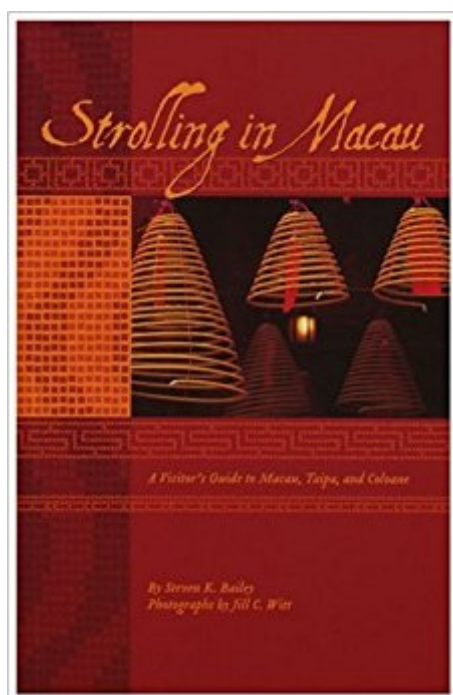


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Strolling In Macau: A Visitor's Guide To Macau, Taipa, And Coloane



Synopsis

This guidebook is designed to help visitors navigate Macaus maze of narrow streets as well as understand the striking contrasts that make this city such a fascinating place to visit. With its compact size, winding back streets, and pedestrian-only lanes and plazas, Macau is best explored on foot. Though geared to those who wish to experience Macau at a walking pace, Strolling in Macau will serve any visitor interested in the history and culture of one of Asias most unique cities.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"His words weave a magic that compels you to want to personify Macau's ancient Portuguese explorers and find your own piece of inspiration somewhere in Macau." --Kimberly Johans - Macau Daily Times

Bailey has written for a variety of travel publications and is a long-time contributor to ThingsAsian Press. The author of Strolling in Macau: A Visitor's Guide to Macau, Taipa, and Coloane, he specializes in northern Vietnam, Hong Kong, and Macau.

I bought this book a week before my trip to Macau and was expecting the book to be useful in terms of getting me to the sites that the book mentioned. The book sounds more editorial than informative and definitely lacks photos & images. It also did not have a comprehensive map of Macau or the islands. So it is definitely not a reliable tour book. The book only includes close up maps of the walking trails, so it was difficult to see what part of Macau it was in. The trails were mostly all part of

what is now designated the "World Heritage site of Macau", which the book also failed to mention. It also doesn't mention how to get to these areas from the harbor, as it was about a 40 minute walk through some not so tourist friendly areas to get here. Word of advice, take a taxi because it is cheap, and it will help you avoid the shady areas. That's what we did to get back to the harbor. There are free maps at the harbor that you definitely want to pick up, and then when you get to the World Heritage "town" you can pick up a map of the "town" and it keys all the historic sites that you will want to visit. We didn't even bother using the book after that. It was completely useless and a waste of money.

Known for centuries as a colonial backwater, Macau has undergone a dramatic transformation into a giant metropolis rivaling that of its cousin colony, Hong Kong. Being the only piece of land in China that has legalized gambling, it draws in wealth and development almost in perpetuity. Indeed, Macao is one of Asia's best kept secret. Alluding to that, writer Steven Bailey provides a comprehensive review of the history of Macao as a Portuguese colony; its glorious age as an international entrepôt, the Dutch threatened invasion in the 17th century, its gradual decline into the background beneath the shadow of Hong Kong, and its recent resurrection as a cosmopolitan city to be reckoned with; all the way from 400 years ago to its return to China in 1999. Though the casinos make an indelible imprint on Macao, this book is not written for the gambling enthusiast, as the writer insists. (If you are one, you probably won't need a travel guide book anyway). Strolling in Macau is really for the strollers. Do you like to sightsee as you walk; and drop in on some random restaurant serving local delicacies? Do you like visiting museums, lighthouses, old temples, church ruins, market vendors? Are you interested in not just the face and appearance of the city but would like to feel the very pulse and beat of it? Then you find kindred spirits in this book. You see, behind the megaton cranes, searing skyscrapers and 5-star casino hotels, Macao contains a rich heritage of Cantonese culture mixed with Portuguese. Buildings, foods, languages, and the people are a unique East-meets-West blend. Interestingly, in *Strolling in Macao*, Mr. Bailey provides not just a list of addresses as to where to go, but painstakingly maps out every step of the way; reminiscent of a treasure hunt guide. For example, after reaching the Porta d'Amaz da Fortaleza, the stroller is advised to pass through the gate to discover a 'small little known café tucked away inside the ramparts' for a cup of good coffee and to catch the 'cooling sea breeze', which would not otherwise be caught if one does not venture to the upper ramparts of the fortress. In the spirit of contrasts, Macao stands out not only in culture and beverages (i.e. European red wine alongside Chinese brandy and herbal brews) but also in geographical landscapes. The

intrepid traveler is enticed to visit the little known island of Coloane which houses 1% of Macao's population and is zoned out as a green territory for a healthy countryside hike. Operating as a husband and wife team, Strolling in Macau provides maps and snapshots that are both picturesque and telling. It is that sort of book that is both an informative journal and a seducing advertisement. I believe this book does much justice to this inimitable peninsula found on the tip of southern China, jutting out like appendix, not unlike Italy is to Europe. Indeed, who would have known that the romance of Europe and the esotericism of Asia can be found in this 'backwater colony' of Macao?

It's alarming that this is the only guidebook devoted entirely to Macau. The good news is, it's quite good! There's a wonderful balance of practical information and anecdotal information/ideas for a trip. You can feel the author's passion for Macau and it's very inspiring. Of course Macau is a city that is very much on the move these days, so hopefully he'll continue updating it. The guidebook is very recent, and thus very accurate -- but the scene is changing by the minute. Bravo!

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