

# HK a2Z

ALWAYS FANTASISED ABOUT MAXING OUT THE PLASTIC IN HONG KONG? **RACHAEL OAKES-ASH** HAS AN EASY GUIDE FOR GIRLS.

**ARTWALK** An annual March charity event for AIDS. Start at The Fringe Club, peruse 40 art galleries in one night, quaff complimentary vino and make "I just adore the line of his work, it's so sultry, so mesmerising, so psychologically binding" comments. The Fringe Club, Lower Albert Rd, Central.

**BRIDES** brides, brides. Hong Kong Park, a maze of fake waterfalls, ponds and turtles provides the photographic backdrop for Chinese brides in hired western frocks. It's Queer Eye heaven. Critique six brides every thirty minutes. Ruffles are big this year.

**CLIPPER LOUNGE** for Tai Tais, and we're not talking cocktails. The modern day concubine, Tai Tai, marries Chinese gazillionaires and sips tea in couture at The Clipper Lounge each afternoon at 3. The Mandarin Oriental Clipper Lounge, 5 Connaught, Central.

**DOUBLE HAPPINESS** plenty of it Friday night girlie happy hour, 13 Lan Kwai Fong Central.

**Dim Sum** at Maxims daily from 11.30 - 2.30pm. It's worth the wait so play nicely with the other children in the line. 2nd Floor, City Hall (next to Star Ferry terminal) Central.

**Dragon I** The light of day reveals deep red décor and the mammoth bamboo birdcage on the patio. The individual unisex loos get a good workout from the chic 'I don't eat' crowd sundown to sunup. The Centrum, 60 Wyndham St, Central.

**EATING** In HK some of the best fine dining can be found in five star hotels - go figure. Philippe Starck put his name on

The Peninsula's Felix Bar, Alain Ducasse lent his to Spoon at The Intercontinental and Tang Court at The Langham has a wait list just to eat.

**FINDS** Stylish Scandinavian restaurant with not a roll mop in site. Think ice white beads and lighting and an intimate bar serving The Greta Garbo, a sinful mix of ginger and vanilla vodka. Wellington St, Lan Kwai Fong, Central.

**Fruits in Suits** meet on the third Tuesday of the month at One Bar and Grill, 1 Exchange Square Central. 6.30pm - 8.30pm. Mixed crowd.

**Fetish Fashion** HK's only leather playroom. Enough said. 32 Cochrane St, Central.

**Feather Boa** More boudoir than bar, discover it on your first night and you won't go anywhere else. There's no street signage and curtains drape the doors so you could easily walk by. Shame if you do, as you'd miss the best Peach Blinis in town. 38 Staunton St, Central.

**GECKO** Eccentric French (an oxymoron) alley bar. All very tribal with freestyle drumming to the resident DJ in a space reminiscent of your lounge room. The barman's name is Cameron: tell him Rachael sent you. Ezra's Lane, 15-19 Hollywood Rd, Central.

**HOT HOT HOT** as in Szechuan cooking at Da Ping Huo private dining room. The 13 courses are rated by heat from mild to inferno to "is there a plastic surgeon in town, I just burned a cleft palate into my mouth". The chef's charming after dinner rendition of Chinese Opera will brulee what's left of your eardrums. 49 Hollywood Rd, Central.

**I SPA** therefore I am. Chan Xue Tao is a Feng Shui master and created the harmony of I-Spas five private spa suites.

Golf clap for Chan, he's done one hell of a job. Take two hours out for The Ancient Rituals of the Orient. The Intercontinental 18 Salisbury Rd, Tsim Sha Tsui.

**JIA** Mandarin for "home" and thankfully only one syllable, which helps when instructing the cab driver after too many cocktails. The only Philippe Starck designed boutique hotel in Asia. Stock up on the complimentary Kiehl's products and Luxe City Guide to Hong Kong - no stylemeister leaves JIA without it. 1-5 Irving St, Causeway Bay.

**KOKAGE** This town loves foie gras and truffles, it's a status thing. You won't be complaining when you try the foie gras and mango nori rolls at Kokage, the best Japanese outside of well, Japan. Star St, Wan Chai.

**LADIES MARKETS** in Mongkok every afternoon and night. Buy buy buy fake fake fakes.

Ladies night in Wan Chai. Free drinks for all females in every bar.

**M ON THE FRINGE** M stands for Michelle as in Garnaut. The look? Oriental bohemian with a touch of France, oh go see for yourself. If you're missing home have the pavlova. 2 Lower Albert Rd, Central.

**MTR** Don't ask what it stands for just get on it. Anywhere you want to go in haste. The best public transport system in the world.

**NINETY SEVEN** Friday night Happy Hour is a must for any Tongzhi (gay) visiting HK. Lan Kwai Fong, Central.

**ORGANIC LUNCH AT MUNCH** Imagine, organic food in Hong Kong, must be imported. 19-21 Hankow Rd, TST, Kowloon.

**Oasis Karaoke Bar** Girls who like girls like Karaoke so do re me your way to Oasis. HK\$150 all you can drink. 14/F, Evernew House, 485 Lockhart Road, Causeway Bay.

**PLATEAU** The closest thing to god in Hong Kong. Stay overnight in the Spa Suites at Plateau with your own private terrace on the harbour - if you can get out of the bath. A square infinity tub with full glass casing means you can check out what you look like underwater in the mirror opposite. Great for narcissists. The Grand Hyatt, 1 Harbour Road, Wan Chai.

**The Peak** tram will take you to the top of HK. Put your feet up at Café Deco (owned by the same group as Café Sydney but half the price) and order up. The view will help you digest.

**Peninsula** A luxurious beast of a hotel with plush couches to lose your title into (dahlink, have you seen my Baron? It's behind the cushion in the drawing room next to the Countess I misplaced last week). Salisbury Road, TST, Kowloon.

**QUINTESSENTIAL** HK shopping - just walk out your front door and start haggling.

**R&R** at Langham Place top floor gymnasium and Chuan Spa. Work out with your own private DVD screen on the treadmill overlooking the new territories then spa it up before reclining in the exclusive relaxation room with digital headphones. Langham Place, 555 Shanghai St, Mongkok.

**STAR FERRY** Fifty cents gets you from Kowloon to Central in less than fifteen minutes.

**TOSCANA** Italian fine dining opposite Star Ferry. Take your time, the luncheon menu should be treated with respect. The Ritz Carlton, 3 Connaught Rd, Central.

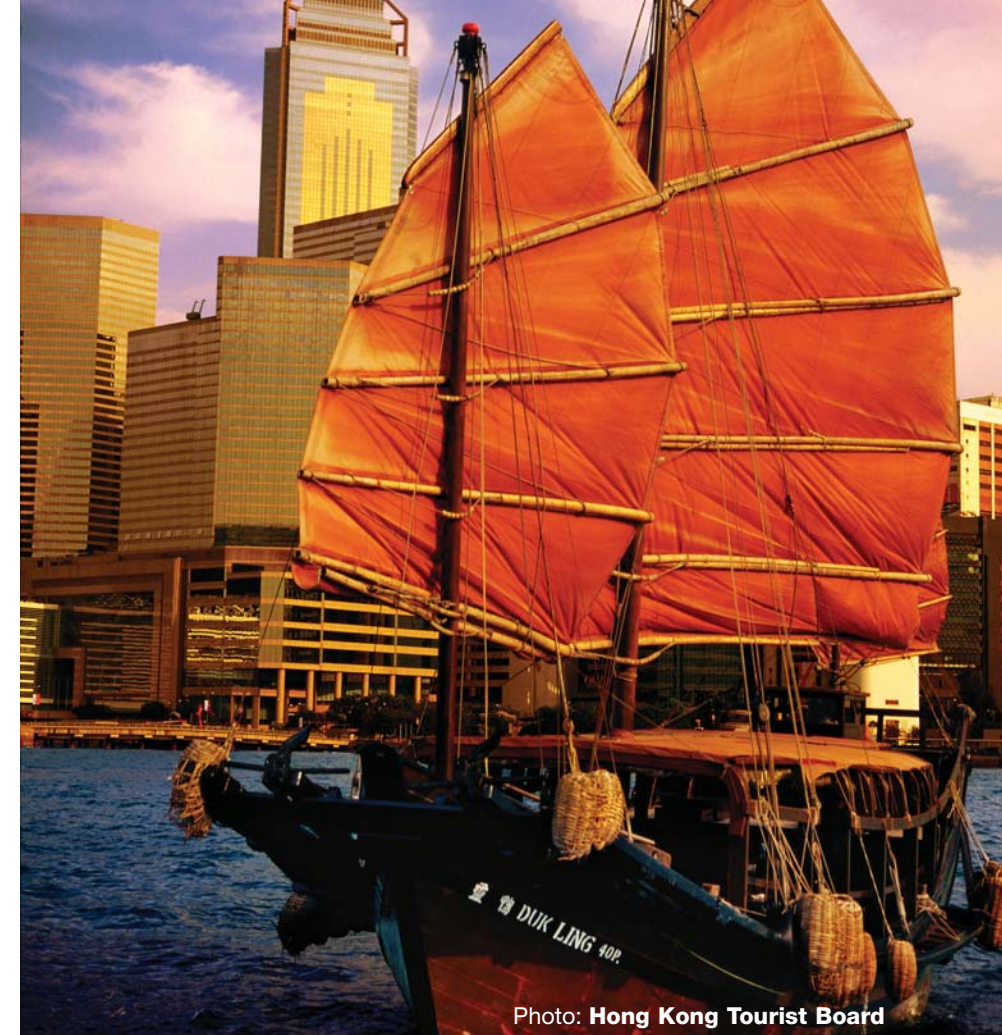


Photo: Hong Kong Tourist Board

Tribute Frank Sun is a humble man and he has plenty of reason not to be. Book private dining Tribute when you book your trip, you'll need that much time ahead to ensure a place. Eat what he serves and you won't be ungrateful. G/F, 13 Elgin St, Central.

**UPPER CLASS** Richard Branson has got in on the action with Virgin Atlantic flights from Oz to Hong Kong. His Upper Class has a stand up bar to get you in training for your sojourn.

**VONG** at the top of The Mandarin Oriental for Asian French fusion. Picasso ate dessert at the beginning of the meal so order the Warm Valhrona Chocolate Cake straight up. The Mandarin Oriental, 5 Connaught Rd, Central.

**WALKING** Call Seonaid (852) 9359 9071 for a guided half day or full day trek of Hong Kong and surrounding islands.

**XPATS** There are half a million of them living in HK and are termed Gweilos by the local Chinese. ABC is American born Chinese, BBC is British born Chinese.

**YU** Australian chef, Nicholas Blair, imports the freshest live fish from Asia, giving them oxygen to reduce jetlag before serving them up on bone china with HK harbour views. The Intercontinental 18 Salisbury Rd, Tsim Sha Tsui

**ZZZZZS** What you'll be getting in your Business Class recliner in Cathay Pacific on the overnight flight home. Make sure you wake for the truffle chocolates. ✈

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