

## 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.

In 2021, the tourism industry continued to be hard hit by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, but its performance improved compared to 2020, supported by a series of promotional and boosting measures. The total number of tourists visiting Macao in 2021 was 7,705,943 – representing an increase of 30.7 percent from the 2020 figure. The number of overnight visitors during the year totalled 3,696,800, representing an increase of 31 percent, and accounting for 48 percent of visitors to Macao. The average length of stay of visitors was 1.6 days, while the average stay of overnight visitors was 3.2 days.

In 2021, tourists from Greater China (mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan) comprised almost 100 percent of the total. Mainland China continued to be the largest market for visitors to Macao, accounting for 91.4 percent of the total number of visitors, which was 48.2 percent higher than in 2020. Among the mainland China visitors, 2,449,128 (accounting for 34.8 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; the numbers of visitors from Hong Kong decreased by 30.1 percent, and those from Taiwan decreased by 31.9 percent, compared with 2020.

## Hotels and Travel Agencies

According to Macao Government Tourist Office (MGTO) statistics, at the end of 2021, Macao had a total of 136 hotel premises, of which 92 were star-rated hotels and 44 were guesthouses, supplying a total of 44,224 guest rooms.

Star Rating	Number of Hotels	Number of Rooms
Five-star Luxury Hotels	12	7,690
Five-star Hotels	26	19,242
Four-star Hotels	18	8,059
Four-star Apartment Hotels	2	657
Three-star Hotels	16	5,745
Three-star Apartment Hotels	1	208

Two-star Hotels	17	1,402
<b>Sub-total</b>	92	43,003
Guesthouse	44	1,221

*The average room rate of three- to five-star member hotels was 834.5 patacas in 2021, nine percent lower than in 2020, according to the Macau Hotel Association.*

The total number of guests who stayed in hotels in Macao during 2021 was 6,623,900, representing an increase of 71 percent from the figure in 2020. The average year-round occupancy rate of hotels increased by 21.4 percent to 50 percent. The average length of stay was 1.8 nights, representing an increase of 0.1 nights.

At the end of 2021, there were 208 licensed travel agencies in Macao, 12 less than in 2020. A total of 1,854 people held tourist guide licences issued by the MGTO, 77 (four percent) fewer than in 2020. The language abilities of these tourist guides spanned Cantonese, Putonghua, English, Portuguese, Indonesian, German, Japanese, Korean, Thai, French, Spanish, Russian, Malay, Hokkien and Chaozhouese.

In 2021, a total of 149,800 Macao residents engaged with travel agent services to travel abroad. Of these, 49,900 joined outbound group tours, and the destinations were all in mainland China, mainly Guangdong Province, accounting for 76 percent of the total, while the total number of residents engaging with travel agent services without joining guided tours increased by 18.4 percent to 99,800, compared to 2020.

The first six months of 2022 saw 1,588,260 inbound tourists to Macao, a year-on-year decrease of 27.5 percent. The number of visitors was still affected by global travel restrictions in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic.

## **Tourism Resources**

Boasting a brilliant and fascinating history encompassing 400 years of cultural exchange 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.

Some of Macao's best known tourist attractions that are steeped in history include: the Ruins of St Paul's Church; the Chapel of Our Lady of Guia; St Anthony's Church; St Augustine's Church; St Dominic's Church; St Lawrence's Church; St Lazarus's Church; the Cathedral; Mount Fortress; Mong Ha Fortress; St Francis Fortress; Guia Fortress; Barra Fortress; the A-Ma Temple; Pou Chai Buddhist Monastery and Temple; Lin Fong Temple; Na Tcha Temple; Hong Kung Temple; Tam Kung Temple; Yeok San Buddhist Monastery; Chu Lam Chi Buddhist Monastery; Sam Po Temple; Po Tai Buddhist Monastery; Lin Kai Temple; Pak Tai Temple; and Tin Hau Temple.

Other unique tourist attractions in Macao include: the Museum of Macao which is adjacent to Mount Fortress and features exhibits on Macao's history; the Grand Prix Museum; Wine Museum; Maritime Museum; the Macao Museum of Art; the waterfront Kun Iam Statue; the A-Ma Statue which is made of white marble and sits on the highest point of Coloane island; and the cybernetic fountain at Nam Van Lake. Visitors are able to see different aspects of Macao in these attractions.

In July 2005 the Historic Centre of Macao was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List with the support of the central government. The Historic Centre of Macao has long been an invaluable asset to the local tourism industry and since its inscription on the World Heritage List, the Government has actively used it as a major selling point in its global marketing efforts to spur diversified development of the tourism industry.

## **Cuisines and Events**

Macao's unique mix of cultures and customs is reflected in the form of culinary fusion. In November 2017, Macao was awarded the title of UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy under the Creative Cities Network. Macanese food, which is a fusion of Portuguese, African, Southeast Asian and Chinese cooking, has begun to gain international recognition after being enjoyed by locals for decades. Other international cuisines are also available in Macao.

Every year Macao stages various international events to raise its international profile and increase its appeal to different tourists around the world. These include the Macao Grand Prix, the Macao International Marathon, the World Women's Volleyball Grand Prix, the International Fireworks Display Contest, the International Music Festival, the Macao Arts Festival and the Food Festival. In addition, the inauguration of major entertainment facilities, theme hotels, convention venues, world class stadiums and other infrastructures has enriched Macao's tourism resources and brought more music concerts, art shows, sports events as well as international meetings and exhibitions to Macao, turning a new page in the local tourism industry.