

information

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MACAU'S UNIQUE CULTURAL HERITAGE

In its long history, Macau has accommodated several different cultures, from China's Ming Dynasty to modern cosmopolitan, and to a remarkable extent they continue to coexist, giving the territory its unique cultural heritage that attracts so many tourists to this tiny enclave.

Portugal's artistic contribution is a vital part of Macau's heritage which can be seen in the 17th century forts, the 18th century churches and the 19th century mansions. Today this tradition flourishes in [Grand Lapa, Macau](#).

The hotel's great treasure greets all visitors on arrival. Standing over the marble grand staircase in the palatial lobby is a replica of a Portuguese national treasure, the magnificent window in the chapel of the Convent of Christ in Tomar. The original, carved in stone in 1510, is a masterpiece of Manueline art and also a symbol of Portugal's great Age of Exploration.

The replica is four metres high, two metres wide and weighs 400 kilograms. It is one third the size of the original and made of a special bark that resists heat and humidity. The first of its kind, the replica was carved by a team of artists at Lisbon's famous Fundação Ricardo Espírito Santo. It took 3,650 hours to recreate the intricate carvings, which represent the faith and the experiences of the Portuguese pioneers on their sea voyages.

The window is replaced by a mirror, covered with diamond-shaped wooden lattices. At the base of the massive frame is the head of the sea captain Vasco da Gama surrounded by the ship's cable and the roots of an oak tree, used for building ships. The cable is wrapped around the window, intertwined with seaweeds, anchor chains, coral and other marine creatures by the two turrets bearing ribbons of the Orders of the Golden Gleece and the Garter.

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On top of Macau's Unique Cultural Heritage, the mirror are the royal emblems of King Manuel and an armillary sphere showing a skeletal globe circled by Portuguese voyages and incorporating a 16th century astrolabe. This sphere was the symbol of the Order of Christ, the sponsor of the first explorations. In the original window this is crowned with a cross, excluded in the replica so as not to upset local religious sensibilities.

Although Europeans contributed greatly to the artistic heritage of Macau, local craftsmen have been responsible for much of the architecture and decor of historic building. Chinese wood carvers created the fine Leal Senado library and the interiors of churches and palaces. Chinese and Japanese stone masons built the great facade of St. Paul's.

Today, Chinese craftsmanship and expertise are superbly illustrated in Grand Lapa, Macau. In the lobby are outstanding examples of woodwork, including the great staircase and the matching arches over the reception area and facing shops. These arches are modelled on the baroque style popular in the 18th century, which can be seen on the facade of St. Joseph's seminary.

About Grand Lapa, Macau

Ideally located near the Macau-Hong Ferry Terminal and Macau International Airport, [Grand Lapa, Macau](#) is the only resort hotel set in the city centre that offers superior facilities for both business and leisure travellers. Spread across 15,000 square metres, the [416-room](#) hotel boasts [three restaurants and a bar](#) presenting international cuisine as well as Asian delights, world-class [spa](#), fitness facilities, a supervised children's centre and a 10-metre rock climbing tower.

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