

## **Libraries in Macao II**

In 2019, there were 314 public libraries and reading rooms in Macao, this density being the highest among the neighbouring regions, including 105 school libraries, 76 special libraries, 37 libraries of higher education institutions and 96 public libraries. The libraries and reading rooms that are open to the public throughout the year have received a total of 6,293,687 readers. The public libraries are mainly operated by the Cultural Affairs Bureau, Education and Youth Development Bureau, and Municipal Affairs Bureau, and other public services, as well as churches, institutions and associations. A total of 18 libraries managed by the Cultural Affairs Bureau, are located in the World Heritage sites, parks, markets, squares, and waterfront etc. These libraries, like the learning oasis in such a busy city, not only let the readers enjoy the pleasure of reading but also lift up their spirit, because most of the library designs are integrated with nature and the surrounding environment. The stamp issue “Libraries in Macao II” leads us to visit five distinctive libraries.

**Wong Ieng Kuan Library in Luís de Camões Garden** was opened in 1999, the Library is located at the end in the tranquil Garden, with singing birds and fragrant flowers. Spanning 675 square meters and has two storeys. The Library building is embraced by the connected trees, and even a huge stone hidden at the end of the Library, creating a classic beauty and elegant style.

**Patane Library** was opened in 2016, has three storeys and covers an area of around 1,130 square meters. This Library is called “Seven Sisters”, is comprised of a group of seven old typical arcade buildings. The Library is in an industrial style design and has integrated the traces of lives of the old fishermen and dock workers, such as containers, hangers, and blinds, becomes one of the must-see destinations for art buffs. In the Library, there is a large round window called the “Eye of the Inner Harbour”, which not only monitors the ships moving in and out of the inner harbour, but also records the outdoor landscapes everyday.

**Taipa Library** is not located on the ground floor, but in the basement of Taipa Central Park, it is a unique underground library in the city and is rarely seen in the world due to its extremely convenient design integrated into a parking lot. Officially putting into public service in 2015, it occupies a total area of 2,200 square meters and provides the largest space for public use among all public libraries in Macao.

**Seac Pai Van Library** was put into operation in 2019, it is currently the most recent library open to the public and is also an important cultural facility for Seac Pai Van residents. With a total area of 2,074 square meters, in terms of the spatial design, the Library underlines the smooth integration of its learning functions with the environment. It has not only an outdoor reading area but also transparent doors and windows to let the readers enjoy the mountain views, especially the small waterfall in rainy days.

The libraries in Macao are small but beautiful and they are usually featured with long histories. Among them, **Senado Library** in the downtown area is the one with the longest

service history. Opened in 1929, the Library occupies a total area of 454.9 square meters. Based on the design of Mafra Convent Library (Biblioteca do Convento de Mafra) in Portugal, it was once praised as one of the most luxurious libraries in the Orient. Its valuable collection of approximately 20,000 volumes of ancient books makes the Library a precious evidence for cultural exchanges between China and the West.

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