



CACCI

Tourism Newsletter

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Message from the Chairman



Importance of developing sustainable tourism policies

The movement of tourists has spread widely to reach all countries of the globe, becoming an important economic sector in terms of income generation, foreign exchange earnings and employment creation. The tourism arrivals and the domestic tourism market are ever increasing in most developed and developing countries. Therefore it has become extremely important for all countries to look more seriously at sustainable development of tourism in their respective countries. This demands a need to change factors that have an impact on the nature, culture or the authenticity of countries which help to attract the tourists in the first place. Therefore it has become necessary to sustain these very features which help to attract the tourists to the site.

Having realized the importance of sustainable development of tourism, the World Tourism Organization (WTO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) have actively developed many guidelines and policies to achieve this end. Even though these policies and regulations have been in place for the past years adequate measures to achieve these have not been taken by many countries. Therefore, sustainability of tourism is currently an issue for both developed and developing countries around the world. This is more evident in countries where tourism has increased exponentially within the last 5 to 10 years.

Making tourism more sustainable is not just about controlling and managing the negative impacts of the industry. Tourism has the best potential to benefit local communities both economically and socially and to raise awareness and support for conservation of the environment. Within the tourism sector, economic development and environmental protection should not be seen as opposing forces but should be pursued as aspirations that can and should be mutually reinforcing.

With the forecasted massive continuous growth of tourism in the next 10 years, excellent opportunities for spreading prosperity is only achieved at a great cost, if the environment and the local communities are not well managed. Climate change may add up to it. The potential role in poverty elevation through tourism and in bringing sources of income to some of the communities will get affected if timely action is not taken by the stakeholders in those countries to sustain the industry.

Sustainability is the responsibility of all stakeholders involved in tourism. However most of the impacts of tourism are the results of actions taken by private sector enterprises and tourists by themselves. There is a clear need for governments to take a leading role if truly significant progress is to be achieved in making tourism more sustainable. This is because governments have the power to regulate, promote and coordinate the fragmented micro and small businesses to make positive difference. Governments also own and manage sustainability related areas of public concern such as air, water, natural and cultural heritage.

Governments should also provide an environment that enables and encourages the private sector, tourists, and other stakeholders to respond to sustainability issues. This can be achieved by establishing and implementing a set of policies for tourism development management, drawn up with all the stakeholders placing sustainability at its center. This should be achieved within a supportive national policy framework.

Basically, some guiding principles should be observed in this regard and an agenda for sustainable tourism drawn up. Finally it is evident that even though tourists and stakeholders are increasingly responsive to the issues and the impacts, governments has to play a critical role in creating the context and encouraging actions to ensure that tourism is sustainable for the healthy growth of the industry.

Anura Samarawickrema Lokuhetty
Chairman
Asian Council on Tourism, CACCI



30th CACCI Conference to Feature Special Session on Tourism

The Confederation of Asia-Pacific Chambers of Commerce and Industry (CACCI) is pleased to invite all CACCI officers and members to the 30th CACCI Conference scheduled to take place on November 23-25, 2016 at The Marriott Hotel in Taipei, Taiwan.

To be co-hosted by the Chinese International Economic Cooperation Association (CIECA) and the Chinese National Association of Industry and Commerce (CNAIC), with the CTBC Bank as major sponsor, the two-day Conference is designed to provide another valuable platform for CACCI members and invited experts to exchange views on measures that the business sector and governments in the region can undertake to take full advantage of the opportunities offered not just by markets in the Asia-Pacific region but by countries in other parts of the world as well.

Focusing on the theme “The Rise of Asia: Taking a Bigger Role in the Global Economy”, the 30th CACCI Conference this year will address the following questions: How can Asia

play a much bigger role in shaping the global economy in the 21st century than it did in the latter half of the 20th century? What challenges would Asian countries – individually and collectively – face in playing such a role and how will they meet these challenges? How should Asia – which in the past was heavily dependent on exports for its growth – nurture its new “second engine of growth”, which is domestic demand, in order to sustain its strong performance?

Eminent speakers will be invited to speak during two Plenary Sessions which will focus on timely and relevant issues, including the following:

Plenary Session 1: G a i n i n g Traction from Regional Economic Integration

Plenary Session 2: Promoting SME Development for Sustainable and Inclusive Growth

In addition, parallel sectoral roundtable discussions and special session will be organized that will gather government and private sector experts for dialogue and panel

discussion on important sectoral issues, particularly on woman entrepreneurship, Information and Communication Technology, youth entrepreneurship, and food and agriculture.

Also, this year’s Taipei Conference will feature a “Special Session on Tourism” which is expected to serve as a platform for representatives from different countries to exchange views and latest information on tourism. Mr. Anura Lokuhetty, Chairman of Asian Council on Tourism, will help organize the Special Session, and cordially invites CACCI members to join us at the 30th CACCI Conference and the Session. ❁



World tourism numbers hit new record in 2015 despite attack fears

By Laure Fillon

The number of international tourists rose by 4.4 percent worldwide in 2015 to hit a record 1.18 billion despite concerns over extremist attacks, the United Nations World Tourism Organization said on January 18, 2016.

France remained the world's most popular tourist destination, followed by the United States, Spain and China, according to the Madrid-based body which tracks the number of tourists who made an overnight stay at an international destination.

"2015 results were influenced by exchange rates, oil prices and natural and man-made crises in many parts of the world," the head of the UN body, Taleb Rifai, told a news conference.

Falling oil prices reduced transport costs but weakened demand for travel in oil-exporting nations while the weakness in the euro currency made travel to Europe for Americans more attractive, he said.

But the sector was marked mainly by the threat of extremism in 2015 with deadly attacks in Egypt, France, Lebanon, Tunisia, Mali and other nations.

"We are facing now, with regard to safety and security, a global threat," said Rifai, a former Jordanian tourism minister.

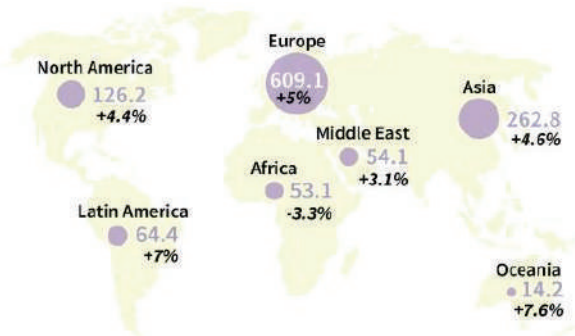
"We cannot anymore say this is the problem of Egypt or France or Tunisia or Turkey or Thailand or Indonesia," he added in reference to nations that suffered attacks last year



Tourists enjoying the Fasouri Watermania Waterpark in Limassol, Cyprus (Iakovos Hatzistavrou, AFP/File)

World tourism

Tourist arrivals by region in 2015 (in millions) and change on 2014 (in percent)



Source: World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

International tourist arrivals by year (in millions)



claimed by the Islamic State jihadist group.

"We must continue to travel. We must never allow the pretext of safety and security to curb and reverse our attitude towards making this world more open."

'Grow strongly'

The UN World Tourism Organization said 2015 was the sixth consecutive year of above-average growth in global tourism since the economic crisis.

It had initially predicted international tourism arrivals would increase by 3 to 4 percent in 2015.

Global tourism figures were hard hit by the global financial crisis, declining 4 percent in 2009 as an outbreak of swine flu also contributed to cash-strapped people staying at

home.

But they have risen each year since.

The UN body predicts international tourism arrivals will increase by 4 percent in 2016. It forecasts the number of tourists who make an overnight trip abroad will hit 1.4 billion by 2020.

"International tourism continues to grow strongly," said Rifai.

The attacks carried out last year "will not have any medium and long-term impact" on the growth of travel, he added.

Some destinations did suffer drops in visitor numbers last year due to fears of attacks.

The number of international visitors to Tunisia -- which was shaken by an attack on the Bardo museum in Tunis followed by one in the resort of Sousse that killed 59 tourists -- fell to 5.2 million last year from 7.2 million in 2014.

China top source nation

Tourism arrivals to North Africa overall fell by 8 percent last year. In sub-Saharan African they were down by 1 percent in part due to fears over the outbreak of Ebola.

Europe, the world's most visited region, Asia and the Pacific, and the Americas all recorded growth of around

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Tourists enjoy a swim with a pink dolphin in the Rio Negro (Black River), in the Amazonia, Brazil on December 10, 2015 (Christophe Simon, AFP/File)

World tourism

...Continued from page 3

5 percent in the number of international arrivals last year.

China was once again the top source country for international tourists, which benefitted Asian destinations such as Japan and Thailand, as well as the United States and several European nations, the UN body said.

Chinese travellers were also the biggest spenders last year with China

posting double-digit growth in tourism expenditure every year since 2004.

By contrast expenditure from Russia and Brazil declined “significantly” last year “reflecting the economic constraints in both countries and the depreciation of the ruble and the real against virtually all other currencies”, the UN body said in a statement.

Source: Agence France-Presse (AFP), January 19, 2016



Tourists pose for photos on November 30, 2015 at Place de la Concorde in Paris (Matthieu Alexandre, AFP/File)

Thai tourism sector to woo more premium visitors

By Kwanchai Rungfapaisarn and Jintana Panyaarvudh

Thailand’s tourism industry is going to be re-branded to transition from being a “cheap” destination to emphasize quality and premium travel.

A tourism destination and product storytelling strategy will be created for all provinces to promote their tourism value.

Chadatip Chutrakul, chief executive officer of Siam Piwat Co., operator of the Siam Centre, Siam Discovery and Siam Paragon shopping complexes, has joined dozens of top CEOs who were enlisted to help the government revive the sluggish economy amid global and domestic challenges.

Given mutual and national benefits, these CEOs, who command Thailand’s largest conglomerates, are working with the economic team headed by Somkid Jatusripitak, Thailand’s deputy prime minister for economic affairs.

The team recently set up 12 working groups comprising CEOs and top government officials to revitalize the economy with a strategy ranging from boosting innovation and productivity to attracting private investment and developing new infrastructure.

Chadatip is a member of the group led by Chanin Donavanik, vice



Chadatip Chutrakul, chief executive officer of Siam Piwat Co.

chairman and executive chairman of Dusit Thani Plc., and Kalin Sarasin, chairman of the Tourism Authority of Thailand, that was tasked with promoting the meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions (MICE) and tourism industries. “The government has encouraged strong participation from the private sector to create ‘quick-win’ solutions to stimulate tourism and the economy. The solutions will be effective within

six to 12 months.

“As the private sector, we have contributed to the government valuable information and views so that it can understand foreign tourists better,” she said.

“One of the quick-win solutions our group is working on is creating a storytelling strategy for tourism destinations and products being promoted in each province all over Thailand and putting them on the e-commerce page to be later developed by the Tourism Ministry.

“The move will allow tourists to access in-depth information on the brand champions of food, accommodations, cultural events and festivals of each province so they can choose their desired destinations,” she said.

“The key issue is how to promote each city as a premium destination in terms of the values behind its culture and events, the local wisdom and superb craftsmanship of its local products and the beauty of its natural resources.

‘Affordable yet delivers unparalleled value’

“Quality and safety standards will be seriously raised at all destinations, which include hotels and restaurants,”

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Thai tourism

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she said.

Chadatip will take part in the arrangement of storytelling about Thailand as a premium destination.

“In conclusion we wish to see Thailand becoming a premium destination that is affordable yet delivers unparalleled value and experience to tourists from around the world.”

In line with the government’s policy to promote tourism, Siam Piwat will launch a major campaign this year inviting all citizens to contribute stories reflecting pride prevailing across the nation, presenting Thailand as a unique and extraordinary nation unlike any other in the world.

After weathering political unrest and economic hardships in 2014, the company saw 2015 as the year of

The Colours of Thailand



resetting the economy.

“We experienced many fluctuating events in 2014, including political unrest. And 2015 is the year that most incidents went back to normal,” she said.

The 10-percent growth in sales posted by the company’s flagship property Siam Paragon last year was driven by the growth in inbound tourists by 15-18 percent. They spent an average of 5,000-6,000 baht (US\$140-170) per visit at the shopping complex.

The top sources of arrivals were mainland China followed by Hong Kong, India and Indonesia. Other important sources of tourists were South Korea, Taiwan and Singapore.

Sales stalled after the blast at the

Ratchaprasong Intersection in August, but fully rebounded in five to six weeks.

“After the year of reset in 2015, we expect the Thai economy to be better this year as many economic-stimulus measures issued by the government will be fully executed.

“The only challenge is the slowdown of the world economy,” she said.

The implementation of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) is also expected to benefit entrepreneurs in the region who will be able to share know-how, human resources, marketing campaigns and activities.

Siam Piwat began preparing for the AEC two years ago by joining with many department stores and shopping malls in ASEAN and Japan in the exchange of privilege programs.

They are Parco in Japan, Lotte in South Korea, Times Square in Hong Kong, Taipei 101 in Taiwan and Starwood Hotels and Resorts Group.

“We plan to exchange on-the-job training for our staff with other retailers and shopping mall operators along with the alliance network,” she said.

The company has also started recruiting more front-office staff fluent in ASEAN languages. Of its 1,500-strong workforce, about 50 employees are from other countries in Asia, such as mainland China, Taiwan, Japan and Indonesia.



Source: *The Nation/Asia News Network*, February 9, 2016



SL-Thailand enter MoU on tourism

Sri Lanka and Thailand signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on technical cooperation and a joint action programme for the implementation of the MoU on bilateral cooperation in the area of tourism, at the Foreign Affairs Ministry on March 9, 2016.



Signing of the MoU

Tourism Development, Lands and Christian Affairs Minister John Amaratunga signed the agreement on behalf of Sri Lanka in the presence of Thailand Deputy Prime Minister in Charge of Economic Affairs Dr. Somkid Jatusripitak.

The Thailand Deputy Prime Minister, who arrived in the island on March 8, is on a four-day official visit to Sri Lanka. The visit is a follow up to President Maithripala Sirisena's visit to Thailand last November.

During his stay, the Thai Deputy Prime Minister will pay courtesy calls on President Maithripala Sirisena and Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe.

He is also scheduled to visit places



Tourism Development Minister John Amaratunga greeting Thailand Deputy Prime Minister Dr. Somkid Jatusripitak while Foreign Minister Mangala Samaraweera looks on

of Buddhist worship and heritage sites including the Kelaniya Raja Maha Viharaya, Kandy and Anuradhapura with a view to promoting Buddhist tourism among Thai nationals.

Source: *Daily Mirror*, March 10, 2016 ❁

Taipei ranks as 11th best travel destination in Asia: survey

By Y.Y. Tsai and Lee Hsin-Yin

Taipei ranked as the 11th best travel destination in Asia in 2015 among 167 cities rated in a MasterCard survey about, with visitor spending in the city totaling US\$9.5 billion, the credit card company said on February 1, 2016.

In the first MasterCard survey of its kind, Taipei registered 6.4 million international visitors, making it the 11th most traveled Asian city in 2015.

Bangkok, Singapore and Tokyo topped the list with 21.9 million, 11.81 million and 11.76 million visitors, respectively.

The interest in Taipei also



contributed to the capital city's economy, with the US\$9.5 billion the city took in from tourism, the seventh most of all cities in the MasterCard survey.

Taipei also ranked second among the cities surveyed for average length of stay number of nights stayed per visitor at 6.6 nights, trailing only the resort island of Bali, Indonesia.

Japan accounted for 2.3 million visitors to Taipei last year, the most of any country, following by visitors from China (1.8 million) and the United States (560,000), the survey found.

According to the MasterCard report, public data was used to derive the international overnight visitor arrivals and their cross-border spending in each of the destinations, using custom-made algorithms.

It stressed the rankings were not based on MasterCard volumes or transactional data.

There was a discrepancy, however, between the MasterCard breakdown of



sources of tourists and official records in Taiwan, one that a spokesperson for the survey could not explain other than to say a different methodology was used.

According to Taiwan's Tourism Bureau, Taiwan had roughly 10 million international arrivals last year, of which 4.1 million came from mainland China, 1.6 million came from Japan, 1.5 million came from Hong Kong and Macau, and 479,000 came from the United States.

Source: *Central News Agency (CNA)*, February 1, 2016 ❁

Sri Lanka Tourism at ITB Berlin

ITB (International Travel Trade Show Berlin) is the largest travel industry event which happens annually in Berlin, Germany.

In 2016, ITB Berlin celebrates its golden jubilee attracting large number of tourism professionals and visitors from 185 countries around the globe. With an estimated turnover of Euro 6.7 billion, the fair creates a unique opportunity to develop strong business contacts in the travel and the tourism

industry.

The grand opening ceremony of ITB Berlin took place on Tuesday 8 March 2016 at 6 p.m. in the City Cube Berlin. The Head of UNWTO addressed over 300 plus distinguished guests and VIPs attended the official opening ceremony of the event.

This year, 64 Sri Lankan companies including key stakeholders of the tourism industry of Sri Lanka are participating at ITB along with Sri

Lanka Tourism to promote key tourist attractions of the island including Ayurveda and tea. SLTPB has arranged a press conference on 10 March, the second day of the event and over 60 international journalists are expected to attend the press briefing.

Germany is the second biggest tourism market for Sri Lanka from Europe accounting for 115,868 tourist arrivals in 2015 which is a 12.5% increase year-on-year.

Source: Daily FT, March 10, 2016 ❀



Malaysia to pull in more shoppers from Brunei to promote tourism

By Zafirah Zaili, The Brunei Times/Asia News Network

delegates, who comprised of shopping mall and tourism product operators, to highlight and promote shopping attractions to local travel agents and tourism associations.

The delegation included representatives from Jakel Mall, Batu Road Retailers Association (BARRA) and Malaysia Shopping Malls Association (PPK).

Phang Sau Lian, assistant secretary of PPK, said that the malls in Malaysia offer more than just value-for-money shopping, as the world-class shopping complexes in the country also provide leisure and entertainment opportunities.

“Mega-sized malls include more features like the Sunway Pyramid, which has a skating rink inside the mall and the Sunway Lagoon just next to the building. These additional features are what make the shopping experience in Malaysia different,” she said.

Iskandar said that this is the first time Tourism Malaysia has organized a shopping seminar in Brunei and their strategy is to make shopping the main objective of tourists’ visit to Malaysia.

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Phang Sau Lian, assistant secretary of the Malaysia Shopping Malls Association, is seen at Bandar Seri Begawan in this undated photo. (The Brunei Times/Asia News Network)

Tourism Malaysia is working with travel agents and tourism associations in Brunei to promote Malaysia as a top destination for shoppers.

Tourism Malaysia Domestic Promotion Director Iskandar Mirza Mohd Yusof said that the country wants to promote itself as a shopping haven to Bruneians, as shopping currently holds the biggest share of tourist expenditure in Malaysia.

“Brunei currently ranks fifth in the top 10 generating markets for Malaysia. Until September last year, it recorded more than 830,000 tourist arrivals,” said Iskandar at the Secretariat Shopping Malaysia Seminar and Travel Mart to Brunei Darussalam on January 27, 2016.

“Shopping remains the highest component of Bruneian expenditure with 45.5 percent when compared to other components such as accommodation, transport, organized tours and others.”

The seminar and travel mart gave an opportunity for the Malaysian

Malaysia to pull

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He also said that Malaysia's success in the shopping industry can be attributed to its strategy of promoting the country as a holistic shopping destination that provides not only a wide variety of products and services from international brands but also leisure, wellness and unique experiences for tourists.

"I believe the favorable currency exchange rate, the extended border crossing hours until midnight and

the diversity of tourist attractions are factors that will attract more Bruneians to shop in Malaysia," said Iskandar.

He added that when tourists are enticed to visit Malaysia to shop, they will likely travel to other parts of Southeast Asia for different cultural experiences.

"The promotion does not only help Malaysia but other economies in the region," said Iskandar.

Director of Tourism Malaysia in Brunei Zurina Abdul Samad said that the increased connectivity between the

countries in the region make it easier for them to offer packages that include other countries apart from Malaysia.

She gave the dual city tour package as an example, which allows tourists to shop in Sabah as well as tour the attractions in Brunei.

"On our part, we'd like to offer products and services that cater to a whole range of clientele like the theme parks for kids and spas for people who prefer to relax while on holiday.

Source: *China Post*, January 28, 2016 ❀

Aichi service area to offer halal foods for Muslim travelers

The Okazaki service area on the Shin Tomei Expressway will start selling halal bento (boxed meals) when it opens in February 2016 to accommodate the needs of a growing number of Muslim tourists.

Using produce grown by local farmers, the meals will be prepared in accordance with Islamic dietary laws to ensure Muslims don't have to worry about their food while on vacation in Japan.

There are currently few restaurants in Japan that cater to the dietary restrictions of Muslims, which includes a ban on eating pork and drinking alcohol.

"Many tour buses use the expressway, but we've never heard of a service area providing (halal food)," said an official at the Japan Tourism Agency.

The bento will be produced and sold by Toyotan Honpo Corp., a company in Toyota, Aichi Prefecture, that develops regional specialities. The company will open its store at the Okazaki service area.

The rest stop is a prime location as it is situated halfway between the Kansai and Kanto regions, with Toyotan Honpo keen to take into account the dietary needs of group tour passengers traveling long distances.

There are four main dish options,

including chicken teriyaki and gyukakuni (beef cube stew), with all meals created using ingredients that have been certified halal.

The bento is served with Aichi no Kaori rice, a local brand produced by the chairman of Toyotan Honpo, 40-year-old Etsushi Ohashi, and comes with side dishes of boiled carrots, shiitake and taro from Mikawa, Aichi Prefecture.

The move to halal foods is not an entirely new one.

There are many Indonesians working in Toyota-affiliated companies in the city of Toyota. The deli section of a supermarket run by Masahide Itakura, 48, offers halal food as well. The supermarket has won the trust of local Muslims by separating and strictly managing ingredients and seasonings, as well as all cooking utensils used.

Toyotan Honpo will prepare the bento in Itakura's store so it can benefit from their experience.

With tourists from Muslim countries often limited to eating light food, such as onigiri (rice balls), when visiting Japan, Toyotan Honpo has already received orders from travel agencies for the product.

Located between the junctions of Toyota-Higashi in Toyota and Hamamatsu Inasa in the city of Hamamatsu, Shizuoka Prefecture,



Etsushi Ohashi shows a bento boxed meal his company will start selling at the Okazaki service area.

the Okazaki Service Area will be the biggest one in the Tokai region when it starts operating on February 13, 2016.

The halal bento is priced at ¥2,000 and must be reserved beforehand.

The company also sells nonhalal food and souvenirs, such as Mikawa beef skewers, Nagoya cochon sausage and an assortment of Japanese and Western confectionery in the service area.

"This is our chance to sell Mikawa products and I want to promote them to the increasing number of inbound tourists," said Ohashi.

Source: *Japan Times*, February 1, 2016 ❀

Visitors to Japan surge to record 19.73 million, spend all-time high ¥3.48 trillion

By Tomoko Otake

A record 19.73 million people visited Japan in 2015, marking the first time in 45 years that the number of incoming travelers surpassed the outbound figure, the tourism ministry said on January 19, 2016.

The announcement confirms once again that the nation is almost sure to achieve its target of attracting 20 million foreign visitors in a year by 2020. The success has sparked the government to think about revising the target upward.

The 19.73 million visitors marked a 47.3 percent increase from 2014, when 13.41 million people entered Japan, and is nearly four times the 5.21 million who visited in 2003 when the “Visit Japan” campaign began.

Spending by foreign visitors also reached a record ¥3.48 trillion, up 71.5 percent from 2014. This means the size of Japan’s inbound tourism industry now equals that of its auto parts exports, tourism officials said.

But officials are cautious on whether such rapid growth will continue this year, citing uncertainties in the Chinese economy and major

destinations such as Tokyo and Osaka having nearly reached their capacities for accommodating the influx.

“For 2016, we expect the arrivals to top 20 million, but it’s hard to think that we will keep seeing the kind of unprecedented growth experienced in 2015,” tourism minister Keiichi Ishii told a news conference. “I think the growth in 2016 will be moderate.”

According to the Japan National Tourism Organization, travelers from China topped the list for 2015, accounting for 4.99 million, more than twice as many from the year before. They were followed by 4 million from South Korea, 3.67 million from Taiwan and 1.52 million from Hong Kong.

The growth record is attributed to a number of factors; the burgeoning middle-class in China is one, with its growing appetite for overseas travel. For such people, Japan, due to the depreciation of the yen, has become a bargain destination.

A series of domestic measures, including eased rules for visas, improved access to airports and expansion of duty-free shopping, have also helped.

Visitors from the United States, the fifth-largest market, surged 15.9 percent to hit 1.03 million, marking the first time that American travelers topped the 1 million mark, the JNTO said.

The Chinese were by far the largest spenders.

Of the nearly ¥3.5 trillion spent by foreign visitors, Chinese people accounted for 40.8 percent, followed by 15 percent for Taiwanese, 8.7 percent for South Koreans and 7.6 percent for people from Hong Kong.

The so-called bakugai “explosive” shopping sprees of Chinese tourists are well documented in the statistics. Such consumption reached ¥808 billion in 2015, by far the biggest spending by nationality, trailed by Taiwanese



Tourists snap photographs of a maiko, or apprentice geisha, walking through the Gion area of Kyoto in May 2015. | BLOOMBERG

shoppers, who spent a total of ¥218 billion.

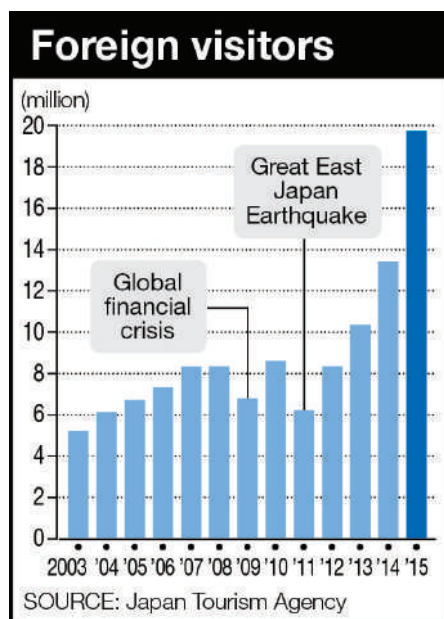
Going forward, Japan has a lot of room for improvement to become a truly tourism-oriented nation, Japan Tourism Agency Commissioner Akihiko Tamura said.

“Japanese ryokan (inns) are not very productive, and their services are not fully tailored to foreign visitors,” Tamura said. “Travel agencies have long been structured around outbound business and there are not many operators making money in inbound business. We have a lot of challenges for tourism to become a key industry, to become a driver of economic growth.”

In fact, the decline in outbound travel is a cause of concern. The number of Japanese who traveled overseas in 2015 was 16.2 million, down 690,000 from 2014. Tamura said this is unfavorable, noting that, like trade, tourism should involve a “two-way exchange.”

“It’s not healthy for one country to be only exporting and not importing,” he said. “In fact, South Korea is expected to have more outbound travelers than Japan in 2015, even though the country’s population is far smaller than ours. We need to promote an environment where people will travel both ways.”

Source: Japan Times, January 19, 2016



KYODO GRAPHIC

Tax rebates and price transparency to encourage medical tourism to South Korea

New initiatives to promote South Korean medical tourism include tax rebates and price transparency.

Foreigners who have cosmetic surgery or cosmetic treatment in South Korea will receive a value added tax refund.

The tax rebate will be given at booths in the country's international airports when foreign patients submit a certificate issued by authorised medical institutions or dermatology clinics.

Cosmetic operations and services including liposuction, nasal surgery and eyelid surgery undertaken between April 1 2016 and March 31 2017 are subject to the tax refund. The idea is to boost South Korea's medical tourism sector.

Fifty Seoul clinics and hospitals have published price lists to provide a better service to foreign patients and to stop illegal brokers ripping off customers by claiming prices are higher than they are. But only selected prices are published.

The long-term aim of the Ministry of Health is to have all hospitals and clinics publish fees so customers can do easy price comparisons. Government is getting resistance from hospitals that regard prices as secret and commercially sensitive.

Both moves are part of the campaign to rebuilt trust in the true cost and safety of cosmetic surgery in South Korea. Most cosmetic surgery customers are from China, where the media has been exposing over charging and unsafe practices in Korea.

Seoul has launched an airport pick-up service for medical tourists and the Ministry of Health has opened

a Medical Korea Information Centre in central Seoul. It offers interpretation services, medical consulting and legal advice to sort out medical disputes.

Korea accepts it has to do more to help customers when they get there. In a recent survey of 200 local clinics, interpretation services were needed in many to attract foreign patients, as was counselling support on visa issues.

South Korea plans to boost support and offer more medical tourism packages, with the aim of attracting 400,000 medical tourists in 2016.

Source: International Medical Travel Journal, 29 April 2016



'Green Street' transforms Tbilisi into city of the future

A residential street in Georgia's capital is going green; green asphalt, rare plants, innovative technologies and solar powered installations will transform the area into one of the most modern and innovative spaces in the city and the world.

In two months' time Kargareтели St in Marjanishvili district of the city will be unrecognisable from its current state, after undergoing a major upgrade to turn the street 'green'.

Tbilisi's Technology Development Fund announced the goal of the 'green street' project was to present Tbilisi to the world as a place of creativity, novelty and a regional centre of modern technologies.

To turn Kargareтели St into a 'green street', the Technology Development Fund planned to lay green asphalt on the road, install solar-powered outdoor lights, put innovative rubbish bins that press garbage, install 'clever chairs' that monitor air pollution and place chargers where electric cars can recharge their batteries.

"For example, rubbish bins will have the ability to press garbage itself before the rubbish truck comes. There will be charger devices in the street so the people can charge their cell phones, laptops, and more. There will also be places to charge electric cars too."

Currently there are about 15 e-auto stations in Tbilisi where drivers can charge their cars, but soon this will increase once the new charging stations open on Kargareтели St, Gvantseladze said.

A 'clever chair' that monitors air pollution levels and shows the weather forecast was another innovative technology that will be installed on the street. Furthermore a modern underground water reservoir will also be fitted at Kargareтели St. The street's infrastructure will also be fully rehabilitated, he added.

A tender will be announced in two weeks, which companies can apply to



A tender will be announced in two weeks, where companies can apply to carry out the works. Artist impression from the Technology Development Fund.



People can charge electric cars on Kargareтели Street. Artist impression by Technology Development Fund.

Solar-powered outdoor lights will be installed on Kargareтели Street. Photo by Technology Development Fund.



carry out the works.

"This will be a pilot project. If successful, the project will cover other streets in Tbilisi," said Gvantselidze.

"Kargareтели St is just a small

street, only 230 metres long. Ultimately we want to make all large streets 'green' in Tbilisi."

Source: Agenda.ge, March 24, 2016 ✿

Investments in tourism will attract visitors and create jobs

The Government's investment in tourism in the Budget will help Australia to attract more international visitors and support jobs and growth in businesses in the sector, the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry National Tourism Council said tonight (May 3, 2016).

Steve Whan, Manager of the National Tourism Council, said: "The tourism sector is pleased that the Government has seen the merit in funding tourism even as it faces a tough fiscal challenge. But we are very disappointed there has been no reversal of the so-called backpacker tax.

"Maintaining funding for Tourism Australia is a key commitment, which will pay dividends for the whole economy. Tourism Australia has been allocated core funding of \$140.3 million in 2016-17, this combined with industry contributions and Asia Marketing fund will see their budget remain relatively stable.

"The Government has wisely honoured its commitment to freeze the Passenger Movement Charge at \$55 a head. The charge raises more than four times the cost of immigration operations at our international ports, so it has gone beyond its original cost-



recovery approach. Keeping upfront taxes and charges as low as possible is critical for promoting tourism and ensuring our visitors have more to spend when they are here.

"Tourism strongly welcomes the establishment of a premium border clearance service which has been advocated by the sector, a user paid service that will help to attract more high-spending visitors to Australia.

"These initiatives reflect the fact that tourism is a star in an otherwise sluggish economy, creating many jobs and supporting our balance of trade. Every dollar invested in tourism marketing and developing our product delivers several dollars of returns to the economy and the Government.

"About 1 in 20 Australian jobs is in tourism, following strong employment growth over the past year, and the sector boosted our balance of payments by \$1.5 billion in February alone. Given this, it is vital that Government policies support tourism growth rather than strangle it.

"We do have some concerns though. It is hugely disappointing that there has been no shift on the Government's proposed tax increases for working holidaymakers (the backpacker tax). The current proposal will lead to labour shortages in tourism and hospitality businesses, particularly in regional areas.

"Tourism will continue to work with farmers to try to get this counterproductive tax amended.

"We will also be keeping a close eye on the impact of efficiency



dividends on Austrade and on Immigration's front line border services. Getting passengers through the airport quickly and effectively needs a greater focus and more staff, so it is important efficiency dividends do not flow through to cuts in these frontline services."

Source: Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, May 3, 2016



Tourism Authority of Thailand launches Women's Journey

Thailand to boost local and international female tourism

Research has shown that women travellers enjoy visiting the beach, benefitting from Thailand's amazing spa opportunities and trying Thai food, but they are perhaps more concerned with safety and privacy than male travellers.

By Theodore Koumelis

The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) is launching a special campaign to attract local and international female travellers to enjoy some of the kingdom's many attractions with a wide range of activities, special offers, discounts and privileges from the variety of products and services and events aimed at women, whether travelling alone or with groups of friends, to be arranged across the month of August 2016.

Mr. Yuthasak Supasorn, TAT Governor said, "We've designated August 2016 as a 'month for women travellers', in a way of marking Her Majesty Queen Sirikit's 84th birthday, to encourage the growth of the global and domestic female traveller segment in conjunct with our strategy to promote Thailand to be a Quality Leisure Destination. Increasingly women are coming to Thailand in groups or as solo travellers and expect to find activities and attractions geared to their needs. So, this campaign will broaden their recognition on how Thailand can cater for a great experience to female travellers like nowhere else."

Mrs. Juthaporn Rerngronasa, TAT Deputy Governor for International Marketing – Europe, Africa, Middle East and the Americas added, "In addition, when it comes to planning holidays, it's often the women in the family making the main decisions. Female travellers are an increasingly strong market for local and inbound tourism to Thailand. The global income of women worldwide has risen hugely and the compound growth of female arrivals to Thailand has also risen, averaging 11.4 percent from the period



Mr. Yuthasak Supasorn (6th left), TAT Governor; Mrs. Juthaporn Rerngronasa (4th right), TAT Deputy Governor for International Marketing – Europe, Africa, Middle East and Americas, Mr. Sugree Sithivanich (3rd right), TAT Deputy Governor for Marketing Communications, Mr. Visanu Jaroensilp (4th left), TAT Deputy Governor for Tourism Products and Business and Mrs. Srisuda Wanapinyosak (5th left), TAT Deputy Governor for International Marketing Asia and South Pacific with various Bangkok female celebrities.

2007-2014."

Research has shown that women travellers enjoy visiting the beach, benefitting from Thailand's amazing spa opportunities and trying Thai food, but they are perhaps more concerned with safety and privacy than male travellers. With this in mind, TAT is joining forces with airlines, hotels, resorts, spas and tour operators to arrange various activities as well as offer special discounts and privileges throughout the month of August.

"In order to promote this initiative and inspire female travellers to come to Thailand, TAT has come up with five different promotional concepts: Beautiful Look, Beautiful Shape, Beautiful Mind, Beautiful Retreat, and Beautiful Experience, which are all designed to meet the varied needs

of women travellers and to boost Thai tourism products and services that are geared towards female travellers." Mrs. Srisuda Wanapinyosak, TAT Deputy Governor for International Marketing Asia and South Pacific, added.

Highlighted activities to be held as part of the campaign include Lady Golf Challenge, Lady Celebrities to Thailand, Thailand through Her Eyes, 84 Perspectives of Thailand, Lady in Thai Fabric, Lady Products Showcase as well as a Women's Journey application. Various other special arrangements are being provided to female travellers in this month; such as, Lady Immigration Lanes, Lady Parking and Lady Airfare.

Source: Travel Daily News, April 29, 2016



12 Travel Apps Worth Keeping in 2016

By Rosenbloom, Stephanie

Recently I deleted dozens of travel apps from my iPhone. Many are great. They allowed me to research unfamiliar places, listen to audio tours and turn my photos into postcards. But travel is about tapping the world, not a screen, so I'm ending the year with an app purge. I've kept only what I use often. An app didn't have to be new (most weren't) to make the cut, but it had to make travel easier or significantly more enjoyable. Below are a dozen that have earned a spot on my smartphone heading into 2016.

LiveTrekker This French app is a dream for flâneurs who love to wander without a map and yet, later, long to see where they've been. The app logs how far you walk, but I'm hooked on the red line it draws up and down each street, and through every park and museum you visit. Before setting off, tap the "tracker" button and then "start." When you've returned to your hotel hours later, you'll have a detailed, zoomable map (the satellite version that allows you to see trees and landmarks is a favorite) of where you've walked that you can also view on a computer and share with friends. I've used LiveTrekker to see how much of a city I've explored, and to note the little streets I strolled down whose names I might otherwise have forgotten. Cost: free.



Bravolo! This app brand puts basic phrases and vocabulary — “Thank you,” “How much?,” “A table for two, please” — at your fingertips. Each (in my case) English phrase is shown in the foreign language and sometimes as a transliteration, too. Even better: Tap a phrase, and the app speaks it aloud so you know how to pronounce it. There are a variety of languages available, including French, Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Portuguese, Russian and Arabic. Cost: free for basic categories, and \$4.99 for additional categories such as “driving” and “sightseeing.”



Duolingo If you want to begin studying a language but don't have the time, money or inclination for classes, you can learn during your commute or waiting in line at the supermarket with this app, which turns language learning into a game of multiple choice questions, word matching quizzes and translation challenges. Answer correctly and, like a video game, you can proceed to the next category. Courses are available in languages including Spanish, French, Italian, German and Portuguese. Cost: free.



Vurb One of the newer travel apps out there, Vurb allows you to access all your favorite workhorse apps in a single place. You can search for or discover destinations and events, and then do all the things you would normally do for an afternoon in a city — make a reservation on OpenTable (see below), buy movie tickets on Fandango, check out a location on Google Maps (below), request a car through Lyft or Uber (below), look at Yelp reviews or Foursquare tips, chat with your friends — all without closing Vurb and opening a half dozen other apps. (You give Vurb permission to open your various apps.) For instance, let's say you opened Vurb and searched for an Italian restaurant. After you select one and tap on its virtual address and information card, you'll see icons for popular apps like OpenTable, Google Maps, Safari and Uber. You can then tap one after another to quickly make a reservation, get directions and request a car without having to hunt for and open multiple apps. Cost: free.

Continued on page 15



12 Travel Apps

...Continued from page 14

Apple iBooks This is an often-overlooked native iPhone app. A virtual library of your own creation, it allows you to highlight favorite passages, add notes and tap a button to send yourself or someone else favorite quotes and passages from the digital books you're reading. You can download a travel



guide or take a bookshelf's worth of classics with you to London. Poetry by Keats, Longfellow and Elizabeth Barrett Browning can be downloaded free. You can increase the font size, and an option to darken the pages is handy if you want to read in your hotel bed while your partner is sleeping. Cost: free (you pay for most books you download).

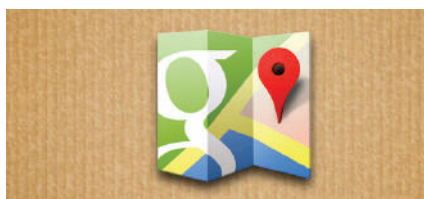
NOAA Radar Pro This weather app has more bells and whistles than anyone needs, but it's also more accurate than other weather apps I've tried. It's easy to scroll through hourly and weekly forecasts. You can customize the order in which you see forecasts for things like



precipitation, wind, visibility and what the temperature feels like. And you can bookmark multiple places where you want to regularly check the weather. Cost: free for basic version; \$1.99 for pro, which is ad-free and has seven-

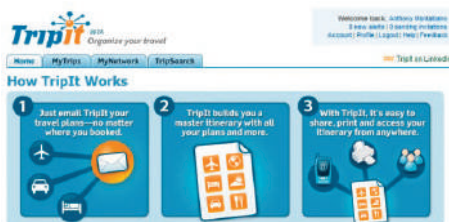
day forecasts (instead of three), severe-weather notifications and a hurricane tracker.

Google Maps and Google Translate Easy to use, with turn-by-turn voice navigation and clean lines, Google Maps is my first map stop. And now that there's also offline navigation, you won't incur roaming charges. Cost: free. Google Translate can be used in various ways. For example, you can tap the camera icon on your phone and then hold it up to a menu and see a translation. You can get translations of words that you speak, type or draw on your smartphone screen with your finger. The app is also capable of real-time translation while two people converse. I try to muddle through in a foreign language as much as possible, but it's comforting to know that in a pinch I've got a translator in my pocket. Cost: free.



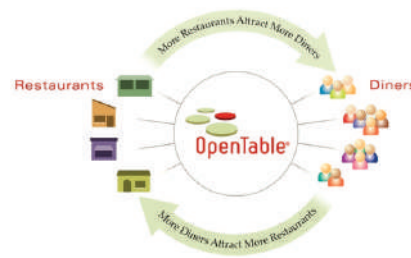
XE Currency For some people, currency conversion is a breeze. For the rest of us, there are apps. This one updates in real time, can display multiple currencies simultaneously, and the price is right. Cost: free (a pro version for \$2.29 allows you to monitor more currencies).

TripIt This travel organizer allows members to forward their various hotel, flight, car rental, concert and restaurant confirmation email to a single address and in return receive a digital itinerary. I'm even more impressed with the app's



ability to alert me to gate changes before an airline's app. Cost: free; \$49 a year for the pro version that includes flight, seat and fare refund alerts and allows you to keep track of your rewards points and miles.

OpenTable This popular app and reward program lets you browse restaurants both casual and costly, and then book with a few taps. Users earn



points for dining (a typical reservation earns 100 points), which can then be exchanged for discounts at participating restaurants or an Amazon gift card. For example, 2,000 points gets you \$20 toward a meal or a \$10 Amazon card. This can add up, especially if you book regularly, even when you know your favorite local joint isn't crowded. Cost: free.

Uber Love or hate the company, this app is indispensable on rainy days and late nights when mass transit is inconvenient and there isn't a cab in sight. In cities like Los Angeles, it's made doing without a rental car an option. And of course you don't have



to worry about having enough cash on hand because it's linked to your credit card. Cost: free.

Source: *New York Times*, December 27, 2015

EVA Air ranks among top 10 international carriers

By Liu Shu-chin and Frances Huang

EVA Airways has been named one of the top ten international carriers by AirlineRatings.com for 2016.

In a statement posted on the AirlineRatings.com website Nov. 30, EVA Air ranked as the seventh best international airline ahead of Virgin Atlantic/Virgin Australia (8), All Nippon Airways (9) and Lufthansa (10).

According to AirlineRatings.com, air carriers have to achieve a seven-star safety rating and show clear leadership in innovation for passenger comfort to gain the position among the top international carriers.

Since June 2013, AirlineRatings.com has rated the safety and in-flight products of 450 airlines, employing its unique seven-star rating system. Its seven-star rating system has been used by millions of passengers from 232 countries and has served as the industry standard for safety and product rating, AirlineRatings.com said.

In the rankings, Air New Zealand grabbed first place among the ten carriers, followed by Qantas Airways (2), Etihad Airways (3), Cathay Pacific Airways (4), Singapore Airlines (5), and Emirates (6).

No U.S. carriers reached the top 10 airlines list released by AirlineRatings.com for 2016.

AirlinesRatings.com said that its editors, some of the most experienced and awarded, looked for a consistent



level of service and innovation of these airlines over a period of four months to come up with the top 10 airlines for 2016 list.

“We want to reward and highlight the leaders in the industry -- airlines that go the extra distance to make a difference to the passenger experience,” AirlineRatings.com Editor-in-Chief Geoffrey Thomas said in the statement.

In addition to the top 10 airlines list, AirlineRatings.com has named Delta Air Lines as the best long haul carrier for the Americas, Etihad Airways for the Middle East and Africa, Cathay Pacific Airways for Asia-Pacific and Lufthansa for Europe.

Source: Central News Agency, December 2, 2015



ABOUT CACCI

The Confederation of Asia-Pacific Chambers of Commerce and Industry (CACCI) is a regional grouping of apex national chambers of commerce and industry, business associations and business enterprises in Asia and the Western Pacific.

It is a non-governmental organization serving as a forum for promoting the vital role of businessmen in the region, increasing regional business interaction, and enhancing regional economic growth. Since its establishment in 1966, CACCI has grown into a network of national chambers of commerce with a total now of 29 Primary Members from 27 Asian countries and independent

economies. It cuts across national boundaries to link businessmen and promote economic growth throughout the Asia-Pacific region. CACCI is a non-governmental organization (NGO) granted consultative status, Roster category, under the United Nations. It is a member of the Conference on NGOs (CoNGO), an association of NGOs with UN consultative status.

Among the benefits of membership in CACCI are the following:

1. Policy Advocacy - CACCI aims to play a strong policy advocacy role in order to establish a business environment conducive to creating

better opportunities for CACCI members.

2. Wide scope for networking - Participation in the various projects of CACCI will provide members the opportunity to expand their reach in Asia-Pacific by establishing contacts with the business communities of the region.

3. Participation in CACCI Annual Conferences and Training Programs - Members are invited to participate in the annual Conferences and various training programs which CACCI regularly conducts either on its own or in cooperation with other international organizations and member chambers.

4. Interaction in Product and Service Councils - Membership in CACCI allows participation in the activities of the various Product and Service Councils (PSCs) of the organization. PSCs are business groupings organized along product or service lines with a primary objective of promoting business cooperation, personal contacts, and technology transfer.

5. Access to CACCI publications - CACCI publishes the CACCI Profile, its monthly newsletter, and the CACCI Journal of Commerce and Industry, a bi-annual publication which features papers, speeches, and other articles pertaining to issues affecting the regional economy.

For more information, please visit www.cacci.biz

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 Chairman of Red Apple Travel & Holidays Lanka (Pvt) Ltd., and Immediate Past President of The 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 and go to the "Product and Service Councils" page.

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