sham Shui Po.

Despite its very scary appearance and malicious implication, snake is regarded as a very nourishing and nutritious food in Chinese traditions. Rich in protein and usually cooked in form of thick soup, its meat is believed to have different medicinal properties like fostering the blood circulation, thus keeping one warm and boosting one’s body health.

What makes the journey more adventurous is that the snake shops always feature cages of live snakes crawling and hissing in cages. Though all these snacks have had their fangs pulled out, it would be an experience to taste the soup with comrades hissing beside you.

Turtle Jelly, on the other hand, is the famous for its detoxifying effects. Made from turtle shell and traditional herbs braised for hours, it is believed to work wonders on relieving liver heat and curing skin problems. The bitter taste is a real challenge to those who want to have glimpse at Chinese medicine.

## Temple Street

Named after a famous temple in the district, Temple Street is one of the best showcases of the local culture. This night market is known as the Man Street as many stalls selling sex toys, blue magazines dominated the market in the past. But now, items for both children and women like casual wear, jeans, neckties, mobile phones, clocks, watches, and many other can all be found,

The street has been famous for a long procession of Chinese fortune modern trend tellers and their clever birds giving advice to the clients. To follow t d, there are now tarot ladies having their stalls near the public toilets at the same site. The Nepal hawkers join the Chinese ones and make the market a cultural hub of different styles and nationalities and a livelier and busier bazaar than other open markets in Hong Kong.



Cantonese Opera

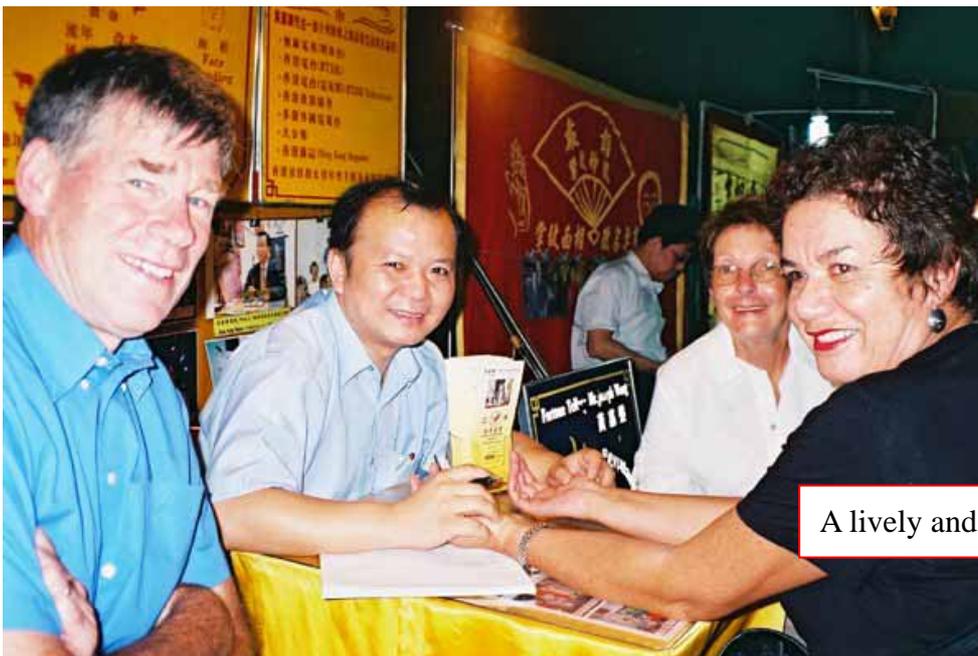




Fortune Teller



Tarot ladies



A lively and busy open market

Level of difficulty: \*

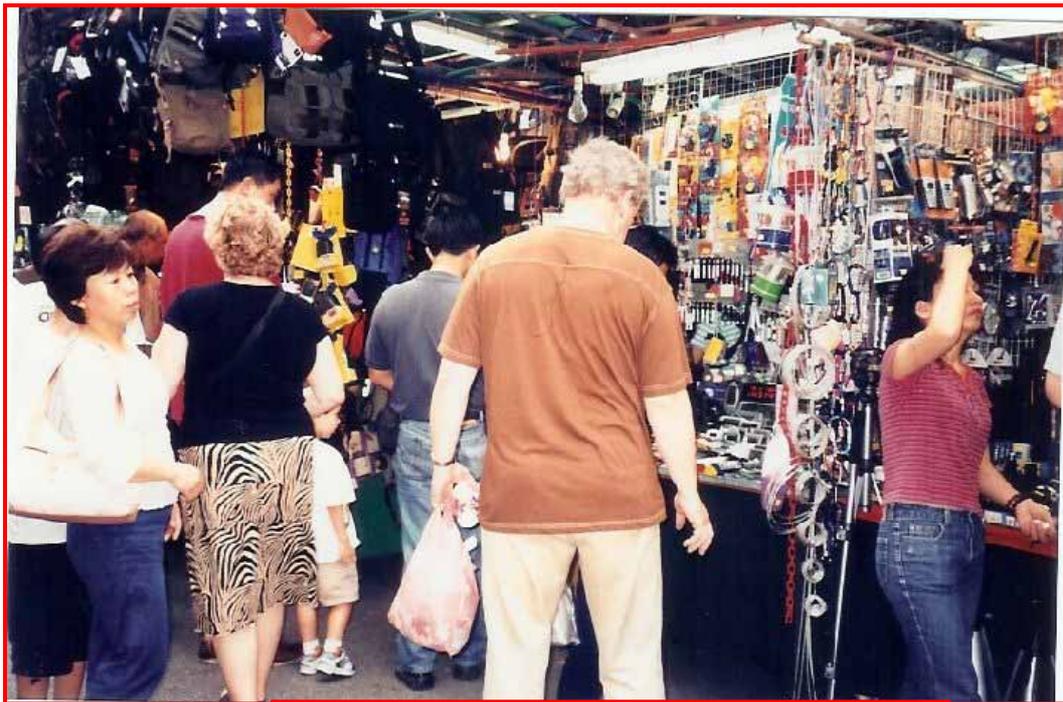
**Safety tips and adventure tips:**

- A. Mind the cultural difference and respect other's culture and rituals.
- B. Open your hearts and try to understand the moral behind each practice or ritual.
- C. Don't just be a bystander – join the locals and experience the local culture yourself.



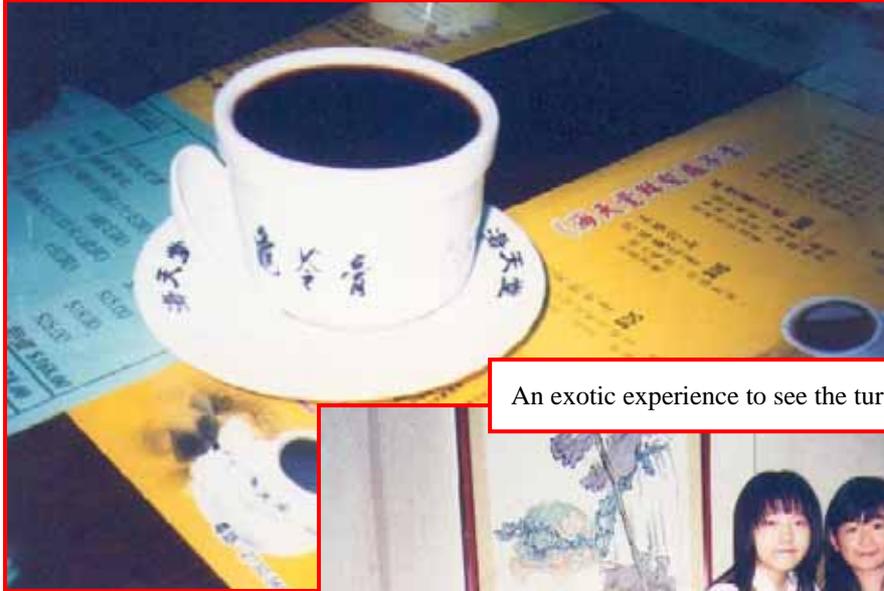
Wet market can be an exotic and adventurous place for visitors.





Adventurous travelers' treasure-hunting in Sham Shui Po.

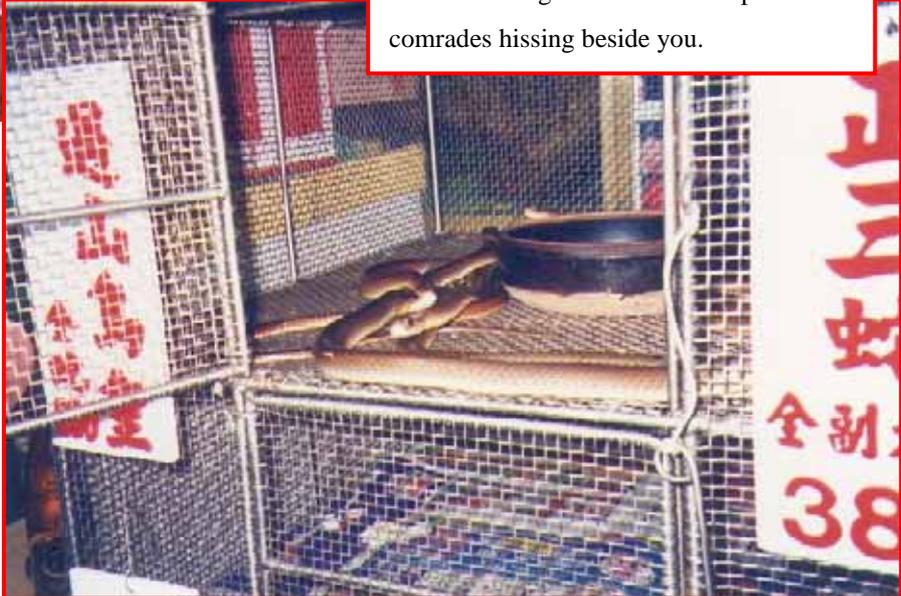




An exotic experience to see the turtle shell and jelly.



A real challenge to eat snake soup with its comrades hissing beside you.



# **CONCLUSION**

The word "adventure" sounds exotic and appealing to our nerves and people always associate "adventure tourism" with strenuous activities like mountaineering or kayaking. Indeed, the term can be seen from a wider perspective and actually involves exploration of the nature and cultural beauty. The process of new discovery and getting close to nature is an adventure as well.

From this perspective, Hong Kong is a treasure land blessed with wonderful resources that allows adventure tourism to flourish.

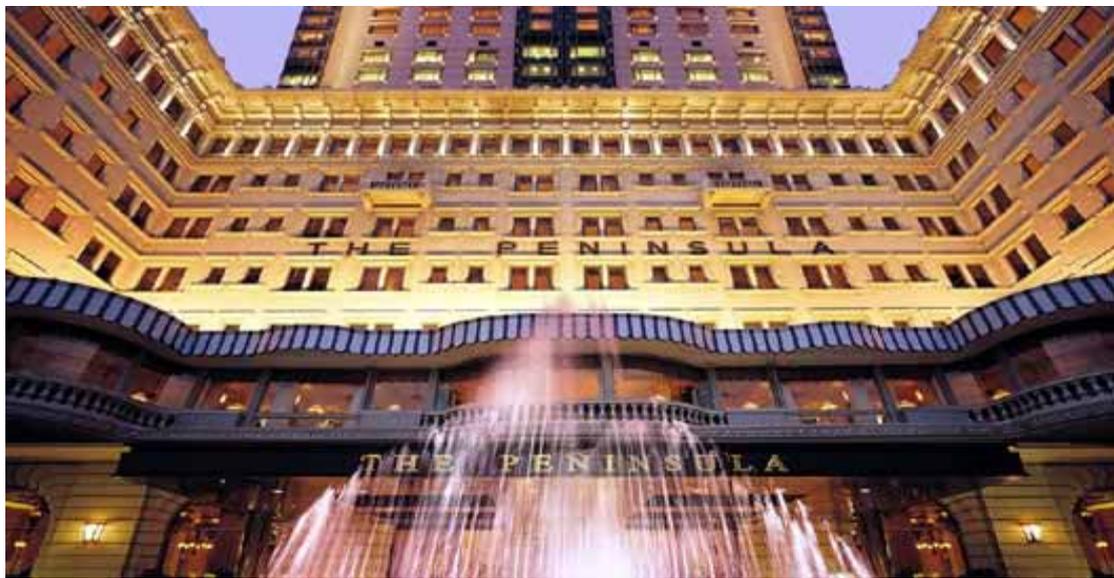
In view of this, Tourism Commission can consider tailor-making some adventure tour packages that showcase threes natural and cultural wonder to the tourists and cater for their needs and interests.

At the same time, we strongly recommend that local authorities like Hong Kong Tourism Board can work in collaboration with the local travel agencies and try to explore the unknown places for the adventure-seeking travelers. More promotion activities could be organised so as to publicize the attractions of these beautiful places.

## APPENDIX - Transportation and Accommodation

After touring around these exciting places, you may be considering the budget for the whole trip. Indeed, there is no entrance fee required for these places and they are basically free of charge.

As far as accommodation is concerned, visitors can find hotel and lodging facilities of all sorts in HK. A room night at a 5 –star hotel like the Peninsula HK costs about US\$339 whereas the same room night at a decent small hostel may cost US\$20 only. They are all very comfortable.



Peninsular Hong Kong – a famous 5 stars hotel in Hong Kong



A luxurious room with a sea view at US\$339 per night


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Types	Bathroom (BR)	Seasonal Prices Daily / Room	Remarks
Single	Private BR	HK\$200-HK\$280	1 single bed
	Shared BR	HK\$180-HK\$250	1 single bed
Double	Private BR	HK\$250-HK\$380	1 double bed; or 2 single beds
	Shared BR	HK\$220-HK\$280	1 double bed; or 2 single beds
Family	Private BR	HK\$350-HK\$450	1 double bed + 1 single bed; or, 3 single beds HK\$400-HK\$450 for 4-people Room with BR: (4 single Beds; or 1 double bed + 2 single beds)
	Shared BR	HK\$300-HK\$350	3 single beds

Above rates are for reference only, please contact us for room rates confirmation, thanks.

A decent room at hostel costs as little as HK\$180 per night





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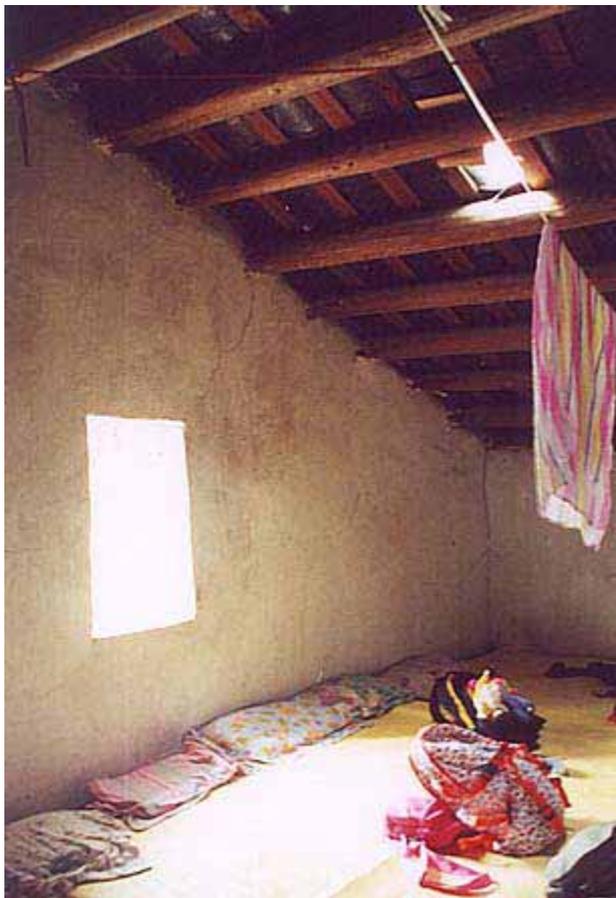


Lodging facilities at a wide price range are available in Hong Kong

To heighten the excitement and experience the local way of life, , we recommend you to stay at the resorts on the islands. Some of the islands mentioned above like Cheung Chau and Po Toi provide simple lodging service at about US\$40.-



Warwick Hotel on Cheung Chau



Hostel in Tung Ping Chau

# Transportation

For easy access to the destinations, it is advisable for visitors to join the local tours in HK. Popular tour companies like Traway Travel Limited and Fat Tat Hong are famous for arranging seasonal tours like island visits and developing unknown places for visitors.

For the more independent travelers, simply grab a copy of a travel guide to HK or visit the official website of Hong Kong Tourism Board [www.discoverhk.com](http://www.discoverhk.com) and there will be full detail on the bus routes or ferry service time table. A return ticket for a ferry cost HK\$40-80 only.

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- \* Between Wong Shek and Tap Mun 來往黃石至塔門
- \* Between Ma Liu Shiu and Tung Ping Chau 來往馬料水至東平洲
- \* Between Wong Shek, Wan Tsai and Chek Keng 來往黃石、灣仔及赤徑

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- \* 《珍珠養殖場、塔門聯遊》
- \* 《東平洲海岸探索一天遊》
- \* 《印塘、吉澳、鴨洲、塔門聯遊》
- \* 《海下灣、南風灣、塔門晨步一天遊》
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Visits to different islands are offered by local tours

# **REFERENCE and ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

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## **Website:**

<http://www.traveler.com.hk/>

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