

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 2017 was 32,610,506, representing an increase of 5.4 percent over the 2016 figure. The number of overnight visitors during the year totalled 17,254,838, representing an increase of 9.9 percent, and accounting for 52.9 percent of visitors to Macao. The average length of stay of overnight visitors remained at 2.1 days, while the overall figure was 1.2 days. In 2017, the 10 major source markets of visitors were:

Country/Region	No. of Visitors	Percentage (%)
Mainland China	22,196,203	68.1%
Hong Kong	6,165,129	18.9%
Taiwan	1,060,107	3.3%
South Korea	874,253	2.7%
Japan	328,990	1.0%
Philippines	307,139	0.9%
Malaysia	218,301	0.7%
Thailand	198,222	0.6%
Indonesia	197,139	0.6%
United States of America	186,378	0.6%

In 2017, the total number of tourists visiting Macao from Greater China (mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan) was 29,421,439, representing an increase of 5.3 percent over 2016 and comprising 90.2 percent of the total number of tourists; and the number of international tourists was 3,189,067, representing an increase of 6.2 percent over 2016 and comprising 9.8 percent of the total. Mainland China continued to be the largest market for visitors to Macao, with a total of 22,196,203 mainland China visitors, accounting for 68.1 percent of the total number of visitors to Macao, and 8.5 percent higher than in 2016. The visitors from mainland China mainly came from Guangdong province (accounting for 41.6 percent of the tourists from mainland China), Hunan province (4.5 percent) and Fujian province (3.8 percent). A total of 10,615,471 visitors travelled to Macao under the Facilitated Individual Travel (FIT) scheme, 10.8 percent more than in 2016. Hong Kong and Taiwan were the second and third largest markets for visitors to Macao, respectively; the number of visitors from Hong Kong decreased by four percent, while the number from Taiwan decreased by 1.3 percent, compared with 2016.

Regarding the international market, South Korea remained at the top of the list of sources of international visitors, with a year-on-year increase of 32 percent to 874,253 in 2017. The Asia market was stable. The number of visitors from Japan increased by 9.4 percent; and numbers from Indonesia and the Philippine increased by eight percent and seven percent, respectively. Visitor numbers from the United States, the only long-distance source of visitors on the top-ten list, decreased by 2.4 percent from 2016. The best-performing long-distance markets for tourists were Brazil, Russia and Portugal, with 10.4 percent, 7.5 percent and 4.1 percent more visitors than in 2016, respectively.

The Hotel Industry

According to Macao Government Tourist Office (MGTO) statistics, at the end of 2017, Macao had a total of 116 hotel premises, of which 81 were star-rated hotels and 35 were guesthouses, supplying a total of 37,901 guest rooms.

Star Rating	Number of Hotels	Number of Rooms
Five-star Luxury Hotels	10	5,608
Five-star Hotels	24	17,010
Four-star Hotels	17	7,869
Three-star Hotels	15	5,470
Three-star Apartment Hotels	1	208
Two-star Hotels	14	995
Sub-total	81	37,160
Guesthouse	35	741
Total		37,901

- Average room rate of three to five-star member hotels was 1,282.2 patacas in 2017 (slightly lower, by 0.2 percent, than in 2016), according to the Macao Hotel Association.

The total number of guests who stayed at hotel premises in Macao during 2017 was 13,154,900, representing an increase of 9.6 percent over the figure in 2016. The average year-round occupancy rate of hotel premises increased from 83.3 percent in 2016 to 86.9 percent in 2017. The average length of stay was 1.5 nights, up by 0.1 nights compared with the 2016 figure.

Travel Agencies

At the end of 2017, there were 223 licensed travel agencies in Macao, two more than in 2016. A total of 1,880 people held tourist guide licences issued by the MGTO, 20 (one percent) less than in 2016. The language abilities of these tourist guides spanned Cantonese, Putonghua, English, Portuguese, German, Japanese, Korean, Thai, French, Spanish, Russian, Indonesian, Hokkien and Chaozhouese.

In 2017, 7,928,700 tourists visited Macao on package tours, representing an increase of 12.6 percent from 2016. Most package tourists, totalling 6,297,900, came from mainland China,

representing an increase of 13.5 percent. The second and third-largest sources of package tourists were South Korea and Taiwan, with 479,600 and 428,500, respectively.

In 2017, a total of 1,391,400 Macao residents engaged with travel agent services to travel abroad. Of these, 562,900 joined outbound group tours. The most popular destination was mainland China, with 377,900 (67.1 percent) residents visiting. South Korea was the second most-popular tourism destination for Macao residents, attracting 51,900 visitors or 9.2 percent of the total. Japan ranked third, attracting 25,500 visitors or 4.5 percent of the total. A total of 828,500 residents engaged with travel agent services without joining guided tours, 9.8 percent more than in 2016.

Macao Government Tourist Office

The functions of the Macao 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, Macao Economic and Cultural Office in Taiwan, and Macao Tourism Promotion and Information Center in Portugal.

In 2017, the number of tourists visiting Macao increased, as did the total expenditure by tourists. The Government completed the formulation of the Macao Tourism Industry Development Master Plan and successfully strived for Macao to become a new member city of UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN) in the field of Gastronomy; explored diverse tourism products, enhanced the tourism regulations, strengthened industry regulations and industry training; leveraged synergy, conducted promotions, participated in international and regional tourism affairs, and facilitated the construction of a world tourism and leisure centre.

Macao Designated as Member City of UNESCO Creative Cities Network in Gastronomy

On 31 October 2017, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) announced the designation of "Macao, China" as a member city of UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN) in the field of Gastronomy. Macao gained new world-recognition as a UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy.

The designation will bring Macao more opportunities to promote the local unique food culture and enhance the sustainable development of tourism, facilitating the construction of a world tourism and leisure centre. Macao is the third city in China to be designated as a UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy. The UCCN covers seven creative fields: Crafts and Folk Art, Design, Film, Gastronomy, Literature, Music and Media Arts.

Tourism Planning and Study

The Macao Tourism Industry Development Master Plan was formulated and announced in 2017, suggesting eight key objectives, 33 strategies and 91 short-, medium- and long-term action plans. This Master Plan was an overall development blueprint and action plan covering various levels of tourism.

The Macau Government Tourist Office (MGTO) also participated in cross-departmental government planning, providing advice to relevant departments to support tourism development.

Also, the MGTO started using scientific research methods to review effectiveness of tourism products, and understand the travel behaviour and characteristics of visitors from different sources, for reference in planning and developing future tourism products.

In 2017, MGTO conducted effectiveness surveys on the Parade for Celebration of the Year of the Rooster, Macao Light Festival 2017, and Macao tourism branding and events in 2017, as well as a study on the Brazilian market.

In addition, new features were added to “Macao Tourism News plus” (<https://newsplus.macaotourism.gov.mo/>) in order to enhance communication efficiency. This online news archive integrates news materials from various sources. By the end of 2017, over 17,000 records were provided, including nearly 1,600 press releases by the MGTO and external representatives, and 8,000 high-resolution photos for easy access by media representatives seeking materials for news stories on Macao tourism.

The MGTO continued to optimise “Macao Tourism Data plus” (MTD plus) (<http://dataplus.macaotourism.gov.mo>). After launching the enquiry service regarding statistical indicators about the hotel industry, Portuguese version and subscriptions in 2016, four new indicators and functions were added in 2017, including data on the “Individual travel scheme”; enhanced data on “Overnight/same-day visitors”, an optimised colour key for various visitor source markets in the distribution maps; and a Simplified Chinese version.

Smart Tourism

In accordance with the Government’s construction of a smart city, the MGTO expedited the development of the smart tourism project and advocated the use of innovative technological strategies to formulate the application of smart tourism, including the construction of tourism big data, enrichment of tourists’ travelling experiences and enhancement of tourism capacity management.

The MGTO enhanced the electronic tourism promotion, establishing a promotion website with contents in 15 languages, launching the 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 providing various mobile phone apps – “Experience Macao”, “Step Out, Macao” and “What’s On, Macao”. The mobile phone app of “Step Out, Macao” can match with the QR codes on the directional signs along tour routes to provide local information.

Tourism Products

The MGTO continued implementing its Community Tourism Plan, to explore community tourism resources with distinctive Macao characteristics, in order to encourage tourists to engage in in-depth travel. It also supported various community groups in organising a wide range of educational and interactive promotion events under the Macao Tourism Awareness Campaign.

The MGTO also leveraged Macao's cultural elements to promote cultural tourism and enrich cultural tourism experiences, and developed marine tourism products.

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 at Anim'Arte NAM VAN, Visit Anim'Arte Nam Van with Emojis, a tourism culture promotion carnival, and the Second Macao Lantern Festival held at the Anim'Arte NAM VAN, and singing and puppet performances held at the Taipa Houses-Museum, facilitating the development of tourism and leisure landmarks.

Community Tourism

In 2017, 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 32 activities held by 21 organisations, attracting over 827,000 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 18 events held by 14 organisations, which were attended by over 18,000 participants.

Cultural Tourism

The MGTO facilitated the development of cultural tourism, highlighting Macao's culture and diverse tourism characteristics. The MGTO continued to subsidise 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, gourmet, marine culture, art exhibitions and local music.

Grand Prix Museum and Wine Museum

For the reconstruction of the Grand Prix Museum, the Grand Prix Museum and the Wine Museum were closed from 1 July 2017 until further notice. From January to June 2017, the Grand Prix Museum received 95,727 visitors and provided 16 guided tours to 396 participants. The Wine Museum received 95,280 visitors and provided 13 guided tours to 259 participants.

Business Tourism

In 2017, the Government continued with the Travel Stimulus Programme, which combined elements of incentive travel, wedding travel and student travel facilitation programmes. A total of 72 cases involving 19,611 visitors were supported.

The Fifth Macao International Travel (Industry) Expo

The Fifth Macao International Travel (Industry) Expo was held from 7 to 9 July 2017. It was hosted by the MGTO, supported by the National Tourism Administration and organised by the Macao Travel Agency Association. The area of the expo venue was 10,000 square metres, with 473 exhibition booths. A total of 45 countries and regions, as well as 303 enterprises and units, including 20 tourism exhibitors from provinces and cities in mainland China, participated in the expo, which attracted about 36,000 visitors.

Global Tourism Economy Forum - Macao 2017

The Global Tourism Economy Forum - Macao 2017, a recognised partner of the World Tourism Organization of the United Nations (UNWTO), was held from 16 to 17 October 2017. 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 16 Central and Eastern European countries, and Guizhou as the partner province. The forum was themed "Regional Collaboration towards a Better Future". To support and align with the advocacies of the country's "Belt and Road" initiative and the "16+1 Cooperation" of China and Central and Eastern European countries, several discussion sessions, business matching and promotional activities were held to facilitate exchanges between domestic and overseas tourism enterprises, and leverage Macao's function as a platform and its unique advantages.

The 43rd National Congress of the Portuguese Association of Travel and Tourism Agencies

With the theme "Tourism: In the East, all new!", this year's Congress attracted around 650 Portuguese tourism representatives. The working meetings of the Congress focused on issues including cooperation between Portugal and Asian countries, opportunities for the tourism industry arising from technological development, and tourism's role in facilitating rejuvenation of the Portuguese economy. The highlights of the event were workshops and exchanges between the Chinese and Portuguese tourism industries, which facilitated interaction and discussion between both parties.

Events and Festivals

In 2017, the MGTO continued organising various events and festivals, which included the Parade for Celebration of the Year of the Rooster, celebration events for World Tourism Day, Global Tourism Economy Forum – Macao 2017, Macao Light Festival 2017, and the Second International Film Festival & Awards Macao, with the aim of building Macao as a city of mega events.

Parade for Celebration of Lunar New Year

Organised by the MGTO, the Parade for Celebration of the Year of the Rooster included an opening performance, floats parade, performing groups parade, cultural performances, a firework show and floats exhibition. There were 14 floats in the parade, and performances by around 688 artistes from 16 Macao performing groups and eight other performing groups from mainland China, Hong Kong, Japan, Spain, Colombia, Portugal, Germany and the United States.

Macao Light Festival 2017

From 3 to 31 December 2017, the MGTO held the Macao Light Festival from 7 pm to 10 pm every night, at eight tourist spots. Radiating from the Ruins of St. Paul's as the heart of the event, there were three routes: from Senado Square, Anim'Arte Nam Van to Nam Van Lake Nautical Centre; St. Anthony's Church and Camoes Garden; and from St. Lazarus Church and Calçada da Igreja de S. Lazaro to Taipa Houses Museum. The festival featured 3D mapping, light installations, interactive games, and a series of new activities including a light art exhibition, an outdoor concert by local performers, outdoor movie screenings and a light-show dinner.

2nd International Film Festival & Awards Macao

The Second International Film Festival & Awards Macao was held from 8 to 14 December 2017 with the theme "A New Avenue to the World of Films". In addition to 48 international outstanding films being screened, an "Industry Hub" was held for exchanges between industry professionals from around the world, and a masterclass and a film-shooting training programme were held for filmmakers.

Tourism Marketing

In 2017, the Government continued promotions with the theme "Experience Macao in Your Own Style". We participated in major tourism exhibitions in key visitor source markets; organised briefings and meetings for the tourism industry; participated in and organised many promotion events, including large-scale promotion activities such as Experience Macao – Malaysia in Malaysia, and Experience Macao – Pop up Restaurant in the United States; as well as organised roadshows about Macao tourism in mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, South Korea and Australia, to promote the festive events of Macao.

Tourism Promotional Videos

Promotional videos of various themed events in Macao were produced and broadcasted in traditional and new media of major tourist markets. Overseas production companies were encouraged to shoot movies, TV series and shows in Macao. Celebrity endorsers were used to broaden the coverage of tourism promotion by broadcasting videos about Macao tourism and interacting with audiences through television channels, the Internet and social media platforms.

Joint Promotion

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 Guangdong, Fujian, Guangxi, Hong Kong and tourism departments of the China Maritime Silk Road Tourism Promotion Alliance, to jointly promote multi-destination tourism. The MGTO also cooperated with the tourism departments of Guangdong, Guangxi, Fujian and Hong Kong to launch a series of promotional activities in Indonesia and Malaysia. 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 set up promotional booths at various important tourism expos. It set up an exhibition hall and a photo exhibition with the theme “Maritime Silk Road travels”, and promoted tourism products of Macao and Pearl River Delta Travel in cities along the High Speed Rail routes, 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, PATA Travel Mart and Global Tourism Economic Forum 2017 – Macau. The MGTO also studied the tourism resources in Guangdong-Macao and Fujian-Macao multi-destination tours with overseas tourism industries.

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, Ritz Building at Largo do Senado, Macau International Airport and Taipa Temporary Ferry Terminal) and major ports in Hong Kong (Shun Tak Centre and Hong Kong International Airport).

In 2017, information counters in Macao and Hong Kong received 1,172,797 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 fourth consecutive year. In 2017, the scheme still targeted the catering industry and travel agencies, but there was consideration of extending the coverage to other industries. Since its launch until 2017, a total of 233 food and beverage merchants and 37 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. The MGTO delegation attended the 22nd Session of the UNWTO General Assembly and the Meeting of the Working Group on the UNWTO Draft Convention on Tourism Ethics as an associate member.

As a member of the governing body of the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA), the director of the MGTO attended the PATA Executive Board meeting and the PATA Annual Summit 2017, etc. In addition, the MGTO attended the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) High Level Policy Dialogue on Sustainable Tourism, and the 51st Meeting of APEC’s Tourism Working Group as a guest economy.

Regarding regional cooperation, under the cooperation framework of the Joint Working Committee on Tourism to Support Macao’s Aspirations to Build a World Tourism and Leisure Centre (“Joint Working Committee on Tourism”), the China National Tourism Administration (CNTA) and the Secretariat for Social Affairs and Culture of the MSAR Government jointly held a seminar between mainland China, Hong Kong and Macao, to exchange experiences and opinions on development of holistic tourism, and tourist police. Tasks for 2017 were formulated

in the 2017 Annual Work Meeting of the Joint Working Committee on Tourism.

The MGTO Director participated in the Promotional Event and the Meeting for Tourism Exchange and Cooperation between Liaoning, Hong Kong and Macao, in Liaoning. The Memorandum of Understanding on Tourism Cooperation was signed by the Liaoning Tourism Bureau and MGTO, to enhance mutual cooperation and communication in tourism.

At the 2017 Pan-Pearl River Delta (PPRD) Regional Cooperation Chief Executive Joint Conference, the PPRD Regional Tourism Union Co-operation Agreement was signed by the government leaders of the PPRD provinces/regions.

Under the guidance of China National Tourism Administration, the Tourism Federation of Cities in Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao Bay Area is a brand-new organisation for comprehensive tourism cooperation comprising the tourism authorities of the nine cities of Guangdong Province – Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Zhuhai, Foshan, Huizhou, Dongguan, Zhongshan, Jiangmen and Zhaoqing – as well as the two Special Administrative Regions, Hong Kong and Macao, with the aim of implementing the “Framework Agreement on Deepening Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Cooperation in the Development of the Bay Area” and together building a quality living circle that is ideal for residence, work and travel.

The Agreement of the Tourism Federation of Cities in Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao Bay Area was signed by representatives of the Tourism Federations, to further enhance mutual tourism cooperation.

Special Tourism-related Arrangements due to Typhoon Hato

In order to receive fewer tour group visitors, to conserve more resources for post-typhoon relief work, the MGTO held an emergency meeting with travel agencies and hotel operators on 25 August, requesting the travel agencies to temporarily stop receiving tour group visitors to Macao from that day, and called and wrote to the China National Tourism Administration and relevant tourism federations about the temporary measure. The MGTO also urged visitors who planned to visit Macao to exercise caution in their travel plans, and assisted hotels and travel agencies in following up regarding tour suspensions.

During the period, the MGTO gained an understanding of the typhoon’s impact from hotels and guest-houses, including how it affected their operations, degrees of damage to facilities and the safety of visitors, and monitored progress with recovery of the affected hotels and guest-houses. On 29 August, a consensus was reached between the MGTO and the industry to resume reception of tours from 2 September, and staff were sent to assess the situation with visitors at various ports and attractions.

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 the same year, the IFT was ranked by the "QS World University Rankings by Subject 2017" as the second best higher education institution in Asia in the field of hospitality and leisure management and the world's 18th 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 36 exchange students during the 2016/2017 academic year. During the academic year, there were 1,576 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 19,413 students took various vocational and continued education courses during the 2016/2017 academic year, with 174 of the students enrolled in two 1.5-year Western Culinary Skills and Pastry and Bakery programmes; 1,674 students enrolled in the Macao Occupational Skills Recognition System (MORS); and 2,679 enrolled in various free training courses under the Community Education and Development Programme (CEDP). Moreover, the school joined hands with Escola Lusó-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 2017, the IFT had built

connection with 104 schools, organisations and institutions in 31 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 2016/2017 academic year, in addition to exchange programmes and international internships, there were over 140 students participating in exchange courses and international conferences in the mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Portugal, the Netherlands, Austria, South Korea, Sweden and the United States, with support from the IFT. The IFT also signed an agreement with the Association of Hong Kong Chinese Middle Schools, the Incheon National University in South Korea and the Universidade Nacional Timor Lorosaé in East Timor, 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 increased the competitiveness of tourism attractions, to achieve sustainable tourism development by establishing the Global Centre for Tourism Education and Training through the IFT.

From 21 to 29 May 2017, the centre held a professional training programme with the theme "Strategic Tourism Planning and Management for a Sustainable Future" for 21 representatives of government agencies, tourism industry professionals and educators from Myanmar, North Korea and China (including mainland China and Macao). The fourth training session was held from 29 November to 6 December 2017, focusing on capacity building for destination marketing and tourism development; 26 representatives from Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Fiji, Vanuatu, Maldives, mainland China and Macao participated in the training.

In addition, the centre cooperated with the MGTO to design professional tourism skills training programmes for representatives of government agencies related to tourism culture in Portuguese-speaking countries, tourism industry professional and educators. In May, July and September 2017, three groups of students from Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau, Mozambique and Timor-Leste completed three training sessions.

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. 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 th 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, Bhaisajjaraja 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.

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 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.



A TRIP TO BAIRRO DE SAO LAZARO







Bairro de Sao Lazaro is an architectural complex inscribed on the list of conserved heritage sites of Macao. It comprises a complex of 2-storey buildings in a southern European style, together with various streets, and is of great historical and cultural significance with a strong southern European character. The Hermitage of Our Lady of Hope, constructed in 1557-1560, is the core building of the complex. It is one of the three oldest churches in Macao, as well as the first cathedral built after the establishment of the Macao Diocese.



Bairro de Sao Lazaro is an important cultural and creative area in Macao. With various art and cultural facilities and spaces, including the School of Music of the Macao Conservatory, and cultural and creative shops, it is imbued with a rich cultural atmosphere.

