Local Currency The unit of currency in Hong Kong is called the Hong Kong Dollar (HK\$). The Hong Kong Dollar is divided into 100 cents. Notes are available in the following denominations: 10, 20, 50, 100, 500 and 1,000. Coins are minted in denominations of: \$.10, \$.20, \$.50, \$1, \$2, \$5 and \$10.

Office/Telephone Facilities The General Post Office in Kowloon is located at 10 Middle Road, east of the Ambassador Hotel and Nathan Road. On Hong Kong Island, the GPO is on your right as you leave the Star Ferry. Both offices are open Monday through Saturday, 8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. In Kowloon the local Telecom Office can be found at Hermes House, 10 Middle Road, Tsimshatsui (same location as the Post Office). This office is open 24 hours daily.

AT&T: 800-1111 / MCI: 800-1121 / SPRINT: 800-1877



The Hong Kong Tourist Association Office is located at the Star Ferry Terminal 2 in Kowloon.



Taxis are available everywhere in Hong Kong. They will stop for you by raising your arm except in restricted busy

areas. Credit cards are not accepted by drivers; U.S. Dollars may be accepted at a lower exchange rate.

Hong Kong's extensive bus system will take you almost anywhere you want to go. In Central (Hong Kong Island), the bus terminal is on the ground floor of the Exchange Square. In Kowloon, the Star Ferry Bus Terminal 2 is the most convenient.

Hong Kong boasts one of the world's most modern metro systems, the Mass Transit Railway (MTR). This underground system is clean, fast and safe. Trains run every two to four minutes from 6:00 a.m. - 1:00 a.m. daily on three lines. Riding the line is easy, everything is automated – just follow the signage.

One of the most scenic ways of getting from Kowloon to Central on Hong Kong Island is via the Star Ferry 2. The trip takes 7 minutes and offers fantastic photo opportunities. The upper deck costs HK\$2.00 and the lower deck HK\$1.20. The coin operated turnstiles do not give change. If riding the upper deck, you may get change from the ticket window.



Good morning – Chao sun How much? - Dor siu chin?

Thank you - Dor tse You're welcome - Foon ying lei I'm sorry/excuse me – Deuimjyu I don't understand – Ngo m meng ba Where is the toilet? – Ching mun bin dao yau chi sor?

Cantonese is the main language of Hong Kong although Mandarin has become more necessary since the British handover of Hong Kong to China in 1997. English is spoken in all tourist areas, hotels and restaurants.

This information has been compiled for the convenience of the passengers of Royal Caribbean Cruise Line and is intended solely for that purpose. While every effort has been made to ensure that the information contained herein is correct, RCCL cannot accept responsibility for any changes that may have taken place since printing.

General Information Hong Kong is

Guangzhou

HONGKONG

Hong Kong

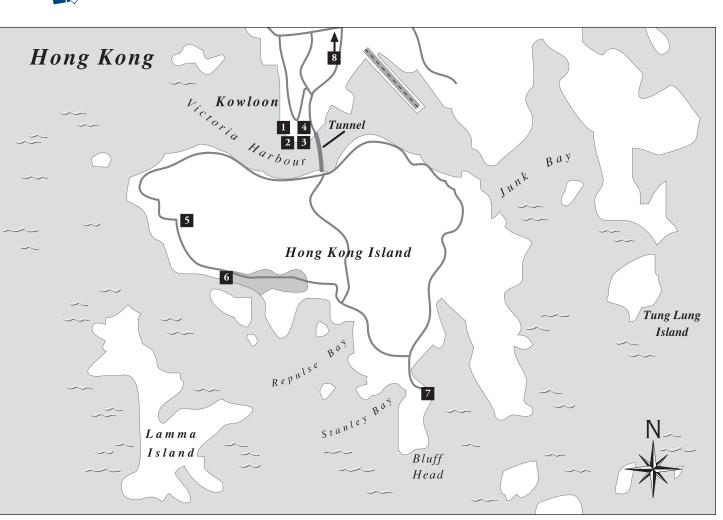
more than just a shopping mecca. Its bustling harbor, towering skyscrapers and row upon row of shops may be its most familiar images, but Buddhist monasteries, terraced rice paddies and a 17th century walled village are equally important to its identity. In fact, most of Hong Kong's land is in the "New Territories," which are rural in charac-

ter, and in addition, Hong Kong administers more than a dozen islands that provide a pleasant contrast to what's found in the densely populated urban areas.

In Cantonese, Hong Kong means "Fragrant Harbor." Hong Kong's 413 square miles (1,070 sq km) is divided into four main areas: Kowloon, Hong Kong Island, New Territories and the Outlying Islands. It is located off the southeast coast of China, just to the south of the Tropic of Cancer. In spite of its location, Hong Kong is not tropical. Summers are usually hot and humid, while winters are quite chilly.

At present, Hong Kong has a population of approximately 5.8 million. This interesting city reverted back to Chinese rule at midnight on 30 June 1997. A vibrant mix of East and West, old and new, Hong Kong offers excellent shopping, restaurants and nightlife.





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Ocean Terminal 1 is a long wharf/building which juts out into Victoria Harbour and is the location of the ship's berth. Within this complex you will find Ocean Centre, an upscale shopping mall. Along the waterfront is a small park which has benches and good views of the water.

Star House 2 is a shopping "mall" located across from the Star Ferry Terminal. The Chinese Arts & Crafts store is located here. Many fast food outlets are to be found in this area.



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Hong Kong Cultural Centre **3** is adjacent to the Star Ferry Pier and is one of Hong Kong's landmarks. The complex contains a concert hall, a theater, an arts library, a garden and two restaurants.

The Hong Kong Museum of Art 3 is now incorporated into the Cultural Centre and houses a collection of paintings, calligraphy, rubbings, lacquerware, embroidery and jade. Admission charge.

The **Space Museum** ³ shaped like half a golf ball, is located at 10 Salisbury Road, adjoining the Cultural Centre. Here you will find the Space Theater (planetarium), the Hall of Space Science and the Hall of Astronomy. The Space Theater has approximately 7 shows each day (except Tuesday), some in English and some in Cantonese. Check times with the Museum. Admission Charge.

Kowloon Park 4 was once the site of the Whitfield Barracks for British and Indian troops. The park is hidden behind Yue Hwa's Park Lane Store on Nathan Road. The park is now basically "artificial," but the highlights include the Sculpture Walk, aviary, an indoor sports hall, fountains, concrete plazas, a museum and multiple swimming pools. No admission charge.

Victoria Peak **5** has been *the* place to live ever since the British moved in. The top of the tram line is 1,312 feet (400 meters) above Hong Kong and offers spectacular views and the three-level Peak Galleria, an excellent shopping mall. To reach Victoria Peak you should take the Peak Tram located at Garden Road, Central, behind the Hilton Hotel and fourtenths of a mile (650 meters) from the Star Ferry Terminal on Hong Kong Island.

Aberdeen 6 was once a quiet fishing village. Today this area houses a community of 6,000 people who live or work on junks anchored in the harbor. There are also three large floating seafood restaurants. From the Central Bus Terminal in Exchange Square on Hong Kong Island, take bus #7 or #70.

Stanley 7 was home to 2,000 people when the British took possession in 1841. Stanley Market is the main attraction here and is open daily from 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Take bus #6 from Central or express bus #260 from the Central Bus Terminal under Exchange Square.

The New Territories 8 is considered to be Hong Kong's bedroom. About one third of Kong Kong's population lives in this area in new towns which have been under construction since 1972.



Hong Kong's history began upriver, in the city of Canton (Guangzhou), where the British had begun trading with China in the late 17th century. The first trade attempts by the British were rebuffed by the Chinese, but Canton was finally opened to trade in 1685. By the end of the 17th century, the British, French, Dutch, Danes, Swedes and Americans had a firm foothold in the region.

Hong Kong Island and Kowloon Peninsula were ceded "In Perpetuity" to the British by the Chinese in 1841 and 1860, respectively, after China's defeat in the Opium Wars. The New Territories were leased to Great Britain for 99 years in 1898. The colony soon became a center of thriving commerce and served as the main conduit for trade between China and the world.

After 156 years of British colonial rule many, especially in the business community, feared that the 1997 British handover of Hong Kong to China would bring about a mass exodus of people and capital, in effect, the death of this great city. Those fears have proved to be unfounded. China has been faithful to its promise of "one country, two systems". Today Hong Kong is still one of the most dynamic, energetic and business minded cities in the world.



Bargaining: Bargaining is expected in Hong Kong's tourist districts, but less so elsewhere. In an honest shop, you shouldn't be able to bargain more than a 10% discount, if they will bargain at all. Price tags should be displayed on all goods. If not, watch out for price gouging.

Tipping: Historically the Chinese never had the habit of tipping, but Westerners introduced the custom and it stuck. Tips for hotel bellhops and airport porters are a must. Taxi drivers generally expect a gratuity. Good hotels and restaurants generally add a 10% service charge, but waiters and waitresses usually expect more.

Dress Code: Hong Kong is a very fashion conscious city and very cosmopolitan. Most items of clothing are accepted here, but bikinis should be reserved for the beach. Flip-flop sandals (thongs) should not be worn outdoors. As long as the sandals have a back strap you're O.K.

Local Cuisine: Rice is an inseparable part of the Chinese culture and wasting it is practically a sin to older Chinese. Chinese meals are social events. Typically, four or five people eat together at the same table. The idea is to order many dishes and then share. There are many different styles of Chinese cooking: Beijing-Shendong, Sichuan-Hunan, Shanghaiese and Cantonese-Chaozhou. Cantonese is the southern variety and is what Hong Kong is famous for.

Specialties are abalone, shark's fin soup, roast pig, snake and pigeon. Dim sum is a snack like variation consisting of small delicacies. Items are normally steamed in a small bamboo basket. You pay by the number of baskets you order.

International restaurants abound in this food conscious city. Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, Malaysian, Indian, Italian, French, etc. are all easily found. European and American fast food restaurants are also readily available.

Drink Specialties: In Chinese restaurants tea is often served free of charge, however, you could be charged as much as \$1.00 USD. Coffee is seldom available except in Western restaurants or coffee shops. There are three main types of tea to be found: Green or unfermented, Bolai or fermented (black tea) and Oolong which is semi-fermented. Most major brands of imported alcohol can easily be found in Hong Kong. Rice wine is more similar in strength to whiskey or rum than wine. Siu Hing is a rice based wine, Go Leung is distilled from sorghum and Mao Tai is made from millet. Excellent beer is available everywhere and San Miguel even has a brewery in Hong Kong.

Bottled water is recommended.

Avoiding Offence: Nude bathing at beaches is not allowed. Do not give a gift of white flowers except at funerals. Do not write anything in red ink as this conveys anger and hostility. Leaving chopsticks sticking vertically in a bowl is a bad omen as it resembles incense sticks in a bowl of ashes, a death sign. When handing someone an item, present it with both hands as a sign of respect.



The main shopping areas in Hong Kong are found in the tourist zone of Tsimshatsui. Ocean Terminal, Ocean Centre and Harbour City are three of the largest complexes. The New World Centre is found adjacent to the New World Hotel on Salisbury Road. The People's Republic of China owns the impressive Chinese Arts & Crafts stores and has two locations. One is in the Silvercord Shopping Centre, 30 Canton Road and the other at Star House, on the corner of Salisbury and Canton Roads. Camera shops abound along Nathan Road, but tend to be the most expensive in all of Asia.

Specialties of the area include antiques, curios, appliances, electronics, carpets, clothing, jade and jewelry. Ivory is a popular seller, but be fore-warned that it is forbidden to bring ivory into the U.S., Canada and many European countries. Beware of counterfeit items such as watches and designer clothing. Again, importing these items to most countries is illegal.

Many tourist oriented stores and street merchants will accept U.S. Dollars. Most stores allow the use of major credit cards.

