

ESCAPE *Routes*BECAUSE THOSE HOLIDAY SNAPS  
WON'T TAKE THEMSELVES

A PENTHOUSE SUITE IN THE UPPER HOUSE WITH A VIEW OF HONG KONG'S SKYLINE. A-MAZING



THE HOTEL'S LAWN: BEAN BAGS, MARTINI IN HAND, NOW RELAX...

## Supersize your city break in hip Hong Kong

The words 'city break' used to mean a short flight across Europe to sample the delights of Barcelona or Rome. But with travel-savvy professionals packing more into their holiday allowance and making NYC and Dubai feasible long-weekend destination spots, why not Hong Kong for five nights? Twelve hours away, yes, but for one of the world's most forward-thinking cities that also boasts Thailand-style beaches, it's well worth it.

If you want sedate, book elsewhere. On arrival, Hong Kong's tightly packed high-rises and bustling pavements can seem overwhelming but it's impossible not to get caught up in its electric buzz. From street-side cafes for afternoon tea to the local jade and Chinese markets selling trinkets and souvenirs, there's a frenetic, positive energy in the air that's infectious.

Set in the heart of the central business district, The Upper House - designed by renowned architect, Andre Fu - is an oasis of minimal sophistication. Step through the imposing 13ft-high textured nickel door and you're transported to a pocket of calm high above the bustling city.

Kick off your stay relaxing on The Lawn where huge bean bags are positioned around manicured grass (beautiful at night by candlelight), then climb 49 floors to witness stunning views of Victoria Harbour from Cafe Gray - the hotel's stunning restaurant and bar with a menu handcrafted by celebrated chef Gray Kunz. Organic-style suites (think woods and creams and browns) are generous, with floor-to-ceiling views of either the harbour or scenic Hong Kong Island, and automated blinds to zip shut after the sun goes down. *Stylist* loved the flatscreen hiding in our bathroom wall, and leather gift bag complete with guide book.

**Why it's hot** Full of sights and smells, days here can be split between city and nature. Snap up designer purchases in the luxurious Pacific Place Mall, navigate the streets by bicycle (available to hire from £2; see [hkoutdoors.com](http://hkoutdoors.com)) and then take the tram up to Victoria Peak for a panoramic vista of the city. Or, for the

slower paced, relax on the beautiful white sands of Repulse Bay, or explore nearby islands by boat. Just pack a cooler full of beers and sail out to hike up a remote mountain peak, or explore a deserted island.

**Eating and drinking** Cafe Gray is the hottest place to be in Hong Kong right now; *Stylist's* favourite dishes were the crab bisque with crab meat vinaigrette, and Gray Kunz's signature dish - braised short rib of beef with soft polenta and Meaux mustard. The bar also serves a mean espresso Martini. If you fancy escaping the city limits, follow our lead and hire a cruiser. Sip ice-cold champagne while watching the sun set over the harbour as you sail out to Lamma Island for a fantastic seafood

banquet with the locals. The food here is freshly caught everyday and the calamari is incredible. For drinks later, once you've sailed back into town, Lan Kwai Fong is a popular area for late night partying, as is nearby Kowloon. For a touch of decadence head to Sugar, the rooftop bar in neighbouring hotel East.

**Photo opportunity** Take a stroll through the famous bird market in Kowloon where you'll see the locals walk their birds and happily pose for pictures, just don't get too close to the bags of live grasshoppers! A trip up to the Big Buddha and Po Lin Monastery located on Lantau is also fantastic; enjoy the breeze as you ascend on a cable car that glides through the mountains to the 250-tonne bronze Buddha perched at the top.

Rooms at The Upper House start at £250 per night\* (00852 3968 1111; [reservations@upperhouse.com](http://reservations@upperhouse.com); [upperhouse.com](http://upperhouse.com)). British Airways offers two flights per day from London Heathrow to Hong Kong from £595 return including taxes, travelling in September (0844 493 0787; [ba.com](http://ba.com))



HONG KONG HARBOUR: JUST BE GRATEFUL YOU DON'T FOOT THE LIGHTING BILL.