

4-13-2018

## A Taste of Hong Kong

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### Recommended Citation

Olson, Jacob, "A Taste of Hong Kong" (2018). *2017-18 Field Notes*. Essay. Submission 12.  
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Jake Olson

Hong Kong

April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2018

### A Taste of Hong Kong

I sit in a very unique situation while completing this assignment. Having already traveled to Hong Kong before, I had a decent understanding of how the locals behaved and possessed an elementary grasp of the culture. Few students who study abroad can say that they were able to visit the country to which they will be going. Regardless, I enjoyed conducting this interview. I was very fortunate to have been able to talk to one of my local friends about topics that don't really come up in casual conversation.

Having done a significant amount of research and in many conversations with my peers, I was not surprised by many of my friend's answers. I started by asking her about lifestyle norms and differences. Probably the biggest difference in everyday life is driving. In Hong Kong, in order to drive a sports car, you must pay 100% tax on the vehicle. Therefore, only the extremely wealthy drive (sports cars in particular). Public transportation in Hong Kong is the most popular form. She also touched on how Hong Kong people are "very boring." The majority of their lives consists of going to school/work, then they are too tired to entertain themselves. I found that a little sad. She also mentioned that for holidays and weekends, men often stay in the home because they work so much.

I was very pleased to hear some of the similarities between Hong Kong and Oregon. One of the biggest ones she touched on was the popularity of recreational activities. Hong Kong is blessed with an amazing environment for hiking and other outdoor sports. My friends and I have gone on numerous hikes, cliff jumped, swam at gorgeous beaches, and much more. Sound

familiar? Sounds a lot like Oregon to me (minus swimming at the beach... that is foreign to Oregonians).

In terms of living situations, the cost of renting and owning property in Hong Kong is absolutely mental. My friend said that a person is considered rich if they have an apartment. Clearly, that is a difference in perception of living in Oregon. In addition, living on campus in Hong Kong is rare. Only first-year students live on campus. Most students commute from home which usually takes, at minimum, an hour via public transportation. That is obviously extremely rare in America. Living on campus or within walking distance to campus is the norm at home. I can't imagine having to commute that distance every day, especially if I had an early class.

Those are just a few of the many things Bernice and I talked about. I really enjoyed the experience! Being such good friends, it made the conversation extremely smooth. I also enjoyed learning a few little pieces of information that surprised me. I feel as though I was able to grow in my cultural understanding, and I am very grateful for the experience.