



MACAU: WEST PEARL RIVER ANCHOR

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FAST FACTS		Similar To
Urban Area Population	450,000	Colorado Springs, Brighton, Strausburg
Urban Land Area: Square Miles	9	Haiphong
Urban Land Area: Square Kilometers	23	
Population per Square Mile	51,800	Lagos, Mumbai, Suwon
Population per Square Kilometer	23,000	
*Continuously built up area		

22 August 2005

From Colony to Special Economic Region: Macau was established as a Portuguese colony in the 16th century, approximately 300 years before the British took Hong Kong. Like Hong Kong, Macau is a special administrative region of China, under its “one China, two systems” policy. Macau reverted to Chinese sovereignty in 1999.

Geography: Macau is located across the mouth of the Pearl River, approximately 40 miles from Hong Kong. Guangzhou, the capital of Guangdong, is 70 miles upriver. Macau consists of three islands. The most populous and northern most island is Macau. Macau is connected to Taipa by three bridges, while Taipa is connected to Coloane by reclaimed land, on which sits the inspection post for travel to mainland China. Zuhai is across a narrow channel from all three islands and is a special economic zone, like Shenzhen. Unlike Shenzhen, however, Zuhai has seen only modest economic growth. The towers of Zuhai are visible from many angles in Macau.



Access to Macau: Macau can be easily accessed from Hong Kong. Generally, no visa is required. Ferry service is frequent from the Macau ferry terminal in Central. There is a boat at least every 15 minutes through most of the day, with a travel time of one-hour. The lowest round trip fare is HK\$144, less than US\$20. A premium service is available, but there is no reason not to travel in economy class. There are serious plans to build a “Y” shaped bridge linking Macau, Hong Kong and Shenzhen, with construction tentatively planned to begin this decade.

Old Town and New: The development on Macau might be thought of as “old town” and “new town.” The ferry terminal is on the northeast corner of the island, adjacent to new town. There is a “Sands” casino, which appears to be a principal reason for tourist visits to Macau. There are also wide streets with moderate sized office and commercial buildings. The downtown area of new town looks vaguely similar to downtown San Jose --- modest and not likely to grow much.

The old town is much more interesting. The buildings are lower rise, though there are a number of tall residential towers. The architecture is similar to what is found in the old town of Singapore or the older sections of Kowloon.

High-Church Buddhism: And, as would be expected in an oriental setting influenced by centuries of European colonization, there are a number of churches and Buddhist temples. Anglicans will immediately recognize the Buddhist Temples as “high-church,” with their dense air of incense. A pleasing fragrance.

Transport: For whatever reason, the locals have been spared the usual infrastructure envy that sites light rail and Metros in the most inappropriate places. Here, of course, the geography is so limited that a Metro route length might be less than the length of the trains. Public transport is buses and minibuses. But it would not be surprising if personal transport has the market share advantage. As in Malaysian and other emerging urban areas, the motorcycle or motorbike has a large share. There are large parking lots for these vehicles, which serve as a poor person’s car until the car itself can be afforded. There are many cars in Macau, and it seems likely that the ratio of cars to households is higher here than in much more affluent Hong Kong.

By Wendell Cox

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Crossing to Macau



Bridge to Taipa



Residential Development: Taipa



Bridge to Taipa



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Bridge to Taipa



Bridges to Taipa



Old Macau



Old Macau



Old Macau



Residential Buildings



Old Macau



Old Macau



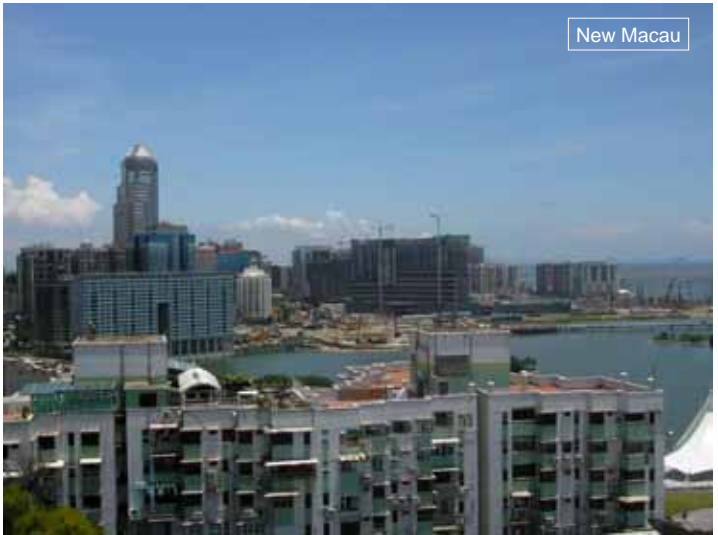
Residential Buildings



Residential Building



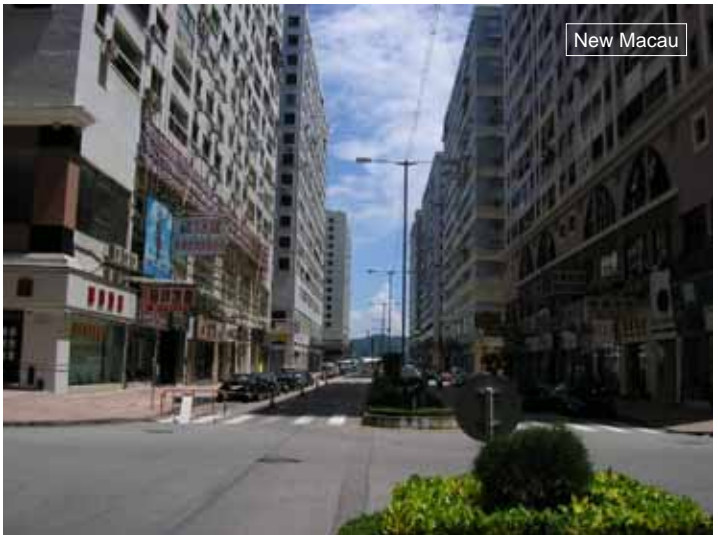
Church of Sao Paulo



New Macau



New Macau
And Zuhai SEZ Beyond



New Macau



New Macau
Sands Casino
At End of Street



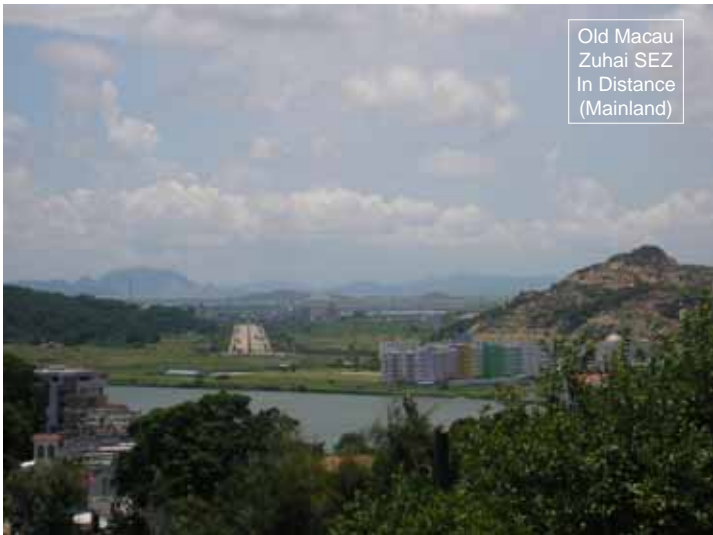
New Macau



Old Macau
Zuhai SEZ
In Distance
(Mainland)



Old Macau
Zuhai SEZ
In Distance
(Mainland)



Old Macau
Zuhai SEZ
In Distance
(Mainland)



Residences