

Hong Kong Personalised Travel Pack

1. AT-A-GLANCE SAFETY

Difficulty	Reason	Confidence Note
Medium	Soy sauces contain wheat; Cantonese dishes use sauces widely. Hong Kong labels 8 allergens; gluten not mandatory.	Many venues adapt; confirm sauces and thickeners.

- **Key Cultural and Legal Allergy Considerations:** Hong Kong's food scene is diverse, but labeling for gluten can be inconsistent. While local regulations require the labeling of cereals containing gluten, enforcement varies.
- **Local Allergen Labeling Laws:** Prepackaged foods need to declare the presence of common allergens, including cereals containing gluten and milk products. However, the application of these regulations can be inconsistent.
- [Read more about allergen labeling in Hong Kong](#)
- [Visit this link](#) for more advice on navigating gluten safety in Hong Kong.

Helpful Websites

- [Hong Kong Centre for Food Safety](#) - Government site for food safety standards.
- [Gluten-Free Certification Organization](#) - Information on gluten-free certification.

2. COMMON HIDDEN RISKS

Risk	Why it's risky
Soy sauce marinades	Usually contains wheat.
Oyster sauce and hoisin	Often contain wheat and sometimes dairy traces.
Cornstarch mixes	May be cut with wheat flour in some kitchens.
Milk powders in drinks	Milk tea and coffee usually use dairy.
Bakery items	Butter, milk, and wheat are standard.

3. USUALLY SAFE BY DEFAULT

Food / Cuisine	Why it's safer
Steamed seafood with ginger	Usually plain, no wheat or dairy added.
Roast meats without glaze	Order salt and spice only, avoid sauce.
Plain congee with toppings	Rice-based and dairy-free when plain.
Stir-fried greens with garlic	Request no oyster or soy sauce.

Food / Cuisine	Why it's safer
Fresh fruit and tofu pudding	Check syrup only, avoid condensed milk.

4. MUST-TRY LOCAL FOODS

Dish / Item	Why It's Special	Notes for Safety
Steamed grouper	Classic Cantonese freshness.	Request no soy or oyster sauce.
Poached chicken	Silky texture and purity.	Ask for salt, scallion oil without soy.
Congee with fish	Comforting rice porridge.	Order plain base, add safe toppings.
Stir-fried morning glory	Fragrant garlic and wok hei.	Ask for garlic only, no sauces.
Roast goose/plain cut	Iconic savory roast.	Request no glaze, serve plain.

5. HOW TO ORDER WITHOUT STRESS

Strategy	Tip / Note
Say no soy or oyster sauce	Ask for salt, pepper, garlic only.
Choose steamed or poached	Sauces served on the side only.
Specify oil type	Ask for vegetable oil, no butter.
Confirm thickeners	Ask no starch or only cornstarch.
Show allergy card	Keep it ready before ordering.

6. EATING OUT VS CONVENIENCE FOOD

Recommended review sites:

- <https://www.openrice.com/en/hongkong>
- https://www.happycow.net/asia/china/hong_kong/
- <https://maps.google.com>
- <https://www.timeout.com/hong-kong>

Important local menu/package words or phrases:

- 豉油 — Soy sauce, usually contains wheat.
- 蠔油 — Oyster sauce, often contains wheat.
- 生抽/老抽 — Light/dark soy, both contain wheat.
- 牛奶/奶類 — Milk or dairy products.
- 無麩質 — Gluten-free label; rare on menus.

Restaurants / Cafés — up to 5 items

Option	Why it works
Cantonese seafood houses	Steamed fish is customizable.
Congee and rice roll shops	Plain versions avoid sauces.
Roast meat shops	Order plain cuts without glaze.
Cha chaan tengs with rice	Request fried egg, tomato beef without sauce.
Japanese sashimi spots	Rice and sashimi without soy.

Supermarkets / Convenience Stores — up to 5 items

Item / Category	Why it works
Plain rice boxes	Naturally gluten and dairy free.
Fresh cut fruit	Safe quick snack.
Roasted nuts and seeds	Check for flavorings.
Plain tofu and soy milk	Verify no barley or wheat additives.
Seaweed snacks	Choose plain, check soy powder.

7. ACCOMMODATION & TRANSPORT NOTES

Scenario	Tip / Note
Hotel breakfast buffet	Choose fruit, eggs, rice, avoid pastries.
MTR and ferries	Carry safe snacks and water.
Airport layover meals	Pick steamed rice and plain protein.
Late-night eating	Congee shops open late.
Reservation notes	Message allergy needs in advance.

8. ESSENTIAL LOCAL PHRASES

Phrase	Pronunciation	Meaning
我對麩質敏感，請不要用豉油或蠔油。	ngo deoi fu-zaht man-gam, ching m4 yong si-yau woh hou-yau.	I'm sensitive to gluten; no soy or oyster sauce.
我唔食奶或牛油，請用植物油。	ngo m4 sik naai woh ngau-yau, ching yung jik-mat-yau.	I can't have milk or butter; use vegetable oil.
請唔好落麵粉或任何增稠粉。	ching m4 hou lok min-fan woh yam-hoh jang-cau-fan.	Please no flour or any thickener.

Phrase	Pronunciation	Meaning
可以清蒸或白灼, 醬汁分開上嗎?	ho-yi ching-jing woh baak-cheuk, jeung-jap fan-hoi seung ma?	Can you steam or poach, sauce on the side?
請畀材料清單我確認。	ching bei choi-liu ching-daan ngo kok-yan.	Please give ingredients list to confirm.

9. SIMPLE FALLBACK PLAN

Situation	Action
Nothing feels safe	Choose steamed rice and plain protein, alternatively use our Menu Checker (https://globallysauced.com/menu-review/) to help you figure out what could be suitable.
Unsure if a packaged meal is safe	Photograph ingredients and translate, alternatively use our Product Suitability Tool (https://globallysauced.com/meal-suitability/) to confirm if it meets your restrictions.
Plans change	Head to a congee shop or supermarket for safe basics.
Communication breakdown	Show your Personal Allergy Card (see below) to staff, ask for clarification (use your translation app), or choose a safe staple food from your list.

10. PERSONAL ALLERGY CARD

English:

I'm allergic to gluten and dairy. These can be hidden in soy sauce, oyster sauce, marinades, thickeners, and bakery items. Safe foods include: steamed fish, plain congee, plain roast meats, stir-fried greens without sauce, fresh fruit. Do you have anything suitable? If you are not sure, please let me know. Thank you.

Chinese (Cantonese):

我對麩質同奶類敏感。呢啲可能藏喺豉油、蠔油、醃料、增稠粉同焗焙食品入面。安全嘅選擇包括: 清蒸魚、白粥、淨燒味、蒜炒菜唔落醬、鮮果。請問有冇合適嘅食物? 如果唔肯定, 請話畀我知。多謝。

11. RESOURCES

Purpose	Recommendation / Link	Tip
Quick menu translation	Use Google Lens or Apple Live Text, alternatively use our Menu Checker	Use camera mode to scan menus instantly

Purpose	Recommendation / Link	Tip
	<p>(https://globallysauced.com/men-u-review/) to help you figure out what could be suitable.</p>	
Phrase lookup	<p>Use a Translation App, see our guide here https://globallysauced.com/translation-apps/</p>	<p>Know how to use it before you go and check pronunciation with audio feature</p>
Emergency translation	<p>Use your Essential Local Phrases (above) or generate your Travel Phrase Guide https://globallysauced.com/travel-phrase-guide/</p>	<p>Keep an offline copy of key phrases in case of no signal</p>