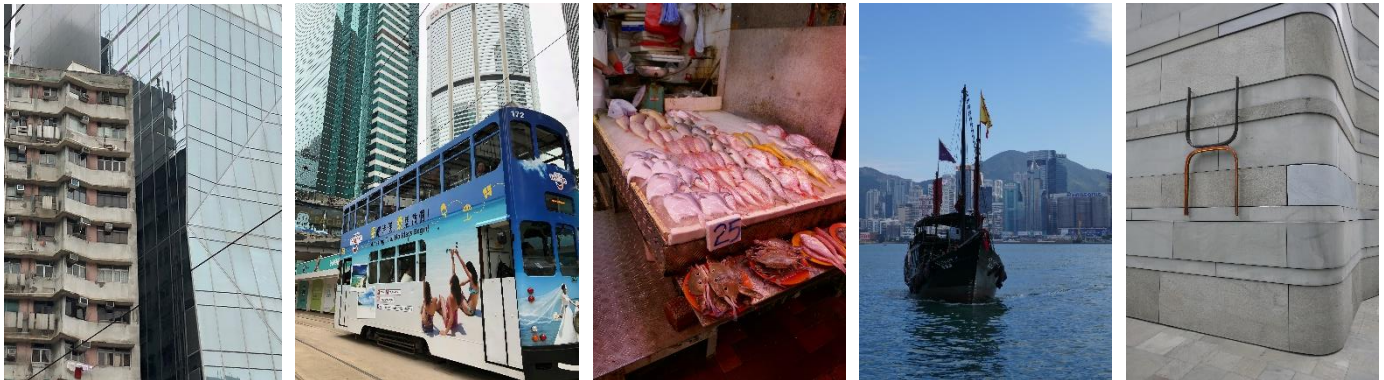




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My nine tips for Hong Kong – part 1

A city full of contrasts – vivid, inspiring, with its finger on the pulse of the present and yet at the same time “down to earth” and traditional; marvellously beautiful yet rich in little oddities; glamorous yet simple; disciplined yet casual; authentic yet artificial. One thing is certain: I can’t wait to come back!

Here I record what are, for me personally, nine special highlights of the city. I focus on fine eating experiences and, of course, also on interior design and spectacular interior architecture in Hong Kong’s hotels and restaurants. The city certainly did leave a very strong impression on me.



1. The Intercontinental Hong Kong

The Intercontinental is located in Kowloon and thus provides a perfect view of the breathtaking skyline of Hong Kong Island. Because whoever assumes that New York’s beautiful panorama of skyscrapers is the most impressive in the world will make, here in Hong Kong, the refreshing discovery that it does have at least a close competitor in this regard. The hotel has been standing for several decades already and large-scale interior refurbishments are now due. It certainly, however, has the best-located **hotel foyer** in the city. From the lobby and the bar located in it one enjoys a unique panorama view of the harbour and of the lights of Hong Kong Island. In the night hours this view provides a spectacle of light playing and shimmering on water which surely has no equal anywhere in the world.

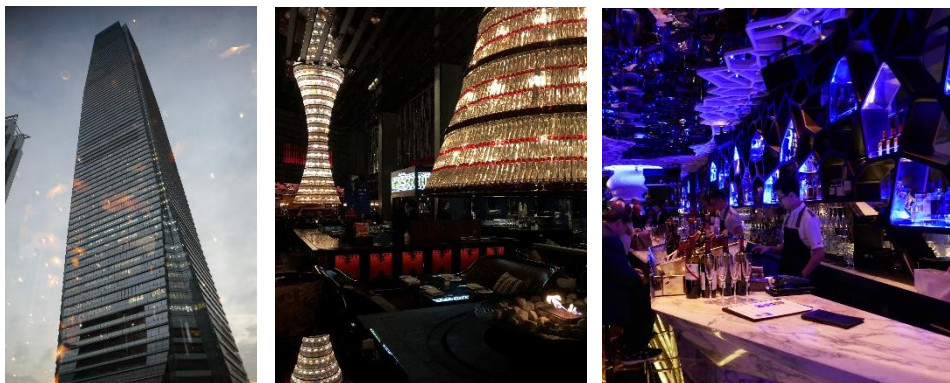
The Intercontinental building is also host to a whole series of top-flight restaurants, all of which offer this same magnificent view across the harbour. These include the the renowned Parisian seafood restaurant “Rech”, owned by Michelin-starred chef Alain Ducasse; the ‘**Yan Toh Heen**’, a gourmet Chinese restaurant, currently boasting two Michelin stars, which specializes in Cantonese cuisine; the ‘**Nobu**’; and also an excellent steak restaurant.



2. The Peninsula Hong Kong

Obliquely opposite the Intercontinental lies the Peninsula, a hotel whose fame stretches back into the days when Hong Kong was still a British colony. At one time the waters of Hong Kong harbour stretched right up to the hotel entrance; today, its drive, with its characteristic lion figures, is separated by a street and by a promenade from the shore from which the ships depart for Hong Kong Island. The classic British “high tea” is still celebrated in the traditionally-decorated hotel lobby – a ritual which still exerts a fascination on many of Hong Kong’s visitors, who form long queues in front of the hotel to take their place in the celebration.

Along with several other highlights in the way of fine cuisine there is to be found on the top floor of the Peninsula – and endowed consequently, with a view as impressive as those I’ve already mentioned – the **‘Felix’**, a combination of bar and restaurant, with interior design by Philippe Starck. It was one of the first designer restaurants to be located within a luxury hotel, a fact which has made the Peninsula a popular destination also for admirers and connoisseurs of fine design. A must-see design classic – taking special care to check out the magnificent panorama from the toilets!



3. The Ritz Carlton Hong Kong

A spectacular recent construction which defines the skyline on its side of the harbour. Right beside it is the entrance to a tunnel through which one can cross over to Hong Kong Island. The tower contains several chic restaurants and is characterized particularly by its fine dining areas for private dining parties, each with its own private panorama. The Chinese, in fact, are very fond of eating out in such *séparées*. Many families even eat out every day at dinner time because their dining room at home is too small. Another highlight of the hotel can literally be said to be offered to visitors “on top” of everything else. Perched 490 metres above sea level, the classy **‘Ozone’** night-club holds the record of being the highest-altitude rooftop bar in the world.



4. The W Hotel Hong Kong

The neighbouring W Hotel is designed in a much younger and hipper style and even seems, in certain of its interior-design details, to be displaying a certain sense of humour about itself – an extremely winning trait! Good atmosphere, good vibes and a good hotel bar in which, during the day, a tea-time meal can be enjoyed in stylish Finnish tableware –and naturally, here too, as is typical for Asia: a rich and broad range of culinary offers!



5. Temple Street Night Market

A programme in absolute contrast to a tour around the luxury hotels. A street north of Kowloon Park is regularly transformed, at sunset, into a mile-long bazaar. Besides many things that one really doesn't need at all, one can find here interesting clothing, fabrics, watches, arts-and-crafts artefacts, and various technological knick-knacks. But you can also settle down at a seat in one of the many street restaurants situated in the side-streets off Temple Street and allow the day to come to a close with a little Hong Kong street food.

On the other side of the harbour, on Hong Kong Island, there await many more great inspirations – among others, my very favourite place, which you see here:



.... there will be more to read about this in the 2nd part of my Hong Kong blog which is coming soon. With warmest greetings, Corinna Kretschmar-Joehnk