

5

TOURISM



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 Tourism 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

According to the Statistics and Census Service, the total number of tourists visiting Macao in 2023 was 28,213,003, representing an increase of 394.9 percent from the 2022 figure. The number of overnight visitors during the year totalled 14,227,229, representing an increase of 472.7 percent from the previous year, and accounting for 50.4 percent of visitors to Macao. The average length of stay of overnight visitors was 2.3 days, while the average length of stay of all visitors was 1.3 days.

Major Markets

In 2023, mainland China continued to be the largest market for visitors to Macao with 19,049,147 arrivals, accounting for 67.5 percent of the total number of visitors. Among the mainland China visitors, 10,634,155 (accounting for 55.8 percent of visitors from mainland China to Macao) 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; compared with 2022, the numbers of visitors from Hong Kong increased by 1,301.5 percent to 7,195,801, and those from Taiwan increased by 655.5 percent to 508,489.

The Hotel Industry

According to Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO) statistics, at the end of 2023, Macao had a total of 149 hotel premises, of which 104 were hotels and apartment hotels, accounting for 69.8 percent of the total hotel premises, while 45 were budget accommodations, accounting for 30.2 percent of the total hotel premises.

Hotel Accommodation	Number of Hotels	Number of Rooms
Hotels and Apartment Hotels	104	47,230
Five-star Luxury Hotels	12	7,689
Five-star Hotels	28	21,095
Four-star Hotels	18	8,930
Four-star Apartment Hotels	2	657

(Cont.)

Hotel Accommodation	Number of Hotels	Number of Rooms
Three-star Hotels	17	6,223
Three-star Apartment Hotels	2	638
Two-star Hotels	25	1,998
Budget Accommodations	45	1,175
Total	149	48,405

In terms of the number of rooms, there were 48,405 rooms in Macao, 47,230 of which were hotel or apartment hotel rooms, accounting for 97.6 percent of the total number of rooms; 28,784 rooms were provided by hotels with five stars or above (including five-star and five-star luxury hotels), accounting for over 60 percent of the total; 1,175 rooms were in budget accommodation, accounting for 2.4 percent of the total.

The total number of guests who stayed in hotels in Macao during 2023 was 13,572,800, representing an increase of 165.4 percent from the figure in 2022. The average year-round occupancy rate of hotels increased by 43.1 percentage points to 81.5 percent. The average length of stay was 1.7 nights.

According to statistics from the Macao Hotel Association, the average room rate for three- to five-star Macao member hotels in 2023 was 1,341 patacas, representing an increase of 79.8 percent from 2022.

Travel Agencies

At the end of 2023, there were 190 licensed travel agencies in Macao, two more than the total of 188 in 2022. A total of 1,761 people held tourist guide licences issued by the MGTO, 25 (1.4 percent) more than in 2022. The language abilities of these tourist guides spanned Cantonese, Putonghua, English, Portuguese, Indonesian, German, Japanese, Korean, Thai, French, Russian, Malay, Hokkien and Chaozhouese.

In 2023, a total of 418,500 Macao residents engaged with travel agent services to travel abroad, 796.3 percent more than in 2022.

Macau Government Tourism Office

The functions of the Macau Government Tourism Office (MGTO) include assisting the formulation and implementation of local tourism policies; enhancing development and diversity of the tourism industry; monitoring tourism and related businesses and issuing licences; formulating tourism crisis emergency responses; managing the Travel Alert System; and realising the Government's overall tourism objectives. In 2023, MGTO established marketing representative offices in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, South Korea and Thailand.

Tourism Planning and Study

MGTO announced the review report on the first Macao Tourism Industry Development Master Plan in November 2021. There were 91 action plans established after the review and reform, including 77 interim plans (zero to five years) and 14 long-term plans (six years or more). The proposals and action plans will strengthen the interaction between the tourism industry and other associated industries, enriching Macao as a world tourism and leisure centre.

To implement various action plans, MGTO regularly collects information on the work progress of various departments. As of the end of 2022, 76 of the 77 interim plans had been launched and followed up on, with targets attained for 66 of these, representing an achievement rate of 86 percent, four percentage points more than in 2021.

In 2022, MGTO commissioned the China Tourism Research Institute (Data Centre for the Ministry of Culture and Tourism) to investigate the development of Macao's educational tourism market. The institute produced a report; and in 2023 MGTO commenced work as recommended in the report's action plan.

Smart Tourism

Aiming to enhance visitors' experiences with innovative technologies, MGTO set up "Tourism + Technology" booths at the Macao International Travel (Industry) Expo and a number of community events in Macao in 2023. These featured VR experiences recreating the first Grand Prix, and AI interactive games on intangible heritage, to introduce practical applications of innovative technologies in tourism to residents and visitors.

In September 2023, MGTO launched a new website, www.dst.gov.mo, to replace the original one. In addition to retaining the original content, the new website further integrates other related services and information, such as major featured websites, Macao Tourism News+, Macao Tourism Data+, social media, and other services and information pages, to provide accessible information for the industry, residents and the media.

Tourism Promotion

In 2023, MGTO supported the MSAR Government's "1+4" appropriate diversification development policy to strengthen the "Tourism +" integration. With the full opening of Macao's borders to the world, MGTO launched promotional campaigns in various source markets. Through the launch of air, sea and land transport and hotel offers, together with a series of local and overseas promotions and various visitor attraction initiatives, the number of visitors entering Macao has steadily increased.

In 2023, through "My Treat for You, See You in Macao", MGTO continued offering flight ticket and hotel accommodation discounts to the mainland China market, while providing buy-one-get-one-free flight tickets and half-price hotel coupons to the international and Taiwan markets, to attract travellers to Macao, stimulate tourism spending and extend visitors' stays in Macao. A total of 112,987 bookings were made as a result of the flight ticket offers, generating a total order value of 169 million patacas, representing a leverage ratio of 1.2.

Regarding hotel promotions, the total number of hotel bookings for the year approached 857,000, with a total order value of 1.28 billion yuan, representing an overall leverage ratio of 5.9 for the promotions. In particular, the flight ticket offers for mainland China attracted a total of 71,500 bookings; the buy-one-get-one-free offer for international flights generated a total of approximately 37,300 bookings; and the half-price coupons for hotels generated stays totalling more than 1,250,000 nights.

MGTO also seeks to attract mainland China, Taiwan and international tourists to visit Macao in group tours through the “My Treat for You, Joyful Macao Tour” Subsidy Scheme. From 2 February 2023 to 31 December 2023, 20,271 group tour applications were received, involving about 544,000 passengers. The number of mainland China tours totalled 18,813, involving 517,206 passengers, while the number of tours from markets other than mainland China totalled 1,458, involving 27,270 passengers.

From 13 January 2023 to 30 June 2023, the “Macao Treat” buy-one-get-one-free bus ticket/boat ticket promotion was implemented, to attract Hong Kong residents as well as Taiwanese and international tourists visiting Hong Kong to visit Macao, generating a total of approximately 295,000 bookings for bus and boat tickets.

To tap into visitor sources for direct flights to Macao, MGTO and airlines have launched international flight ticket promotions, to attract visitors to Macao with the convenience of direct flights and special offers. During 2023, this resulted in sales of over 60,000 tickets.

Tourism Promotion Strategy

In 2023, MGTO continued launching a series of local and overseas promotions and various tourist attraction campaigns that encompassed comprehensive online and offline promotions, to diversify international visitor sources. In addition, MGTO incorporated elements of culture and creativity, sports, conventions and exhibitions, and gastronomy into various promotional activities, showcasing Macao’s World Heritage and Creative City of Gastronomy positions in its tourism brand, and promoting the city’s festivals and events, gastronomy and community tourism products to international audiences.

Diversified “Tourism +” Promotions at Home and Abroad

Various overseas promotions were organised by MGTO in 2023. In particular, the “Experience Macao Unlimited – Macao Promotion in Lisbon” served as the kick-off event for the MSAR Government’s efforts to revive the promotion of Macao tourism in Europe, featuring new elements of Macao tourism through exhibitions, projection mapping performances, promotional seminars and industry study tours. Roadshows and industry promotional seminars were also organised in Thailand, South Korea and Malaysia, followed by participation in major international travel expos in overseas markets, and the organisation of study tours for international tourism counterparts and the media, thereby expanding international visitor source markets.

In addition, MGTO organised “Macao Week” mega promotion events in Qingdao, Shandong; Tianjin; and Xiamen, Fujian. The three roadshows attracted a total of nearly three million visitors,

with an overall transaction amount of approximately 178 million patacas, and a total of 1.97 billion views across all promotional channels. As an extension of the “Experience Macao·Unlimited” Greater Bay Area Roadshow held in Zhuhai and Zhongshan in 2022, a roadshow featured a caravan travelling to Guangzhou, Jiangmen, Huizhou, Shenzhen, Dongguan, Foshan and Zhaoqing in the first half of 2023, which attracted more than 2,410,000 visitors to the seven stops, driving a total transaction value of approximately 53.622 million patacas and more than 840 million views across publicity channels of the 2023 caravan roadshow.

Mainstream Media, Travel Influencers and Social Media Promotions

In collaboration with international mainstream media, major e-commerce platforms, celebrities and influencers with wide reach and influence, a total of 290 travel and food experts from Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Korea, Japan, India, the Middle East, Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States, mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan were invited to Macao in 2023, to promote Macao’s brand new “Tourism +” element.

MGTO’s official Kakao Talk account was launched in the Korean market in 2023, and its Instagram, Facebook and X (formerly known as Twitter) accounts were re-launched for the Korean and Japanese markets. Globally, MGTO has 28 social media accounts spanning WeChat, Weibo, Douyin, Xiaohongshu, Facebook, IG, Youtube, Tiktok, Twitter, Kakao and Line, with a total of more than 6.34 million followers.

Publicity on the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and Guangdong-Macao Intensive Cooperation Zone in Hengqin

In 2023, the Tourism Marketing Organization of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao rolled out 10 new Greater Bay Area itineraries and launched a series of promotional programmes in mainland China and overseas, including the first post-pandemic overseas tourism promotion of the Greater Bay Area in Bangkok, Thailand, and the filming of a travel programme in the three places by a Thai TV station. The Tourism Alliance of Zhongshan, Zhuhai and Macao invited renowned travel influencers from mainland China and tourism representatives in Hunan, Fujian and Jiangsu to visit Zhongshan, Zhuhai and Macao, followed by promotional seminars for the tourism alliance of Zhongshan, Zhuhai and Macao in Changsha and Quanzhou.

Organised by MGTO, the “Experience Macao Unlimited” Greater Bay Area Roadshow invited the tourism departments of Guangdong-Macao Intensive Cooperation Zone in Hengqin, Zhongshan and Zhuhai to participate in the event. In addition, the Economic Development Bureau of the Guangdong-Macao Intensive Cooperation Zone was invited to participate in the Macao tourism seminar, in order to promote “multi-destination” itineraries and facilitate tours combining these destinations by visitors from different regions.

Ongoing promotion of Macao·Creative City of Gastronomy

To promote traditional and distinctive eateries in Macao on social media, in 2023 MGTO launched the “Eat in Macao for 100 yuan “ series, a feature compiling late-night snacks, and a guide to local

cuisine to tie in with festivals and celebrations.

In conjunction with Macao's integrated leisure and tourism enterprises, MGTO organised gastronomic promotions during "Macao Week" events in Qingdao, Tianjin and Xiamen.

A promotional film, *Experience Macao 2023*, was produced to highlight Macao's image as a Creative City of Gastronomy, together with the *Fun in the Northern District* promotional film, which explores Macao's local flavours and tourist attractions in the Northern District.

In 2023, MGTO cooperated with Macau Broadcasting Television Limited to launch a TV programme, "Experience the Metropolitan Charm of Macao", featuring local delicacies and special restaurants in the central, northern and island districts of Macao; and worked with newspapers and magazines to publicise promotional videos on "Tourism +".

Macao the Ultimate Guide and *A Handbook of Gastronomy in Zhongshan, Zhuhai and Macao* have been published by MGTO to introduce Macao local cuisine, with the content of *Macao the Ultimate Guide* updated in 2023. The regularly updated Dining Out website incorporates video clips related to food, cooking and culinary culture.

Organised by MGTO, the 11th Macao International Travel (Industry) Expo brought together 23 "Creative Cities of Gastronomy" that are in UNESCO's Creative Cities Network from all over the world including Macao, to strengthen the "Tourism + Gastronomy" integration.

In 2023, the "Gastronomic culture promotion" subsidy programme supported seven events, which attracted more than 750,000 participants and 310 directly-engaged merchants.

Through public-private partnership, MGTO supported the tourism sector in organising two award presentation ceremonies for world-renowned food ranking and five special culinary and cultural promotions, with the five culinary promotions attracting more than 64,000 visitors. It also supported the organisation of four events, including the "Macao International Cultural and Culinary Festival (Hengqin) cum the 4th Guangdong-Macao Cultural and Culinary Tour", which attracted over 280,000 participants.

Licensing and Industry Management

In 2023, MGTO issued eight licences for hotels and 38 licences for catering premises, and followed up regarding applications for various licences. In 2023, MGTO conducted 2,858 inspections of licensed premises and activities under its supervision, 1,278 inspections of border crossing checkpoints and tourist attractions, and 190 random inspections of inbound tours from mainland China. Regarding combating illegal accommodation, 106 units were closed to visitors in 2023.

With the resumption of group tours between mainland China and Macao and the increase in the number of inbound tourists, MGTO has continued to inspect tourist attractions, border checkpoints and venues that are under its supervision. In addition, MGTO has strengthened joint inspections with related authorities, and continued closely liaising with members of the tourism industry, to ensure the quality of tourism services.

In addition, MGTO introduced a number of new permit-related online services in 2023. Permit holders can also log in to the MGTO website through their "Macao One" account to apply for the related services, thus enhancing the convenience of public services.

Specific Financial Support Programme

The Specific Financial Support Programme was launched in 2023, to provide funding support for organisations to develop diverse tourism activities, and support the organisation of “Tourism Plus” projects. Through the Community Economic Tourism Development, Food and Culture Promotion and Maritime Tourism schemes, local organisations were encouraged and subsidised to organise diverse tourism activities and projects that capitalised on tourism resources including community, culture, history, branded tourism events, food and maritime, to drive development of the tourism economy. As of 31 December 2023, the three financial support schemes have supported a total of 39 events, attracting over 2,190,000 participants and benefitting over 3,860 merchants.

Macao Tourism Mascot “Mak Mak”

After the “Mak and Greet” project was launched on 1 May 2023, the tourism mascot “Mak Mak” participated in various tourism promotions, and a social media page was set up for “Mak Mak”. In 2023, “Mak Mak” participated in 73 tourism promotions, interacting with more than 220,000 visitors.

Macao Grand Prix Museum

As an ongoing effort to enrich the Macao Grand Prix Museum exhibition and to tie in with the 70th Anniversary of Macao Grand Prix, in 2023 the museum collaborated with Madame Tussauds Hong Kong to install eight new wax figures of renowned drivers, a new Grand Prix motorcycle simulator and a new “VR 360°MGP Race Highlights” exhibition. In addition, a number of activities were organised to disseminate and pass on the culture of Macao Grand Prix.

In 2023, the museum received a total of 132,331 visitors, including 6,951 participants of 282 tours.

Business Tourism

The 11th Macao International Travel (Industry) Expo

Hosted by the MGTO, supported by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the People’s Republic of China and organised by the Macao Travel Agency Association, the 11th Macao International Travel (Industry) Expo was held from 30 June 2023 to 2 July 2023 with the theme “MITE Connects the World”, bringing together industry players from around the world to network and explore a wide range of business opportunities, thus fully leveraging its role as a platform for international professional travel trade exhibitions and conventions. With a total floor area of 23,000 square metres, the first “1+4” pavilions were set up at the Expo to help foster the development of key industries. The event featured 886 booths, 512 exhibitors and 465 invited buyers, reaching 44 contract signings and attracting 37,000 visitors.

Travel Stimulus Programme

The Travel Stimulus Programme – which combines elements of incentive travel, student travel,

wedding travel and sports travel – was renewed, and handled a cumulative total of 23 cases, benefiting 20,921 travellers.

Events and Festivals

In 2023, various branded events and festivals were organised to support economic development in Macao.

Lunar New Year Celebration 2023

MGTO organised the Lunar New Year Celebration 2023 on 22 January and 23 January (the first and second days of the Lunar New Year), with 18 performances in various districts of Macao. Performing teams from Zhaoqing and Hong Kong were invited to perform at designated locations, attracting about 14,000 participants.

2023 Parade of Floats Plus Exhibitions Celebrating the Year of the Rabbit

Presented by MGTO in collaboration with government departments, local organisations and six major integrated leisure and tourism enterprises, two parades of floats and two exhibitions of the parade floats were held from 24 January 2023 to 12 February 2023, featuring 18 floats and more than 1,000 performers from mainland China, Hong Kong and the local community, which gave spectacular performances for audiences. Two exhibitions were held, at the Macao Science Center Seaside and Tap Seac Square. The parades and exhibitions attracted more than 130,000 spectators.

Lunar New Year 2023 Fireworks Displays

MGTO held the Lunar New Year fireworks displays on 24 January, 28 January and 5 February 2023 at the waterfront opposite the Macau Tower, with each of the three displays lasting 15 minutes, to bring evening entertainment to tourists and citizens on the third day of the Lunar New Year, the Common Man’s Birthday and the Lantern Festival, and brighten the festive spirit.

The 31st Macao International Fireworks Display Contest

The International Fireworks Display Contest was held on 11 September, 16 September, 23 September, 1 October (National Day) and 11 October 2023. Ten fireworks teams – from Australia, Switzerland, Austria, Russia, the Philippines, Japan, China, Portugal, the United Kingdom, and Germany – gave 10 spectacular fireworks displays of audiovisual delight to residents and visitors, attracting some 700,000 spectators.

“World Tourism Day” Tray Race

To celebrate the annual World Tourism Day on 27 September, the MGTO organised the “Macao Courtesy” themed tray race at the Ruins of St. Paul’s. About 160 participants from 24 hotels and restaurants in Macao took part in the competition.

The Second Crunch and Munch Fair in Macao - Fiesta for Five

Jointly organised by the MGTO and community organisations in Macao, the Second Crunch and Munch Fair in Macao – Fiesta for Five was co-organised by six major integrated leisure and resort enterprises from 19 October 2023 to 29 October 2023, introducing to visitors the culinary and tourism elements of the five Creative Cities of Gastronomy in mainland China. The 107 booths set up for the event attracted some 130,000 visitors.

Light Up Macao 2023

The MGTO joined hands with six integrated tourism and leisure enterprises to hold “Light Up Macao 2023” with the theme “The Dazzling Wonderland” from 2 December 2023 to 25 February 2024, presenting a diverse array of projection mapping performances, light installations, interactive installations and various events spanning communities on the Macao peninsula to Taipa and Coloane, in a total of 34 locations across seven different districts, with one flagship event held in each district to structure the overall event layout.

In addition, an open call for 3D projection mapping was conducted for “Wuhan - Creative Cities Network”, and “Macao - Creative City of Gastronomy” of UNESCO, and the team producing “Seoul - UNESCO City of Design” was invited to participate in the design and production of the projection mapping at the Macao Science Center. As of 31 December 2023, the event had attracted more than 100,000 visitors.

Quality Tourism Services Accreditation Scheme

In 2023, the assessment of the Quality Tourism Services Accreditation Scheme accreditation resumed. Among the accredited “Star Merchants”, there were 256 food and beverage businesses and 40 travel agencies, of which 16 were selected for the “Special Theme Award”, four for the “Star Gold Award” and four for the “Star Award for Excellence in Tourism Services”. A total of 35 merchants from the retail sector have been selected to participate in the Certified Shop Scheme.

Regional and International Cooperation

Regarding international cooperation, the MGTO continued to actively participate in various online and offline conferences, seminars and events organised by international tourism organisations in 2023, thereby enhancing Macao’s participation and popularity in international tourism-related activities.

For example, the MGTO attended events including:

- The 35th Joint Meeting of the Regional Commission for East Asia and the Pacific and the Commission for South Asia cum Conference on International Code for the Protection of Tourists, organised by UN Tourism (formerly known as UNWTO) in June;
- The 25th session of the UN Tourism General Assembly, in October; and
- UN Tourism Workshop on Programme of Work for Asia and the Pacific, in December.

Also, as a member city of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN), the MGTO organised the City of Gastronomy Focal Point Meeting (in July), and participated in the UCCN Online Meeting, and Creative City of Gastronomy Webinars (in February, April, June, August, October and December 2023).

The MGTO also attended:

- The PATA Working Group Online Meeting (in May);
- The PATA Annual Summit (online) 2023 (in June);
- The PATA Executive Board Meeting (in October);
- The PATA Executive Committee Meeting (in October); and
- The PATA Gold Awards 2023 sponsored by the MGTO (in October).

Regarding Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the MGTO participated in:

- The 61st APEC Tourism Working Group Meeting (in April); and
- The 62nd APEC Tourism Working Group Meeting (in August).

The MGTO also attended:

- The World Tourism Cities Federation Changsha Fragrant Hills Tourism Summit 2023 (in May);
- The World Conference on Tourism Cooperation and Development 2023 (in September);
- The WTA Xianghu Dialogue 2023 (in November);
- The Global Association of the Exhibition Industry (UFI) Asia-Pacific Conference 2023 (in March); and
- The 48th Portuguese Association of Travel and Tourism Agencies (APAVT) National Congress (in November).

Regarding regional cooperation, the MGTO:

- Participated in the 2022 World Centre of Tourism and Leisure Joint Working Committee Annual Meeting (in March) online;
- Attended the Shenzhen-Macao Working Group Meeting (in May);
- Organised the meeting for fostering implementation of the “Culture and Tourism Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area” 2023 (in November);
- Signed the Agreement on Expanding Cultural Exchange and Cooperation between Fujian and Macao with the Fujian Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism (in September);
- Signed the Memorandum of Understanding on Cultural and Tourism Exchanges and Cooperation between the Beijing Municipal Bureau of Culture and Tourism, the Cultural Affairs Bureau of the MSAR Government and the Macao Government Tourism Office (in

December); and

- Signed the Tourism Cooperation Framework Agreement between Zhuhai Culture, Radio, Television, Tourism and Sports Bureau and the Macao Government Tourism Office (in December).

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 that provides degree and professional training programmes in tourism, and is the world's first tertiary educational institution to be granted TedQual Certification by the UNWTO.

The IFT offers bachelor degree, master's degree and doctoral degree education and continued and international certificate programmes, covering hotel services, tourism, culture and heritage, conventions and exhibitions, retail and marketing, smart technologies, culinary arts, food and beverage, leisure and entertainment, sports and recreation, cultural and creativity, and languages. 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 to pass the International Quality Review (IQR) by the UK's Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (UKQAA). In 2022, the IFT passed the renewal of the IQR accreditation, making it world's first higher education institution to receive this renewed accreditation. The IFT was ranked by QS World University Rankings by Subject 2023 as the best higher education institution in Asia and Macao in the field of hospitality and leisure management, and the 10th best higher education institution in the world in this field.

The Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area proposes building a tourism education and training base for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, by capitalising on Macao's strengths in tourism education and training, and its tourism development experience. In December 2019, the Macao Institute for Tourism Studies (IFT) was licensed by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism as a trustee unit of the Tourism Education and Training Base for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, to train talent.

The IFT has partnered with top Swiss institutions to offer "3+1 Dual Bachelor Degree" and Certificate Programmes, and jointly launched "1+1 Dual Master's Degree Programme" with the University of Queensland, Australia, to nurture global management talents for the tourism industry.

The Legal Regime of Macao University of Tourism (Law No. 4/2024) and the Charter of the Macao University of Tourism (By-Law No. 11/2024) came into force on 1 April 2024, and the IFT was renamed as the Macao University of Tourism.

Tertiary Education

The IFT offers bachelor degree, master's degree and doctoral degree programmes to serve the development of tourism and meet Macao's demands for management talents.

The programmes in place during the 2022/2023 academic year were as follows:

IFT's diploma and degree programmes admitted 503 undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral students during the 2022/2023 academic year, with a total of 1,726 registered students (including 19 exchange students in the first semester) enrolled in the following degree programmes at the beginning of the academic year:

Degree Programmes	Diploma and Degree Programmes
(Taught in daytime, English as medium of instruction)	(Taught in the evening, Chinese as medium of instruction)
(1) Culinary Arts Management	(1) Hotel Management
(2) Heritage Management/ Cultural and Heritage Management	(2) Tourism Event Management
(3) Hotel Management	(3) Tourism Retail and Marketing Management
(4) Tourism Business Management	
(5) Tourism Event Management	
(6) Tourism Retail and Marketing Management	
Postgraduate Diploma Programme (Taught in the evening, English as medium of instruction)	Master's Degree Programmes (Taught in the evening, English as medium of instruction)
(1) Hospitality Management (2) Smart Technologies in Hospitality and Tourism	(1) Hospitality and Tourism Management (2) International Hospitality Management (3) International Tourism Management (4) International Food and Beverage Management (5) International Gastronomy Management (6) Smart Technologies in Hospitality and Tourism
Doctor of Philosophy Programme (English as medium of instruction)	
Hospitality and Tourism Management	

Non-tertiary Education

In the 2022/2023 academic year, about 15,000 students received training and assessments by the School of Continuing Education of the Macao Institute for Tourism Studies (IFT). On top of the existing programmes, the School of Continuing Education offered 220 new courses in the 2022/2023 academic year. The school regularly collaborates with public and private sector organisations in Macao to tailor-make a variety of vocational training programmes.

The School of Continuing Education of the IFT is also one of the course providers under the Continuing Education Programme launched by the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau. In total, 227 courses were approved for the 2022/2023 academic year, benefiting about 1,818 students.

Regarding international exchanges and cooperation, as at August 2023, the IFT had built connections with 179 schools, institutions and organisations (142 of which are non-local) in 32 countries and regions, including China (Macao, mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan Region), countries in the Asia-Pacific region, Europe, America and Canada, to actively promote academic and cultural exchanges.

The IFT has actively expanded its collaboration with mainland China and overseas partners. In the 2022/2023 academic year, newly established non-local partners included the Education Department of Fujian Province, Fujian Occupational Skills Authentication Guidance Center, the Livelihood Affairs Bureau of Guangdong-Macao Intensive Cooperation Zone in Hengqin, Sheffield Hallam University in the United Kingdom, and the United Chinese School Committees' Association of Malaysia.

In the 2022/2023 academic year, a total of 32 undergraduate students participated in internships and exchanges outside Macao, with 18 of the students participating in online exchange programmes in Beijing, Shanghai, Shenzhen and other cities as well as in Finnish universities; and 45 students took part in seven exchange programmes under the Ten Thousand People's Scheme.

A new articulation agreement was signed with two leading Swiss institutions, under which students will be awarded a Bachelor's degree from both the Swiss institutions and the IFT (dual degree) upon completion of their course requirements. Four students participated in this programme at Les Roches International School of Hotel Management (Spain campus) in the 2022/2023 academic year.

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 Iam Pavilion. This ancient structure

is distinguished by its traditional Chinese cultural characteristics.

Between Hong Ren Hall and Kun Iam 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 Iam 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 Iam. 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 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.

Macau Grand Prix

The Macau 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 Macau 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 Women's Volleyball Nations' League, 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.



70th Anniversary of Macau Grand Prix



The 70th Macau Grand Prix is held over six days in November. Several world-class races are held on the Guia Circuit, bringing together top motorsport elites from around the world, and attracting an impressive attendance of 145,000 spectators. During the event, the lively spectators' area is packed. To coincide with the 70th anniversary of Macau Grand Prix, a parade of 54 vintage cars is organised to entertain fans.

