

6. Practical Tips of Getting Around in Hong Kong

Introduction

Strategically located at the doorstep of China and the centre of Asia-Pacific, Hong Kong has, in the last 150 years, developed into one of the world's leading manufacturing, trading and service centres. Its open economy is built on free trade and free enterprise. Geographically, the territory is divided into four distinct areas: Hong Kong Island, Kowloon, the New Territories and the outlying Islands. Hong Kong is subtropical with a relatively high humidity. Temperature ranges from 10 °C in the winter to 30 °C in the summer.

Languages

English and Chinese are the official languages. Street signs, menus, tourist and government publications are usually bilingual.

Money and Banking

Most banks are open from 9am to 4:30pm on weekdays, and from 9am to 12:30pm on Saturday. There is no foreign exchange control in the territory and the Hong Kong dollar is freely convertible. In Hong Kong, any currency, including mainland China's renminbi (RMB), may be bought and sold in the open market. Visitors can exchange foreign currency at any bank or exchange shop or at the cashier counters of hotels. Daily exchange rates are available through any bank, but the Hong Kong dollar is pegged at HK\$7.8 to US\$1. The government issues coins in denominations of 10c, 20c, 50c, \$1, \$2, \$5 and \$10. There are also three different kinds of notes in denominations of \$10, \$20, \$50, \$100, \$500 and \$1,000.

Transportation

Hong Kong's efficient and low-cost public transport system includes three railways, buses, trams, taxis and ferries. There are three road-only tunnels crossing the harbour.

To and From the Airport

From 6 July 1998, travellers to Hong Kong will be served by one of the world's largest and most modern airports situated at the Chek Lap Kok on the outlying island of Lantau. The easiest connection from the airport to Central and Kowloon is the Airport Express Railway, which takes just 19 minutes to get to Kowloon, and an extra 4 minutes to Hong Kong. Adult single journey fare is HK\$100. In addition, express bus service called "Airbus" operates on frequent schedules to popular spots in the city, with stops near most major hotels. An overnight bus service will cover the airport's 24-hour operation. Taxis are also an option and fares from Chek Lap Kok range from HK\$200-HK\$400.

Railways

The MTR [Tel: (852) 2881 8888] network comprises nine railway lines serving Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and the New Territories. In addition, a Light Rail network serves the local communities of Tuen Mun and Yuen Long in the New Territories while a fleet of buses provide convenient feeder services. The MTR also operates the Airport Express, a dedicated high-speed rail link providing the fastest connections to Hong Kong International Airport and the city's newest exhibition and conference centre, AsiaWorld-Expo. From Hong Kong, passengers can travel with ease to Guangdong province and the major cities of Beijing and Shanghai in the mainland of China using the MTR's intercity services.

Unlike many other modes of public transport, the operational reliability of MTR trains is unaffected by traffic conditions, so passengers should always get to their destinations on time, barring severe weather conditions. What's more, MTR trains run about 19 hours a day, 7 days a week, from early morning (5:30am - 6am) to 1am the next morning.

Trams

Trams ply the northern shore of Hong Kong Island at a fixed fare from 6am to 1am. There is also the century-old Peak Tram, a funicular railway which runs up to the Peak from 7am to midnight at about 15-minute intervals. Tel: (852) 2522 0922.

Ferries

The Star Ferry Co [Tel: (852) 2366 2576] operates a shuttle service between Hong Kong Island and Kowloon. Ferries between Central and Tsim Sha Tsui run every few minutes from 6:30am to 11:30pm. Other Star Ferry boats connect Central with Hung Hom (7am to 7:20pm) and Wan Chai to Tsim Sha Tsui (7:30am to 11pm). The Wan Chai Ferry Pier is within a few minutes walk of the HKTDC offices and the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre.

Taxis

Taxi fares are charged by metered tariff. When crossing the harbour by either cross-harbour tunnel, the two-way tunnel toll is added to the fare. With the other tunnels, only the one-way toll is added. There is an extra charge per piece of luggage (both of these extra charges are signposted in the taxi). Flagfall and charges are displayed. Tipping is usually confined to small change. There are two taxi jurisdictions in Hong Kong -- urban and New Territories. Radio taxis: Tel: (852) 2574 7311 / (852) 2527 6324 (Hong Kong Island), (852) 2760 0411 / (852) 2670 0477 (Kowloon), (852) 2457 2266 / (852) 2697 4333 (New Territories).

Visa

According to Hong Kong Immigration Department, nationals of most foreign countries can visit Hong Kong visa-free. Applicants may submit their visa applications directly to Hong Kong Immigration Department, or through Chinese diplomatic or consular missions in their place of domicile.

Enquiries can be directed to:

Hong Kong Immigration Department

Immigration Tower, 7 Gloucester Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong.

Tel : (852) 2824 6111

Fax : (852) 2824 1133 / 2877 7711

Visas for Mainland China Travel

All travellers to the Chinese Mainland, except Hong Kong Chinese residents, require visas. The mainland issues single-entry, double-entry and multiple-entry (six months, unlimited entry) visas, the latter designed for frequent travellers who have long-term business establishments (e.g. joint ventures) in the mainland. The Office of the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the PRC in the HKSAR Region at 7/F, Lower Block, China Resources Building, 26 Harbour Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong [Tel: (852) 3413 2300 / 3413 2424]. Hours: Monday to Friday 9am to 12noon, 2pm to 5pm, and the China Travel Service at various locations, Central office, [Tel: (852) 2522 0450], Tsim Sha Tsui office, [Tel: (852) 2736 1863]. Many travel agencies specialising in China travel can also obtain visas. The China Travel Service normally takes 48 hours to issue a visa, but can do so in one day for a premium. The Visa Office takes 24 hours and also offers a more expensive same-day service.

6. 訪港旅客須知

簡介

香港位於亞太區心臟地帶，又是通往中國內地的大門，地理環境優越。香港奉行自由貿易和自由營商政策，經濟開放，經過150多年的發展，現已成為全球知名的製造、貿易和服務中心。香港分港島、九龍半島、新界和離島四大區域，氣候屬亞熱帶，濕度較高，氣溫介乎冬季攝氏10度和夏季攝氏30度之間。

語言

官方語言為中文和英文。本地的路牌、菜單、旅遊指南和政府刊物大多採用中英雙語。

貨幣及銀行服務

大多數銀行的營業時間為星期一至五上午9時至下午4時30分，星期六上午9時至中午12時30分。香港並無實施外匯管制，港元可自由兌換，任何貨幣(包括人民幣)均可在公開市場自由買賣。旅客可在銀行、找換店或酒店櫃台兌換外幣。港元與美元掛鈎，匯率約為1美元兌7.8港元，每日匯價可向銀行查詢。香港政府發行的硬幣，面額分1毫、2毫、5毫、1元、2元、5元及10元；市面流通的紙幣由3家發鈔銀行發行，面額分別為10元、20元、50元、100元、500元和1,000元。

交通

香港公共交通網絡完善，交通工具包括3條鐵路、公共汽車、電車、計程車及渡輪，收費相宜。另有3條海底行車隧道。

往返機場與市區

由1998年7月6日開始，來港旅客會使用位於大嶼山赤鱗角的新機場，由機場到中環及九龍最方便的途徑是乘搭機場鐵路，到中環只需23分鐘，到九龍19分鐘。成人單程票價為港幣一百元。另外，旅客亦可乘坐機場巴士到各熱門旅遊地點及主要酒店。計程車是另一選擇，由機場到市區車費大概由港幣二百元到四百元。

鐵路

香港鐵路公司[電話：(852) 2881 8888]在香港營運九條鐵路線，網絡覆蓋香港島、九龍及新界，同時在屯門及元朗為當地社區提供輕鐵服務及接駁巴士。公司設有機場快綫，為海外旅客提供高速鐵路專綫，連接市中心和香港國際機場以及香港最新的展覽及會議中心 - 亞洲國際博覽館。公司的城際客運服務，為往返廣東省、北京、及上海的旅客提供方便的鐵路運輸。

港鐵列車與其他交通工具不同，極少受路面交通或天氣影響，每天由清晨5時30分至6時不等至翌日凌晨1時提供約19小時快捷可靠的服務，讓你準時到達目的地。

電車及纜車

電車行走於港島北部，車費劃一，服務時間由上午6時至凌晨1時。另外，有一百多年歷史的山頂纜車[電話：(852) 2522 0922]，每天上午7時至午夜12時提供由中環直達山頂的服務，每15分鐘一班。

渡輪

天星小輪[電話：(852) 2366 2576]開辦多條來回港島與九龍的航線，其中中環至尖沙咀線每數分鐘一班，服務時間為上午6時30分至晚上11時30分；另有中環至紅磡(上午7時至下午7時20分)和灣仔至尖沙咀(上午7時30分至晚上11時)兩條航線。由灣仔渡輪碼頭步行往香港貿易發展局辦事處和香港會議展覽中心，只須數分鐘。

計程車

香港的計程車分市區和新界兩類，按行車哩數收費，車費顯示在計程表上。行經海底隧道的計程車，乘客須支付雙程隧道費，使用其他隧道則只須支付單程隧道費；每件行李亦須額外收費(車內告示詳載各項附加收費)。乘客一般以小額找贖作為小費。計程車電召電話：(852) 2574 7311或(852) 2527 6324(港島)；(852) 2760 0411或(852) 2670 0477(九龍)；(852) 2457 2266或(852) 2697 4333(新界)。

簽證

根據香港入境處資料，大部份外國國民可以免簽證訪港。申請人可把他們的簽證申請直接交往香港入境處，或是透過各地之中國大使館或領事館代辦。

查詢請聯絡：

香港入境處

香港灣仔告士打道7號入境事務大樓

電話：(852) 2824 6111

傳真：(852) 2824 1133 / 2877 7711

中國旅遊簽證

除香港的中國籍居民外，所有往訪中國內地的旅客均須申領簽證，簽證種類包括一次和兩次入境簽證，以及特為經常往返內地經商的旅客簽發的多次入境簽證(6個月內無限次入境)。提供簽證服務的中國外交部駐香港特別行政區特派員公署領事部，位於香港灣仔港灣道26號華潤大廈低座7樓 [電話：(852) 3413 2300 / 3413 2424]，辦公時間為星期一至五，上午9時至中午12時及下午2時至5時，簽發手續需24小時，即日簽證服務需另加收費。此外，香港中國旅行社[中環辦事處電話：(852) 2522 0450，尖沙咀辦事處電話：(852) 2736 1863]以及其他專營中國旅遊業務的旅行社，均可代辦中國簽證。香港中國旅行社一般需要48小時辦理，亦提供一天簽證服務，但需額外收費。