

Schedule at a Glance

Registration opens	January 1, 2017
Registration deadline	April 15, 2017
Arrival in Hong Kong	June 20–21
Conference dates	June 22–28
Cultural tour	June 29–30
Departure	July 1

Tours to Cultural Sites in Hong Kong

A two-day tour of Buddhist cultural sites in and around Hong Kong will follow the conference. The tour will include notable Buddhist monasteries (Tung Lin Kok Yuen, Tsz Shan Monastery, Chi Lin Nunnery) and the famous sights of Lantau Island. Itineraries and arranged sightseeing are subject to change at any time. Additional independent tours to China, Macau, and other locations of cultural interest can be arranged through local travel agencies. Comfortable walking shoes that easily slip on and off will be most convenient.

Travel Tips

Book your flight to arrive at Hong Kong Airport on June 21, at the latest. A range of accommodations is available, for different budgets. Accommodations in Hong Kong are expensive, so be sure to book immediately to ensure your choice of accommodations. Suggestions for places near the conference site are posted on the Sakyadhita website.

Hong Kong's climate is tropical, with high humidity. In June, temperatures range from 23 °C (73 °F) to 33 °C (91 °F). There are occasional downpours of rain. Light cotton clothing, sandals or comfortable walking shoes, and an umbrella are recommended. A good sun protection is also highly recommended. If you suffer from pollen allergies, be aware that many flowers bloom in June in Hong Kong, for example, African lily, Chinese quinine, and Chinese hibiscus. Please prepare accordingly.

For further information, please email: Karma Lekshe Tsomo (tsomo@sandiego.edu), Amy Yu (cbsevent@hku.hk).

Registration (All costs in HKD)

Online registration and further details are available at www.sakyadhita.org. Space is limited, so register early to ensure a spot. Please note that registration fees are non-refundable.

- * Earlybird registration by March 1: HKD460 (around US\$60)
- * Registration by April 15: HKD620 (around US\$80)
- * Late registration by May 15: HKD770 (around US\$100)
- * Breakfast and lunch (vegetarian, June 23–28): by donation (Please note that breakfast will *not* be provided on June 22)
- * Two-day temple tour: HKD420 (around US\$55)

Arrival Information

Participants are responsible for their own transportation to and from the airport. Airport transportation to the conference site by taxi is very convenient.

Be sure to check the visa requirements for citizens from your country with Hong Kong's Immigration Department: <http://www.immd.gov.hk/eng/services/visas/visit-transit/visit-visa-entry-permit.html>.

Conference Highlights

- * Buddhist Women of Hong Kong
- * Buddhism & Social Action
- * Women Buddhist Practitioners: Mind the Gender Gap
- * Female Images of Enlightenment
- * Western Buddhist Women: Tradition & Interpretation
- * and many more available on the conference website

Organizers

Sakyadhita
International Association
of Buddhist Women



Co-organizers



Major Sponsor



15th Sakyadhita International Conference on Buddhist Women

**“Contemporary Buddhist Women:
Contemplation, Cultural Exchange
& Social Action”**

June 22 to 28, 2017

The University of Hong Kong

Sakyadhita is pleased to announce that the 15th Sakyadhita International Conference on Buddhist Women will be held at The University of Hong Kong (HKU). With the cooperation of the HKU Centre of Buddhist Studies and other organizations in the city, the conference will offer a variety of meditations, research papers workshops, cultural performances, and Buddhist teachings. With a spotlight on Buddhist women and contemporary issues, we welcome all voices at the Sakyadhita conferences – people of all genders, lay and ordained of all ages, nationalities, and perspectives.

Sakyadhita, Compassion, and Social Justice

Buddhism is a significant cultural force in our world, influencing virtually every sphere of human activity from business to popular music. The global spread of Buddhist ethics, iconography, meditation, and philosophy is having an impact on science, psychology, government, and the arts. Today, women have more pathways for developing their spiritual and intellect resources than at any other time in recorded history. Whether the choice is between career, family, or monastery, women are expanding beyond traditional roles in creative and beneficial ways. Women also take different paths and approaches to spirituality. Depending on their cultural backgrounds and personal interests, they may be inclined to meditation, scholarship, social activism, or the arts.

The 2017 conference theme is meant to be broad enough to encompass the many aspects of what Buddhism means to women and to embrace the range of Buddhist women's experiences. "Contemplation" includes personal introspection, mindfulness practice, meditation, and reflection on contemporary life issues. "Cultural exchange" incorporates interreligious dialogue, indigenous Buddhist experience, inter-generational dialogue, and Buddhist transcultural exchange, expressed through music, literature, drama, painting, social media, and the martial arts. "Social action" takes many forms, including education, charitable activities, social entrepreneurship, community leadership, and other ways of transforming society. The 15th Sakyadhita Conference will be a forum for making connections across cultures and traditions, exploring a wide range of Buddhist teachings, values, and techniques for living a meaningful life.

Sakyadhita – Awakening Buddhist Women

In recent decades, attention to the topic of women in Buddhism has expanded dramatically. Since the 1960s, interest in Buddhism has grown exponentially throughout the world. This flourishing has been facilitated by great Buddhist teachers, new research and contemporary publications on Buddhism, the Internet, the development of outstanding Buddhist educational centers, and an abundance of vibrant Buddhist social services. The recent wave of interest in Buddhism has coincided with an increasing public awareness of women's capabilities and potential. Although the Buddha acknowledged women's equal capacity for awakening and countless women have achieved liberation, today many women, who are keen to learn Dharma have no access to Buddhist education, nor are they adequately represented in Buddhist institutions. Since 1987, Sakyadhita has created forums to discuss these and other issues that are central to the lives of Buddhist women.

Buddhism in Hong Kong

The history of Buddhism in Hong Kong stretches back to the early centuries CE. As a foreign religion from India, introduced to China via the Silk Road in the northwest and by sea in the south, the Buddha's teachings were not initially understood or welcomed. Buddhist ideals of renunciation, monasticism, and individual enlightenment were at odds

with Confucian ideals of filial piety, procreation, and social duty. Buddhist culture reached its peak during the Tang Dynasty (618-907) and, over time, became part of the Chinese religious landscape. Buddhas and bodhisattvas were venerated along with the ancestors. Daoists and Buddhists exchanged views on meditation, and Confucians and Buddhists found common ground in matters of ethics. Today, many Buddhists in Hong Kong and Chinese diaspora communities around the world draw inspiration from all of these traditions.

The variety of Hong Kong's Buddhist temples, centers, and retreat centers rivals other major metropolises. Although best known as a commercial and financial haven, Hong Kong's religious and spiritual pursuits also play an important role in cultural life. Colorful urban temples and sylvan hermitages vie for the attention of pilgrims and tourists alike. Temple gardens, Buddhist lectures, art exhibits, meditation retreats, and a multitude of Buddhist cultural events are increasingly popular. Devotees may choose from a wide variety of Buddhist schools, including Chan, Pure Land, Tiantai, Huayen, and a variety of Tibetan traditions. The beloved Guanyin, bodhisattva of compassion, is a central object of devotion. Like elsewhere in Asia and around the world, Buddhism today has become very popular among college-educated youth and professionals.

Life and Culture in Hong Kong

Hong Kong ("Fragrant Harbor"), comprised of Hong Kong Island, Kowloon, and the New Territories, is a vibrant territory, teeming with life and creativity. Under British rule from 1841 to 1997, English is commonly heard alongside Cantonese and myriad other languages, spurring its growth as a major global crossroads. With a panoramic view of the South China Sea, Hong Kong boasts a cutting-edge art scene, an enviable public transportation system, and hills that are a hiker's delight. The city offers a wide range of cuisines, from dim sum to high tea to fast food, with countless restaurants serving delicious vegetarian dishes. Famed as a financial capital and shoppers' paradise, it offers the visitor much more. Take in the Hong Kong Heritage Museum, the statue of Bruce Lee on the Avenue of Stars, Cantonese pop, qigong, fishing villages with homes on stilts, and skyscrapers over Victoria Harbour. Also notable, according to recent data, women in Hong Kong boast the longest life expectancy in the world.