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Best Hong Kong harborview bars (extract)

Sipping on a fancy drink while oggling Victoria Harbour is probably the quintessential Hong Kong drinking experience

By Zoe Li, Hong Kong Editor 9 April, 2010



Looking for your boss? Try Sugar, at EAST.

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Hong Kong's famed Victoria Harbour lit up in bright lights makes for a ravishing view -- there's nothing quite like it anywhere else in the world. The experience is most enhanced by a well-made drink at some of the city's most glamorous addresses. Here are our picks of the best Hong Kong harborview bars:

Sugar: Best new perspective

Hong Kong harborview bar scene newcomer Sugar is probably the most resourceful -- it's located on the edge of a residential housing estate in Quarry Bay where it is rare to find a high-octane cocktail joint with a killer view to boot. Predictably, the joint is getting good business from the neighboring Taikoo Place offices.

While "harborview" typically conjures up the night view of Tsim Sha Tsui lit up by neon lights, Sugar offers a view of East Kowloon where there are less fluorescent billboards to spot. The scene is of sparse dots of ocean vessel's serenely floating in the wide harbor with a backdrop of sturdy-looking building blocks and rolling green hills. It's best to visit the loungy outdoor deck before sunset to enjoy the coastline by the soft light of dusk. This way, you can also avoid Sugar's garish pink and purple lighting that becomes apparent once it's dark.

Open until 2am. 32/F, EAST, 29 Taikoo Shing Road, Tai Koo, tel +852 3968 3738 www.sugar-hongkong.com



Cafe Gray Bar: Unapologetically fancy

The crowd is very moneyed, very hip, and unashamedly aware of how pretentious they can be. I mean, this is a place that serves gimlets in miniature martini glasses. But it is a six star hotel bar and the staff are very well trained in the finer skills of hospitality. They'll serve your gimlet in a paper cup if that's what you demand, with a smile that almost looks sincere too.

The design is understated and sophisticated, with tactile upholstery in warm woods, navy and not a touch of chrome or acrylic. A seat by the windows gets a view of the tops of Admiralty's skyscrapers and Tsim Sha Tsui beyond. The best part though, is that the bar food is actually pretty good, such as the polenta fries and crabmeat fritters, courtesy chef Gray Kunz.

Drinks until 1am. 49/F, The Upper House, Pacific Place, 88 Queensway, tel +852 2918 1838

www.cafegrays.com