

YOU catch your breath descending into Hong Kong International Airport. As your plane banks round over the frenetic, brimming Kowloon mainland tip you gaze northwards to the verdant tree-clad New Territories and mighty China beyond; and southwards, across the water to iconic Honk Kong Island itself - like some Mammon Mountain or Manhattan-on-heat - whose leafy summit is ascended by the famous Peak

And - without being too rose-smug - locals don't seem to resent a British colonial past that brought law, wealth, status and relative prosperity; and ultimately left with the graceful doff of a hat. A Brit will feel strangely at home on a double-decker bus chugging along the left-hand side of a "Ferry Street" or "Waterloo Road"; and strangely humbled by Hong Kong's space-age, air-conned metro system.

be a bit put out by the fact that English and Americans often outnumber locals.

For something more authentic - not least if you're into hairy fairies - pop back up Nathan Road to the **Rainbow Bar** (14f Pearl Oriental Tower, 225 Nathan Road, Jordan, Kowloon; Tel: +852 2735 6882), Hong Kong's only bear club. Then whip over to **Wally Matt Bar & Lounge** (3 Granville Circuit, Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon; Tel: +852 2367 6874) - actually far more modern and stylish than its aforementioned allegedly "new" namesake brother and where, by contrast, you're likely to be the only white face amidst

GO GAY IN HONG KONG

ADRIAN GILLAN goes in search of Wun Hung Lo in the bustling hi-rise tropical trading hub, sweaty flesh pit and former British colony that is Hong Kong.

Tram and whose glass-and-steel Central district boasts many of Asia's tallest stories.

Protected by swathes of British Law for decades to come - despite Chris Patton's tearful farewell and handover back to China in 1997 - Hong Kong still feels like a colony: at least for a fleeting visiting Brit or those young yuppie London boys sweating it out here for the big banks on a two year stint. And sweat you will in this luscious, tropical marketplace that has always "followed the money" - a valued honey pot, tussled over by wannabe masters for centuries. Yet - regardless of who's in the big seat - you get the impression Hong Kong just shrugs wryly and gets on with it: with the noble and fundamentally peaceful art of trading - from ground-hugging knicky-knack stalls to offices built via Feng Shui over sixty floors.

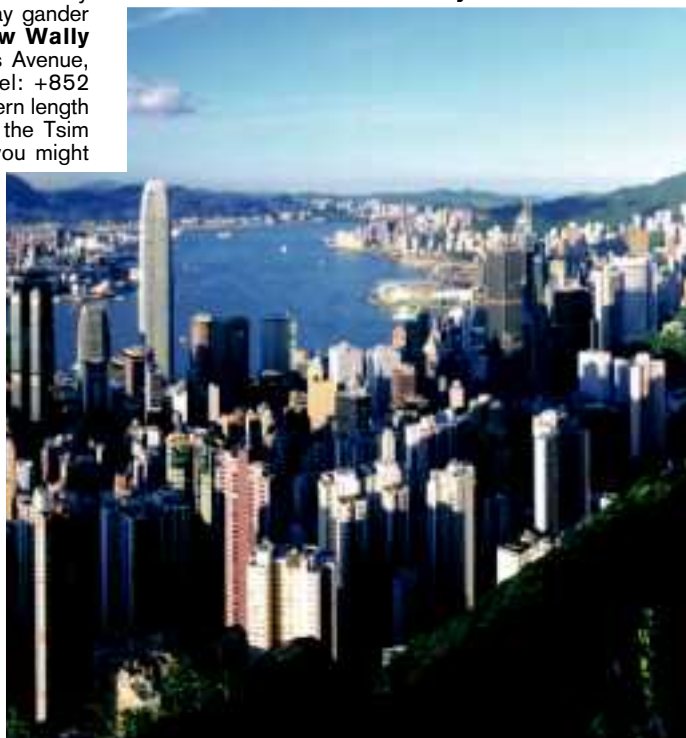
Despite few explicit legal protections for LGBs and a same-sex consent age of 21 (16 for straights), Hong Kong has a sizable, vibrant and stable scene, located half in Kowloon's Tsim Sha Tsui district on the mainland; and half on the glitzy, scraped Island, around a road called Lan Kwai Fong.

Large and suitably anonymous for most gay purposes, the **Metropole Hotel** (75 Waterloo Road, Kowloon; Tel: +852 2761-1711; www.metropole.com.hk) in Kowloon is a great-value, well-positioned place-to-be-based: unenviable home to the deadly SARS outbreak a couple of years back but now doubtless one of the cleanest, safest lodgings on earth.

A short stroll or ride from the hotel and - before you can say "Hoo Flung Dung?" - you're on Nathan Road: Kowloon's main north-south artery, spectacularly neon-lit by night. Start your gay gander at the gothic-yet-friendly **New Wally Matt Lounge** (5a Humphreys Avenue, Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon; Tel: +852 2721 2568) - just off the southern length of this mighty thoroughfare in the Tsim Sha Tsui district - although you might

young local cuties karaoke-crooning Canto-pop. You can likewise go native round the corner at **Tony's** (7-9 Bristol Avenue, Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon; Tel: +852 2723 2726).

Then take the inexpensive Star Ferry across to Central district on the Island. You'll be back with the ex-pats at **Club 97** (9 Lan Kwai Fong, Central; Tel: +852 2810 9333) - a busy, popular, long-established bar-club that turns gay of a Friday. Ditto nearby club **Works** (1/f, 30-32 Wyndham Street, Central; Tel: +852 2868 6102): a dark, labyrinthine interior crammed with western rice queens plus the odd basking local. Then follow the gang along the street to **Propaganda** (Lower g/f, 1 Hollywood Road, Central; Tel: +852 2868 1316) with its long stylish bar from which to preen-and-be-seen; and a sizable pit-like dance floor from-which-to-woo. Sunday's (4pm-10pm) mean long-running **Decadance Tea Dance** (Queen's Club, Theatre Lane, Central; Tel: +852 9679 1144 - www.hxproduction.com), just round the corner. Should all else fail, steam away at nearby **CE Sauna** (2/f Cheung Hing Commercial Building, 37-43 Chochrane Street, Central; Tel: +852 2581 9951); or - on sunny days - check out the Island's **Middle Bay Beach**.



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ANTHEM

Sunday - Kandi Kane's Welcome Party.
Anthem - Yacht cruise with Wayne G

Monday - Pink Foam Party with Hom
swimwear. Dance til dawn.

ORANGE

Tuesday - Bling Blang Blung with
Laquisha Jonz. Orange - PA by
Theresa.

NIGHTINGALE

Wednesday - 'Beauty and the Beast'
Fancy Dress Ball. Nightingale
entertains - with Phil Oldershaw

Thursday - Fleurettes, Winners of Drag
Idol. Milk and Sugar - Holland's hot
club.

CRASH

Friday - Pool Party, Rocky Horror and
fireworks. Crash - with Steve Pitron.

BEYOND

Saturday - Sunset Tea Dance; Diva
Explosion. Beyond.



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