

5

TOURISM



Tourism is the backbone of Macao's economy. With the long-term goal of building Macao as a world tourism and leisure centre, the government department responsible for tourism development - the Macao Government Tourist Office (MGTO) - started adjusting tourism policies and measures in accordance with Macao's new positioning, and promoted sustainable and healthy development of the tourism industry in areas including marketing and promotion, tourism planning, products and events, tourism industry management, and training and quality control.

Overview of Tourism in Macao

Major Markets

According to the Statistics and Census Service, the total number of tourists visiting Macao in 2018 was 35,803,663, representing an increase of 9.8 percent over the 2017 figure. The number of overnight visitors during the year totalled 18,492,951, representing an increase of 7.2 percent, and accounting for 51.7 percent of visitors to Macao. The average length of stay of overnight visitors was 2.2 days, 0.1 days higher than the previous year, while the overall figure remained at 1.2 days.

In 2018, the 10 major source markets of visitors were:

Country/Region	No. of Visitors	Percentage (%)
Mainland China	25,260,556	70.6%
Hong Kong	6,327,925	17.7%
Taiwan	1,060,968	3.0%
South Korea	812,842	2.3%
Japan	325,798	0.9%
Philippines	312,072	0.9%
Malaysia	227,854	0.6%
United States of America	201,810	0.6%
Thailand	181,379	0.5%

In 2018, Greater China (mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan) comprised 91.2 percent of the total number of tourists; and the international market comprised 8.8 percent. Mainland China continued to be the largest market for visitors to Macao, accounting for 70.6 percent of the total number of visitors to Macao, and 13.8 percent higher than in 2017. Among the mainland China visitors, 12,267,344 (48.6 percent) travelled to Macao under the Facilitated Individual Travel (FIT) scheme.

Hong Kong and Taiwan were the second and third largest markets for visitors to Macao, respectively; the numbers of visitors from Hong Kong increased by 2.6 percent,

while those from Taiwan increased slightly by 0.1 percent, compared with 2017.

Regarding the international market, South Korea remained at the top of the list of sources of international visitors, with a decrease of seven percent from the figure of 2017.

The Southeast Asia market was relatively weak. The markets of Indonesia, Thailand and Singapore recorded decreases of 11.8 percent, 8.5 percent and 5.8 percent, respectively.

Visitors from Japan also decreased, by one percent. Visitors from the United States, the only long-distance source of visitors on the top ten list, recorded an increase of 8.3 percent.

The Hotel Industry

According to Macau Government Tourist Office (MGTO) statistics, at the end of 2018, Macao had a total of 120 hotel premises, of which 85 were star-rated hotels and 35 were guesthouses, supplying a total of 40,109 guest rooms.

Star Rating	Number of Hotels	Number of Rooms
Five-star Luxury Hotels	11	5,795
Five-star Hotels	26	19,142
Four-star Hotels	17	7,862
Three-star Hotels	15	5,326
Three-star Apartment Hotels	1	208
Two-star Hotels	15	1,036
Sub-total	85	39,369
Guesthouse	35	740
Total		40,109

- Average room rate of three to five-star member hotels was 1,350.6 patacas in 2018, seven percent higher than in 2017, according to the Macau Hotel Association.

The total number of guests who stayed at hotel premises in Macao during 2018 was 14,106,700, representing an increase of 7.2 percent over the figure in 2017. The average year-round occupancy rate of hotel premises increased from 87.2 percent in 2017 to 91.1 percent in 2018. The average length of stay was 1.5 nights, the same as the 2017 figure.

Travel Agencies

At the end of 2018, there were 227 licensed travel agencies in Macao, four more than in 2017. A total of 1,913 people held tourist guide licences issued by the MGTO, 33 (1.8 percent) more than in 2017. The language abilities of these tourist guides spanned Cantonese, Putonghua, English, Portuguese, German, Japanese, Korean, Thai, French, Spanish, Russian, Malay, Indonesian, Hokkien and Chaozhouese.

In 2018, 8,717,900 tourists visited Macao on package tours, representing an increase of 10.1 percent from 2017. Most package tourists, totalling 6,799,100, came from mainland China, representing an increase of eight percent. The second and third-largest sources of tourists were Taiwan and South Korea, with 670,000 and 615,000 visitors recorded, respectively.

In 2018, a total of 1,578,700 Macao residents engaged with travel agent services to travel abroad. Of these, 526,700 joined outbound group tours. The most popular destination was mainland China, with 384,900 (73.1 percent) residents visiting. Hong Kong was the second most-popular package tourism destination for Macao residents, attracting 19,900 visitors or 3.8 percent of the total. Thailand ranked third, attracting 19,700 visitors or 3.7 percent of the total. A total of 1,051,900 residents engaged with travel agent services without joining guided tours, 26.7 percent more than in 2017.

Macau Government Tourist Office

The functions of the Macau Government Tourist Office (MGTO) include assisting the formulation and implementation of local tourism policies; enhancing development and diversity of the tourism industry; and monitoring tourism and related business and issuing licences, in order to realise the Government's overall tourism objectives.

The MGTO has set up representative offices in many countries and regions around the world, including the Hong Kong SAR, Japan, South Korea, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, India, the United Kingdom and Ireland, the United States of America, Russia, Australia and New Zealand.

Macao's tourism industry was also actively promoted by three overseas offices: the Tourism Section of the Office of the Macao Special Administrative Region in Beijing, Macau Economic and Cultural Office in Taiwan, and Macau Tourism Promotion and Information Center in Portugal.

In 2018, the overall performance of Macao tourism was satisfactory. To expedite developing Macao as a world tourism and leisure centre, the Government was committed to facilitating implementation of the Macao Tourism Industry Development Master Plan. It also actively took part in the "Belt and Road" initiative and development of tourist destinations in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, improved the tourism environment, and launched the 2018 Macao Year of Gastronomy, to support the mission of promoting Macao as a Creative City of Gastronomy.

Tourism Planning and Study

Along with the completion and announcement of the Macao Tourism Industry Development Master Plan in 2017, through joint efforts of various government departments and industries, the Macao Government Tourist Office (MGTO) commenced and followed up related work on 67 short-term (within one year to five years) action plans, and gradually achieved the key objectives and implemented the recommendations in the plan. The MGTO also participated in cross-departmental government planning, including planning for Coloane waterfront of Lai Chi Vun shipyards and Rua dos Navegantes, revitalisation of Nossa Senhora Village in Ka Ho and feasibility studies regarding reuse of materials, and providing advice to relevant departments to support tourism development.

Also, the MGTO started using scientific research methods to collect data, and using the data as a reference for improving the quality of MGTO's tourism services and products.

Projects that were launched during 2018 included: 2018 Macao Tourism Branding and Media Effectiveness Evaluation of Mega Events, a study of Indonesian visitor profiles, and a satisfaction survey on MGTO's services.

In addition, "Macao Tourism News plus" (<https://newsplus.macaotourism.gov.mo/>) expanded its service coverage to accept account registration by tourism industry professionals who engage in journalism and communication work.

The MGTO continued optimising "Macao Tourism Data plus" (MTD plus) (<http://dataplus.macaotourism.gov.mo>) by adding functions, including database enquiry content, multilingual versions and subscription services. Also in 2018, the platform added database enquiry content related to tourists visiting Macao during mainland China's Golden Week holidays.

Smart Tourism

The MGTO commenced the first phase of cooperation in smart tourism with Alibaba Cloud, a subsidiary of the Alibaba Group. The two parties jointly developed three projects: a tourism information interchange platform, an application for visitor insights, and a smart application for visitor flows. Moreover, the MGTO is committed to optimising tourists' travelling experiences, building a foundation for future research on tourism promotion strategies, and monitoring scenic spots and congested locations in order to divert and redirect visitor flows.

Regarding electronic tourism promotion, apart from using the promotion website, online version of "What's On" and online newsletter of "Macao Travel Talk", setting up official accounts on social media including WeChat, Weibo, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube, and utilising mobile phone apps and interactive information screens, the MGTO also launched the "Gastronomy Map" website in 2018, for the convenience of users exploring Macao with a focus on gastronomy.

Licensing and Industry Management

In 2018, the MGTO issued four licences for hotels and catering premises, and followed up regarding the applications for various kinds of licence. In 2018, the MGTO conducted 1,877 inspections of licensed premises and activities that were supervised by the MGTO, checkpoints and scenic points. Regarding combating illegal accommodations, 245 units were sealed.

Tourism Products

2018 Macao Year of Gastronomy

To promote Macao as a Creative City of Gastronomy in the UNESCO Creative Cities Network, the MGTO launched the “2018 Macao Year of Gastronomy” to support the organising of food promotion activities, which include the Macao Gastronomy Carnival, the 19th Southeast Asian Food Festival, World Cities of Gastronomy (China) Meet in Macao Activities, the 18th Macao Food Festival, and the eighth Macao Beef Cuisine Festival.

Macao Aquatic Trek

The MGTO supported Reel Fun, which was operated by Macao community organisations during the fishing moratorium, passing through the Doca da Ilha Verde to the sea area in front of Kun lam Ecumenical Centre, together with maritime tours. Currently, there are two operators of maritime tourism products, which depart from and arrive at the Inner Harbour Ferry Terminal, and head towards the sea area in front of the Zhuhai/Macao border crossing area on the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge artificial island. Three regular routes are scheduled to depart from Taipa Ferry Terminal and Coloane Pier.

Anim'Arte NAM VAN and Taipa Houses-Museum

The MGTO continued to add tourism elements to the Anim'Arte NAM VAN and Taipa Houses-Museum and support Macao community groups in organising various tourism and cultural activities, including the Fun Easter 2018 at Anim'Arte NAM VAN, the tourism culture promotion carnival, the third Macao Lantern Festival, Gudetama in Macao and Golden Week – A Trip to Macao and Travelling around the Community – A Day in Autumn, held at the Taipa Houses-Museum, facilitating the development of tourism and leisure landmarks.

Community Tourism

In 2018, the MGTO continued implementing its Community Tourism Plan, supporting relevant organisations that held activities in various parishes and along “Step Out, Macao” tour routes. It subsidised a total of 31 activities held by 18 organisations, attracting over 879,000 participants. The MGTO again organised the Tourism Awareness Campaign, promoting the “tourists first” concept and disseminating travel information to residents and the industry, by subsidising eight events held by seven organisations, which were attended by over 16,000 participants.

Cultural Tourism

The MGTO facilitated the development of cultural tourism, and effectively utilised Macao’s unique cultural elements to promote local culture. The MGTO subsidised community groups in organising festive cultural activities and Macao intangible cultural heritage activities, including birth anniversaries of gods and immortals in Chinese mythology, festival celebrations, Cantonese opera, art exhibitions and local music.

Grand Prix Museum and Wine Museum

Work on the interior design and renovation of the Grand Prix Museum was commissioned on 3 September 2018. The consultancy, supervision and quality management services commenced simultaneously. The MGTO followed up on the production of the waxwork figures of racers, and procurement of information and multimedia equipment.

The Wine Museum also closed, from 1 July 2017 until further notice.

Business Tourism

In 2018, the Government continued with the Travel Stimulus Programme, which combined elements of incentive travel, wedding travel and student travel facilitation programmes. A total of 89 cases involving 11,886 visitors were supported.

International Gastronomy Forum, Macao 2018

The International Gastronomy Forum, Macao 2018, was held on 18 and 19 January 2018. Representatives of the UNESCO Creative Cities of Gastronomy around the world assembled in Macao, to exchange views and explore ways to promote sustainable development leveraging the potential of gastronomy. The International Gastronomy Forum, Macao, is an annual event, and is one of the important initiatives of developing

Macao as a Creative City of Gastronomy in the coming four years.

The Sixth Macao International Travel (Industry) Expo

The Sixth Macao International Travel (Industry) Expo was held from 27 to 29 April 2018. It was hosted by the MGTO, supported by the National Tourism Administration and organised by the Macao Travel Agency Association. The expo venue had an area of 11,000 square metres, with 550 exhibition booths. A total of 50 countries and regions, as well as 420 enterprises and units – including 11 from the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, 14 from countries along the Maritime Silk Road, eight from Portuguese-speaking countries, and 23 tourism exhibitors from provinces and cities in mainland China – participated in the expo, which attracted about 40,120 visitors.

Global Tourism Economy Forum – Macao 2018

The Global Tourism Economy Forum – Macao 2018, a recognised partner of the World Tourism Organization of the United Nations (UNWTO), was held from 23 to 24 October 2018. It was hosted by the Secretariat for Social Affairs and Culture, and co-organised by the China Chamber of Tourism and the Global Tourism Economy Research Centre. Partner regions for this year’s forum included European Union countries, and Guangdong as the major partner province. The forum, with “Strategic Partnership in a New Era, Rising Momentum for a Shared Future” as the theme, comprehensively discussed the influence of strategic tourism cooperation of in “2018 EU-China Tourism Year”, and explored the huge potential of the Greater Bay Area.

Events and Festivals

In 2018, the MGTO continued organising various events and festivals, which included:

Parade for Celebration of Lunar New Year

Organised by the MGTO, the Parade for Celebration of the Year of the Dog included an opening performance, floats parade, performing groups parade, cultural performances, a firework show and floats exhibition. There were 15 floats in the parade, and performances by around 1,008 artistes from 25 Macao troupes plus nine troupes from mainland China, Hong Kong, Japan, Spain, France, Portugal, Germany and Russia.

The 29th Macao International Fireworks Display Contest

The ten teams participating in the 29th Macao International Fireworks Display Contest were from the Philippines, South Korea, Japan, Belgium, France, Portugal, Germany, Austria, Italy and China. The contest sessions were held on 1, 8, 21 and 25 September and 1 October, on the seafront area near the Macao Tower.

Macao Light Festival 2018

From 2 December 2018 to 20 January 2019, the MGTO held the “2018 Macao Light Festival — Time Travel in Macao” from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. every night. The show was performed along three theme routes with unique characteristics, covering five districts and 11 locations. The festival also added gastronomy elements to the routes to promote the 2018 Macao Year of Gastronomy. In addition to 3D mapping, light installations and interactive games for demonstrating Macao’s gastronomy culture, food trucks and a gastronomy night market were held for the first time, to showcase cross-domain creativity of Macao as a Creative City of Gastronomy.

The Third International Film Festival & Awards Macao

The Third International Film Festival & Awards Macao was held from 8 to 14 December 2018 with the theme “A New Avenue to the World of Films”. In addition to 54 outstanding international films and 14 local films being screened during the festival, an “Industry Hub” event was held for film industry professionals from around the world, to build an effective platform for exchanges, and create opportunities for cooperation in development, production, distribution and investment.

Tourism Marketing

Organising events in countries along the “Belt and Road” during the MSAR government delegation visits

The MGTO held various events in Myanmar to promote Macao’s diverse tourism products and festivals, including a consumer roadshow at Myanmar Plaza in Yangon City; a briefing session on tourism and trade, organised jointly with the Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute (IPIM); and a concert by Macao Orchestra held jointly with the Cultural Affairs Bureau.

Promotion events held in Cambodia included a photo exhibition about Macao’s implementation of the principle of “One country, two systems” and engagement in the “Belt and Road” initiative; and a briefing session regarding Macao’s tourism and

investment environment, held jointly with the IPIM. Plus, Macao youth music groups and cultural and creative organisations were invited to participate in promotional events focusing on tourism, culture and creativity.

Promoting Macao Year of Gastronomy

In 2018, Macao began tourism promotions with two themes – “Macao Year of Gastronomy 2018” and “Experience Macao in Your Own Style”. The MGTO participated in major tourism exhibitions in key tourist source markets; organised briefing sessions and meetings on tourism for the industry; participated in and organised various promotional events, including a large-scale food truck promotion, Macao tourism roadshows, and cooking programmes featuring Macao dishes broadcast via the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) website, to promote Macao’s culture of gastronomy.

The MGTO also cooperated with local food bloggers to introduce restaurants along the walking routes recommended by “Step Out, Macao”, to enrich the content of these walking routes, and guide tourists to various districts for gastronomic discoveries and increased consumption.

The MGTO cooperated with video game developers by developing local food cooking games for mobile phones, to promote Macao’s image and gastronomy in a fun way.

In 2018, the MGTO also organised 28 gastronomy and culinary exchange tours.

Tourism Promotion

To support the 2018 Macao Year of Gastronomy and Macao Creative City of Gastronomy, the MGTO promoted Macao food through local newspapers, produced brochures, and introduced readers to the process of Macao’s application for inclusion on the Creative City of Gastronomy list.

The MGTO made a series of souvenirs with Creative City of Gastronomy as the theme, for distribution in exhibitions and briefing sessions held in different countries and regions. It also produced “Creative City of Gastronomy” promotional videos and commercials for broadcasting through TV channels and social media platforms in Macao, Hong Kong and all over the world. The MGTO also cooperated with Air Macao to apply “Macao - Creative City of Gastronomy” as a decorative theme for aircraft.

Joint Promotions

In accordance with the Government’s policy for enhancing regional cooperation and leverage the advantages of Macao as a platform between China and Portuguese-speaking countries, the MGTO strengthened tourism cooperation with neighbouring

provinces and cities, including tourism departments of Guangdong, Fujian, Hong Kong and the China Maritime Silk Road Tourism Promotion Alliance and The Tourism Federation of Cities in Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, to jointly promote multi-destination tourism. The MGTO also cooperated with the tourism departments of Fujian to launch a series of promotional activities in Sydney and Melbourne in Australia, and invited overseas Chinese leaders, media and industry in Australia to visit Macao, Guangzhou and Xiamen. In addition, the MGTO made use of Fujian's international aviation network, and took the Maritime Silk Road and overseas Chinese cultures into consideration for developing tourism products and jointly exploring the Australian market.

The MGTO cooperated with tourism promotion organisations in Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao to hold large-scale consumer roadshows and events in Japan with the Greater Bay Area as the theme. It also promoted multi-destination tourism products in Changsha, a city along high speed rail routes in mainland China, and set up joint promotion booths in various important tourism exhibitions, to expand tourist sources. In addition, with Macao as a promotional platform, the MGTO invited mainland China provinces and cities to Macao for large-scale regional tourism activities, such as the Macao International Travel (Industry) Expo and Global Tourism Economic Forum – Macau. The MGTO also studied the tourism resources in the Greater Bay Area multi-destination tours with overseas tourism organisations, and invited the Tourism Office of Guangdong Province and the Portuguese Travel Agency Association to exchange opinions on multi-destination tourism during the Sixth Macao International Tourism (Industry) Expo.

During the year, the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture, Tam Chon Weng, and leading officials of the MGTO, the Sports Bureau, the Tourism Development Committee and the Macau Grand Prix Organising Committee paid site visits to tourism routes, scenic spots and facilities in Guangzhou and Foshan. The MGTO and members of the Tourism Development Committee then travelled to Nansha, Dongguan, Huizhou and Shenzhen for updates regarding the latest information on tourism, and to strengthen exchanges within the industry.

Information Counters

Seven information counters have been set up by the MGTO in major ports and tourist spots in Macao (the Border Gate, the Outer Harbour Ferry Terminal, Edif Ritz at the Largo do Senado, Macao International Airport and Taipa Temporary Ferry Terminal) and major ports in Hong Kong (Shun Tak Centre and Hong Kong International Airport). The eighth information counter, located inside the Macao Checkpoint Building of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge, is scheduled to commence operations in the first quarter of 2019.

In 2018, information counters in Macao and Hong Kong received 857,147 visitors.

Quality Tourism Services Accreditation Scheme

To implement the tourism policy of enhancing service quality and optimising the industry accreditation mechanism, the MGTO continued with the Quality Tourism Services Accreditation Scheme for the fifth consecutive year. In 2018, the scheme still targeted the catering industry and travel agencies, but there was consideration of extending the coverage to other industries. Since its launch, a total of 260 food and beverage merchants and 36 travel agencies have received the “Star Merchant Award” accreditation.

Regional and International Cooperation

Regarding international cooperation, the MGTO actively participated in various conferences, seminars and events organised by international tourism organisations, thereby enhancing Macao’s participation in international tourism affairs. As an associate member of the UNWTO, the MGTO delegation attended various events to express opinions and exchange views, thus strengthening Macao’s participation in international tourism organisations.

As a member of the governing body of the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA), the director of the MGTO attended the PATA Annual Summit 2018, and was elected as Secretary and Treasurer of the PATA during the UNWTO/ PATA Leaders Debate.

Regarding the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the MGTO sent its representatives – as a guest economy – to attend the 52nd Meeting of APEC’s Tourism Working Group in Papua New Guinea and the 53rd Meeting of APEC’s Tourism Working Group in Manila, the Philippines.

The MGTO also attended the WTCF Qingdao Fragrant Hills Tourism Summit 2018, and received a 2013-2017 Industry Contribution Award.

The MGTO signed a memorandum of understanding on tourism cooperation with Sao Tome and Principe.

Regarding regional cooperation, the MGTO attended the first general meeting of Tourism Federation of Cities in Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, the 2018 annual working meeting of the Joint Working Committee on Tourism to Support the Development of Macao into a World Centre of Tourism and Leisure, and the 2018 Promotion Event of Hong Kong and Macao Youth Study Tour to the Great Wall in Shanxi and Mainland Tourism Alliance Conference.

Tourism Training

Tourism and related industries employ a significant proportion of Macao’s total workforce. The Government attaches great importance to training people employed in the tourism sector; it offers training courses for various tourism-related professionals

through the Institute for Tourism Studies.

The Institute of Tourism Studies

Established in 1995, the Institute for Tourism Studies (IFT) is a public tertiary education institute affiliated to the Secretariat for Social Affairs and Culture, and is the first educational institution to be granted the TedQual Certification by the UNWTO. The IFT offers degree and professional programmes in a wide range of tourism-related disciplines, such as hotel services, tourism, cultural heritage, conventions and exhibitions, retail and marketing, leisure and entertainment, sports and recreation, cultural and creativity, and culinary arts. The institute also cooperates with renowned overseas colleges and training institutions to offer advanced management courses. In addition, the IFT has been commissioned by the Government and other institutions to conduct policy research on tourism planning and development.

In 2017, the IFT was the world's first higher education institution that passed the International Quality Review (IQR) from the UK's Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA). In 2018, the IFT was ranked by the "QS World University Rankings by Subject 2018" as the fourth best higher education institution in Asia in the field of hospitality and leisure management, and the world's 30th best higher education institution in this field.

To meet the human resources demands of the tourism sector and complement the sector's future development, IFT's diploma and degree programmes admitted 427 students and 57 exchange students during the 2017/2018 academic year. During the academic year, there were 1,600 students enrolled in the following degree programmes:

Daytime Degree Programmes (English as Medium of Instruction)	Evening Diploma and Degree Programmes (Chinese as Medium of Instruction)
(English as medium of instruction)	(Chinese as medium of instruction)
(1) Culinary Arts Management	(1) Hotel Management
(2) Tourism Business Management	(2) Tourism Event Management
(3) Heritage Management	(3) Tourism Retail and Marketing Management
(4) Hotel Management	
(5) Tourism Event Management	
(6) Tourism Retail and Marketing Management	

Regarding non-tertiary education, a total of 19,538 students took various vocational and continued education courses during the 2017/2018 academic year, with 183 of

the students enrolled in two 1.5-year Western Culinary Skills and Pastry and Bakery programmes; 1,781 students enrolled in assessment under the Macao Occupational Skills Recognition System (MORS); and 2,990 enrolled in various free training courses under the Community Education and Development Programme (CEDP). Moreover, the school joined hands with Escola Luso-Chinesa Técnico-Profissional to organise a three-year tourism programme for senior secondary students, and cooperated with several organisations to promote various courses under the Community Education and Development Programme.

Regarding international exchanges and cooperation, as at August 2018, the IFT had built connection with 106 schools, organisations and institutions in 32 countries and regions, including mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, countries in the Asia-Pacific region, Europe, America and Canada, to promote academic and cultural exchanges. During the 2017/2018 academic year, in addition to exchange programmes and international internships, there were over 84 students participating in exchange courses and international conferences in mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Portugal, the Netherlands, Austria, Thailand, the United Kingdom and Vietnam, with support from the IFT. The IFT also signed an agreement with the Jiangmen Polytechnic in Guangdong province, Universidade de Évora in Portugal, Taylor's University in Malaysia, FERRANDI Paris in France, and the French School of Culinary Arts and Hospitality Management, to widen the scope of international cooperation in the IFT's academic exchanges and student exchange programmes.

In line with Macao's development positioning regarding the establishment of "One Centre, One Platform", as outlined in the 13th National Five-year Plan, the IFT actively deepened cooperation with governments, institutions and organisations of Portuguese-speaking countries; worked hand-in-hand with the Government to participate in the establishment of the "Belt and Road" initiative, made the best use of advantages in tourism education and training, facilitated frequent cultural exchanges between teachers and students in the regions and countries along the Silk Road economic belt, and provided relevant tourism courses for them.

In line with the Memorandum of Cooperation signed by the Government and the UNWTO on 12 October 2015, the Government improved the quality of human resources and strengthened the competitiveness of tourism attractions, to achieve sustainable tourism development by establishing the Global Centre for Tourism Education and Training through the IFT.

From 2016 to 2018, the centre organised six training courses, attended by more than a hundred representatives from government agencies, tourism industry professionals and educators. The attendees came from countries along the "Belt and Road" and mainland China, including the Greater Bay Area and Macao.

In addition, the centre cooperated with the MGTO to provide training for representatives of Portuguese-speaking countries. During the year, trainees from Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau, Mozambique, Timor-Leste and Sao Tome and Principe completed three training sessions, which were held on 15 and 20 March, 29 May and 5 June, and 18 and 25 July 2018.

Tourism Resources

Boasting a brilliant and fascinating history encompassing 400 years of cultural exchanges between China and the West, Macao has a unique appeal to tourists. Its scenery is embellished with tourist treasures of all types, including picturesque dwellings constructed in traditional styles and ancient temples built during the Ming and Qing dynasties, buildings with Southern European architectural features, baroque-style churches and impressive contemporary structures.

Churches

Ruins of St Paul's

The Ruins of St Paul's, the surviving facade of St Paul's Church, is Macao's landmark. Designed by a Spanish Jesuit, construction of the original church began in 1602, and it was completed between 1637 and 1640.

St Paul's Church has been destroyed by fire three times, but fortunately its original facade remained standing. The facade has since been repaired many times, and is now generally known as the Ruins of St Paul's.

St Paul's Church is a delicate mixture of European Renaissance and Eastern architectural styles. The Museum of Sacred Art and Crypt was built at the location of the church, and houses collections paintings, sculptures and ceremonial decorations from churches and abbeys.

The Chapel of Our Lady of Guia

Originally built in 1622, the Chapel of Our Lady of Guia is the oldest building on Guia Hill. A project to enlarge it was carried out in 1637 and was completed in 1638. The Portuguese dedicated the church to the protector of seafarers. The interior preserves features that were common in 17th century Portuguese abbeys.

In 1996, a mural was discovered inside the church; this is a rarity in the churches of southern China.

St. Anthony's Church

The oldest church in Macao, St Anthony's Church, was built by the Society of Jesus between 1558 and 1560. Catholics regard St Anthony as the patron saint of marriage, so locals also call it the "Wedding Church".

St. Augustine's Church

St Augustine's Church was built in 1591, and is one of the oldest churches in Macao.

The church underwent considerable changes and assumed its present form when it was restored in 1874.

St Dominic's Church

St Dominic's Church stands on part of the former site of St Dominic's Convent. In 1587, Spanish friars built the original church, which was dedicated to Our Lady of the Rosary. It was initially built of camphor wood, and later restructured with stucco bricks and cream-coloured stones. The architecture is in Portuguese style, which was popular in the Orient in the 17th and 18th centuries.

In the main chapel stands a statue of Our Lady of Fatima, from which the Parade of the Virgin commences on 13 May each year. Believers march to Penha Hill to commemorate the Virgin Mary's appearance in Fatima, Portugal. There is a museum of sacred art inside the chapel. The collection includes religious items of artistic value, as well as scriptures and carved wooden representations of saints.

Every year, the Macao Orchestra and guest orchestras from around the world choose St Dominic's Church as a performance venue, for mainly holding vocal and religious music shows.

St Lawrence's Church

St Lawrence's is one of Macao's most famous large churches. Built in the middle of the 16th century, it has undergone several restorations, and its present construction was completed in 1846. The Portuguese, who were great mariners and navigators, believed that St Lawrence offered protection and bestowed the gift of the wind.

Hermitage of Our Lady of Hope

The Hermitage of Our Lady of Hope, also called St Lazarus's Church, is the first cathedral built after the establishment of the Macao Diocese. Before the present cathedral was built, whenever a new bishop arrived in Macao to take up office, he first had to come to St Lazarus's Church to receive his crosier before he could exert his power. Consequently, this church is especially holy among Catholics in Macao. The present structure of St Lazarus's Church remains as it was in 1885.

The Cathedral

The Cathedral was built in 1576 and was originally a simple wooden structure. Between 1844 and 1850, Catholic parishioners collected donations to rebuild the church and enlarge it to its present size. Many major events in the Church's calendar centre on the Cathedral, especially during Easter. In addition to the procession of Our Lord of Passion, a solemn parade takes place on Good Friday and special masses are held on Easter Sunday.

Fortresses

Mount Fortress

Mount Fortress is one of Macao's major tourist attractions. Work on its construction began in 1617, during the reign of Emperor Shenzong of the Ming Dynasty, and it was completed in 1626. Mount Fortress was originally used by the Church to protect the clergymen of St Paul's Church from pirate attacks. It was later turned into a military installation. In the past, the fortress stood high above the city centre of Macao, and it was regarded as an important part of its defensive fortifications. It has now become a heritage site and witness to history.

Mount Fortress occupies about 8,000 square metres. The ancient fortress tower was once an office of the Society of Jesus. It was also used as the office of the Macao Meteorological and Geophysical Bureau, and it has since been rebuilt as the Museum of Macao. At the entrance, a stone carving records the fort's military successes in defending the city against invasions.

Mong Ha Fortress

Construction of Mong Ha Fortress began in 1849. It covers an area of 650 square metres. The fortress was once a barracks for African Portuguese soldiers stationed in Macao, and was called "Black Ghost Fortress". After the former Portuguese administration withdrew its Macao garrison during the 1970s, the barracks were abandoned. In the 1980s, Mong Ha Fortress was renovated and became the Government-owned Tourism School, now known as the Institute for Tourism Studies.

St Francis Fortress

St Francis Fortress was constructed in 1622. In 1584, Spanish clergymen built St Francis Convent on the site behind the fortress; subsequently, the convent was converted into a barracks. In the 20th century, after Portuguese soldiers withdrew from Macao, the barracks became the headquarters of the security forces in charge of the Marine Police, Public Security Police and Fire Service.

Guia Fortress

Guia Fortress occupies about 800 square metres. Its construction began in 1622, and it was expanded from 1637 to 1638. It was formerly valued for military purposes, because of its position overlooking the entire peninsula. It was therefore classified as a restricted military area until 1976, when the Portuguese army left. It was then turned into a tourist spot, and its appearance has been kept intact until now.

The Chapel of Our Lady of Guia was built in the fortress in 1622. Adjacent to the hermitage is the 13-metre-high Guia Lighthouse, which was built in 1864, and is one of the oldest lighthouses in the Far East. It resumed service in 1910 and has been

guiding seamen ever since, with a visibility of 25 nautical miles from Macao.

When a typhoon approaches, typhoon signals are hoisted on the side of the lighthouse to warn nearby residents.

Barra Fortress

Barra Fortress, also called Pousada de S. Tiago Fortress or Sai Van Fortress, was built in 1622. It was an important fortress for protecting Macao's Inner Harbour. Inside the castle is the Chapel of St James. In 1981, the castle was converted into a hotel, while retaining its old characteristics.

Three Ancient Grand Temples

Macao's famous grand temples are the A-Ma Temple, Pou Chai Buddhist Monastery and Temple, and Lin Fong Temple. Many visitors are attracted to these temples, because of the different generations and backgrounds they represent, and because of the gods to whom they are dedicated.

A-Ma Temple

The A-Ma Temple is one of the most famous tourist attractions in Macao and the oldest of Macao's three ancient grand temples.

Built in the Ming Dynasty, the A-Ma Temple was originally called the "A-Ma Pavilion" or "Tin Hau (Heavenly Queen) Temple" by local people. The entire temple consists of four main structures: the Stone Hall, the Main Hall, the Hong Ren Hall and the Kun lam Pavilion. This ancient structure is distinguished by its traditional Chinese cultural characteristics.

Between Hong Ren Hall and Kun lam Pavilion, there are many stone inscriptions along the cliff path written by celebrities, statesmen, poets and scholars and engraved in different calligraphic styles.

Pou Chai Buddhist Monastery and Temple

Built in the late Ming Dynasty, Pou Chai Buddhist Monastery and Temple is also called Kun lam Tong Temple. The Buddhist monastery is built in the ancient Chinese architectural style of Hui Fei, resembling ancient Chinese temples on famous mountains.

The first large hall in the monastery is dedicated to the Three Precious Buddhas, the second to the Buddha of Longevity, and the third to Kun lam. Besides the large halls, there are also some other buildings, such as the western hall, the eastern hall, the backyard garden, and so forth. Such a large Buddhist temple complex is unusual in Macao and Hong Kong.

Many collections of paintings, items of calligraphy and antiques by famous masters are housed in the temple. They include the works of Gao Jianfu, a famous painter of the Ling Nan (Guangdong and Guangxi areas) school, and his student Guan Shanyue; Chen Gongyin, who ranked among the three great poets in Ling Nan; and the famous scholar Zhang Taiyan; as well as inscriptions by ancient celebrities such as Mi Fu, Dong Qichang, and Liu Yong. The unequal Treaty of Wanghia between the United States of America and the Qing regime of China was signed in the temple garden.

Lin Fong Temple

Built in the Ming Dynasty, Lin Fong Temple is one of the most famous temples in Macao. Formerly named the “Tin Fei Temple”, Lin Fong is a comparatively small monastery and temple dedicated to Tin Hau. Since the Qing Dynasty, it has been expanded and renovated from time to time, and has gradually been expanded to its present size.

In the middle of the 19th century, Lin Zexu, a Qing Dynasty imperial commissioner, received Portuguese officials in Lin Fong Temple during his temporary residence in Macao.

As well as the three ancient grand temples, there are many other old temples in Macao, such as the Na Tcha Temple, Hong Kung Temple, Tam Kung Temple, Bhaisajyaraja Bodhisattva Buddhist Monastery (Yeok San), Chu Lam Chi Buddhist Monastery, Sam Po Temple, Po Tai Buddhist Monastery, Lin Kai Temple, Pak Tai Temple and Tin Hau Temple.

Cybernetic Fountains

Macao has a cybernetic fountain at Nam Van Lake. The fountain comprises various spouts and lights for fountain shows. The Civic and Municipal Affairs Bureau schedules two musical fountain shows and laser fountain shows on Saturdays and Sundays. More shows are staged during special festivals, such as New Year’s Day, Chinese New Year, the Mid-Autumn Festival and Christmas.

Macau Tower

The Macau Tower Convention and Entertainment Centre, which was funded and constructed by the Sociedade de Turismo e Diversões de Macau, officially opened on 19 December 2001 as Macao’s new signature landmark. Soaring 338 metres high, the Macau Tower was the tenth-highest freestanding tower in the world and the eighth-highest in Asia when it was completed.

The main observation level is 223 metres above the ground, and consists of four floors. Two floors accommodate an indoor viewing deck, cafe, revolving restaurant and outdoor viewing deck. The indoor viewing deck provides visitors with panoramic views of up to 55 kilometres.

The multifunction convention and entertainment centre integrated with the tower

also has four floors containing exhibition and conference facilities.

A-Ma Statue

Located at the top of the Alto de Coloane, the A-Ma Statue is the tallest white marble statue of this goddess in the world. Constructed from 120 white marble boulders and completed on 28 October 1998, it is 19.99 metres in height. The face is carved from a single white marble boulder, and the statue weighs 500 tonnes.

International Sports and Cultural Events

Macao hosts a variety of international sports and cultural events throughout the year. These play an important role in promoting Macao, enhancing its international profile and attracting tourists and visitors.

Macao Grand Prix

The Macao Grand Prix began in 1954, and was originally an amateur sports event for Macao motor racing fans. Today, it has become a major event for the world's leading racing teams.

Every year in late November, world-class drivers and thousands of visitors flock to Macao to join the world's only street track event that includes both a formula touring car race and a motorcycle race.

The Formula Three race of the Macao Grand Prix is the premier event, drawing national championship racers from throughout the world to compete for the honour of first prize. Grand Prix street track riders and motorcycle superstars such as Ayrton Senna, Michael Schumacher, David Coulthard, Jenson Button, Kevin Schwantz, Carl Fogarty, Didier de Radigues and Ron Haslam have competed at the Guia Circuit.

Macao International Marathon

The Macao International Marathon seeks to foster sports development, enhance international friendship and promote Macao's sports and tourism industry to the world.

The Macao International Marathon is held every December and is the largest track-and-field event in Macao. The route circles the Macao peninsula and crosses to Taipa and Coloane islands, and has a total length of 42.195 kilometres. Marathon competitors come from all over the world, and include athletes from Macao and Hong Kong as well as famous international track-and-field stars.

Macao International Fireworks Display Contest

The Macao International Fireworks Display Contest is recognised throughout the world. It attracts numerous prominent fireworks companies and is attended each year

by large numbers of tourists and Macao residents. The contest provides an opportunity for Macao to showcase its tourism industry and reputation.

The first Macao International Fireworks Display Contest was held in 1989, and was contested by just five teams. The contest has gradually become a major annual tourism event, attracting high standard fireworks companies from countries and regions such as mainland China, the Philippines, Thailand, Taiwan, Japan, South Korea, Australia, the United Kingdom, Switzerland, France, Germany, Portugal and Spain. The Macao International Fireworks Display Contest is usually held between September and October each year, on the seafront near the Macau Tower.

Other major sports events and cultural activities held in Macao include the FIVB World Grand Prix, the Macao Open (Golf Tournament), the annual Macao International Dragon Boat Races, the Macao Arts Festival from March to May, the Macao International Music Festival in October, and Macau Food Festival.

Culinary Delights

Since Chinese and Western cultures coexist in Macao, it offers food that blends culinary influences from around the world. Different cuisines can be sampled throughout the area, and tourists may taste the regional dishes of Beijing, Shanghai, Sichuan, Guangdong and Taiwan to their heart's content. They can also enjoy authentic cuisines from Portugal, Italy, France, Japan, India, Vietnam, South Korea, Brazil and Thailand.

Regarded as one of the world's unique cuisines, Macanese cuisine is actually a distillation of the culinary arts of Portugal, Africa, India, Malaysia and mainland China's Guangdong Province. Bacalao balls, African chicken, spicy prawns, Portuguese chicken, stewed duck with herbs, stewed knuckle with red beans, stuffed crab shells, and grilled sardines are celebrated delicacies in Macao.

Macao specialties also include almond cakes, egg rolls, crackers, peanut candy, chicken-shaped pastries, dried preserved fruits and various dried meats, which are tourists' favourites. Clusters of pastry houses and snack shops are found along Almeida Ribeiro Avenue to the Auto Novo Alley, Sao Paulo Road and around the old district on Taipa island.



PHANTOM OF LOTUS

Sacred Lotus (*Nelumbo nucifera*) was selected as the theme flower of the 18th Macao Lotus Flower Festival. It is a small-to-medium sized lotus species, with bowl-shaped flowers that have double rows of petals and glow with splendid purple.

The main exhibition, at the Taipa Houses-Museum, was themed "Phantom of Lotus". The site was sprayed with mists of water droplets to create an atmosphere of a lotus water town. Spotlights were also used to show the elegance of lotus flowers by day and night. The lotus pond wetland at the Taipa Houses-Museum has an area of 69,000 square metres. Admirers could walk along the 1,100-metre-long pond-side trail to enjoy the enchanting views.



