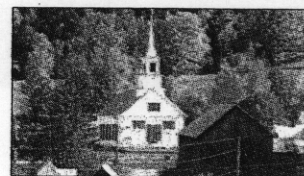


Colours explode along upper Connecticut River, Page 5
Churchill is bearable, Page 6
View from on high, Page 7



THE GAZETTE | MONTREAL | OCTOBER 2, 2004



Victoria Harbour lies in a sea of high-rises from the southern part of Hong Kong Island and the Kowloon Peninsula. Star Ferry has plied these waters for more than a century.

ZORAN BOZICEVIC IPHOTO.CA

By sea, land and air

FIVE WAYS OF SEEING HONG KONG SHOW THE VARIETY OF THIS REMARKABLE CITY

JUDITH J. RITTER
 SPECIAL TO THE GAZETTE

HONG KONG - Flying over the South China Sea and into Hong Kong at dawn, we watch the sun glance off the glass and steel skyscrapers that soar out of green hills. City, mountain and sea, Hong Kong is a gateway to China.

The city, whose name means "fragrant harbour," has 7.5 million people, 200,000 shops, more than 8,000 restaurants and, at least five fascinat-

ing ways to see the city. We tried them all - bus, sampan, harbour ferry, helicopter and a mode of outdoor city transportation unavailable anywhere else, the escalator.

Since most travellers arrive quite fatigued from the long trip, a relaxing first ride with a sense of the city, its surroundings and its history is the No. 66 bus. Like most buses in Hong Kong, 66 is a double decker, a reminder of Hong Kong's British colonial past. Grab a seat on the top at the front and you'll have an unhampered

view during the one-hour ride from Central Hong Kong to the beach at Stanley.

A good place to pick up the bus is Queens Pier in front of City Hall and near the soaring I.M. Pei-designed Bank of China building. Ride the 66 just 10 minutes and hop off at Queens Rd. E. at the edge of the Wan Chai district. This area is full of little neighbourhood shops with wares in boxes tumbling out onto the street. You can smell the incense burning from the century-old Hung Shing Temple,

whose wonderfully carved exterior is full of dragons and fish. There are tiny two-table noodle stalls, fruit juice stands stacked with fluorescent pink dragon fruit and nubby red fresh lychees.

Hop back on the 66 at Amoy St. before it swings up Stubbs Rd., out of the dense city and into the hills toward Happy Valley. The bus route winds higher and higher into the mountains, offering great views of the Hong Kong Jockey Club and the Hong Kong Cricket Club, haunts of

Hong Kong bluebloods. So rural is the area that a hiking trail runs from the stop at Wong Nei Cheung Gap. The hairpin turns take us by fabulous private estates and beautiful views before we arrive at Repulse Bay beach - the Beverly Hills of Hong Kong.

What better way to end our first ride than at the Verandah Restaurant, which at one time was the historic Repulse Bay Hotel where celebrities and royalty dined in the

Please see HONG KONG, Page 3