



EXPLORANGES

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Hong Kong Tour 13-day itinerary

Hong Kong and the New Territories is 1,104 square kms consisting of Hong Kong Island, Lantau Island, Kowloon Peninsula and the New Territories as well as some 260 other islands. Despite the common perception that Hong Kong is just a busy metropolis, 70% of its land mass is rural mountains, forests and outlying islands with much of this area designated as country parks and nature reserves. Hong Kong is a hiker's paradise, providing endless opportunities to explore the glorious countryside or take a scenic walk along paths and trails overlooking the city and harbour. Whether it's a challenging climb over mountains or a pleasant stroll through bamboo forests, walking in Hong Kong will take you into another world and provide a living breathing cultural experience like no other.

Included:

- 12 nights accommodation in 4 Star Kowloon Hotel (includes Free WiFi)
- 12 breakfasts, 10 lunches and 1 dinner, as indicated in the itinerary
- All transportation, daily tours and entrance fees for itinerary days 2-12
- Experienced Australian tour guide

Not Included:

- Airfares to and from Hong Kong
- Arrival and Departure transfers
- Evening meals (except where indicated in the itinerary)
- Personal expenditure such as drinks, laundry service and souvenirs
- Personal Travel Insurance

Please Note:

Our guide may need to change the itinerary depending on local daily conditions

Exploranges Hong Kong 13-day Itinerary

Day One - Travel to Hong Kong

Check into your Kowloon hotel after your private flight connections to Hong Kong.

Day Two - An Introduction to Hong Kong

After a leisurely breakfast you will meet your Exploranges Guide and start orientating yourself with the local streets around your hotel in the heart of the busy Tsim Sha Tsui district. In the afternoon you will take the short ride across Hong Kong Harbour on the famous Star Ferry. You will be introduced to the history of this ex British colony and will see the contrast of modern and colonial architecture you visit some of the city's historic buildings.

Walking distance: ~ 5 km Grade: easy

Meals included (B,L)



Day Three - Tap Mun Island

Today you will venture to a small fishing village on Tap Mun Island, in the far Northeast. After a short trip on the Hong Kong Mass Transit Railway (MTR), Tap Mun is a 90 minute slow ferry cruise out through Tolo Harbour. On arrival at the small island village, where fishermen have worked and lived for several hundred years, the first stop is a visit to the Qing dynasty temple built to honour Tin Hau, the Goddess of the sea and Queen of Heaven. Then it is in easy stroll to circumnavigate the 2 km² island and take in the views overlooking the South China Sea. You will have time to explore the local village before returning to the pier to catch the ferry for a short 30 minute trip back to the Sai Kung Peninsular. From here a local bus completes the journey to Sai Kung, a fishing harbour where fresh seafood is sold straight from the pier. You will have time to feast your eyes on the many restaurants selling live seafood before heading back to Kowloon mid afternoon.

Walking distance: ~ 5 km Grade: easy

Meals included (B,L)



Day Four - The Dragon's Back

Within one hour of Kowloon, on the eastern end of Hong Kong Island, is the Shek O Country Park. It is here that we find the walking trail that Time Magazine has declared the best urban hike in Asia - The Dragon's Back. To get there we will ride on Hong Kong's famous double-deck tramcar, affectionately known as "Ding Dings". Hong Kong has the world's largest fleet of double-deck tramcars, carrying an average of 240,000 passengers every day.

At Shek O, the walk undulates along the ridgeline of a thin peninsula jutting into the South China Sea, providing breathtaking views of Hong Kong's craggy southern shoreline, before plunging back down the mountainside to the sleepy Dai Long Wan ("Big Wave Bay"). This 8.5 km walk forms part of the 50 km Hong Kong Trail and will take about 4 hours.

Walking distance: 8.5 km Grade: moderate

Meals included (B,L)



Day Five - Cheung Chau

Cheung Chau is just 12 km southwest of Kowloon. This 2.45 km² island is made of two granite islands joined by a sand spit. The central part of the island is densely populated with shops and houses and the narrow lanes prevent normal motor traffic. Therefore, the best way to explore this island is on foot. The one hour ferry ride from Hong Kong Central arrives in the island's small harbour, which is crowded with fishing boats, Chinese junks and sampans. From the pier it is a short walk to one of the Cheung Chau's highest points where the Beitiao Pavilion overlooks most of the island. From here you will explore the rest of the island including the the Pak Tei Temple, dedicated to Cheung Chau's "patron saint", Pak Tei - the Northern King, Tung Wan Beach and ancient rock carvings that are estimated to be over 3000 years old. Walking further around the granite coast reveals imaginatively named rock formations such as Human Head Rock and Vase Rock.

Walking distance: ~ 10 km Grade: easy

Meals included (B,L)



Day Six - Tai Po Kau Forest and Mai Po Marshes

Hong Kong's topography and sub-tropical climate provide a wide range of habitats for a rich variety of flora and fauna. In Hong Kong conservation is taken very seriously with about 40% of land designated as country parks and special areas. Tai Po Kau Forest Reserve and Mai Po Marshes showcase the conservation of these habitats. Tai Po Kau is 460 hectares or forest reserve. Planting of this forest was started in 1926 when the Government first began afforestation in the New Territories. Mai Po Marshes in the North western corner of the New Territories, have long been known as a haven for migratory birds. It was first recognized as a protected area in 1976, and in 1995 1,500 ha of wetlands around Mai Po were formally designated a Wetland of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention. If you love bird watching bring your binoculars.

Walking distance: ~ 12 km Grade: easy

Meals included (B,L)



Day Seven - Free Day

After five full days on the go it is time to rest, relax and recharge before exploring the rest of the New Territories. In the evening you will be introduced to the finerities of street dining at the Temple Street Market before browsing the stalls for that designer handbag or a souvenir T-Shirt.

Walking distance: optional

Meals included (B,D)



Day Eight - Ngong Ping Plateau

Lantau, occupying a land area of 144 kms², is Hong Kong's largest island. In the Lantau South Country Park, at the base of Hong Kong's second highest mountain, is the Ngong Ping Plateau. To get there you will take the western MTR to the end of the line before a local bus will take you to Tai O, a small coastal fishing village that is more than three centuries old. Tai O retains most of its historical setting such as waterways, stilt houses and fishing boats and it is famous for its fishing village scenery. Here you can take time to wander the narrow streets of the village, mingle with the locals and investigate their many stalls of dried seafood. It is then up onto the plateau to see the Po Lin Monastery complex. This monastery incorporates the giant 34m bronze Tian Tan Buddha. The statue symbolizes the harmonious relationship between man and nature, people and religion. A short walk takes in the Wisdom Path which is made up of thirty-eight timber columns with inscription of the Heart Sutra - a treasured text revered by Confucians, Buddhists and Taoists alike that articulates the "Perfection of Wisdom of the Buddha". You will have time to soak up the atmosphere of the monastery and to climb the 268 steps to the base of the Buddha's lotus throne, before descending on the scenic 6 km long Ngong Ping Cable Car.

Walking distance: ~ 5 km Grade: easy

Meals included (B,L)



Day Nine - Macau

Portuguese traders began using Macau as a staging port as early as 1516, making it the oldest European settlement in the Far East. The Portuguese left a distinctively Mediterranean footprint there with ornate churches, cobblestone streets, tantalizing delicacies and even a distinctive Creole language. A day trip to this historic city provides you with the opportunity to visit the Macau Museum and take in the UNESCO World Heritage sights of Monte Fort, the iconic ruins of St. Paul's Church and the elegant Portuguese and baroque style buildings surrounding the central square, Largo do Senado. Of course, no visit to Macau would be complete without trying an authentic Portuguese egg tart.

Walking distance: ~ 5 km Grade: easy

Meals included (B,L)



Day Ten - Lai Chi Wo

In the heart of the Plover Cove County Park, the old Hakka village of Lai Chi Wo, dates back around 400 years when it was one of the most affluent villages in the North eastern New Territories. Today it is all but abandoned but the houses remain well preserved and the fung shui wood behind the village is said to be one of the oldest surviving fung shui woodlands in Hong Kong.

The walk starts with an easy climb to the top of the ranges offering exciting views of the Yan Chau Tong Marine Park and across the border into Mainland China. After descending to explore the village the walk continues through an area of intertidal mudflats and mangroves. Following the coastline, you can admire some of the oldest geological formations in the area, dating back 400 million years. Along the way you will walk past abandoned rice fields and terraces once cultivated by the villagers. Lai Chi Wo remains an untouched reminder of traditional life because it is only accessible by foot. The walk provides both spectacular mountain and coastal views and a unique insight into the lands, homes and lives that the villagers left behind.

Walking distance: ~12 km Grade: moderate

Meals included (B,L)



Day Eleven - Lamma Island

The third largest of the outlying islands, and somehow less well known both to visitors and to Hong Kong residents, is Lamma. Although it is just over 13 square kilometres, Lamma is rich in green hills and beautiful bays. But because of its rugged terrain, there is only a very small area of farmland. Rocky and bare hilltops dominate the island's grassy lower slopes. Archeologists have associated it with some of the earliest settlements in Hong Kong. It is peaceful and tranquil providing an alternative to the hectic life in the city. Today starts with a Sampan tour to see the fishing fleet in the busy harbour of Aberdeen. Then it is a ferry ride, across the busy international shipping lanes, to the sleepy village of Mo Tat Wan. There is a short walk to the village Sok Kwu Wan, the largest fish farming site in Hong Kong, where a sumptuous seafood lunch awaits. In the afternoon you will enjoy views across the island as you walk to the village of Yung Shue Wan to catch the ferry back to Kowloon.

Walking distance: 5 km Grade: moderate

Meals included (B,L)



Day Twelve - Kowloon Reservoirs

The line of Kowloon peaks, stretching east to west for ten kilometres, is one of Hong Kong's main topographical features. In fact, the name Kowloon came from the nine dragons represented by eight peaks of the Kowloon hills and a Chinese emperor. In these hills is the Kam Shan Country Park and some of Hong Kong's best loved trails, including sections of the MacLehose Trail. Here you will walk stage six of this 100 km trail, which starts at the Kowloon Reservoirs, a favourite haven for many of Hong Kong's wild Macaques monkeys. Walking along Smuggler's Ridge we will visit the ruins of wartime fortifications know as the "Gin Drinkers Line". Built during the 1930s, this string of trenches, pillboxes and bunkers designed to protect Hong Kong against a Japanese invasion.

Walking distance: 7 km Grade: moderate

Meals included (B,L)



Day Thirteen

All good things must come to an end and today it is time to return home. After a casual buffet breakfast you will say goodbye to your Exploranges Guide before checking out in preparation for your private flight connections. If your flight departs Hong Kong in the evening you can pack early and spend the day doing some last minute shopping or visiting some of the other great Hong Kong attractions. A ride on the famous Peak Tram, a walk around the Hong Kong Zoological and Botanical Gardens, one of the oldest zoological and botanical centres in the world, or a visit to the Hong Kong Heritage Museum are just some of the many options.

Walking distance: optional

Meals included (B)

