

## Chills in Europe start to bite

Asia being turned to for shortfall, as numbers slide and budgets shrink

By Brian Higgs

AN ATMOSPHERE of austerity is sweeping across Western Europe, slaying even the strongest of longhaul markets such as Germany.

Buyers and sellers the *Daily* spoke to painted a picture of declining leisure and MICE numbers and requests for cost-effective alternatives, necessitating changes in the ways they conduct business (see story below).

Judy Lum, group vice-president, sales & marketing, Tour East Singapore, which handles European FITs to Asia and some group series with stopovers in Singapore, said: "All my European markets are down compared

to last year. The UK and Germany are weak, with business from some (travel consultants) dropping by 15-30 per cent. Italy saw a 30 per cent drop and Switzerland saw a nine per cent drop."

Lum said Tour East would turn to alternative markets such as China, India, South America and Eastern Europe to make up the numbers. "We have many incoming enquiries from the Czech Republic, Bulgaria and Poland."

It is the same story at Kuala Lumpur-based Asian Overland Services Tours & Travel. Assistant director business development, Noor M Ismail, said: "Our top two markets, Germany and the Netherlands, saw 20-30 per cent

and 10-15 per cent drops in 2011 compared to the year before," he said. "Out of 10 group bookings, two or three don't book the entire package, but go to hotels directly and arrange their own airport transfers. They used to stay in four-star hotels and above; now, budget to three-star plus. There are also half the number of series departures these days."

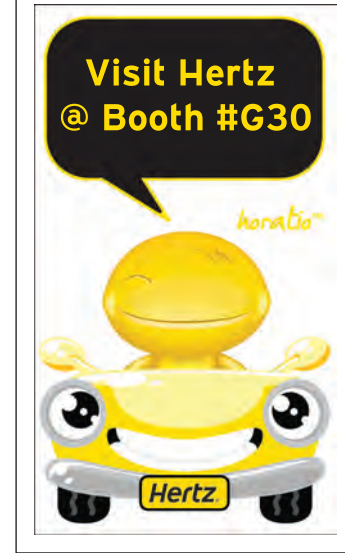
Philippe Roussel, product manager of Paris-based Asie Voyages, said: "Outbound traffic is decreasing due to a combination of people having less money, more taxes and a weaker euro."

"My customers now spend 1,000 euros (US\$1,270) for a one-week vacation, excluding

airfare, compared to 1,200 euros in the past," he said. "They also look for cheaper options like homestays, compared to beach and hotels previously."

Karl Hellgren, managing director of Ghislenghien-based B.E.I., which organises Belgian incentives, said his clients were also booking much later. "It used to be at least one year in advance, now it's months, sometimes weeks even. Corporates are booking as and when they can secure the budget to travel."

Corporate buyer Monique Petrus, country manager assistant, business travel & incentives department, of Nokia Benelux, confirmed the cost-cutting. In-



centives have been reduced from five to four nights, with smaller groups and cheaper destinations preferred, she said. "We manage everything ourselves with no DMC involved. We go straight to the hotel for negotiations."

### Tough times call for innovative ideas

ASIAN sellers eager to keep European traffic flowing have developed alternative ways to tickle the fancy of these longhaul travellers.

Panorama Destination general manager, Raka Ramayana, told the *Daily* that the company was ready to "lower our margin to reach a price that is acceptable to us and our partners", which involves manoeuvring around exchange rates. As well, the agency intends to develop periodic promotional fares by working with hotels. For instance, offering cheaper per day rates but for a longer period of stay, appealing to the traveller's sense of getting a bargain.

The Seminyak Beach Resort director, Herdy Sayogha, said creative packages targeted at Europeans who could "still afford to travel" must be developed to stay competitive, which requires identifying clear segments and going after them.

Asian Trails Indonesia managing director Andre Seiler added: "We have begun targeting alternative markets like Eastern Europe. We also have started working with more niche operators, specialising in honeymoons, adventure travel and high-end."

Over in Thailand, Buffalo Tours account manager, Hayo Massop, said the agency would also offer itineraries that "clients cannot recreate on their own", putting together unique product combinations. — Mimi Hudoyo and Brian Higgs



### See you in Vientiane next year

Laos will host ATF 2013, to be held in its capital city from January 17-24. Some 500 buyers are expected to turn up at TRAVEX, which will showcase the latest in ASEAN products and services. Read about the country's rapid development on page 3.



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# Brunei's trajectory

New tourism projects and partnerships to double arrivals by 2016

**By Shekhar Niyogi**

BRUNEI Tourism has lined up some 69 projects from this year – including strategic marketing tie-ups with the trade and the introduction of new attractions and tour packages – even as its long-serving chief, Sheikh Jamaluddin Sheikh Mohamed prepares for his swansong.

Four new ecotourism resorts, five detox spas, a reinvented diving package that offers shipwreck exploration and farmstays will be rolled out progressively. Also on offer is a three-night Islamic heritage tour package that showcases the sultan's collection of miniature Quran, 300 rare *mushaf* or religious scrolls, and 60 kinds of prayer beads among other treasures.

Brunei, a popular destination for golf enthusiasts and the host of major tournaments including the Brunei Open and Aberdeen Brunei Senior Masters, will also court new professional golf tournaments, said Brunei Tourism CEO, Sheikh Jamaluddin, who will be retiring in 2013.

He also revealed to the *Daily* that a joint marketing campaign

Brunei's sources

# 50

Travellers from ASEAN made up a little more than 50 per cent of Brunei's total arrivals last year. China, Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea and Taiwan contributed 17.2 per cent of arrivals.

with AirAsia was being developed. The LCC has twice-weekly flights linking Kuala Lumpur and Brunei.

Although air links to Brunei suffered a setback with flag car-

rier Royal Brunei Airlines (RBA) withdrawing flights from East Malaysia's Kuching last August and Australia and New Zealand last October, Sheikh Jamaluddin said the destination still has good partnerships with other feeder airlines.

Japan would also join Brunei Tourism's list of target source markets should RBA commence flights to Tokyo, as there has been talk of new services between the two countries, said Sheikh Jamaluddin (see related story on page 4).

He added that the NTO would focus on the China, Hong Kong and Singapore markets for growth, cheekily pointing out that the destination's competitive advantage was that it offered an escape "from urban jungle to real jungle".

Arrivals are targeted to grow by 15 per cent this year, up from 209,720 in 2011.

Looking back to his appointment in 1996, Sheikh Jamaluddin recounted: "No one wanted to work in hotels or tour companies. Today, these are the careers people aspire for."

# Panoramic expansion

PANORAMA Group's hotel arm, PHM Hospitality, will unveil two new brands and at least two openings by year-end.

Two new-builds in Bali would carry the new brand names, to be disclosed in February, said the group's CEO, Budi Tirtawisata, who added that one would be a mid-tier thematic hotel and the other, a budget property.

Four more hotels under the company's The IO1 label (three-star premium) are also being constructed in Jakarta, Bali, Bogor and Jogjakarta. The IO1 Dharmawangsa Jakarta will hit the market in mid-2013 with 138 rooms, while The IO1 Legian's new 106-room wing will open early 2013.

"With these four brands (the fourth being The Haven, a four-star brand), we aim to develop 10 more hotels this year," said Budi.

PHM Hospitality's aim is to have 15 hotels by 2013 and 30 hotels by 2015. New destinations such as Medan, Surabaya and Manado, where Panorama Group has a competitive advantage, have been earmarked for future development, he added.

– Mimi Hudoyo

## Sound bites



"If I had depended solely on the Greek market, I would have taken a rope and hung myself."

**LaiWah Chow**

Executive director, Greece-based IGI-MICE, European Division of Best Travel Deals, referring to the dismal showing of her home market and the necessity to diversify.

# Thumbs up for a day of good leads

Delegates get down to business, stopping to show Patrick Tan their best faces for the camera



Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy Bandung Institute of Tourism's Noviendi Makalam (centre) with the Indonesian delegation



Rendezvous Grand Hotel Singapore's Lim Mia Kwang and Discover Orient Portugal's Cristina Figueira and The Holidays Malaysia's W P Yen



The Jayakarta Suites Komodo-Flores' Ronald Hendradjaya, CF Public Relations Portugal's Cristina Figueira and The Jayakarta Bali's I Ketut Budha



The Mulia Bali's Putri Sasmito, Riska Surafani and Pram Sanjaya, Destination Asia (Indonesia)'s Donna Murphy and The Mulia Bali's Andy Dirgantara



Accor Asia Pacific-Indonesia's Alivia Gracianti, Accor Hospitality Germany's Tanja Scheuerer, Accor Indonesia's Sophia Altamirano, Accor Hotels Singapore's Kerry Healy, Pullman Hotel G Thailand's Tankorn Somprasong, Mercure Vientiane's Twinkle Turqueza and Pullman Jakarta's Mustika Retnowati

# Laos steps up its game

ATF 2013 host is busy preparing for its spot in the limelight, especially with developments in Vientiane

By Shekhar Niyogi

MONEY is being poured into infrastructure, products and marketing, as Laos suits up for an action-packed year ahead, banking on three major events to raise its profile among international tourists.



Manivong: more ASEAN arrivals

Four key provinces – Luang Prabang, Vientiane, Savannakhet and Champasak – will be recipients of infrastructure investments, which include new hotels, airports, roads and bridges across the Mekong River easing travel to neighbouring Vietnam, Cambodia and Thailand.

A new convention centre is also under construction in Vientiane, targeted for completion before the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) in November, as 3,000 delegates from 46 countries are scheduled to arrive, Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism tourism development department director general, Sounh Manivong, told the *Daily*.

Other developments are afoot in the capital city, including an expansion project for the airport in order for it to handle 1,000 passengers daily. It currently serves 500 pax a day. Elsewhere in Laos, land for three new airports that will cater to medium-size aircraft has also been earmarked.

Manivong revealed that new airlines have expressed interest in launching flights to Vientiane, such as German charter carrier Condor and Jin Air, which already operates charters from South Korea but is intending to mount regular services.

National carrier Lao Airlines was also able to deploy its new Airbus A320s on its thrice-weekly Singapore-Vientiane flights launched last November, opening a window of opportunity for travellers to arrive via Changi. Guangzhou, Seoul and Tokyo are next destinations on the airline's radar.

Manivong said: "We are developing new products like homestays, ecotourism, and cultural and soft adventure tours that will appeal to our primary source markets."

Some 2.8 million visitors are expected

this year, with 1.8 million likely to be from ASEAN countries.

Saly Phimphith, director general, tourism marketing department, Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism,

added: "ASEM and the ASEAN University Games in 2012, and ATF in 2013 will showcase Laos as a destination like never before. (These) will surely have a cascading effect on tourism growth."

Hotel supply in Vientiane is also being beefed up, with several to open this year, adding to the 14 upscale hotels, according to Lao Hotel and Restaurant Association president, Oudet Souvannavong.

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## Titill tattle

### PATA's new look

**The old boys' club seems to be taking advice from the right people, with its Next Gen logo now imprinted on the association's namecards and marketing collateral, in addition to a recent hire said to embody its new philosophy.**

Speaking to journalists on the sidelines of ATF, PATA's new, outspoken CEO, Martin Craigs, revealed that it was also on the hunt for online travel-related companies to welcome into its fold. It is currently in talks with two (well-known) names, but you will have to watch this space to find out who they are.

Craigs has set about repositioning PATA as a forward-thinking body imbued with "fresh, new blood", attuned to the world of technology.

That sounds great, but ironically, we could not find the Next Gen branding anywhere on PATA's website. – **Linda Haden**

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# Japan recovery hastened

New routes to Indonesia, Brunei and Laos could bring the market back to ASEAN

By Linda Haden

TRAVEL professionals in Indonesia, Brunei and Laos are anticipating a surge in the number of tourists from Japan, as a flurry of new routes connecting the country with the three ASEAN destinations take root this year.

A new flight linking Tokyo Haneda to Bali is set to launch on April 28. Operated by Garuda Indonesia, this new service complements its existing daily flights from Tokyo Narita and Osaka, as well as thrice-weekly services from Nagoya.

Ippei Takahashi, director, Island Marketing Japan, said: "Garuda has virtually had a monopoly over the Japan-Bali route ever since JAL (Japan Airlines) cut Bali from its destination list in 2010. This new flight would certainly help bolster (Japanese) numbers to the island's resorts which have yet to return to pre-2008 levels."

He was also hopeful that the strong yen would continue to push more Japanese to Bali and



Takahashi: Bali to benefit

other overseas destinations. O g a t a Eiji, director, ASEAN Resort Net, said the addition of the Haneda route was a coup, as the new airport provides good domestic connections for interlining and is much closer to Tokyo's city centre compared to Narita.

Bali-based Sari Tour's business development manager, I B Mahatmananda Manuba, estimates that Japanese arrivals would return to levels just below that of 2008, the year before the full force of the global financial crisis struck, which led to a significant drop in Japanese footfalls. "To date, our booking volumes for the first quarter have hit about 80 per cent of the total received during the same period in 2008," he said.

Krish Purnawarman, sales

manager, Bali-based Astina Tours & Travel, was also equally hopeful. "I predict that the number of arrivals from Japan could increase by as much as 50 per cent," he said.

Besides Indonesia, Brunei also seems set to receive more Japanese arrivals from August, when an entirely new air link between the two countries is scheduled to launch, according to Japan Association of Travel Agents senior executive of the board, Tatsuro Nakamura.

Island Marketing Japan's Takahashi observed that, currently, few Japanese were heading to Brunei. He said: "In fact, it only appeals primarily to ecotourists. It is not a destination that I actively market although I think more Japanese might add it to their list as part of a multi-destination tour (if the flights begin)."

Figures obtained from Brunei Tourism show that just under 4,000 Japanese tourists head to the destination every year.

"Japanese tourists tend to combine Brunei with East Malaysia. Usually, they arrive in Kota Kinabalu and then go on to Brunei," said Sugumaran Nair, inbound manager, Freme Travel Services. He added that with MASwings planning to open up flights between Kota Kinabalu and Bandar Seri Begawan, he expected Japanese booking volume to go up by at least 20 per cent.

Meanwhile, discussions are also under way at Lao Airlines to introduce four-a-month charter flights between Japan and Laos in the second half of 2012, although the exact details are still being worked out.

"The new flights are a welcome boost as we are actively targeting Japanese tourists through various consumer and B2B initiatives in Japan," said Laos' Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism tourism marketing department director general, Saly Phimphinith. He expects the number of Japanese visitors to Laos to increase by 30 per cent.

## What ATF buyers want

By Mimi Hudoyo

LIMITED accessibility and insufficient marketing promotions have been identified as hurdles to growing Indonesia as a tourism destination.

The comments came from buyers representing nine markets – Malaysia, India, Switzerland, Thailand, Russia, Canada, Indonesia, Singapore and the Middle East – who were engaged yesterday in a first-ever dialogue with Indonesia's minister of tourism and creative economy, Mari Elka Pangestu.

Aditya Dhumma, managing director of India's Classis Travels & Tours, said Manado's potential as a popular destination among the Indians was hampered by air connectivity. Indian travellers have two route options – Singapore-Jakarta-Manado or Bangkok-Bali-Manado.



Indonesia's minister of tourism and creative economy, Mari Elka Pangestu, with buyers and TTG Asia Media's Darren Ng at the dialogue

"It took me almost 24 hours to get here," Dhumma said.

Tourcan Vacations Canada president, Vivek Khanna, who used to see better volume to Indonesia 25 years ago when Garuda Indonesia operated flights to Canada, said: "Traffic must go through Hong Kong or Seoul but promotional seats (with Cathay Pacific and Korean Air) beyond those points are difficult to secure. You need to book at least six months ahead."

At a press conference later, the minister said the government would resolve connectivity issues in the next three years. An airport has been planned for Bitung to draw Filipinos to North Sulawesi, as well as for northern Bali. Roads connecting Sanur to Bali's Ngurah Rai Airport, which will complete its expansion by April 2013, will be built.

Buyers also called for stronger destination promotions. Khanna said the Canadian economy was strong and could yield good traffic for destinations with suf-

ficient seat capacity and marketing activities.

Flex Travel Zurich senior product manager Asia, Ulrike Meissner, said: "Bali is the top destination in Indonesia for the Swiss because it is so well-known. We would like to explore other destinations." She suggested that a Visit Indonesia Tourism Officer (VITO) be appointed in Switzerland or incorporated under VITO Germany.

Russia's Tour Express general manager, Diana Ignatenko, said her travellers were now looking for new resort destinations and products such as jungle safaris, cave diving and extreme adventures, but Russian-speaking guides were needed too.

The minister agreed to look into increasing cooperation with embassies and the presence of VITOs, and said that a temporary permit for Russian guides could be arranged until locals were ready to take over. Currently, the country stipulates that only locals can be hired as guides.

## MAS pull-out messes up East Malaysia's plans

OPERATORS and tourism stakeholders in East Malaysia have been forced to rethink their marketing strategies due to Malaysia Airlines' (MAS) impending withdrawal of direct flights between Kota Kinabalu and South Korea, Japan, and Australia, which they say will greatly reduce the destination's ability to draw visitors.

MAS cut its twice-weekly Kota Kinabalu-Osaka services on January 6. Its thrice-weekly Kota Kinabalu-Perth flights will end on January 31, as will four-weekly services between Kota Kinabalu and Tokyo and Seoul from February 1 and 21, respectively.

Sabah Tourism Board (STB) deputy general manager, Gordon Yapp, said it is now "a matter of survival".

"We are an isolated destination; 90 per cent of our arrivals are by air, so the cuts will impact our competitiveness, especially with regards to Japan and Australia," he said. "South Korea is less affected because of existing flights by Asiana and Korean Air."

Yapp said STB would attempt to convince Japanese to fly with Cathay Pacific via Hong Kong, or Asiana and Korean Air via South Korea, while traffic from Perth would have to go through Kuala Lumpur or Singapore.

"We will work with any willing airline, since we cannot rely on MAS," he said, adding that incentives will be offered to travel consultants who send custom-

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### CORRECTION

Red Lantern Journeys is sourcing for partners in Malaysia and Singapore, not Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos as reported in yesterday's ATF Daily. We are sorry for the error.

ers over. STB will also help them with marketing efforts.

Meanwhile, operators like YTL Hotels, which is opening the Gaya Island Resort, Borneo in July, have been forced to overhaul their marketing. "We intended to target South Korea, Japan, Australia and Europe. Now, it looks like we have to concentrate our efforts on Europe," said Ai Lin, assistant director of sales.

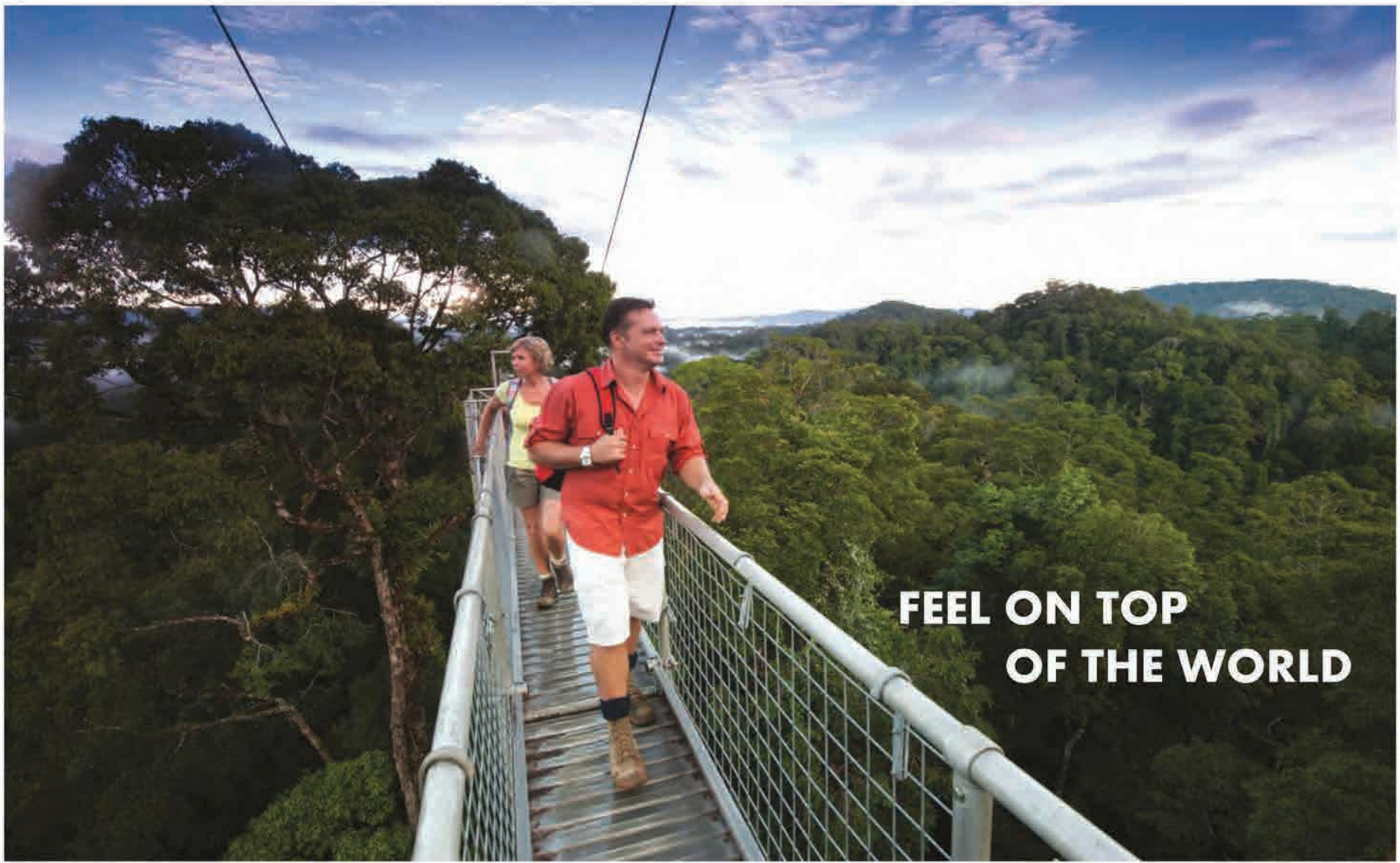
Emong Tinsang senior manager-sales & operations of Kuching's Borneo Adventure, which has a large Australian clientele, expects at least a 20 per cent drop in business, and now has to target the high-end European market.

"We are trying our best to promote our products, upgrade our facilities, but it makes no sense if there's no way to get here," he added. "We can't expect people to swim the South China Sea."

Baton Bijamin, general manager of Kota Kinabalu-based Borneo Eco Tours, whose top three markets are Australia, Europe and the US, said he would turn to Eastern Europe and Scandinavia via Hong Kong, Singapore and Kuala Lumpur, and expats based in China and Hong Kong.

"We will also create more products which are able to sell regardless of whether there are direct flights, such as adventure, nature and wildlife tours, bird-watching, local culinary journeys and tribal homestays," he said.

– Brian Higgs



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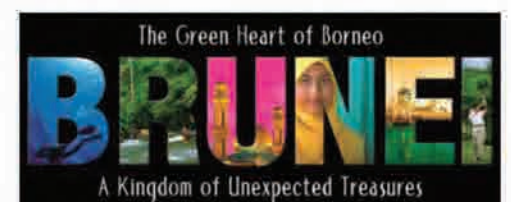
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# Brunei has modest aims

The arrival of more cruise ships, along with Brunei Tourism's marketing efforts and airfare cuts, have all fuelled inbound rises. Reports by **N. Nithiyananthan**



Masjid Jamek

Courtesy of Brunei Tourism

Singapore, China and Australia are the focus of marketing efforts as Brunei seeks to promote Islamic tours and the country's pristine reefs and relatively unknown shipwrecks. Cuts to Royal Brunei Airlines' schedules and disasters in Japan have held back growth, but Australia's economic boom is expected to boost business as optimistic operators add new products.

Both of Brunei's leading inbound tour operators reported business growth of 20 per cent last year compared to 2010, but cited different reasons for the rises.

Freme Travel Services inbound and MICE division head, Sugumaran S. Nair, said: "The contributory factors for the increase have been more cruise ships calling on (the deep water port of) Muara."

An example was the *Sun Princess* which had already visited three times last year with about 2,000 persons on board. "Our increase has also been complemented by arrivals from some new markets in Australia, specifi-

cally Melbourne and Perth, and from student traffic," he said.

For Sunshine Borneo Tours & Travel operations manager, Wong Kee Hing, "the economic boom in Australia and increased relations with foreign counterparts" fueled the increase.

At the same time, a host of factors had dampened inbound travel to a certain extent.

"They were the tsunami and earthquake in Japan, and the cutting back of flights by Royal Brunei Airlines (RBA) to Vietnam, (a market in) which we have had a stronghold for a long time," said Sugumaran.

"Positive developments which boosted business, as highlighted

by Wong, were "the efforts of Brunei Tourism promoting Brunei to countries such as Australia and China, and the affordable air fares supplied by RBA".

Source markets for Freme and Sunshine Borneo were similar. "Most of our customers are from North Asia and certain Asean countries, while the cruise segment is mainly from the US," said Sugumaran.

"Our customers are mainly from the Asia-Pacific region," added Wong.

As a result, the Eurozone and US-based economic crises did not have any major impact on either operator. "We are not heavily involved in these markets to

feel the effects of the crises," said Wong. Sugumaran added: "There is not much impact yet."

Both operators will stick to traditional markets this year, while looking for new opportunities. Sugumaran said Freme was developing new greener markets and innovative products, while Wong said: "There is definitely a shift towards China."

Wong said the outlook was "unpredictable" with the recent winter schedule released from RBA (with cuts in flights to Kuching, Ho Chi Minh City, Brisbane, Perth and Auckland). "However we are looking at it from a positive stride," he said.

## My take

"We are positive as we are developing newer ideas and more innovative programmes for specific markets to differentiate our products."

**Sugumaran S. Nair**

Inbound and MICE division head  
Freme Travel Services

## NTO | Top trio are still main targets

With its marketing campaign for 2011 showing positive results, Brunei Tourism will continue with the same formula for 2012, said its director of marketing, Jean Christophe Robles Espinosa.

"We are continuing with our current campaign with perhaps more focus given to ASEAN markets – particularly Singapore (due to proximity), China and Australia."

"Several roadshows, sales missions and exhibitions have already been planned for 2012 in those markets," he added.

Brunei Tourism's marketing representation offices also happen to be in these three countries.

Arrival numbers as of March 2011 had been on a significantly upward trend. This had come after an even more impressive performance in 2010.

"We were already looking at a 23.7 per cent increase over March 2010, so things are looking good," said Robles. "In 2010, there was an



**Robles: things are looking good**

overall increase of 36 per cent in total tourist arrivals compared to 2009 (with 157,474 arrivals recorded), with our neighbouring markets in ASEAN showing the highest increase."

In contrast, a more modest rate of increase was anticipated for 2011.

"Our target figure for 2011 is for a 15 to 20 per cent increase compared to 2010; about 250,000 air arrivals," Robles said. "However, our target may be slightly

affected due to the loss of important routes, especially in the fourth quarter. To compensate, we are making great efforts in working very closely with our tour operators, overseas counterparts as well as other airlines serving the destination to increase the number of tourist arrivals into Brunei."

"Islamic tourism is also something that we are pushing for. We currently have Islamic packages on offer with one of our travel agents, Darussalam Holdings," said Robles. "These are targeted at the Muslim

market, as well as at those who have a keen interest in learning about Islam in Brunei and the way it is practised and applied in everyday life through Brunei's unique Malay Islamic monarchy philosophy."

Diving has also been identified as another new product to be promoted. "Interest in Brunei as a new destination for divers is picking up due to the fact our reefs are mostly pristine and, unknown to many divers, there are a number of interesting shipwrecks in our waters," said Robles.





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- FX Hotel Lanzhou, Lanzhou
- FX Inn Lin Yi, Lin Yi
- FX Hotel Nanjing, Nanjing
- FX Hotel Jinqiao, Shanghai
- FX Hotel at Expo Park, Shanghai
- FX Hotel Shanghai at Liuying Road, Shanghai
- FX Hotel Shanghai on the Bund, Shanghai
- FX Hotel Xujiahui, Shanghai
- FX Hotel Taining, Shenzhen
- FX Hotel Zhonghua, Shijiazhuang
- FX Hotel Guanqian, Suzhou
- FX Hotel Taipei, Taipei
- FX Hotel Tianjin East Station, Tianjin
- FX Hotel Yangzhou, Yangzhou
- FX Hotel Yin Chuan, Yin Chuan
- FX Inn Yin Chuan, Yin Chuan

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**Hotels | Optimistic outlook**

Leading hotels in Brunei experienced an increase in room and occupancy rates in 2011 compared to 2010.

“At the end of September 2011, we experienced an increase of at least 10 per cent in both average rate and occupancy compared to July 2010,” said Evangelina Imperial, director of sales & marketing, The Empire Hotel & Country Club, Brunei.

She attributed the rise to “aggressive marketing strategies, the engagement of representative sales offices in key destination markets, and promotions with competitive pricing”.

The Radisson Hotel Brunei had also performed positively. Director of sales, Paula Munoz, said: “This is in line with Brunei’s economy that is growing at a steady rate. Our corporate segment is the main contributing factor.”

Both hotels expected further growth for occupancy and room rates this year. “We expect to grow even more, with newly-renovated rooms to be introduced by the end of this year,” said Imperial.

Munoz added: “We remain optimistic about 2012 and look forward to increasing the brand’s presence in this region.”



**Radisson Hotel Brunei**

The Empire Hotel & Country Club saw a noticeable rise in visitor numbers from China, while Australian arrivals had weakened “due to flight limitations”.

Imperial said marketing efforts in 2012 would focus on the Middle East and the Asia-Pacific.

The new year’s marketing focus is in line with the hotel’s appointment of representative offices in the Middle East, China and Australia, and a public relations agency in Hong Kong in early 2011.

Imperial added that a refurbishment of 196 guestrooms in the hotel’s main Atrium building was on the cards.

“We also have other projects in the pipeline, such as restaurant renovations and upgrades,” she said.

While the Radisson Hotel Brunei expects a growth in its corporate segment this year, Munoz said: “We anticipate a decline in the leisure market due to the cancellation of Royal Brunei Airlines flights from key markets such as Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia and Vietnam.”

**Destination by the numbers**

**3** The number of countries in which Brunei Tourism has marketing representation offices – Australia, China and Singapore.

**4** The number of flights a week from Bandar Seri Begawan to Melbourne, which was launched by Royal Brunei Airlines in 2011.

**20** The projected percentage increase in total tourist arrivals to Brunei in 2011 over 2010.

**20** The rate of growth in inbound business in 2011 for Freme Travel Services and Sunshine Borneo Tours & Travel compared to 2010.

**36** The overall percentage increase in total tourist arrivals to Brunei in 2010 compared to 2009.

**2,000** The number of passengers onboard the cruise ship, *Sun Princess*, which visited the deep water port of Muara, Brunei three times in 2011.



Courtesy of Brunei Tourism

**Airline | Access handicapped by flight cuts**

The year 2011 was marked by a significant shift in Royal Brunei Airlines’ (RBA) network strategy.

The flag carrier decided to suspend flights from Brunei’s capital city of Bandar Seri Begawan to destinations in Malaysia, Vietnam, Australia and New Zealand.

The decision came after RBA replaced its fleet of Boeing B767-300ERs aircraft with six B777-200ERs leased from Singapore Airlines in 2010. It had hoped to

expand on the Kangaroo Route between the UK and Australia and New Zealand with the fresh fleet.

However, services to Kuching were suspended from August 1, while services to Ho Chi Minh City, Brisbane, Perth and Auckland ceased by end-October.

A link to Australia was maintained with the airline’s four-weekly services to Melbourne, which was launched in March 2011.

In a press release, RBA said

the rationalisation was part of a plan to allow it to “improve its operations, financial performance and customer service experience”.

No indication was given as to when flights would resume, if ever.

In anticipation of the decision, RBA’s deputy chairman, Dermot Mannion, had said: “It was not an easy decision to reduce RBA’s network. However, it is the first step towards creating a stronger foundation that will allow the airline

to enhance our value to customers, employees and society.”

RBA’s turnaround in network strategy hit Brunei’s tourism players hard.

Freme Travel Services inbound and MICE division head, Sugumar S. Nair, said: “The cutting back of flights by RBA to Vietnam, in which we had a stronghold for a long time, affected our inbound business.”

Anthony Tours & Travel Agency commercial director, Nordin Besar, said: “Although it’s just a

suspension, it will affect the trust people have (in RBA), especially when it wants to resume these routes or start new services. We have started looking at other Asian carriers.”

Hotels in the destination have also noticed a change in source market performance as a result of RBA’s flight suspensions, with The Empire Hotel & Country Club reporting a dip in Australian bookings and the Radisson Hotel Brunei anticipating weaker leisure bookings this year.

Courtesy of Brunei Tourism



# New branding to bolster Malaysia's business tourism position

The Malaysia Convention & Exhibition Bureau (MyCEB) has recently unveiled a new branding campaign and a new tagline which reinforces its evolving business and embraces the positioning of Malaysia as Asia's business events hub. Witnessed by stakeholders, industry captains and partners, the launch was officiated by YB Dato' Dr. James Dawos Mamit, Deputy Tourism Minister, Malaysia, at the historic Central Market Kuala Lumpur.

**Entry point for business**

YB Dato' Dr James Dawos said, "The new tagline, 'Malaysia – Asia's Business Events Hub' encompasses our aim to communicate Malaysia's proposition as a gateway to Asia for meetings – where many of Asia's diverse cultures, languages and lifestyles are represented and have merged through a long history of trade and meetings. Malaysia is increasingly becoming a first port of call for international meetings wanting to enter the Asian marketplace because it is a microcosm of Asia and an easy place to do business."

Malaysia's strength in engaging with new and emerging economic centres lies in its rich historical links with China, India and the Middle-East while simultaneously enhancing ties with the West.

YB Dato' Dr James Dawos continued, "The strategic changes are instituted to clearly define and communicate Malaysia's business event proposition for the international and regional markets. It is also pertinent that the new campaign supports Tourism Malaysia's world renowned tagline – Malaysia Truly Asia, but with a business spin.

"Our primary focus is to position Malaysia as a microcosm of Asian cultures and the entry point for international organisations wanting to engage with the world's largest and fastest growing economic region through business events," he added.

**Aiming for top five**

The launch of the new brand campaign was seen as timely with MyCEB planning a more progressive approach towards achieving its mission to be Asia Pacific's top five meeting destination by year 2020.

According to Mr Zulkefli Hj Sharif, Chief Executive Officer, MyCEB, "We have lined up a series of strategic communication initiatives to actively pursue MyCEB's target markets including international and regional associations plus meeting and incentive planners. The brand proposition will be applied in our core programmes including trade advertising, website, editorials, trade shows and promotions. Industry partners are also encouraged to carry the brand message in their sales and marketing programmes overseas."

**Mixing business with culture**

Central Market Kuala Lumpur, recently identified as an offsite venue for business events was chosen as the

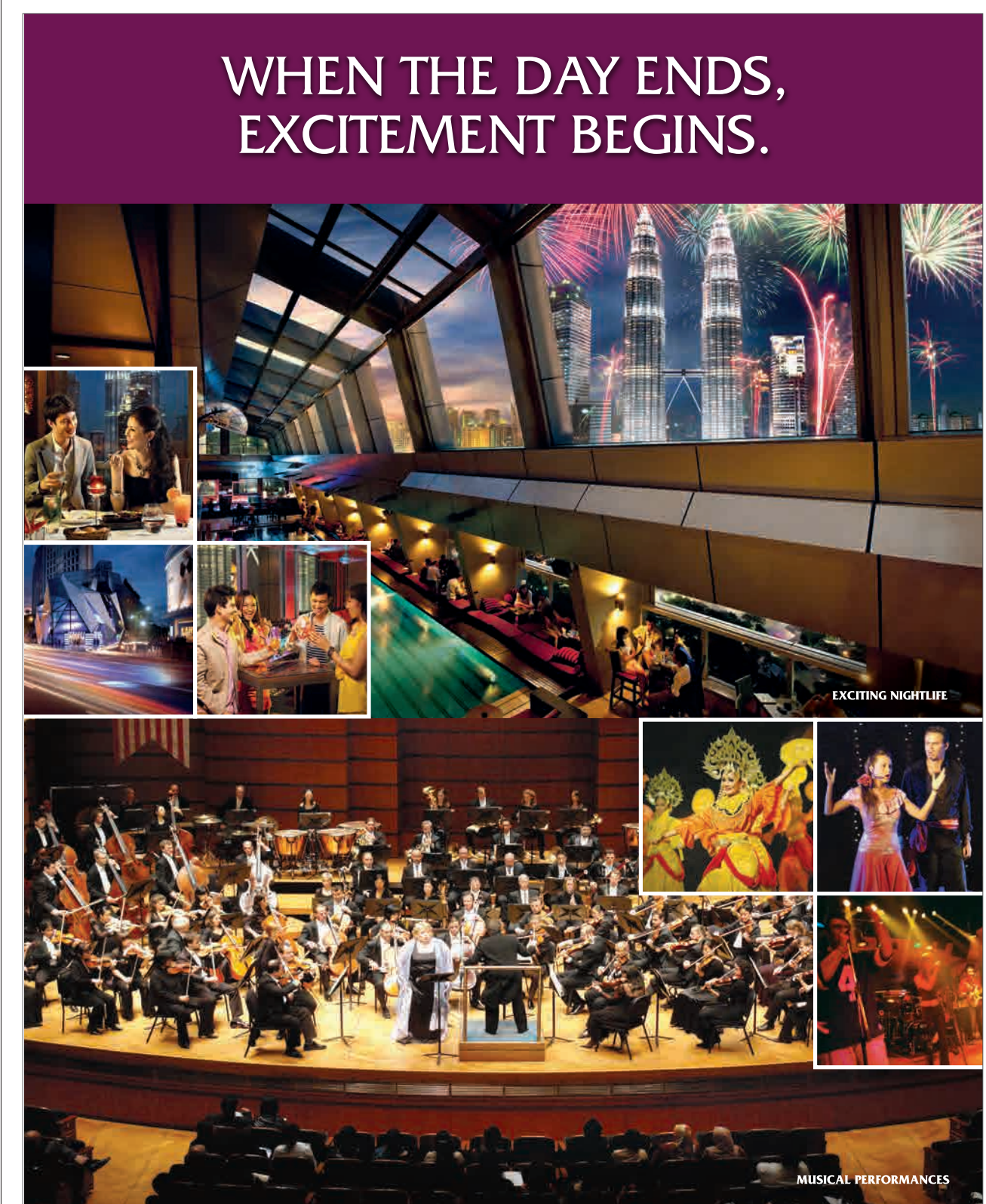
launch location as it embodies a thriving commerce centre similar to Malaysia, centuries ago. Strategically located between the booming economies of China and India, Malaysia has always been the place to meet and do business for the past 600 years and this continues on to this day. The Arabs, Chinese, Indians and Europeans have long appreciated Malaysia's position as the nexus for trade which resulted in the assimilation of cultures,

customs and lifestyle. This infusion makes Malaysia a truly cosmopolitan, dynamic and progressive country. These are the inspiration and rationale of the new brand direction, capturing the spirit of Malaysia's past and taking it into modern Malaysia.

Formed two years ago in 2009, MyCEB has been committed to fulfilling its role to further strengthen Malaysia's brand and position for the

international meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions (MICE) market. The business events industry was recognised in Malaysia's Economic Transformation Programme (ETP) Roadmap as one of the Entry Points Project to establish Malaysia as a developed nation by year 2020.

*For more information, visit [www.myceb.com.my](http://www.myceb.com.my).*



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# ASEAN-bound uptrend

South-east Asia is proving a hit with outbound travellers from Hong Kong and Taiwan

## Hong Kong Vietnam shows promise as a new destination

The outlook for Hong Kong's outbound market is rosy despite the problems which have beset regional destinations. While there are no official statistics on outbound travel, the Travel Industry Council indicated IATA's total air ticket billing for the first eight months of 2011 reached HK\$15.08 billion (US\$1.91 billion), up 11.8 per cent over the same period in 2010. The number of transactions reached 4,011,791, up 3.8 per cent. With the government planning a HK\$6,000 cash handout to all permanent adult residents, there is a great opportunity for outbound travel.

For ASEAN travel, Package Tours (HK) general manager, Frankie Yuen, said: "By headcounts, Thailand is one of the top three popular spots for Hong

Kongers but Singapore has stolen the limelight given its new attractions like Universal Studios. When the disastrous Japan earthquake and tsunami happened last March, it diverted traffic to South Asia."

The company ventured into Vietnam last year. Yuen said: "We had no other choice but to expand and Vietnam is not well developed for FITs, so package tours are still needed. In fact, overall air seats to South Asia from Hong Kong have not drastically increased except for Taiwan and South Korea who have more frequent flights."

"So I expect a stable growth for ASEAN in 2012. Unlike Thailand where repeat visitation is high, it's not the same picture for other member countries given the absence of a pull factor."

Wincastle Travel (HK) senior manager of marketing and product, Eliza Li, said problems in Thailand and Japan had been diverting traffic to Vietnam. She said: "There is limited choice but thanks to TV coverage, more Hong Kongers are visiting areas like Hue and Danang... Vietnam is not a mass market destination and it has improved a lot with many new international hotel chains waving their flags, such as Six Senses."

Excluding Vietnam and Singapore, ASEAN traffic accounts for about 10 per cent of Wincastle's business. Thailand takes 20-30 per cent of that thanks to the abundance of airline seats.

Li said: "Brunei is okay, but it is nothing special. It was once popular as a celebrity filmed there but it only lasted for a

short while. The country has only a handful of quality hotels and there is not much to see." However, its safety and political stability are big pluses for Hong Kongers.

She added: "Before the hostage incident, both Cebu and Boracay (excluding Manila) did well." But travel to the Philippines has now dropped.

The availability and cost of visas still play a pivotal role. A Vietnam visa costs more than HK\$300 and takes four working days to process, which deters visitors. "I believe if the visa was waived, the traffic volume would soar. I reckon there will be stable growth in 2012 with no big fluctuations for the ASEAN market. There will be more leisure and business, but fewer MICE groups," said Li. — **Prudence Lui**



The Hong Kong outbound market will remain more or less the same as last year, given no change to existing conditions.

However, if airlines offer discount tickets, it may help. Visa-wise, it may help if fees are waived but Hong Kongers would not go just for this reason.

**Alex Lee**, general manager, Miramar Travel, Hong Kong



Bayon Tower, Cambodia; Basket Boat at Cu Lao Cham Island, Vietnam; Myanmar fisherman; Elephants, Laos

## Taiwan South-east Asia increasingly on the agenda

More than half of Taiwan's outbound travel is to China, which is hardly surprising given that more than one million of Taiwan's 23 million citizens have relocated to jobs there in the past decade.

In 2010, 5.3 million outbound trips – 57.3 per cent of the 9.4 million total – were to Chinese cities and Greater China jump-off points, Hong Kong and Macau.

Hong Kong is also a hub for links to the US, Canada and Europe, as is Japan, which attracted 1.3 million visitors.

Japan itself was Taiwan's top tourist destination in 2010, with South Korea a distant second with 406,000 visitors. North America and Europe accounted for just 499,518 and 172,000 visitors respectively.

ASEAN destinations grabbed most of the remainder – 1.4 million visitors – and were one of the fastest-growing sectors in 2010.

Taiwanese visitor numbers to the top ASEAN destination, Thailand, jumped 35.7 per cent,

from 258,449 to 350,074. Second place Vietnam leaped 18.5 per cent from 264,819 to 313,987 visitors, and Malaysia surged 38.6 per cent from 153,695 to 212,509. Relative laggards, Indonesia saw a 3.5 per cent gain from 173,429 to 179,845 while Singapore, then at a five-year low, saw a 21.1 per cent improvement from 137,348 to 166,126 visitors.

What makes the growth to ASEAN destinations remarkable is that it outshone that of others in a year when Taiwan's outbound market rebounded 15.6 per cent while emerging from a two-year economic downturn.

Promotions by low-cost carriers (LCCs) such as AirAsia, Tiger Airways, and Cebu Pacific have boosted ASEAN destinations, according to Jack Lin, CEO, 169travel.com. "They keep coming out with special promotions. Since last spring, a one-way from Taipei to Kuala Lumpur has been priced at NT\$2,700 (US\$89)," he said.

Calvin Liu, manager, Phoenix Tours, said the price difference

between LCCs and full-fare airlines, such as domestic carriers China Airlines or Eva Air, was only significant if it was part of an onward flight to Australia or destinations beyond South-east Asia.

"However the LCCs' discounted price alone is not a consideration for Taiwanese to buy package tours to South-east Asia," he said.

The attraction of destinations such as Boracay in the Philippines and Bali in Indonesia is their low cost of living. "It is a comfortable feeling for Taiwanese travellers. Food, shopping ... everything is cheaper compared to back home," he said.

ASEAN destinations remained a bright spot last year as Taiwan's outbound travel cooled, registering a meagre increase of 1.6 per cent to 7.4 million travellers during the first nine months of 2011.

Thailand saw a 34.9 increase to 336,018 visitors, while Singapore jumped 26.1 per cent to 165,228 and the Philippines leaped 24.8

per cent to 135,771.

Many attribute the surge in travel to ASEAN to the impact of the March 11 tsunami in Japan affecting travel to the destination.

"If you consider the drop in travel to Japan since the tsunami, and counted how many fewer travellers headed there, you would probably see an equivalent increase in the number of travellers to other destinations in Asia," said Dale Mackie, proprietor, WHOSE Travel.

His hunch works out – almost 330,000 fewer Taiwanese visited Japan during the first nine months of 2011, compared to the same period in 2010. Meanwhile, ASEAN destinations saw a gain of 179,000 – roughly half of Japan's loss.

Phoenix Tours' Liu believes ASEAN's gain is short-term, however. He said: "That may have been true up until July last year. But people here see Japan as an advanced nation, and they have confidence that it will recover." — **Glenn Smith**



One factor that might explain the in-

creased popularity of the Philippines is the new direct service to Boracay. The major airlines connect via Manila, and not all connect daily, therefore requiring an overnight stay in Manila. But there is a charter flight that lands in Kalibo, then only requiring a bus ride to Boracay. I always recommend the package with the direct flight.

**Dale Mackie**, proprietor, WHOSE Travel, Taiwan



India

# Indian outbound travel the ASEAN way

India is one of the fastest-growing outbound markets and the World Tourism Organization estimates 50 million Indians will travel abroad annually by 2020.

Asia remains the focus of this expanding market for two main reasons – value-for-money and shorter flight durations. ASEAN countries have courted India tourists with easy-to-get visas and, in some instances such as Thailand and Indonesia, visa-on-arrival.

“Indians prefer to travel to ASEAN countries because typically a family of four will spend about US\$6,500 for a week, less perhaps in Thailand, but will have to spend about US\$11,000

for a similar vacation in Europe or South Africa,” said Rajesh Sethi, managing director, New Delhi-based Carnation Travel Services, which has seen 100 per cent outbound growth.

Indian leisure travellers are among the highest spenders in most countries they visited with an average of spend US\$1,789 per trip, according to Nielsen.

The tropical climate, Asian culture, presence of other Indian tourists, availability of Indian food and ability to talk in English with hotel staff and tour guides are pluses for ASEAN destinations. Indians’ proficiency in English also accounted for the growing popularity of online travel firms such as Yatra.com

and Makemytrip.com.

Vaishali Sharma, Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) marketing officer, New Delhi, said: “Indians prefer Thailand because it offers tourism options for every segment – honeymoons, weddings, family travel, FIT, MICE venues and adventure tourism.”

The emergence of low-cost carriers such as Air Asia, Tiger Airways and IndiGo has also attracted many first-time travellers and there are plentiful flights to ASEAN destinations – Bangkok, for example, has 157 weekly flights from major Indian cities.

In 2010, 11.2 million Indians travelled overseas and 12.8 million were expected in 2011. Asia nabbed 72 per cent of Indian lei-

sure travellers. The Philippines, for example, attracted 34,800 in 2010 and expected a 70 per cent rise in 2011 thanks to direct flights.

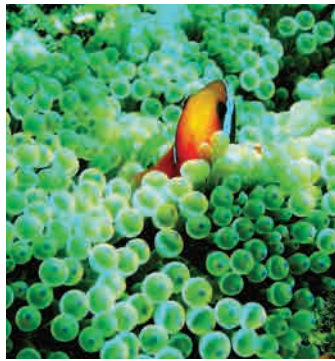
According to PhoCusWright data, Singapore received 726,000 Indian tourists in 2009, 829,000 in 2010 and expected 883,800 in 2011; Thailand had 615,000 in 2009, 791,000 in 2010 with 873,247 in 2011; and Malaysia had 590,000 in 2009, 691,000 in 2010 and should attract 784,430 in 2011. The projection for this year was a 12-15 per cent growth to most ASEAN destinations and 10-12 per cent growth overall. TAT expects 1,052,000 Indian visitors to Thailand this year. – Shekhar Niyogi



“ASEAN destinations are cheap and good

value-for-money. Indian food is easily available and the shopping makes them ideal holiday destinations. There are plenty of flights and in some cases visa-on-arrival. This all adds up to easy, quick get-aways.”

Veneeta Rawat, director, Mumbai-based Amazing Vacations



Katong, Singapore; Taman Negara National Park, Malaysia; Brunei diving; Wayang Puppet, Indonesia

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## Indonesia Strong economy feeds growth

The Indonesian outbound market continues to show significant growth as the country's economy improves and the rupiah gains against the US dollar.

Within ASEAN, Singapore is the top destination, while Thailand and Vietnam are also growing in popularity. Although Malaysia is still a favourite, outbound travel consultants said growth in bookings was slowing down.

Data from the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy showed the number of outbound travellers in 2010 was 5,934,239, while last year, up to September, the total had reached 4,950,699.

The data was not broken down by destination but travel consultants said major ASEAN countries, particularly Singapore, did very well with Indonesian travellers.

Panorama Tours Indonesia managing director leisure travel management, Meity Monica Lukito, said: "Singapore's new integrated resorts, especially Resorts World Sentosa and its Universal Studios theme park, have been a big draw for the Indonesian market."

Bayu Buana Travel Services outbound manager, Nurdin Su-

pena, said: "Easy access, new hotels, and new and improved attractions have all given travellers reasons to keep visiting Singapore."

He said the market ranged from first-time travellers and Indonesians who had children studying in Singapore, to business and meeting travellers and medical tourists. "Special rates given by hotels during weekends are also a draw," Nurdin said.

While numbers to Malaysia continued to grow, consultants believe it needs to add new attractions and hotels.

Meanwhile, Thailand attracted more Indonesian leisure travellers and corporate incentives with its aggressive marketing. Garuda Indonesia's increased frequencies also helped improve accessibility.

Indonesians have also turned their gaze to Indochina, with Vietnam gaining popularity. However, travellers are waiting to see what is on offer in Myanmar and Cambodia. "What we need is for the tourism authorities in Indochina to promote themselves here and, with the industry, create special offers to attract travellers to give it a try," Meity said. – **Mimi Hudoyo**



What we need is for the tourism authorities in Indochina to promote themselves here and, with the industry, create special offers to attract travellers to give it a try.

**Meity Monica Lukito**  
Managing director  
leisure travel management  
Panorama Tours Indonesia



## Cambodia More rapid rises

The number of Cambodian outbound tourists visiting ASEAN countries has grown rapidly in recent years and these increases are set to continue, according to industry experts.

A total of 509,183 Cambodian nationals departed the kingdom in the first nine months of 2011, a 38.6 per cent year-on-year increase from the same period in 2010, Ministry of Tourism figures showed.

Cambodian outbound tourist departures throughout 2010 hit 504,990, a 48.66 per cent increase on the previous year.

A number of factors have helped to fuel the growth in outbound tourism according to Mohan Gunti, advisor to the Cambodia Association of Travel Agents and a member of the government's tourism working group.

He said: "People are now travelling for leisure, business, medical reasons, education, trade and to visit friends and family."

He added that Vietnam remained the top destination for Cambodian tourists.

In 2010, Vietnam welcomed 248,603 Cambodian tourists, almost half its total arrival num-

bers, while visitors to Thailand and Laos hit 90,694 and 7,283 respectively, ministry figures showed.

"ASEAN tourism has been rapidly growing because of an easing of visa policies, improved road and air links, financial sustainability and an increase in tourism awareness," Gunti explained.

Most tour operators believe outbound tourism to ASEAN countries will continue to increase, especially with recent efforts to integrate the region's tourism activity.

"The Amazing Thailand and Malaysia Truly Asia roadshows were both held in Cambodia this year, showing their commitment to attracting more Cambodian tourists," Diethelm Travel Cambodia managing director, Pierre Jungo, said. He added that the lifting of visa restrictions around the region would also go a long way in building up Cambodia's outbound tourism.

While nearly all outbound traffic remains within Asia, there have been slight increases to destinations such as Australia, Europe, and to a lesser extent due to visa restrictions, the US, he said. – **Liam Barnes**



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# Cambodia's steady growth

**Cambodia has shrugged off its dark past for a bright future. Reports by Byron Perry**

**My take**

“The perception of Cambodia being dangerous has entirely changed and we now see our clients doing overland tours between provinces.”

**Pierre Jungo**  
Managing director  
Diethelm Travel Cambodia

Cambodia's visitor numbers have shot up nearly every year since the country's civil war ended in 1992 and the growth trend looks set to continue.

There were 1,874,985 arrivals through August 2011, up 15 per cent from the same period in 2010, putting Cambodia on track for another record year. Arrivals set a record in 2010, with 2,508,289 visitors, a 16 per cent increase over 2009.

Indeed, things are looking rosy for Cambodia as the country continues to develop and move beyond its dark past.

Tourism minister Thong Khon said: “Based on the going rate, we are optimistic that Cambodia will be able to attract over 4.5 million tourists by 2015.”

The travel trade is also looking at the same trends.

Asian Trails Cambodia managing director, Jacques Guichandut, said business in general had been stable, particularly the European segment, its main source market.

“We haven't seen a big increase but we haven't seen a drop either.



Courtesy of Bangkok Airways

Cambodia is on track for another record year in 2011, after recording a 15 per cent year-on-year increase to 1.87 million arrivals in the first eight months. Siem Reap and the Angkor temples are still the main draws but Phnom Penh and the southern beaches around Sihanoukville are gaining popularity, buoyed by new tourism infrastructure and marketing.

We're getting more and more requests for 2012, so I think this year should be better,” he said.

Asia-Pacific continues to supply by far the bulk of tourists to Cambodia, with approximately 72 per cent coming from the region in 2010 and about the same percentage through August 2011.

Neighbouring Vietnam sends

the largest number of visitors to the country, followed by South Korea, China and Japan. Western visitor numbers dropped off during the financial crisis, but many said they were seeing those sectors returning.

Exotissimo Travel Cambodia general manager, Olivier Marchesin, said: “With many countries finding resolutions to

the global financial crisis and disposable income increasing, people are looking to travel again.”

But he expressed concerns that Internet bookings had bitten into the marketshare, a trend which he said would likely to continue in the future.

The majority of tourists to Cambodia come for short trips to Siem Reap and the Angkor temples, but the government is actively promoting the rest of the country, especially the bohemian lifestyle of Phnom Penh and the beach areas around Sihanoukville.

Destination management companies said they were seeing increased interest in the rest of the country, resulting in longer stays.

Pierre Jungo, managing director of Diethelm Travel Cambodia, said: “We see that the average stay is steadily increasing.

“The perception of Cambodia being dangerous has entirely changed and we now see our clients doing overland tours between provinces and overland country combinations between Laos and Vietnam.”

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**Hotels | Steady move upmarket**

Cambodia's hotels are looking to maintain or increase their rates this year, citing an increase in arrivals and revenue.

This came as hotels reported blockbuster business in the previous high season albeit with a significant drop-off during the May-October low season.

Wayne Buckingham, regional vice president of Starwood Hotels and Resorts for Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam, said the chain would look to maintain or increase rates on an annual basis, though this would be determined by the market and the competitive environment.

Key Cambodian cities, such as Siem Reap, have no shortage of budget and mid-range places to stay, but the business is moving upscale with more luxury properties opening. They are also being built beyond the tourism hotspots of Siem Reap, Phnom Penh and on the southern coast around Sihanoukville.

One notable recent addition was the opening of Phnom Penh's third five-star hotel, the 201-room Sofitel Phnom Penh Phokeethra, in December last year.

Sofitel's decision to open a property in Phnom Penh dem-



**Sofitel Phnom Penh Phokeethra**

onstrates the group's increased focus on the capital. The property is also looking to attract MICE groups with its top class facilities.

Sofitel Phnom Penh Phokeethra general manager, Charles-Henri Chevet, said the hotel, which had already positioned itself above most in the city, would keep rates stable in 2012. Chevet added: "We have seen lots of business from other Asian countries, especially China, Singapore and Malaysia."

To keep up with new comers, albeit in different locations, existing luxury properties in Siem Reap – Sofitel Angkor Phokeethra Golf and Spa Resort and Raffles Hotel d'Angkor – have undergone soft refurbishments and service upgrades.

The Song Saa Private Island opened in late 2011, adding a taste of tropical island luxury to Cambodia. Approximately 30 minutes by speedboat from Sihanoukville, the twin islands offer 27 luxury over-water, rainforest and beach villas.

**Destination by the numbers**

**21.8** Vietnam was by far the biggest source of arrivals to Cambodia, with nearly 408,517 visitors from January through August 2011 for a 21.8 per cent share of the total.

**12** South Korea is the second largest source of visitors to Cambodia with 227,545 through August 2011, or around 12 per cent of the total number. China was third with 158,492 visitors, giving it an 8.5 per cent share of the total.

**3** There are three international airports in Cambodia – Phnom Penh, Siem Reap and Sihanoukville. Unfortunately, no carriers were offering international services to Sihanoukville at the time of writing.

**23** The Kingdom of Cambodia has 23 provinces plus the capital Phnom Penh, 159 districts, 1,417 communes, and is home to 26 official cities.

**97** Some 97 per cent of Cambodia is Buddhist in its belief.

**50** The flight time from Phnom Penh to Ho Chi Minh City is approximately 50 minutes. From Phnom Penh to Bangkok it is one hour and 10 minutes; to Singapore it is three hours; and to Hong Kong it is three hours and 40 minutes.

**1,874,985** Is the number of arrivals to Cambodia in between January and August 2011, up approximately 15 per cent from 2009.

**1.79** Cambodia received approximately US\$1.79 billion in tourism revenue in 2010, up from just US\$100 million in 1995, the first year that records are available.

**90** Ninety per cent of Cambodia's population is of Khmer origin and consequently, most speak Khmer, the country's official language.

**Airline | Opening up Sihanoukville's beaches**

National carrier Cambodia Angkor Air launched a thrice-weekly Siem Reap-Sihanoukville service on December 14, a move hailed by the travel trade as opening up the country for twin-centre culture and beach holidays.

Diethelm Travel Cambodia managing director, Pierre Jungo, said the service would help to lengthen the amount of time visitors spent in the country.

"Previously, travellers would leave Cambodia for the beaches in Thailand or Bali but now they can have their beach holiday in

the country," he said.

Cambodia Angkor Air operates the Siem Reap-Sihanoukville route using its ATR 72 twin-engine turboprop.

The new domestic route links the country's biggest tourist attraction – the Angkor Wat temple complex near Siem Reap – with its southern beach area near Sihanoukville, allowing for a complete Asian vacation without leaving Cambodia.

New international routes to Cambodia in 2011 included Tiger Airways' daily Singapore-

Siem Reap-Phnom Penh service using Airbus A320s.

South Korea's Eastar Jets also launched four-weekly Seoul-Siem Reap flights, using a Boeing B737.

Another new route is the twice-weekly flight by Myanmar Airways International on the Yangon-Siem/Reap-Phnom Penh route.

Cambodia Airports' spokesman, Norinda Khek, said the company, which operates three airports in Cambodia, expected to end 2011 on a positive note

with combined passenger numbers at Phnom Penh and Siem Reap growing by approximately 12 per cent.

As for 2012, Khek said the forecasts were also "reasonably" optimistic with an anticipated overall increase of slightly above 10 per cent.

"If traffic is in line with our forecasts, each of the two airports by year-end 2012, should cross the two million passenger mark for the first time in our history," Khek said.

Meanwhile, Long Chheng,

secretariat of state of the Civil Aviation Department, was quoted in the *Phnom Penh Post* in November as saying that an unnamed Australian airline would launch direct flights to Cambodia sometime during the early part of this year.

At press time, Cambodia Angkor Air said it also planned to launch a daily Siem Reap-Seoul flight utilising its Airbus A321 aircraft. However, it said that the service would only be launched if there was sufficient demand.







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# More draws in Singapore

New attractions and hotels, as well as popular events, raise the allure of the city, reports by Linda Haden



Supertrees, Gardens by the Bay

## Gardens by the Bay

The first phase of Singapore's second botanic garden is scheduled to open in June. Situated in the heart of Singapore's new downtown Marina Bay area, the 101-hectare Gardens by the Bay boasts three distinctive waterfront gardens, encompassing a diverse selection of dining outlets to suit all budgets. Two temperature-controlled greenhouses dominate the gardens. The 1.2 hectare Flower Dome will showcase plants that thrive in the Mediterranean and semi-arid tropical environments, while the 0.8 hectare Cloud Forest will feature plants from tropical mountain habitats. The second phase of the park occupies a 32-hectare site named Bay East. Plans for this site involve the installation of aquatic gardens and education facilities.

**Contact**  
[www.gardensbythebay.org.sg](http://www.gardensbythebay.org.sg)

## International Cruise Terminal

Singapore's new International Cruise Terminal at Marina South is designed to accommodate the world's largest Oasis-class cruiseships. It can handle 6,800 passengers at a time, effectively doubling Singapore's berth capacity. The 28,000m<sup>2</sup> terminal is one of Asia's biggest. It is projected

to attract 1.6 million cruise passengers by 2015. The terminal will be operational in the second quarter.

## Marine Life Park

The eight-hectare Marine Life Park at Resorts World Sentosa is scheduled to open this year. It is the largest oceanarium in the world, showcasing 700,000 fish in 20 gallons of water, as well as the world's longest man-made river. Visitors will also have the opportunity to get up close with reef fishes at the attraction's wading pool and to interact with dolphins.

**Contact**  
[www.rwsentosa.com/Attractions/MarineLifePark](http://www.rwsentosa.com/Attractions/MarineLifePark)

## W Hotel Sentosa Cove

Scheduled to open on April 30, the 240-room hotel forms part of the Quayside Isle Collection, a mixed lifestyle development constructed by Singapore-based City Developments. It comprises private apartments, retail outlets and restaurants. Quayside Isle is situated within Sentosa Cove, a premium residential enclave on the island of Sentosa.

**Contact**  
[www.starwoodhotels.com/whotels/property/overview/index.html?propertyID=3462](http://www.starwoodhotels.com/whotels/property/overview/index.html?propertyID=3462)

## Mosaic Music Festival

Launched in 2005, this annual 10-day music extravaganza brings together a long list of local and overseas acts that transcend various genres. Performances are held at various venues around the Esplanade - Theatres by the Bay. The eighth edition of the Mosaic Music Festival is scheduled to take place between March 9 and 18.

**Contact**  
[www.mosaicmusicfestival.com](http://www.mosaicmusicfestival.com)

## River Safari

Asia's first river-themed wildlife park will open in the third quarter of this year. Located in the same Mandai area as the Singapore Zoo and the Night Safari, the River Safari will feature new species of wildlife

between February 14 and 19. It is acknowledged as one of the top three aviation shows globally. The first four days will be exclusively for trade attendees, but the show will be open to the public for the remaining two days. Visitors will be treated to acrobatic air shows, as well as static displays of different commercial and military aircraft. There will also be fairground attractions and stalls selling food and collectibles.

**Contact**  
[www.singaporeairshow.com](http://www.singaporeairshow.com)

## Sentosa Palawan Walk

Formerly known as Palawan Link, Palawan Walk will be redeveloped to feature an 800m landscaped walkway linking

musical debuted in Singapore at Marina Bay Sands Theatre on December 7, 2011. Its run ends on January 29. It tells the tale of how two unlikely friends became the Wizard of Oz's Wicked Witch of the West and Glinda the Good. Tickets are priced from S\$55 (US\$43) to S\$250. A VIP box for four people is also available for S\$1,000.

**Contact**  
[www.marinabaysands.com/Singapore-Entertainment/Shows/Wicked](http://www.marinabaysands.com/Singapore-Entertainment/Shows/Wicked)

## Maritime Experiential Museum & Aquarium

Situated within Resorts World Sentosa, the museum, which explores the maritime Silk



International Cruise Terminal

Courtesy of Singapore Tourism Board



W Hotel Sentosa Cove

and endangered animals, boat rides and special displays of freshwater habitats. One of the main attractions will be a pair of giant pandas housed in a climate-controlled 1,600m<sup>2</sup> enclosure that emulates the four seasons found in their natural habitat.

**Contact**  
[www.riversafari.com.sg](http://www.riversafari.com.sg)

## Singapore Airshow

Formerly known as the Changi International Airshow, this biennial event will be held at the Changi Exhibition Centre

restaurants and the food court between Beach Station and Palawan beach. A play area targeted at under-10s featuring a giant pirate ship replica, which houses a family restaurant and kids club, will also be constructed as part of the redevelopment and is expected to complete within this year.

**Contact**  
[www.sentosa.com](http://www.sentosa.com)

## Wicked

Winner of 35 major awards including a Grammy and three Tony Awards, this hit



Maritime Experiential Museum & Aquarium

Route, opened its doors on October 15, 2011. It features over 400 rare artefacts, including *Bao Chuan*, a life-size replica of the bow of a treasure ship used by Admiral Zheng He, a Chinese explorer. Another key highlight is the Jewel of Muscat, a replica of a ninth century Arab dhow bestowed to Singapore by the Sultanate of Oman.

**Contact**  
[www.rwsentosa.com/language/en-s/Attractions/MaritimeExperientialMuseumAquarium](http://www.rwsentosa.com/language/en-s/Attractions/MaritimeExperientialMuseumAquarium)

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# New Thai attractions

Thai tourism architects are not getting any rest, pushing ahead with new hardware, says Sirima Eamtako

### Hua Hin Floating Market

Opened in August 2011, this attraction adds to the growing list of boutique-style tourist sites in the royal seaside resort. Designed in an old Hua Hin-style or colonial-style architecture, the market features shops selling clothing and souvenirs, restaurants, as well as Thai cultural performances and activities. Open 09.30 to 19.30 from Monday to Thursday and until 20.00 from Friday to Sunday.

#### Contact

[huahinfloatingmarket@hotmail.com](mailto:huahinfloatingmarket@hotmail.com)  
[www.huahinfloatingmarket.com](http://www.huahinfloatingmarket.com)

### Mahanakorn Floating Market

Opened in September 2011, this attraction was developed at a cost of almost 100 million baht. It features Thai culture and lifestyle during the

Rattanakosin Kingdom, the fourth established sovereignty of Thailand. Besides souvenir shops and restaurants, the 38,000m<sup>2</sup> site on Lad Krabang Road – about 10 minutes from Suvarnabhumi Airport – also boasts replicas of royal palaces in many parts of Thailand such as Sanam Chandra Palace and boat trips along nearby canals. Open daily from 09.00 to midnight.

#### Contact

[www.mahanakornfloatingmarket.com](http://www.mahanakornfloatingmarket.com)

### Thai Airways International's new services

Thai flag carrier launched a new direct thrice-weekly Bangkok-Brussels service on November 17, 2011. It operates the route with Boeing 777-200ER aircraft. The airline also introduced a direct thrice-weekly Bangkok-Copenhagen-

Phuket flight with the B747-400 on November 11, and a thrice-weekly Phuket-Incheon service with the Airbus A330-300 on October 30.

#### Contact

[www.thaiairways.com](http://www.thaiairways.com)

### Bangkok Airways' new services

The private-owned airline has launched a six-weekly Bangkok-Mumbai service and a daily Bangkok-Dhaka flight, and boosted the Bangkok-Chiang Mai frequency from four to five flights per day, in March. The airline launched a five-weekly Bangkok-Bangalore service in September. In the next summer timetable, starting end of March 2012, it plans to launch a new daily Samui-Kuala Lumpur service and to boost the Samui-Hong Kong frequency from one to two flights daily.

#### Contact

[www.bangkokair.com](http://www.bangkokair.com)





[www.baliismylife.com](http://www.baliismylife.com)



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THAI Smile Air (above)

Outdoor event zone at the centre court pond, Phothalai Convention and Event Center

**Phothalai Convention and Event Center**

This will become Bangkok's latest standalone events and functions facility. Slated to open in 2012, the venue will offer 11 types of indoor and outdoor spaces that can hold 20 to 800 people, or a large event of 2,000 people when spaces are

combined. The spaces include a Thai pavilion reception hall with an underground aquarium, a grand ballroom, a traditional Thai stream in a landscaped garden and an outdoor zone at the centre court pond. It is located on the same grounds as the eight-year-old Phothalai Thai Wellness Centre

on Praditmanuthum Road, about 25 minutes by car from Suvarnabhumi Airport and Bangkok's city centre.

**Contact**  
[info@phothalai.com](mailto:info@phothalai.com)  
[www.phothalai.com](http://www.phothalai.com)

**THAI Smile Air**

THAI Smile Air is a subsidiary of Thai Airways International (THAI). It is a light premium airline that will offer full in-flight service at lower airfares than THAI but higher than low-cost carriers. It is set to take to the skies in July 2012, operating to five domestic destinations from its hub in Bangkok's Suvarnabhumi Airport. From 2013, it will launch flights to cities in India and China, and within South-east Asia. The airline will have a fleet of four Airbus A320s in the first year, with a plan to have a total of 11 aircraft of the same type by 2015.

**Contact**  
[www.thaiairways.com](http://www.thaiairways.com)

**Asiatique The Riverfront**

Slated to open in February 2012, the project is set to become the first and largest lifestyle riverfront integrated entertainment venue in Asia. Being built

on the bank of the Chao Phraya River, off Charoenkrung Road, the venue will feature more than 1,500 boutique shops, 40 restaurants, a riverfront pathway, more than 12,000m<sup>2</sup> of open space for concerts and product launches and a theatre for the Calypso Cabaret show and the Joe Louis' Thai puppet performance. Operating hours will be from 16.00 to midnight.

**Contact**  
[www.thaiasiatique.com](http://www.thaiasiatique.com) (under construction at press time)

**Chiang Mai's convention and exhibition centre**

After much delay, this yet-to-be-named government-built facility is set to open in July 2012. Being developed with a budget of around 1.86 billion baht on a 52.16-hectare plot of land in Chiang Mai city, the centre will comprise an estimated 364,550m<sup>2</sup> of outdoor space and 55,000m<sup>2</sup> of indoor area, including a 10,000m<sup>2</sup> exhibition hall and a 3,000-seat convention room. The Ministry of Tourism and Sports, which oversees the project, will be seeking a private company to manage the facility.

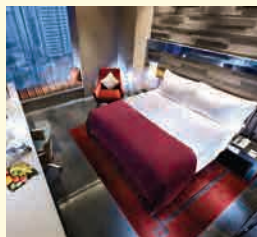
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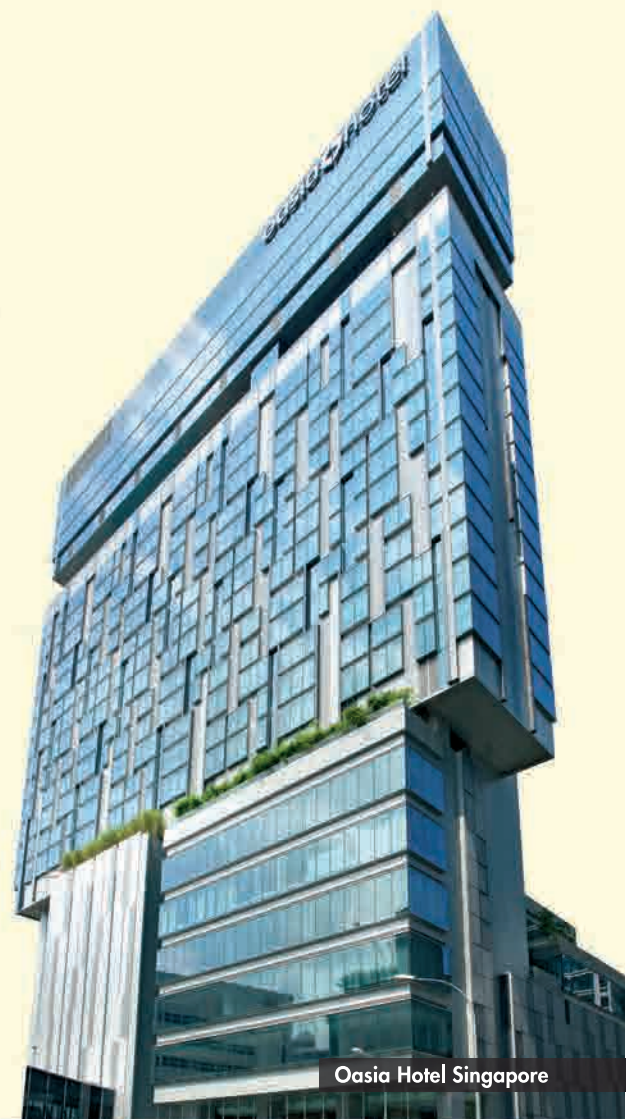
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# Cambodia's alluring nature

A slew of new eco-resorts, hotels and attractions to keep clients happy, says Byron Perry

## Song Saa Private Island

Song Saa, a luxury private island resort located 30 minutes from Sihanoukville, opened late last year. The property, which features 25 overwater, jungle and beach villas, aims to make environmental preservation one of its cornerstones. A marine reserve has been established across the development's two islands.

**Contact**  
reservations@songsaa.com



Song Saa Private Island

## Preah Vihear Temple

An 11<sup>th</sup> century Khmer temple which has been at the centre of a border dispute between Cambodia and Thailand for decades. Cross-border tensions have calmed in recent months, and visitor numbers to the temple – believed to be one of the most magnificent examples of Khmer architecture – have boomed. In July and August last year, visitor numbers were 218 per cent higher compared to the same period the year before.

## Legend Cinema

Opened in July last year, this movie theatre was the first to screen licensed Hollywood movies in Phnom Penh. The US\$1.5 million facility has three screens and 800 seats. Its inaugural screening was Transformers 3.

**Contact**  
legendcinema@gmail.com

## Sofitel Phnom Penh Phokeethra

development. The first phase – which has been undertaken by Cambodian conglomerate The Royal Group – will comprise two spa resorts, 160 villas, a beach club, five restaurants, a lagoon and infrastructure including roads, a small airport, a port, and power, water and telecommunications facilities.

**Contact**  
admin@kohrong-island.com



Preah Vihear Temple

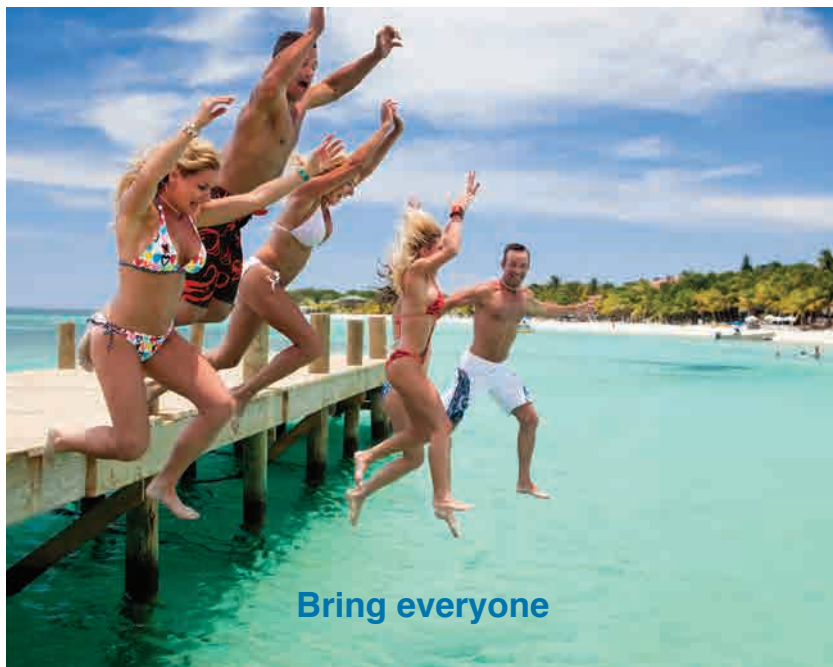
## Hotel Sofitel Phnom Penh Phokeethra

The US\$70 million Sofitel Phnom Penh Phokeethra, which had its grand opening in March last year, is the first five-star property to open in Phnom Penh since the early 1990s. The hotel offers 201 rooms and suites, eight restaurants and bars, and a 1,800m<sup>2</sup> ballroom.

**Contact**  
www.sofitel.com

## Koh Rong Island

Koh Rong, an island off Sihanoukville, is another Cambodian eco-resort currently under



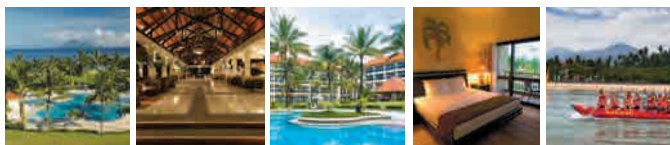
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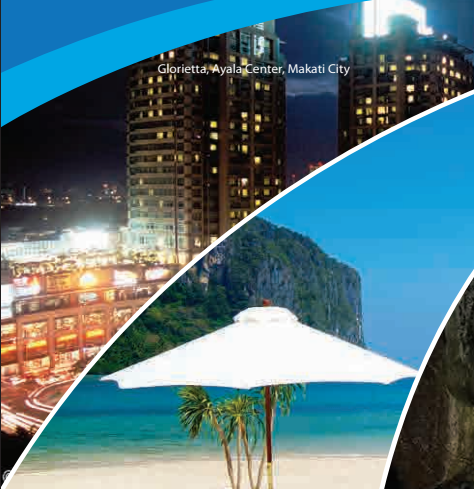
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## Thailand

# Thailand woos emerging markets

## As traditional sources slide, fast-growing newbies come to the rescue

Thailand is going all out to woo fast-growing emerging markets such as Brazil, Russia, India and China, and those with potential for growth including Indonesia and Vietnam.

Association of Thai Travel Agents president, Sisdivachr Cheewarattanaporn, said as *TTG ATF Daily* went to press that it was difficult to say when the Thai tourism industry would fully recover from the recent flooding which had shattered travellers' confidence.

However, the first markets to rebound would be China, India and Russia, provided that travel warnings were lifted and marketing campaigns launched.

China, India and Russia are among the country's fastest-growing emerging markets, according to the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT).

Despite the substantial drop in visitor numbers in November, when the floods engulfed some parts of Bangkok and threatened the centre of the capital, TAT

and industry experts agreed that these emerging markets were likely to be among the first to recover.

According to data from the Ministry of Tourism and Sports, of 15.79 million arrivals recorded from January to October 2011, the number of visitors from China surged by 64 per cent to 1.45 million, India rose 19.75 per cent to 784,950 visitors and Russia jumped 69.71 per cent to 732,417 visitors.

The number of visitors from India was expected to reach the one million mark in 2011, however, this target was affected by the recent flooding, said Sansern Ngaorungsi, TAT's deputy governor international marketing for Asia and the South Pacific.

He said Thailand would receive some 900,000 visitors from India in 2011 and, provided that the market rebounded by the second quarter of 2012, arrivals should hit the one million mark by the end of the year.

In a bid to further grow the Indian market, TAT had adjusted its marketing in India with different strategies for northern and southern India.

TAT's New Delhi office would ramp up online tools to target FITs and families, while the Mumbai office would continue to focus on weddings, incentives and golfers.

Latin America had been earmarked as another area with the potential to expand and compensate for sluggish growth from the traditional longhaul markets – Europe, the UK and US.

TAT is eyeing an annual growth of 20 per cent in the number of arrivals from Latin America, especially Argentina and Brazil, between 2011 and 2012.

Juthaporn Rerngronasa, TAT deputy governor of international marketing for Europe, Africa, the Middle East and the Americas, said the NTO's aggressive push for Latin American visitors included its first-ever participation

at the Associação Brasileira de Agências de Viagens 2011 travel trade show in Brazil in October, where a 24m<sup>2</sup> country booth featuring four Thai tour operators – Travex, Destination Asia, CBS Travel Asia and NCT Asia Tour – was on display.

Juthaporn said TAT was promoting Thailand in Latin America through Qatar Airways' Buenos Aires-São Paulo-Doha-Phuket service. This is on top of direct flights to other South-east Asian destinations offered by carriers such as Singapore Airlines and Malaysia Airlines.

TAT is also appointing a representative in Brazil.

She said the NTO would continue to maintain its presence in traditional markets although growth for 2012 over 2011 was expected to be just around five per cent for the US and Europe.

The key message to help maintain these markets would centre on Thailand's value-for-money tourism products and services. – **Sirima Eamtako**

## China booms

# 64

Percentage increase in arrivals from China up to October 2011



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# Soaring on high spirits

Patrick Tan gets a taste of the excitement during the first day of business sessions



Sunshine Borneo Tours & Travel's Anthony Chieng and Eric Ignacio, Brunei Tourism's Salinah Salleh and Sheikh Jamaluddin Sheikh Mohamed, Royal Brunei Airlines' Alirahim Haji Abdul Rani, Freme Travel Services Brunei's Sugumaran Nair, Royal Brunei Airlines' Balachandran C and Brunei Tourism's Ak Zulkhairi Pg Abdul Razak



Delta Incentive Travel Services Hungary's Bernadett Budán, Delta Travel Group Hungary's Gabor Lukacs, Park Hotel Group Hong Kong's Pauline Cheung and Park Hotel Group Singapore's Cindy Goo



Mega Travel Bulgaria's Lidia Ivanova and Vietnam Star Golf's Bui Nguyen Tam Dang



InterContinental Hotels Group's Mark Flower (centre, back row) leads his team from the region



Starwood Hotels and Resorts' Dominik Trimborn, Sheraton Mustika Yogyakarta Resort & Spa's Erni Kusmastuti, Sheraton Nha Trang Hotel & Spa's Debbie Chee, Starwood Hotels and Resorts' Fiona Hagan, Le Meridien Angkor's Lee Ng and Starwood Hotels and Resorts' Bob Lunnon



Allamanda Laguna Phuket's Chamaiporn Mulcome, Best Western International Asia & Middle East's Tantip Santisaowapak, Transhotel Spain's Teresa Bustos, Trinidad Hospitality Malaysia's Patricia Yap and Best Western International Asia & Middle East's Christopher Yong



Laguna Beach Resort Phuket's Lawrence Oh, Angsana Laguna Phuket's Paritchawan Kraiponrak, Banyan Tee Phuket's Nuttakorn Jaikaew and Laguna Phuket's Prapa Hemmin



Hyatt Regency Yogyakarta's Nurcahyadhi, Hyatt Regency Hua Hin's Maria Sitanggang, Grand Hyatt Bali's Iin Sari, Hyatt Regency Yogyakarta's Vivie Elizabeth and Bali Hyatt's Wismaya Sudantia



Department of Tourism Philippines' Ramon R Jimenez (centre) and his team show up in full force



# Smiles of ATF 2012

Manado



# Mart hits the ground running

The showfloor heats up as sellers parade their wares from vibrantly-dressed booths. By **Patrick Tan**



Hertz International GSA Vietnam's Grace Lumowa, Sime Darby Rent A Car Malaysia's Michelle Phua and Hertz Asia Pacific Singapore's Doris Goh



Ministry of Tourism Malaysia's Ng Yen Yen (centre) rouses the Malaysian delegation with a cheer



Nusa Dua Beach Hotel & Spa Bali's William Santoso and Rubianti



Amara Singapore's Winnie Chew, Geomedia Consulting Germany's Stefan Kraft, GTA Singapore's Alex Tan and Amara Sanctuary Resort Sentosa Singapore's Frankie Lam



Pacto Indonesia's Umberto Cadamuro and Alessio Manganaro, DBA & Sons Travel & Tours UAE's T Prahlad and Pacto Indonesia's Rika Larasati



LVS International (Malaysia)'s Veronika Tarigan and Marina Bay Sands Singapore's Hannah Nguyen



Far East Hospitality Singapore's Winston Koh, Chariot Travels Singapore's Ajambar Basnet, Oasia Hotel Singapore's Rebecca Wee and Landmark Village Hotel Singapore's Kennice Kam



Bali Garden Beach Resort's Adrian Forsyth, Mirage Resorts Indonesia's Yuliani Normauli and Bali Garden Beach Resort's Ida Bagus Punia



Nikko Bali Resort and Spa's Made Sudana and Joy Cartwright Gartner



Furama Hotels International's Ivan Chan, Messe Berlin's Katrin Thieme, Furama Hotels International's Vione Tan, Furama Jomtien Beach Pattaya's Tatcha Riddhimat, Furama Bukit Bintang Kuala Lumpur's Yvonne Liew, FuramaXclusive Villas & Spa Ubud Bali's Ramia Adnyana and Furama Chiang Mai's Wirachart Watthaphanich



Padma Hotel Bandung's Yoggi Angga Permana and Padma Resort Bali at Legian's Yani Suwanda

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For hundreds of years, Indonesian women have understood and willingly taken what nature offers, that flowers, fruits, roots, barks, and leaves are nature's secret to good health and good looks. Indonesia's tropical spa experience celebrates nature's glory and power to rejuvenate the soul and achieve a harmony between inner and outer beauty.

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# TTG

A S I A



ASEAN TOURISM FORUM

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# 4



**ADMIRING FROM AFAR  
WON'T GET YOU HERE**

## HOTEL

### How many hotels can claim to be the icon of their city?

With 2,561 luxurious rooms and suites spread over 55 floors, most overlooking the city or the South China Sea, Marina Bay Sands is largest and most spectacular hotel in Singapore.



## MICE

### Never business as usual, but business done right

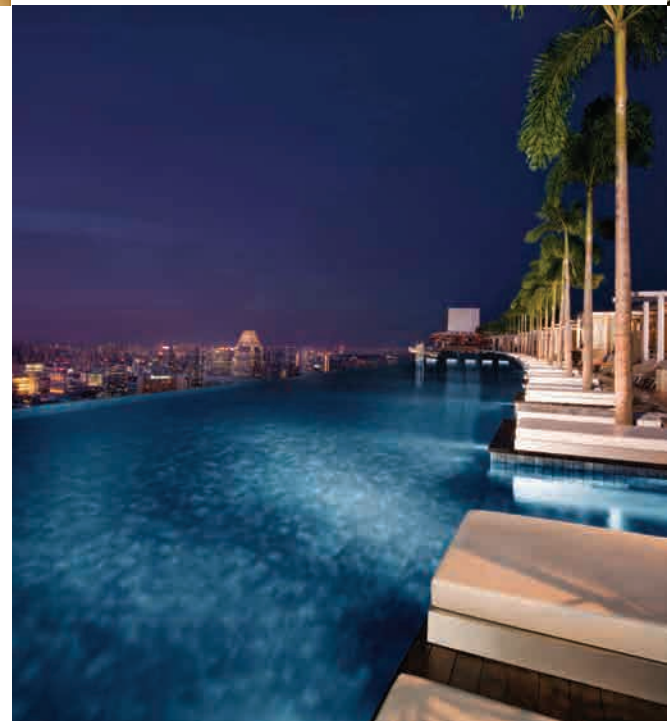
With 1.3 million square feet of configurable space spread over five levels, the Sands Expo and Convention Center is Singapore's largest and most versatile. It is home to Southeast Asia's largest ballroom, and can comfortably accommodate 45,000 delegates, 2,000 exhibition booths, and 250 meetings.



## THE SHOPPES AT MARINA BAY SANDS

### A glamorous gathering

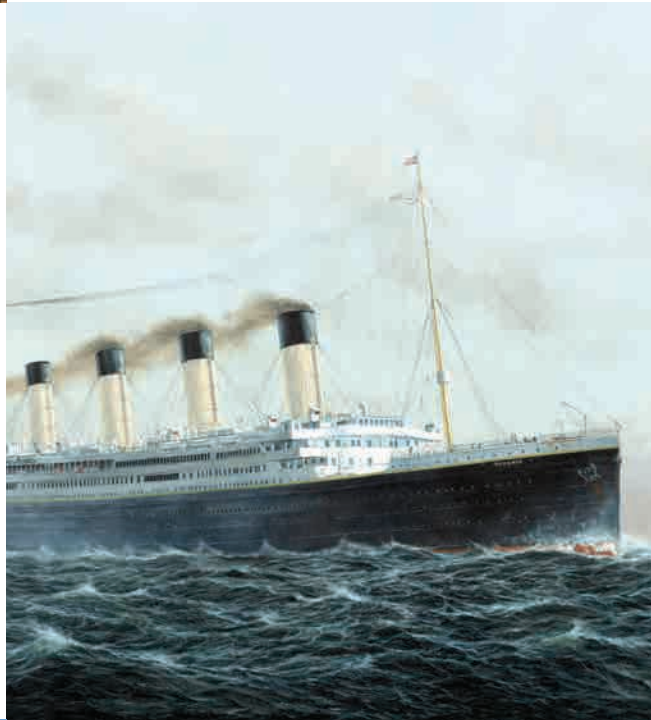
Flagship designer boutiques, new concept stores and the world's first Louis Vuitton Island Maison, complimented by a variety of bars and cafés in more than 800,000 square feet of shopping haven. The Event Plaza on the waterfront comes alive every evening with Wonder Full, the largest Light and Water Spectacular in Southeast Asia.



## TITANIC: THE ARTIFACT EXHIBITION

### Set foot into the legendary RMS Titanic

No other maritime disaster has captured the imagination of the public like that of the Titanic, with more than 25 million tickets sold to date, is one of the most successful exhibitions in the world. Marvel at 275 actual artifacts, 14 of which have never been seen before, recovered from the wreck 3,800 meters below the Atlantic Ocean.



## BANYAN TREE SPA & FITNESS CLUB

### Be embraced by the Tree of Life

Rejuvenate yourself at the 1,213 square meter urban spa located 55 floors above, which offers a suite of distinctive treatments in 15 uniquely designed rooms with panoramic views.



## CRYSTAL PAVILIONS

### Be transported to other worlds

Two underwater tunnels via The Shoppes at Marina Bay Sands® take visitors to the two Crystal Pavilions that appear to float on the Bay. Louis Vuitton Island Maison, the first of its kind in the world, occupies the northern pavilion, while Hollywood super club and lounge Avalon and Pangaea in the south is where the party of a new era begins.





## ASIA'S DINING DESTINATION

### Let your palate take flight

7 celebrity chef restaurants, a bevy of fine dining options, specialty cafés, waterfront and alfresco settings, as well as popular street eats from around the region make for infinite epicurean experiences at Asia's Dining Destination.



## SANDS SKYPARK

### The Crown Jewel of Marina Bay Sands

Stretching further than the Eiffel Tower laid down, longer than four and a half A380 jumbo jets, Sands SkyPark® boasts an impressive 12,400 square meters of lush tropical garden and features the world's largest and highest outdoor infinity pool. The Observation Deck rests on a gravity-defying cantilever, one of the largest of its kind in the world.



## ARTSCIENCE MUSEUM

### Moshe Safdie's lotus-inspired architecture is an exhibit in itself

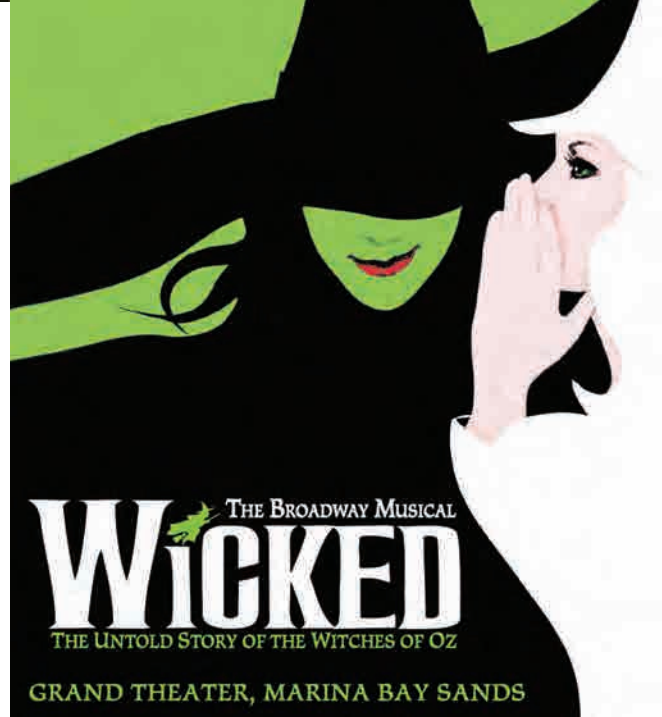
Coined "the welcoming hand of Singapore" to visitors from all over the world, the iconic ArtScience Museum has over 50,000 square feet of galleries that host marquee exhibitions by leading collections and museums around the world.



## THEATERS

### WICKED The Broadway Musical

Seen by 30 million people and winner of 35 major awards, WICKED has broken every box office record around the world, making it one of the most successful shows in theater history. Having opened to a sell-out crowd in December 2011, and for a limited time only in 2012, be transported into the magical atmosphere of the Land of Oz.



## WATER TAXIS

### All roads lead to Marina Bay Sands, but why settle for the conventional one?

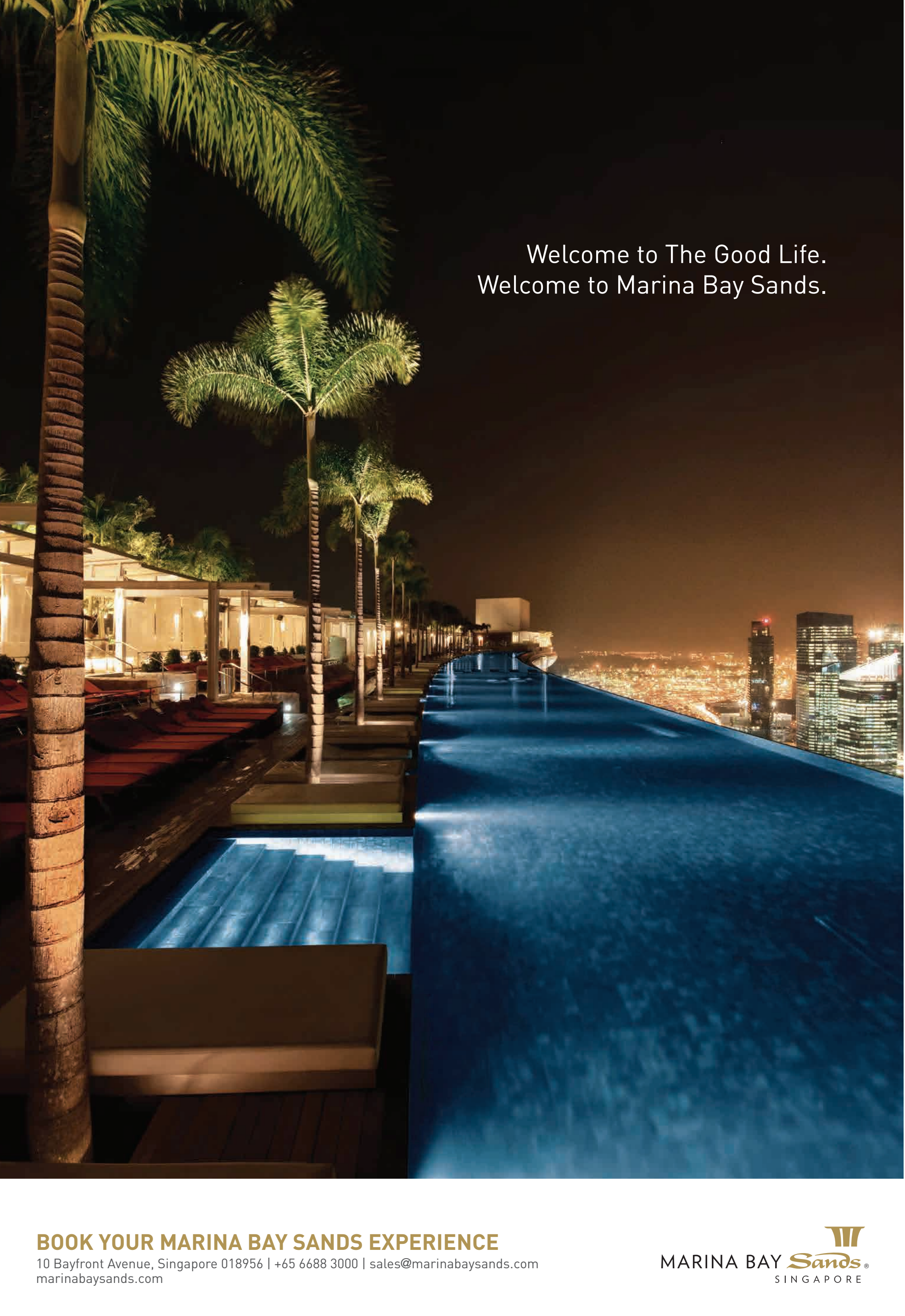
Take the scenic route via Water Taxis, operating every 15 minutes, daily from 9am till the last service at 10pm, with ticket prices starting at S\$4.



## MEET THE MARINA BAY SANDS SALES TEAM TODAY

ATF 2012 Booth G16





Welcome to The Good Life.  
Welcome to Marina Bay Sands.

**BOOK YOUR MARINA BAY SANDS EXPERIENCE**

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