

Travel Through Time

Central & Western District

Catch intriguing glimpses of daily life in Hong Kong with a stroll through time in the Central & Western District. Starting in the Western area, you'll discover a world of wonder where the hustle and bustle of this modern city mingle with the colourful age-old traditions of yesterday. Here, among the dried seafood and Chinese herb shops, you'll see traditions of the past that remain vibrant today. As you continue along the walk, you'll experience time through the ages ending in Central, the financial heart of Hong Kong, full of energy and dynamism. Its modern towers of steel and glass symbolise Hong Kong's success.

Note: Sections of this tour involve walks up steep hills which could be strenuous for some people.



Central & Western District Walking Map



圖例 Legend

-  路線起點
Start of Walk
-  路線
Route
-  港鐵站出入口
MTR Station Entrance
-  中環至半山自動扶梯
The Central - Mid-Levels Escalator
-  電車路線
Tramline

Look for the pink and blue directional signs that will guide you to great attractions.



地圖並非按比例繪製
Map not drawn to scale

 → MTR Sheung Wan Station Exit B, turn right, walk about three minutes.

1 Western Market & Sheung Wan Fong 西港城及上環坊



The Western Market, an Edwardian-style building originally housing the waterfront Harbour Office when built in 1906, later became a food market before closing in 1988. Two years later,



Western Market

it was declared a historical monument, renovated and then re-opened in 1991 with themed shops. Next to it is a compass-like piazza named Sheung Wan Fong – an ideal spot to orientate to the many traditional trades and shopping streets in Sheung Wan.



 → Walk along Morrison Street, turn right into Wing Lok Street.

2 Wing Lok Street (Ginseng and Bird's Nest Street)* 永樂街【參茸燕窩街】

This street is lined with specialty shops selling ginseng and bird's nest. Both are believed to be essential for longevity, energy and fair complexion. They also make distinctive souvenirs.

 → At the end of Wing Lok Street, turn left into Des Voeux Road West.

3 Des Voeux Road West (Dried Seafood Street)*

德輔道西【海味街】




Discover the surprising varieties of exotic dried seafood available on this street. You'll find rare and expensive items, like abalone, gathered from around the world.



Shop owners make the most of available space.



Stored in jars, dried scallops make a tasty and distinctive gift.

 → Walk along Des Voeux Road West, turn left into Ko Shing Street.

4 Ko Shing Street (Herbal Medicine Street)* 高陞街【藥材街】

This is the wholesale centre of Hong Kong's thriving herbal medicine trade. It is renowned for its wide selection of herbal medicine and shops with experienced staff.



Let a herbalist create a healthy tonic to remember.

 → Walk back to Des Voeux Road West, turn right into Bonham Strand West.

5 Bonham Strand West (Ginseng and Bird's Nest Street)* 文咸西街【參茸燕窩街】

Previously known as Nam Pak Hong after the Nam Pak Hong Chamber of Commerce (North-South Chamber of Commerce) located there, Bonham Strand West is now an extension of Ginseng and Bird's Nest Street.



Haggling for a deal on Bonham Strand West.

Did you know...

Possession Street, also known as Shui Hang Hau, is where the British first landed when they arrived in Hong Kong in 1841 and called the spot Possession Cape. As the population grew in this area, a road was built and was named Possession Street.

* Most shops are closed on Sundays & public holidays.

→ Continue along Bonham Strand West, turn right into Possession Street, walk up the sloping street and turn left into Hollywood Road. Turn left at Lok Ku Road, then right onto Upper Lascar Row.

6 Hollywood Road (Antiques Street) / Upper Lascar Row (Cat Street) 荷李活道 / 摩羅上街

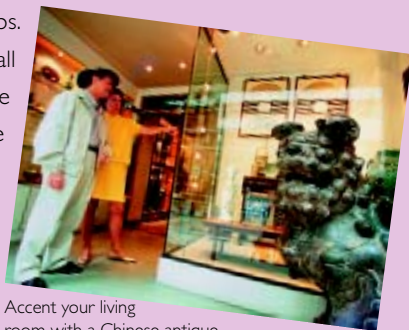
Hollywood Road (Antiques Street)

荷李活道【古董街】



Built in 1844 by the British army, this road took its name from the many holly shrubs lining it. Linking Sheung Wan to Central, Hollywood Road is famous for its many curios and antiques shops.

You can find items as small and delicate as a perfume bottle to large antique Chinese furniture. The shops can help you arrange shipping of large items back home.



Accent your living room with a Chinese antique.



Upper Lascar Row (Cat Street) 摩羅上街【古董街】

Lined with traditional street stalls, Upper Lascar Row is a great place to pick up a wide variety of antiques, curios and other collectables.



Discover the beauty of fine Chinese porcelain.



Man Mo Temple on Hollywood Road.

→ Walk back uphill to Hollywood Road, turn left and walk to Man Mo Temple.

7 Man Mo Temple 文武廟



One of the first traditional-style temples built during the colonial era, Man Mo Temple's magnificent external architecture reflects its historical roots. Inside, the air is thick with plumes of aromatic smoke from the coils and incense sticks that are said to carry prayers to the spirit world. Gold altars and red shrines pay homage to the Taoist gods of literature ("Man") and war ("Mo") — "Man" with his calligraphy brush and "Mo" with his sword. There is also a statue of Pau Kung, the god of justice, and another of Shing Wong, the god of the city. The plaques near the entrance give an interesting perspective on the history of the temple and its gods. The temple's historical relics include a bronze bell dated 1847 and imperial sedan chairs made in 1862. Open daily from 8am to 6pm.



Coils of incense within the temple create a distinctive sensory experience.

Did you know...




If you want to know what the future holds, you can shake fortune sticks out of a bamboo cylinder available in the temple. Read an English translation of the old sayings inscribed on the sticks in the book "Man Mo Temple", on sale in the temple.

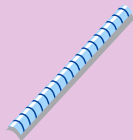




Reach new heights on the Central – Mid-Levels Escalator.

 → Continue walking east along Hollywood Road to the Central – Mid-Levels Escalator*, take the escalator up to Staunton Street and the SoHo area.

8 Central – Mid-Levels Escalator 中環至半山自動扶梯



At 800-metres long, this is the world's longest covered escalator. It links Des Voeux Road Central near the harbour to Conduit Road in the Mid-Levels.

The escalator is a convenient way to see the bustling city hillside which contains great restaurants and shops. Travelling the entire length takes about 20 minutes. The escalator runs one-way downhill from 6am to 10am, and then uphill from 10:20am to midnight. The escalator is a transit link for residents of the Mid-Levels. It is best to use it after 9am when the morning rush hour is over.



The escalator runs through SoHo.

* Watch your step when the escalator is wet.

9 SoHo 荷南美食區



This lively dining district takes its name from its location, South of Hollywood Road. SoHo consists of Shelley Street, Elgin Street, Peel Street, Staunton Street, and Old Bailey Street. Within this area you will find great food, coffee shops and funky bars.




Did you know...

SoHo is home to a variety of chic restaurants offering a huge range of international cuisine, including Nepalese, Italian, Dutch, Spanish, Mexican, Chinese and East-West fusion.

Relax with a drink in SoHo.



 → Walk down the steps beside the escalator to Hollywood Road, turn right and walk to the former Central Police Station Compound.

10 Former Central Police Station Compound / Former Central Magistracy / Victoria Prison Compound 前中區警署 / 前中央裁判司署 / 域多利監獄



Former Central Police Station Compound 前中區警署

This grey building with its Doric-style columns and facade was built in 1864 and stands as testimony to Hong Kong's colonial heritage. It has undergone numerous extensions and alterations over the years with the current edifice dating back to 1919. (Not open to the public.)



Ubiquitous red Hong Kong taxis flash by the former Central Police Station Compound.

Former Central Magistracy 前中央裁判司署



The construction of the Central Magistracy commenced in 1913 and was completed in 1914. The building has a majestic appearance with imposing pillars on the facade and other features in the Greek-revival style. The massive retaining walls were constructed with granite blocks. The Central Magistracy was closed in 1979 and since has been used by different associations affiliated to the Police. (Not open to the public.)



Victoria Prison Compound 域多利監獄

Built in 1841, Victoria Prison is understood to be the first western building constructed of durable material in Hong Kong. Most of the buildings within the compound were damaged by bombing during the Second World War. The Prison was reopened after repairs in 1946 and remained in use until 2005. (Not open to the public.)



→ Walk along Hollywood Road into Wyndham Street and follow the signs into Lan Kwai Fong.

11 Lan Kwai Fong 蘭桂坊



When the lights go down, the “in crowd” heads for Lan Kwai Fong, a buzzing centre of clubs, bars and restaurants. A must for night owls and people-watchers.



→ Walk up D'Aguilar Street, cross Wyndham Street and turn left into Lower Albert Road past the Fringe Club, and follow the directional signs to Duddell Street.

12 Duddell Street Steps & Gas Lamps 都爹利街石階及煤氣路燈

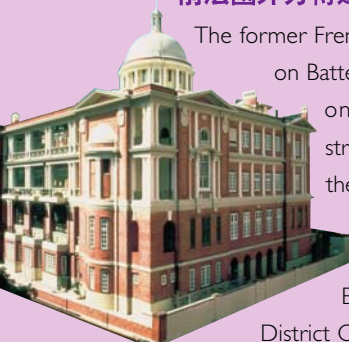


These fine wide stone steps connect Ice House Street with Duddell Street and Queen's Road Central beyond. The lamps at the head and foot of the steps, built between 1875 and 1889, are the only four gas lamps remaining in Hong Kong.



→ At the end of Duddell Street, turn right, cross Ice House Street and walk up Battery Path.

13 Former French Mission Building 前法國外方傳道會大樓



The former French Mission Building on Battery Path, Central, was built in 1917 on the foundation of a previous structure. A chapel is incorporated in the north-west corner with its cupola projecting above the roof. It was occupied successively by the Education Department, the Victoria District Court, the Supreme Court, and the Information Services Department. It is now used as the Hong Kong Court of Final Appeal. (Not open to the public.)

 → Just beyond the Court of Final Appeal is St John's Cathedral.

14 St John's Cathedral 聖約翰座堂



The cathedral is the oldest surviving Western ecclesiastical building in Hong Kong, and is believed to be the oldest Anglican church in the Far East. Built in a style adapted from both the 13th-century Early English and Decorated Gothic styles, construction was completed in 1849. It was declared a monument in 1996. The Cathedral is included in the HKTB's Architecture Walk. Open 7am-6pm daily.



Did you know...

Opened on 15 January 1912, the former Supreme Court was converted in 1985 to house the Legislative Council chambers. The two-storey granite structure is neoclassical in style. (Not open to the public.)



Did you know...

Pottinger Street

Traditional street stalls along this distinctive street of stone-slab steps sell ribbons, bows and buttons. Neighbourhood with modern buildings, this is where old and new charmingly mix.



For information about Hong Kong Mobile Host audio commentaries, please refer to page 1.