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ENTERTAINMENT

top picks

- **Aqua Spirit** (p211) Plate glass harbour panoramas, swanky surroundings.
- **Cloudnine** (p216) Listen to the local kids sing along to saccharine Cantopop. An authentic, if perhaps painful, Hong Kong experience.
- **Drop** (p214) Chilled owners, rib-rattling sound system, up-for-it crowd, bangin' choons.
- **Gecko Lounge** (p207) Lost French civilisation found in Central back alley. Great wines, chilled beats, warm atmosphere.
- **Yumla** (p214) Scruffy, unpretentious, inexpensive and late-opening club-cum-bar with cool, eclectic music.
- **Yun Fu** (p207) Kick off the night with eclectic tunes, fruity cocktails and a retro Chinese look at Yun Fu's tiny, circular bar.

Hong Kong's reputation as a cultural desert that's full of drinking holes is not entirely deserved. Certainly the clubbing and bar scene is more frantic and full of choice than it has ever been. Beyond the happy hours and the neon, though, there's a small but growing world of cultural entertainment representing drama, Cantonese opera, dance or live music.

Most weeks, half a dozen local arts companies perform anything from Cantonese opera to an English-language version of a Chekhov play. Locally cultivated drama and dance are among the most enjoyable in Asia, and the schedule of foreign performances is often stellar; recent imports have included the incomparable soprano Barbara Hendricks, composer Philip Glass and his ensemble, the Senegalese *mbalax* superstar Youssou N'Dour and Australian pop-singing sensation Kylie Minogue. There are also some very impressive new venues, especially in New Kowloon and the New Territories.

Nightlife Strips & Districts

Hong Kong Island has the lion's share of the territory's most popular pubs, bars and clubs, plus the cultural venues of Central and Wan Chai, so classical music concerts, theatre, opera and the like are within easy striking distance.

Much of Central's fun nightlife revolves around the now legendary Lan Kwai Fong, and increasingly the streets immediately above it. In the not-so-distant past it was an area of squalid tenements, rubbish and rats, but it has since been scrubbed, face-lifted and closed to traffic and these days is often full to bursting. Lan Kwai Fong's clientele tends to be young, hip, cashed up and increasingly Chinese as well as expatriate.

Soho is more geared more for dining than drinking, but a handful of bars and clubs make it worth the trek – on foot or via the Central Escalator – up the hill. Sheung Wan boasts a couple of attractive venues, including a popular gay bar (p208).

GAY HONG KONG

What a difference a decade and a half makes... With no more than a couple of grotty speakeasies just over 15 years ago, when homosexual acts between consenting adults over the age of 21 (it's 16 for heterosexuals and lesbians) were finally decriminalised, Hong Kong can now count upwards of two-dozen bars and clubs – with more than a third in Central and Tsim Sha Tsui – and just as many gay-oriented saunas scattered throughout the territory. Grab a copy of *G*, a bimonthly gay-centric listings publication brought to you by the same people who publish *HK Magazine*, or check out the [GayStation](http://www.gaystation.com.hk) (www.gaystation.com.hk) or [Gay HK](http://www.gayhk.com) (www.gayhk.com) websites.

Wan Chai has been sleaze territory ever since it was the first port of call for American sailors and GIs on R&R from the battlefields of Vietnam. Much of the western part of the district has cleaned up its act, but hostess bars still line Lockhart Rd. There's lots of zippy club action and a sprinkling of late-night cover-band venues throughout the district.

Compared with Wan Chai and the Lan Kwai Fong area of Central, Causeway Bay is relatively tame after dark. Still, there are a few pubs and bars that do a thriving business. The neighbourhoods to the east are not especially attractive for their entertainment venues, though you will find a clutch of pubs and bars in Quarry Bay (especially on and around Tong Chong St).

For the most part, the entertainment scene in Kowloon plays second fiddle to the hot spots of Hong Kong Island, although there's a nascent local karaoke bar scene around the Minden Rd area and a more touristy, but no less buzzy, food-and-drink thing going on around along Knutsford Terrace in the north of Tsim Sha Tsui. Otherwise the district is littered with bars and pubs – it's just a bit tackier, less imaginative and more run-down.

What's On

To find out what's on in Hong Kong, pick up a copy of [HK Magazine](http://www.asia-city.com) (www.asia-city.com), a very comprehensive entertainment-listings magazine that also has lively articles on current trends in the city, reviews of restaurants and bars, and a classified ad pull-out section called *black + white*. It's free, appears on Friday and can be picked up at restaurants, bars, shops and hotels throughout the territory.

Also worth checking out is [bc magazine](http://www.bcmagazine.net) (www.bcmagazine.net), a biweekly guide to Hong Kong's

entertainment and partying scene. One of the most useful features in this highly visual and glossy publication is its complete listing of bars and clubs. It is also free and can usually be found alongside copies of *HK Magazine*.

The [Hong Kong Arts Centre](http://www.hkac.org.hk) (www.hkac.org.hk) publishes *Artslink*, a monthly with listings of performances, exhibitions and art-house film screenings. Another invaluable source of information is the monthly [Artmap](http://www.artmap.com.hk) (www.artmap.com.hk), a map with listings, available free at venues throughout the territory.

Tickets & Reservations

Expect to pay around \$50 for a seat up the back for the Hong Kong Philharmonic and from about \$400 for a performance by the likes of Norah Jones or an international musical such as *Saturday Night Fever*. Bookings for most cultural events can be made by telephone or the internet with [Urbtix](http://www.urbtix.gov.hk) (☎ 2111 5999; www.urbtix.gov.hk; ☹ 10am-8pm). Tickets can either be reserved with a passport number and picked up within three days, or paid for in advance by credit card. There are Urbtix windows at the [Hong Kong City Hall](http://www.hongkongcityhall.gov.hk) (Map p56; ☹ 10am-9.30pm) in Central, [Queen Elizabeth Stadium](http://www.queenelizabethstadium.gov.hk) (Map p65) in Wan Chai and the [Hong Kong Cultural Centre](http://www.hongkongculturalcentre.gov.hk) (Map p92) in Tsim Sha Tsui. Tickets can also be purchased from the [Tom Lee Music Company Centre](http://www.tomleemusic.com) (Map p92; ☎ 2723 9932; 1-9 Cameron Lane, Tsim Sha Tsui; ☹ ticketing 10am-7.30pm). The Fringe Theatre and the Academy for Performing Arts use [HK Ticketing](http://www.hkticketing.com) (☎ 3128 8288; www.hkticketing.com).

You can also book tickets for many films and concerts and a great variety of cultural events over the phone or internet through [Cityline](http://www.cityline.com.hk) (☎ 2317 6666; www.cityline.com.hk).

DRINKING

Drinking venues in Hong Kong run the gamut from British-style pubs to tiny little karaoke bars aimed at a young Cantonese clientele, to stylish wine and cocktail lounges where affluent professionals don their glad rags. Much of Hong Kong's nightlife takes place in top-end hotels where inventive cocktails, skilled bar staff and some of the best views in town attract visitors and locals.

Depending on where you go, beer costs at least \$40 a pint (though it's cheaper at happy hour). Overall, Lan Kwai Fong in Central is the best – and most expensive – area for bars, though it's the stomping ground of expat and Chinese suits. The pubs in Wan Chai

are cheaper and more relaxed, and those in Tsim Sha Tsui tend to attract more locals than visitors.

Opening Hours

Bars generally open at noon or 6pm and close anywhere between 2am and 6am. Wan Chai bars stay open the latest.

HAPPY HOUR

During certain hours of the day, most pubs, bars and even certain clubs give discounts on drinks (usually one-third to one-half off) or offer two for every one drink purchased. Happy hour is usually in the late afternoon or early evening – 4pm to 8pm, say – but the times vary widely from place to place. Depending on the season, the day of the week and the location, some pubs' happy hours run from noon until as late as 10pm, and some start again after midnight.

HONG KONG ISLAND

Central

BAR GEORGE Map p68 Bar

☎ 2521 2202; 38-44 D'Aguilar St; ☹ 3pm-4am, happy hour 3-9pm; MTR Central (exit D2)

This large and raucous place is probably Lan Kwai Fong's biggest meat market; if you can't make it here, you won't make it anywhere. There's a lounge section and a dance floor at the back, with a second bar at the dance floor.

BIT POINT Map p68 Bar

☎ 2523 7436; Ground fl, 31 D'Aguilar St; ☹ noon-3am Mon-Fri, noon-4am Sat, 4pm-2am Sun, happy hour 4-9pm; MTR Central (exit D2)

Owned by the same lot as Biergarten (p211), Bit Point is essentially a German-style bar where beer drinking is taken very seriously. Most beers here are draught pilsners that you can get in a glass boot if you've got a thirst big enough to kick. Bit Point also serves some pretty solid Teutonic fare (starters from \$30, mains from \$60), with set lunches still a snip at \$59/75 for half/full portions.

CAPTAIN'S BAR Map p56 Bar

☎ 2522 0111; Ground fl, Mandarin Oriental, 5 Connaught Rd Central; ☹ 11am-2am Mon-Sat, 11am-1am Sun; MTR Central (exit F)

This is a clubby, suited place that serves ice-cold draught beer in chilled silver mugs,

as well as some of the best martinis in town. This is a good place to talk business, at least until the cover band strikes up at 9pm.

DRAGON-1 Map p68 Bar, Club

☎ 3110 1222; www.dragon-i.com.hk; Upper ground fl, the Centrium, 60 Wyndham St; 🕒 noon-midnight Mon-Sat, happy hour 3-9pm Mon-Sat (terrace); 🍷 26

A fabulous venue on the edge of Soho serving as club, indoor bar and restaurant with a huge terrace over Wyndham St filled with caged songbirds. There's an ultra-exclusive door policy by night, so it helps to be a rock star or a supermodel.

FINDS Map p68 Bar

☎ 2522 9318; www.finds.com.hk; 2nd fl, LKF Tower, 33 Wyndham St, Central; 🕒 noon-late Mon-Sat; MTR Central (exit D2)

Scandinavian food and drink is the theme at this elegant bar-'Scandinavian tapas' joint commanding prime spot above the Lan Kwai Fong hordes. There's a fine range of Scandinavian spirits, including some fantastic Finnish Akavit-style firewater. There's a small balcony if it's a fine night.

GLOBE Map p68 Bar

☎ 2543 1941; 39 Hollywood Rd; 🕒 7.30am-1am Mon-Fri, 10am-1am Sat & Sun, happy hour 9am-8pm & midnight-1am Mon-Sat, all day Sun; 🍷 26

This tiny, unpretentious place gets packed out after work with expats thirsting for one (or more) of the 60 lagers, beers and real ales from around the world that are available here.

LA DOLCE VITA Map p68 Bar

☎ 2186 1888; Cosmos Bldg, 9-11 Lan Kwai Fong Lane; 🕒 11am-2am Mon-Thu, 11.30am-3am Fri, 2pm-3am Sat, 2pm-1am Sun, happy hour 5.30-8pm; MTR Central (exit D2)

This is a popular place for postwork brews, with room to prop on the heart-shaped bar or stand on the terrace and watch the preening mob crawl by.

LE JARDIN Map p68 Bar

☎ 2526 2717; 1st fl, Winner Bldg, 10 Wing Wah Lane; 🕒 noon-3am Mon-Thu, 4.30pm-3am Fri & Sat, happy hour noon-8pm Mon-Thu, 4.30-8pm Sat; MTR Central (exit D2)

Don't imagine a breezy oasis – The Garden' is no more than an enclosed veranda – but

this is still an attractive bar with loads of atmosphere. The mostly expat crowd enjoys itself without getting too boisterous.

MO BAR Map p56 Bar

☎ 2132 0077; The Landmark, 15 Queen's Rd, Central; 🕒 11am-2am Mon-Sat; MTR Central (exit D1) If you can't face the crush of Central's usual drinking haunts and perhaps want to catch up with a chat, the swish MO Bar, attached to the Mandarin's new swanky outpost, offers peace, repose, soft lighting and a high-end drinks list of wines and cocktails.

RED BAR Map p56 Bar

☎ 8129 8882; L4, Two IFC, 8 Finance St, Central; 🕒 noon-midnight Mon-Thu, noon-3am Fri & Sat, noon-10pm Sun; MTR Hong Kong (exit F) A fantastic combination of alfresco drinking and harbour views is hard to beat on Hong Kong Island. DJs playing funk and jazz turn up the volume as the weekend approaches.

SODA Map p68 Bar

☎ 2522 8118; Upper basement, 79 Wyndham St, Central (enter from Pottinger St); 🕒 4pm-midnight Sun-Thu, 4pm-3am Fri & Sat, happy hour 6-9pm; 🍷 13, 26, 40M

This well-placed watering hole, decorated in warm yellows and oranges, and with its front open to steep Pottinger St, is also a DJ scene, notably on Wednesday and the weekend, with hip-hop and R & B.

SOLAS Map p68 Bar

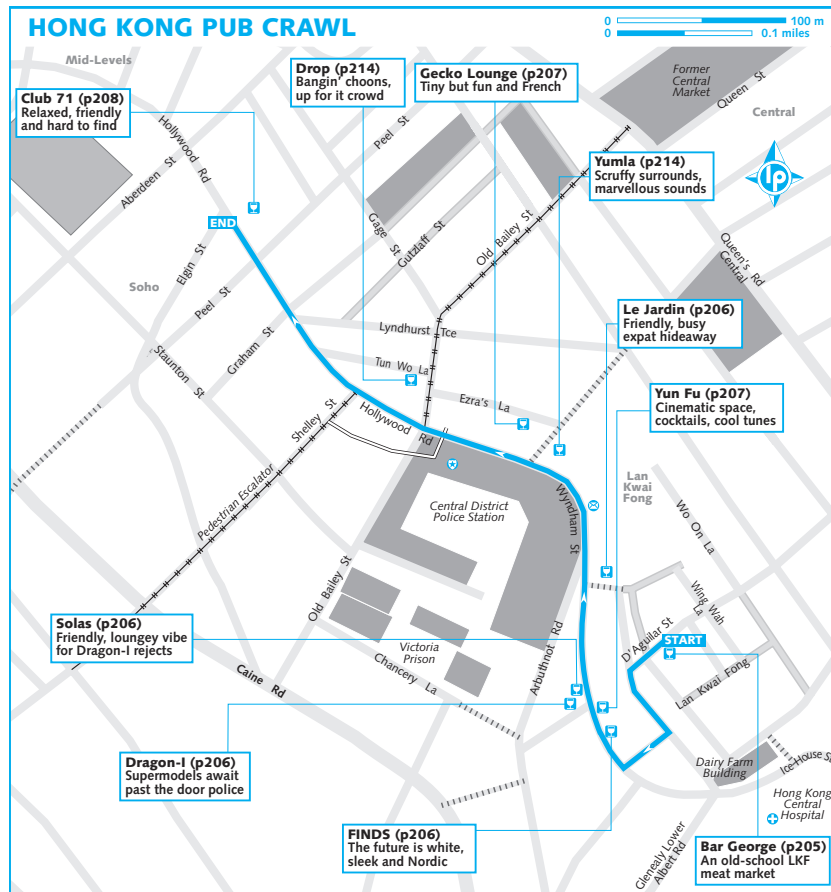
☎ 9154 4049; www.solas.com.hk; 60 Wyndham St, Central; 🕒 noon-2am Mon-Sat; MTR Central (exit D2)

If the nasty man wouldn't let you into Dragon-1 upstairs, never mind. Who wants to spend all night swapping small talk with characters out of *Zolander* anyway? This relaxed, friendly place, where a DJ spins relaxed lounge sounds and the cocktails pack a punch, isn't a bad consolation prize.

TIVO Map p68 Bar

☎ 2116 8055; www.aqua.com.hk; 43-55 Wyndham St, Central; 🕒 noon-2am Mon-Sat; MTR Central (exit D2)

One of the best of a lively little string of bars that have sprung up, almost overnight it seems, along increasingly lively Wyndham St. Tivo is a cut above the peanuts and beer standard of the 'Fong, just



around the corner. Wine and snacks Italian style (such as thin-crust pizza) is the thing (that'll be where the name comes from then). You can just have a drink without eating, though.

YUN FU Map p68 Bar, Restaurant

☎ 2116 8855; www.aqua.com.hk; Basement 43-55 Wyndham St, Central; 🕒 noon-2am Mon-Sat; MTR Central (exit D2)

Look for the Chinese characters before you reach Tivo and descend to this tiny but delightful circular bar. The fantastical Imperial China theming is actually part of the pioneering restaurant of the same name (p178), but even if you're not dining, it's well worth stopping for one of the fresh fruit cocktails and to soak up the sounds coming from the DJ's tiny cubby hole.

GECKO LOUNGE Map p68 Lounge, Wine Bar

☎ 2537 4680; Lower ground fl, 15-19 Hollywood Rd; 🕒 4pm-2am Mon-Thu, 4pm-4am Fri & Sat, happy hour 6-9pm; MTR Central (exit D1) Entered from narrow Ezra's Lane off Cochrane or Pottinger Sts, Gecko is an intimate lounge and wine bar run by a friendly French sommelier and wine importer with a penchant for absinthe. The well-hidden DJ mixes good sounds with kooky Parisian tunes, and there's usually live music on Tuesday and Wednesday. Great wine list, obviously.

WHISKEY PRIEST Map p68 Pub

☎ 2869 0099; Ground & 1st fl, 12 Lan Kwai Fong; 🕒 4pm-1am Tue-Thu, 4pm-3am Fri & Sat, noon-1am Sun, happy hour 4-10pm Mon-Sat, noon-1pm Sun; MTR Central (exit D2)

The first (and so far only) Irish – thus the ‘e’ in ‘whiskey’ – pub to hit Lan Kwai Fong has Guinness, Kilkenny and Harp on tap, and 60 types of whiskey.

Soho & Sheung Wan

BAR 1911 Map p68 Bar

☎ 2810 6681; 27 Staunton St, Soho; ☎ 5pm-midnight Mon-Sat, happy hour 5-9pm Mon-Sat; ☎ 26 This is a refined bar with fine details (stained glass, burlwood bar, ceiling fan) and a 1920s Chinese vibe. It's usually a tad less crowded than other nearby competitors, which makes it a great haven from the hubbub of the 'Fong.

BARCO Map p56 Bar

☎ 2857 4478; 42 Staunton St, Soho; ☎ 4pm-1am Sun-Thu, 4pm-late Fri & Sat, happy hour 4-8pm; MTR Central One of our favourite Soho bars, Barco has great staff, is small enough to never feel empty, and attracts a cool mix of locals and expats.

CLUB 71 Map p68 Bar

☎ 2858 7071; Basement, 67 Hollywood Rd, Central; ☎ 3pm-2am Mon-Sat, 6pm-1am Sun, happy hour 3-9pm; ☎ 26 When Club 64, the counter-culture nerve centre of Lan Kwai Fong whose name recalled 4 June 1989, the date of the Tiananmen Square massacre in Beijing, was forced to close, some of the owners relocated to this quiet alley north of Hollywood Rd. Named after the huge protest march held on 1 July 2003, Club 71 is again one of the best drinking spots for nonposers, with a pleasant little terrace. It's accessed via a small footpath running west off Peel St.

LOTUS Map p68 Bar

☎ 2543 6290; 37-43 Pottinger St, Soho; ☎ 7pm-late Tue; ☎ 26 This cool little style bar takes the art of mixing cocktails to entertaining extremes. With a nod to molecular gastronomy, it plays with taste and texture by foaming, heating and freezing various ingredients. Silly but fun.

PEAK CAFE BAR Map p68 Bar

☎ 2140 6877; 9-13 Shelley St, Soho; ☎ 11am-2am Mon-Sat, 11am-midnight Sun, happy hour 5-8pm; ☎ 13, 26, 40M

The fixtures and fittings of the much-missed Peak Cafe, from 1947, have moved down the hill to this comfy bar with super cocktails and excellent nosh. The only thing missing is the view.

V-13 Map p68 Bar

☎ 9803 6650; 13 Old Bailey St, Soho; ☎ 6pm-midnight Mon-Thu, 6pm-late Fri, 6pm-late Sat, happy hour 6-9pm Mon-Sat; ☎ 26 The 'v' word here could only refer to Russian mouthwash, and there are some 80 vodkas on offer – from chocolate to chilli flavoured. The bar staff know their mixes very well.

BLISS Map p68 Gay Club

☎ 3110 1222, 2147 2122; Basement & ground fl, 1 Elgin St, Soho; ☎ 5.30pm-late Mon-Sat, 2-11pm Sun, happy hour 6-9pm; ☎ 26 What was a popular post-work suit hang-out called Liquid then a sophisticated lounge-dance bar called NU has metamorphosed into Hong Kong's newest low-key gay club, with two bars and ultra-sophisticated lounge. You can't miss the joint; it's next to eye-popping Rock Candy.

RICE BAR Map p70 Gay Bar

☎ 2851 4800; www.rice-bar.com; 33 Jervois St, Sheung Wan; ☎ 7pm-1am Sun-Thu, 7pm-2am Fri, 8pm-3am Sat, happy hour 7-9pm Sun-Fri, 8-9pm Sat; MTR Sheung Wan (exit A2) Rice is a popular gay bar with a lounge area that sees a bit of dancing as it gets later. It can get very crowded on the weekend.

FEATHER BOA Map p68 Lounge

☎ 2857 2586; 38 Staunton St, Soho; ☎ 5pm-late Tue; ☎ 26 Feather Boa is a plush lounge hidden behind gold drapes. Part camp lounge, part bordello – part those curtains and order a mango daiquiri (\$75). It was once an antiques shop – thus the odd furnishings.

STAUNTON'S WINE BAR & CAFE

Map p68 Wine Bar
☎ 2973 6611; 10-12 Staunton St, Soho; ☎ 10am-2am Mon-Fri, 8am-2am Sat & Sun, happy hour 5-9pm; ☎ 26 Staunton's, on the corner with Shelley St, is swish, cool and on the ball with decent wine, a Central Escalator-cruising scene and a lovely terrace. If you're hungry,

there's light fare downstairs and a fabulously remodelled international restaurant above.

Wan Chai

Most of the best bars and pubs line the western ends of Jaffe and Lockhart Rds. As in Lan Kwai Fong, on weekend nights this area is crawling with partygoers.

BAR 109 Map p65 Bar

☎ 2861 3336; 109 Lockhart Rd; ☎ noon-3am, happy hour 3-9pm; MTR Wan Chai Tired of rubbing, er, shoulders with working girls in the Wanch? Well, even if not, the 109 will give you 110 reasons to flock here. It's a serious chill-out zone cobbled from a 1920s-vintage bakery and divided into three sections, including a bar, a covered 'outside' area and a 1st-floor balcony.

BRIDGE Map p65 Bar

☎ 2865 5586; Shop A-B, 1st fl, Beverly House, 93-107 Lockhart Rd, Wan Chai; ☎ 24hr, happy hour noon-10pm; MTR Wan Chai (exit c) This large and airy bar, with great windows overlooking the frenzy of Lockhart Rd, is open 24 hours, serving cocktails to the denizens and the doomed of Wan Chai. Less frenetic than most of its neighbours.

CHAMPAGNE BAR Map p65 Bar

☎ 2588 1234 ext 7321; Ground fl, Grand Hyatt Hotel, 1 Harbour Rd, MTR Wan Chai; ☎ 5pm-2am; MTR Wan Chai (exit A1) Take your fizz in the sumptuous surrounds of the Grand Hyatt's Champagne Room, kitted out in Art Deco furnishings to evoke the Paris of the 1920s. Live blues or jazz happens most evenings and the circular main bar is always busy.

CHINATOWN Map p65 Bar

☎ 2861 3588; 78-82 Jaffe Rd, Wan Chai; ☎ noon-2.30am, happy hour noon-6pm; MTR Wan Chai (exit C) The kitschy Chinese Brothel theming may sound a tad over the top, but fear not, this is nothing like one of the nearby go-go bars. The soft lighting and large red lanterns actually combine to make this one of the more relaxed Wan Chai watering holes. It's busy but seldom frantic, and the service from cheongsam-wearing waitresses is swift and friendly.

DELANEY'S Map p65 Bar, Pub

☎ 2804 2880; Ground & 1st fl, One Capital Place, 18 Luard Rd, Wan Chai; ☎ noon-2.30am Sun-Thu, noon-3am Fri & Sat, happy hour noon-9pm; MTR Wan Chai (exit C) At this immensely popular Irish watering hole you can choose between the black-and-white-tiled pub on the ground floor and a sports bar and restaurant on the 1st floor. The food is good and plentiful; the kitchen allegedly goes through 400kg of potatoes a week. There's also a branch on Peking Rd in Tsim Sha Tsui (p211).

MAYA Map p65 Bar

☎ 2866 6200; 68-70 Lockhart Rd, Wan Chai; ☎ 11am-2am Sun-Thu, 11am-3am Fri & Sat, happy hour noon-9pm; MTR Wan Chai (exit C) This lovely new bar, whose name apparently means 'illusion' in Sanskrit, is a design-minded oasis in Wan Chai. We love the bold black-and-white patterns on the wall, the bright red bar and the (almost) never-ending happy/relaxing/two-for-one hour(s).

MES AMIS Map p65 Bar

☎ 2527 6680; 81-85 Lockhart Rd, Wan Chai; ☎ noon-2am Sun-Thu, noon-6am Fri & Sat, happy hour 4-9pm; MTR Wan Chai (exit C) This easy-going bar is in the lap of girly club land. It has a good range of wines and a Mediterranean-style snacks list. There's a DJ from 11pm on Friday and Saturday. There's also a Tsim Sha Tsui branch (Map p94; ☎ 2730 3038; 15 Ashley Rd; ☎ noon-2am Sun-Thu, noon-3am Fri & Sat, happy hour 4-9pm).

OLD CHINA HAND Map p65 Bar

☎ 2865 4378; 104 Lockhart Rd, Wan Chai; ☎ 8am-5am, happy hour noon-10pm; MTR Wan Chai (exit C) This place is hardly recognisable as the gloomy old dive where the desperate-to-drink (no one we know) used to find themselves unhappy but never alone at 3am. Now it's got a generous happy hour, internet access and cheap set lunches.

SKITZ Map p65 Bar

☎ 2866 3277; www.skitzbar.com; 5th fl, Phoenix Bldg, 21-25 Luard Rd, Wan Chai; MTR Wan Chai (exit C) Hong Kong's most convenient sports bar screens big sporting events on its massive plasmas. There are also pool tables and dart

boards, and (depending on the night) a DJ on the decks.

KANGAROO DOWNUNDER

Map p65 Lounge Bar
 ☎ 2139 31111; Lower ground fl, The Broadway, 54-62 Lockhart Rd, Wan Chai; ☎ 11am-2am, happy hour 4-9pm; MTR Wan Chai (exit C)

This well-scrubbed successor to the infamous Kangaroo Pub in Tsim Sha Tsui is more of a lounge bar-cum-restaurant than the erstwhile pub, but it's popular with young Australians and other expats nonetheless.

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE

Map p65 Pub
 ☎ 2865 7271; 48-50 Lockhart Rd, Wan Chai; ☎ noon-late Mon-Sat, 1pm-late Sun, happy hour noon-10pm; MTR Wan Chai (exit C)

This pleasant pub in the thick of things is as relaxed as they come. The bar spills onto the pavement and the staff is charming. 'Devilling Hour' (5pm to 7pm) is even cheaper than happy hour, and there are cheap drinks on Wednesday night.

WHITE STAG

Map p65 Pub
 ☎ 2866 4244; Ground fl, The Broadway, 54-62 Lockhart Rd, Wan Chai; ☎ noon-late, happy hour noon-10pm; MTR Wan Chai (exit C)

This is a somewhat subdued (suity, not snooty) pub with open frontage, and such filling dishes as sausage and beans (\$65), cottage pie (\$75), fish and chips (\$85), and chilli (\$75).

Causeway Bay

BRECHT'S CIRCLE

Map p74 Bar
 ☎ 2576 4785; www.brechts.net; Ground fl, Rita House, 123 Leighton Rd; ☎ 4pm-2am Mon-Thu, 4pm-4am Fri & Sat, happy hour 4-8pm Mon-Sat; MTR Causeway Bay (exit f)

A small and fairly unusual clublike bar with an arty edge, Brecht's is given more to intimate, cerebral conversation than serious raging. Thankfully the décor has been upgraded to this century.

DICKENS BAR

Map p74 Bar
 ☎ 2837 6782; Basement, Excelsior Hong Kong, 281 Gloucester Rd; ☎ 11am-1am Sun-Thu, 11am-2am Fri & Sat, happy hour 5-8pm; MTR Causeway Bay (exit D1)

This evergreen place has been popular with expats and Hong Kong Chinese for dec-

ades. In truth the atmosphere is nothing special and the real draw is the big-screen sports coverage.

EAST END BREWERY & INN SIDE OUT

Map p74 Pub
 ☎ 2895 2900; Ground fl, Sunning Plaza, 10 Hysan Ave; ☎ 11.30am-1am Sun-Thu, 11.30am-1.30am Fri & Sat, happy hour 2.30-8.30pm; MTR Causeway Bay (exit F)

These two related pubs flank a central covered terrace where you can while away the hours on a warm evening, sipping beers and throwing peanut shells on the ground. East End has imported microbrews, and also has a Quarry Bay branch (below).

Island East & Island South

CAFÉ EINSTEIN

Map pp54-5 Bar, Lounge
 ☎ 2960 0994; 33 Tong Chong St, Quarry Bay; 11am-1am Mon-Sat, happy hour 4-9pm Mon-Sat; Quarry Bay (exit B)

This attractive and upbeat bar-bistro, which feels more Lan Kwai Fong than Tong Chong St, has a great bar and lounge with piped jazz and R&B, and serves decent food all day from a short but inspired menu.

EAST END BREWERY

Map pp54-5 Bar
 ☎ 2811 1907; 23-27 Tong Chong St, Quarry Bay; ☎ 11.30am-2am, happy hour 4-8pm; Quarry Bay (exit I)

This place out in Quarry Bay is a beer lover's must-visit. You can choose from more than 30 beers and lagers from around the world, including a couple of local microbrews. There's wi-fi access, too. The Causeway Bay branch (above) serves up much the same beer and fodder if you can't make it this far out.

SMUGGLERS INN

Map p85 Pub
 ☎ 2813 8852; Ground fl, 90A Stanley Main St, Stanley; ☎ 10am-2am, happy hour 6-9pm; ☎ 6, 6A, 6X or 260

This scruffy but good-natured place is arguably the most popular pub on the Stanley waterfront, offering perhaps the closest thing to a traditional English pub in Hong Kong. Smugglers Inn gets a good mix of people and serves a decent pint of Guinness. Pub food is also available, including steak sandwiches (\$55), burritos (\$75) and, to accompany your beer, finger food (\$40).

KOWLOON

Tsim Sha Tsui

AQUA SPIRIT Map p92 Bar
 ☎ 3427 2288; 30th fl, 1 Peking Rd; ☎ 6pm-1am Sun-Thu, 4.30pm-3am Fri & Sat; MTR Tsim Sha Tsui (exit E)

This magnificent restaurant-bar on top of one of Kowloon's new skyscrapers is everyone's favourite place for a brew with a view, which is spectacular enough to take your mind off the equally stratospheric bar bill.

BAR

Map p92 Bar
 ☎ 2315 3163; 1st fl, Peninsula Hong Kong, Salisbury Rd; ☎ 4pm-midnight; Star Ferry, MTR Tsim Sha Tsui (exit E)

For mellow 1940s and '50s jazz, don your smoking jacket and sip Cognac at the Peninsula's stylish main watering hole. Your fellow tipplers will be serious business blokes, courted couples and new-money names trying to sound old(er). The music starts around 9.30pm.

FELIX

Map p92 Bar
 ☎ 2315 3188; 28th fl, Peninsula Hong Kong, Salisbury Rd; ☎ 6pm-2am; MTR Tsim Sha Tsui (exit E)

Enjoy the fabulous view at this Philippe Starck-designed bar connected to Felix restaurant (p191), one of the swankiest eateries in Hong Kong's poshest hotel. Guys, the view from the urinals in the gents' is just one reason to fill your bladders.

TONY'S BAR

Map p92 Gay Bar
 ☎ 2723 2726; www.tonys-bar.com; Ground fl, 7-9 Bristol Ave; ☎ 5.30pm-4am, happy hour 5.30-10pm; Tsim Sha Tsui (exit D2)

This low-key, anonymous and rather scruffy gay-friendly bar just behind Mirador Mansion (see boxed text, p261) is a relaxed place to come for a drink, with none of that 'last chance for romance' tension found in some other gay venues.

SKY LOUNGE

Map p92 Lounge
 ☎ 2369 1111; 18th fl, Sheraton Hong Kong Hotel & Towers, 20 Nathan Rd; ☎ 4pm-1am Mon-Thu, 4pm-2am Fri, 2pm-2am Sat, 2pm-1am Sun; MTR Tsim Sha Tsui (exit E)

Before you can pooh-poo the departure-lounge feel of this big, long lounge, you've already started marvelling at the view.

Don't take flight: sit down in a scoop chair, sip something shaken or stirred and scoff international snacks.

DELANEY'S

Map p92 Pub
 ☎ 2301 3980; Basement, Mary Bldg, 71-77 Peking Rd; ☎ 9am-3am, happy hour 5-9pm; MTR Tsim Sha Tsui (exit E)

This pub seems more authentically Irish than its Wan Chai counterpart (p209), with lots of dark wood, green felt and a long bar that you can really settle into.

NEW WALLY MATT LOUNGE

Map p92 Pub
 ☎ 2721 2568; www.wallymatt.com; 5A Humphreys Ave; ☎ 5pm-4am, happy hour 5-10pm; MTR Tsim Sha Tsui (exit A2)

The name comes from the old Waltzing Matilda pub, which was one of the daggiest gay watering holes in creation. But New Wally Matt is an upbeat and busy place and actually more a pub than a lounge.

Tsim Sha Tsui East & Hung Hom

BALALAIKA

Map p94 Bar
 ☎ 2312 6222; 2nd fl, 10 Knutsford Tce, Tsim Sha Tsui; ☎ 5pm-midnight Sun-Thu, 5pm-1am Fri & Sat; MTR Tsim Sha Tsui

Russian theming – from the dacha-style walls to the music, the food and, of course, the vodka – set a fun tone here. Don a fur hat and coat and step into the tiny ice bar if you really want to take the experience to the extreme.

BIERGARTEN

Map p94 Bar
 ☎ 2721 2302; 5 Hanoi Rd; ☎ 10am-3am Mon-Fri, noon-2am, happy hour 4-9pm; MTR Tsim Sha Tsui (exit G)

This clean, modern place rubbing shoulders with the expanding Minden Rd car and club hotspot has a jukebox full of hits (and misses) and Bitburger on tap. It's popular with visiting Germans and others who hanker after such hearty and filling nosh as pork knuckle and sauerkraut.

CHILLAX

Map p94 Bar
 ☎ 2722 4338; 8 Minden Ave; ☎ 6pm-3am Mon-Sat; MTR Tsim Sha Tsui (exit G)

This tiny space lit by candles and mainly patronised by young locals, is good for simply sitting, slumping and taking refuge from a day spent dodging through Tsim

Sha Tsui. Things get livelier later when the DJ gets going.

COURTNEY'S Map p94 Bar

☎ 2739 7777; 5th fl, The Minden, 7 Minden Ave; ☎ 5pm-2am; MTR Tsim Sha Tsui (exit G)

This hotel snack room-bar, decorated with original and attractive artwork by local painter Pauline Courtney, has a fabulous outdoor terrace, allowing you to watch the goings-on in lively Minden Ave below. Don't expect crowds, though; this is a great place for a quiet drink and some elbow room.

LA TASCA Map p94 Bar, Live Music

☎ 2723 1072; 8 Hanoi Rd; ☎ 11am-4am Mon-Fri, 5pm-4am Sat & Sun; happy hour 4-8pm; MTR Tsim Sha Tsui (exit D2)

La Tasca is more a cantina and bar than a restaurant nowadays and has live music starting from 10pm on Saturdays. But it still does a set lunch (\$38 to \$42) and food at night, including tasty tapas (\$40 to \$60) and more substantial main courses (\$85 to \$95).

NEW TERRITORIES

Sai Kung Town

XTREME BAR & RESTAURANT

Map p127 Bar

☎ 2791 7222; 72 Po Tung Rd; ☎ 4pm-late Mon-Fri, 11am-3am Sat & Sun, happy hour 4-9pm Mon-Fri, 11am-9pm Sat, 11am-7pm Sun; ☎ 92, 299

This uberstylish brasserie-like place has raised the bar by a few hundred metres for upmarket drinking venues in Sai Kung town. Food (starters from \$48, mains from \$78) is available until just before closing.

POETS Map p127 Pub

☎ 2791 7993; 55 Yi Chun St; ☎ 5pm-1am Mon-Fri, 3-4pm-2am Sat & Sun, happy hour noon-9pm Mon-Fri; ☎ 92, 299

This friendly workaday pub with literary aspirations is a pleasant place for a pint and serves typical pub meals, such as pies, chips and beans for \$58.

THE DUKE Map p127 Pub

☎ 2791 6255; Ground fl, 42-56 Fuk Man Rd; ☎ 12pm-2am, happy hour 12-9pm Mon-Fri, 12-7pm Sat & Sun; ☎ 92, 299

This popular pub, just up from the waterfront, has darts, free pool and sports on the TV. Cocktails range from \$35 to \$60 and

there's snack food, such as curried fish balls (\$25) and marinated chicken kidney (\$30).

OUTLYING ISLANDS

Lamma

Yung Shue Wan has several cosy waterfront boozers worth checking out, which serve a very much local crowd in the evenings (mostly expats). In theory you may have to sign a members' book, as some operate on club licences.

DIESEL'S BAR Map p132 Bar

☎ 2982 4116; 51 Main St, Yung Shue Wan; ☎ 6pm-late Mon-Fri, noon-late Sat & Sun, happy hour 6-9pm Mon-Fri; 🍷 Lamma (Yung Shue Wan)

This place next to the Lamma Bistro attracts punters with big-screen TV during sports matches.

FOUNTAINHEAD DRINKING BAR Map p132 Bar

☎ 2982 2118; 17 Main St, Yung Shue Wan; ☎ 5pm-2am Mon-Fri, 3pm-4am Sat & Sun, happy hour all day Mon-Fri; 🍷 Lamma (Yung Shue Wan)

The cheerfully no-frills Fountainhead has a good mix of Chinese and expats in regular attendance, decent music and beer at affordable prices.

ISLAND SOCIETY BAR Map p132 Bar

☎ 2982 1376; 6 Main St, Yung Shue Wan; ☎ 6pm-late Mon-Fri, noon-late Sat & Sun, happy hour 4-8pm; 🍷 Lamma (Yung Shue Wan)

The Island remains the bar of choice for long-term expats living on Lamma, so if you want the lowdown on what's up, head here.

Cheung Chau

MOROCCO'S BAR & RESTAURANT Map p143 Bar

☎ 2986 9767; 71 Praya St; ☎ 12pm-3am, happy hour 4-9pm Mon-Fri; 🍷 Cheung Chau

The exodus of expats from Cheung Chau over the past years has left the island all but bereft of quality drinking venues, but there will always be Morocco's on the waterfront. It also does decent Indian food (curries \$45 to \$50, tandoori dishes \$50 to \$80).

PATIO CAFÉ Map p143 Pub

☎ 2981 8316, 2981 2772; Cheung Chau Windsurfing Water Sports Centre, 1 Hak Pai Rd; ☎ noon-7pm daily Apr-Nov, noon-7pm Sat & Sun Dec-Mar; 🍷 Cheung Chau

This open-air, café-cum-pub attached to the windsurfing centre at Tung Wan Beach, known locally as Lai Kam's in honour of its owner, is a Cheung Chau institution. Come here for a sundowner.

Lantau

CHINA BEACH CLUB Map p139 Bar

☎ 2983 8931; 18 Tung Wan Tau Rd; ☎ noon-10pm Thu & Fri, 11.30am-10pm Sat & Sun, happy hour all day Thu-Sun; 🍷 Lantau

This pleasant bar-restaurant has a 185-sq-metre rooftop and an open-air balcony overlooking Silvermine Bay Beach. The staff is friendly and helpful, and the food is good. There are salads and sides (\$35 to \$65), a large barbecue section (\$110 to \$150), other mains including moussaka and Thai curry (\$79 to \$95) and puddings (\$45 to \$55) too. Reservations are recommended, particularly on Sundays. The two for one cocktail 'hour' can go on well into the night.

JK'S CLUB Map p136 Bar

☎ 2984 0220; Ground fl, 20 Lo Wai Tsuen, Pui O; ☎ 6pm-late Tue-Sat, 4pm-late Sun; ☎ 1, 2, 3M, 4 or A35

This place is conveniently located just off the main road in Pui O. The beach is right across the street.

CHINA BEAR Map p139 Pub

☎ 2984 9720; Ground fl, Mui Wo Centre, Ngan Wan Rd; ☎ 10am-2am, happy hour 5-9pm Mon-Fri, 5-8pm Sat & Sun; 🍷 Lantau

The China Bear is the most popular expat pub-restaurant in Mui Wo, with a wonderful open bar facing the water. It's right by the ferry terminal, making it the perfect spot for your first and last beer in Mui Wo, and for those in between perhaps. The menu includes offerings such as salads and pizzas for around \$60.

Peng Chau

FOREST BAR & RESTAURANT Map p147 Bar

☎ 2983 8837; 38C Wing Hing St; ☎ 11am-late Tue-Sun; 🍷 Peng Chau

This cosy bar has five beers on tap and a large outside terrace seating area. The kitchen whips up authentic pan-Asian (mostly Thai) food (snacks from \$35, mains from \$62) six days a week.

NIGHTLIFE

Energetic Hong Kong has long enjoyed a big night out, and in these boom times the clubs are doing a roaring trade. There's a good spread of clubs in Hong Kong, including in Wan Chai and Causeway Bay, although Central and Soho dominate for the sheer number of venues.

The defining feature of Hong Kong's dance music scene has evolved from the impromptu, large-scale and often semi-legal dance parties held in warehouses and other remote locations a few years ago to a focus on a night spent flitting between a number of intimate little venues.

Most of the club nights take place on Friday and Saturday, but there are some good midweek venues as well. Cover charges range from \$100 to as high as \$350 when a big-name foreign DJ is mixing or an internationally recognised band is on stage. On some nights, you may get in free (or for a cheaper cover) if you are among the first 50 or so through the door, dressed in '70s gear (or whatever) on theme nights, or a woman.

Karaoke clubs are also becoming ever more popular with the city's young citizens, with a sprinkling of clubs in Central and a clutch of smart places springing up on and around Minden Ave in Tsim Sha Tsui.

As in any world-class city, the club scene in Hong Kong changes with the speed of summer lightning, so it would be in your interest to flip through *HK Magazine* or *bc magazine*. On the web, check out www.hkclubbing.com or www.hkentertainment.com.

Cantopop is the name for the local pop music (p34). If you give it a chance, you'll discover some worthwhile tunes (or ones that you won't be able to get out of your head for your entire stay here).

There are usually a few decent rock bands (both local and imported) playing around town, and numerous bars have house bands that play dance music. Hotel bars and clubs have Filipino bands that can play 'Hotel California' and 'Love Is a Many-Splendoured Thing' in their sleep (and yours).

Judging from the closure of a couple of key venues in recent years, jazz seems to be losing a lot of its traditional following in Hong Kong; there's only a couple of venues in Central and Tsim Sha Tsui. World music is generally a staged event, with big international acts booked at the Hong Kong Arts Centre or Hong Kong City Hall.

HONG KONG ISLAND

Lan Kwai Fong & Soho

CLUB 97 Map p68 Bar, Club

☎ 2186 1897; Ground fl, Cosmos Bldg, 9-11 Lan Kwai Fong, Central; ☎ 6pm-2am Mon-Thu, 6pm-4am Fri, 8pm-4am Sat & Sun, happy hour 3-8pm; MTR Central (exit D2)

This schmoozy lounge bar has a popular happy hour (it's a gay event on Friday night) and there's reggae on Sunday. It has a 'members only' policy to turn away the underdressed; make an effort and you're in.

JOYCE IS NOT HERE Map p68 Bar, Live Music

☎ 2851 2999; 38-44 Peel St, Soho; ☎ 11am-late Tue-Fri, 10am-late Sat & Sun, happy hour 3.53-8.04pm; ☎ 13, 26, 40M

'James or Ma?' we asked, trying to be clever. Alas, neither but this super-chilled café-bar in reds, whites and blacks has something for everyone – from poetry readings and live music on Thursday to booze and Sunday brunch. Love the place.

RED ROCK Map p68 Bar, Club

☎ 2868 3884; Lower ground fl, 57-59 Wyndham St, Central; ☎ noon-3pm & 5pm-2am Mon-Thu, 11am-2pm & 5pm-5am Fri & Sat, happy hour 5-8pm Mon-Fri; MTR Central (exit)

This attractive place, backing onto the walkway above Lan Kwai Fong, is a very successful chameleon: a decent Italian restaurant at lunch and dinner (set lunch \$87, mains \$70 to \$90) and a popular dance venue by night (cover \$100). A dozen cocktails and as many shooters go for half-price at happy hour.

DROP Map p68 Club

☎ 2543 8856; www.drophk.com; Basement, On Lok Mansion, 39-43 Hollywood Rd, Central; ☎ 7pm-2am Mon & Tue, 7pm-3am Wed, 7pm-4am Thu, 7pm-5am Fri, 9pm-5am Sat, happy hour 7-10pm Mon-Fri; ☎ 26

Deluxe lounge action, excellent tunes and potent cocktails keep Drop strong on the scene. It's like walking into *Wallpaper* magazine, but the vibe here is unpretentiously inclusive and the crowd reaches a happy mutual fever pitch on big nights. The members-only policy after 10pm Thursday to Saturday is (flexibly) enforced to keep the dance floor capacity at a manageable 'packed like sardines' level. Enter from Cochrane St.

HOMEBASE Map p68 Club

☎ 2545 0023; 2nd fl, 23 Hollywood Rd, Central; ☎ 10pm-3am Mon-Fri, 10pm-9am Sat, happy hour 10pm-midnight Mon-Thu & Sat, 8pm-midnight Fri; ☎ 26

A meet 'n' greet for the styled and beautiful early on, this place turns into a bump 'n' grind after hours (cover \$100). It's one of the more popular after-hours venues and one of the few places that is still partying well after dawn in a city that does, in fact, sleep. Great house and breakbeat music, small dance floor. Friday's generous happy hour is for gays and lesbians.

INSOMNIA Map p68 Club

☎ 2525 0957; Lower Ground fl, Ho Lee Commercial Bldg, 38-44 D'Aguiar St, Central; ☎ 9am-6am Mon-Sat, 2pm-5am Sun; happy hour 5-9pm; MTR Central (exit D2)

This is the place to come to when you can't sleep, as it fills up only when other nearby bars are starting to wind down. It's a people-watching place with a wide, open frontage, and there's a live Filipino band doing covers in the back. If the munchies strike in the witching hour, there's food, too.

YUMLA Map p68 Club

☎ 2147 2382; Lower basement, 79 Wyndham St; ☎ 8am-1pm Mon-Thu, 8am-3am Fri & Sat, 8am-9pm Sun, happy hour 4-8pm; ☎ 26

Tucked behind Soda, Yumla is worth seeking out not for its scruffy looks but rather for the relaxed vibe and DJs that spin an eclectic but cutting-edge mix of excellent dance, hip-hop and guitar stuff.

PROPAGANDA Map p68 Gay Club

☎ 2868 1316; Lower ground fl, 1 Hollywood Rd, Central; ☎ 9pm-4am Tue-Thu, 9pm-6am Fri & Sat, happy hour 9pm-1.30am Tue-Thu; MTR Central (exit D2)

Propaganda is still the premier gay dance club and meat market; everyone gay ends up here at some point on a weekend night. It's free from Tuesday to Thursday, but cover charges (\$120 to \$160) apply on Friday and Saturday (which gets you into Works, below, on Friday). Enter from Ezra's Lane, which runs between Pottinger and Cochrane Sts.

WORKS Map p68 Gay Club

☎ 2868 6102; 1st fl, 30-32 Wyndham St, Central; ☎ 7pm-2am, happy hour 7-10.30pm Mon-Fri; MTR Central (exit D2)

Propaganda's (opposite) sister club, Works is where most gay boys out on the town start the evening, and sees some heavy FFFR (file-for-future-reference) cruising till it's time to move on to the P. There's a cover charge (\$60 to \$100) on the weekend.

BOHEMIAN LOUNGE Map p68 Live Music

☎ 2526 6099; 3-5 Old Bailey St, Soho ☎ 4.30pm-12.30am Mon-Wed, 4pm-2am or 3am Thu-Sun, happy hour 5-9pm; ☎ 26

This long, narrow watering hole is a great place for a libation anytime, but try to make it on Thursday after 9pm or Friday or Saturday after 10pm when live jazz kicks in.

CAVERN Map p68 Live Music

☎ 2121 8969; Shop 1, Lower ground fl, Lan Kwai Fong Tower, 33 Wyndham St, Central; ☎ 6pm-late Mon-Sat; MTR Central (exit D2)

Hong Kong's first (and only) supper club, the Cavern is effectively a showcase for two tribute bands: Sixties Mania Showband, done up in mop-top haircuts and bell-bottoms, and the Rolling Bones, a great Filipino band. Music starts at 9pm Monday to Saturday. There's food and the cover charge is \$100. Enter from D'Aguiar St.

FRINGE GALLERY Map p68 Live Music

☎ 2521 7251; www.hkfringe.com.hk; Ground fl, Fringe Club, 2 Lower Albert Rd, Central; ☎ noon-midnight Mon-Thu, noon-3am Fri & Sat, happy hour 3-9pm Mon-Thu, 3-8pm Fri & Sat; MTR Central (exit D1)

The Fringe, a friendly and eclectic venue on the border of the Lan Kwai Fong quadrant, has original music in its gallery-bar from 10.30pm on Friday and Saturday, with jazz, rock and world music getting the most airplay. There's a pleasant rooftop bar open in the warmer months.

Admiralty & Wan Chai

1/5 Map p63 Club

☎ 2520 2515; 1st fl, Starcrest Bldg, 9 Star St, Wan Chai; ☎ 5pm-3am Mon-Thu, 5pm-4am Fri & Sat, 6pm-2am Sun, happy hour 6-9pm Mon-Fri; MTR Admiralty (exit)

Pronounced 'one-fifth', this sophisticated lounge bar and club has a broad bar backed by a two-storey drinks selection from which bar staff concoct some of Hong Kong's best cocktails. It gets packed on the

weekend with a dressy professional crowd but it's still a good place to chill.

JOE BANANAS Map p65 Club

☎ 2529 1811; Ground fl, Shiu Lam Bldg, 23 Luard Rd, Wan Chai; ☎ noon-5am Mon-Thu, noon-6am Fri & Sat, 4pm-5am Sun, happy hour 11am-10pm; MTR Wan Chai (exit C)

JB's, in Wan Chai forever it seems, has dropped its long-standing wet T-shirt/boxers aesthetic and gone for more of a bamboo-bar feel. Unaccompanied females should expect a good sampler of bad pick-up lines; go with friends and have some un-PC fun. There are free drinks for women from 6pm to 3am on Wednesday and 'Crazy Hour' (6pm to 8pm daily) is even more generous than happy hour.

NEPTUNE DISCO II Map p65 Club

☎ 2865 2238; Basement, 98-108 Jaffe Rd, Wan Chai; ☎ 4pm-6am Mon-Fri, 2pm-6am Sat & Sun, happy hour 4-9pm Mon-Fri, 2-9pm Sat; MTR Wan Chai (exit)

Neptune II is a fun club with a mostly Filipino crowd and a rockin' Pinoy covers band. If everything's closing and you can't bear to stop dancing, this is the place to come. It really rocks at the Sunday afternoon tea dance (men/women \$100/50, including one drink), starting at 2pm.

NEW MAKATI PUB & DISCO Map p65 Club

☎ 2866 3928; 1st fl, 94-100 Lockhart Rd; ☎ 4pm-5am, happy hour 4-9pm; MTR Wan Chai (exit C)

It has to be said: you can't go lower than this sleazy pick-up joint, named after a Manila neighbourhood. Imagine dimly lit booths, Filipino *amahs* and middle-aged white male booze hounds, who all just wanna have fun. It is a friendly place to dance the morning away, though.

TRIBECA Map p65 Club

☎ 2836 3690; 4th fl, Renaissance Harbour View Hotel, 1 Harbour Rd, Wan Chai; men \$120; ☎ 6pm-4am Mon-Fri, 10pm-late Sat, happy hour 6pm-midnight Mon-Wed & Fri, 6-9pm Thu; ☎ 18 MTR Wan Chai (exit A1)

No, not NYC but glitzy Hong Kong... It's an uberdecked-out club with chatting lounges, a long bar and popular theme nights (eg salsa on Sunday). It's popular with a suave Cantonese crowd, so dress to impress. There's free entry and drinks for women on Thursday night.

CARNEGIE'S Map p65

Live Music

☎ 2866 6289; Ground fl, 53-55 Lockhart Rd, Wan Chai; 🕒 11am-late Mon-Sat, 5pm-late Sun, happy hour 11am-9pm Mon-Sat; MTR Wan Chai (exit C) The rock memorabilia festooning the walls makes it all seem a bit Hard Rock Café-ish but it's worth a look all the same. From 9pm on Friday and Saturday, the place fills up with revellers, many of whom will end up dancing on the bar. All good clean fun.

DUSK TILL DAWN Map p65

Live Music

☎ 2528 4689; Ground fl, 76-84 Jaffe Rd, Wan Chai; 🕒 noon-5am Mon-Fri, 3pm-7am Sat & Sun, happy hour 5-9pm; MTR Wan Chai (exit C) Live music from 10.30pm, with an emphasis on beats and vibes that will get your booty shaking. The dance floor can be packed but the atmosphere is more friendly than sleazy. The food sticks to easy fillers, such as meat pies and burgers.

WANCH Map p65

Live Music

☎ 2861 1621; 54 Jaffe Rd, Wan Chai; 🕒 noon-2am Sun-Thu, noon-4am Fri & Sat, happy hour noon-10pm Mon-Thu, noon-8pm Fri-Sun; MTR Wan Chai (exit C)

This place, which derives its name from what everyone calls the district, has live music (mostly rock and folk with the occasional solo guitarist thrown in) seven nights a week from 9pm. Jam night is Monday from 8pm. If you're not here for the music, it can be a dubious scene – the Wanch is basically a pick-up joint.

Causeway Bay**WASABISABI** Map p74

Club

☎ 2506 0009; 13th fl, Times Square, 1 Matheson St; 🕒 6pm-midnight Sun-Thu, 6pm-3am Fri & Sat, happy hour 6-8pm; MTR Causeway Bay (exit A) This Japanese restaurant in the Times Square shopping mall, with out-of-this-world décor (cable vines, rondo lounges, faux birch forest), transforms each night into the camp Lipstick Lounge.

CAUSEWAY LOUNGE Map p74

Live Music

☎ 2890 6665; Basement, Causeway Cnr, 18 Percival St, Causeway Bay; 🕒 5pm-2am Mon-Thu, 5.30pm-2.30am Fri-Sun, happy hour 5-9pm; MTR Causeway Bay (exit B)

This slick lounge has live folk music from 6pm to 9pm on weekdays and a resident quartet plays pop favourites from 9pm to 1am Monday to Saturday.

KOWLOON**Tsim Sha Tsui East & Hung Hom****BAHAMA MAMA'S** Map p94

Club

☎ 9803 6650, 2368 2121; 4-5 Knutsford Tce, Tsim Sha Tsui; 🕒 5pm-3am Sun-Thu, 5pm-4am Fri & Sat, happy hour 5-9pm; MTR Tsim Sha Tsui (exit) Bahama Mama's goes for a 'Caribbean island' feel, complete with palm trees and surfboards. It's a friendly spot and stands apart from most of the other late-night watering holes in this part of town. It's also the place to come for a *foosball* (table soccer) showdown. On Friday and Saturday nights there's a DJ spinning and a young crowd out on the bonsai-sized dance floor.

CLOUDNINE Map p94

Club

☎ 2723 6383; 7 Minden Ave; 🕒 6pm-3am Mon-Sat; MTR Tsim Sha Tsui (exit G)

If you want to find out what the local kids do of an evening (or at least those with some cash to burn), step through the egg-shaped doorway of this stylish little bar-cum-karaoke joint, take a seat and listen to the Cantopop classics get murdered.

HARI'S Map p92

Live Music

☎ 2369 3111 ext 1345; Mezzanine, Holiday Inn Golden Mile, 50 Nathan Rd, Tsim Sha Tsui; 🕒 5pm-2am, happy hour 5-9pm Mon-Sat, 5pm-2am Sun; MTR Tsim Sha Tsui (exit G2)

Is it tacky or classy (or neither)? You decide after you've had a couple of speciality martinis (there are over a dozen to challenge you). There's live music from 6.15pm weekdays, 8.45pm Saturday and 7.30pm Sunday.

THE ARTS

In Hong Kong there are classical music concerts performed every week by one of the local orchestras or a foreign ensemble.

Hong Kong is stuffed with cinemas and boasts well over 150 screens. Most show local films (with English subtitles) or Hollywood blockbusters dubbed into Cantonese, but a few – Cine-Art House in Wan Chai, the Broadway Cinematheque in Yau Ma Tei and the UA Pacific Place in Admiralty – screen more interesting current releases and art-house films.

Cinemas usually screen five sessions (very roughly at 12.30pm, 2.30pm, 5.30pm, 7.30pm and 9.30pm) weekdays, with extra screenings

at 4pm and 11.30pm on Saturday, Sunday and public holidays. You must select a seat when you buy a ticket, which costs between \$50 and \$80, depending on the location and whether you can claim a concession. Tickets are usually cheaper (eg \$40 to \$50) at matinees, the last screening of the day on weekends and on holidays (usually 11.30pm), or on certain days of the week, eg Tuesday at the UA Pacific Place (Map p63).

Almost all Hong Kong films screening in Hong Kong have both Chinese and English subtitles. You can confirm that the film has English subtitles by checking its Censorship Licence in the cinema.

Both the *HK Magazine* and the *South China Morning Post* have listings for film screenings.

Local theatre groups (p35) mostly perform at the Shouson Theatre of the Hong Kong Arts Centre, the Academy for Performing Arts, the Hong Kong Cultural Centre and Hong Kong City Hall (opposite). Performances are usually in Cantonese, though there are often summaries in English available. Smaller troupes occasionally present plays in English at one of the two theatres at the Fringe Club.

HONG KONG ISLAND

On Hong Kong Island some of the most important classical music venues are the **Hong Kong Academy for the Performing Arts** (Map p65; ☎ 2584 8500, bookings 3128 8288; www.hkapa.edu; 1 Gloucester Rd, Wan Chai; MTR Wan Chai, exit A1), **Hong Kong City Hall** (Map p56; ☎ 2921 2840, bookings 2734 9009; www.cityhall.gov.hk; 5 Edinburgh Place, Central; MTR Central, exit J3) and the

Hong Kong Arts Centre (Map p63; ☎ 2582 0200, bookings 2734 9009; www.hkac.org.hk; 2 Harbour Rd, Wan Chai; MTR Wan Chai, exit A1).

Central**PALACE IFC CINEMA** Map p56

Cinema

☎ 2388 6268; Podium L1, IFC Mall, 8 Finance St; MTR Hong Kong (exit f)

This new eight-screen cinema complex in the IFC Mall is arguably the most advanced and comfortable in the territory.

Admiralty & Wan Chai

Certain cultural organisations based in this area show foreign films from time to time, including the **Alliance Française** (Map p65; ☎ 2527 7825; 1st & 2nd fl, 123 Hennessy Rd, Wan Chai) and the **Goethe-Institut** (Map p63; ☎ 2802 0088; 13th & 14th fl, Hong Kong Arts Centre, 2 Harbour Rd, Wan Chai).

For both art-house and mainstream films, Wan Chai has two of the best and most comfortable cinemas in the territory.

AGNÈS B CINEMA Map p63

Cinema

☎ 2582 0200; Upper basement, Hong Kong Arts Centre, 2 Harbour Rd, Wan Chai; 🕒 18

This recently renamed cinema – it was the Lim Por Yen Theatre for years – is the place for classics, revivals, alternative screenings and travelling film festivals.

CINE-ART HOUSE Map p65

Cinema

☎ 2827 4820; Ground fl, Sun Hung Kai Centre, 30 Harbour Rd, Wan Chai; MTR Wan Chai (exit A5)

This alternative cinema specialises in English-language films.

MAJOR VENUES

Hong Kong has at last arrived on the big-name concert circuit, and a growing number of internationally celebrated bands and solo acts – including the likes of REM, U2, Robbie Williams, Avril Lavigne, Norah Jones, Diana Krall, Sting and k.d. lang – perform in Hong Kong regularly.

Big concerts are usually held at either the 12,500-seat **Hong Kong Coliseum** (Map p94; ☎ 2355 7233, 2355 7234; 9 Cheong Wan Rd, Hung Hom; 🕒 Hung Hom), located behind the KCR station, and **Queen Elizabeth Stadium** (Map p65; ☎ 2591 1346; www.lcsd.gov.hk/qes; 18 Oi Kwan Rd, Wan Chai; MTR Wan Chai). The sound is abysmal in the former, and you'd get better acoustics in an empty aircraft hanger than at the latter.

Two other venues are the **HITEC Rotunda** (Map pp88–9; ☎ 2620 2222, 2620 2838; www.hitec.com.hk; 1 Trademart Dr, Kowloon Bay; MTR Kowloon Bay) and the New Wing of the **Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre** (HKCEC; Map p65; ☎ 2582 8888, bookings 2582 1111; www.hkcec.com; 1 Expo Dr, Wan Chai; bus 18, MTR Wan Chai). These are not huge venues, so the ticket prices are usually quite high.

Smaller acts are sometimes booked into the **Ko Shan Theatre** (Map pp88–9; ☎ 2740 9222; www.lcsd.gov.hk/kst; 77 Ko Shan Rd, Hung Hom; 🕒 Hung Hom). The sound at this venue isn't great either, but the back portion of the seating area is open air, and most of the seats offer a good view of the stage.

PUNCHLINE COMEDY CLUB

Map p65 Comedy
 ☎ 2827 7777; 2nd fl, Sun Hung Kai Centre, 30 Harbour Rd, Wan Chai; ☎ 18, alight at Wan Chai Sports Ground

The only venue with regularly scheduled comedy acts in Hong Kong at present is the Viceroy Restaurant & Bar's Punchline Comedy Club, with local and imported acts every third Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 9pm to 11pm. Entry costs \$300.

Causeway Bay & Island East

Causeway Bay is packed with cinemas but, with few exceptions, most of them show Hollywood blockbusters and Hong Kong and mainland films. Further east is Hong Kong's most important film-watching venue, the Hong Kong Film Archive.

HONG KONG FILM ARCHIVE

Map pp54–5 Cinema

☎ 2739 2139, bookings 2734 9009; www.filmarchive.gov.hk; 50 Lei King Rd, MTR Sai Wan Ho This is the place to find out what lies (or perhaps lurks) behind Hong Kong's film industry. The archive houses more than 4300 films, runs a rich calendar of screenings (local and foreign movies), and exhibits natty posters and other fine film paraphernalia.

WINDSOR CINEMA Map p74 Cinema

☎ 2577 0783; 1st fl, Windsor House, 311 Gloucester Rd, Causeway Bay; Causeway Bay (exit E) This comfortable cineplex with four screens is just west of Victoria Park.

SUNBEAM THEATRE Map pp54–5 Theatre

☎ 2856 0161, 2563 2959; Kiu Fai Mansion, 423 King's Rd, North Point; tickets \$40-320; MTR North Point (exit B)

CHINESE OPERA UNMASKED

The best time to see and hear Chinese opera – not the easiest form of entertainment to catch in Hong Kong these days – is during the Hong Kong Arts Festival (p15) in February/March, and outdoor performances are staged in Victoria Park during the Mid-Autumn Festival. At other times, you might take your chances at catching a performance at the Temple Street Night Market (p96), but the most reliable venue for opera performances year-round is the Sunbeam Theatre (above) in North Point.

Cantonese and other Chinese opera (p35) are performed here throughout the year. Performances generally run for about a week, and are usually held five days a week in the evening at 7.30pm, with occasional matinees at 1pm or 1.30pm. The theatre is directly above the North Point MTR station (exit A4), on the north side of King's Rd, near the intersection with Shu Kuk St.

Lan Kwai Fong & Soho**FRINGE STUDIO & THEATRE**

Map p68 Theatre

☎ 2521 7251, bookings 3128 8288; www.hkfringe.com.hk; Ground & 1st fl, Fringe Club, 2 Lower Albert Rd; ☎ 8pm during performances (days vary), box office noon-10pm Mon-Sat; MTR Central (exit D2)

These intimate theatres, each seating up to 100 people, host eclectic local and international performances (average ticket price is \$80) in English and in Cantonese.

KOWLOON**Tsim Sha Tsui****GRAND OCEAN CINEMA** Map p92 Cinema

☎ 2377 2100; www.goldenharvest.com; Marco Polo Hong Kong Hotel Shopping Arcade, Zone D, Harbour City, 3 Canton Rd, Tsim Sha Tsui; 🚢 Star Ferry

The Grand Ocean screens the usual blockbusters.

HONG KONG CULTURAL CENTRE

Map p94 Classical Music

☎ 2734 2009; www.hkculturalcentre.gov.hk; 10 Salisbury Rd, Tsim Sha Tsui; MTR Tsim Sha Tsui Many classical music performances are held at the Hong Kong Cultural Centre (just east of the Star Ferry terminal), also home to the Hong Kong Philharmonic and the Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra. It is well worth stopping by there to pick up a monthly schedule.

Yau Ma Tei & New Kowloon**AMC FESTIVAL WALK** Map pp88–9 Cinema

☎ 2265 8545; www.amccinemas.com.hk; Upper ground fl & Levels 1 & 2, Festival Walk, 80-88 Tat Chee Ave, Kowloon Tong; MTR Kowloon Tong (exit C2) This complex with 11 screens at Hong Kong's poshest mall is the largest cinema in

the territory. The films are a mix of Chinese and Western. Check ahead as the latter are sometimes dubbed, rather than subtitled in Cantonese.

BROADWAY CINEMATHEQUE

Map p97 Cinema

☎ 2388 3188; Ground fl, Prosperous Garden, 3 Public Square St, Yau Ma Tei; MTR Yau Ma Tei This is an unlikely place for an alternative cinema, but it's worth coming up for new art-house releases and rerun screenings. The Kubrick Bookshop Café next door serves good coffee and decent pre-flick food.

NEW TERRITORIES

The New Territories also has several important cultural centres:

Kwai Tsing Theatre (Map pp50–1; ☎ 24080128; www.lcsd.gov.hk/ktt; 12 Hing Ning Rd, Kwai Chung; MTR Kwai Fong)

Sha Tin Town Hall (Map p124; ☎ 2694 2550; www.lcsd.gov.hk/stth; 1 Yuen Wo Rd, Sha Tin; KCR Sha Tin, East Rail)

Tuen Mun Town Hall (Map pp50–1; ☎ 2450 4202; www.lcsd.gov.hk/tmth; 3 Tuen Hi Rd, Tuen Mun; KCR Tuen Mun)

Tsuen Wan Town Hall (Map p105; ☎ 2414 0144; www.lcsd.gov.hk/twth; 72 Tai Ho Rd, Tsuen Wan; MTR Tsuen Wan)

Yuen Long Theatre (Map pp50–1; ☎ 2476 1029, bookings 2477 1462; www.lcsd.gov.hk/ylt; 9 Tai Yuk Rd, Yuen Long; KCR Yuen Long).

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