



Let's learn about the history and culture of Macao.

**Developing Readers**



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# Tracing our Roots in Macao



By Barbara Lowe



## Dear Parents,

Reading plays a very important role in second-language learning. It helps young learners build the basic foundations for learning the English language. It opens up the imagination and creates new possibilities.

Reading helps our children to relate to and understand the world around us. Reading teaches us to empathise with others and enhances our character.

We hope that, through reading, our children will discover the light that comes with us on life's journey.

The Curriculum Team

Written by Barbara Lowe

Edited by Frances Strachan

Designed by Fred Aulas

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# Tracing our Roots in Macao

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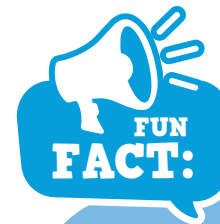
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## The History of Macao

Macao was once a small fishing village at the mouth of the Pearl River. Now, Macao is the most densely populated region in the world! Do you know that there are around 21,000 people per square kilometre in Macao?



There are only 0.03 people per square kilometre in *Greenland* - the world's least densely populated region!

About 400 years ago, some travellers from Portugal arrived in Macao by sea and began trading goods. Some of these merchants settled in the area, married local women and raised families.

Over the years, Macao became an important trading post, linking Eastern and Western cultures. For many years, Macao was ruled as a Portuguese **colony**<sup>1</sup>, until it was returned to China on 20 December 1999.

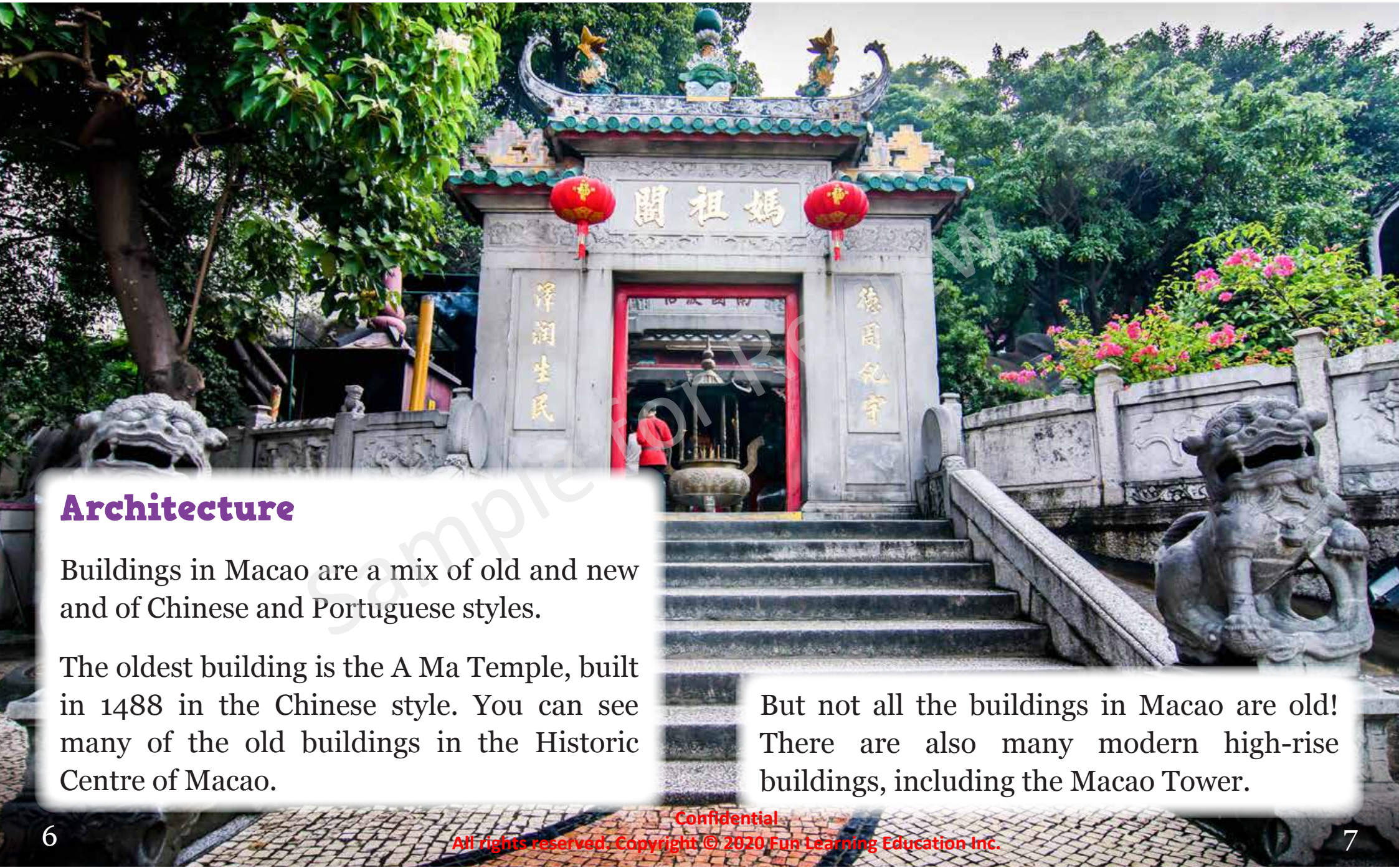
It continues to **thrive**<sup>2</sup> as an important tourist **destination**<sup>3</sup> today.

<sup>1</sup> A **colony** is a territory or country that is ruled by another country.

<sup>2</sup> Something that **thrives** does very well.

<sup>3</sup> A **destination** is a place where someone is going.





## Architecture

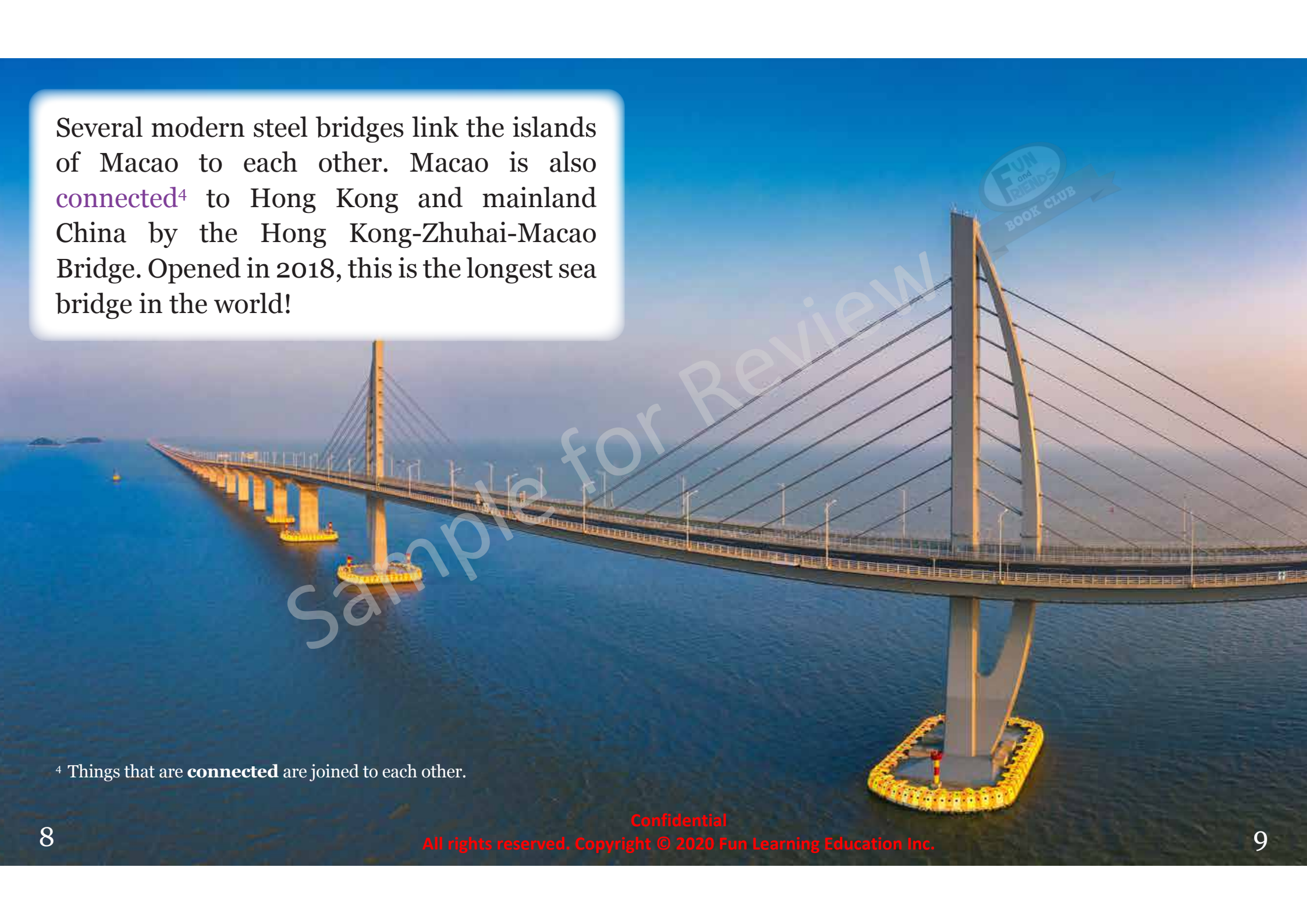
Buildings in Macao are a mix of old and new and of Chinese and Portuguese styles.

The oldest building is the A Ma Temple, built in 1488 in the Chinese style. You can see many of the old buildings in the Historic Centre of Macao.

But not all the buildings in Macao are old! There are also many modern high-rise buildings, including the Macao Tower.



Several modern steel bridges link the islands of Macao to each other. Macao is also **connected**<sup>4</sup> to Hong Kong and mainland China by the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge. Opened in 2018, this is the longest sea bridge in the world!



<sup>4</sup> Things that are **connected** are joined to each other.

## Language

In the past, people from around the world settled in Macao and brought their languages with them. Today, as you walk around the streets, you will hear people speaking Chinese, English and Portuguese.

Most people speak Cantonese as their first language. However, both Chinese and Portuguese are official languages in the **territory**<sup>5</sup>, and these languages are used in all official documents. English is also widely spoken and is used in trade and **tourism**<sup>6</sup>.

**Can you speak Portuguese?**

<sup>5</sup> A **territory** is an area of land forming part of a country.

<sup>6</sup> **Tourism** is the area of business that caters for people who travel for pleasure.

你好!

Olá!

Hello!

Do you know how to say  
'Hello!' in Portuguese?





## Cuisine

Food is a very important part of Macao's culture.

When Portuguese people settled in Macao, they also brought their recipes with them. Over the years, these mixed with local dishes to create a separate Macao **cuisine**<sup>7</sup>. This is often regarded as the world's first **fusion**<sup>8</sup> cuisine.

<sup>7</sup>A **cuisine** is a particular style of cooking.

<sup>8</sup>**Fusion** food is a mix of different types of food.

Today, this mix of Chinese and Portuguese foods contains some very popular dishes. These include 'bacalhau', a tasty dish of salted fish that originally came from Portugal. Also, bakeries throughout the territory sell Portuguese egg tarts. Sweet and creamy, these are served warm straight from the oven! Some dishes are unique to Macao; these include pork chop buns and Serradura! Spicy dishes like Chinese-style crab curry are also very popular.

**Be creative!**  
**Can you think of a new  
mixed dish?**







## Religion

The large number of temples and churches in the territory reflect the importance of religion in its historical past. Some of the religious beliefs people in the territory have include Buddhism, Chinese Folk religions and Christianity.

Chinese Folk religions have the largest following, and over half of the population make visits to temples during the year.

Catholicism was brought to Macao by Portuguese traders and was once very important in the territory. There are still many people in Macao who follow the Catholic faith.

**What about you?  
Do you belong to a  
religious group?**







## Cultural Heritage in Macao

Macao is an important World Heritage Site. Its historic centre contains over twenty areas with beautiful, historic buildings and streets. These buildings include temples, churches and an ancient fort. Again, they are a mix of Portuguese and Chinese styles, and reflect the territory's past and its links to both Eastern and Western cultures.

These historic buildings are **preserved**<sup>9</sup> and protected by law so that they can be enjoyed by everyone, both today and in the future.

<sup>9</sup>Things that are **preserved** are looked after carefully.

## Information for Visitors – The Ruins of St. Paul's



Location: Rua de São Paulo, Macao

History: Work started on this Catholic church in 1602. It is built of white stone and took nearly 30 years to complete. It was one of the largest churches in Asia at that time, being 27 metres high. The building **dominated**<sup>10</sup> the area and stood intact for nearly

200 years, serving the local Catholic community. Tragically, during a typhoon in 1835 a fire destroyed most of the building. Now, only the front of the building remains. The ruins are protected and form part of the Historic Centre of Macao.

## The Macao Tower



Macao Tower, Macao

The Macao Tower Bungy Jump is 223m high. It is the Guinness World Record holder of the Highest Commercial Bungee Jump in the world! Jumpers leap from a platform 233m above the ground and experience the **ultimate**<sup>11</sup> free fall experience.

Macao Tower also offers other activities like Skywalk and Skyjump, which are slightly less terrifying!

*Opening hours:*  
10 a.m. to 10 p.m. every day.

<sup>10</sup> A building that **dominated** an area was bigger than any other building in that area.

<sup>11</sup> An **ultimate** experience is one that is better than any other experience.



# Taipa Old Village



This small village is a good place for tourists to visit. Its tranquil<sup>12</sup> streets make a welcome change from the bustle<sup>13</sup> of city life.

You can spend some time wandering slowly around the narrow streets and shopping in the local stores. The open-air flea market is held on Saturdays and is a must for picking up souvenirs! As for culture and history, there are many art

galleries, temples and churches to visit. And when you are tired, you can stop for a great meal at one of the popular restaurants.

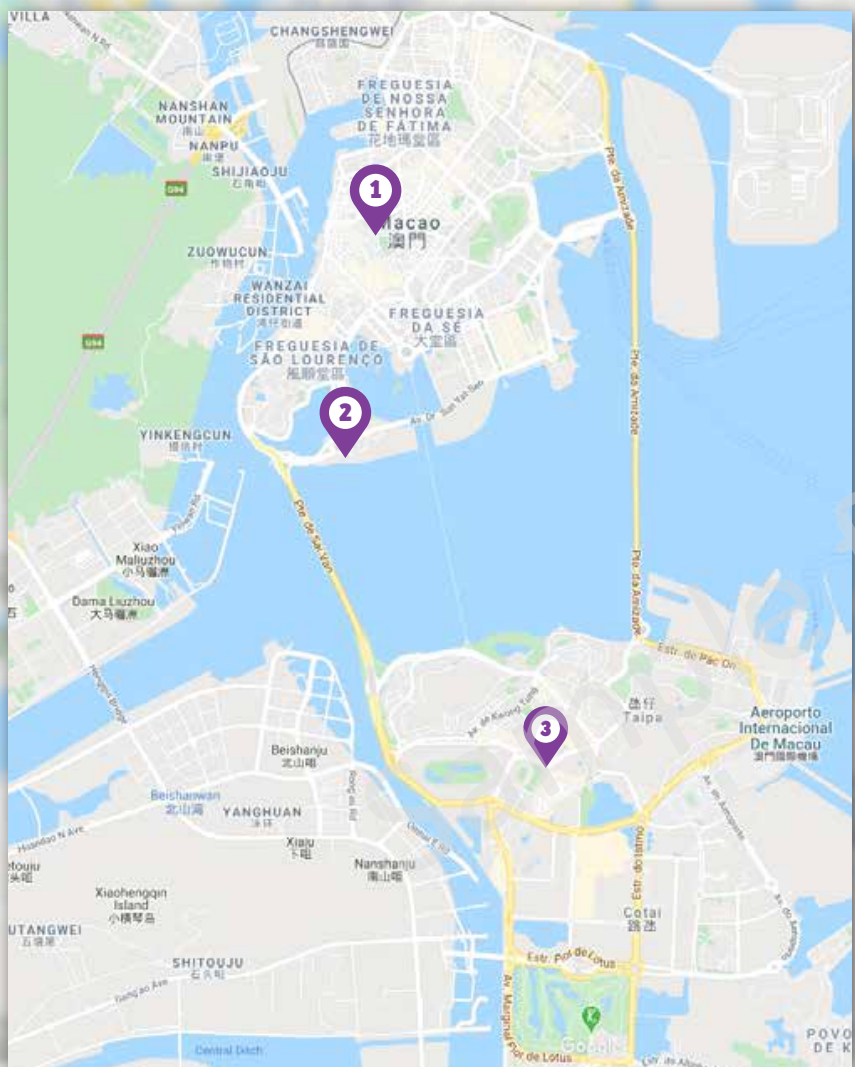


*Getting there:*  
Public transport around the territory is cheap and frequent. From the ferry

terminal you can take a taxi or a bus, or from the main hotel area on Taipa, you can walk.

<sup>12</sup> Somewhere that is **tranquil** is very quiet.

<sup>13</sup> **Bustle** describes the noise and activity in a busy place.



**1. The Ruins of St. Paul's**



**2. The Macao Tower**



**3. Taipa Old Village**

Macao is a place rich in history and culture. It is **unique**<sup>14</sup>, too! What can you do to protect its culture and buildings? How can you attract visitors to come and visit this wonderful place?

**Do you know any other special places? Where are they? What makes them special?**

<sup>14</sup> Something **unique** is different to everything else.



# Activities

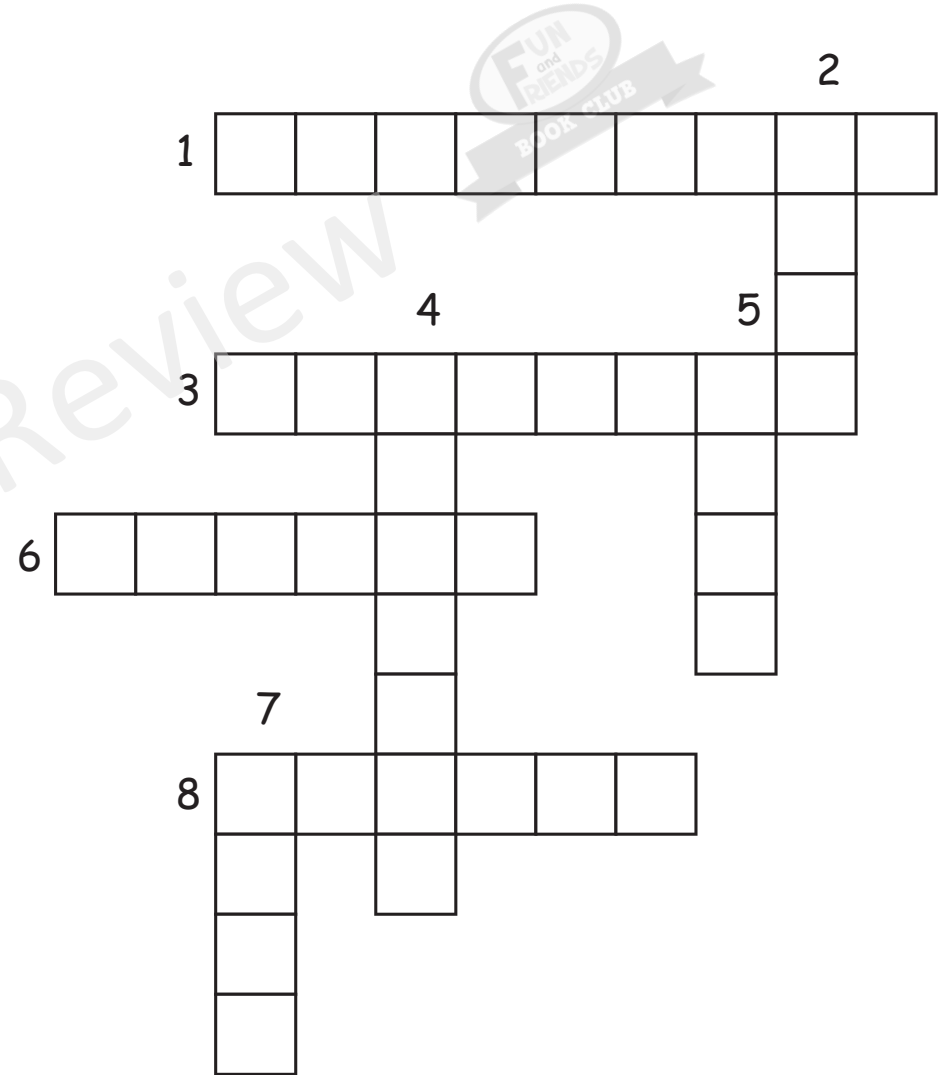
## A. Complete the crossword about Macao

### Across

1. You can buy \_\_\_\_\_ at the market.
3. Buddhism is a \_\_\_\_\_.
6. A \_\_\_\_\_ is ruled by another country.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ food is a mix of different cuisines.

### Down

2. St. Paul's church is a \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge is the \_\_\_\_\_ sea bridge in the world.
5. The Macau Tower is \_\_\_\_\_ all day.
7. 'Bacalhau' is a \_\_\_\_\_ dish.



B. What is your favourite place? Why do you like it? What do you do there? Write about it below. Use the words in brackets to help you.

My favourite place is \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

(name of place)

It is a \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

(garden, temple, church, library, market, restaurant, park, beach ...)

I can \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

(see, learn about, find, buy, eat, watch ...)

I like it because \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

(busy, beautiful, comfortable, interesting, old, quiet, relaxing ...)





## Language Functions and Focus

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use the passive voice to talk about activities.</li></ul>	The ruins <b>are protected</b> and form part of the Historic Centre of Macao.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use superlative adjectives to describe buildings and structures.</li></ul>	The <b>oldest</b> building is the A Ma Temple. Opened in 2018, this is the <b>longest</b> sea bridge in the world!
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use the modal verb 'can' to describe possibilities.</li></ul>	You <b>can</b> spend some time wandering slowly around the narrow streets.

## Target Vocabulary

• colony

• fusion

• thrive

• connected

• cuisine

• tourism

• destination

• preserved

• ultimate

• dominated

• territory

• unique

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