

the place

MACAU



Macau Tower, left, seen with Mandarin Oriental and MGM.

New hotels are bringing thousands of rooms and some of the world's best chefs to Macau, where there's a renewed spotlight on the lesser-considered yet vibrant arts and culture scene.

BY JULIANA LOH

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: MANFRED GOTTSCHALK/GETTY IMAGES; COURTESY OF TAIPA VILLAGE ART SPACE; COURTESY OF MACAO SCIENCE CENTRE; IAN TROWER/ROBERT HARDING/GETTY IMAGES; MAP BY CHOTIKA SOPITARCHASAK

PETER STUCKINGS/GETTY IMAGES



THE FORMER PORTUGUESE COLONY is a city of paradoxes: crumbling old and shiny new; everything from architecture to food is a blend of East and West in good measure. Macau is constantly reinventing itself with new developments and a burgeoning arts scene that celebrates both its Portuguese legacy and Chinese heritage. The recent opening of the 55-kilometer bridge connecting it to Hong Kong and the mainland has helped grow Macau's vibrant dining culture even further with the city's being better connected. As big new resorts have brought exciting restaurants with them, and local restaurants continue to make their beloved traditional foods, it's no wonder 2018 was Macau's inaugural year as a UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy, and next March Asia's 50 Best Awards gala returns to Cotai—all of which make it prime time to plan a palate-whetting trip.

SEE + DO

Yes, there's life beyond the blackjack table. We're betting the rich heritage and blossoming arts scene will offer plenty of distractions for the family.

In the south, **Coloane Island** has a couple of nature trails for those wanting to do a spot of hiking. + Check out the latest **Art Space** (taipavillage.macao.com) in Taipa Village for contemporary exhibitions. + Or get your fortune told at the UNESCO World Heritage site **A-Ma Temple** (São Lourenço, Barra) built in 1488. + Take a dive down the world's tallest man-made bungee jumping site at the **Macau Tower** (macautower.com.mo) then stroll over to the **Macao**

Science Centre (msc.org.mo) designed by architect I.M. Pei to watch the sunset over the Macau Peninsula. + If you're a selfie fanatic, the **Guia Lighthouse**

(accessible by foot or cable car) is a wonderful quiet spot with a colonial vibe for ample photo opportunities. One just might think you were in Portugal.



Guia Lighthouse in St. Lazarus



UNESCO World Heritage Site A-Ma Temple.



Get learning at Macao Science Centre.



Art Space in Taipa Village.

EAT + DRINK

Macau gets you bang for your buck with dining options for everyone. From Michelin-starred fine dining to local holes-in-the-wall, there's plenty to discover and devour.

MACANESE

Chinese, Southeast Asian and Lusophone fusion.

At the new **La Famiglia** (taipavillagemacau.com), Macanese cuisine ambassador Florita Alves cooks up complex, authentic flavors. + Pop into local eatery **Riquexo** (69 Av. de Sidonio Pais; 853/2856-5655) for home-style dishes. Order *minchi*—and say hello to centenarian cook Dame Aida de Jesus. + **APOMEC** (G/F 49B Av. De Sidonio Pais) down the street is a retirees club that serves up hearty set meals of Macanese dishes for only MOP100. + At **Restaurante Litoral** (restaurantelitoral-taipa.com) try the African chicken, and the city's best *tacho*, a winter stew with roasted meats, Chinese sausages and cabbage among a long list of ingredients—each family has its own unique recipe.



Chef Florita Alves helms La Famiglia.

Minchi: minced pork with potatoes at La Famiglia.

HAUTE

With the hotels full of top chefs, you'll practically trip over stars.

At the top end of the spectrum, the latest talks of the town are Michelin two-starred Mauro Colagreco's **Grill 58**, named for the temperature at which they cook their perfect

steaks, and **Janice Wong MGM** from Singapore's award-winning pastry chef, both at MGM Cotai (mgm.mo); and Michelin three-star Alain Ducasse's entire floor of Morpheus (cityofdreamsmacau.com), composed of a classic fine-dining, a South American—and Asian-inspired restaurant, and a bar. + Looking for more Michelin three-starred

Charcoal-grilled Spanish prawn with black garlic dressing at Grill 58.



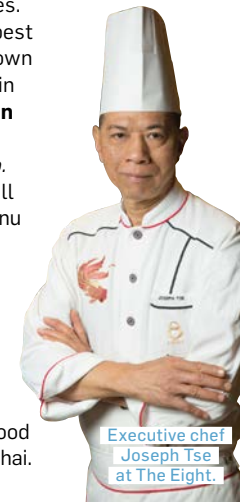
gastronomy? Make your reservations for French fine dining at **Robuchon Au Dome**, or yum cha and haute Cantonese at **The Eight**. Both restaurants are located at the iconic Grand Lisboa (grandlisboahotels.com) and boast excellent wine lists that surprisingly won't break the bank. + In fact, for Cantonese, the

Michelin options abound: at two-starred **Jade Dragon** (cityofdreamsmacau.com), pre-order the roasted meats when you make your reservation; **Wynn Macau** (wynnmacau.com) has one-starred **Wing Lei** and two-starred pan-Chinese **Golden Flower**. If you fancy something hot, though, Michelin two-starred **Feng Wei**



"Old Beijing" pan-fried pork dumplings at Feng Wei Ju.

Ju (starworldmacau.com/dining) serves mouth-watering spicy Sichuan and Hunanese dishes. + Some of the best Indian food in town is at the Michelin one-star **Golden Peacock** (venetianmacao.com). Here, you'll find a broad menu of northern and southern Indian dishes. But it is best to head over at teatime for a rich feast from the buffet spread over a good cuppa masala chai.



Executive chef Joseph Tse at The Eight.



Chandni Chowk Raj Chaat at Golden Peacock.

PORTUGUESE

Besides darling architecture, the colonial legacy left Macau with scrumptious fare.

Antonio (antoniomacau.com) in Taipa village is an institution. Dinner is a lively affair with the eponymous chef wielding a large sabre opening bottles of champagne, over live music and carafes of Portuguese red wine. + **A Petisqueira** (apetisqueira.com) is a laid-back alternative located in a little blue shophouse serving up favorites such as garlic clams and seafood rice. + Brunch lovers will want to hit up **Fernando's** (fernando-restaurant.com) in Coloane, which has been a popular spot for decades for long, convivial days, or **Tromba Rija** (macautower.com.mo) at the Macau Tower, which offers a generous Portuguese buffet spread good for families on Sunday afternoons. + For creative modern-European cuisine, check out **Root** (rootmacau.com) by locavore chef Anthony Sousa Tam, who grows most of his vegetables with hydroponics.



Tromba Rija has a flowing buffet brunch.



Antonio: a Portuguese institution.



Even the dessert at Root feels all natural.

COFFEE The coffee culture is strong, with several independent cafés serving specialty brews. Get your fix at **Single Origin** (fb.com/singleorigincoffee), **Commune Table** (fb.com/communetablecoffee) and **Terra Coffee House** (fb.com/terracoffee). If you prefer a stronger Portuguese-style cup, order an espresso at **Ou Mun Café** (oumuncafe.com) along with *tigelada*, a type of Portuguese egg tart, light and fluffy with the consistency of both a canelé and the Malay cake *kuih bakar*. Proprietor Fernando is Portuguese and has lived in Macau for more than a decade; his dish is an adaptation of one from central Portugal, with less sugar and served with a side of caramel.



Terra Coffee House.



Lord Stow's famous egg tarts can be found in Taipa.

LOCAL SNACKS If you don't want to join the other tourists flocking to **Lord Stow's** bakery (14 R. do Cunha; lordstow.com) for egg tarts, the alternative on the main street of Taipa Village is **San Hou Lei** (13–14 R. do Cunha; 853/2882-7373), a very local confectionery. They are famous for their bird's-nest egg tarts, but it's the Portuguese egg tarts without the fancy dress that hit the spot. + Wander through Taipa Village's Cunha Street and taste your way through different textures and flavors—from agar-agar jellies made of tropical fruits at the decades-old **Mok Yi Kei** (9 R. do Cunha) to traditional, powdery almond cookies from **Koi Kei bakery** (11–13 R. do Cunha; koikei.com) and the ubiquitous, thin slices of sweet barbecue pork.

DRINKS

Mixology, music and vino.



Enjoy the best sundowners at **Goa Nights** (goanights.com)—their menu of eclectic cocktails features a mix of spices and flavors inspired by the Portuguese voyage East in the 15th century.



Happy-hour gin-and-tonics at **The Ritz Carlton Bar & Lounge** (ritzcarlton.com) with a background of live Bossanova music is a favorite social habit with the local expats.



Duck into the cozy Portuguese wine bar-slash-lounge **MacauSoul** (macausoul.com), which carries more than 100 different labels from Portuguese wine producers, just a stone's throw away from UNESCO site St. Paul's Ruins.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: RUSSELL MACMASTER; COURTESY OF GRILL 58; COURTESY OF TROMBA RIJA; LEIGH GRIFFITHS; COURTESY OF ROOT; COURTESY OF LA FAMILIA (2)
CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: COURTESY OF FENG WEI JU; LEIGH GRIFFITHS; COURTESY OF RITZ CARLTON; COURTESY OF MACAU SOUL; LEIGH GRIFFITHS; COURTESY OF GOLDEN PEACOCK; COURTESY OF THE EIGHT; COURTESY OF TERRA COFFEE HOUSE



Morpheus, a new architectural wonder in Cotai.



MGM has an East-meets-West aesthetic.

WHERE TO STAY

Our favorites among the slew of shiny new (and improved) hotels that have elevated the city skyline.

Mandarin Oriental

Since 1984, the grand dame of Macau has always been one of the few hotels without a casino, and, in its newest iteration opened last year, continues to offer respite from the dizzying adrenaline rush of gaming. The sole restaurant, Vida Rica, serves delightful fare from dim sum to modern European, while the bar offers regular cocktail pop-ups. It also has unrivaled views of sunsets over the Macau Tower and front-row seats for the fireworks during the festive

season. mandarinoriental.com; doubles from HK\$2,500.

MGM Cotai

The gleaming jewelry box gracing the Cotai skyline is this MGM whose 1,390 rooms include Skyloft duplexes and villas. The centerpiece of the integrated resort is "The Spectacle," a vast four-story atrium with beautiful indoor-plant landscaping, the world's largest permanent indoor LED screen, retail, entertainment and celebrity chef-led dining under its naturally lit canopy. The permanent art collection of more than 300 pieces bridges East and West. Retail options include the über-exquisite Chinese couturier Guo Pei and Singaporean designer Ethan K. mgm.mo; doubles from HK\$2,000.

Morpheus

The futuristic steel-structure by Zaha Hadid is the latest addition to the Cotai strip. The architectural masterpiece is the world's first high-rise supported by free-form steel exoskeleton, with two towers

connected by a sky bridge, and 770 rooms and villas, the latter of which begin at 582 square meters. Dining options are top notch: besides the Alain Ducasse floor, there's a Pierre Hermé Lounge with an extensive spread from the patisserie maestro, and his creations are served exclusively at breakfast as well as for in-room dining. cityofdreamsmacao.com; doubles from HK\$3,000.

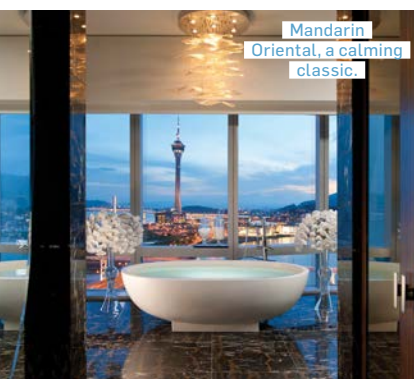
The Parisian

Sands Resorts' latest project on the Cotai Strip, The Parisian Macao is decked out in gold and red, with opulent old-world interiors and an eye-popping 3,000 rooms. Outside is a *Tour d'Eiffel* that, half the size of the original in Paris, holds La Chine, a French-inspired Chinese restaurant. The mini-Tower is linked to the hotel by a footbridge that showcases the design of

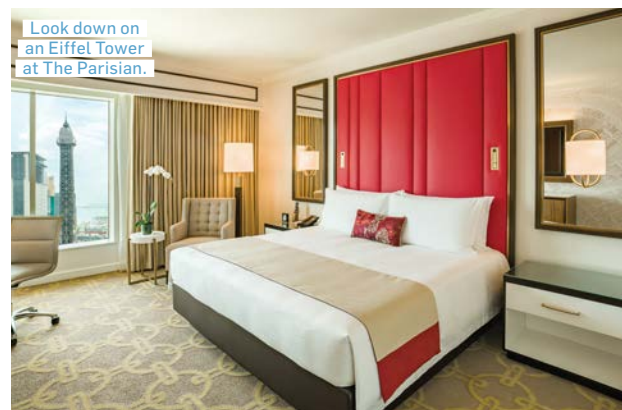
industrial mastery. The 1,200-seat theater hosts many international acts, and kids' activities. parisianmacao.com; doubles from HK\$1,300.

Wynn Palace

Wynn Palace on the Cotai Strip has a glorious façade lined with cable cars offering the best view of their fountain spectacle. Home to Macau's largest floral art, their eclectic art collection is not too shabby either; check out the rare Ming vases and Jeff Koons's psychedelic *Tulips*. The massive spa offers treatments fit for royalty, such as a diamond-and-gold facial. Each of the 1,706 rooms and suites has an intuitive touchscreen panel to control everything; and the three-bedroom Garden Villas have 24-hour butlers, 800-thread count Frette sheets and, of course, private pools. wynnpalace.com; doubles from HK\$1,700. >>



Mandarin Oriental, a calming classic.



Look down on an Eiffel Tower at The Parisian.



Sardines at Lojas Das Conservas.

Colorful delights at Merceria Portuguesa.

WHERE TO SHOP

Pick up local design items and traditional snacks as take-home gifts with a difference.

Eschew the tacky casino-chip keychain souvenirs, and instead head over to **Merceria Portuguesa** (mercariaportuguesa.com) at Albergue 1601 for beautifully packaged traditional Portuguese soaps and artisanal food items from jars of jam to traditional sweets. + **Lojas Das Conservas** (9 Tv. do Aterro Novo; 853/6571-8214) has floor-to-ceiling shelves of every type of sardine can you can think of in psychedelic packaging. + Shop Macau's local creative designs at the **MOD Design Store** (Largo da Companhia de Jesus, by St. Paul's Ruins), which carries kooky items, including T-shirts, mugs and umbrellas.

INSIDERS' TIPS



MIGUEL DE SENNA FERNANDES
LAWYER AND PLAYWRIGHT; PRESIDENT
OF THE MACANESE ASSOCIATION

Every year for the last 25 years, I write and produce a Patua play for the **Macau Arts Festival** in May as an ongoing effort to preserve Patua, our Macanese dialect.

The **Macau History Museum** and **Maritime Museum** are comprehensive places to get local history. The **Civic and Municipal Bureau** showcases artifacts dating to the 14th century. The best spot to capture Macau is behind the Ruins of St. Paul by the 15th century **Na Tcha Temple**, where you get an amazing view of old and new, with Grand Lisboa in the skyline.

Taipa Village is fantastic for colonial Portuguese architecture and shophouses.



REBECCA GLADE
PRESIDENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL
LADIES CLUB MACAO

What many don't know is the **Macallan Whiskey Bar** at the Galaxy (galaxymacau.com) makes a mean margarita, in addition to their whiskey collection. A great place for brunch in Macau is **Aurora at Altira** (altiramacau.com): great seafood and they keep your bubbles filled. Don't leave before stopping by **Quarter Square** (89 Largo Maia de Magalhães, Taipa Village; quartersquare.co) for a good cuppa; it's a neat little concept shop with well-curated home décor items. After shopping, head up to the rooftop for a lovely view of Taipa and say hello to the resident French bulldog, Copper, on your way out.



ANTHONY SOUSA TAM
MACANESE CHEF AND OWNER
OF ROOT RESTAURANT

The pork bun and egg tart are very well known foods in Macau, however there are plenty of local dishes that aren't on the tourist map. I love spicy beef noodles from **Taipa Tip Kei Sopa Fritas** (Av. de Kwong Tung 130, Edf. Nam San Black 6 r/c), and in winter I like to have a warm almond dessert at **Tin Heung Yun** (5 R. Tres do Bairro da Areia Preta) in the backstreets of Barra. We often get dim sum with the kids at **Lua Azul** (macautower.com.mo). On my days off, we go regularly to **Vencedora** (R. do Campo, 264R, Edf. Pak Nin Son) a Portuguese restaurant I have been going to since I was a toddler.