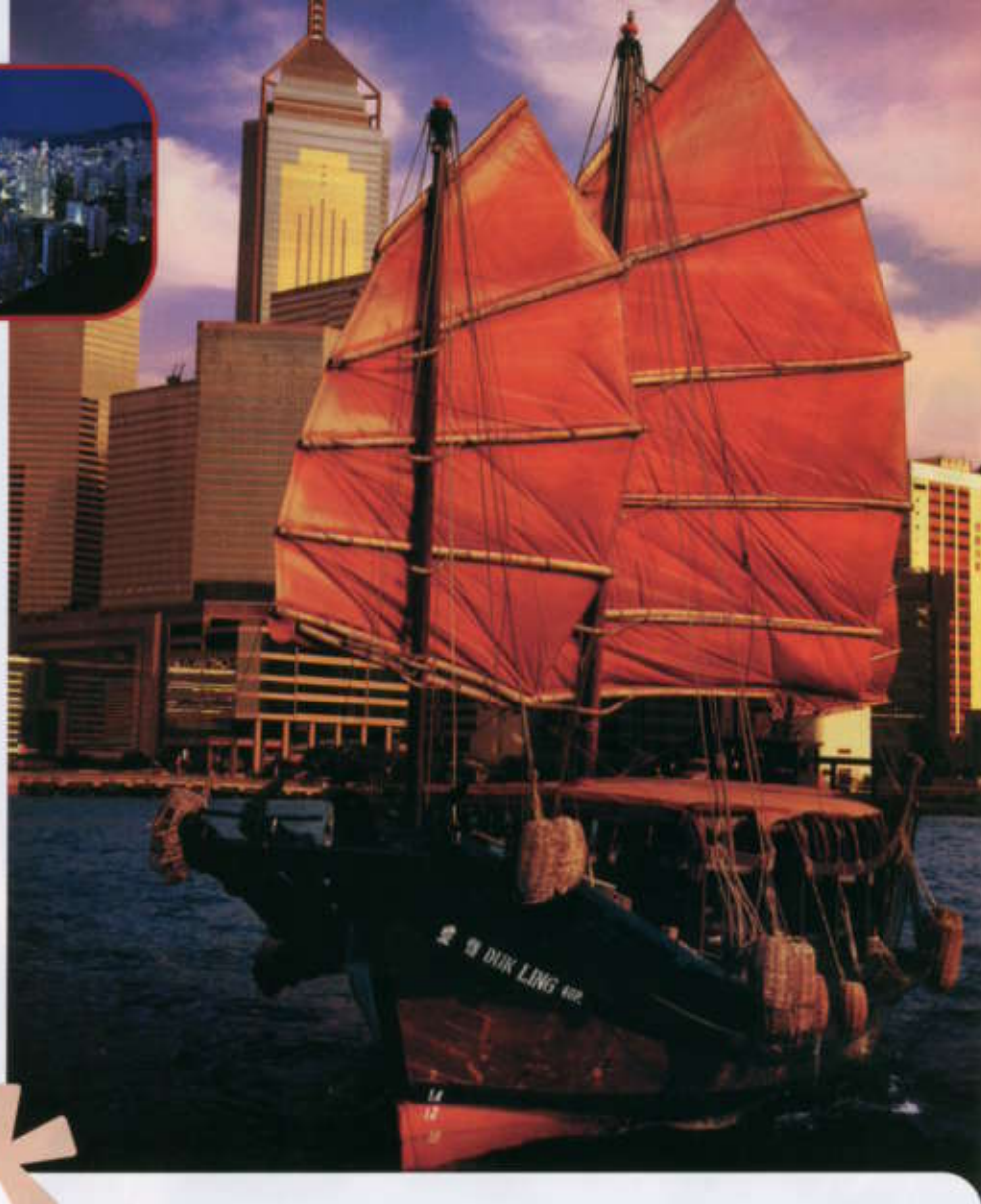




Main: Duk-Ling ride on the harbour in Hong Kong
Above: The view over Hong Kong Harbour



Hong Kong, China

By Rachael Oakes-Ash

Hong Kong is the city of excess – the New York of the Orient. My first trip to Honkers was to last five days. I came home 14 days later having made only a mere dent on the city's extreme 24/7 nightlife.

It's not who you know in this town; it's who knows you. If you're white you're a Gweilo; if you're rich, female and if you're Chinese, you're a Tai Tai. If, like me, you're a Gweilo pretending to be rich then you're a wannabe (but that's worldwide).

With over seven million people crammed into the size of the eastern suburbs of Sydney, space is a commodity. This is what makes Hong Kong exciting – the jostling of people come lunchtime in Central, the city's Filipino population picnicking on the sidewalk every Sunday, and the internationals crowding the bars of Soho.

Best hotel: Causeway Bay's JIA Boutique Hotel (1-5 Irving St), designed by Philippe Starck, offers a touch of modernism and luxury. Australia's Teage Ezard has found fame as the head chef here. Visit www.jiahongkong.com

Best Restaurant: At The Intercontinental in Kowloon, Spoon blends the Tony Chi design and Alain Ducasse menu – enough said. At 18 Salisbury Rd, Kowloon. Tel: +852 2721 1211 or visit www.hongkong-ic.intercontinental.com/

Best Bar: Gecko, hidden down a side alley in Ezra Lane, Lower Hollywood Rd, Central, is unpretentious and filled with French men and a bohemian band for jamming. Visit www.gecko.hk

Further information: Visit the Hong Kong Tourist Board at www.hktb.com •