

# TEA FOR TWO

An enduring tradition of Hong Kong's colonial era is the charming custom of afternoon tea, so if you're shopping in Tsim Sha Tsui or Admiralty, it's worth taking time out to sample some of the best Hong Kong has to offer.

The ritual of afternoon tea is rooted in British custom and The Duchess of Bedford is credited with launching the fashion in 1830. By the 1840s, wafer-thin slivers of bread encasing thinly sliced cucumber

and platters of light sponge cakes were served in the new tea gardens of Vauxhall and Marylebone. By later Victorian years, tea was a well-established meal with its own distinctive array of foods, including savoury sandwiches, hot teacakes, English muffins or scones. Tea was a time to share gossip and show off one's prettiest teapots and china, so hostesses vied with each other to produce the most refined sweetmeats and elegant table settings.



## RITZ-CARLTON

High Tea. Without doubt the most spectacular view while enjoying afternoon tea is at the Ritz-Carlton's Lounge & Bar, located on the 102nd floor of the ICC.

The Lounge & Bar's elaborate décor and high ceilings create a stunning contemporary setting and with panoramic views (400 metres above sea-level) across Victoria Harbour, it's definitely worth requesting a window table. Visiting the observation deck on the 100th floor of the ICC costs HK\$150 per adult, so the Ritz-Carlton's afternoon tea is also remarkable value for money at just HK\$228 per person (or HK\$428 for two people).

As you'd expect, the service is excellent and a live band create a relaxed and informal atmosphere. The set menu includes sandwiches, a wide selection of cakes and freshly baked scones with clotted cream and you can choose from a wide variety of black, oolong or herbal teas.

The Ritz-Carlton's signature afternoon tea runs from 3pm to 6pm and dress code is smart-casual (no flip-flops or beach sandals and no shorts or sleeveless shirts for men) and there are plenty of tourists wearing the latest golfing fashions. Due to its popularity, you need to register for reservations from 1pm at ground floor reception on a first-come first-served basis and it's worth getting there early.

The Ritz-Carlton, Lounge & Bar, 102nd Floor,  
International Commerce Centre, Kowloon



## THE PENINSULA

Perhaps the most elegant and stylish setting for afternoon tea in Hong Kong, The Lobby at The Peninsula serves classic afternoon tea from 2pm to 7pm daily. The Lobby's colonial charm sets it apart as a most appropriate venue.

Afternoon tea begins with savoury finger sandwiches with ingredients such as smoked salmon, egg salad, chicken salad, prawns and cucumber in addition to a fine selection of biscuits, pastries and savouries.

The Peninsula's warm buttery scones are made from a recipe unchanged at The Peninsula for over half a century and served with strawberry jam and Devonshire clotted cream.

With its classical columns and gargoyles, marble-topped tables and Tiffany chinaware, The Lobby is refined and chic and a great place to spend the afternoon. The atmosphere's busy and exclusive and the service personal and friendly. The Lobby Strings add to the lively ambience with classical music each afternoon from 12 noon to 6.30pm (except Monday).

Again, you don't have to spend much to enjoy such an exclusive venue with afternoon tea priced at HK\$268 for one person or HK\$398 for two. Weekends get busy and you can't reserve a table unless you're a hotel guest so it's recommended to arrive early (queuing from 1.45pm). Dress code's smart casual with no flip-flops, beach sandals or plastic footwear (you would look out of place wearing 'cros') and no sleeveless shirts for gents.

The Peninsula, Ground Floor, The Lobby, Salisbury Road, Kowloon

## THE LANGHAM

The Langham, Hong Kong has a rich heritage surrounding the tradition of afternoon tea; it was at the sister property, The Langham London that tea was served for the very first time over 140 years ago.

The hotel's Palm Court serves Tiffin Afternoon Tea from 3.00pm until 5.30pm, seven days a week. Guests can choose from two delicious menus, named after fairytale characters of Sleeping Beauty, a traditional tea with handmade shortbread and mini cupcakes and Beauty and the Beast, a chocolate-rich offering. Afternoon tea at The Langham is child-friendly too with a Tiffin Prince and Princess tea for children.

Relaxed and informal, The Palm Court is a very cosy place to relax in the afternoon and get away from the busy streets of Tsim Sha Tsui and you don't have to worry about formal dress codes. Gilt screens with rich fabrics divide Palm Court into smaller discrete private spaces and there are comfortable sofas and low tables. There's also live strings and jazz in the afternoon that enhance the elegant atmosphere.

The three-tiered platter of exquisitely prepared sandwiches, scones, cakes and delicacies are served with a selection of teas including fruit and herbal and The Langham's own blend.

You can make reservations which means you don't have to worry about getting there first and it's great value at HK\$188 for one person, HK\$328 for two people and just HK\$88 for children.

The Langham, Palm Court, 8 Peking Road, Tsimshatsui, Kowloon



## THE ISLAND SHANGRI-LA

If you don't fancy venturing off Hong Kong island, The Shangri-La's Lobby Lounge is a relaxed place to meet, socialise and enjoy afternoon tea in the heart of the city whilst taking in the view of their tropical gardens.

The Shangri-La offers a tempting selection of sandwiches and cakes and guests can choose from three different afternoon tea selections – Shangri-La, Traditional or Wimbledon (with fresh strawberries).

The Lobby Lounge is a more formal setting than some other venues, dress code is smart casual or business dress, but there's a relaxing atmosphere and live music.

It's also spacious and less busy than other places and conveniently located above Pacific Place shopping centre in Admiralty. You can make advance reservations and The Lobby Lounge serves afternoon tea from 3pm to 6pm (Monday to Friday) and from 2pm to 6pm at the weekend. It's also good value for money at HK\$228 for one person or HK\$408 for two people.

Island Shangri-La, Lobby Lounge, 6/F Pacific Place, Supreme Court Road, Central