

LESSON NOTES

All About #8

Life in Hong Kong

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The Focus of This Lesson is Hong Kong!

Hong Kong is one of the most exciting cosmopolitan cities on the planet. If you haven't visited Hong Kong and don't know this yet, there's no excuse for not taking a trip and finding out for yourself. The variety and pace of this vibrant and ever-changing city should keep the most demanding people satisfied.

If there was ever a city where East truly meets West, Hong Kong has to be it. Everything you could want can be found in Hong Kong, from cinemas to theme parks and numerous restaurants serving global cuisines, to the world's finest hotels. Hong Kong Island is also stunningly beautiful: its modern high-rises stand down near the water, soaring green mountains covered with tropical trees towering above. The city is so green that forty percent of the HKSAR is actually parkland. Even Hong Kong Island itself has a number of walking trails leading to Victoria Peak for those keen on getting closer to nature.

The expatriate community in Hong Kong is extremely vibrant. The majority of expats are British and American: they work at many of the large multinational companies that are based in Hong Kong, and use the territory as the base for their Asian headquarters. Many of these expats are quite affluent and live in the expensive mid-level area above Central district. On the evenings and weekends, the foreign community tends to socialize in the highly Westernized districts of Lan Kwai Fong and Wan Chai. These are also the two major entertainment districts on Hong Kong Island.

Central is where you'll find Lan Kwai Fong, the traditional expat hangout. Even though it's a small and compact area, it is host to a large variety of restaurants, trendy bars, and nightclubs all huddled into this compact and popular expat haunt. Drinks are fairly pricey with even your basic beer costing fifty dollars and up. In spite of having quite an upmarket feel to the place, it's relatively relaxed in terms of dress code. Then a short taxi ride will take you to the other expat hangout on Hong Kong Island, Wan Chai.

Wan Chai is a major commercial district and is an example of the seedier side of Hong Kong. Home to a handful of discos, many of which are open until the sun comes up, this district is infamous for being the center of the sex industry. Be careful if you go into bars—many participants work in bars and earn commission from club owners as management knows very well that they will attract male clients. Also, you will find a strip of go-go bars along the main road near the MTR station. If you're into that scene, be prepared for a hefty bar bill. You have

been warned! Crazy as it sounds, it's still an exciting area to visit.