

Objects of History and Tradition

Objects, decorations and many items inside a walled village often have their own stories. The heavy wrought iron gate at *Kat Hing Wai* best illustrates this point. As mentioned in the previous section, village clans struck for a certain degree of self-independence from the government of their times. The story went on with the British colonial government. The villagers of *Kat Hing Wai* struggled with the British troops, they armed themselves with weapons and launched attacks occasionally. The colonial military tried to destroy the iron gate which guarded the village. Later on, a British officer who was in charge during the war with the New Territories' clans ordered to get this iron gate which had made much trouble to him and after seizing it he sent it to London as a trophy. The clan never stopped claiming it back since then. In 1952, it was shipped back to where it belonged.



The Iron Gate of Kat Hing Wai

Objects of tradition create another kind of interest among tourists. They reflect the way things are perceived and demonstrate the unique culture of walled villages. A typical example is delicately designed ancestral shrine inside a typical walled village ancestral hall. In the early days, clans strived to make their shrines look beautiful and big, it reflected their status.



Ancestral Shrine of a Walled Village

On the gate doors of a walled village is often a pair of two colour-drawn god guardians. It signifies the repelling of all undesired evil spirits and bad luck. On each of the two top ends of a walled village's tiled roof situates a sculpted fish for sake of good *feng shui*.



God Guardians

Village Inhabitants and Lifestyle

Walled villages, unlike their city counterparts, live simple, plain and cozy life. In the old days, most villagers practice farming in nearby areas, it is until recent decades that many of them started going to work in downtown or so.



Hakka Walled Villagers

The *Hakka* women like to play a kind of traditional poker game at leisure. They wear *Hakka* women's country-style clothes and hats. The case study team has met some Western tourists who said the traditional clothing of villagers was part of their sightseeing expectations.



Hakka Women Playing Traditional Hakka Poker Game

Walled villagers generally enjoy good neighbourhood relations. They have frequent communications among themselves. Even nowadays, doors of houses are open inside some of the lived-in walled villages as it is more convenient and encouraging for neighbours to talk to each other. This forms a big contrast to families in cities who always have to ensure their doors are locked and safe for basic security. Tourists coming from cities and urban lifestyle certainly find this walled village's uniqueness an interesting thing to remember.

Culinary Tradition

Walled villagers, like most clans in the New Territories, have their unique recipes. Many of those recipes have been adopted, modified and served in Chinese restaurants elsewhere and even in hotels. Village people prefer fresh ingredients for cooking and their cuisine is exotic. A famous Chinese restaurant in *Yuen Long*, called *Tai Wing Wah Restaurant*, has brought the village cuisine to fame. Every day, groups of inbound and local visitors – among them, many food and beverages professionals - flooded the restaurant for a taste of its exotic approach to cooking. The chef of the restaurant recently hosted a series of television programme demonstrating the style of cooking to viewers. The series is a prime time show on the number one channel in town.



Basin Meal Served at Restaurant



*Basin Meal Served by Cathay Pacific
to Passengers on Flight*

More than that, one of the top airline companies in the world, *Cathay Pacific*, has recently brought on board a famous cuisine invention by walled villagers. It is now serving a mini size of the famous *basin meal* to serve its passengers. *Basin meal* was invented by walled villagers to celebrate happiness and share among neighbours at times of their festive events. It has rice at the bottom and different ingredients including meat and vegetables on top, layer by layer. Food is served, as it is named, in a portable ceramic basin and it is said that this retains its original flavours.

The culinary tradition of walled villages, in this instance, has stretched far beyond its walls and high up in the air, serving purpose of tourism. It is a best

demonstration of the value of heritage in the modern context.

Festive Events

Besides most festive events that Chinese celebrate, walled villagers have their unique ones. Weddings and new births are celebrated through rites of paying tributes to ancestors. The ancestral hall plays an important part in this. Every ten years, a walled village holds a special festive event to thank their gods for bringing them good luck and taking care of them and it has its unique ceremony.



Lanterns for Festive Events

Remarks

According to UNESCO, cultural heritage can be divided into tangible and intangible ones. Heritage sites, historical cities, cultural landscapes, handicrafts are obvious examples of tangible heritage; oral traditions, languages, rites, music, performing arts and literature are mainly intangible; museums, festive events, on the other hand, have a mix of both. The walled villages in this case study contain both tangible and intangible heritage.

Issues and Discourse

■ Tourist Experience

Tourist experience forms the core of tourism. It is one of the outcomes of tourism. In this case study, the tourist experience of walled villages is examined. Field observation and interview of visiting tourists have done a help to the collection of key information.

Getting Information

Tourist experience starts before a tourist visits a destination or a site. The following sources of information are identified as the most effective form of pre-visit experience:

- Travel guidebooks
- Books on the subject
- Pamphlets
- Internet websites
- Library & resource centre
- Word of mouth

Most international travel guidebooks have coverage on walled villages. Standard sized guidebooks on Hong Kong by *Lonely Planet*, *Frommer's*, *Insight Guide*, *Fodor's* and *Time Out Guide* have one to four standard paragraphs of text on the subject. Remarkably, *Dorling Kindersley's DK Eyewitness Top 10 Travel Guide: Hong Kong* rates *Kat Hing Wai* and the walled villages on *Lung Yeuk Tau Heritage Trail* in its recommended list of 'Top 10 Historic Village & New Town'; *Frommer's* Beth Reiber describes visiting *Kam Tin's* walled villages and *Sam Tung Uk* together as a very good experience; *Time Out Guide* writes *Lo Wai* offers a "real feel ... as it was generations ago".

However, in concise pocket guidebooks such as *Frommer's Portable Hong Kong* and *Fodor's Pocket Hong Kong*, walled villages are inexistent. Such pocket guidebooks seem to target on short-stay travellers for just a day trip or so in Hong Kong. All the suggested heritage sites are in or adjacent to Hong Kong's busiest tourist areas on Hong Kong Island and in southern Kowloon.

As far as books are concerned, there is not one English book dedicated to this subject in great details and is published by the government. Publications in Chinese, on the other hand, are abundant. One of the books on the reference list has many chapters on walled villages, offering both basic background information and historical stories of the villages. It might be a good idea to have a single book solely on walled villages with beautiful photographs.



Tourists Visiting a Walled Village with a Guidebook

Pamphlets on walled villages are mainly published by *Hong Kong Tourism Board* and by the *Antiquities and Monuments Office*. They are available at tourist service centers. Information is well presented in the pamphlets and is available in English. Photos and sketch map are well included in layout.



A Previously Published Pamphlet Guiding Tourists to Heritage Sites in Hong Kong

Websites of the following three public bodies offer brief but interesting information on walled villages:

- *Hong Kong Tourism Board*
- *Hong Kong Heritage Museum*
- *Leisure and Cultural Services Department* of the HKSAR Government
- *Antiquities and Monuments Office* of the HKSAR Government

Interfaces of the web pages are well configured and their layouts are quite attractive. Average tourists should find the information useful and adequate. However, there is not a special website on the subject.

For dedicated tourists, the *Resource Centre of Hong Kong Museum of History* offers some unique forms of information, including digitalized recordings of documentary programmes on the subject. There is an archive on the special festive event held in walled villages every ten years. This is particularly meaningful as it is a rare cultural occasion. One needs to make a booking prior to visit.

Lo Wai seems to offer a good impression to tourists. An interviewed Western tourist, who is an international banker, indicated that he found the heritage attraction worthwhile to visit and he intended to bring his friends to the same site again. The newly built bungalows inside *Kat Hing Wai* might in some ways slightly disappoint some foreign visitors. Word of mouth on walled villages certainly depends on the site visited and on the expectations of the experienced tourists.



Newly Built Bungalows inside Kat Hing Wai

The most notable area that needs improvement is the provision of interpretative information at some sites. *Sam Tung Uk* is a well designed and converted heritage museum offering adequate information to visitors. *KatHingWai*, on the other hand, has no interpretative facility. Two interviewed tourists indicated that they had a difficulty comprehending many of the heritage items they saw at the site. Most walled villages tourists see in daytime are seniors and hardly speak any English. No tourist guide, volunteer or paid, is serving except those who work with group tour operators. It is perhaps worthwhile to have more interpretative descriptions, in static forms, fixed or attached to the sites to allow tourists to have a minimal understanding and it should help to enhance tourist experience. A good example is an information board outside *Lo Wai* briefing visitors the basics of *Lung Yeuk Tau Heritage Trail*, it is not costly but effective.



Information Board outside Lo Wai

Getting There & Around

Most key walled villages can be accessed by public transport. *Sam Tung Uk* is a few-minute walk from *Tsuen Wan* MTR (Hong Kong's subway system) station and is situated near major residential and commercial establishments. A big portion of *Lung Yeuk Tau Heritage Trail*, with its starting point at *Lo Wai*, is on a

minibus route departing at *Fanling* KCR (railway) station.



*Bus Stop Named 'Kat Hing Wai'
with Route and Schedule Information*



*Minibus Stopping at
Lung Yeuk Tau Heritage Trail*

The tricky part is a tourist who does not read Chinese might have initial difficulty in identifying the right minibus to take. *KatHingWai* is along the main road in the district (*Kam Tin*), which is served by minibus and public buses of several routes departing from different points (including *Tai Po* KCR station). Taxi drivers are well acquainted with the key walled villages and serve an important role in bring individual tourists to site. In the case of taking minibus to *Lo Wai* by individual tourists, a bit of English information at the rail station and at the bus stop should be able to solve the problem.



Transport Signposts at Sheung Shui KCR Rail Station

Access by driving on one's car own might be a bit challenging. In the case of *Lo*

Wai, an interviewed visitor who drove a luxury sedan said it took him a bit of time to find the entrance to *Lung Yeuk Tau*, he said the road signs were not clear enough to guide him on his way. *KatHingWai* should be no difficulty to private drivers. *Sam Tung Uk's* location is nothing but convenient. In all of the cases, car parks are available at or very near the sites.



Confusing Road Signs to a Western Visitor to Walled Villages by Driving

Getting around in *Kam Tin* and *Lung Yeuk Tau Heritage Trail* to see other walled villages is less convenient. In the case of *Lung Yeuk Tau*, there is simply not enough signposts to guide tourists, in *Time Out Guide's* phrases, its “*signposting is patchy along the way*”. Tourists would need to take quite a bit of extra effort to identify directions and locations. This situation needs to be improved.



Signpost Indicating Direction to a Heritage Site only in Chinese



Lack of Clear Signposts along Lung Yeuk Tau Heritage Trail

Being Served

Most Walled villages, unlike some other fancy heritage attractions on Hong Kong Island, are located in rural areas and are away from modern establishments such as shopping malls. Visiting tourists are not served with modern facilities. In case of *Lo Wai* and *Kat Hing Wai*, there is no public toilet nearby and tourists might find this quite inconvenient. A small *Hakka* vendor, who is an old woman, sells a collection of souvenirs of Chinese culture inside *Kat Hing Wai*. Apart from one of the postcards for sale, none of the items are directly related to walled village.



A Hakka Vendor Selling Souvenirs inside Kat Hing Wai

For refreshments, visitors to *Kat Hing Wai* can buy drinks and snacks at a nearby grocery store. Nothing is available for sale at or near *Lo Wai*. *Sam Tung Uk* is an exception since it is adjacent to the town centre of *Tsuen Wan*. Visitors can easily enjoy a cup of tea and even have a wholesome Chinese dim sum meal at nearby restaurants. In fact, there is a hotel in the same area.

For a tourist spot, public toilet should be a basic necessity. The government is in the best capacity to build one near each of the key and frequently visited walled

villages. Simple souvenirs like key chains and little badges can help tourists to retain memory of their visits. Selling such souvenirs to tourists by villagers would unlikely disturb the tranquility of the sites but would strongly enhance the tourist experience. In the case of *Lung Yeuk Tau* near *Lo Wai*, a little shop, counter or kiosk selling refreshments to visitors would make visit much more pleasurable. Packed drinks with Chinese cultural characteristics such as green tea and chrysanthemum tea should be good enough to complement the stock of standard drinks such as Coke and 7-Up. Such facilities would not be costly and risky but probably could generate a small income to the villagers.



Pleasant Seats outside an Ancestral Hall



Well-managed Public Toilet near a Heritage Site at Sheung Shui Wai

■ Operational Matters

Successful and sustainable development of heritage attraction depends heavily on good management of operational matters. This case study looks into some major areas in brief.

Restoration, Preservation and Maintenance

Record shows that the government plays a key role in identifying, restoring and preserving the key walled villages. In the case of *Lo Wai*, repairs of a portion of its wall was undertaken in 1991 with funds provided by the *North District Office*, which is not a specialized unit on the preservation of heritage. Full restoration of the entrance tower and enclosing walls commenced in 1997 and was supervised by the *Antiquities and Monuments Office* and the *Antiquities Group* of the *Architectural Department* of the Government after it had been officially declared a historical monument in the same year. *Hong Kong Jockey Club* and the Government provided the key source of funding in this case.

Sam Tung Uk enjoys the best attention from the public authority since it is officially a public museum owned by the government. The *Leisure and Cultural Services Department* plays a key role and the walled village is well attended.



Well Preserved and Restored Cultural Heritage for Tourist Visit in Sam Tung Uk

Kat Hing Wai's situation is less favourable since it receives no official recognition. It is unknown if funding would be made available to a major preservation undertaking. It is possible that well-off villagers who work in the commercial sector might be able to contribute a big portion of funding but preservation works require more than just money, professional guidance and expertise in a critical factor.

Routine Care-taking

With no doubt, *Sam Tung Uk* obtains the best care-taking by designated personnel on routine basis. Other walled villages need the attention of their own clans. Field observation shows that some rubbish and refuse were unattended inside a part of *Lo Wai*. The same applies to other walled villages along *Lung Yeuk Tau Heritage Trail*. Walled villages, unlike some heritage sites, can by nature generate little income for their own. In the case of *Kat Hing Wai*, visitors pay only HK\$1 to HK\$2 per entry. The money collected would be far from sufficient to support a paid caretaker. One possible way would be organizing members of the same clan to do a roster caretaking but probably this would only work for retired members. Volunteering is important in such setting.



Rubbish and Refuse inside Lo Wai



Refuse outside Kat Hing Wai

Besides, the basic knowledge and expertise required for the work might not be readily available or accessible. There is no declared standard operation guideline for walled villages as heritage tourist attraction. Co-ordination between responsible authorities and the walled villages appear to be on project basis. Currently, tourist flow in walled villages is still within the capacity of the sites. In case of a big increase of tourist flow threatening the quality of the sites,

the government might decide to step in.



*Traditional Pieces of Furniture Facing a Lack of Care and Maintenance
in a Heritage Site of One of the 'Five Great Clans'*



*Untrained Caretaker
at a Heritage Site*

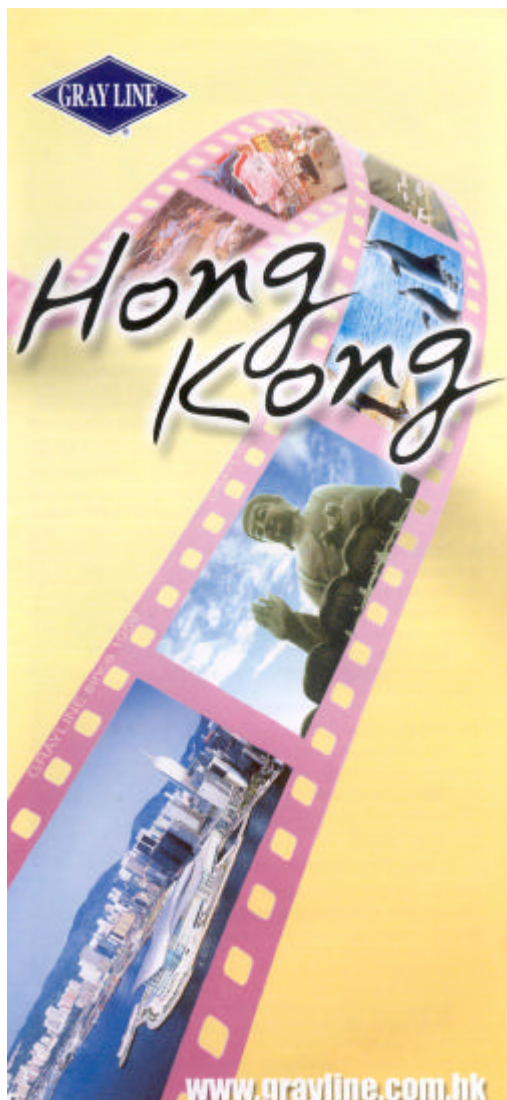
Interestingly, one of the best preserved and maintained walled villages, besides *Sam Tung Uk*, is one which is not open to public. *Hakka Wai* in *Fanling* shows an excellent state of quality. Field observation shows that it almost fully retains the original shape and style, both inside and outside, of a typical walled village.



The Interior of Hakka Wai Retains its Originality Despite Great Changes in its Surrounding Area

Tour Operations

Hong Kong Tourism Board has done a great job of connecting inbound tour operators to offer practical heritage tours to incoming tourists. Track record shows that group tour visitors are so far satisfied with the quality of the *Heritage Tour* as suggested by the tourism board. Large well-established inbound tour operators like *Gray Line Tours* have developed certain expertise in running such tours. Interviews conducted in this case study show that not all tour guides are willing to take their guests to walled villages, especially for just a half-day tour. The perception of the heritage value of walled villages by each individual tour guide makes a big difference to what is suggested or recommended to a tourist.



DS135 THE HERITAGE TOUR

Duration : approx. 5 hours

Departure time : Every Monday, Wednesday, Friday & Saturday, except 1st, 2nd and 3rd days of the Chinese New Year, Christmas Day and New Year Day.

Pick up points : Kowloon : 8:45 am Lobby of The Kowloon Hotel, 19 - 21 Nathan Road, Tsimshatsui.

Hidden away among high-rise apartment towers and busy highways, the past lives on in the New Territories - living museum shaped by the rise and development of the so-called five great clans of Hong Kong (the Tang, Hui, Pang, Liu and Man). Taking in historic sites around the New Territories, the Heritage Tour brings to life the customs and cultures of these clans and provides a fascinating glimpse of Hong Kong's rich heritage.



NAN MO TEMPLE

A dedicated temple to the gods Man (Literature) and Mo (Martial Arts). It was built a century ago to serve as a center of worship for the community. Also situated here is the **Tai Po Market** which sells all kinds of fresh produce, dried herbs and seafood. En route to **Lam Tsuen Wishing Tree** to pray for protection and good luck.



TANG CHUNG LING ANCESTRAL HALL

Built in the early 16th Century, the exquisitely decorated three-hall building is still used for annual rituals and festival celebrations. The structure was declared as an historic monument in 1997.



LO WAI WALLED VILLAGE

The first walled village built by the Tang clan. Today it remains the cradle of clan activities and houses the family's descendants. The site was also gazetted as a declared monument in 1997.



TAI FU TAI

An opulent stately home built in 1865 by a scholar of the gentry class, Man Chung-juen. The ornate country mansion shows how high-ranking officials lived.

Remarks: For cancellations made within 24 hours of departure, 40% of the tour price will be charged.

A Tour Operator Offering Heritage Tour Including a Visit to Lo Wai

Promotion & Information

HongKong Tourism Board makes a big contribution to promoting walled villages. Most of its effort has been mentioned in other sections of this case study. A little minor suggestion would be to put some eye-catching promotion signposts at key transport connecting points such as rail stations. Pamphlets on walled villages should best be made available at these points to attract the pass-by tourists.



Customer Services Centres at Key Transport Points Make Good Places for Dispersing Promotion Materials and Pamphlet Guides

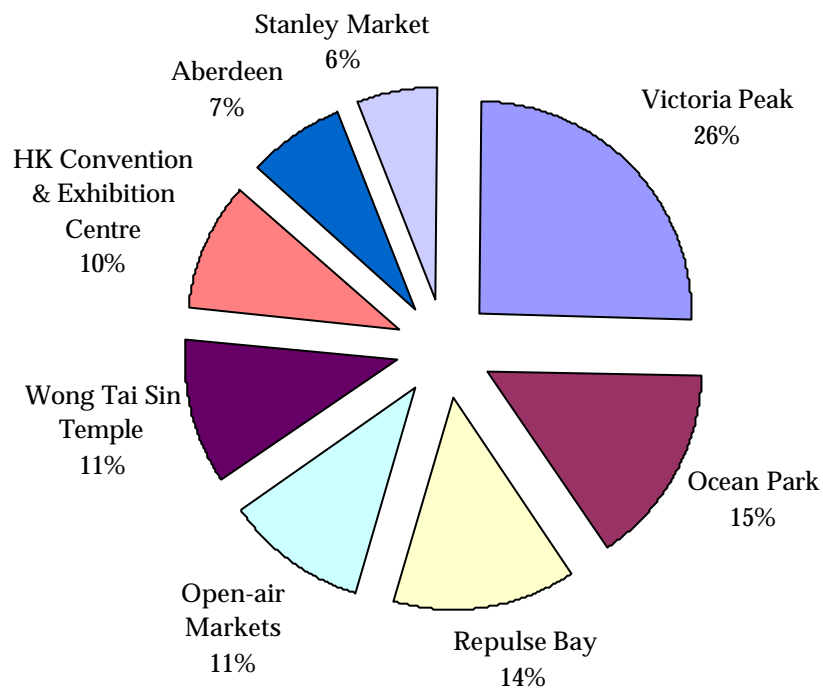
Another suggestion is that it might be worthwhile for the tourism promotion authority to extend its offering of a practical walking booklet guide and a portable audio system providing commentary on highlighted sites to tourists who visit designated walled villages. Currently, such facilities and service are available for those who take the '*Heritage and Architecture Walk of Hong Kong Island*' at a daily rental of HK\$50. Walled villages, with their unique cultural features and background, should benefit significantly from such provisions in tourism terms.



Portable Audio System Providing Commentary on Highlighted Locations

■ Tourism Impact

Currently, there is no specially documented information on the impact of tourism on walled villages that is made available to the public. The chart below shows a statistical summary of places visited by tourists in 2000 and 2001:



Places Visited in Hong Kong in 2000 & 2001

Walled villages are not on the list of survey. Library research also shows there being no publicly available statistics on tourism matters concerning walled villages. The lack of basic information – such as tourist flow figures – for analysis makes it particularly difficult to assess the possible impact of tourism on the cultural heritage of walled villages. One possible way to improve this situation is to include either walled villages or heritage tours as a single category in the survey. This would help a great deal to have an overview of the popularity of heritage sites to tourists. A further suggestion is that academic research institutes such as universities can play a key role in building up a systematic and continuously updated database for walled villages. *Hong Kong Polytechnic University* has established a *Sustainable Travel & Tourism Resource Unit* (STTRU), which might also help to facilitate the exchange of such information. A simple questionnaire for gathering basic information at site from tourists visiting walled villages might also help the authority concerned to get a real

picture of what is going on. A draft of such questionnaire is shown below:

<u>TOURIST SURVEY : HERITAGE ATTRACTION</u>	
1.	How did you learn about this walled village? <input type="checkbox"/> Travel Guide Book / Magazine <input type="checkbox"/> Pamphlet / Brochure <input type="checkbox"/> Travel Agent / Tour Guide <input type="checkbox"/> Internet <input type="checkbox"/> Friend / Relative <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) : _____
2.	What did you expect to see in this visit? <input type="checkbox"/> Traditional Architecture <input type="checkbox"/> Traditional Decorations <input type="checkbox"/> Handicrafts <input type="checkbox"/> Traditional Lifestyle <input type="checkbox"/> Walled Villagers <input type="checkbox"/> Festive Event <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Performance <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) : _____
3.	Which part of this visit do you find most interesting? (please specify) _____
4.	Are your expectations being met? <input type="checkbox"/> Better Than Expected <input type="checkbox"/> Just As Expected <input type="checkbox"/> Poor Than Expected (please specify why): _____
5.	How did you come to this site? <input type="checkbox"/> Public Transport (MTR/KCR/Bus/Minibus) <input type="checkbox"/> Taxi <input type="checkbox"/> Driving <input type="checkbox"/> Tour Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Commissioned Transport / Hotel Vehicle
6.	Which country are you from : _____
7.	What is your purpose of travel to Hong Kong? <input type="checkbox"/> Leisure <input type="checkbox"/> Business / Work-Related Purpose <input type="checkbox"/> Other Purposes (please specify) : _____
8.	Will you recommend this site to other people? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

*Questionnaire Drafted to Collect Basic But Important
Information about Tourism in Walled Villages*

Economic Impact

Heritage tourism does generate some economic income to the local community. A typical example is *Liu Man Shek Tong Ancestral Hall*. It is one of the popular heritage sites for group tour sightseeing. In an interview, the owner of a tuck shop situated closely to the site reviewed that coaches and coaches of group tourists did generate profit to his business. What he sells at his shop are simple refreshment items such as soft drinks and cigarettes. The same probably happens to the grocery store near *Kat Hing Wai*.



Local Tuck Shop Near Liu Man Shek Tong Ancestral Hall

The case of *Sam Tung Uk* is even more evident. Its situated district, *Tsuen Wan*, is not a key, nor a real tourist area and normal tourists have little reason to visit it. The existence of a key Chinese heritage spot there helps to generate tourist visits to the district and thus brings some benefits of tourist spending to its nearby vendors and service facilities. In the case of *Kat Hing Wai*, the *Hakka* women who sell souvenirs and offer photograph-taking with interested tourists (for a charge of HK\$10 to HK\$20 each) can earn some money even in retirement.

Social and Cultural Impact

The development and promotion of walled villages into heritage attraction certainly bring upon a better cultural and heritage awareness among the parties involved. More funding would be generated to support keeping up the key sites in shape. Improved documentation of the intangible heritage of walled villages, such as the archives on the festive events, does help to preserve its cultural essence.

Besides, as suggested by UNESCO, tourism can provide “*an appreciable means of communication and dialogue between individuals and civilizations*”. This case study team of three urban Hong Kong Chinese has learnt a lot to understand and appreciate the culture of walled village people. In some ways or so, the involvement of walled villages in Hong Kong’s heritage tourism development contributes to the sustaining of cultural pluralism and the preservation of cultural diversity of Hong Kong.



*Interpretive Facility Illustrating the History and Background of Walled Villages –
Bridging Individuals and Civilizations*

Environmental Impact

Theoretically, tourism should be able to contribute to the better development of a heritage in the following ways:

- Providing funding for restoration of the attractions
- Providing or improving the infrastructure for the attractions
- Providing or improving the amenities for users of the attractions

This is evident in the case of *Sam Tung Uk*. It is doubtful if the walled village would have remained to now if it had not been declared a historical monument and converted into a tourist-attracting heritage museum. *Tsuen Wan*, its situated district, has been a rapidly growing and changing new town, it would be extremely difficult to keep an old building structure given its surroundings has been fully converted into all sorts of modern and urbanized establishments.

The fact that *Kam Tin's Kat Hing Wai* not being officially recognized as a heritage tourist site gives doubt that it might not stand for long. Further alterations and residential development inside and adjacent to the walled village might eventually destroy its value of attraction to tourists. *Insight Guide's Hong Kong* even describes *Kat Hing Wai's* as its “*authenticity spoiled*”. Some western tourists interviewed at the site indicates that they were slightly disappointed at the numerous new building structures, namely the bungalows, stuffed inside the walled village and that they had been expecting something “more historical” and “original”.



Old Walled Village Structures Are Vulnerable to Deterioration



Tourism Provides Initiatives for Preserving Lo Wai

Conclusion

■ **Walled Villages and the Cosmopolitan City**

Being “*Asia’s WorldCity*” as proclaimed by its government, and also one of the ten must-visit world cities as rated by an extensive global travel survey, Hong Kong has all what a world-class modern city can offer : state-of-the-art information technology networks, renowned masterpieces of modern architecture, exceptionally efficient transport systems, and of course, an always energetic business community. Its cosmopolitan character is overwhelming and people from overseas countries often think that Hong Kong is nothing more than that.



Hong Kong – Asia’s World City



Tsing Ma Bridge

For short-trip travellers, Hong Kong’s Chinese traditions might be the synonym

of temples, superstitions and dining. They are exposed to a narrower view of the history and traditions of the Hong Kong Chinese community. The fact that most local Chinese people living in the urban areas being quite modernized and westernized makes it harder and harder for others to understand what is kept and held in the past.



A Scene at Wong Tai Sin Temple in Kowloon

Walled villages, whether lived-in or converted (*Sam Tung Uk*), offer perhaps the best living example of the past. It provides a form of cultural diversity that is not duplicable elsewhere. It is a vital proof of Hong Kong's rich history of rural development despite the commonly known colonial one. It has the strong presence of people in itself and it contains a rich content of both tangible and intangible heritage. It has a key role to play in enriching the tourist experience of Hong Kong. Its style and uniqueness is irreplaceable. Given proper management and development, it should have a very good and promising future to embark upon. Walled villages as a single unit of heritage attraction is a best and definite proof of alternative tourist experience in the East-Meet-West cosmopolitan Hong Kong.

■ Common Concerns in Heritage Tourism Development

The UNESCO identified the following key partners in the preservation of heritage:

- Government
- Parliamentarians
- Cultural and Spiritual Institutions
- Professional Associations
- Cultural Associations and Community Groups
- Universities and Research Institutes
- Media
- Regional/Local Authorities
- Schools
- Sites, Museums
- Places of Worship
- Public Spaces for Culture
- Businesses

UNESCO states that our commitment to our cultural heritage *“is based on acceptance by all of a principle of responsibility in relation to our cultural heritage. Involvement in maintaining cultural diversity in its past, present and future form and in the dialogue that it affords, is an individual and collective responsibility. Each of us, every citizen of the world, has his share of the common heritage, but our right to enjoy it is complementary to and inseparable from a duty to understand and a duty to transmit”*.

Tourism should be able to co-exist with the respect and treasure of heritage. It is best to have all different parties working in co-ordination towards a common goal. The case study team of the participating school perceives itself as a member with role to play in the process of promoting a win-win partnership of sustainable tourism and heritage development.

Appendix

■ Methods of This Case Study

Library Research

- Hong Kong Central Library
- Hong Kong Museum of History Resource Centre
- Antiquities and Monuments Office of the HKSAR Government

Field Observations

Walled Villages

- Lung Yeuk Tau Heritage Trail's walled villages
- Kat Hing Wai
- Tai Hong Wai
- Hakka Wai (not open to public)
- Tsang Tai Uk (also regarded as a fortified village)

Relevant Heritage Sites

- Liu Man Shek Tong Ancestral Hall

Museums

- Hong Kong Museum of History
- Hong Kong Heritage Museum
- Sam Tung Uk Museum

Interviews

- Grace Lee, Gray Line Tours of Hong Kong Limited
- Leon Cheung, registered German tour-guide
- Western tourists from the U.K. at Kat Hing Wai
- Western tourists from the U.K. at Lung Yeuk Tau Heritage Trail
- Hakka local residents at Kat Hing Wai
- Mr. Tang, a descendant from Tang's Clan residing in a Kam Tin's walled village
- Local caretaker working at Liu Man Shek Tong Ancestral Hall
- Owner of a tuck shop near Liu Man Shek Tong Ancestral Hall
- Attendant of customer service counter at Sheung Shui KCR (railway) station
- Service attendant working at Antiquities and Monuments Office

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- Pamphlet of 'Heritage Tour' (Hong Kong Tourism Board)
- Pamphlet of 'Museums & Heritage' (Hong Kong Tourism Board)
- Pamphlet of 'Kam Tin Heritage Guide Map' (Antiquities and Monuments Office)
- Pamphlet of 'Protecting Hong Kong's Heritage' (Antiquities and Monuments Office)
- Pamphlet of 'Liu Man Sheuk Tong' (Antiquities and Monuments Office)
- Hong Kong (Beth Reiber, Frommer's)
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- The Course Materials of 'Travel and Tourism' (The Education Department)

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