



Kwai Tsing: Hong Kong's nucleus of trade

Home Affairs Department

WITHOUT doubt, the most important logistics centre in Hong Kong is Kwai Tsing, linking the world's largest container port and international airport with an intricate network of roads and rail systems feeding cargo and people to every point of the compass.

Indeed at night, the lights of the juggernaut robotic cranes on the docks of the Kwai Chung terminal and the nearby Tsing Ma Bridge appear to be from a futuristic movie set. Above all, they are symbols of Hong Kong's prosperity and vitality.

Apart from its strategic importance as the gateway to Hong Kong's myriad of attractions, Kwai Tsing has developed to become a modern metropolis while maintaining its many relics and time-honoured customs.



Kwai Tsing area in 1924

History and origin

Kwai Tsing is situated at the south-western part of the New Territories. It is made up of Kwai Chung and Tsing Yi Island, with a total area of about 2,229 hectares and a population of about 495,000 people. The name Kwai Chung is associated with the lush growth of palm trees in Kwai Chung in the old days. Equally interesting, the name

Tsing Yi is derived from the old practice of weighing clothes traded with Chinese scales and the abundance of parrot fish in the area. The logo of the Kwai Tsing District Council is, in fact, an impressionistic design incorporating a palm leaf, and the Chinese characters *Kwai* and *Tsing*.



Kwai Chung coastal view in 1920s

Kwai Tsing emerged in the 1950s as a small self-contained satellite town with a mix of residential, commercial and industrial developments, mainly around Kwai Chung. Tsing Yi, being an island, was somewhat isolated with ship building and repairs in the north and large oil depots in the southern part of the island. The only landmark visible from Hong Kong Island was the huge chimney stacks from a power plant near the oil depots. A single bridge across the Rambler Channel linked Tsing Yi to Kwai Chung. Real development of Tsing Yi did not start until late 1970s when the then newly formed Housing Authority introduced its "cruciform"

style of housing on the island's south-east. Over the years, the district has evolved into a major residential area, a world-acclaimed container terminal and a conglomeration of heavy industries.

Kwai Chung Container Port

The township of Lai King, a major MTR hub between the express Tung Chung line and the rest of the New Territories, affords panoramic views of the world's busiest shipping port which operates round the clock throughout the year, moving tens of thousands of containers between docksides and ocean-going ships.

The Kwai Chung Container Port is one of the world's most fast-growing container ports with an area of 217 hectares accommodating eight terminals and 18 berths. Last year, Hong Kong's throughput topped the world again at 19.14 million twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs), of which 11.89

Kwai Tsing in 1990s





Kwai Chung Container Port

million TEUs or 62% were handled by the Kwai Chung terminals. Container Terminal No. 9 at Tsing Yi, with six additional berths and a designed annual throughput of 2.6 million TEUs, opened its first berth in July 2003. The remaining five berths are scheduled for phased completion before end 2004, thus meeting the projected throughput over the next decade and sustaining the momentum of Hong Kong's logistics industry.

Tsing Ma Bridge

The magnificent Tsing Ma Bridge, with a main span of 1,377 metres, is an internationally renowned landmark of Hong Kong and the world's second longest suspension bridge carrying both road and rail traffic. The bridge is designed to withstand the most torrid weather conditions, and in the event of severe gale-force winds, vehicular traffic is diverted from the upper open road to a tunnel underneath adjacent to the suspended rail tunnel. This ensures that the link between the airport and the urban areas is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The bridge will also serve as the major link to Disneyland, due for completion in two years' time in the nearby Penny's Bay.

The Lantau Link View Point, located at the north-western corner of Tsing Yi, commands an excellent view of the Lantau

Link to the west and Ting Kau Bridge to the north, making it the most ideal vantage point to admire the engineering feat of the Tsing Ma Bridge. The view point, comprising a visitors centre, outdoor exhibits, and a Bauhinia garden, with some 1,100 Bauhinia trees of different species and more than 38,000 blossoming Rhododendron, is one of the most popular scenic spots in Hong Kong, particularly for tourists from the Mainland. Last year, more than 486,000 visitors were recorded at the view point.

Kwai Tsing Theatre

The Kwai Tsing Theatre, opened in November 1999, is not only a cultural focal point in the district, but also for the whole Hong Kong SAR. It has a 905-seat auditorium with world-class stage equipment designed for drama, dance and opera. Other facilities include exhibition gallery, dance studio, rehearsal room and lecture room. Located next to the Kwai Fong MTR station, the theatre has become a key civic centre for cultural and recreational activities and a landmark for Kwai Chung.

Alfresco wining and dining in the plaza of the theatre, which came on stream in mid-September and is one of the local community economy projects in the territory, adds further charm to the district. An adjoining five-storey modern shopping mall — Metroplaza — with a simulated tropical recreation area and an interactive fountain, is an ideal place to experience local lifestyle in the district.

Maritime Square

Maritime Square is the largest thematic mall in Kwai Tsing built on the oceanic concept. The mall, with an area of 500,000

square feet and located next to the Tsing Yi Airport Railway station, houses more than 130 shops of different varieties for one-stop shopping, movie-going and eating out.



Maritime Square

Tsing Yi commuters can reach either Central or the airport in 15 minutes on the fast Tung Chung/Airport MTR line and the Airport Express station currently offers free car parking for the first three days for air travellers.

For an outdoor family walk, there is the nearby Tsing Yi Park, with an area of 6.7 hectares, featuring a mix of ancient Chinese garden architecture and landscaping, and housing a variety of facilities including a children's playground, a lookout point, an amphitheatre and three artificial lakes with waterfalls.

Tin Hau Temple

Within five minutes' walk to the south-west from the Metroplaza is the Tin Hau Temple at Kwai Chung Road. The 200-year-old temple was relocated to its existing site in 1966 to make way for the port reclamation in Kwai Chung. During the Tin Hau Festival in May, there are Cantonese opera performances and competitions for the best 'Fa Pau' or floral shrines and each year, the festival attracts thousands of well-wishers praying for good fortune and peace.

Kwai Tsing District Sports and Arts Festivals

The Kwai Tsing District Sports Festival is a large-scale popular event in the district. It is usually held between October and December each year, featuring different sports events. Major events last year included the Asian Beach Volleyball Competition, City Beach Football Competition and 2002 International Remote Control Touring Grand Prix, which attracted many local and overseas visitors. The Kwai Tsing District Arts Festival, held between November and December each year, is another major district event attracting

Lantau Link View Point





City Beach Football Competition

public attention. A variety of programmes are organised, including Chinese musical instrument, folk song, drama, Cantonese song and opera performances, and a dancing night.

Kwai Tsing District Council

In April 1985, Kwai Tsing was hived off from Tsuen Wan District and became a separate administrative district. The Kwai Tsing District Council (K&TDC) has 36 seats,

comprising 28 elected, one ex officio and seven appointed ones. The average age of the District Council members is 45, being the youngest among the 18 districts. Thanks to its dedication and hard work, K&TDC contributes significantly to the well-being of district residents and offers invaluable advice to the Government on many fronts.

Kwai Tsing—WHO's safest community

With the support of K&TDC, Princess Margaret Hospital and other 23 district organisations, Kwai Tsing entered the World Health Organization (WHO)'s Safe Community and Healthy City schemes in recent years. And with Tuen Mun, Kwai Tsing was accredited by WHO on March 18, 2003, as being the safest community, health-wise, in all of China. Also, in January 2002,

Kwai Tsing was named the fourth healthy city in Hong Kong after Tsuen Wan, Central and Western, and Wan Chai.

The WHO schemes aim to promote health and safety culture in the community and achieve health and safety objectives through community partnership.



Kwai Tsing and Tuen Mun being accredited by