

Sleepless in Macau

Offering a tapestry of sights, sounds and flavours, Macau is a perfect confluence of Chinese and European cultures

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ACTIVITIES GALORE

▲ **Dragon of Fortune show** can be enjoyed at the Rotunda Atrium where a dragon uncoils and puffs smoke as it rises from the depths. Symbolic of good fortune, well-being and vitality, this dragon is a confluence of traditional sculptural art, modern lighting and audio effects in a dramatic display





◀ One should not miss the renowned **House of Dancing Water** show with acrobatics and stunts designed by Franco Dragone at the in-house theatre in the City of Dreams. If you are a shopaholic, go shopping in the high streets of The Venetian

Macau is a classic example of East meets West. An amalgamation of European culture from 500 years of Portuguese colonisation and Oriental culture with strong Chinese influences, this Special Administrative Region (SAR) of the People's Republic of China, has loads of surprises for the discerning travellers. With over 20 ancient monuments and urban squares, the historic district is collectively known as The Historic Centre of Macau and was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2005. One of the world's richest cities, Macau can be best explored on a ferry.

POTPOURRI OF CULTURE

Well-known around the world as a hot destination for high-rollers, Macau astonishes tourists with relics, churches, colourful Portuguese - styled houses and Azulego, the glazed handmade Portuguese tiles across cobbled streets. Most streets have two names each, one in Chinese and the other in Portuguese. If you have a penchant for culture and heritage, old Macau is the place to be. You could head to A-Ma Temple dedicated to Matsu, the goddess of seafarers and fishermen. Legend has it that when Portuguese sailors landed here for the first time, they asked the name of the place to which the natives replied by calling out – A-Ma Gau meaning Bay of A-Ma Gau or the goddess of A-Ma. Thus, the Portuguese named the peninsula as Macao or Macau.

Huge conical incense coils hanging around one of the oldest and most famous Taoist temples in the country makes for



It is believed that when Portuguese sailors landed here for the first time, they enquired about the name of the land. The residents called out 'A-Ma Gau' meaning 'Bay of A-Ma' which, over time, changed to Macau

Macau Museum is a great place to spend a few hours if you want to get an insight into the history, arts and traditions of Macau. Walk around the fort to get a panoramic view of the old city

a pretty sight. A few steps away is Lilau Sqaure, under the shade of a huge tree, which houses a fountain, the remnant of a natural spring that once existed here. Do not forget to drink from the fountain as a popular Portuguese phrase claims that "one who drinks from Lilau never forgets Macau."

Close to Senado Square, the heart of Macau with its bustling street, is St Dominic's Church. Established by three Spanish Dominican priests, this beautiful yellow building with green wooden doors and windows was built in a Baroque style and is noted for a blend of European and local Macanese features in its design. A few steps ahead are the ruins of the 16th century St Paul's Church which was destroyed in a fire in the 19th century. All that remains now is its facade and the stone stairs. Right next to the church is the Monte Fort with bastions and barracks which once were a defence setup and now houses the Macau Museum, a great place to spend a few hours if you want to get an insight into the history, arts and traditions of Macau. Walk around the fort to get a panoramic view of the old city.

UNITY IN DIVERSITY

New Macau is extraordinarily diverse in comparison to the old town. Those keen on trying their luck in gaming should head to the gambling dens at The Venetian, MGM or the casinos of Grand Lisboa. With an



WINE and DINE

The gastronomic scene is quite interesting as you get to savour a varied offering of Portuguese, Cantonese and Chinese delicacies. The succulent prawns in tomato sauce and the African chicken cooked in onion paste are specialities of Restaurant Litoral, renowned for Macanese cooking. If you want to indulge your tastebuds with some Portuguese delicacies, head to

A Lorcha. The biscuit mousse, a speciality of Macau, is surely not-to-be-missed. At Coloane, do not forget to buy a box of egg tarts from Lord Stow's Bakery. Other local treats are soft almond cookies from Koi Kei and beef jerky sold at most bakeries



active nightlife, Macau is aptly called the Gaming Capital of the World. The city also hosts the unusual greyhound race at the Macao (Yat Yuen) Canidrome Club, the only greyhound racing stadium in Asia with around 120 dogs participating in 18 races for five days every week.

If you are interested in adrenaline-pumping activities, head to the Macau Tower and indulge in a skywalk or bungee jumping. Another option is to watch the



A The ruins of the St Paul's Church

B Prawns in tomato sauce at Restaurant Litoral

ODYSSEY OFFSHORE

DO NOT MISS



1 If you are an animal lover, you shouldn't miss a visit to the Macau Giant Panda Pavilion to watch the cuddly giant pandas, Kai Kai and Xin Xin



2 Head to MGM for the underwater event in an eight metre tall aquarium called Water Aurora as divers enter it and feed schools of fish



3 Lou Lim leoc Garden is modelled on Suzhou, a classic Chinese garden. Watch people practice Tai Chi or stroll on the bridge across a pond of flowers



4 For thrill seekers, this is the ultimate to-do of Macau. At 233m, the Macau Tower is currently the world's highest bungee jump



C

C Gondola ride at The Venetian

Macau Grand Prix in action as motorcycles and cars zip across the twisted Guia street circuit of Macau if you happen to be in the city around November. Otherwise, experience the rush of Formula 3 racing at the Grand Prix Museum by trying your hand at one of the simulators.

Another interesting option is the 1,400 sq m Wine Museum that offers information not only about wine but also aims to recreate the atmosphere of wine production, showing visitors traditional and modern tools used in the process. The museum is divided into different areas – historical information, wine cellar, museum and exhibitions – and uses maps, texts, photos, tiles and videos, among other mediums, to relate the history of wine.



D

D Macau Grand Prix Museum

MACAU FACTS

Macau is made of Macau peninsula and the islands Taipa and Coloane. Taipa and Coloane are connected by a landfill called Cotai. Macau has been growing in size in the last few decades as land is being reclaimed from sea

Macanese are those born to a Chinese mother and a Portuguese father

Cars with two number plates are seen plying in Macau, one issued by the Chinese government and the other by Macau

Most people in Macau speak Cantonese, a Chinese dialect