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Hong Kong Travel: Not For The Faint Of Heart

By Frank Johnson

If tranquility and serenity are adjectives you would use to describe the perfect trip, leave Hong Kong

out of your itinerary. The boisterous energy of 14 million inhabitants leaves the visitor wondering if insomnia is contagious in this city. Hong Kong is the quintessential representation of east meets west, boasting its own Times Square along with artifacts from the Paleolithic Age. The far-reaching history and booming capitalist economy has propelled Hong Kong to the forefront of modern technology and commerce. The best way to navigate this urban jungle is to allow extraordinary diversions to lead where they may, while visiting a few key sites when you travel to Hong Kong.

>From Opium Wars to Opulence: Hong Kong History

Since the Stone Age, the island of Hong Kong has supported a society rich with influences from Europeans and the Portuguese through steady and moderate trade. During the 1700s, increased commercial value of Asian luxury goods sparked heightened global interest in this once-neglected corner of China. Following the Opium Wars of the mid-19th century between the British and Chinese, Hong Kong was officially ceded to the British Empire as a Crown Colony beginning in 1898 for a term of 99 years. During that term, Hong Kong's economy blossomed onto the international stage to become one of the most prosperous free markets of today. After 1997, Hong Kong was returned to China as a Special Administrative Region under the conditions that the market and government would remain free and democratic (non-Communist) while Beijing would only handle national security and foreign diplomacy ("one country, two systems").

Today, Hong Kong has maintained a majority of its autonomy and travel to Hong Kong has remained relatively easy for Western nationals. At this time a visa is still not required unless traveling through China as well. English is still an official language along with Chinese.

The Sights and Sounds of Hong Kong Travel

The constant buzz of modern life and the ghostly prevalence of ancient life on the island will keep any traveler occupied without a moment to spare. A unique attraction that pays homage to the Chinese fixation with caged song birds is the Yuen Po Street Bird Garden where 70 different bird stalls, each

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elaborately decorated, fill the air with their own harmony. >From anywhere in the city it is impossible to miss the looming Bank of China Tower, now Hong Kong's national monument and a modern declaration of China's mounting role in the global economy. In the center of the city is Times Square, a monumental 9-story shopping complex that dwarfs Western commercialism. Hong Kong museums do not skip a beat, ranging from science and space to history and art.

When the sensory overload of the city center begins to take a numbing effect it is easy to escape to one of Hong Kong's many parks and monasteries. Victoria Peak is by far the most popular asylum, standing 1,810 feet above the city lights - only to offer more distractions of a smaller commercial district. The famous Man Mo Temple and the Miu Fat Monastery provide a mind-calming sanctuary while Kowloon Walled City Park, which once protected a private Chinese enclave during British rule, is a true natural refuge from Hong Kong's concrete.

Once in Hong Kong, the city will guide you along its commercial corridors and through its ancient

alleys. Tradition and history are alive in every corner of this modern municipality, as long as you can turn away from the neon distractions.

For more information on international travel and discount airfare to Hong Kong

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EPL Broadcasts in Hong Kong

By Dale James Caffrey

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Having spoken to many English Premier League fans in Hong Kong, there seems to be some confusion over how they are going to get to see the new season 2004/2005 games 'Live' on TV.

For the past few years, i-Cable have been showing the EPL games via ESPN/Star Sports as part of their broadcasts. However, as of 17th August 2004, ESPN/Star Sports will be shifting to Now Broadband TV – and this is where the confusion lies.

i-Cable (who have won the bidding for the broadcast of EPL games for Hong Kong) will still be showing these games, but the feed will be directly from the UK.

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Even though ESPN/Star will still be broadcasting the EPL games out of Singapore, their footprint does not include Hong Kong and the footie that ESPN/Star will be showing in Hong Kong is the European Champions League, the FA Cup, the League Cup and selected England games (if i am informed correctly).

Therefor, EPL footie fans in Hong Kong, don't go and sign up for NOW BBTV and cancel your i-Cable subscription, otherwise you will be in for a big shock!

If you want to see the 'live' EPL games you will need i-Cable and if you want to watch ECL, FA Cup, League Cup and England games, you will need NOW BBTV.

So, if you are like me, you need to subscribe to both! yes, it will be a little bit more expensive but at least you'll get to see all of those fantastic games at your leisure.

Don't say that you weren't warned!

The author is one of the owner operators of www.3lionssport.com



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