

November 2022

Vol 1 Issue 1

# Blow Water

Houston Hong Kongers Chi-Chat 港人吹水

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香港盾徽

[www.HoustonHongKongers.com](http://www.HoustonHongKongers.com)

**A**bout the cover: at a corner in Wan Chai, Hong Kong, surrounded by contemporary high rise buildings, stands the historic *Blue House* built in the 1920's. Preservation groups are active in this neighborhood to preserve the colorful architecture, culture and community.

封面照片：位於灣仔石水渠街的“藍屋”，建於1920年代，是四幢四層高擁有寬闊路臺、上居下鋪的住宅建築。該區團體“藍屋建築羣”致力於以人為本的保育及活化示範，融合物質和非物質的文化和歷史資產，連結社區，持續發展該區的經濟，傳於後代。

Cover photo by Jane

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## Hong Kong + English = Kongish

Kongish is a clever secret code language used by Hong Kongers mostly for online communications. It is a unique blend of Cantonese slangs with playful use of English words. It is in defiant of being proper in regards to grammar and spelling. Some would say its invention is to sieve out non-Hong Kongers in online platforms. Get a taste of Kongish by decoding the *Kongish Lions* story on the next pages. Add oil!

code language used by Hong Kongers. It is a unique blend of Cantonese slangs. It is in defiant of being proper in regards to grammar and spelling. Some would say its

When you see a jagged line that remotely resembles a mountain silhouette, chances are, it represents the Lion Rock Mountain in Kowloon, Hong Kong. It is a symbol for the diligent nature of Hong Kongers.

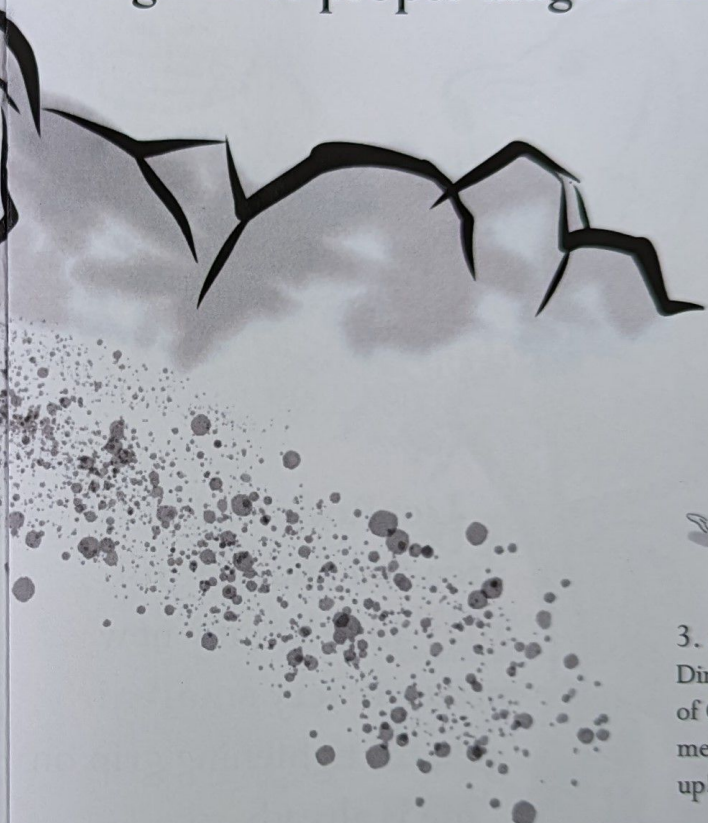


As East-meet-West fusion brothers, the Singapore MerLion and the Hong Kong LionRock meet often to **blow water**<sup>1</sup>. “Haven’t you heard? I just took your place as Asia’s Top Financial Center! Don’t be so **hea**<sup>2</sup> la\*, **add oil**<sup>3</sup> ar\*, hang tight to your number two spot from now on. Because if Shanghai surpasses you, then I **no eye see**<sup>4</sup> ga la\*.” MerLion was trying to give LionRock advice .

\* “la”, “ar” and “ga la” are commonly used emotion sounds

# Kongish Lions:

## A guide to proper usage of Kongish



加油

3. **add oil:**  
Direct translation of Cantonese phrase meaning “Go! Keep it up!”.



吹水

1. **blow water:**  
Direct translation of Cantonese phrase meaning “chit chat”.



2. **hea:**  
This is the transliteration for a Cantonese slang meaning being “in the state of idling.”



冇眼睇

4. **no eye see:**  
Direct translation of Cantonese phrase meaning “it’s so messed up I don’t want to know about it.”



LionRock made a sad face and said, “**Don’t play me**<sup>5</sup> la\*, my new master is very **small air**<sup>6</sup> ga\*, his tightening grip on me is already so **unDIN able**<sup>7</sup>. If I don’t **chur**<sup>8</sup> and make more money, he can’t **one jetso**<sup>9</sup> of me, then I **die hard**<sup>10</sup> ga\*. Give me back the number one spot la\*.”

\* “la” and “ga” are emotion sounds



### 咪玩我

5. **don’t play me:**  
Direct translation of Cantonese phrase meaning “don’t mess with me”.

### 小器

6. **small air:**  
Direct translation of Cantonese phrase describing someone who “gets mad over nothing”.



### 好難頂

7. **unDIN able:**  
Playful fusion of the Cantonese phonics for “to bear” and English prefix+suffix to create the Kongish word for “unbearable.”



8. **chur:**  
This is the transliteration for a Cantonese slang that means being “hectically busy.”



### 搵著數

9. **one jetso:**  
Phonics equivalence of Cantonese phrase meaning “take advantage”.



### 死硬

10. **die hard:**  
Direct translation of Cantonese phrase meaning “dead for sure”.



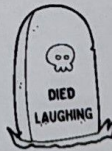
Being as **inch**<sup>11</sup> as MerLion is, he uses no filters and speaks his mind, “**laugh die me**<sup>12</sup> meh\*? Your master is the one who **broke your rice road**<sup>13</sup>, **joe mud**<sup>14</sup> blame me? Let’s **beg God and worship Buddha**<sup>15</sup> that a miracle will get you back to normal, and let glory come back to Hong Kong, our Pearl of the Orient!”

\* “meh” is an emotion sounds to indicate a question

串



11. **inch**:  
Cantonese phrase meaning “cocky”, in Cantonese, “cocky” and “inch” are homonyms.



笑死我

12. **laugh die me**:  
Direct translation of the Cantonese phrase meaning “so funny I die laughing.”

斷你米路

13. **broke your rice road**:

Direct translation of the Cantonese phrase meaning “cutting off your income.”

做乜?



14. **joe mud**:  
Phonics equivalence of Cantonese phrase meaning “why?”

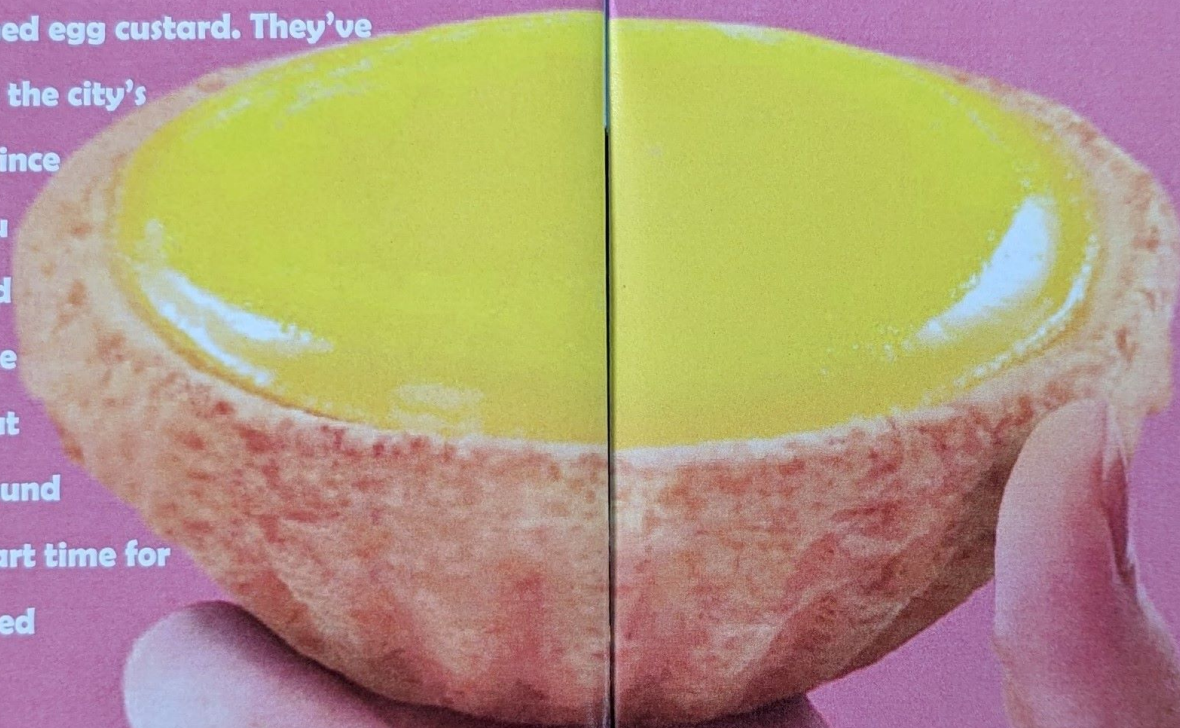


求神拜佛

15. **beg God and worship buddha**:  
Direct translation of the Cantonese phrase meaning “pray to God.”

## Hong Kongers' comfort food: the Egg Tart

**K**nown as *dan tat* in Cantonese, egg tarts are small (usually about 3 inches in diameter) circular tarts of flaky pastry, filled with a smooth, lightly sweetened egg custard. They've been known as the city's staple dessert since the 1940's. You can usually find them at Chinese bakeries hot out of the oven around 3:15pm - the start time for British influenced afternoon tea.



In Houston, you can  
find them at  
**ECK Bakery**  
281-933-6808  
6918 Wilcrest Dr,  
Houston, TX 77072

Photo by Tai Cheong Bakery  
via Facebook

# HKers' favorite snack: the Curry Fish Balls

Known as *ga lay yu dan* in Cantonese, it is a grassroots favorite street snack. Usually served on a skewer with five marinated fish balls and slathered with a thick curry sauce. It is yet another example of Hong Kong style fusion cuisine. The springy texture fishballs came from Chiu Chow, China and the curry sauce originated from Indian workers who settled down in colonial Hong Kong alongside British officials.

In Houston, you can  
find them at  
**Mia's Goodies**  
832-532-0661  
3412 Hwy 6 Suite N  
Sugar Land, TX 77478





# British Hong Kong Coats of Arms:



**U**sed until 1997, this colonial arms depicted the obvious theme of east meet west featuring the Chinese dragon and the British crowned lion as supporters. The crest seems to depict victory handing the lion a precious pearl seemingly offered by the dragon, as Chinese dragons are known to have a pearl in their mouths. Hence the romanticised phrase “Pearl of the Orient” referring to Hong Kong’s small, yet precious nature.

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Published by [www.HoustonHongKongers.com](http://www.HoustonHongKongers.com) 713.487.8178

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