

The background features several large, semi-transparent circles in shades of blue, purple, and grey, along with small triangles pointing in different directions.

Tai Nan Street

A community with economical
opportunities and potential threat

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Birdview of Tai Nan Street: area with long history and new things



Tai Nan Street is located in Sham Shui Po district, which is one of the poorest communities in Hong Kong. It has been a street famous for its fabric and leather stores for a long time.

Looking down from above, we can see that Tai Nan Street is packed with various architectures built in different eras, looking like an architecture exhibition. Many cultural heritages which are the carrier of Hong Kong history can be found in this old community. Experiencing these heritages became a newborn cultural tourism in Hong Kong.

Trace of the original Tai Nan Street: well-developed cultural tourism

Walking along the Tai Nan Street, people can see many fabric and leather stores.

According to one of the store owners, only a few old stores stay opened until the present day. Luen Cheong Leather HK shown in this photo is one of them, which has a history of 70 years since its opening in 1948. Many tourists visit this store for its cultural connotation.



Landmark in Tai Nan Street: Luen Cheong Leather HK



Luen Cheong Leather HK is one of the few fabric stores which keeps its original brand image. Many young people are attracted to come to take photos and some come inside to try their products.

This old brand image is a logo of Tai Nan Street. To the non-local people, this brand image gives them a sense that “this is what Hong Kong in the old time looks like”. A group of foreigners in this photo are attracted by this brand and excitedly taking photos with it. To them, this brand is the authentic old Hong Kong taste.

Old stores in Tai Nan Street: trying to preserve their heritages



Luen Cheong Leather HK is advertising on Facebook, Instagram and holding auction to enable customers to get to know their traditional leather craft.

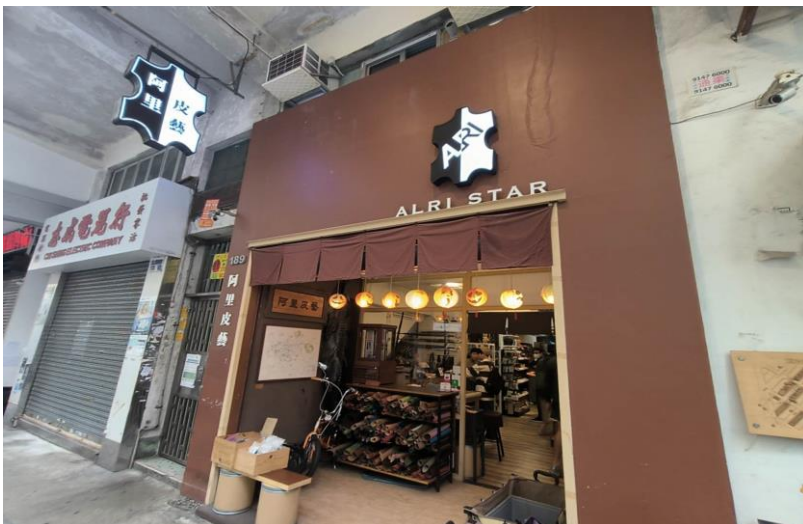
Although the auction is mainly held for commercial interests, like what the name of this auction mentions, Luen Cheong Leather HK also actively educates the public about their leather craftsmanship. This craftsmanship is a cultural heritage of Tai Nan Street. As what the store's owner told us, after opening in Tai Nan Street for 70 years, they have built a Luen Cheong sentiment in the local community. Their brand and craftsmanship are the carrier of the development of Tai Nan Street community.

New-comers in Tai Nan Street: bringing gentrification to community



Apart from Luen Cheong Leather HK, we can see many other fabric and leather stores with modernized design in Tai Nan Street, most of them are newcomers in Tai Nan Street community.

Numerous of leather stores emerge in the context of the revival trend of handcraft industry in Hong Kong.



“Hong Kong craftsmanship is experiencing revitalization tide in recent years”, said the owner of ALRI STAR, “This is the reason why I decided to open this store. Few people from Tai Nan Street community can afford to buy our products. Many young people come here to experience our leather art workshop”.

Old stores: making changes in the context of gentrification



Under the influence of the modernized design of other fabric and leather stores, Luen Cheong Leather HK has also decorated the interior to deliver a new look, and installed LED lights and Neo-Chinese style showcases in order to have more modernized features.

The store staff told us that although he is missing the original design, they have to compete with other stores on the street and play up to the modern and new taste of people in the present day .

Chic stores in Tai Nan Street: the sign of gentrification



Many new modernized stores in Tai Nan Street are opened in old architectures, just as the cafe in the middle of this photo. These stores are definitely not served for the migrant workers living in Tai Nan Street community, their target customers are high consumption group.

Local community groups in Tai Nan Street: Pakistani migrants



Nowadays, many migrant workers are living in Tai Nan Street. They struggle to survive by working as a street peddler.

As shown in this photo, a group of Pakistani street peddlers are standing in front of a Pakistani food store and chatting with each other. They have formed a Pakistani community in Tai Nan Street. Most of them can only speak a little bit English, just enough to allow them to do small business in Hong Kong.

The other kind of “ stores” : “ down to earth”



Pakistani immigrants are selling products in Tai Nan street for living.

The products they are selling, as this photo shows, are various. Many of them are cheap second-hand goods, including clothes, watch and Chinese antiques. Selling these kinds of products can barely cover their living cost.

Making a living in Tai Nan Street: doing small business in crevice



The police are coming, the business is in suspension.



A sign reading “NO HAWKING” is placed next to the area where Pakistani stay.

Flea market is forbidden in Tai Nan Street. Policemen patrol frequently to stop the peddlers from selling products. Poor peddlers have to play the game of cat and mouse with the policemen in order to make a living. One Pakistani peddler told us that they have to quickly pick up their goods when they get a glimpse of policemen, they can only put them back and restart to sell when the policemen are gone.

Tai Nan Street: facing opportunities and threats



Nowadays, Tai Nan Street has become a paradise for young people's romantic consumption.

"Sitting in a well-designed restaurant which is built in an architecture with a long history gives me a sense that I am becoming literary and artistic style (文艺范). I also feel like I am a part of this old community when I am sitting here. It is worth for us to experience this for this cost (75\$ for two drinks)", said the young man in this photo who came here with his girlfriend.

On the one hand, the cultural tourism can stimulate the economic development in Tai Nan Street and, on the other hand, the living price may increase sharply due to the economic development and hence the living condition of local community will be threatened.