

# Macau, My Home

## 我的家，澳門

Sarah Feather

*Sarah Feather is an English teacher at the MPI Bell Centre. She came to visit her family in 1988 and ended up staying for more than 25 years ...*


Macau was a very different city 25 years ago. I remember in Taipa there were only three high-rises – the University of Macau, the Hyatt Hotel and Pak Lok Building. The landscape now is dramatically different. And back in the day there were only a handful of foreigners. It was a small community where everyone knew everyone else. Now the number of foreigners here is by the thousands and the feel of life has morphed from that of a provincial town to an international city's.

Some things have remained the same and become even better over the years. Ask any local what his favourite cuisine is and he'll tell you it's Cantonese cuisine, and with good reason. What seems quintessential to Macau is Dim Sum. If I ever leave, that will be the thing I miss the most. I love those small steaming baskets! After 25 years of dim sum, I can still be surprised by new dishes I didn't dream existed. And it's not just the quality and array; it's also

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今天的澳門和二十五年前很不同，我記得那時的氹仔島上只聳立著澳門大學、凱悅酒店和“伯樂花園”大廈三幢高樓，而現在，澳門的城市面貌已和過往大相徑庭。以前，澳門只住著屈指可數的外國人，我們的社群內所有人都彼此認識；時至今日，澳門的外國人數已成千上萬，澳門也從一個小城鎮搖身一變成為了一座國際化大都市了。

不過，有些事物還保留著原來的樣子，或是隨著時間的推移越變越好。如果問一個本地人最喜愛的菜餚是哪一種，他們會回答是廣東菜，且理由充分。澳門的代表性佳餚是廣式茶點，若有朝一日我離開澳門，那將會是我最記掛於心的東西。我實在太愛這些熱氣騰騰的小蒸籠了！二十五年來我嚐遍了廣式茶點，但仍舊會驚



the culture of taking time off work, drinking tea and spending time with family and friends. As well as Cantonese food, and cuisines of all the other regions of China, we have Macanese food, Portuguese, Thai, Italian ... the range and quality of restaurants in Macau is amazing and the prices are affordable, making it a great place for any food lover to live.

Education is something that has also changed and improved a lot over the years. My brothers were 14 and 16 respectively when they arrived. The younger went to study in Yuet Wah whilst the elder went straight out to work, the first foreigner to work at a Macau McDonald's. Fast-forwarding a few years, they've both done very well. The younger is a solicitor at a top firm in London whilst the other is in Macau running his own company. Opportunities in education are unlimited these days. There are a number of universities to choose from, providing a wider range of courses (especially in arts) and subsidies and scholarships, which means that the kids here have more opportunities than ever before. And not just the youngsters, but adults also have lots of options to study for both vocational and degree programs. The Macau Polytechnic Institute has the very popular Senior Academy. My nephews both graduated from high school this year and although they had the option to go overseas, they chose to study in the University of Macau as it had the best courses for both of them, and they are now living in the University dorms, another new thing that I think is great for Macau's young people. They

歎其意想不到的新花樣。廣式點心不但風味和賣相俱佳，且體現了廣東人在工作之餘與家人朋友共聚時光、飲茶談天的文化。澳門除了有廣東菜和中國各系菜色外，澳門風味葡國餐、傳統葡國餐、泰國菜、義大利菜等異國風味也比比皆是。澳門餐廳的種類包羅萬有，美味且價格合理，這也使澳門成為了美食愛好者的理想居住地。

澳門的教育近年來也同樣進步顯著。我的兩個弟弟來到澳門時分別是十四和十六歲，弟弟入讀了粵華中學，而哥哥則開始工作，成為了第一張在澳門麥當勞工作的外國面孔。匆匆數年之後，他們都事業有成。弟弟在倫敦一間知名企業擔任律師，而哥哥則在澳門經營私人公司。現今，澳門擁有無限的教育機會。有很多大學可供選擇，科目也一應俱全（特別是在藝術領域），並提供了津貼及獎學金，使年青人有了更寬廣的升學前景。成年人同樣也可獲得更多職業或學位課程的進修機會，如澳門理工學院就有著極具人氣的長者書院。我的兩個侄子今年剛高中畢業，



get the chance to live away from home and yet to be close enough to family because of the convenience of transport.

Compared with most other countries, the employment situation here is also very good. Unemployment is almost unheard of and there are bright prospects for both those who decide to continue their education and those who opt to join the workforce immediately after high school. The main concentration of jobs is, of course, in the gaming and hospitality sector, but I think that future diversification would perhaps offer a wider range of choices and more stability to the economy. And there are still professional areas, such as in medicine and science, which require overseas studies.

Macau is a very dynamic city where language is concerned. In addition to Cantonese, Mandarin, English and Portuguese, you can hear Tagalog, Thai ... so many different languages spoken at any time of the day anywhere in Macau! I'm ashamed to tell people I don't speak Cantonese after all these

他們都獲得了海外升學的機會，但由於澳門大學提供了他們心儀的課程，所以選擇留在本地就讀。他們現在住在大學宿舍裏，這點又是澳門學生的福氣，他們既可離開家人體驗獨立式生活，又因澳門交通方便而可以與家人很接近。

和很多其他國家相比，澳門的就業前景良好，失業情況幾乎聞所未聞，無論是選擇升學，或高中畢業後直接投身職場，前程同樣都很美好。澳門主要的職位集中在博彩和酒店業，但我認為市場可能應該進一步多元化，並可能提供更多領域的就業機會，以及帶來穩定的經濟發展。然而，一些醫學或科學等專業，則仍需前往海外學習。

就語言這點而言，澳門是個充滿活力的地方。你隨時隨地可聽到不同的語言—除了粵語、普通話、英語和葡語外，你還能聽到菲律賓語、泰語。我在澳門住了



years, but I try to use this as a language lesson for my students – with language, people mostly learn what they need to know to survive. So I can travel by taxi and order food... you can survive in Macau with a smattering of mostly anything. It's always an adventure!

An often overlooked huge plus to living in Macau is safety. Macau is a safe city. Apart from pick-pocketing, which I'm sure pretty much everyone has at some point been a victim to, Macau is a very safe place to live, with low street crime. I don't know many people who've been mugged, for example, and we seldom hear of rapes or crimes involving children.

I think the greatest challenges to life in Macau at the moment are in housing and the environment. It's very difficult to buy an apartment right now, and rents are high. On the other hand, there are similar problems in many

這麼多年，每當我告訴別人仍不會說粵語時，我都挺不好意思的。然而在語言課堂上，我會告訴學生這個道理：人們通常學懂一些會幫助自己生存的東西。在澳門只要對大多數事物都有一點點掌握，便可生存，所以，我能乘坐計程車，或在餐廳點菜。在澳門生活天天都如同一場歷奇！

澳門是一個安全的地方，這也是在此居住的另一個通常被忽略的大優點，但澳門有扒手，所以，我敢肯定大部份人都有差點被偷的經歷吧。除此以外，在澳門居住非常安全，街道犯罪率很低，甚少聽聞有搶劫，強姦或與幼童有關的犯罪案件。

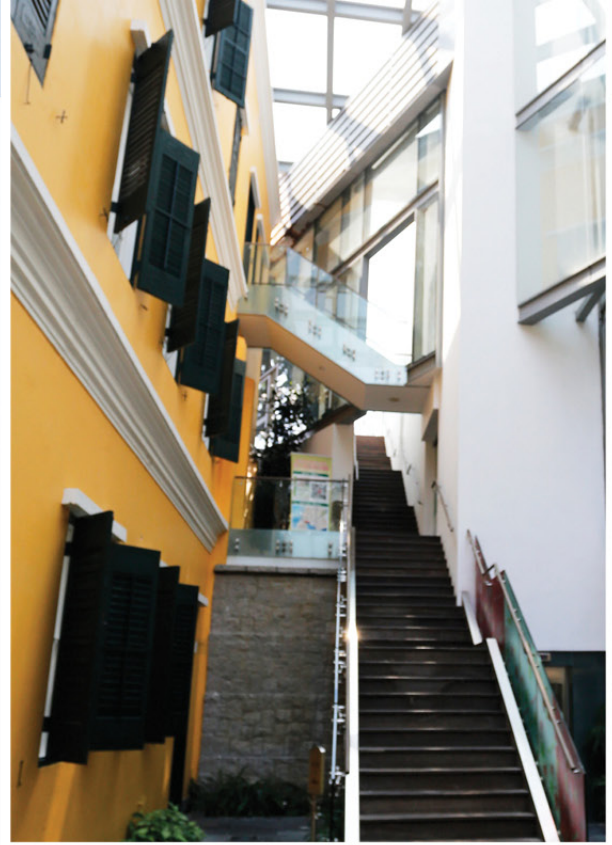
我認為澳門當下面臨的最大難題是住屋及環境問題，現在已經很難在澳門買到房子了，租金也很高昂。此類問題在其他



other parts of the world, too. But I'd definitely like to see more affordable housing options for local people. In terms of the environment, Macau is becoming increasingly polluted and it seems that there is a general lack of awareness when it comes to energy saving and recycling. But even that is changing.

What are the things that make Macau such a special place to me? Lou Lim Ieok Garden early in the morning, the Guia Lighthouse at dusk, St. Paul's Ruins, the Sir Robert Ho Tung Library and the Dom Pedro Theatre, to name just a few. Also on the list are the bustling market streets around the Red Market, the Coloane village with the famous egg tarts, Taipa Village and the Carmel Church. Many cities tout themselves as 'international' but, to me, Macau is really an international city because of its unique fusion of Chinese and Western architecture, cuisines and lively day-to-day life involving people from so many countries and cultures.

We are now in the season of moon cakes and fireworks. The holidays in Macau are charming ... with the merriment of the Mid-Autumn Festival, the Chinese New Year, the Dragon Boat Festival and the Feast of the



地區也並非新鮮事，但我仍希望本地居民能有更多選擇，可購買接近其經濟承受能力的樓宇。至於環境方面，澳門環境污染日益加劇，而民眾對於節約能源和廢物回收等問題還缺少環保意識，但這一點也正朝著好的方面在轉變。

有什麼事物使澳門對我而言是個特別的地方？清晨時刻的盧廉若公園、黃昏時分的東望洋燈塔，大三巴牌坊、何東圖書館、崗頂劇院，還有紅街市周圍那熙熙攘攘的熱鬧街道、路環島上的葡撻、嘉模聖母教堂，都點綴了我心中的澳門。很多城市都為自己冠以“國際化都市”的名號，但在我看來，澳門才確確實實是一座國際之都，融合了獨特的東西方建築風格及佳餚，匯聚了來自四面八方、文化各異的人們，每一天都是那麼的生機勃勃。

現在正值中秋及煙火表演的季節，澳



Hungry Ghosts. And October usually comes with the Macau International Music Festival. The Grand Prix takes place in November, soon followed by the Macau Trail Hiker, and then there is the Marathon in December. There're so many things to do in this small city, where, however, many people list their favourite hobby as sleeping!

Macau is really my home. Having been here for so many years, I am in love with the culture, the place, the food, and the people. I can walk safely down the street at any time of the day and stop for an espresso at a street café or a bowl of noodles at a “dai pai dong”. I can go out to Coloanne and run the trails and gather some greenery.

Both my sons were born here. People often ask them, “Where are you from?” “Macau,” they answer. “No .... But where are you REALLY from?” “From Macau, my home.”

門的節日也魅力非凡，中秋佳節、農曆新年、端午節、盂蘭節，個個都洋溢著節日色彩。十月份有“澳門國際音樂節”，十一月則有“格蘭披治大賽車”，緊接著有“澳門遠足者”和十二月份的馬拉松大賽。在這個小城市可以做的是那麼多，可是許多人最大的興趣居然依舊是睡覺！

澳門真的是我家。在此居住了這麼多年，我已深深愛上了這裏的文化、地方、食物和市民。無論在何時，我都可以安心地出門，在路邊的咖啡店喝上一杯蒸餾咖啡，在大排檔吃上一碗麵，或是去路環山徑慢跑，採集一些綠色植物。

我的兩個兒子都在澳門出生。人們常常問我來自哪裏，我會回答來自澳門，他們會說：“不，我是指你家在哪裡？”  
“我來自澳門，這裏便是我的家。”