

Why aren't we hosted?

Big boys shocked at not being hosted, longhaul competes with booming markets

By Gracia Chiang

THE question of who should be hosted at ATF has arisen as some of the biggest European producers to ASEAN were rejected as hosted buyers, shocking these big-timers and creating a debate on how TRAVEX should strike a balance between old and new buyers going forward.

Of the more than 400 buyers at TRAVEX, which kicks off today, about 300 are hosted, but but major travel groups such as Germany's Meier's Weltreisen, Thomas Cook UK and The Mark Travel Corporation US did not make the cut for the first time in years. John Pell, product manager of Thomas Cook's scheduled

businesses, and Claudia Schienker, product manager Asia of Meier's, managed to attain hosted buyer status only after several appeals. Trade buyers have to pay their own airfares and are accommodated free only on a first-come-first-served basis.

The big boys did not mince their words on the hosted buyer selection process. Melissa Tilling, Mark Travel's product director (Far East), called it "flawed" and "secretive", adding it should be reviewed and made transparent.

"This is the first year (since 1994) I have not been accepted as a hosted buyer, and I feel disappointed that my personal hard work and commitment as a buy-

er is not valued by the host committee. Furthermore, I wonder why The Mark Travel Corporation is not valued above others." The Cambodia host committee later changed her status to hosted, but it was too late as she had made other plans.

Thomas Cook's Pell said: "I was extremely surprised that a company of the size, history and stature of Thomas Cook was not accorded hosted status in the first instance. To the best of my knowledge, we have always been hosted at ATF in the past."

But sellers like Lac Hong Voyages' director for business development Robert Tan point to a gradual shift in importance from

longhaul markets to those within the region. He also noted that the local host committee would naturally favour operators that produced numbers for itself.

But Jean Christophe Robles Espinosa, director of marketing, Brunei Tourism, last year's host, said an NTO must not be selfish and consider only its top producers, but those to the region overall.

Darren Ng, managing director of TTG Asia Media, to which the organisation of TRAVEX was outsourced, said: "There must be new buyers in order to expand the base for ASEAN countries. With so many considerations, it is hard to please everyone."

How we picked 'em

Lor Thoura, deputy director of marketing and promotion department, who oversees the hosted buyer selection, said: "We had 1,000 people registering as buyers, but our main target for the show is Asia-Pacific buyers and we have limits on the number of buyers we host for each country and region."

"We select who to host on a first-come-first-served basis and once we get enough, we don't accept any more. Some big operators from Europe may not be hosted if they register later than others. Before we validate hosted buyers, we also check with hotels in Cambodia and look at the size of groups they bring. We meet with the private sector in Cambodia and show sellers the list of buyers we are intending to host. We are concerned about the development of Cambodia but also for ASEAN."

Viewpoint

Two sides of a coin

"It is totally incomprehensible why most of us are not included as hosted buyers. If the biggest operator in Germany, the most important market in Europe is not hosted, then I am asking, who is?"

Hermann Wegmueller

Executive director, product and consulting
Go Vacation Thailand, part of Rewe Touristik



"Europe may not necessarily be producing high volumes given their economies now. Asia, however, is a growing market..."

Robert Tan

Director, business development
Lac Hong Voyages, Vietnam

First-time buyers: why us

By Gracia Chiang

FRESH faces at this year's ATF argue that they, of all buyers, should be hosted.

Australia-based Oasis Travel managing director Nick Page said: "If the big, international tour operators rate the show highly enough, they should have a budget to send their staff to attend. It is the smaller and more boutique operators with no budgets that will benefit more from being hosted buyers."

Page added that the smaller buyers were the ones who needed to broaden their product knowledge by attending such shows.

Thomas Ng, managing director of Pave-way Explorer Holidays in Singapore, explained that shows like ATF were the best avenues for new buyers to be introduced to vendors and subsequent business opportunities. "Without these contacts, new operators will find it extremely difficult to lay the groundwork necessary to start a travel programme," said Ng.

Greece-based IGI-Mice executive di-

rector Chow Laiwah added that with a growing number of enquiries for ASEAN destinations such as Cambodia, Vietnam and Myanmar, trade shows were an important tool for the company. Said Chow:

"If the big, international tour operators rate the show highly enough, they should have a budget to send their staff to attend."

"Through them we are able to meet new suppliers, discover new markets and new products."

Addressing allegations by major operators that new or smaller buyers may be attending trade shows for free vacations, Chow said: "Those who work with and in Asia don't have to participate in a trade-show to take their holi-

days, as time is money for all of us and we need time to do our business."

Page responded similarly. "This may well be abused by a small minority but... with many small businesses, time out of the office is at a premium and is not to be wasted," he said.

Said Ng: "ATF is serious business for us and certainly not an opportunity for a paid holiday."

— What old-timers/sellers say, page 2



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Patrick Tan Photographer
Redmond Sia, Haze Loh
 Creative Designers
Lina Tan Editorial Assistant

CONTRIBUTORS

Bernie Rosenbloom, Rahul Khanna, Steve Finch

SALES & MARKETING

Michael Chow Publisher
Katherine Ng, Marisa Chen
 Senior Business Managers
Fiona Heng Marketing Services Executive

PUBLISHING SERVICES

Tony Yeo Division Manager
Agnes Loy Senior Production Executive
Nancy Lee Production Co-ordinator
Betty Loo Advertisement Administration Executive
Carol Wong Circulation Executive

TTG ASIA MEDIA

Darren Ng Managing Director

Beyond Angkor Wat

Adventure travel gains traction, spreads tourism to remote Cambodia

By Brian Higgs

TOURISM to Cambodia is spreading beyond popular Siem Reap, with tour operators reporting a huge increase in ecotourism and adventure travel in the more remote areas of the country.

Lolei Travel general manager Michael Scholten said adventure-seeking travellers were heading to regions such as Mondulkiri and Rattanakiri in the north-east, where there are vast, pristine national parklands.

"This is also a good way to

combine Cambodia and Laos (Luang Prabang) in one trip," he said.

Hanuman Tourism company advisor Nick Ray said: "A few years ago, there was hardly anyone coming to these areas. Over a period of three to five years, the numbers have increased by 400 to 500 per cent. Most of these visitors are from the UK, US and Australia, with some from France and the Netherlands."

Improved connectivity is a reason. "The roads used to be

terrible, but now they have tarmac roads and bridges. What used to be an eight- to nine-hour journey from Phnom Penh now takes just five hours."

"There only used to be backpackers (in these areas), but we are finding growing interest from groups, especially adventure motor biking groups who come on dirt bikes," he added.

Unique offerings include homestays in minority group villages and an elephant sanctuary run by a local NGO.

Hot leads

Tracking groundhandlers

US-BASED Global Tracks has groups arriving in 2012 and is looking for local groundhandlers in South-east Asia.

Programme manager Kimberly Brown said the company planned trips for executive MBAs and MBAs. Annually, it does about 40 groups with 40-90 pax per group. Each trip lasts about 10 days to two weeks.

About half of the groups will choose Asia, Vietnam and China in particular. However, there is also some interest for Thailand and Malaysia, according to Brown. — **Sirima Eamtako**

Sellers urge ATF host country to find right buyer balance

By Gracia Chiang

SELLERS say buyers with big volumes to ASEAN should be hosted, but concede they also want the presence of new players.

Destinations of the World (Malaysia) regional manager-business development of South-east Asia, Fizie Mansor, said the "ideal" strategy should be "increasing new buyers while maintaining the traditional heavyweights".

Singapore-based Tour East

group vice president of sales and marketing Judy Lum said: "Why should a major operator be made to pay and the small and medium or up-and-coming operators not have to? I cannot comprehend the logic. Major operators have to work hard at trade shows as every supplier wants to see them."

Yet Lum agreed that buyers from new and emerging markets presented "opportunities for the show".

Lac Hong Voyages director of business development Robert Tan expressed the desire to "see new players" at ATF as huge accounts had gone to other groundhandlers.

Refuting the argument (see page 1) that top producers have the means to fund their attendance, David Carlaw, head of Faraway Product at Premier Holidays UK, said: "Although we produce large volumes to the Far East, we are still an independently owned

tour operator who would find it harder to justify the attendance of the show and post- and pre-trips to the ASEAN countries if we were not hosted."

Others said they would rethink coming to ATF if they were not hosted. Andrea Mele, managing director of Italy-based Viaggi del Mappamondo explained: "There are so many trade shows all around the world nowadays. ATF is very far for us and it's just 40 to 45 days before ITB Berlin."



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India breakthrough for Philippines

First-ever air connectivity between the two countries opens a slew of opportunities for agents

By S Puvaneswary

THE Philippines' effort to nab a share of the Indian market, long stymied by an absence of air connectivity, is enjoying a turnaround as Indian buyers gear up for new six-weekly flights between Delhi and Manila.

Philippine Airlines will commence thrice-weekly direct services on March 27, to be followed the next day with three weekly Delhi-Manila services via Bangkok. The carrier will deploy an Airbus A320 with a passenger capacity of 302.

Unimondo Travel and Leisure director – business development, Suraj Khan, said: “Without these direct flights, transit times to Manila via Kuala Lumpur are between two to 10 hours, depending on which airport one is flying out of in India.”

He is now looking to sell niche, high-end products such as spa, yachting and island resorts in Cebu for the FIT segment.

Mercury Travels head-MICE, Augustine Barretto, said it was difficult to sell Asian destinations where flight times were more than seven hours. The direct flights would help him get more MICE groups to the Philippines, where there was already easy availability of Indian food and good shopping in Manila, he said.

Vacationer Holidays director M Shan-

muganatham said there was sufficient awareness of the destination created by the Philippine Department of Tourism in Delhi. “There were only no direct flights to help us push the destination. We want to tap this market early; the margins are higher because there are not many Indian

outbound operators doing this market.”

He also sees potential for the honeymoon segment. He said: “Mindanao can easily beat the Maldives, which is a top-end destination. Airfares to the Maldives may be cheaper (from India) but the total package cost is much more expensive. For

a three-night stay in Maldives, you can stay five nights in the Philippines. Indians also love shopping. There is not much shopping in the Maldives whereas Manila has numerous shopping malls and plazas. Manila boasts the third largest shopping mall in the world, SM Mall of Asia.”

ASEAN for ASEAN shines brightly

By Sirima Eamtako

ASEAN tourism ministers are stepping up the focus on the ASEAN market and China, Japan, South Korea, Russia and India, amid lingering financial problems in longhaul markets.

Responding to a question by *TTG Asia ATF Daily* at a press conference yesterday, Indonesia tourism minister Jero Wacik said: “Europe is still in a crisis. That’s why we have the programme called ASEAN for ASEAN (to encourage a region with a population of 600 million people to travel within the region).

“Now, our marketing focus is on (member) ASEAN countries, our dialogue partners (Japan, China and South Korea), and Russia and India.”

Cambodia tourism minister Dr Thong Khon said during the 14th meeting of ASEAN tourism ministers that the “Plus 3” dialogue partners were urged to support outbound tourism to ASEAN destinations. In response, ASEAN would look at adding more flights to the three countries, he said.

South Korean officials pointed out that direct flights between Siem Reap and South Korean cities brought more than 200,000 South Korean visitors to Cambodia alone last year.

Not all the three partners were doing well, however, with Japan senior vice minister of land, infrastructure, transport and tourism Shuji Ikeguchi saying Japan outbound had been sluggish in the last few years due to the country’s economic slowdown.

China National Tourism Administration director-general Lin Shan said he envisioned further cooperation between China and ASEAN countries in product development and manpower training in order to grow traffic both ways.



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Next stop: Manado

New US\$11 million venue being built to host ATF 2012

By Mimi Hudoyo

A NEW exhibition hall is being built in Manado – capital city of the North Sulawesi province – to accommodate TRAVEX next year.

The 10,000m² venue is under construction within the Grand Kawana International City (GKIC), near the Novotel Manado Golf Resort and Convention Centre, where the ASEAN ministerial meetings will be held.

It will be able to accommodate 500 booths, and works are scheduled to be completed by November, according to Widijanto, managing director of Wenang Permai Sentosa, which owns GKIC. The total investment is 100 billion rupiah (US\$11.1 million).

North Sulawesi Regional Tourism Office director Haerfrey Sendoh said: “As far as facilities are concerned, the TRAVEX venue is the only addition we need to fulfil.” Other requirements such as accommodation and buses could be met, Sendoh said.

Work on the hall followed the announcement last year by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism that Manado had won the bid for



Wacik: Not the first time

ATF over Lombok and Palembang.

The new facility will enhance Manado’s MICE capacity, which includes the 5,000-pax convention centre at Novotel Manado Golf Resort and Convention Centre.

Indonesia Minister of Culture and Tourism Jero Wacik said: “ATF is not the first international event to be held in Manado. The destination successfully hosted the World Ocean Conference (WOC) and Coral Triangle Initiative Summit in 2009 with 5,000 delegates and the Sail Bunaken 2009.”

In the run-up to ATF, two “warm-up” events – the Indonesia MICE and Corporate Travel Mart and the Tourism Indonesia Mart and Expo – will be held in Manado in May and October respectively, according to Sendoh. This could draw the numbers required to entice international airlines to service Manado.

Pacto Convex president director Susilowani Daud approved of introducing secondary destinations as venues for ATF. “(Based on our handling of WOC 2009,) Manado is quite ready in terms of facilities and infrastructure, but access must be considered, especially on peak delegate departure and arrival dates.”

Get set for a wonderful night

WONDERFUL Indonesia, the destination’s new branding, will be unveiled to ATF delegates at Indonesia Night tonight, marking its international launch.

A budget of US\$25 million has been set aside for the brand campaign, which is on top of the US\$25 million NTO marketing budget for 2011. “Indonesia has a number of wonderful highlights

– wonderful people, wonderful culture, wonderful nature, wonderful food and wonderful value for money,” Wacik said.

A new video depicting this will be shown tonight. New advertising material has been created and more placements will be made in print media TV. They will highlight Indonesia’s ecotourism, culture and MICE offerings.

Wego to manage SoutheastAsia.org

By S Puvaneswary and Sirima Eamtako

METASEARCH firm Wego has been appointed by the ASEAN Tourism Association (ASEANTA) to manage the Southeast Asia.org portal, which is the focal point of the *Southeast Asia: Feel the Warmth* campaign.

Wego will come up with a proposed agreement to manage the website as well as an awareness campaign.

ASEAN secretary-general Mohd Ilyas Zainol Abidin said: “USAID has successfully completed its task of initiating and deploying the portal last year. Now we have taken over. We would like to continue working on this campaign with the ASEAN NTOs and see the tagline used more regularly.”

The website, which targets inbound tourists visiting multiple South-east Asian destinations

was set up about a year ago.

Wego CEO, Martin Symes, welcomed the company’s continued involvement in the project as Wego originally built the website’s Travel Search and Trip Planner functionalities.

He said: “South-east Asia is a major focus of our business. We believe this website sits comfortably alongside all the websites promoting travel to individual countries.”

ASEANTA’s newly-elected president Yanti Sukamdani said the association would explore more joint promotion possibilities with ASEAN NTOs, adding the campaign had a bright future. “We will discuss the funding issue with the ASEAN NTOs at the next ASEANTA meeting in Bangkok in March,” she said.

USAID funding, around US\$500,000 for the first year, ended in August last year.

Sound bites

“The free bottle of wine in the room is old hat. Consumers are looking for tangible benefits, like pay five stay seven nights, and so forth. Lots of hotels are now moving into this.”

Neil Gregory

Commercial director-tour operations group, The Airliner group, UK

Delegates all ready and raring to go

The mart’s off to a promising start and spirits are high as Patrick Tan rounds up the buyers and sellers



Mercurie Hotel Samui Fenix’s Rolf Opitz, and Le Fenix Sukhumvit’s Thitaya Yenwattana and David Calvet



Booking.com Singapore’s Ian Oh



The Diamond Cliff Resort & Spa Thailand’s Nutchanan Kijviriya, Virat Atthabhirak and Jirawat Worawong

GTMC Travel Singapore’s Samson Tan



Mercury Travel & Tours (Cambodia)’s Clement Robinson and his wife, and Fly Albatross Travel & Tours India’s Kumar Asirvatham



Global Tracks US’ Kimberly Brown and John Brown

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View of Marina Bay Sands

Setting a bruising pace

Lion City presses on unrelentingly towards even greater heights, reports **Gracia Chiang**

NTO Singapore experienced a strong tourism rebound in 2010, hitting as many as one million visitor arrivals in July, a major milestone for the country. The Singapore Tourism Board (STB) set its highest target yet last year, aiming for between 11.5 million and 12.5 million arrivals. Visitor numbers as of August stood at 7.6 million.

Recognising the changing profile of travellers, the NTO enhanced its online presence last year by launching YourSingapore.com, an interactive platform that allows visitors to create their own personalised itineraries. This was supplemented by several digital media initiatives in markets like Indonesia and Malaysia. Efforts included engaging 'Twitter influencers' and launching contests via Facebook pages.

At press time, STB could not share strategies or targets for 2011 as planning was still ongoing. A spokesperson said details would only be revealed during the Tourism Industry Conference early this year.

Agents, however, felt that the NTO should start promoting Singapore in new markets such as Southern and Eastern Europe

as well as Central Asia, where they noted a growing interest in the city-state.

Access Changi International Airport registered 30.8 million passengers in the first nine months of 2010, a growth of 15.3 per cent compared to the same period in 2009. It expects to handle 50 million passengers by 2012.

This March, Singapore will be the first destination in South-east Asia with a direct air link to Brazil. National carrier Singapore Airlines announced in September it would make its first foray into the South American market with thrice-weekly flights to Sao Paulo via Barcelona.

Connectivity to Northern Europe will also be given a boost in May when Finnair mounts a daily nonstop Singapore-Helsinki service, re-introducing direct links between the two countries.

The city-state is also eyeing routes beyond major Chinese gateways. Last November, the Changi Airport Group signed an MOU with the Henan Civil Aviation Development and Construction Committee, a move that will soon see new direct



"Our hotel rates are very reasonable if we think about the quality of service and the facilities we offer. We shouldn't become a cheap destination."

Manuel Ferrer
Regional director
Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia
Pacific World

flights between Singapore and cities in Henan, one of China's fastest-growing provinces.

Hotels Official figures put the number of rooms currently available in Singapore at more than 47,000.

Sentosa island will have several hotel openings, with at least two scheduled this year. The Mövenpick Heritage Hotel Sentosa is a 181-room development that includes *onsen* suites and penthouses with private gardens and pools. The 454-key Shangri-La's Rasa Sentosa Hotel will also reopen after a complete makeover of its guestrooms and facilities. When Resorts World Sentosa's phase two developments are completed, the Spa Villas and Equarius Hotel will provide about 500 additional rooms.

The city-state had around 15,031 hotel rooms in the pipeline as of the first quarter of 2010, most of which are expected to be completed between the second quarter of 2010 and 2013.

Rates Hotels had a good year in 2010, as occupancies and rates grew at breakneck pace.

At press time, year-to-date average occupancy was 85 per cent, an 11.7 percentage point increase over the first nine months of 2009. Year-to-date average room rate fared just as well, recording S\$212 (US\$161.16), an 11.2 per cent increase compared to the same period last year.

Agents believed rates would continue to head north in 2011, either matching or surpassing pre-crisis rates in 2008.

Luxury Tours & Travel director Michael Lee said contract rates this year were as much as 30 per cent higher than those of 2010. He added that many hotels were "upscaling" their products, with three-star equivalents passing themselves off as four stars.

GTMC Travel CEO, Samson Tan, said rates would stabilise, especially since additional room capacity at the city's integrated resorts (IRs) had not been optimally utilised last year. The influx of new rooms would also exercise some downward pressure on rates. "It was trial and error for the IRs last year. They didn't drop their rates but would ask for help to fill their rooms at the last minute. I think their marketing strategy will be different this year and they'll be more flexible."



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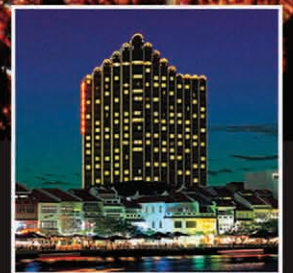
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National Art Gallery

National Art Gallery

What The latest icon in Singapore's arts landscape is a new institution that focuses on South-east Asian art.

Slated to be completed by 2013, the new visual arts venue will be housed in downtown City Hall and the adjacent former Supreme Court building.

Besides ticketed exhibition spaces, visitors will enjoy free access to the Singapore Art Gallery, dedicated to showcasing local art and art heritage, and the Children's Gallery.

A rooftop plaza will feature art installations, F&B outlets and a piazza that offers views of the Padang and Marina Bay.

Contact

Website www.nationalartgallery.sg

277 and 218 Orchard Road

What Singapore's rejuvenated Somerset area will see in 2013 the addition of a retail, hotel and office landmark that straddles two sites directly across from each other. The two plots of land will be linked by a glass overhead bridge as well as an underground passageway with shops. Plans are to develop 277 Orchard Road, location of the former Specialists' Shopping Centre and Hotel Phoenix, into a 500-room hotel with retail space. The 218 Orchard Road site, previously home to Orchard Emerald, will have office and retail space. This will also include a double-storey conservation house at the edge of the adjacent Emerald Hill historic district, which will house the Singapore Visitors Centre.

Pedestrians will be able to access nearby shopping malls and the Somerset MRT station through connected walkways.

iFly Singapore

What Touted as the world's largest skydiving simulator, the five-storey complex will officially open on Sentosa's Siloso Beach in the first quarter of 2011.



iFly Singapore

Suitable for adults and children, participants skydive in an air-conditioned wind tunnel that offers sea views. The package for first-timers retails at S\$79 for children and S\$89 for adults, and offers two skydives that last a minute each.

Included in the experience are professional training from certified instructors, complimentary gear rental and a certificate. There will also be more than 900m² of F&B space onsite.

Contact

Website www.iflysingapore.com

Gardens by the Bay

What Families looking to escape the city sprawl can soon head to three waterfront gardens in the heart of downtown Marina Bay.

The 101-hectare Gardens by the Bay site is made up of Bay

South, Bay East, and Bay Central across the mouth of the Singapore River. Phase 1, scheduled for public preview at the end of 2011, will offer dining and retail options in a garden setting.

Once fully opened, the city's green lung will provide a multitude of recreational choices. Key highlights include two conservatories for cool climate plants, mass floral displays showcasing horticulture and floriculture, areas for garden festivals, open spaces for concerts and per-

formances and water-based activities.

Contact

Website www.gardensbythebay.org.sg

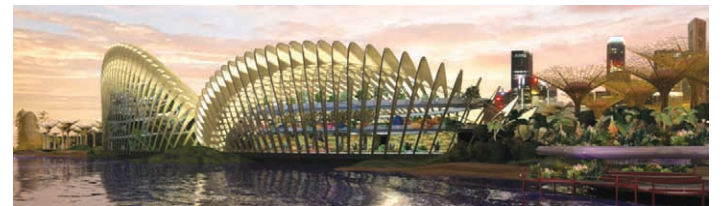
Changi Motorsports Hub

What Spanning 41 hectares on the eastern tip of Singapore, this facility, when completed by 2012, will host at least two international events a year including the Super GT series, D1 Grand Prix and Formula Nippon.

It will also feature at least two local events per year such as the Drifting Championship and Karting Championship. Built at a cost of S\$330 million (US\$256 million), the circuit is being designed to accommodate a 3.7km race track and a permanent seating capacity of 20,000 spectators. The hub will serve as a lifestyle activity venue, drawing car enthusiasts with a motor-themed entertainment complex and retail outlets as well as a museum.

Contact

Website www.sgchanghi.com



Gardens by the Bay

My choices

Singapore

Compiled by Gracia Chiang



Judy Lum

Group vice president, sales and marketing Tour East

The weak economies of longhaul markets, the strength of ASEAN currencies and most of all, the high hotel rates in popular ASEAN destinations where Tour East has an office. Attracting people to Singapore is not a challenge, but attracting them to stay longer is hard with the high hotel rates and strong Singapore dollar.

ASEAN has always been working towards that. But it hasn't seemed very successful because regional traffic does not favour multi-destination packages unless they are going longhaul. The multi-ASEAN-destination itineraries are more popular with longhaul markets but these markets are constrained by the air passage and the relationship that tour operators have with airlines.

Thailand. Despite the problems, both external and internal, this destination has been the most resilient. It has managed to retain its appeal for shorthaul and longhaul markets. The people, the culture, the food, the sights, the bargains, the beaches and resorts, and so on... They have everything and they have successfully "sold" them to the world.



Patrick Imbardelli

President and CEO Pan Pacific Hotels Group

Reinforcing the strategic priorities we have set for ourselves in 2010, although it is not so much a challenge as it is a key focus. This means growing our portfolio by aggressively pursuing strategically important locations and hotels.

The recognised challenges of the ASEAN Connectivity plan at the 17th ASEAN Summit in 2010 are a very clear indication that ASEAN is still made up of diverse countries at very different stages of development and with their own different sets of political and social systems. The road to an ASEAN Community by 2015 is naturally fraught with challenges.

Thailand definitely ranks high for us. Even with its precarious political situation, it has been growing strongly this year. Although Pan Pacific Bangkok will be leaving our system from January 2011, Pan Pacific Hotels Group and the Pan Pacific brand have enjoyed an illustrious presence in Thailand for the last 15 years.



Chong Phit Lian

CEO Jetstar Asia

Consolidating the introduction of Singapore's first longhaul value-based flying. Our new routes will see daily connections between our growing Jetstar Asia network out of Singapore and domestic networks in Australia and New Zealand. Our focus this year will be on how best to capitalise on this new traffic flow.

ASEAN is an important market for Jetstar, particularly out of Singapore, with services now to 21 Asian cities. The growing strength of our region's economy, the increasing sophistication of our tourism product and the further growth of transport infrastructure through carriers such as Jetstar will continue to enhance ASEAN's appeal as a single destination.

I am most impressed with the growth of Vietnam's demand for travel services. With its potential, we believe the variety of demand for both domestic and international travel will grow exponentially.

What is your biggest challenge in 2011?

Has ASEAN taken off as a single destination?

Which ASEAN destination, apart from yours, are you most impressed with and why?

Sun Sodavy

Housekeeping
Allson Angkor
Siem Reap, Cambodia

Nothing makes her happier than a clean, tidy room.

Do Thi Ngoc

Front Office Receptionist
Sunway Hotel Hanoi
Vietnam

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Ker Sokunthea

Executive Chef
Sunway Hotel Phnom Penh
Cambodia

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Sunil

Bellman
Sunway Resort Hotel & Spa
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

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Li Ting

Chinese Restaurant Host
Sunway Golden Diamond Hotel
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CAMBODIA

CHINA

INDONESIA

MALAYSIA

VIETNAM

Icebreaker Strike a lucrative deal with these newcomers to ASEAN Tourism Forum. Compiled by **Gracia Chiang**



Shelley Jin
General manager
Sha Newsway International
Commercial & Travel Services, China

What do you do? We are a travel agent that provides tailor-made products and services for destinations all over the world. This includes luxury tours.

What are you looking for at ATF 2011? New suppliers and products such as five-star hotels, beach resorts, airlines and professional tour operators.

What do you like about buying travel? Getting to know new destinations and meeting suppliers.

What is the hardest thing about buying travel? Finding products that are of high quality.

How can sellers get your attention and impress you? By being professional and offering quality products.

What upsets you most about sellers and/or travel trade-shows? When I don't get any new information at tradeshow.

What is the best destination you've ever been to and why? Europe because of the ample tourist resources that clients can choose from. France, Switzerland and Greece are examples. They have beautiful scenery, historical buildings, great shopping and more.

What is the easiest travel destination to sell and why? South-east Asia because it was the first region to be opened to Chinese leisure travellers. Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia were among the first to receive Approved Destination Status and they are popular because of their close proximity and beautiful islands.

What is the one destination you'd like to visit but never had the chance to and why? South America. Countries like Brazil, Peru and Argentina have history and nature.



Thomas Ng
Managing director
Paveway Explorer Holidays
Singapore

What do you do? I am the managing director of Paveway Explorer Holidays, a boutique incentive travel company that focuses on unique experiences and destinations.

What are you looking for at ATF 2011? DMCs that are focused on quality, service and unique travel experiences.

What do you like about buying travel? The ability to market a destination quickly because all itineraries and operational procedures have been worked out. In addition, being a buyer at tradeshow enables one to network with a wide spectrum of sellers. Eye-to-eye contact enables all parties to build initial rapport, which is crucial in assessing whether to establish or avoid a more proactive business relationship in the future.

What is the hardest thing about buying travel? The unwillingness of travel vendors to modify established travel itineraries to create a more enriching experience for clients.

How can sellers get your attention and impress you? By their expertise and passion for their products, and the ability to think out of the box.

What upsets you most about sellers and/or travel trade-shows? Sellers' inability to follow through on what they claim are their deliverables.

What is the best destination you've ever been to and why? Spending winter in the Mojave desert in California which looks spectacular at sunset. As nightfall approaches, you realise you're still hundreds of miles from your motel in the middle of the desert, braving freezing temperatures, and there's no car there apart from yours.

What is the easiest travel destination to sell and why? Japan because of its sights, culture, food, service quality and nice people.

What is the one destination you'd like to visit but never had the chance to? Polynesia. I'm attracted to its stunning landscape, aura of mystery and romance, fascinating culture, beautiful people and grass skirts.



Peggy Mooney
President
Travel With Peggy
The US

What do you do? I am the owner of a small travel company in southern Florida.

What are you looking for at ATF 2011? I am looking for companies that are smaller and more specialised. I need excellent service from the vendors I use anywhere in the world.

What do you like about buying travel? I like finding the perfect vendor who provides the excellent service that I'm seeking and wants to develop a one-to-one relationship with my company. I like to build a bond of trust between the vendor and myself.

What is the hardest thing about buying travel? Searching for services for my type of clients. My clients are well-experienced and well-educated travellers so they seek more in-depth tours compared to most tourists.

How can sellers get your attention and impress you? A seller gets my attention by his reputation for superb service.

What upsets you most about sellers and/or travel trade-shows? The short amount of time I get to spend with a seller to find out about the company and the services it can provide. I always walk away from good sellers wanting to spend more time with them.

What is the best destination you've ever been to and why? That is a very difficult question because I have travelled to so many wonderful places around the world. Last summer, I visited Russia and took a river cruise from St Petersburg to Moscow, which was very interesting.

What is the easiest travel destination to sell and why? Since my business is located in Florida, the easiest kind of travel to sell is cruises because they are packaged trips. Many of my clients love cruising the Mediterranean and Caribbean.

What is the one destination you'd like to visit but never had the chance to and why? I have a few destinations that are still on my wish list: Alaska, which is the only state in the US that I have never visited, and Australia and New Zealand, which is the next big expedition I feel I have to take.



Yaow Butwisate-Lok
Product manager – Far East
Cox & Kings Travel
The UK

What do you do? I'm responsible for product development, contracting, annual brochure production and product training for Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Burma, China, Japan, Taiwan, Mongolia, Hong Kong and South Korea. We specialise in upmarket group tours and FITs.

What are you looking for at ATF 2011? New product ideas, new destinations within our current portfolio of countries, DMCs that can offer unique products and services, and hotels with interesting character.

What do you like about buying travel? Learning new concepts and market trends especially when they strike a chord with our concept and are a good fit for our clients.

What is the hardest thing about buying travel? Not knowing whether the actual product will live up to the sales and marketing pitch as there isn't always a chance to experience it firsthand.

How can sellers get your attention and impress you? By knowing their product well and understanding the market and the tour operator they're targeting. Their willingness to offer fam opportunities and marketing support is a real asset.

What upsets you most about sellers and/or travel trade-shows? When sellers don't know who they're selling their product to because they haven't researched what the company does or offers.

What is the best destination you've ever been to and why? Myanmar. People are gentle and generous, and attractions are not overrun with tourists.

What is the easiest travel destination to sell and why? Cambodia. Everyone knows Angkor Wat. Siem Reap's service and facilities are so diverse it can accommodate most tastes and requirements.

What is the one destination you'd like to visit but never had the chance to and why? Indonesia. I know it's an amazing destination with rich cultural heritage, history and great beaches.

“(The hardest thing about buying travel is) not knowing whether the actual product will live up to the sales and marketing pitch as there isn't always a chance to experience it firsthand.”

Yaow Butwisate-Lok
Product manager – Far East
Cox & Kings Travel
The UK

ECO-TOURISM IN MALAYSIA

Blessed with a wide range of natural and cultural assets, and as one of only 17 mega-biologically diverse countries in the world, Malaysia is proving to be a magnet for eco-tourists. And if eco-tourism can be fairly described as nature-based holidays that enrich and educate, then Malaysia believes it has much to offer. Caving, hiking, jungle trekking, white-water rafting, bird watching, diving and visiting the indigenous communities are some of the nature-based activities for tourists here.

Malaysia's reputation as one of the best eco-tourism destinations in the region is further strengthened by the inclusion of the Mulu National Park and Kinabalu Park in the UNESCO World Heritage Sites list. Langkawi, which is located in the northern part of the Peninsular Malaysia, has also been recognised by UNESCO as a geopark, a title given to outstanding geological landscapes in the world.

But Malaysia's green initiatives go deeper than these so-called frolics in nature. Time and again, the Malaysian government has shown its commitment towards sustainable development of the tourism industry. One of them is the promise that at least 50% of its land area remain as forests. Malaysia has also committed to a voluntary reduction of up to 40% in terms of carbon emissions intensity by the year 2020.

The government has also tabled the Economic Transformation Programme, a blueprint co-created by the private and public sectors for the country's growth over the next few years. The tourism industry – including eco-tourism efforts – is among the 12 economic areas that will receive prioritised public investment and policy support.

Under the programme, an accreditation body – the Global Biodiversity Hub (GBH) – will be established to monitor areas of outstanding biodiversity to ensure a high level of excellence and commitment to sustainable use.

Rainforest and marine discovery centres will be set up to showcase Malaysia's biodiversity offerings and cater to mass tourists, while live sites around Malaysia will be promoted to visitors who want to experience the flora and fauna in the wild.

The Tourism Ministry has also initiated the "1 Malaysia Clean, 1 Malaysia Green Tourism" campaign to promote the importance of keeping tourists spots pristine, both to attract visitors and



enhance their sustainability. Other green initiatives by the Ministry include promoting Parks & Gardens packages to attract garden enthusiasts and help conserve the local flora and fauna.

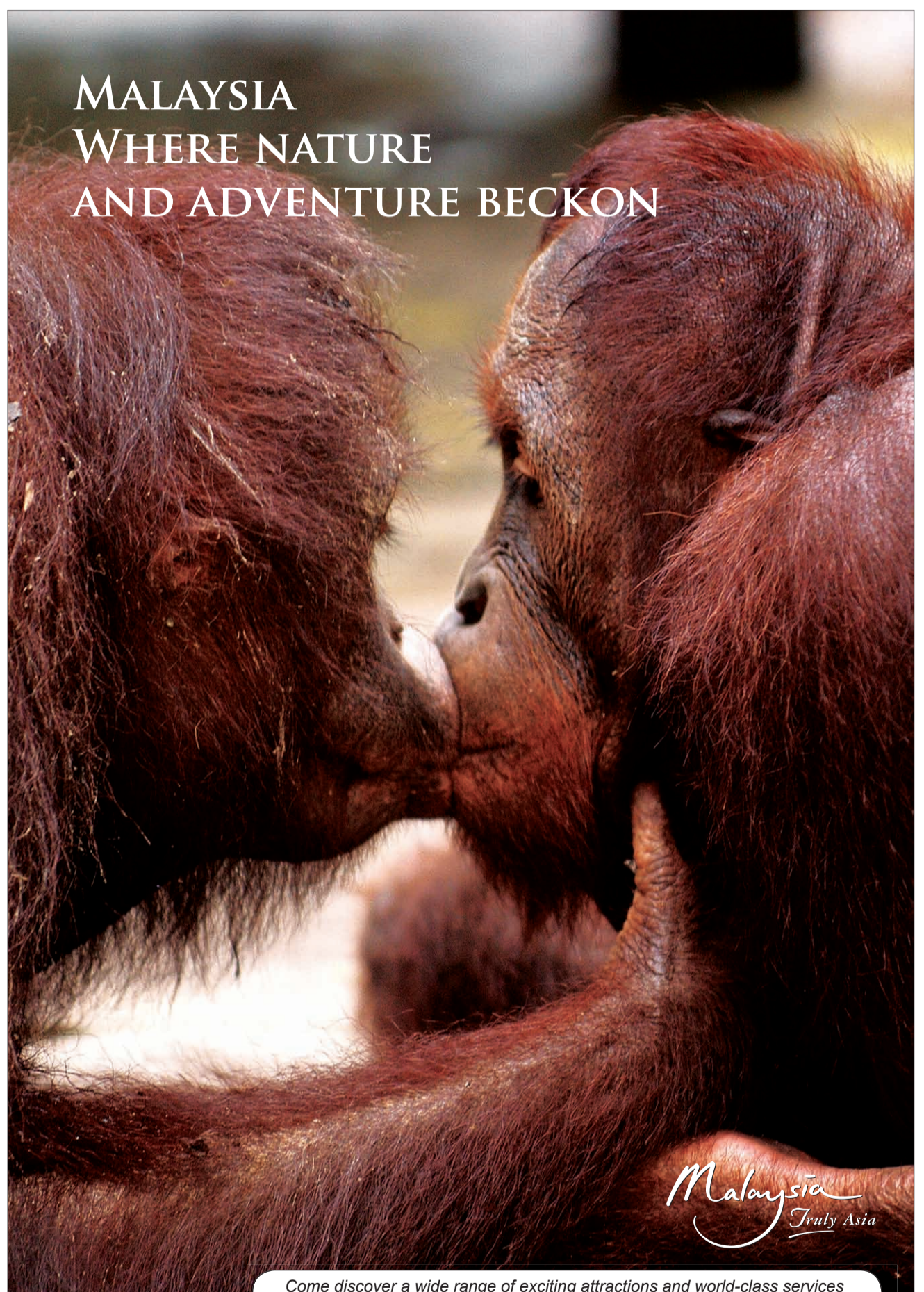
Conscious of the importance of sustainable tourism development, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), one of the prominent universities in the

country, is developing various tour packages known as "Knowledge Eco-tourism" that enable tourists to visit all seven of its restricted research facilities – or Living Labs – throughout the country. Here, tourists can learn about the country's plants and animals in their natural habitats.

Increasingly more local tourism operators are hopping on this "green"

bandwagon. For example, ten Malaysian hotels were awarded the Asean Green Hotel Award during the ASEAN Tourism Forum (ATF) in Brunei in 2010. An Asean Green Hotel is an environmentally friendly hotel, which adopts energy conservation measures, based on the 11 criteria and 25 requirements of the Asean Green Hotel Standard.

Eco-tourism events were also organised to create awareness about the importance of conservation of the country's natural and cultural assets. Such events include the Tabin Wildlife Conservation Conquest in Sabah, Fraser's Hill International Bird Race and Taman Negara Eco-Challenge competition.



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Shwegadon Pagoda, Yangon

Coming into its own

Myanmar is on an upswing but visa challenges could spoil its fun, writes **Rahul Khanna**

NTO At press time, the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism (MHT) estimated that Myanmar would have welcomed 800,000 visitors in 2010. Barring unforeseen upheavals, the visitor tally is expected to breach the million mark this year.

MHT Directorate of Hotels and Tourism director-general Htay Aung said that to meet the goal, the country's travel trade plans to participate in more international and regional trade events this year. These include the ASEAN Tourism Forum and Fitur in January, Bit-Borsa Internazionale del Turismo in February and ITB Berlin in March.

But despite the MHT's optimism, visa challenges could hinder the country's ambitions. Myanmar withdrew its visa-on-arrival facility at the Yangon and Mandalay International Airports on September 1, a move that local players believe would impact negatively on tourist arrivals.

Access Myanmar Airways International (MAI) plans to launch direct services from Yangon to Macau, Kunming, Jakarta and Bali, while Air Bagan

has earmarked flights to Siem Reap, Bangkok, Kunming, Kuala Lumpur and Singapore.

MAI increased the frequency of its Yangon-Kuala Lumpur service from five- to six-weekly flights and its daily Yangon-Bangon flight to twice daily, from end-October 2010. It also introduced a daily Bangkok-Singapore service on November 15 and, at press time, was to launch thrice-weekly Yangon-Guangzhou flights by end-2010.

Meanwhile, Air Bagan was set to turn its twice-weekly Yangon-Chiang Mai service into a thrice-weekly flight from November and launch a twice-weekly Yangon-Phuket service in December.

International carriers have been just as interested in the market. In November, Vietnam Airlines launched a new four-weekly Ho Chi Minh City-Yangon service, added a weekly flight to its four-weekly Hanoi-Yangon service and boosted capacity on this sector by replacing its 79-seat Fokker 70 with an Airbus A320 with 150 to 160 seats.

AirAsia started daily Yangon-Kuala Lumpur services in July while Thai AirAsia added a second daily flight from Bangkok.

Last year also saw Myanmar



"This will be an exciting year for Myanmar. The marketing campaign can be broadened and if the visa-on-arrival facility is brought back, it could open up the weekend tourist market."

Aung Myat Kyaw
Managing director
Orchestra Travel, Sandoway Resort,
Ayravata Cruises

get two new domestic carriers – Asian Wings started operations in mid-November and Air Kanbawza was to commence commercial services before year-end.

Hotels MHT data recorded 646 licenced hotels with a total of 21,368 rooms. New hotels are slated to open in Yangon, Inle Lake, Ngapali Beach and Nay Pyi Taw this year.

The Max Myanmar Group is scheduled to open 66-bungalow Inle Max Hotel at Inle Lake and 70-bungalow Ngapali Max Hotel at Ngapali Beach in early 2011. Also set to open early this year is the 300-room Centrepoint Towers Hotel in Yangon.

Htoo Trading, a subsidiary of Myanmar Treasure Hotels Group, is readying the 90-room Myanmar Treasure Resort Ngapali for a late-2011 debut.

Several projects are cropping up in the two designated hotel zones in Nay Pyi Taw. Around 10 properties in Hotel Zone One doubled their inventory last November, while the 102-room Sky Blue Hotel is slated to open in June. The new Hotel Zone Two is being developed in the new Oak-tara Thiri Township ahead of the

city's hosting of the 2013 South-east Asian Games.

Rates Hotels in Yangon expected average occupancy rate (AOR) in 2010 to grow by 18 to 20 per cent over 2009. Strong forward bookings buoyed hopes of even better AORs this year.

At press time, Chatrium Hotel sales and marketing director May Myat Mon Win said occupancy looked "extremely good" for the coming peak season. The Park Royal Hotel was enjoying good forward bookings from October onwards, according to sales director Susie Moe Aung: "We hope to see a tremendous increase in tourist arrivals in the 2010/2011 high season," she said.

A poll by the *TTG Asia ATF Show Daily* saw three hotels in Yangon recording AORs of 55 to 60 per cent in the last fiscal year (April 2009 to March 2010). The properties are targeting AORs of 65 to 70 per cent this fiscal year.

Hotels in Bagan expect to raise AOR levels to 65 to 75 per cent, from 60 to 70 per cent in the last fiscal year, while those in Inle Lake are eyeing an AOR of 60 to 75 per cent, over the previous 55 to 70 per cent.



The art of producing woven handicrafts

Brunei Tourism

Gaining second wind

New access links could open up transit traffic for the sultanate, reports **S Puvaneswary**

NTO Brunei Tourism planned to appoint marketing representatives in key markets such as China/Hong Kong and Australia/New Zealand by end-2010. Other marketing representatives may be placed in key markets in South-east Asia and Europe in 2011, but this would depend mainly on the performance of the first two marketing representatives, said Brunei Tourism director of marketing and promotion Jean Christophe Robles Espinosa.

The NTO also recently developed four-day/three-night tours with inbound tour operators to promote the sultanate's religious aspects and experiences centring on the concept of Malay Islamic monarchy.

Brunei and Malaysia will work on joint promotions to market both destinations to foreign tourists who want to discover more about Malay culture and heritage. These packages will be launched at ASEAN Tourism Forum, said Robles.

Brunei Tourism is targeting 254,000 air arrivals in 2011, an increase over last year's target of 200,000. In 2009, the sultanate received 157,474 air arrivals.

Most visitors to Brunei are from the Asia-Pacific region. The five fastest-growing markets in the first half of 2010 were India (96.7 per cent), Indonesia (58.5 per cent), Thailand (40 per cent), Malaysia (30.7 per cent) and China/Hong Kong (19.4 per cent). The phenomenal growth from India came largely from the business travel sector.

Access Royal Brunei Airlines (RBA) will launch four-weekly direct services between Bandar Seri Begawan and Melbourne from March 29.

Brunei's Freme Travel Services manager, Inbound & MICE Division, Sugumaran Nair predicted that RBA's direct flights to Melbourne would attract regional travellers as well since RBA's airfares to Perth and Brisbane are B\$200 (US\$155) and B\$300 cheaper respectively than Singapore Airlines' tariffs for these two Australian points.

Agents in Malaysia said increased regional capacity to Melbourne through RBA would alleviate difficulty in getting seats from carriers that fly direct from Kuala Lumpur and Singapore, especially during the year-end



"We are looking forward to market representation in China and elsewhere. This will really help with destination promotions."

Adam Tan
Managing director
Travelhub

holiday season.

Golden Tourworld Travel managing director Jason Lim said that since Melbourne was a year-round market, the bulk of the traffic from Malaysia for RBA flights would be West Malaysians who could not get direct seats out of Kuala Lumpur.

Hotels The sultanate's hotel inventory got a boost last year, with the opening of the 142-room five-star Radisson Hotel Brunei Darussalam (formerly the Sheraton Utama Hotel) on May 1.

Four-star 115-room Times Hotel followed in October, opening in the Times Square Shopping and Entertainment Complex.

Travelhub managing director Adam Tan, however, saw the need for more beach hotels of various star ratings to cater to different market segments. Anthony Lim, managing director of Anthony Tours & Travel Agency, added that given strong demand from China and RBA's new Melbourne service that would boost arrivals from Australia, Brunei definitely needed more five-star beach hotels.

Currently, the only beach

hotel available is the five-star 532-room The Empire Hotel & Country Club.

Rates According to MegaBorneo Tour Planner managing director Khirul Zainie, hotel rates in Brunei are very competitive as hoteliers do not impose different rates for different market segments. There are also no government taxes or peak season surcharges.

Zainie said: "We're selling five-star city hotels in Brunei at B\$180 (US\$136.75) with breakfast. A three-star hotel in Singapore charges between S\$220 and S\$250. It is very affordable for business travellers coming to Brunei to stay in good hotels."

Most hotels maintained their 2009 contract rates last year. With average occupancy at less than 50 per cent, the majority of properties are likely to freeze rates this year as well.

Intrepid Tours managing director Allan Riches said: "Hotels have always been willing to discuss rates and packages with agents, help to accommodate special needs and requirements, and make it attractive for travellers to come to Brunei."

My choices

Brunei

Compiled by S Puvaneswary

What is your biggest challenge in 2011?

Has ASEAN taken off as a single destination?

Which ASEAN destination, apart from yours, are you most impressed with and why?



Jean Christophe Robles Espinosa
Director of marketing and promotion
Brunei Tourism

To consolidate Brunei's growth pattern in arrivals, which was disrupted in 2009 due to A/H1N1 and the economy. Being a small destination, small fluctuations make a difference, so we need to put in place mechanisms of collaboration with airlines and operators as well as have continuity in promotions, in order to create growth in a constant way, which we are targeting in the long term at 11.5 per cent yearly.

Because of its size and diversity, ASEAN, no more than Europe or the Caribbean, can be a single destination. The task for the NTOs and the ASEAN organisation is to globally position ASEAN (or South-east Asia) as a "top of mind" holiday region, and to encourage more multi-destination trips and intra-regional travel.

Vietnam has clocked some impressive growth and will certainly become one of the main players in ASEAN, attracting much investment, especially along the coastline.



Anthony Lim
Managing director
Anthony Tours

Getting sufficient room allotments from Empire Hotel during the Chinese New Year season, which is the peak travel season from China. Empire is the only beach hotel that Brunei has and it is very much in demand by Chinese tourists. It will help the destination if there are more beach hotels and of different categories to cater to travellers with varying budgets.

I don't think so. ASEAN ministers have been talking about a single visa for all of ASEAN but this has not materialised. It would really help boost tourism if this becomes a reality.

Singapore, as the government and the private sector have worked as one and have done an impressive job promoting the country. Its new attractions such as the Formula 1 Grand Prix and the integrated resorts with gaming facilities are a success.



Peter Feran
General manager
Radisson Hotel Brunei Darussalam

The biggest challenge in 2011 will be to grow occupancy levels. An increase in tourist numbers will certainly assist this. There is currently sufficient hotel room supply and therefore, it must be driven by the extra demand.

Yes, I do believe that ASEAN has taken off as a single destination with great connectivity and diverse offerings. It is a very exciting destination that can offer a huge choice of accommodations and attractions that suit everyone's needs and budgets.

I am very impressed with Singapore. For a small country, it packs a real punch in terms of hotels, attractions, events, shopping and dining.

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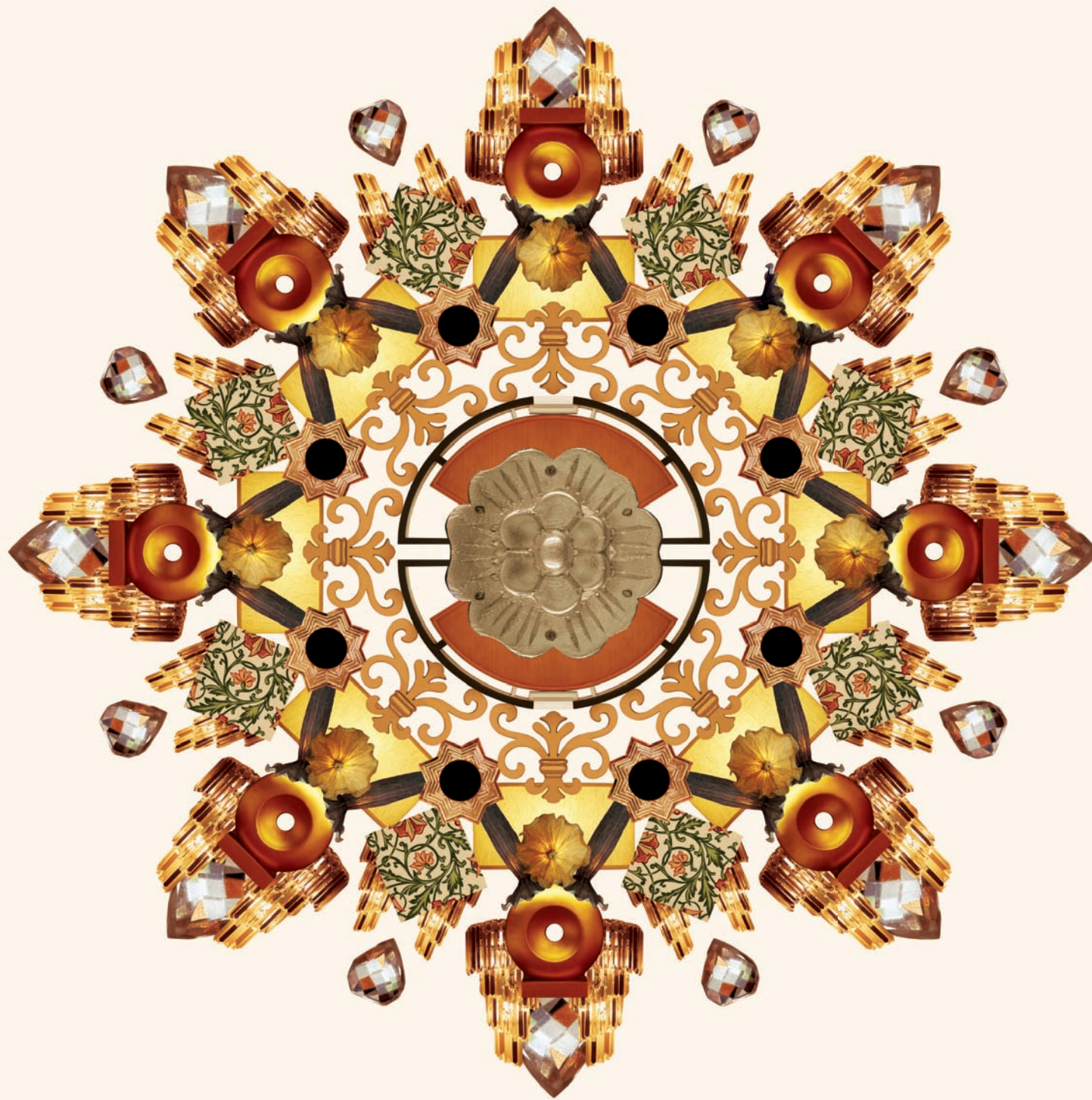
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Products Urban and natural attractions line up to delight visitors this year

Centrepont Towers Hotel

What Slated to open in early 2011, the 300-room Centrepont Towers Hotel is located at the corner of Merchant and Sule Pagoda Roads in Yangon's Kyautada Township.



Centrepont Towers Hotel

The international-standard hotel will have a banquet hall, a coffee shop, two restaurants and three bars. The hotel's opening follows the launch of office and retail spaces at its twin building in September 2010.

The opening of the twin Centrepont Towers will conclude 15 years of development for the site's owner, Thailand's LP Holding, which signed a 30-year agreement with Myanmar's Ministry of Hotels and Tourism in November 1993.

Contact

Email centrepont-towers@mptmail.net.mm

Website www.centrepont-towers.com

Nay Pyi Taw International Airport

What Myanmar is developing a new international airport in the capital city of Nay Pyi Taw.

Developed by privately-owned Asia World and CPG Consultants from Singapore, the facility will have a two-storey terminal, separate wings for

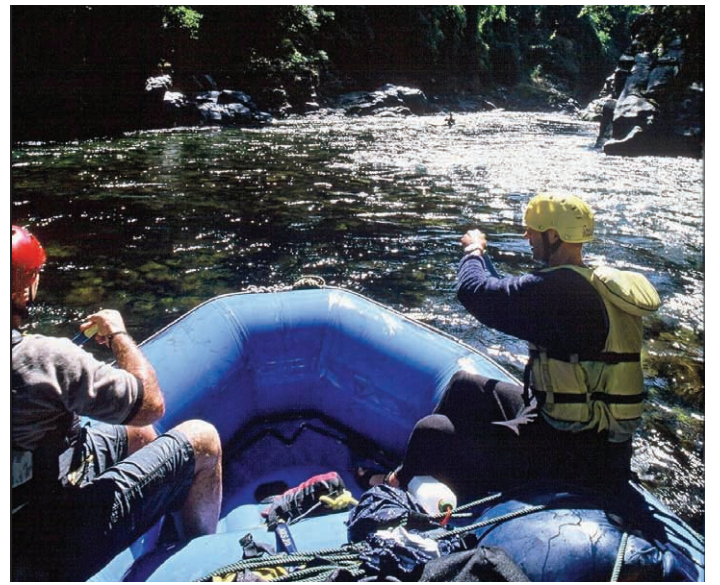
domestic and international passengers, and a maximum annual passenger throughput of 10.5 million passengers. The airport will be built in three phases, with the entire project scheduled for completion by early 2013.

The first phase, which began in January 2009 and is expected to be ready by mid-2011, will have an initial capacity of 3.5 million passengers a year.

Rafting in Myanmar

What Yangon-based tour operator, Journeys, Nature and Cultural Exploration, will launch this year a new range of rafting expeditions in northern Myanmar's Kachin State, known as a jump-off point for trekkers who want to explore the region's deep forests, wildlife sanctuaries and snow-capped mountains.

The tour will highlight multi-day rafting adventures at the Mula, Malikha or Namlang rivers. Seasoned and experienced whitewater rafting operators, trained in wilderness first aid and survival, oversee rafting op-



Putao Rafting

tions using modern equipment.

Access difficulties have left the ecosystem in northern Myanmar largely intact, making it an internationally-recognised hotspot of biodiversity. The area is also home to diverse cultures of local tribal communities, including Hkamti Shan, Doolin Jimphaw

(Kachin), Rawan, Lisu, Pigmy Tarong, the hunting community of Htalu, as well as Tibetans in the far north in the Himalayas.

Contact

Email sales@putaotrekkinghouse.com

Website www.putaotrekkinghouse.com

My choices

Myanmar

Compiled by Rahul Khanna

What is your biggest challenge in 2011?

Has ASEAN taken off as a single destination?

Which ASEAN destination, apart from yours, are you most impressed with and why?



Htay Aung

Director-general
Directorate of Hotels and Tourism
Ministry of Hotels and Tourism

We are facing some challenges such as security, stability, natural disasters and the economic downturn in general, and infrastructure, standards, regional cooperation, connectivity, sustainability and sanctions in particular.

Leaders have been striving to jump-start ASEAN as a single destination since its inception (in 1967). In tourism, as member countries promote ASEAN as a single destination, the grouping is widely recognised by Asian countries and governments worldwide. China, Japan, South Korea, India and Russia are cooperating as dialogue partners to promote tourism bilaterally. But research by international agencies shows that foreign visitors, especially those from longhaul markets, only know the member states as South-east Asian countries. We should adopt specific promotional techniques to raise awareness of ASEAN as a single destination, no matter which brand is highlighted.

That's difficult to answer as we all have diverse tourist destinations and offer unique attractions. Most of ASEAN's attractions are culture- and nature-based. All ASEAN countries have been working to develop tourism individually and multilaterally within the framework of ASEAN to raise awareness of the region among international visitors.



Phyo Wai Yarzar

Managing director
All Asia Exclusive Travels, Yangon

Our biggest challenge this year is coping with inadequate tourism infrastructure, namely accommodation, seats on domestic flights, transportation and, most of all, tour guides, as we are expecting more business for the 2011-2012 season. We need to, at least, concentrate on capacity-building so that we can keep our manpower on par, or even better, than those of competitors in the region.

We still need to try harder to realise the plan of promoting ASEAN as a single tourist destination. There are still some countries that need to be abreast of the leading players and streamline certain regulations in order to improve efficiency. It is necessary to increase public-private participation to ensure that each member of ASEAN pulls in the same direction. Only then can the goal of ASEAN as a single destination be reached.

I am most impressed with Laos PDR and Vietnam. They are making real progress, both in terms of establishing infrastructure and promoting products. I am convinced that they will soon catch up with those running ahead of them. I wish Myanmar could keep up at the same pace.



Frank Janmaat

General manager
Inya Lake Hotel, Yangon

The biggest challenge is assuring the quality of service with the hopefully increasing number of tourists. The elections brought a lot of positive publicity after all the negative reports from the international press that Myanmar so undeservedly received over the last number of years. The biggest challenge for the country is coping with tourism growth as far as infrastructure, communication and preserving its unique national identity are concerned.

No, not really. All the countries in ASEAN are unique in themselves. We do see, of course, that Europeans and Americans do a combination of two or more countries, but I think this has more to do with the initial distance travelled and a relatively cheap opportunity to cram a bit more in their exotic holiday than anything else.

Every country in Asia has something exceptional in itself. It just depends on what you are looking for. I love the food in Singapore and Vietnam, the ancient historic sites in Cambodia and the diversity of Indonesia, for instance. Other people would love Thailand for their beaches and nighttime entertainment. So many countries, so much diversity and so many opportunities.

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Ministry Of Culture And Tourism
Republic Of Indonesia
Sapta Pesona Building
Jl. Medan Merdeka Barat No. 17, Jakarta 10110
Tel: +62 21 383 8167 • Fax: +62 21 384 9715
Email: promosiluarnegeri@gmail.com
Website: www.budpar.go.id

TRAVEX SECRETARIAT



TTG Asia Media Pte Ltd
1 Science Park Road #04-07
The Capricorn, Singapore Science Park II
Singapore 117528
Tel: +65 6395 7575 • Fax: +65 6536 0896
Email: atf@ttgasia.com
Website: www.atfindonesia.com

Cambodia's hive of activity

From high-level meetings to product-sourcing, Phnom Penh's buzzing with action. Pictures by **Patrick Tan**



Myanmar Hotelier Association's Khin Aung Htun, Singapore Hotel Association's Margaret Heng, Indonesia Hotel and Restaurant Association's Wiryanti Sukamdani, ASEANTA Malaysia's Datuk Mohd Ilyas, Cambodia Hotel Association's Luu Meng and Best Western Vientiane Hotel's Oudet Souvannavong



Mekong Lao Travel Co.'s Khamtanh Keungpan Nha and Kambuja Voyages Cambodia's Meng Phala



Philippine Travel Agencies Association's Maria Paz Alberto and Cambodia Association of Travel Agents' Om Pharin



National Association of Travel Agents Singapore's William Tan (front row, third from right) with ASEANTA members



intelliEx Consulting Cambodia's Mohan Rao Gunti and Destination Asia Cambodia's Lynol Yi



National Association of Travel Agents Singapore's Robert Khoo and Malaysian Association of Tour and Travel Agents' Dato' Mohd Khalid Harun



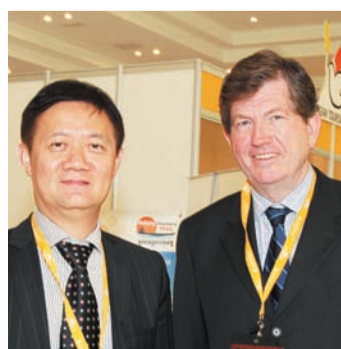
Ministry of Tourism Cambodia's So Mara and Canadia Bank PLC Cambodia's Charles Vann



Cox & Kings UK's Yaow Butwisate-Lok



DBA & Sons Travel & Tours UAE's T. Prahlad



World Tourism Organization Spain's Xu Jing and Frédéric Pierret



Princess Travel Brazil's Jefferson Santos and Solutions Travel Service US' Cindy Yam



Aspen Holidays Malaysia's Edwin Teng and 333Travel The Netherlands' Melissa Reijnders

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There's strength in numbers

ASEAN tourism ministers arrive in town and TRAVEX proves to be a crowd-puller. Pictures by **Patrick Tan**



ASEAN tourism ministers release more than 10,000 fish into the Tonle Sap



DERTOUR Germany's Astrid Geiger and Britta Jahner



World Express Malaysia's Jessica Yong and World Express Singapore's Candice Lim



Worldwide Tour Services India's Manoj Bhadola and Vacationer Holidays India's M Shanmuganatham



Sunway International Hotels & Resorts Malaysia's Fanny Ng and Sunway Hotel Phnom Penh's Pheakdey Kong



Jagsons Travels India's Harmandeep Singh Anand and ACMA Travel Tours India's Anil Kumar



Hotelbeds Thailand's Daniel Gregori and Rembrandt Hotel & Towers Thailand's Krosakorn Rokrungraj



GTA Thailand's Romain Arruat-Padis



Go Vacation Indonesia's Cathrin Gerlach



InterContinental Hotels Group Indonesia's Jelantik Suhartha and Senggigi Beach Lombok's Ida Bagus Okayana



"K" Line Air Bangladesh's Zahiruddin Babar and Asia Experience Tours Malaysia's Steffanie Tan



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