


take a trip

With Travel Editor
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MUM NEEDS A BREAK TOO, SO GIVE HER A MOTHER'S DAY TREAT WITH A DIFFERENCE – A SHOPPING TRIP WITH THE GIRLS

With bargain airfares and package deals, you can afford to look outside Australia for that much deserved time out from work and family. With four shopping meccas all within a short flying distance from home, the only question you need ask yourself is: 'When are we going?'



Shop 'til YOU DROP

BANGKOK

- A truly cultural hotpot filled with luscious Thai silks, delicious Thai cooking, golden temples and the convenient air-conditioned Skytrain to take all the blisters out of shopping.



INSIDER TIP

Beware of fake brands. If the item has a VAT (value added tax) price tag, it usually means it's genuine.

Head straight to:

Siam Square is a hub of shopping and night-life. Local designers sit beside big-name fashion brands at the Siam Center and Discovery Shopping Center. Pantip Plaza has bargain computer equipment.

Best bargains:

Get lost in Chatuchak Weekend Markets, 14ha of 15,000 vendors selling everything from goldfish and soft furnishings to clothes, jewels and herbs. A whole day and you still won't have seen everything.

Shop here for:

Jim Thompson is the most famous outlet for Thai silk, but you don't have to spend big bucks to get quality Thai silk fabric or tailored clothes made up within 24 hours. Ask your hotel concierge to recommend a reputable tailor.

Where to bunk:

The Sofitel Silom for the V9 Wine Bar is the perfect spot for the girls to crack open a chardonnay and watch the sun go down. For more information, visit www.sofitel.com.



Head straight to:

Orchard Rd is Singapore's premium shopping district. It has block after block of shopping malls, from designer labels at Paragon Shopping Center and Palais Renaissance to the fashion bargains of the Heeren Shops, Wheelock Place and Orchard Towers. Pack comfortable shoes!

Best bargains:

Twenty-four hour department store Mustafa sits in the middle of Little India. Bollywood style bangles and earrings go for less than \$5, so stock up big.

SINGAPORE

- This country still holds its position as shopping mecca of the East. The spotless, ordered city provides hours of retail therapy, which is the only kind you'll need here.

Shop here for:

Fabrics, furniture and homewares are big business, so head to The Shophouse in Gillman Village on the last Thursday of the month for their fabulous Shophouse Fair.

Where to bunk:

Qantas Holidays is offering four nights for the price of three at the New Park Hotel, which includes breakfast daily, a unique Shop & Eat Tour and airport transfers. Call Qantas Holidays now on 13 14 15, or visit [Qantas Holidays at www.qantas.com/holidays](http://www.qantas.com/holidays).


INSIDER TIP

Singapore airport is home to Charles and Keith, for *Sex and the City* style footwear at around \$20!



TOM'S POSTCARD

Mum and I met up in London in 1996 when I was backpacking. She took me on a bus tour, even though I thought I was too cool for that - Mum thought I was a brat! I'm trying to convince her to come to New York, one of the best cities in the world, to see all the Broadway shows. One day soon I hope we visit somewhere special together, with all our family. I love you, Mum - happy Mother's Day! I couldn't have done it without you.



Travels with
my mum
Tom.

■ This week on *The Great Outdoors*, Ernie boards the Sampo, the world's only tourist icebreaker, in the Baltic Sea. Monday 7.30pm on the Seven Network.

HONG KONG

● If you can't find it in Hong Kong (left and right), it doesn't exist. Whether it's the seconds fashion outlets of Wan Chai, the Jade Market or Chinese antiques on Hollywood Rd, you won't leave empty-handed. Visit between June 24 and August 31 to experience the Hong Kong Shopping Festival.



Head straight to:

Hong Kong is divided into Central and Kowloon districts. Central is home to shopping in Causeway Bay, Times Square, Causeway Place and Sogo department store. The CBD houses Harvey Nichols and shopping at IFC, Prince's Building and Chater House.

Alight the Star Ferry Kowloon side and walk into the Harbour City shopping mall for chain store paradise. Go further afield to Mongkok Ladies' Market after midday for bargain fashion accessories galore. Computer fanatics should hit Nathan Rd.

Best bargains:

Visit Stanley Market on the south side of Hong Kong Island for handicrafts and souvenirs. When you're done, enjoy a delicious beachfront meal in a local cafe.

Shop here for:

Everything. Electricals are still considerably cheaper here than in Australia, but purchase from a reputable store and make sure the warranty is worldwide and the voltage is compatible with that at home. Fortress is a good electrical store for cameras, computers and the like.

Where to bunk:

Qantas Holidays has four nights for the price of three at Novotel Century Harbourview, with a free Hong Kong Island Tour, a shuttle to the downtown area, 15 per cent off hotel dining and transfers. To create the ultimate shopping experience and for more fantastic deals, call Qantas Holidays on 13 14 15, or visit www.qantas.com/holidays.



Wednesday night is ladies' free drinks night at many bars in Wan Chai. Perfect for a girls' night out.

KUALA LUMPUR

● KL is pure old-world charm mixed with new-world bargains. Make sure you take plenty of room in your suitcase - and an umbrella. You'll need both.



Head straight to:

Suria KLCC next to the famous Petronas Twin Towers has six levels of IT superstores, Marks & Spencer, Zara, Burberry and more. When you're done here try Times Square, Lot 10 and Avenue K for chain store must-haves to high end window shopping. Head to the Mid Valley Megamall for top designer Melinda Looi buys.

Best bargains:

Petaling St in Chinatown is a must with street vendors selling herbal medicines, T-shirts and local jewellery. If in doubt about an item, say 'mahal sangat' (too expensive) and watch the price plummet.

Shop here for:

Songket is the local Malay fabric handwoven with gold and silver and found throughout the city. The longer it takes to make, the more expensive it is.

Where to bunk:

Spoil yourself at the wonderful J.W. Marriott Hotel for some shop and spa treatments - it's conveniently located in the Bukit Bintang shopping district. Visit www.marriott.com.au.



Visit between July and September for major discounts with the city's annual Mega Sale Carnival.