



Travel Stories by Amaru & Suzanne



Among Peaks, Old Egg and Peking Duck!

by Amaru & Suzanne, November 7th 2009

It might not be traditional China, but Hong Kong can certainly provide an introduction to it...

Our trip to Hong Kong didn't have the best start. We were checking in and the person behind the desk tells us that our specified seats that we'd pre-booked over 6 months ago were not available.

Hearing this at 6am when you're barely awake is not what you want, she then went on and said that we might have to sit separately before finding us seats together in the middle of the plane.

We were at the very end of the plane and not in the best of spirits when we noticed that the doors of the plane had closed, we were taxiing towards the runway and we had no one next to us....

We actually had 4 seats to share.... 2 seats each, maybe this flight wouldn't be so bad after all!



Temple Street Night Markets
Lots of junk for sale....



Suz waiting for our food
Having a few beers while we wait!

The flight was great and 9 hours passed very quickly... it helped that besides the extra room, and all the on-demand movies we could ever wish for, the seats also had a power plug for the laptop!

Immigration and customs in Hong Kong was a breeze and we were soon past it all, the only nervous point was that Suz decided not to tick that she had a cough (they are quite paranoid about swine flu) and then had to make sure she didn't cough in the health authorities face ;)

We were going to buy return train tickets to the city but were convinced to get the "Octopus" card instead and it proved to be a great choice. This card covers the metro, ferries, trams and also some shops like 7-11, just swipe and your payment is complete... When can we expect to see this in Sydney huh?!?

That first night after checking into our hotel we strolled down to the Temple Streets Night Markets, browsing the different vendors sell the same bootlegged merchandise before we settled on a street side restaurant where we had some great food.

Before we headed back to the hotel for some well deserved sleep we decided to check out the Light Symphony that the city puts on every night. We enjoyed the show but both of us were actually expecting more, not sure what - but we felt that the music could have been louder, there could have been more lasers etc...

The next morning we woke to an overcast day but decided to stick to our plans and still do the ferry ride to the other side of the harbour and ride the peak tram to the top of Victoria Peak for some great views of the city.



Salt & Pepper Squid
Yum!!



A lot of fresh seafood
...some of them are still moving

Once we were off the ferry we started seeing lots of people just sitting on the streets, having picnics and talking to each other... and when we say lots of people we mean LOTS of people, they were on every corner and every tunnel and in some of the shops as well.

Suz thought it was hilarious as we walked through the shopping centre as she didn't have to worry about losing sight of me, for once I was a giant and was at least a head taller than anyone else =))

We found out later that day that on every Sunday it's quite common to see the workers of different South East Asian background gather in parks and other places for their day off... Anyway, we eventually made our way to the top of Victoria Peak where we had some great although cloudy views of the city.

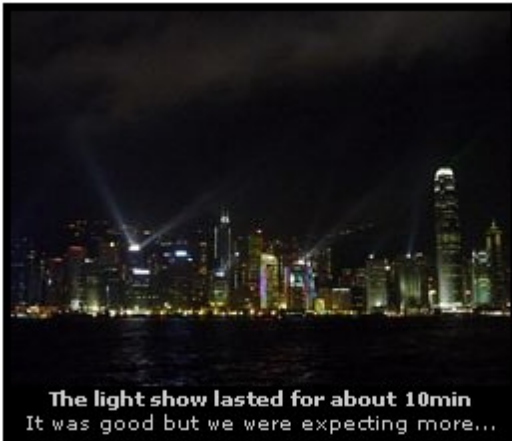
On our way back we stopped at a restaurant for lunch and I was asked by the waitress if we wanted to try a preserved egg. Suz declined but I've always stated that I'll try everything at least once so I said yes.

What can I say about it... First of all it looks quite interesting with a greenish tint, it doesn't look rotten at all but it also doesn't look like something you should be able to eat. Once I took a bite of it though I quickly realised that the egg white (now green) is quite tasteless while the yolk has a ammonia taste to it, different but bear in mind that I like the Swedish Fermented Herring (Surströmming) as well so this wasn't really all that bad ;)

We spent the rest of the day wondering the streets of Soho as they had a Wine and Dine festival and the streets were closed off (they must have known we were coming).



Hong Kong Skyline
...waiting for the light show!



We went back to the Avenue of the Stars that afternoon and wondered there during the sunset just checking out the different names of all Hong Kong superstars (we could recognize about 5 of them).

The next day we went on a daytrip to Macau (read more in our next blog) and when we returned we decided to head up to Victoria Peak for some views of Hong Kong by night. While we were waiting for the sun to set we found this place called Wonderfish Spa which we decided to try. We've done the free version of this a couple of years ago in Thailand at the Erawan Waterfalls. You simply stick your feet into a tub that contains Garra Rufa fishes which then proceed to eat the dead skin off your feet, it's a strange feeling at first and can be ticklish but after a while it's actually a nice foot massage, and it leaves your feet feeling very smooth...

On our last day in Hong Kong we had to wait until our flight at 10pm so after check-out, we headed out to the airport, stored our luggage and then on the same island we jumped on the Ngong Ping Cable car that runs for almost 6km up to the top of the mountain. Once at the top we found the great Buddha, a beautiful monastery and a Wisdom Path... can't say I feel any wiser though as I couldn't read any of the tablets.... they were all in Chinese ;)

On our way back down from the mountain we decided to upgrade to a so called Chrystal Cabin which had a glass bottom which was very cool... Later after a few hours of killing time in the airport we finally boarded our flight to India!

How can we summarise Hong Kong? It's a great place for everyone... transportation is a breeze with the state of the art metro (shame on you Sydney), the scenery is spectacular with all its peaks and the harbour and the food is just awesome, so many different things to try...

We're sold and we'll definately be back!!





The Tram climbs the mountain
at quite a steep rate



Hong Kong from Victoria Peak
...on a cloudy morning



Suz and I
overlooking the city!



We're not sure what was happening...
or why they were sitting on the roads



Lunch anyone?
We certainly thought so and walked in...



I ate a thousand-year old egg
...it was a bit weird!



Walking down a few alleyways...
just exploring



A Wine & Dine Festival
Perfect timing by us...



The streets are closed off
so that we can enjoy the area!



Who needs a supermarket?
Everything you need is right here...



Cheap and Expensive
Both can be found in the same place



Hong Kong Trams
They're quite thin...



Your local pharmacy?
Don't even want to know...



Avenue of the Stars
A Bruce Lee statue



Also found a Jackie Chan print
One of many "famous" actors



We thought they were selling popcorn...
Nope, cuttlefish anyone?



**A Junk sailing past us
in the harbour...**



**Suz
Getting ready for dinner**



**Check out my new watch...
I paid a whopping \$3.50 for it**



**Hong Kong by Night
Neon signs everywhere...**



**Hong Kong by Night
Neon signs everywhere...**



**At the Wonderfish Spa
Garra Rufa fishes nibble on you...**



**It might look freaky...
and it is... but also quite amazing!**



**Suz and I
With the city behind us**



Peking Duck
Dinner time!



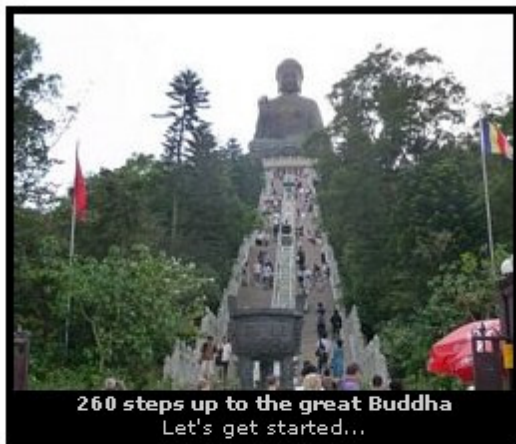
We're trying to blend in
with our face masks!



On the Ngong Ping 360
The cable car will take us to the top



Vegetarian food? No Problem...
How about a vegetarian Chicken?



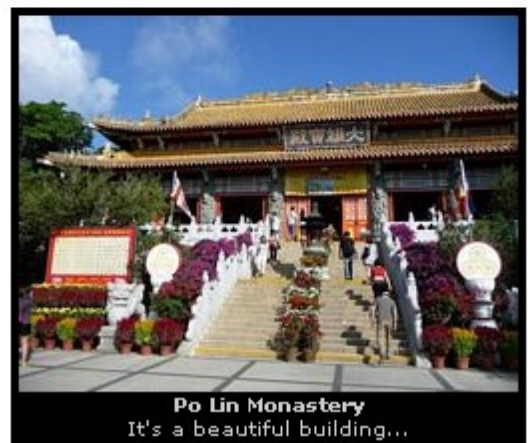
260 steps up to the great Buddha
Let's get started...



It really is massive and you
feel very small once you reach the top



These must be the Buddha's groupies
or maybe the catering girls



Po Lin Monastery
It's a beautiful building...



Po Lin Monastery
on the inside



I walked the Wisdom Path
and found these boards



The only problem is that I
can't understand the wisdom!



Lots and lots
of incense burning



We upgraded to a crystal cable car
with a glass bottom



The clouds have descended on us
Looks pretty spooky doesn't it?



The cable cars
run just off the airport



Hong Kong Airport
It's time to leave...