



# CACCI Tourism Newsletter

Volume 10

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## Message from the Chairman

As Chairman of the Asian Council on Tourism, I am pleased to introduce to you the 10th Volume of the Newsletter of Asian Council on Tourism.

This issue not only highlights the trends in the Asia-Pacific region, but also includes the latest news of the region and interesting reports on tourism. In particular, we prepare the Summary Report on the Breakout Session on Tourism during the 27th CACCI Conference in 2013 in Cebu City, the Philippines. I hope that you will find the articles included in this Newsletter of great value, and look forward to your contribution to the Newsletter in the future. Interested parties may visit [http://www.cacci.org.tw/pubx.php?study\\_id=25&type=Product And Service Council Newsletters](http://www.cacci.org.tw/pubx.php?study_id=25&type=Product And Service Council Newsletters) for previous volumes.

I hope that you will find the content of this issue interesting and informative, and that future issues will continue to serve as an effective platform for an exchange of ideas and information not only among ACT members but also among the industry players in the Asia-Pacific region as a whole.

My Best Wishes!

**Anura Samarawickrema Lokuhetty**  
Chairman  
Asian Council on Tourism

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At the 27th CACCI Conference in Cebu

## Breakout Session on Tourism Attracts an Active Participation at the 27th CACCI Conference

Mr. George Abraham, Chairman and Managing Director, GA Group Pte. Ltd., chaired the breakout session of the Asian Council on Tourism (ACT) held on March 14 in Cebu City in conjunction with the 27th CACCI Conference. Mr. Abraham led the discussion on behalf of Mr. Anura Lokuhetty who was unable to join the Cebu Conference. The session saw the participation of more than 30 local and foreign delegates.

Mr. Abraham made a presentation on the current state of tourism in Asian countries. He urged CACCI members to promote tourism from the perspective of Asia as a whole, and explore cooperation opportunities with neighboring countries. He further indicated that as CACCI has a wide range of membership in the Asia-Pacific region, CACCI meetings could serve as a platform for delegates from the tourism industry to interact and network with each other on a regular basis. According to Mr. Abraham, innovation is also an important strategy for the promotion of tourism. Taking Singapore as an example, he said that the country has been studying new activities to attract tourists, such as safari tours and visits to Universal Studio and the casino. Singapore also tries to explore tourist potentials with its neighboring countries. In terms of the Philippines, Mr. Abraham pointed out that since the country is good at handicrafts, it should take advantage of the handicraft sector to promote tourism.

Mr. Robert Lim Joseph, Chairman Emeritus, National Association of Independent Travel Agencies-Philippines, Inc., shared with the audience the status and prospects of tourism in the Philippines. In his presentation, Mr. Joseph emphasized the importance of promotion campaigns and comprehensive infrastructure for tourism,



*Session Chairman Mr. George Abraham make his Opening Remarks.*



*The Breakout Session participants listen intently to the presentations on the latest development on tourism in the Asia-Pacific region.*

citing Malaysia as a successful example. In addition, Mr. Joseph echoed Mr. Abraham's idea of promoting tourism through cooperation with neighboring countries, such as "ASEAN Tourism," as well as urges frequent and convenient daily flights within Asia. According to Mr. Joseph, the tourism industry should work on introducing attractive tourism packages to the market, and consider carefully what products/services they want to sell outbound and inbound. As for the governments, Mr. Joseph encourages them to focus on wellness

(medical) tourism and exhibition tourism.

During the Q&A Session, Mr. Abraham encouraged the Asian Council on Tourism, as a regional platform for information exchange, to work on a development strategy for tourism. Delegates from Australia, Malaysia, Russia and the local community also exchange views on related topics, including tourism by students, the access/availability of aviation and transportation facilities in Asia and possible cooperation among CACCI members. ■

# Manga artist unveils statue in Japan town to help boost tourism

By Shigemi Sato

Japanese comic strip soccer superhero Captain Tsubasa, who has inspired stars such as Lionel Messi and Fernando Torres, has returned from a storybook stint in Spain to save his “birthplace.”

His bronze statue was unveiled on March 30 in a newly built park in the eastern Tokyo town of Yotsugi, the hometown of Captain Tsubasa creator Yoichi Takahashi, as a tourist attraction to help boost the community’s flagging fortunes.

“Yotsugi is where I was born and brought up but it appears to have run down since when I was a child,” Takahashi, 52, told the unveiling ceremony attended by about 700 dignitaries, townspeople and fans including children.

“I wish every kind of people will come from across the nation and from around the world to see, touch and photograph this statue.”

The statue shows Tsubasa Ozora as an elementary school boy in the early phase of the comic series — standing 145 centimeters (4 feet 9 inches) tall, smiling broadly and putting on a captain’s armband.

The Captain Tsubasa strip, also featuring goalkeeper Genzo Wakabayashi, was launched in a Japanese boys’ weekly magazine in 1981 when soccer was still a minority sport in baseball-hooked Japan.

Over the years, the star player, Captain Tsubasa, has become a professional player in Brazil and moved to Barcelona.

His fortunes rose alongside those of the game in Japan, where the J-League was launched in 1993. The national side reached the last 16 of the 2010 World Cup.

The series has featured around the world in cartoon books, animated films and video games, read and watched avidly also by the likes of Messi of Barcelona and Argentina and Torres of Chelsea and Spain on their way to superstar status.

It is entitled “Holly e Benji” in Italy, “Campeones: Oliver y Benji” in Spain and “Super Campeones” in Spanish-speaking Latin America. North American viewers know him as “Flash Kicker.”

“There are many people who fell in love with soccer after reading this manga among the world’s top players



and Japan’s national team players,” Japanese MP Katsuei Hirasawa told the ceremony.

Takahashi said more than 100 countries are believed to have tuned in to the series. And the stories have sold more than 70 million copies in book form at home. Foreign sales are estimated at 10 million-plus copies.

The series has been suspended since last year and the creator, who became hooked on soccer after watching the 1978 World Cup on television, said he had no immediate plans to produce new material, but had a lot of ideas.

“As a matter of course, Tsubasa’s dream is to see Japan win the World Cup. I definitely hope I get to draw this scene one day,” he said.

Source: Agence France-Presse (AFP), April 1, 2013 ■



TAIPEI--Taiwan has risen four places to rank 33rd in the world in terms of tourism competitiveness this year, according to a report released yesterday by the Swiss nonprofit World Economic Forum (WEF).

Taiwan ranked seventh in the Asia-Pacific region, behind countries

## Taiwan rises to 33rd in travel competitiveness

including Singapore in first position, Japan (4th), Hong Kong (5th) and South Korea (6th), but ahead of Thailand (9th) and China (10th), according to the WEF’s “Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report 2013.”

Of the 14 categories upon which the evaluations were based, Taiwan performed particularly well in terms of policy rules and regulations, in which it ranked 5th out of the 140 economies surveyed.

It also received relatively high ratings in its information and communications technology

infrastructure, safety and security, ground transportation infrastructure, as well as education and training, all of which ranked among the top 20 in the world.

Singapore was the only Asian country to make the top 10 in the world, benefiting from its policy environment, transport infrastructure and safety.

Switzerland was ranked as the world’s most competitive in travel and tourism, followed by Germany, Austria, Spain and the United Kingdom.

Source: Central News Agency, March 8, 2013 ■





## UNWTO and PATA Partner to Advance Tourism for Economic Growth in Asia

Advancing economic diversification, cultural and environmental preservation through tourism are the key objectives of a new Strategic Partnership signed between UNWTO and the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) on the occasion of the PATA Annual Summit (April 26) in Bangkok, Thailand.

The lasting support to the development objectives and the positioning of tourism as a central contributor to economic growth and sustainability in Asia are at the centre of the Strategic Partnership, which was signed April 26 by UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai, and PATA CEO, Martin Craigs.

“We are proud to further deepen

our relationship with PATA, a leading voice of tourism in Asia Pacific”, said Taleb Rifai, attending the PATA Annual Summit in Bangkok, Thailand. “In providing market intelligence, setting global standards and joining our voices to advocate for the value of tourism, this partnership will help the continued growth of tourism in Asia and the spreading of its socio-economic benefits in one of the most dynamic regions of the world,” he said.

PATA CEO Martin Craigs, said: “On behalf of PATA members, public and private, large and small across the 17 time zones and 104 destinations, I am delighted to initiate this strategic partnership with UNWTO.”

The PATA CEO welcomed Taleb Rifai to the PATA Annual Summit and 62nd AGM in Bangkok. “PATA’s advocacy of balanced business building and our embrace of the Complete Visitor Economy align us closely to the UNWTO’s global mission,” he said.

The Strategic Partnership includes a series of projects, such as a PATA/UNWTO forum on marketing and joint research. The first research initiative will address air connectivity and its impact on tourism in the Asia-Pacific region. The study is expected to be implemented already this year, in collaboration with the Tourism Promotion Organization for Asia-Pacific Cities (TPO). Other topics include visa facilitation, taxation, aviation policies as well as consumer and enterprise protection.

The UNWTO/PATA partnership builds on a track record of successful joint activities, such as the annual UNWTO/PATA Forum on Tourism Trends and Outlook, launched in 2007 in collaboration with the Hong Kong Polytechnic University and the Municipal Government of Guilin in China.

*Source: Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA), April 26, 2013* ■

## Increase in NZ Tourism funding welcomed

Tourism New Zealand’s Chief Executive Kevin Bowler has welcomed the Government’s announcement of a \$158m boost for tourism spending over the next four years.

He says Tourism New Zealand understands that it will receive a significant portion of the new funding and is delighted by the Government’s recognition of the tourism sector as a driver of economic growth.

“Since we began the development of our new three-year marketing strategy in August 2012, we have been in discussion with the Government and with industry about what could be achieved for the New Zealand economy with more funding.

“This new funding package will enable us to grow the value tourism generates for the economy through targeted initiatives. There is a deliberate focus on attracting high value visitors,

something which was strongly supported during industry consultation on our new strategy.”

Kevin Bowler says Tourism New Zealand looks forward to sharing more details about its plans with the sector at the upcoming TRENZ event in Auckland and at planned industry briefings around the country.

“Tourism New Zealand will continue to work closely with industry to support the ongoing development of a quality visitor sector, and in particular, with the Tourism Industry Association as they develop the National Tourism Plan, to ensure alignment of activity.

“This significant funding increase comes on the back of a strong start to the calendar year in terms of visitor arrivals, with a number of key markets in growth – including China, the US, Canada and Japan.



“With this strong Government endorsement Tourism New Zealand is well placed to further grow the economic contribution of international visitors to New Zealand.”

Tourism New Zealand is running a series of forums around the country in June, to discuss how it will implement the new three-year marketing strategy.

Industry can register their attendance at one of the forums on the corporate website [www.tourismnewzealand.com](http://www.tourismnewzealand.com)

*Source: Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA), April 17, 2013* ■

# Routes Asia Awards 2013 Winners Announced

During a lavish networking evening on the lawns of the Renaissance Mumbai Hotel recently, Changi Airport Group was announced as the winner of the Asia heat of this year's Routes Airport Marketing Awards. Over 700 aviation professionals were gathered to witness the presentation of the awards and to take part in the 11 Routes Asia – the largest route development event for the entire Asia region.

The Routes Airport Marketing Awards recognise and reward the highest standards of marketing activities undertaken by airports. The 2013 awards will see a number of innovations including taking a blended approach to the nomination process, meaning the final nominees will include a number of airports who will be shortlisted using our online voting form together with a number of airports who have been selected by a panel of industry experts drawn from the airline network planning community.

This year the awards were split into two categories based on the size of the airport and also a new tourism award for best destination marketing campaign by a tourism authority.

The winner, Changi Airport Group, continue to demonstrate their detailed route development activities and are pushing the boundaries in terms of initiatives. 2012 was a record breaking year for Changi as for the first time in 31 years of operating they welcomed over 50 million passengers through the airport.

Changi has also managed to secure five new air services in 2012 bringing their total of weekly scheduled flights up to 6,482. Their 'Changi Connects' product, which was launched earlier this year, is a unique product which passengers can purchase and allows bags to be through connected, even if the airlines are not partners.

"It has been a great year for Changi Airport Group. To be recognised by our airline partners (with this award) for the hard work our



teams have put in to secure new air services is a great endorsement of our achievements," said Toh Ern Chong, Manager Airline Development for Changi Airport Group after collecting the award in Mumbai this evening.

"We constantly strive to innovate to bring an unparalleled level of service to our customers and partners. We believe it is important to understand their needs and work closely with them so as to realise their aspirations of growth at Singapore Changi Airport," he added.

Changi were also named as the winner from the over 20 million passengers category with Clark International Airport Corporation (CIAC) ranked top from the under 20 million passengers category. Tourism Australia was honoured as the winner of the first Routes Asia Destination Marketing Award.

Nigel Mayes VP & Commercial, Routes commented: "We are delighted to announce Changi as the winners of this regional heat of our awards and would like to congratulate them and all of our winners." Mayes continued: "Over the past 12 months Changi has achieved some amazing results. With Scoot, Drukair, AirAsia Philippines, Shenzhen Airlines and Yangtze River express all commencing operations Changi Airport now has 106 scheduled airlines flying to 240 cities in 61 countries."

As overall winner of this regional heat, Changi Airport Group will be automatically shortlisted for the World Routes Airport Marketing Awards which will take place at the event in Las Vegas, 5th – 8th October 2013. Changi join San Diego International

Airport, who were announced as overall winner of the Americas heat last month.

The full list of companies shortlisted under each award category were as follows:

## **Over 20 Million Passengers**

- \* Changi Airport Group - Winner
- \* Delhi International Airport Pvt Ltd – Highly Commended
- \* Chengdu Shuangliu International Airport (CDIA) – Highly Commended
- \* Beijing Capital International Airport Co. Ltd.
- \* Soekarno - Hatta International Airport

## **Under 20 Million Passengers**

- \* Clark International Airport Corporation (CIAC) - Winner
- \* Auckland International Airport – Highly Commended
- \* Bangalore International Airport
- \* GMR Hyderabad International Airport
- \* Juanda - Surabaya International Airport
- \* Kansai International Airport
- \* Siem Reap Airport

## **Destination Marketing Award**

- \* Tourism Australia - Winner
- \* Philippine Department of Tourism – Highly Commended
- \* Okinawa Convention & Visitors Bureau
- \* Singapore Tourism Board
- \* Tourism New Zealand

*Source: Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA), March 20, 2013* ■



## Tourism Australia Now Hiring For “The Best Jobs In The World”

Tourism Australia has teamed up with industry and State and Territory tourism partners and launched a new A\$4 million campaign targeting the international youth market in a search for candidates to fill “The Best Jobs in the World.” The new campaign follows Tourism Queensland’s wildly successful The Best Job in the World competition of 2009, which attracted over 30,000 applicants from all around the world for a six-month position as an Island Caretaker on the Great Barrier Reef.

Tourism Australia is taking the Best Jobs concept to an entirely new level with six dream jobs now up for grabs. The campaign targets applicants between 18 and 30 years of age and will focus primarily on international markets eligible for Australia’s Working Holiday Visas. These markets include Hong Kong, Taiwan, South Korea, Japan, UK and Ireland, the US, Canada, Germany, France, Italy and Sweden.

“Hong Kong is the ninth biggest source of Australian Working Holiday Visa travellers in the world. In the six months to 31 December 2012, a total of 4,666 visas were granted to Hong Kong applicants, which represented a 65.2% increase over 2011 and a four-fold increase since 2008,” said Carmen Tam, Manager, Hong Kong, Tourism Australia.

“Interest in working holidays among Hong Kongers is growing fast. The youth segment plays an important role in the arrivals from Hong Kong market. Australia’s sports culture and outdoor lifestyle experiences attract the youth segment. The Best Jobs in the World campaign offers the opportunity for many young people in Hong Kong to come to Australia with an attractive package to broaden their horizons. I believe it will attract many applications, and I am hopeful that the city will produce a winner for one of the dream jobs in this new campaign,” Ms Tam said.

The Best Jobs in the World campaign is a global competition

## UNESCO Joins UNWTO to Advance Silk Road Tourism Development



The development of a ‘Silk Road Heritage Corridors’ tourism strategy for Central Asia and China is among the main outcomes of the 3rd UNWTO Silk Road Ministers’ Meeting held at ITB Travel Trade Show in Berlin, Germany on 6 March 2013.

With the support of ITB Berlin, the 3rd Silk Road Ministers’ Meeting brought together Ministers and Vice Ministers of Tourism from over 20 Silk Road countries and international experts to discuss how to join forces to further raise the profile of Silk Road tourism, while safeguarding its exceptional heritage sites and intangible cultural heritage.

The event was the ideal backdrop for the announcement of the new joint UNWTO/UNESCO ‘Silk Road Heritage Corridors’ tourism strategy project, which will commence in 2013 with the support of UNESCO Netherlands Funds-in-Trust.

### Advancing collaboration on heritage protection and visa facilitation

The Meeting emphasised the importance of collaboration between Ministries of Tourism and Ministries of Culture in managing heritage

effectively and sustainably and underscored the importance of engaging the local community and stakeholders in building levels of coordination and dialogue. Community involvement in this framework was highlighted as a key element in fighting poverty and supporting the UN Millennium Development Goal (MDGs).

Participants presented the latest technology in 3D laser scanning and digital modelling, demonstrating the role that this technology plays in preserving and maintaining the authenticity of heritage sites while enhancing the visitor experience.

Furthermore, the 3rd Silk Road Ministers Meeting represented a milestone in the promotion of travel facilitation as Ministers expressed their commitment to improve visa policies and border crossings. In this regard, Tajikistan announced the opening of the Kulma pass on the border with China to international visitors, while Kazakhstan stated its intention to pursue a visa-free Central Asia.

On 7 March, private sector stakeholders had the opportunity to share best practices and debate key issues at the UNWTO Silk Road Tour Operators’ Forum, another key annual meeting taking place as part of the UNWTO programme of Silk Road events supported by ITB Berlin.

For more information please visit: [www.UNWTO.org/SilkRoad](http://www.UNWTO.org/SilkRoad)

*Source: Pacific Asia Travel Association, March 12, 2013* ■

involving six of Australia’s State and Territory Tourism Organisations – each offering their own unique experiences.

Details of the exciting new jobs were revealed by five Hong Kong celebrities who are cheering for the six jobs: Ekin Cheng, Alex Lam, Wilfred Lau, Ivana Wong and Ellen Loo. Each Best Job position comes with an attractive six-month salary package

worth A\$100,000 including living costs.

The jobs are: Chief Funster (New South Wales); Outback Adventurer (Northern Territory); Park Ranger (Queensland); Wildlife Caretaker (South Australia); Lifestyle Photographer (Melbourne), and Taste Master (Western Australia).

Tourism Australia Managing

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## Make Japan a tourism magnet to boost economy, nat'l image

Increasing the number of foreign visitors and turning this into economic growth — this goal of making Japan a tourism-oriented nation will require combined efforts by the public and private sectors.

The government is pouring considerable effort into steps to make Japan a tourism magnet. A ministerial conference chaired by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has been established for that purpose. The government plans to study comprehensive tourism policies that cross ministerial borders and formulate an action program by summer.

If more tourists and businesspeople visit Japan, it will invigorate consumption and create jobs, thereby promoting the development of regions as tourist spots. We fully support the government's initiative of realizing a tourism-oriented country.

### Long Way to Go

But we must point out that the government has failed to achieve adequate results despite implementing various programs, including the "Visit Japan Campaign," since 2003.

Sustained by the overseas travel boom among middle-class people in Asian nations with spectacular economic growth, 8.37 million foreigners visited Japan in 2012. This figure has almost recovered the level



recorded before the Great East Japan Earthquake and tsunami of March 2011, and is 60 percent higher than the number of visitors in 2003.

Nevertheless, it is a far cry from the target of 18 million visitors the government hoped to reach by 2016.

Japan ranked 39th in the world as a destination for foreign visitors in 2011, trailing far behind China (third), Malaysia (ninth), Thailand (15th) and South Korea (25th). Although the earthquake and tsunami disaster must be factored into the equation, the figures are sobering.

Japan's main Asian rivals are pulling out all the stops to lure foreign visitors because tourism is a component of a strategy to enhance their national image.

Tourism encompasses a wide range of fields, including transportation, accommodation, food services and distribution. Government ministries and agencies need to put aside their turf battles, revamp promotion project content and step up cooperation with the private sector. The Tourism Agency must be more active in leading the formation of such a strategy.

Japan is famous for its culture of

hospitality and is blessed with many regional treasures such as the natural beauty of its four seasons. However, these have yet to be reflected fully in a strategy to attract tourists.

Providing items and experiences that incorporate traditional local values and tap private-sector wisdom would be more effective than safe tourism campaigns led by administrative offices and designed to please everyone.

### Make foreigners comfortable

In recent years, more foreign visitors have been travelling individually, rather than in groups. Collecting information through personal computers or mobile phones has become common practice.

The tourism industry must improve its capability to disseminate information on expenses, facilities and services, and increase the number of places where Internet service is accessible free of charge, thereby improving the environment for foreign tourists to travel easily and comfortably.

Inviting international conferences that have huge knock-on effects and promoting medical tourism for people who want to receive health checkups and treatments are also promising ways to invigorate the tourism industry.

To lift the standard of Japan's tourist trade, the nation also urgently needs to develop industries that are currently relatively unproductive, such as some hotel businesses.

*Source: The Yomiuri Shimbun/ Asia News Network, April 25, 2013* ■

## Tourism Australia

*...Continued from page 6*

Director Andrew McEvoy said the competition provides an excellent platform to entice more young people from around the world to come to Australia to holiday as well as to work, helping to fill many tourism jobs across Australia.

"We've taken one of the most successful tourism campaigns in recent times – Best Job in the World – and made it bigger and better by coming up

with a competition which represents the very best of our country. These include our breathtaking landscapes and scenery, our unique nature and wildlife, great food and wine and, of course, our huge sense of fun," Mr McEvoy said.

Ben Southall added: "A few years ago I won 'The Best Job in the World' – being an Island Caretaker on the Great Barrier Reef. Unfortunately for me, my time is up. But luckily for the world, 'The Best Job in the World' is back. This time there's not one, but six amazing jobs in Australia up for grabs."

Mr McEvoy said the competition was expected to appeal to youth travellers' sense of fun and adventure. "The youth market contributes more than a quarter of all Australia's international arrivals. These are visitors who tend to stay longer, disperse widely and often come back again, with their families, later in their lives. For many young people, Australia's working holiday visa programs provide the economic means to fund travel plans, and this is at the heart of our new

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## Tourism Australia

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campaign,” he said.

“Despite recent challenges - such as the high Australian dollar and the global financial crisis affecting some of Australia’s traditional Western markets – the youth traveller segment remains an important part of Australia’s visitor mix,” Mr McEvoy said.

The youth segment contributes A\$12 billion annually in total tourism spending and delivers nearly 1.6 million (26%) of Australia’s international arrivals. On average, youth travellers spend A\$7,279 per trip in Australia (IVS: September 2012). In 2012, Working Holiday Makers contributed A\$2.5 billion to the Australian economy. On average WHMs spend in excess of A\$13,000 during their stay.

“This is a wonderful chance to reinforce and amplify our There’s Nothing Like Australia message that Australia is a wonderful, world class destination full of unique experiences, adventure and great places to explore,” Mr McEvoy said.

Tourism Australia has secured a number of key partners to support the campaign, including Virgin Australia, STA Travel, Citibank, DELL, IKEA, Sony Music and Monster.com, who have created an online ‘jobs board’, advertising temporary jobs within the Australian tourism industry aimed at travellers visiting the country under Australia’s WHM program.

For further details of the competition, visit Tourism Australia’s Working Holidays Facebook page, [www.facebook.com/australianworkingholiday](http://www.facebook.com/australianworkingholiday) or <https://www.australia.com/zht/best-jobs.aspx>

Source: Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA), March 12, 2013 ■

## Bumpy road forecast for Singapore tourism

By Jessica Lim

The boom years for Singapore’s tourism industry are over, with its pace of growth expected to slow by about half over the next 10 years.

This is because of keen regional competition for the same tourism pie and Singapore’s tight labor market, Second Minister for Home Affairs and Trade and Industry S. Iswaran said on April 22 as he unveiled a muted forecast of tourist arrival growth of 3 to 4 percent year-on-year.

Spending by tourists is also expected to grow at only 4-6 percent over the next 10 years.

This contrasts with the record growth posted between 2002 and last year, when visitor arrivals grew at a compounded annual rate of 6.6 percent. Tourism receipts also grew at a corresponding 10 percent in the same period.

But the surge, which coincided with the launch of major projects such as the two integrated resorts and the Formula One Singapore Grand Prix, is “not sustainable,” said Iswaran.

“The growth model that is based solely on sheer quantitative growth is no longer viable,” he told more than 600 people at the Tourism Industry Conference.

“There is a general consensus that we need to reposition ourselves for more sustainable quality growth, of which the focus is on deriving yield from each visitor.”

Last year, Singapore welcomed an estimated 14.4 million visitors, an increase of 9 percent from 2011. They

spent S\$23 billion, up 3 percent from S\$22.3 billion in 2011.

This year, tourism receipts are expected to rise moderately, between 2.2 and 6.5 percent, while the growth in visitor arrivals is forecast to slow to between 2.8 and 7.6 percent.

The way forward is to attract more big-spending visitors and those who come here regularly, said Iswaran, as he urged the industry to create more content for visitors in the lifestyle and business sectors. One example is the Fort Canning Centre and Black Box Theatre, which the Singapore Tourism Board (STB) and National Parks Board are looking at turning into a museum with modern art, for an Asian audience.

STB’s chief executive Lionel Yeo, who also spoke at the event, said competition is getting tougher. Macau and South Korea have announced new integrated resorts, Bangkok plans to hold an F1 night street race by 2015, and Universal Studios will open in South Korea and Shanghai soon.

“Many of these competitors are going after the same source markets and target segments as Singapore,” Yeo said, adding that the labor crunch will make growth even more challenging.

This is already felt by Chan Brothers Travel. Its chief executive Anthony Chan said the company had to delay plans for a new subsidiary brand targeting private clients because they could not find enough staff to open an office.

There are also worries for the hotels sector, where room inventory is slated to grow by over 20 percent to 53,000 by 2015.

Said hotelier and restaurateur Loh Lik Peng, 40: “When you have a situation of a larger supply of hotel rooms and a smaller number of tourists coming at the same time, then you are going to have an issue of oversupply of hotel rooms.”

Source: The Straits Times, April 24, 2013 ■





## Philippine resort wins top global tourism award

Besting more than a hundred other tourism organizations from more than 46 countries, El Nido Resorts won a prestigious Tourism for Tomorrow Award (TTA) during the recent 13th annual World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) Global Summit held in Abu Dhabi.

El Nido Resorts (ENR), a cluster of four eco-resorts in Bacuit Bay in Palawan in west Philippines, was one of four international organizations recognized for best practices in sustainable tourism in four categories — Destination Stewardship Award, Conservation Award, Community Benefit Award and the Global Tourism Business Award.

ENR, run by the Ayala-owned Ten Knots Development Corp., bagged the Community Benefit Award and

was recognized for “demonstrating the power of tourism to address poverty alleviation, improve local livelihood and protect the cultural and natural heritage for future generations.” The WTTC’s awards body noted that 90 percent of ENR’s staff came from the local community.

The group was also cited for “purposefully educating guests on how their vacation can be good for the planet and the local people,” according to the WTTC newsletter.

The Destination Stewardship Award was won by Peaks of the Balkans — Albania, Kosovo and Montenegro. The Conservation Award

was won by &Beyond, South Africa. The Global Tourism Business Award was won by Air New Zealand.

Finalists were selected by a panel of independent judges chaired by Costas Christ, an internationally recognized expert on sustainable tourism.

*Source: Philippine Daily Inquirer/Asia News Network, April 16, 2013* ■



Fun Travel in Taipei, a bilingual mobile app which provides instant transportation information for Taipei City, launched a new tourist attraction map function for Android smartphones, the city said yesterday.

Taipei City Department of Transportation Commissioner Wang Shang-wei said the new function will also be available for iOS and Windows Phone before the end of April.

The tourist attraction maps include 101 locations recommended

## Fun Travel in Taipei app launches new function offering tourist maps

*By Lauly Li*

by celebrities and foreign tourists who have been to Taipei, Department of Information and Tourism Commissioner Rose Chao said.

The tourist information on the app contains an introduction for the destinations, location maps, telephone numbers, and opening hours, the city government said.

Department of Transportation official Liu Jui-lin said that since the Fun Travel in Taipei app was launched in April 2011, it has had over 400,000 downloads. Liu added that on average the app is used over 7 million times a month.

Wang said that apart from tourism information, the app also provides bus and MRT timetables, and information about Taipei’s YouBike bicycle sharing system, including nearby bicycle stations.

There are currently 62 stations and 2,132 bicycles in the YouBike system in Taipei, Wang said, adding that since the stations are scattered all over the city, the number of those using YouBikes now averages 25,000 a day, with an increase on the weekends to 27,000.

Chao said the app will help tourists use the YouBike service more effectively, adding that combining the bicycles and app offers an eco-friendly and convenient way for tourists to travel in the city.

The department is set to add 100 more YouBike stations before the end of this year, with the stations to not only be established near MRT stations but also tourist attractions, such as the Taipei Confucius Temple and the Beitou area.

*Source: The China Post, April 12, 2013* ■

# Chinese overtake Germans as biggest-spending tourists

Chinese tourists have overtaken Germans as the world's biggest-spending travelers after a decade of robust growth in the number of Chinese holidaying abroad, the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) said.

Chinese tourists, known for traveling in organized tours and snapping up luxury fashion abroad, spent US\$102 billion on foreign trips last year, outstripping deep-pocketed travelers from Germany and the United States.

Chinese tourists spent 41 percent more on foreign travel in 2012 than the year before, beating the close to US\$84 billion both German and U.S. travelers parted with last year.

Tourists from other fast-growing economies with swelling middle classes, like Russia and Brazil, also increased spending in 2012. In recession-hit Europe, however, French and Italian tourists reined in their holiday budgets.

"The impressive growth of tourism expenditure from China and Russia reflects the entry into the tourism market of a growing middle class from these countries," said UNWTO Secretary-General Taleb Rifai.

The German Travel Association (DRV) said it was to be expected that the Chinese would eventually overtake Germans in terms of spending, given that the country had more inhabitants than North America, Russia and Europe put together.

"But that they have overtaken us already is astonishing," DRV President Jurgen Buechy said.

The Chinese make more long-haul trips than Germans, who typically go to Mediterranean destinations, meaning that the average spend per holiday was

greater, he added.

China is the world's fastest growing tourist source market, thanks to higher disposable incomes in the world's number two economy and looser foreign travel restrictions. Chinese tourists made 83 million foreign trips in 2012, compared to 10 million in 2000.

Hoteliers, tour companies, restaurants and even taxi drivers will need to brush up on their knowledge of Chinese cuisine, culture and language if they are to tempt them away from favorite destinations like Hong Kong, Taiwan and the Maldives, European tourism officials have said.



Other countries in the top 10 including Japan and Australia posted growth in travel spending, though only Russia came close to China's huge growth, with a 32-percent increase in holiday budgets.

Russians are now the fifth highest-spending tourists, parting with US\$43 billion last year, according to the Madrid-based UNWTO, and catching up on the British, who spent US\$52 billion in 2012.

Italian spending dipped by 1 percent to US\$26 billion in 2012 and French tourists parted with US\$38 billion, a 6-percent drop year-on-year. The two eurozone peers were the only countries in the top 10 outbound markets to post declines.

Source: Reuters, April 6, 2013 ■

# Turkey's tourism industry anticipates boom

By Nicolas Cheviron

The air-clearing apologies were both made and accepted.

Now, Turkey's tourism industry is holding its breath and hoping that Israel's apology for a deadly 2010 raid on a Gaza-bound aid flotilla will translate into a new love affair that will bring Israeli holidaymakers back to its beach resorts.

"After the apology, I think we'll reach 500,000 (Israeli) tourists this year," said Timur Bayindir, the president of the Association of Hotel Owners in Turkey (TUROB), convinced that any grudges between the two allies were erased thanks to last week's diplomatic breakthrough.

And he is not the only one who is optimistic.

"The cooperation between the two countries will resume as before," Basaran Ulusoy, the president of the Association of Travel Agencies in Turkey (TURSAB), told mainstream daily Sabah.

Prior to the spat, Turkey-Israel relations were warm, and vacationers from the Jewish state were a common sight along the Turkish Mediterranean coastline. Among the 558,000 tourists that visited Turkey in 2008, one out of every 13 was Israeli, making it their top holiday destination.

But relations soured in 2009, when Israel unleashed its devastating 22-day Operation Cast Lead on Gaza.

Turkey was infuriated.

It accused Israel of using disproportionate force in the conflict that cost the lives of 1,400 Palestinians — half of them civilians — and 13 Israelis, 10 of them soldiers.

The criticism did not go down well in Israel, where trade unions called for a boycott of Turkey. The number of Israeli tourists in Turkey fell to 312,000 that year.

A year later, relations between the two states hit rock bottom. Israeli

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## Turkey's tourism

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commandos staged a botched pre-dawn raid on the six-ship flotilla to Gaza headed by Turkey's Mavi Marmara, in which nine Turkish nationals are killed.

In response, Ankara expelled Israel's ambassador to Turkey and suspended their military cooperation. And angry Turkish mobs took to the streets and burned Israeli flags.

That was when Israeli holidaymakers really began to turn their backs on Turkey.

In 2010, the number of Israeli tourists plummeted to 110,000, in 2011 to 79,000, and last year it only slightly rebounded to 84,000.

The March 22 apology made by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to his Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan — and brokered by U.S. President Barack Obama — may reverse the trend.

“Before the apologies, we pushed very hard (for) Greece and Bulgaria, but since last week we try to do our best to push Turkish products,” Eyal Kashdan said, the chief executive of Flying Carpet Travel, one of the market leaders in promoting Israeli tourism in Turkey.

“Actually, clients prefer the (Turkish) products, the hotels of Turkey... because of the luxury of the hotels and the all-inclusive system, and they feel that the Turkish cuisine is similar to the Israeli cuisine,” he told AFP.

Still, he does not go as far as to say the Turks can now expect a boom in



## Nepal seeks to attract more tourists from Asian nations

By Anbarasan Ethirajan

**Nepal's most iconic symbol - Mount Everest, the world's highest peak - and other tall mountains attract tens of thousands of foreign tourists, particularly from Western Europe, the United States and Japan.**

Home to eight of the highest mountains in the world, the Himalayan nation has been a paradise for adventure seekers offering them ultimate challenges.

As the country emerges from a decade-long civil war between security forces and Maoists, tourism officials here believe it is now time to showcase the country's other cultural riches to the world.

Nepal, home to the birthplace of Lord Buddha and a number of the most sacred Hindu sites, wants to attract visitors interested in its rich history and culture.

“We are now targeting new economies like China, India, Korea,

Israeli tourism. At least not yet. “I think the clients need more time to feel better with the (Turkish) hospitality,” he said.

His reservations are echoed by Daniel Zimet, president of the Zimet Marketing Communications agency which promotes Turkey in Israel.

“Israelis shall be ensured 100 percent that there is nothing to worry about when going to Turkey,” he said, adding that Erdogan is still walking a

fine line in regards to doubts cast on whether the Israeli commanders of the flotilla raid still risk judicial proceedings in Turkey.

“It's still a way to go before things will be totally clarified between the two nations.”

Source: Agence France-Presse (AFP), April 1, 2013 ■

Malaysia and Thailand,” says Sushil Ghimire, Secretary of the Nepal Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

He explains that not only are these nations close to Nepal, but they also “share similar socio-cultural conditions”.

### Important industry

The tourism sector is a key contributor to Nepal's economic growth.

Despite its political instability and poor infrastructure, the country attracted nearly 600,000 foreign tourists in 2012, a 10% cent increase on the previous year.

The industry provides employment to more than 750,000 people in a country where the unemployment rate is more than 45%.

Last year the tourism sector earned revenues of \$370m (£245m) - nearly 3% of the country's gross domestic product (GDP).

It is also the second biggest foreign income earner after remittances from abroad by Nepalese workers.

And these numbers are likely to increase in the coming years.

The number of Chinese visiting Nepal has seen a big jump with nearly 75,000 tourists coming to the country last year, a 60% increase from the previous year.

Tourist numbers from Nepal's other giant neighbour, India, are also on the rise.

While their focus is on attracting a new segment of tourists, officials are also trying hard to provide more options for their existing adventure tourists, who constitute about 40% of the market.

Last year, they introduced a “Guerrilla Trail”, a trek through the

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## Nepal seeks

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battle grounds of the country's bloody war with Maoist rebels, which ended in 2006.

Officials hope the guerrilla trek will give tourists an insight into the insurgency

The three-week-long trek takes hikers across rugged mountains, rivers and villages in western Nepal.

With their new strategies, officials hope to boost tourism revenue to \$500m in the next five years.

### Stumbling blocks

Despite its ambitious targets, Nepal still faces a number of issues, not least a lack of adequate infrastructure.

"International air connectivity to Nepal is poor. Very few airlines fly to Nepal," says Lekha Nath Bhandari of Ample Travels in Kathmandu.

Mr Bhandari explains that this results in ticket prices surging during the peak travel season.

"An average tourist cannot afford to buy such expensive tickets," he says.

He adds that as road connectivity in Nepal is inadequate, tourists depend on domestic airlines to fly to various destinations, where once again ticket prices act as a deterrent.

Another issue is Nepal's recent record on air safety.

In the past two years there have been six air crashes, killing more than 75 tourists. Last year, a small plane carrying 19 people towards Mount Everest crashed on the outskirts of the Nepalese capital, killing everyone on board, including seven Britons and five Chinese.

At the same time, flash protests and strikes by various political parties also deter tourists.

While Nepal has enjoyed relative



peace in the last five or six years, tour operators say they experience large number of cancellations during any prolonged period of strikes or protests.

### 'Game changer'

But the government says it is taking steps to address those concerns.

"We are upgrading our systems in airports. Modern radars will replace the existing old ones," says Mr Ghimire.

"We are also trying to establish monitoring stations in mountains so that flights can have clear visibility and good communication with the main airport in Kathmandu,"

He adds that the government

is also tightening the country's aviation regulations in line with the recommendations of the International Civil Aviation Organization.

Industry players say that these changes need to come sooner rather than later. They warn that any delay may see Nepal miss out on a great opportunity.

"Tourism is a mainstay of our economy. It is one of the few industries growing in this country," says Aditya Baral, a senior official at the Nepal Tourism Board.

"If we can manage it properly, this can even be a game-changer for us in the future."

Nepal has picture postcard natural beauty. For some it has the potential to become the Switzerland of the East.

A lot will now depend on how quickly it can turn from being a risky holiday spot into a must visit destination.

Source: BBC News, 28 March 2013 ■

## About CACCI Asian Council on Tourism

Asian Council of Tourism is one of the Product Service Councils under the CACCI umbrella. The PSCs have been formed with the primary aim of promoting greater business interaction among CACCI members who are in the same product or service line. There are currently twelve PSCs that are operating within the CACCI umbrella.

The PSCs meet at least once a year, usually in conjunction with the Annual CACCI Conference held in various member countries. Occasionally, officers and key members of the PSCs conduct teleconferences to discuss their activities for the year.

CACCI held its first breakout

session on Tourism during the 60th CACCI Council Meeting held on 18-19 May 2004 in Phnom Penh, Cambodia and formally organized a CACCI Asian Council on Tourism (ACT).

The current Chairman of ACT is Mr. Anura Samarawickrema Lokuhetty from Sri Lanka. He is concurrently Deputy Chairman and Chief Executive of Serene Pavilions, and Immediate Past President of Tourist Hotels Association of Sri Lanka, the apex body representing all hotels in Sri Lanka.

For more information on the PSCs, please visit the CACCI website at [www.cacci.org.tw](http://www.cacci.org.tw) and go to the "Product and Service Councils" page.

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