BABYCCINO KIDS blog
daily inspiration for the modern family

WEEKEND GET-AWAY: HONG KONG

SEPTEMBER 10, 2010

If you travel internationally it is very hard not to have a stop-over at some point in Hong Kong. Chances are that you are on a long-haul flight so it is the perfect place to take a break in your journey. But it has never seemed to me like a kid-friendly place, so I was really excited to meet Kristen a few months ago, who runs the lovely eco-friendly and ethical e-shop Hocusadabra and lives in Hong Kong. (Hilariously enough we have friends in common in Kuala Lumpur which shows yet again how small the world is.) Kristen was excited to hear about the weekend get-away posts and was kind enough to write up what she would recommend doing with kids on a weekend in Hong Kong. I hope you enjoy it. Please do let us know if you have any other recommendations for what to do in this great city!

EAT:

CAFÉ CAUSETTE – An absolute institution in Hong Kong, The Mandarin Oriental was renovated three years ago and somewhat of a rarity in Hong Kong, the designers managed to keep all the old world charm. A new and treasured addition to the hotel is Café Causette on the mezzanine level. Café Causette serves great Western and Eastern fare as well as offering the best scones and rose petal jam at high tea. For the kidlettes, there are high-chairs (a rarity) and a full and nutritionally pleasing menu complete with crayons and activities.

MAXIM'S CITY HALL DIM SUM – There is no better place in the world to try dumplings for the first time than Hong Kong. And in Hong Kong, no dumpling experience is complete without a trip to City Hall. Right on the harbor, this dumpling diner is mammoth in size serving Dim Sum the traditional way on trolleys so you can select your dishes. A popular destination for local bridal parties, so it doubles as a truly cultural experience. Get there before 11am to avoid the queues.

CAFÉ DECO – While visiting the Peak, it is worth noting that of all the restaurants up high, Café Deco offers the best menu for kids, balloons and a play area to keep them occupied while you finish your meal. On a clear day, the views are like no other and will probably outshine anything you eat!

PLAY:

HONG KONG PARK – Hong Kong can be difficult to navigate with a pram and HK Park certainly doesn't help its reputation. Despite all the stairs, there are also lovely ponds full of fish, waterfalls and an aviary. The park hosts one of HK's best playgrounds complete with sand and swings!

SHEK- O – Definitely worth the trip, Shek- O is a beachside village on the South-Eastern tip of HK Island. With beautiful views over the South China Sea and an old sleepy village atmosphere, Shek- O is a nice break from all the hustle and bustle of the city side. Weave your way through the village to a little café called Black Sheep worth stopping at for lunch.

BOWEN ROAD – An extremely popular destination for runners and dog-walkers, Bowen Road runs from the Mid -levels to Happy Valley. Enjoy panoramic views of the city and little sporadically placed playgrounds along the path. Don't miss Lover's Rock fabled to provide Happy Marriages to those who have worshiped. For the overly adventurous head up the steep slope of Wong Nai Chung Gap Road to a large playground and the Historical Police Museum or stay straight and head to the horse track at Happy Valley.

SHOP:

STANLEY - Catch the #6 bus from Central Pier to Stanley Markets and shop for all sorts of Chinoiserie souvenirs (fans, cheongsams, slippers, etc), amazing children's dress-ups and factory seconds from the best American and European children's brands.

Stroll the Stanley Promenade up to Murray House; a 160 year-old restored three- storey colonial building recently restored and housing the HK Maritime Museum.

HOCUSADABRA- For all last-minute children's entertainment supplies or forgotten birthday presents for loved ones back home delivered straight to their door. Art+ Craft packs are recommended for long-haul travel and/or long lunches.

PEEL STREET –The best destination for lanterns perfect for decorating the little ones bedrooms. Head farther down to find more food markets and street vendors selling temple incense, traditional umbrellas and other local treats. Whilst in the area, Gough Street

offers quirky home ware shops and further West is the infamous Cat street for antiques and local bric a brac.

PRINCES BUILDING- A one stop shop for last minute 'outfits', the Princes building hosts well known French brands, Jacardi and Bonpoint as well as Mothercare and a few scattered boutiques such as Little Misses and Mini Masters. Our favorite children's bookshop, Bookazine on the top floor offers an extensive selection of children's books, games and toys.

SEE:

OCEAN PARK - No trip to China would be complete without a Panda sighting. Head to Aberdeen to Hong Kong's famous amusement park and see Pandas, ride the Cable Car and enjoy the panoramic scenery of the surrounding islands.

BIG BUDDHA - Take a ferry or MTR to the amazing Giant Buddha on Lantau Island. The Buddha sits at 34 meters high hillside overlooking the serene Po Lin Monastery. A full day out, make time to stop at the legendary Stoep restaurant on Cheung Sha Beach and view basking buffalos wandering across the beach.

HONG KONG'S INFAMOUS MARKETS – Head to Sheung Wan if you are on the Island for 'traditional' Hong Kong Wet Markets. Think meat cleavers, flip flops, wet floors and hanging red bulbs. This is the real deal, not for the faint hearted, vegetarians or pregnant mamas! Where locals come to buy their fruit, veg and meat, poultry and fish…

For less shock value but just as much vibrancy, head to the open markets in Mongkok. Bird, Flower or Goldfish markets; whatever takes your fancy. They are all in very close proximity to one another and are truly traditional and very much a part of Hong Kong's heritage. See elderly locals "walking' their birds, buying fish for their Aquariums and flowers for their homes. Your kids will love the vibrant, sensory overload.

VICTORIA PEAK – Despite being over 100 years old, The Peak Tram still draws thousands of locals and tourists alike to climb the lush and steep hills of Victoria Peak. This nostalgic journey takes you from Central up through the Mid- Levels to the top for spectacular views of this bustling city. Once at the top, head a further 5-10 minutes up Mt. Austin Road to the park and playground. If your kids are feeling overly energetic, you could walk the flat 45-minute loop of the Peak along Lugard Road for full panoramic views of Hong Kong Island. If you happen to be up there at night, stay for the 8:00pm Symphony of Lights extravaganza.

STAY:

Accommodation doesn't come cheap in this metropolis, however rest assured it is some of the best on offer.

FOUR SEASONS – For island dwellers, The Four Seasons is perfectly located, right in the heart of Central and with stunning views across Victoria Harbor. The amenities alone may leave you wanting to be pint size! A bathrobe, toiletries, diapers, bedding and complimentary bedtime milk and cookies are all included in your package. As well as the standard: cribs, bath-tubs, high chairs, sterilizers and a DVD library. The hotel connects to IFC Mall, a shopping haven complete with cinemas and an international supermarket for last minute necessities.

W- The convenience of this Starwood gem couldn't get any better. Start by catching the Airport Express train right to your doorstep. The W sits adjacent to the Elements Mall offering you some of the city's most luxurious shopping, an ice-skating rink, a waterfront boulevard with stunning views back over to the Island side and much more. Close to Nathan Road, Temple Street Markets, Kowloon Park and the Star Ferry.

(Image of Hong Kong found on Tour Magazine)

Category: Travel,Weekend Getaways

EMILIE IN PARIS | 9 COMMENTS