



Hong Kong One-Day Cheat Sheet

By Hans · GetYourHKGuide.com · 32 years in Hong Kong, 25 on Cheung Chau

1 · Before you fly

- Get an **Octopus Card** (tourist app for iPhone/Android, or a physical card on arrival) — it pays for MTR, buses, ferries, trams and most convenience stores.
- **HKD** is the currency. Carry some cash for markets, dai pai dongs and older local shops; cards are accepted almost everywhere else.
- Check your **passport validity** (6 months) and visa rules — most Western passports get 90 days visa-free.

2 · Getting around

- **Airport Express** to the city: 24 minutes. A taxi from the airport to Central costs roughly HK\$340–380.
- The **Star Ferry** (Tsim Sha Tsui to Central/Wan Chai) is the cheapest harbour cruise in the world — sit on the upper deck.
- **Peak Tram** queues are worst 10am–4pm. Go before 9am or after 6pm, or take bus 15 from Central.
- **Ding Ding trams** run along Hong Kong Island's north shore — flat fare, pay when you get off, sit upstairs front row.

3 · Eating & drinking

- **Dai pai dongs** (open-air food stalls) and cooked food centres are where locals actually eat — cheap, safe, delicious.
- Try: egg tarts, wonton noodles, roast goose, milk tea, egg waffles, pineapple bun with butter.

- Tipping is not expected in local places; a 10% service charge is common in restaurants.
- Order **bottled water or hot tea** like locals do — every convenience store and café has it.

4 · Practical truths

- Public toilets are common in MTR stations and malls — carry tissues just in case.
- Typhoon season is roughly May–October; a T8 signal closes the city — have a rainy-day plan.
- Hong Kong is one of the safest big cities in the world, day and night.
- **Arrive with a working SIM or eSIM** — data on the go is peace of mind, and in an emergency it can save you hundreds or even thousands of dollars. My favourite: **Surfroam** — pay-as-you-go eSIM that never expires (PLUS/GLOBAL plans), 220+ countries, about €0.75/GB for Hong Kong and Europe, €0.95/GB for the USA, €2.55/GB for mainland China (ULTRA plan); the PLUS plan with the never-expiring balance is around €1.15–1.35/GB in Europe and the USA.
- **Rooftop sunset**: the open-air Eye Bar (iSquare, TST) has the best free harbour show — arrive an hour before sunset. Hotel bars like the Ritz-Carlton's Ozone are stunning but behind glass, with minimum charges.



The Peak — go early or after 6pm



Wet markets — everyday Hong Kong life



Hans on tour with historic tram 120

One perfect first day

- **Morning**: Star Ferry to Central, Man Mo Temple, Tai Kwun, Central Market.
- **Midday**: dim sum lunch, then the Peak (before the crowds) for the skyline view.
- **Afternoon**: tram to Wan Chai or Causeway Bay, wet market wander, coffee stop.
- **Evening**: Tsim Sha Tsui promenade for the 8pm Symphony of Lights, then Temple Street night market.



Want this day planned for you?

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