



ATF 2013
January 22, 2013
Vientiane, Laos

Europe holds up for now

Buyers and sellers observe generally heartening trend, especially from FITs

By Xinyi Liang-Pholsena and Mimi Hudoyo

DESPITE the uncertain global economy, business from Europe into the region is still on an upward trajectory, with buyers and sellers reporting growth in FITs and small groups.

Pham Ha, founder & CEO, Luxury Travel Vietnam, said: "Our UK market is doing well for the FIT, small group and special interest segments, posting a 30 per cent increase from 2011 to 2012. The robust growth from the UK is also partly driven by the launch of Vietnam Airlines' thrice-weekly flights from Gatwick to Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City in December 2011.

"At the same time, our German business rose 25 per cent from 2011 to 2012, led by FITs, couples and multi-generational family segments."

Carlo Fossati, MICE manager, Periplo Viaggi Italy, added: "Our business to South-east Asia is going strong, especially for Vietnam and Myanmar, as we notice that Italians are starting to move

away from established destinations like Thailand and Bali.

"Growth to Asia was stagnant in 2011, but picked up in 2012 with a 15 per cent rise. This year, I expect the trend to continue, probably about 10 per cent growth."

Volume from non-traditional markets is also climbing. Kauno Piligrimas Lithuania director, Juozas Pekis, anticipates five to 10 per cent growth for 2013. "We

still see growth to Thailand, and we plan to expand and combine it with Cambodia and Laos this year. Most of our market is FITs," he said.

Heldur Allese, chairman, Fiestta Reisid Travel Agency Estonia, said: "We are still seeing strong demand for this region, with a 15 per cent increase in business from 2011 to 2012, although we expect slightly lesser growth this year. Thailand and Bali remain

the top destinations in South-east Asia for Estonians, who are generally fond of spa and wellness as well as golf tourism."

However, not all inbound operators had good news to share, one of them being Panorama Destination Indonesia, whose bulk of European traffic consists of group series from the Netherlands and Eastern Europe.

"The European market does not seem to be picking up this year," said managing director, Raka Ramayana.

Luxury Travel Vietnam's Pham Ha also spotted some worrying signs. He said: "Probably due to European travellers exercising more caution in spending, we observed that the booking time has shortened from a year to just six or three months ahead, with even last-minute bookings occasionally. European FITs are also cutting back on their time in Vietnam from two weeks to 10 days, while they are opting to stay in less expensive properties, from five- to four-star or top luxury to deluxe luxury hotels."

Viewpoint How are your European markets doing?



"It will be good if we can maintain last year's figure. What we have been doing

since last year is to diversify our markets to Asia, especially Vietnam and Sri Lanka."

Raka Ramayana
Managing director
Panorama Destination Indonesia



"Our UK market posted a 30 per cent increase from 2011 to 2012...and our German business rose 25 per cent from 2011 to 2012."

Pham Ha
Founder & CEO
Luxury Travel Vietnam

Welcome to TRAVEX

With a graceful snip of the ribbon yesterday evening, Laos' vice prime minister, Asang Laoly, declared ATF TRAVEX 2013 open. He was joined by tourism ministers from ASEAN member countries. Held at Lao ITECC in Vientiane, Laos from January 22-24, the event will showcase the region's latest and best tourism products.



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China beams spotlight on SE Asia

A SERIES of programmes has been lined up in 2013 by the ASEAN-China Centre (ACC) in Beijing, reflecting China's intention to accelerate efforts in driving Chinese outbound traffic to South-east Asia.

ACC secretary general, Ma Mingqiang, told *ATF Daily*: "Some 90 per cent of Chinese travel to Europe, the US, Japan and South Korea, but only about 11 per cent head to South-east Asia. There is obviously still a lot of growth potential for this

region."

He added: "Chinese tourists spent US\$7.2 billion in Europe during the last Lunar New Year holidays. Why should Chinese tourists go all the way to Europe when the same luxury products they desire can be found in Singapore and Malaysia too?"

The centre's strategy will employ a multi-pronged approach, with an emphasis on generating awareness through the media.

He said: "We will air two 45-minute documentaries on the

10 ASEAN countries on China's TV channels; one will highlight each country's cuisine while the other will focus on tourist attractions. We will roll out news clips as a prelude to the documentaries.

"At Wangfujing (building in Beijing), which sees 310,000 visitors daily, we will have a tourism exhibition during the upcoming Labour Day holiday."

A travel guidebook highlighting cultural norms and social etiquette in South-east Asia, and

containing travel tips and emergency contacts in each ASEAN destination will also be produced for Chinese travellers.

A trial version of an ACC website, rolled out last August to offer tourism-related news and information pertaining to South-east Asia, will go live within the next two months.

With these initiatives in place, Ma hopes that Chinese traffic to South-east Asia will break the 10 million mark in 2013, having reached 8.8 million last year.

Welcoming ACC's ramped-up focus on the region, Saly Phimphith, director general,

tourism marketing department, Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism, Laos, said: "I hope (ACC's efforts) will drive the middle- and high-end segments to Laos, as Chinese tourists to Laos are generally lower-spending compared to Europeans."

Tourism Authority of Thailand's deputy director Asia and South Pacific market, Sansern Ngaorungsi, added that ACC's efforts in helping ASEAN's private sector to better understand the behaviour of Chinese tourists had led to higher Chinese arrivals each year. — Xinyi Liang-Pholsena

Joint visa gets slow start

Benefits of Thai-Cambodian visa limited; Vietnam visa hike a concern

By Xinyi Liang-Pholsena

The implications of the Thailand-Cambodia joint visa, which finally took effect on December 27, 2012, are not as far-reaching as expected.

India and China are among the 35 countries eligible for this new visa scheme, which allows tourists to spend up to 60 days each in Thailand and Cambodia without having to apply for separate visas.

Jack Bartholomew, general manager, Khiri Travel Cambodia, said: "With this joint visa policy, it will save our Indian clients the trouble of applying twice, as they only need to get the visa from the Thai or Cambodian embassy, and just pay the amount upon arrival."

"Furthermore, this joint visa will help clients to see Cambodia as a more accessible destination, and I foresee a trend of clients adding Cambodia onto their main holidays in Thailand."

Tourism Council of Thailand president, Piyaman Tejapaibul, added: "Only 20 nationalities still need a visa to visit Thailand. But this joint visa can potentially create a win-win situation for both Cambodia and Thailand, especially since China and India are the biggest source markets to benefit from this joint visa."

However, Asian Trails' manager for the



Piyaman: China and India boost

China market, Grace Chen, was more ambivalent about the benefits. "We haven't seen any impact so far. Our MICE clients from China tend to stay only five to six days in Thailand, so it's unlikely they will extend their trips to Cambodia."

"Unlike Western tourists who spend two weeks or more in South-east Asia, the Chinese prefer spending that amount of time on longhaul destinations such as Europe and the US instead."

The cost of applying for the joint visa also makes it unattractive to travellers from the West, most of whom already enjoy visa exemptions to Thailand, pointed out Simon Sweet, director of sales, Footsteps in Style.

He explained: "For instance, a British traveller may incur US\$15 to send his passport by special post to the Cambodian embassy in the UK and another US\$20 for the visa fee, which makes it US\$35 altogether. Compare that to coming straight to Thailand, where a British national already enjoys a visa waiver and only pays US\$20 (for a visa on arrival) when he en-

ters Cambodia. What we want to see is no visa charges for Cambodia."

For some, a two-country visa is also not enough of a drawcard. Maeve Nolan, product & operations manager of Backyard Travel, said: "Only a regional visa that includes Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia would be of significant value."

Furthermore, DMCs *ATF Daily* spoke to said a bigger worry in the area of regional itineraries was the recently increased visa fee for Vietnam. Fees for single-entry visas for foreigners were hiked to US\$45 from US\$25 from January 1, 2013, while those for multiple-entry visas also went up.

This would jeopardise any possible benefit from the Thai-Cambodian visa, said Asian Trails deputy managing director, Claudio Kellenberger.

A general manager of a DMC in Vietnam added: "Overseas agents are surprised at why such an increase was introduced instead of what has been discussed for many years of facilitating access, as well as an ASEAN or a Thailand-Cambodia-Vietnam visa...Everyone would have welcomed the increase if it was tied to a simplification of procedures."

Bach Tran, general manager – Vietnam, Buffalo Tours, agreed. "Thailand and Cambodia have introduced a joint visa,

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which makes it easier for travel, whereas Vietnam is doing the reverse and making it harder for tourists to come," he said.

However, Tran acknowledged that it was still too early to measure the impact on business at this stage.



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Numbers that matter

1,581 The total number of delegates, comprising exhibitors, buyers and media representatives, attending ATF 2013 in Vientiane, Laos.

490 The number of exhibiting booths from 354 companies and properties across the 10 ASEAN countries. The Thai delegation has the largest representation on the show floor, with 125 booths.

81 The number of booths taken by corporate exhibitors at the show.

470 The number of buyers attending, hailing from 56 countries/territories. The show welcomes new buyers from markets including Argentina, Bangladesh and Taiwan.

52 The percentage of buyers from the Asia-Pacific region. This is followed by Europe (39.3 per cent), the US (6.4 per cent), Africa (1.3 per cent) and the Middle East (one per cent).

141 The number of media representatives covering ATF 2013.

UNWTO maps action plan for ASEAN

By S Puvaneswary

UNWTO has lined up several initiatives with ASEAN governments for 2013, with a focus on areas such as river-based tourism, travel facilitation in Indonesia and a code of ethics for the tourism industry.

According to UNWTO regional director for Asia and the Pacific, Xu Jing, the organisation is now in talks with the governments of ASEAN nations to run a joint study on river-based tourism in South-east Asia to highlight the importance of this segment.

In the next quarter, UNWTO and the Indonesian government will convene over travel facilitation issues in the country and explore various models on how further improvements in travel visa and air access can contribute to job creation.

Plans are also underway to work with Malaysia's Ministry of Tourism to bring the World Tourism Conference to Malacca in 4Q2013, an event that will address ecotourism issues in the world and be used as a platform to showcase the country's success in tourism.

Xu, who was in Vientiane for the Meet-

ing of the ASEAN Tourism Ministers on January 20, told *ATF Daily* that the adoption of the UNWTO Global Code of Ethics for Tourism was also on the list of to-dos this year. The code is designed to guide the development of tourism in a way that maximises the socio-economic benefits of the sector, while minimising negative impact on the environment and cultural heritage.

"We are pleased that ASEAN countries at the ministerial level have started the process of adopting the code," said Xu, adding that the move signifies a political commitment at the highest level to treat the tourism sector in a responsible way.

Meanwhile, UNWTO plans to deliver open letters to the heads of government in Laos and Cambodia this year to support the *UNWTO/World Travel & Tourism Council Global Leaders for Tourism* campaign, which calls on country leaders to position tourism as a national policy on their social and economic agenda. So far, these open letters have been accepted by the governments of countries such as Brunei, the Philippines and Myanmar.

Indonesia taps shariah tourism niche

With a ready pool of halal products, the destination is looking to grow arrivals from Muslim markets

By Mimi Hudoyo

Indonesia's Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy is hoping to capture a wider market through shariah tourism.

Indonesia's deputy minister of tourism and creative economy, Sapta Nirwandar, said: "The demand for shariah tourism is huge, and Indonesia has the products to offer but we have not packaged them in such a way that they meet the needs of shariah-conscious travellers."

He added that the ministry had formed a working group with the National Shariah Board which issues halal certification in Indonesia, academics and the tourism industry to set up guidelines for products, human resource training and marketing.

Singapore-based halal travel specialist Crescentrating CEO, Fazaal Bahardeen, said: "The world's Muslim population is currently 1.6 billion, representing 23 per cent of the world's population. The number is estimated to reach 2.2 billion by 2030...and 50 per cent are below 25 years old."

Crescentrating & DinarStandard's Global Muslim Lifestyle Tourism Market 2012 Report showed that Muslim travel expenditure in 2011 totalled US\$126 billion, representing 12.3 per cent of global outbound tourism spend.

"The expenditure's annual growth rate is expected to be at 4.8 per cent from 2012 to 2020, higher than the global average growth rate of 3.8 per cent for the same period," Fazaal said, adding that the expenditure is expected to hit US\$192 billion – 13.4 per cent of the global total.

Indonesia's Shariah Hotel and Restaurant Association chairman, Riyanto Sofyan, said the domestic market was equally sizeable. "The number of domestic tourists in 2011 was 239 million trips with an economic turnover of Rp158 trillion

(US\$16.6 billion). With 88 per cent of our population being Muslim, the number of trips could reach 210 million," he said.

Travel consultants welcome the new

initiative by the tourism ministry. Focus Indonesia general manager, Anthony Johannes, said travellers who sought such products would have more choices.

Marintur executive director, Ismail

Ali, said: "We need to start small, by expanding the number of halal-certified products, having clear labels for such products, then promoting it to specific markets (with Muslim populations)."

Muslim-friendly hotel chain casts eye on South-east Asia

BIZTEL, which manages the De Palma Group of Hotels in Malaysia, plans to expand its network of Muslim-friendly properties beyond its home base.

It is currently exploring opportunities in Myanmar, Jakarta, Bali and Manila, and properties may be established either through joint venture or franchise. These hotels will carry the De Palma brand.

Mohd Ilyas, Biztel managing director and De Palma Group of Hotels group general manager, sees Muslim-friendly hotels as a niche that caters to Muslim travellers who want to continue their religious obligations while abroad.

The current collection of five De Palma hotels in Malaysia are three-star properties, all offering halal food in their restaurants, as well as common prayer areas with Friday prayers led by an Imam. There is also a floor dedicated to Muslim guests, and all guestrooms have toilet facilities for ablutions and furniture is arranged to create a space for prayers.

De Palma hotels overseas would boast these facilities too, said Mohd Ilyas who noted that the average occupancy across all hotels rose from 50 per cent in 2007 to 73 per cent last year, following its Muslim-friendly positioning since 2006. – S Puvanewary

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India moves to seal closer ties with ASEAN

New tourism website launched; amended MoU signed

By Shekhar Niyogi

ASEAN and dialogue partner India are forging ahead with more tourism exchange initiatives in 2013, even as their respective ministers yesterday signed the protocol to amend an earlier inked MoU that promises to strengthen tourism cooperation between the two parties.

Following last year's MoU signing at ATF 2012 in Manado, Indonesia, there was an underlying security concern by several ASEAN countries with regards to the aspects on data sharing and transfer of information.

The MoU was thus tweaked by inserting a new clause that allows any ASEAN member state or India to undertake appropriate steps or consultations to ensure that its rights and interests are safeguarded with respect to its national security, national and public interest or public order, protection of intellectual property rights, confidentiality and secrecy of documents, information and data.

Also agreed upon yesterday was the launch of the ASEAN-

India tourism website (www.indiaasean.org) as a platform to jointly promote destinations.

With 2.7 million tourist arrivals in ASEAN in 2012, India is bullish about doubling the number as soon as possible.

month.

Naresh Kumar, second secretary, Indian High Commission in Vientiane, said: "Ways are being considered to improve greater connectivity between India and ASEAN by air, sea and road."

"This MoU is an understanding between ASEAN and India to share information and data, promote tourism, and improve visa norms."

Anand Kumar
Joint secretary
Ministry of Tourism, India

Anand Kumar, joint secretary, Ministry of Tourism, India, said: "We are already offering visa on arrival to seven ASEAN nations, and will soon ease visa norms further."

He added that India had also invited ASEAN delegates to the International Buddhist Conclave in Varanasi and Bodhgaya last year and the International Tourism Mart in Guwahati this

Among the other initiatives in 2012 are India's sending of faculty members of hospitality institutes to Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia, the hosting of tour operators, travel consultants and media on trips, and the 8,000km ASEAN-India car rally.

The 11th meeting of the ASEAN-India Tourism Working Group will be held in Myanmar in June this year.

Keeping the fun flowing

By Xinyi Liang-Pholsena

HAVING garnered worldwide attention for the successful *It's more fun in the Philippines* campaign launched in January 2012, the challenge for the country now is to keep the momentum going, said Ramon R Jimenez, secretary of the Philippine Department of Tourism (DoT).

He said: "We have succeeded in inspiring a lot of people, not least of all the Filipinos, as well as the airlines, hotels, investors, the government (sector) and even the press.

"The prospect for the Philippines is bright, but it's not without problems. The challenge is to keep the momentum going as we are waiting for key infrastructure – new hotels, airports and roads – to be put in place."

Having received "significantly more resources", the *It's more*

fun in the Philippines campaign will be more specific, zeroing in on activities like scuba diving, festivals, dance and music, and cuisine, with fresh executions set to be rolled out on the TV and Internet, Jimenez revealed.

Meanwhile, the DoT is working to ease visa restrictions for India and Myanmar, as well as group travel from China.

In addition, legislation is expected to be passed soon to eliminate the common carrier and gross billing taxes for foreign airlines, while the authorities are reviewing air seat arrangements with key partner countries such as South Korea, according to Jimenez.

Having surpassed the four million mark for international visitors last year, the DoT targets to cross the five million mark by the end of this year.

Banjaran guns for more Asian business

THE Banjaran Hot Springs Retreat in Ipoh, Malaysia will deploy a more aggressive marketing stance this year to snag more guests from Asia.

According to Lybanor P Godio, resort manager, 60 per cent of guests are from Malaysia. The resort is particularly keen on Singapore, Greater China and Japan, source markets singled out for their "air accessibility and inter-

est in wellness programmes".

"By getting a larger mix of foreign guests, we hope to improve our yield and occupancy as foreign guests tend to stay longer, from three nights to a week, while locals spend an average of one or two nights," she said.

Fam trips for the media and trade buyers, as well as new guest programmes will be rolled out this year. – S Puvaneswary

Delegates roll up their sleeves

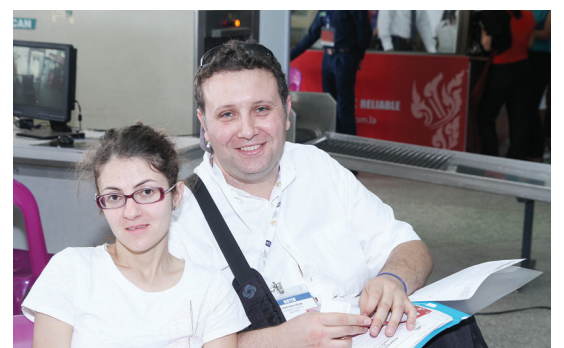
Patrick Tan hits the registration area as buyers and sellers gear up for busy days at TRAVEX



LD Tourism Promotion Laos' Joy Thid Thaloun and Thamrong Loysak



Vidotour Indochina Travel Vietnam's Nguyen Xuan Ky, Nguyen Thien Phuc, Nguyen Ngoc Thu and Nguyen Khac Le Thi



E-Travel Club Bulgaria's Snezha Marinova and Ivelin Tsvetkov



Lily Travel Singapore's David Chua



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With great pleasure

Meeting delegates are demanding more playtime, causing a blurring of business with pleasure or leisure – giving birth to the word **bleasure** – and forcing event organisers and hoteliers to look at work-life balance seriously. **Raini Hamdi** reports



Meet and unwind at Crowne Plaza Phuket Panwa Beach Resort

The quest for work-life balance among today's road warriors has crept into the meeting sector, where providing wellness to delegates has become a serious thinking point of meeting planners and hoteliers instead of an afterthought.

Research by at least three chains shows that 'bleisure' or 'bleasure' – a mixing or blurring of business with leisure or pleasure – is a real phenomenon.

Hilton HHonors' survey, for instance, shows one in three UK employees invites partners and families along on business trips, and a high percentage of employers (45 per cent) is sympathetic and supportive of staff creating their own bleasure stays.

Even Chinese travellers today are "not shy" to mix business with pleasure, a Wyndham Hotel Group survey shows. More than two-thirds of Chinese travellers (67 per cent) say they bring a spouse

or a family member along on business trips and 59 per cent extend business trips to include leisure time.

InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) in South-east Asia notes a 50 per cent rise in bleasure bookings among meeting delegates, who add on a leisure stay pre- or post-meeting. Not only that, it claims that the bleasure phenomenon is also changing the way people meet: resorts are becoming a more popular destination for business travel and meetings, less time is being spent cooped up in the boardroom (reduced to an average of a day, with as many as two or three days spent in break-out sessions), and more time is being spent on programmes that include working with social and environmental charities. IHG said around 25 per cent of enquiries required at least a half day be set aside for delegates to enjoy the spa or local excursions.

As a result of these findings, IHG is promoting blue-sky thinking and self-improvement meetings, according to Mark Flower, director of commercial, IHG South-east Asia.

Changing supply

Hotels and venues are rewiring to meet bleasure aspirations, with new properties having a better go at this.

The Crowne Plaza Phuket Panwa Beach Resort, for example, is launching a meeting room with its very own golf putting green.

The best spaces are also going to meetings, no longer in the basement like before. An example is The Summit, a meeting room at the top of a mountain offered by InterContinental Danang Sun Peninsula Resort.

The design of meeting rooms too is being redefined. The new Pullman Bangkok Silom Hotel G, for instance, has a meeting space called The Gallery, done in a New York-style art gallery. Apart from its conceptual decor and minimalist furnishing, the room offers plenty of daylight and is peppered with iPads for delegates. "Clients want more flexibility, reactivity, multi-tasking and connectivity, which impacts the interior design and even the service," said Xavier Louyot, Pullman's vice president global marketing.

Integrated resorts (IRs) such as Marina Bay Sands (MBS) Singapore see themselves as inherent venues for bleasure, due to the multitude of pleasure options available – spa, entertainment, art, F&B, theatre, casino, etc. And while delegates can enjoy these at leisure, IRs add value to meetings with group ideas, such as the Dine Around at MBS, which leverages on MBS' six celebrity chef restaurants. Delegates start with cocktails and canapés at the first restaurant, then move on to subsequent restaurants for starters, mains, desserts and digestifs.

"This allows clients to have a leisurely culinary adventure that they may not normally get to enjoy on their own time," said John Mims, senior vice president, world-

wide sales and resort marketing Asia, Las Vegas Sands Corp.

"The expectations of business travel have changed. More and more, pleasure is a priority than ever before and they expect a higher level of comfort and service while on business. Being seasoned travellers, they also expect to be surprised by new and innovative offerings that they have not come across in other destinations – comparing, contrasting and making mental notes of what they like," he said.

Soft?

But does bleasure put meetings in danger of becoming soft, pandering to a desire for more playtime?

Corporate chieftains such as David Levitt, president talent development of Ogilvy & Mather Worldwide, who organised O&M's Asia-Pacific conference in Kyoto recently, said the success of a meeting still lies fundamentally in how well it has been thought out by the company.

"A lot of meetings follow a formula that is outdated and predictable. Because they lack a real set of tangible, aspirational meeting objectives, some well-thought out theatricality and sufficient investment in the areas that matter, disappointment can set in early. There is usually too much input/talking at, top-down, death by powerpoint and long-winded status updates, combined with a lack of real participation (not to be confused with insufficiently planned and thought-through break-out sessions). Most meetings also suffer from over-packed, crammed agendas that would benefit from being ruthlessly pruned and focused. And finally, not enough imagination applied to breaks, meals and fun – this is not about cost, it's about imagination.

"We have learned the hard way that meetings need to be given a serious amount of careful thought well in advance – not simply because of the cost but to define what their purpose, motivational benefits and value are, and how to be able to sustain the momentum and commitments afterwards. All our significant face-to-face meetings receive a great deal of work in the planning stages."

That said, Levitt agrees that his meetings are not all work and no play. "There needs to be reward in several forms," he said. Asked if hotels were pushing the work-life balance too far, he said: "We ourselves are mindful of trying to get this right. I suspect some try to do so more than others, especially if it is a resort location which, by the way, is a pointless location selection by meeting planners if all they intend to do is keep their participants in a windowless meeting room with no time to enjoy the location except for a token dinner by the pool or on the beach.

"We have learned to seriously think more about the locations we choose, why and how to ensure they are relevant to the meeting's goals and objectives and the wishes of participants."



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An expansion of B2B players in Asia is making the wholesale market more wholesome. Raini Hamdi and Gracia Chiang take a look at the competitive strategies of four players

Wholesome wholesale

TACentre

WHO Owned by Asiatravel.com Holdings Singapore, a pioneer in B2C in Asia and the only public-listed travel agency on the Singapore Stock Exchange.

PLANS Launched in Singapore, the Philippines and Hong Kong in October 2012, TACentre will be rolled out to Malaysia, Indonesia and China next. Plans are afoot to offer local language versions in-market and to offer agencies white-label marketing later on.

USP/INVENTORY Bills itself as Asia's first online wholesale system that offers not just hotels but FHTs (flight/hotel/tours) that can be booked with instant confirmation. It banks on "best rates" and "widest inventory", thanks to 17 years of local presence throughout Asia that helps it seal "real" relationships with suppliers, said vice president marketing Fred Seow. The inventory now comprises 100,000 products (including packages,

hotels, flights and tours) and the aim is to boost this to one million products by 2013. Consultants can also buy tickets to popular theme parks in Asia on TACentre, with the barcoded vouchers serving as tickets.

THUMBS UP Agencies see the instant confirmation promise as its greatest advantage. They also give the inventory, convenience, service and flexibility the thumbs up. Plus, it's free to use.

FEEDBACK Some agencies were concerned about clients' data confidentiality. As well, "instant confirmation" still depends on availability, they pointed out. Addressing the former concern, Seow said: "Transactions and communication on TACentre.com are between the travel agency and TACentre.com strictly. E-tickets and vouchers are emailed to the travel agency and not their customers... protecting the integrity of the wholesale system is of utmost importance, or else TACentre will not be sustainable in the marketplace."

Hotelbeds

WHO Part of the Accommodation & Destinations Sector of TUI Travel, Hotelbeds is now in its 10th year of operations as accommodation provider.

PLANS The Middle East and Asia-Pacific (MEAPAC) region is where it is betting its dollars on next, having established a firm footing in Europe and the Americas. It has set a target of 40 per cent growth for MEAPAC by 2015, compared with 20 per cent growth for the Americas by 2015.

It aims to increase its workforce in MEAPAC by 25 per cent by 2015, from 750 employees and 21 offices throughout the region now.

It also aims to double the hotel portfolio in the next five years, with particular focus on Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Hong Kong and Japan, and develop its distribution coverage and further expand source markets across the region, particularly in Singapore, South Korea, Japan, Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, China and the Philippines.

In the last three months of 2012, it recruited a team in South Korea and Japan to focus on forging closer ties with local hotel suppliers.

USP/INVENTORY An online accommodation database of more than 45,000 hotels from over 1,500 hotel chains and independent hotels in 147 countries.

"We invest in people, IT platforms and distribution channels. This is why we have been able to outperform the market with double-digit growth every year since the last 10 years. There may be more competition now, but our core strengths and continued investment will ensure we achieve our targeted growth of 40 per cent by 2015. With 21 offices now, you can imagine how this gives us more opportunities to have preferential rates and treatment with key partners," said Pablo Aycart, MEAPAC managing director.

He also revealed that Hotelbeds was starting to develop special services such as ticketing and excursions for Real Madrid and Barcelona team matches. In Europe, the trade can already buy such inventory with Hotelbeds, and Aycart expects that within 12 months, agencies worldwide would also be able to do so.

JacTravel

WHO An independent, privately-owned company based in the UK specialising in providing hotels online and inbound services to the travel trade. JacTravel has local operations in London, Edinburgh, Vancouver, Dubai, Barcelona, Paris, Prague, Rome and Sao Paulo. In 2011, it claims to have handled operations for more than 3,000 groups and 1.5 million FIT passengers on behalf of its trade partners.

PLANS In December 2012, JacTravel established an office in Hong Kong, led by Abba Lee who is responsible for the com-

pany's product expansion in Asia. Before that, the company appointed a head of sales for South-east Asia, Ali Jones. She is tasked with selling JacTravel's B2B booking system and XML links to its hotel inventory, which the trade can access on a net rate basis.

Since expanding to Asia in 2009, sales in the region have increased 319 per cent to £8.3 million (US\$13.4 million), with over 20 new clients. Inventory has grown to over 350 directly contracted hotels in Asia in the past three years.

USP/INVENTORY It "handpicks" its own hotels rather than contracting all hotels. Said CEO Mario Bodini: "These are boutique, independent hotels in a wide range of categories and styles, with large allocations on short releases and the best deals."

Its inventory includes over 10,000 properties in more than 550 cities. Besides zeroing in on boutique, independent hotels, Bodini said excellent customer service, and rigorous health and safety criteria for its hotels, were "potent differentiators" in the B2B market.

AdventureLink

WHO US-based adventure travel aggregator AdventureLink was established in 2006. Ninety per cent of its business is from B2B partners, which includes OTAs, leisure travel agencies and even consumer publications that want to feature adventure travel products. The company recently established a partnership with Orbitz and is in talks with Travelport to distribute its content.

PLANS Wants to enter the Asian market with a new agent interface that will be launched in the region this year, offering access to around 12,000 trips across 130 countries. It is seeking distribution partners who will provide access to the agency community in Asia, with particular interest in Thailand, Singapore and Japan.

USP/INVENTORY Calling it the "largest system in the world for booking adventure travel", founder and CEO, Kelly Tompkins, said his "well-rounded" inventory consists of land packages ranging from African safaris to cycling wine tours in France, contracted with major tour operators such as G Adventures and Intrepid Travel, as well as family-run boutique outfits. Air content will soon be available, with at least one airline already onboard.

Tompkins said: "The adventure travel market is estimated to be growing at 17 per cent a year by the Adventure Travel Trade Association. This is a US\$89 billion market, and it's being fuelled by ageing baby boomers who are looking for these types of experiential travel opportunities. However, (the market is) very fragmented...so we're trying to put all the information into one place."

THUMBS UP It offers commissions of 10-15 per cent.

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PLACES TO STAY

The Chateau Spa and Organic Wellness Resort, Pahang

The world's first organic spa and wellness resort, The Chateau is modelled after a French medieval castle, and offers a European spa experience fit for royalty.

The Banjaran Hotspings Retreat, Ipoh, Perak

The Banjaran is a 5-star retreat sanctuary consisting of 25 luxury villas offering holistic wellness and spa experiences, unequalled hospitality and distinctive Asian grace.

Seri Chenang Resort, Langkawi Island, Kedah

Seri Chenang Resort, located on an exotic island famous for its legends and breathtaking landscapes, promises to pamper guests with exceptional service and luxurious touches.

45 Lekiu Guesthouse, Melaka

Enjoy luxurious accommodation with a distinctive design sensibility dedicated to you alone. Get exclusive use of the whole premise when you check-in with 45 Lekiu Guesthouse.

Grand Hyatt Hotel, Kuala Lumpur

Expect nothing but the best at Grand Hyatt hotels from the most spectacular accommodation to the most savoury dining options to the most eye-opening entertainment.

Four Seasons Resort, Langkawi

Four Seasons Resort Langkawi presents a tranquil retreat in the Andaman Sea, where UNESCO-protected mangroves showcase labyrinthine adventures between land and sea.

PLACES TO PLAY

With over 200 courses peppering the country, it's fair to say Malaysia loves its golf. Top golf course designers like Jack Nicklaus, Arnold Palmer, Gary Player, and Greg Norman have all brought out the best features of the local environment whilst incorporating their own unique signatures in the courses located throughout Peninsular Malaysia, the nearby islands of Penang and Langkawi and further afield in Sabah and Sarawak on the island of Borneo.

Must-play courses in Malaysia include Kota Permai Golf and Country Club and Glenmarie Golf and Country Club in Selangor, Gunung Raya Golf Resort in Kedah, Clearwater Sanctuary Golf Resort in Perak, Sutera Harbour Golf and Country Club in Sabah and Kelab Golf Sarawak.

PLACES TO HEAL

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people from around the world have come to seek quality healthcare in Malaysia. With cutting-edge facilities and highly qualified specialists, it's no wonder we're ranked amongst the world's top five health tourism destinations.

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fertility treatment, and reconstructive surgery. On top of that, the Malaysian Society for Quality in Health (MSQH) accredits our private hospitals in line with internationally recognised healthcare quality standards.

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TO DO

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- Pamper yourself with a signature spa session at a city spa, or one surrounded by nature.



TO EAT

- Taste fine cuisine fit for kings at Starhill's Feast Village.
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ASEAN tops bestsellers list

In the second instalment of this intra-ASEAN travel feature, the *Daily* discovers that the ease of travel around ASEAN makes the region popular with Singaporeans and Indonesians

Singapore Familiarity with the region hurts travel firms



Hanoi's rich heritage works like a charm on Singaporean tourists

ASEAN destinations receive the bulk of travellers out of Singapore, with Malaysia leading the pack, followed by Indonesia and Thailand.

In 2011, Malaysia recorded a 2.5 per cent rise in the number of arrivals from Singapore over 2010 to 13.4 million, a figure that includes overland travel via the Johor-Singapore causeways.

In Indonesia, the volume of Singaporean visitors increased by 9.6 per cent between 2010 and 2011 to 1.5 million, while Thailand received 670,148 Singapore-

ans last year, up 11 per cent over 2010.

Said Alicia Seah, senior vice president, marketing & PR, CTC Travel: "The growth in demand for ASEAN destinations has been relatively robust since the start of 2012, particularly for Thailand and Indonesia, where bookings have risen by as much as 20 per cent so far. Cambodia is flourishing too, and so is Vietnam as well as overland trips to Malaysia. We've also noticed a definite upswing in demand for both customised and high-end travel to this region."

She added that despite CTC's strong track record in selling ASEAN tours, she fears that more Singaporeans are now eschewing package deals for independent travel arrangements when visiting the region.

"Low-cost airlines such as Jetstar, AirAsia and Scoot have played a definite part in boosting numbers to ASEAN as they have expanded their frequencies and routes to the region in the last two years, but travel consultants are gradually being left out of this loop as travellers can only book low-cost flights online."

Cheaptickets.sg CEO, Andrew Hesselink, revealed that the year-old OTA has seen "phenomenal growth" in airline bookings from Singapore to the rest of the region since the company kicked off operations, with Thailand, Indonesia and the Philippines being top destinations.

"The growth rate has been far greater than what we initially forecast. We've attributed this partly to the mounting competition between low-cost and legacy airlines, which has pushed airfares down significantly. Naturally, as fares become more af-

fordable, more Singaporeans are spurred to head abroad," he said.

"In addition, we've observed that an escalating number of younger Singaporeans are turning to OTAs to make hotel and flight bookings for ASEAN destinations, owing to the sheer convenience and choice (this channel) offers."

Likewise, Holiday Tours & Travel marketing manager, Cindy Loo, admitted that the company has seen a drop in ASEAN tour package sales.

"A large proportion of the growth (to ASEAN) we've experienced in the last 12 months stems primarily from the FIT segment. Generally, Singaporeans are very familiar with ASEAN destinations, having visited them repeatedly in the past, and therefore many see little need to join a group or packaged tour," she explained.

Loo noticed that more Singaporeans are cutting back on longhaul trips, and are instead, taking frequent short breaks to destinations closer to home. "It's a trend that we envision will persist for a while given the current perilous worldwide economic

situation. This is particularly true for younger travellers."

Despite the dire economic outlook, a majority of outbound travel consultants believe that the Singaporean demand for ASEAN destinations will stay resilient.

"Holidays are now an integral part of Singaporeans' lifestyles and hence, they are loathe to relinquish trips abroad completely," said Loo.

Travel consultants say Singaporeans spend approximately two to four days in ASEAN destinations on average, with most preferring to carry out shopping, culinary or cultural activities.

Thailand's main appeal lies in its beaches, including Phuket, Koh Samui and Krabi as well as bustling Bangkok for bargain shopping. Singaporeans also flock to Indonesia's beaches such as Bali, and heritage locations such as Borobudur in Yogyakarta. Cambodia, Myanmar and Vietnam draw Singaporeans with their rich culture and cuisine.

Singapore's overall outbound sector grew 77.7 per cent between 2001 and 2011 to reach almost eight million departures. — **Linda Haden**

Indonesia Perfect getaways are found in the region

One of Asia's fastest growing markets, Indonesia's economy expanded 6.3 per cent in 2012 and is expected to hit 6.7 per cent in 2013, predicts Bank Indonesia.

This growth has spawned a 140 million strong middle class gripped with wanderlust, up from 131 million in 2010, and attracted NTOs keen to promote their destinations to this lucrative market. Travel fairs organised by travel trade players have provided Indonesians a plethora of travel choices.

Despite this, ASEAN destina-

tions continue to be favourites of Indonesians because of the region's proximity, growing accessibility and visa-free facilities, allowing travellers to spend weekends in neighbouring cities. Singapore and Malaysia remain hot destinations, while demand for Thailand and Vietnam is rising.

WITA Tours director of sales and marketing, Rudiana, said: "Japan and (South) Korea are high in demand during the Lebaran and Christmas/New Year holiday seasons. (However), neighbouring destinations such

as Singapore and Malaysia will not lose their attractiveness because they are so accessible.

"Travellers may need to plan ahead for medium and longhaul destinations during the holiday season, but they can head to neighbouring countries for the weekend with far less planning."

Agreeing, Elok Tour managing director, Pauline Suharno, said: "Singapore continues to attract weekenders because one can get cheaper hotels. A hotel costing S\$300 (US\$246) on weekdays can offer rates of S\$220 on weekends."

She pointed out that although airfares to Bangkok were more expensive due to the longer distance, land arrangements were cheaper than in Singapore. For Rp1.5 million (US\$156), an Indonesian traveller could book a 4D/3N package including hotel and tour.

Also seeing rising demand for Thailand is Golden Rama Tours and Travel general manager, Edhi Sutadharma.

"You can get a 4D/3N holiday in Bangkok for less than Rp5 million and even under Rp4 million during the low season. It can be cheaper than holidaying in Bali," he explained.

Travel consultants report that Malaysia continues to attract families with its new Legoland and Hello Kitty Town. Although the Malaysian tourism bureau has launched a luxury travel campaign in Indonesia, Suharno has not seen much growth in the market so far.

Rudiana reasoned that as long as access remains dominated by low-cost carriers, it would be difficult to attract the top-tier markets Malaysia is targeting.

"We need to see (full-service) airlines such as Garuda Indonesia and Malaysia Airlines increase frequencies between Indonesia and Malaysia to grow such a market," he said.

Besides the "traditional" ASEAN destinations of Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand, travel consultants in Indonesia are seeing greater interest in Vietnam.

Sutadharma said: "Following the launch of Vietnam Airlines' four times weekly Jakarta-Ho Chi Minh City flight on December 2, we created 4D/3N packages priced from US\$451. Demand has been good."

The destination attracts frequent travellers looking for new places to visit, he said. — **Mimi Hudoyo**

“
Travellers may need to plan ahead for medium and long-haul destinations during the holiday season, but they can head to neighbouring countries for the weekend with far less planning.”

Rudiana
Director of sales and marketing
WITA Tours



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How sustainable is ASEAN?

In the first instalment of a three-part special report, the *Daily* hears from two passionate advocates of sustainable tourism, one hailing from the Philippines and the other, Vietnam

The Philippines Al B Linsangan III, president, Calamianes Expeditions & Ecotours

How sustainable is the Philippines in terms of tourism?

Having been identified as one of the protected ecotourism sites in the country, the Calamianes Islands, including Coron in northern Palawan, is very promising for sustainable tourism. Tourism's impact is being managed to ensure that it is kept within the destination's capacity.

The islands are more of a marine-based destination with majority of activities water-based (swimming, snorkelling, diving, etc) so we need to protect the reef and its adjacent ecosystem. One of the main efforts is to place mooring buoys to discourage anchorage on coral reefs.

We also helped to establish Marine Protected Areas and identify proper zoning (core zone, multiple use zone, restricted zone and buffer zones). This will help us to manage the area effectively while combining conservation and tourism.

Are tourists increasingly interested in/demanding sustainable tour programmes when they visit



Trekking across Kingfisher Park in Coron

Al B Linsangan III

the Philippines? What do they like?

Yes. In the case of Coron, we are now getting a good percentage of "responsible tourists" whom I call green travellers. Some programmes that we are considering in response to their interests include birdwatching, homestay with the locals, indigenous tours that include an immersion programme with tribal and indigenous communities, mangrove kayaking and nature interpretation.

But these programmes should have a low-impact base. They're not for mass tourism as we are also protecting the communities we work with.

What sustainable tourism products do you hope to see more of in the Calamianes, and why?

I would look into authentic cultural events, which we have already started with the monthly Fullmoon Festival where indigenous communities showcase their customs and traditions in the form of dances, native drumbeats and songs; and ecotourism incorporating environmental

activities such as planting mangroves in identified areas and coastal/beach clean-up.

We recently started offering a multi-day sea safari on board an expedition *banca* boat, grilling fresh catch in the glow of a campfire, and sleeping under the stars – the alluring simplicity of connecting with nature.

What do you hope to achieve in the area of sustainable tourism in 2013?

For Coron to be maintained as a destination for responsible tourism players and visitors. I hope also for Coron to establish guidelines on capacity management, green print or sustainable tourism guidelines for all builders, investors, stakeholders and visitors, as well as have sound and harmonised environmental policies, developmental approach, cultural sensitivity and balanced economic policies.

And I hope to have everyone work together to maintain the sustainability of the destination. – Rosa Ocampo

Vietnam Guilhem Cavallé, products and marketing manager, Handspan Travel

How sustainable is Vietnam in terms of tourism?

There is a positive trend but the level of tourism sustainability is still pretty low. Vietnam experienced rapid tourism growth at a time when there was a clear lack of experience and expertise in both tourism and sustainable development.

Older tourism spots were developed without consideration for sustainability. In the last 10-15 years, some have suffered irreversible environmental and socio-economic degradation. The more recent developments have benefitted from greater expertise and consideration for sustainability.

More farmers are giving up their fields to invest in tourism, but these decisions are made without a global vision of the industry. There is a risk of potential instability in the industry.

So far, developed destinations where entire communities rely on tourism alone still draw a steady flow of travellers that support the local economy.

The number of tourists in Vietnam is still growing every year, but a sudden slow-down in

arrivals to Vietnam – for political or economic reasons – or to a particular destination due to the emergence of new ones could bankrupt a bunch of businesses without any social or economic back-up.

Are tourists increasingly interested in/demanding sustainable tour programmes when they visit Vietnam? What do they like?

Very few tourists are genuinely interested in the sustainable aspects of a tour programme. Very few know Vietnam well enough to assess the sustainability of a tour.

More and more travellers are interested in getting far away from the crowds and this opens a window to the creation of new destinations, which in turn presents a unique opportunity to better manage the next phase of development.

Many people are interested in outdoor activities, cultural interaction, local life experiences, etc. Community-based tourism is getting more and more attractive. This has created opportunities for the development of responsible tourism. But what impact



As Vietnam's top destination, Halong Bay is in danger of overexploitation

Eva Schuster

will these tours have on these communities if they are not controlled and balanced?

We hope to get a sustainability certification system here soon – probably not in 2013, but soon. If no certification is implemented, we may just create one (ourselves). Having a local certification is an essential step towards a more sustainable tourism industry in Vietnam.

What sustainable tourism products do you hope to see more of in Vietnam, and why?

First and foremost, we'd like to see more sustainable cruises/tours in Halong Bay because the ecosystem is dying, the social sit-

uation of "floating communities" is terrible and the destination has been grossly overexploited.

As a result, the experience offered to travellers has also declined.

(Nonetheless), Halong Bay remains Vietnam's number one tourism asset. Without it, tourism here would probably suffer greatly.

What do you hope to achieve in the area of sustainable tourism in 2013?

First we will work on promoting alternative destinations where very few tourists visit. In some of these locations, we are the exclusive operator. All our tours

to these places are community-based and community-supportive. They all focus on human-powered outdoor activities such as bicycle tours and kayaking trips, and on raising ecological consciousness. All tours also take place in amazing natural and cultural environments.

These programmes are all sustainable, but they are not mentioned in guidebooks or Internet forums, and tourists seem to have a hard time trusting us to take them on those tours.

Finally, we will renew some of our tours to improve their sustainable performance. City tours are top of our list. – Thomas Stewart




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Thailand keeps its edge

Despite experiencing a string of crises in recent history, the Thai tourism sector maintains its resilient growth and is on track to attract even more arrivals. Reports by **Timothy France**

Following consecutive years of political strifes and devastating floods, 2012 was among the least challenging years for Thailand in the last half decade, allowing the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) to pursue stronger tourism growth.

TAT was on course to surpass its 2012 target of 20.5 million international arrivals, having received 19.7 million visitors year-to-date by November, a 13.6 per cent year-on-year increase.

Leading this growth was China, which crossed the two million mark in October and has replaced Malaysia as the source market for the first time. Overall ASEAN arrivals rose 8.67 per cent year-on-year to 5.5 million.

TAT launched a plethora of new campaign concepts through 2012, including the new *Thainess* campaigns that highlight the country's unique selling propositions such as Thai boxing, cuisine, health and wellness, culture and heritage, among others. The NTO has also reaped returns from its significant investments in digital marketing.

Commenting on the *Thailand Reunited #ThaiTales* travel blogger contest launched at WTM2012, TAT deputy governor for international marketing Europe, Africa, Middle East & America, Juthaporn Rerng-nonasa, said: "Such campaigns are very effective in spreading a more credible message via word-of-mouth marketing – by people trusted by their target audience. In countries with high Internet penetration such as the UK, this strategy is by far the best way of getting high-value returns on investment."

From *Thaispective* is a trio of short films that portray the Thai ways of life, culture and traditions from the eyes of locals liv-



Bangkok's Grand Palace

Viewpoint

How will business be in 2013?



"Hoteliers are reporting strong forward bookings, even in competitive markets like Bangkok. We are still seeing strong demand from major source markets like Germany, with a high volume of repeat travellers who see Thailand as a value for money destination."

Tobias Fischer
Director of business development
Go Vacation Thailand



"I expect to see stabilisation of tourism arrivals to Thailand and emergence of more niche products – driven mainly by private sector operators. Online players will become more dominant, and large tour operators will look to buy into DMCs to help raise standards."

Niels Steeman
Group product director
Destination Asia

ing in three different regions. The multimedia campaign was also integrated into Facebook to encourage viewers to enter a contest for free trips to see Thailand from their own perspectives.

Last year, TAT also tried to shrug off Thailand's value-for-money reputation with focused campaigns targeting high-yield and niche markets like golf, wellness, weddings and ecotourism.

TAT London hosted a 12-day trip for British tour operators to scope out sustainable tourism offerings along the bureau's specially developed Green Routes.

In September, 90 tourism facilitators, health tourism organisations and health insurance companies attended the Thailand Medical & Wellness Tourism Trade Fam Trip 2012 in Bangkok. According to the Department of Health Service Support, the number of medical tourists is expected to hit 2.5 million in 2012, up from 2.2 million in 2011, and generate 97.8 billion baht (US\$3.2 billion) in revenue.

In October, the first 160 of a planned 999 couples from China tied the knot in a mass wedding ceremony held at the Thai beach resort of Cha-am. The campaign will continue through 2013.

These activities have been strategically incorporated into TAT's DISCO Plan, which focuses on digital marketing, image building, sustainable development, crystallisation/crisis management and organisation management.

The NTO will give specific attention to the ASEAN market in its *Thailand and Beyond Strategy* to capitalise on increasing arrivals from the region, as well as China, Japan, South Korea, Russia, India and Australia.

TAT is targeting 22.2 million international arrivals for 2013.

Tracker

An update on major issues and events from the past

Revival of Don Mueang Airport

Bangkok's Don Mueang Airport was inundated under a metre of water during the 2011 Thailand floods, bringing services at the airport to a complete halt. All airlines, including Orient Thai and Nok Air, relocated operations to Suvarnabhumi International Airport, leaving a massive question mark over the future of Don Mueang.

THEN The airport resumed operations four months after its closure. After a good deal of policy flip-flopping, Thailand's Ministry of Transport finally decided to invest millions of dollars to redevelop the old facility to cater to budget carriers to relieve pressure at the overcrowded Suvarnabhumi Airport.

NOW Following the Thai government's decision to commit to a dual airport policy, Don Mueang is now a dedicated LCC hub in Bangkok. The Airports of Thailand (AoT) has rolled out incentives to entice LCCs to shift to the older airport, with Thai AirAsia – the country's biggest LCC – operating from Don Mueang since October 1, 2012.

FUTURE With rising budget air travel, AoT is now investing substantial funds to upgrade facilities and open a second terminal to accommodate growth. Plans are also in place to extend the Airport Rail Link – which connects to Survanabhumi – to Don Mueang.

Products Thailand welcomes a raft of debuts from north to south

New convention venue to debut in Bangkok

The Bangna Convention Centre was recently taken over by serviced apartment operator Oakwood and is currently undergoing a major renovation to reopen in 2Q2013. Located next to the 167-room Oakwood Residence Garden Towers Bangna, the centre's facilities include the pillar-less Ratchaphruek Ballroom, which can accommodate up to 1,000 pax, with a sizable banquet kitchen and state-of-the-art audio and visual systems.

Zip through Chiang Mai on two wheels

A fun and innovative way to explore Thailand's culturally rich northern province, Segway Gibbon provides participants the opportunity to glide through the ancient city's landmarks on two-wheeled, self-balancing electric transport vehicles. Organised by the company behind the popular Flight of the Gibbon jungle zipline tours, these eco-friendly tours vary in duration and route, and include a 15-minute training session. They are ideal for families.



Segway Gibbon in Chiang Mai

Dine and shop by the Chao Phraya River

Launched in early 2012, the open-air mall and night bazaar is located on the banks of Bangkok's Chao Phraya River. The

venue incorporates more than 1,500 boutiques and 40 restaurants, with new eateries opening on a regular basis. Available cuisines range from traditional British pub grub to sushi, while eclectic entertainment includes Thai puppet performances and Calypso ladyboy show.

Phuket gets its first DoubleTree resort

Opened in November 2012, the 250-key DoubleTree Resort by Hilton Hotel Phuket-Surin Beach offers four room types, with all rooms featuring private balconies or terraces, bathtubs and flat-screen TVs. Facilities within the hotel include three

F&B outlets, a swimming pool, a gym and five meeting rooms.

Bangkok rolls out bicycle rental scheme

Traffic-clogged Bangkok can sometimes be a tricky destination to get around, but the introduction of a new bike rental scheme in November 2012 aims to reduce such problems by renting out 100 bicycles at MRT Sam Yan and BTS Siam train stations. The project is slated to expand to 50 train stations with 500 bicycles in the next few months. In addition, it is possible to purchase a registration card which entitles users to an insurance package.

Hotels | Unabated growth ahead

Driven by strong international tourist arrivals, Thailand's hotel inventory continues to grow despite the threat of oversupply in the market – nowhere more evident than Bangkok.

CBRE Thailand has estimated that Bangkok's hotel supply would increase by 28 per cent between 3Q2011 and 2014, with a majority in the three-star and four-star category. After a robust 2012, the growth momentum is expected to continue through 2013.

Hilton will launch the 182-room DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Sukhumvit Bangkok in March and the 287-room Hilton Sukhumvit Bangkok in May. Accor will debut the 174-room Mercure Bangkok Makkasan in 2Q2013 while it will be Carlson's turn to open the 290-room Radisson Blu Plaza Hotel Bangkok Sukhumvit come September, followed by InterContinental Hotel Group's 188-room Hotel Indigo Bangkok Wireless Road this year-end.

In the south, 5,080 rooms are expected to enter Phuket's market between March 2011 and 2015.

Among the island's most anticipated developments of 2013 is the five-star Nikki Beach Hotel and Spa opening in the fourth quarter with 151 suites and 23 villas. Also joining the five-star category is the Point Yamu by COMO, which will open in November with 109 keys.

Midscale openings in Phuket this year will be led by two international brands. The 120-key Days Hotel will mark the entry of Wyndham's Days Inn brand to Thailand in April, followed by the 164-

key Hotel Novotel Phuket Kamala Beach in May.

Pattaya is also seeing a buzzing hospitality industry, driven by a strong business and MICE sector. C9 Hotelworks forecasts a four per cent growth in room supply between 2011 and 2016, with one third of the new 1,779 rooms to rise in Jomtien.

Thai Centara Hotels & Resorts is rolling out the 160-room Centara Grand Resort & Spa Pattaya in March, as well as the Centara Avenue Residence & Suites Pattaya with 380 condominium residences and a 100-room hotel some time in 2013.

Another five-star addition to Pattaya's burgeoning inventory is the 264-room Mövenpick White Sand Beach Resort Pattaya, which is scheduled to open its doors in October. In the midscale sector, Holiday Inn Express, which debuted in Bangkok last year, is due to launch a



Mövenpick White Sand Beach Resort Pattaya

200-room property in Pattaya later in the year.



Equarius Hotel

Airlines | Rise of A380s, LCCs

Thai Airways International (THAI) is scaling new heights as it began taking delivery of its Airbus A380 order. The national carrier has introduced the A380 on its daily Bangkok-Frankfurt route since December 15, with Tokyo's Narita added to the superjumbo list on January 16, followed by Paris-Charles de Gaulle on February 16.

As aircraft deliveries continue through 2013, THAI will expand its A380 network to Osaka on August 16 and Sydney on September 16, with the sixth and final A380 set to be operated on the Bangkok-Heathrow sector in October.

THAI Smile, THAI's light-premium airline launched in July 2012, has plans to start Phuket-Singapore flights this year.

To build on China's emerging outbound segment, Nok Air is looking to launch services to Nanjing – where it already offers charter services to – whereas Thai AirAsia will add more Chinese cities to its network after starting flights to Xi'an and Wuhan in 4Q2012.

Meanwhile, Cebu Pacific has commenced twice-weekly Cebu-Bangkok services from December 9, 2012, while VietJet Air will begin its first international link with the Ho Chi Minh City-Bangkok service on February 10.

Phuket's air connectivity has improved since late last year, thanks to Emirates' new daily service from Dubai and British carrier Thomson Airways' weekly service from London's Gatwick. The launch of the latter service on November 13 marked the island's first direct air link with the UK.



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A MILLION MOMENTS. ONE WORLD.

Brunei rallies up for top scores

Collaboration is the name of the game, as Brunei teams up with its national carrier and neighbour Malaysia to promote its attractions and Islamic tours, finds **S Puvaneswary**

In 2012, Brunei Tourism continued to concentrate its promotional efforts on markets that have direct air access to Brunei while also shoring up promotions for its new Islamic tourism package.

The country's targets continue to be regional markets as well as China, the UK, Australia and New Zealand, where Royal Brunei Airlines (RBA) flies to.

Said Mariani Haji Sabtu, acting director of Brunei Tourism: "We enhanced our collaboration with RBA last year so that our plans were aligned. With the airline's support, we organised fam trips for the media and travel consultants in all our key markets last year."

Mariani added that Brunei Tourism, together with inbound consultants, reached out directly to consumers in 2012 through participation in the MATTA and NATAS travel fairs in Malaysia and Singapore respectively.

Brunei Tourism also used its two marketing and PR representative offices – Beijing Longway for its China and Hong Kong markets, and the Walshe Group for the Australia and New Zealand markets.

Mariani said: "Both marketing representatives... have helped create awareness of the destination in the markets they work in, and have also advised us on what products travellers in their respective markets are looking for when on holiday."

She said Brunei was interested in attracting travellers who were "really interested" in nature, culture and heritage.

"With the Australian and New Zealand markets, we have seen more FIT movement in 2012.



Yayasan Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Complex, Bandar Seri Begawan

Viewpoint

What is Brunei's outlook for 2013?



"In 2012, we did a lot of regional promotions and went to the World Travel

Market (in London) to create more awareness of Brunei and what we can offer tourists. As a result, we expect to see increased business in 2013, especially from regional destinations where there are direct flights."

Nuratiqah Abdullah
Head of department
Darussalam Holdings



"We expect a five per cent year-on-year increase in regional travel for 2013.

Royal Brunei Airlines increased flights between Bandar Seri Begawan and Kuala Lumpur from daily to 10 flights weekly on December 13, 2012. With the increase in frequency, we expect more business from Malaysia as well as travellers coming through Malaysia."

Khirul Zainie
Managing director
MegaBorneo Tour Planner

They are people who really appreciate nature."

Islamic tourism is also an increasingly important sector. At the World Travel Market (WTM) in London last November, the NTO co-launched the Brunei-Malaysia Islamic Tourism Package in collaboration with Malaysia's Islamic Tourism Centre and Tourism Malaysia. The launch was held at the Islamic Cultural Centre & the London Central Mosque.

Said Mariani: "We wanted to leverage WTM and the travel trade there to reach out to long-haul markets interested in Muslim tourism."

"(The tour) provides tourists with an insight to the Muslim communities in both countries, and we hope it will promote better understanding among people of the world." The package will be promoted at tradeshow and wherever possible, she added.

Tracker

An update on major issues and events from the past

Royal suspensions

From July-October 2011, Royal Brunei Airlines (RBA) axed loss-making services to Auckland, Brisbane, Perth, Ho Chi Minh City and Kuching to streamline operations and finances.

THEN Scrapping the only flights between Brunei and these destinations dealt tourism a blow. MegaBorneo Tour Planner lost all inbound business from the affected Australian cities. "New Zealand and Australia (travellers) would use Brunei as a stopover destination, and the average traveller would stay three nights," said managing director, Khirul Zainie.

Century Travel Centre manager CP Foo said he was badly affected as Brisbane was a popular holiday spot for Bruneians.

NOW RBA runs daily flights to its sole remaining Australian destination, Melbourne, while inbound from Australia and New Zealand continues to suffer. Though tourists could come via South-east Asia, higher fares and transits were deterrents, said Khirul.

Freme Travel Services' manager, inbound & MICE division, Sugumaran Nair, said he was now concentrating on business from Hong Kong, China, Indonesia and Malaysia – "countries where there are direct flights".

FUTURE RBA has no plans to reinstate the suspended routes.

Products Brunei plays on hot favourites

Lovely flutters

Taman Kulimambang, a butterfly park, opened in July 2012. Located within Tasek Merimbun Heritage Park in the Tutong district, the attraction is managed by the Museums Department and houses around 100 butterflies of different species.

Tasek Merimbun is open daily though opening hours differ according to the day of the week. Admission is free.

Contact
Tel: (673) 426-9179

Explore a shipwreck

The waters off the coast of Brunei are a diver's paradise. Shallow coral dives are perfect for inexperienced divers,

while experienced divers can explore Brunei's reefs and more impressively, its pristine wrecks scattered between Brunei and the Malaysian island of Labuan.

Royal Brunei Holidays offers diving packages, which include up to nine boat dives with trained guides. Each diver is provided with 12kg of free excess baggage.

Contact
www.bruneiair.com



Royal Brunei Airlines

Step back in time

Opened in August 2009, the Kampong Ayer Cultural & Tourism Gallery gives visitors a unique glimpse into the history of Kampong Ayer, the world's largest settlement on stilts, which has been in existence for over a thousand years.

The gallery is shaped like a traditional village house and sits over water in Kampong Ayer. Artefacts on display date back to the 10th century and are on loan from the Brunei Museum.

Contact
Tel: (673) 220-0874/75

The Waterfront

Opened in May 2011, The Waterfront in Bandar Seri Begawan is a pedestrian promenade great for strolls in the evening or to watch the world go by over an



Kampong Ayer Cultural & Tourism Gallery

iced drink.

Newest stay

The 112-room Times Hotel Brunei is one of the newest hotels in Brunei. It fully opened in March 2011, occupying the second to sixth floors of Times Square Shopping Centre. Facilities include a spa, a gym and an outdoor swimming pool. The hotel is a five-minute drive from Brunei International Airport and ten minutes from the Gadong

and Kiulap commercial areas.

Contact
www.timeshotelbrunei.com

Retail heaven

Opened in July 2011, Airport Mall is Brunei's latest shopping destination. The four-storey building on Jalan Berakas is next to Times Square Shopping and Entertainment Complex. It features 174 shops, a 22-lane bowling alley and a basement carpark with 285 parking spaces.

ASEAN Tourism Forum 2013
Official Late Night Function

Pattaya Variety night

Brace yourself for an
exhilarating evening!

23 January 2013 | Wednesday
9.30 pm - midnight

Don Chan Palace Hotel, Ballroom
Unit 6 Piawat Village,
Sisatanak District

Dive headfirst into a night of myriad colours as Pattaya Variety brings its Active Beach all the way to the ASEAN Tourism Forum 2013.

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Tiffany
Show

Music from
the Sea

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Draw

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Refreshing retreats

Rising from the sea of cookie-cutter rooms sweeping through South-east Asia are these boutique retreats, packing local flavour and personalised experiences. By **Xinyi Liang-Pholsena, S Puvaneswary, Marianne Carandang, Linda Haden, Calvin Godfrey, Mimi Hudoyo and Rahul Khanna**



From left: Navutu Dreams Resort & Spa, Cambodia; The House of Cebu, Philippines

The Alcove Library Hotel, Vietnam
USP Its well-stocked reading room and American-themed bar and grill provide the Western business professional an affordable reprieve from the city's chaotic streets. Located five minutes from Ho Chi Minh City's airport, the hotel offers 38 affordable rooms.
Target Travelling professionals and mid-range leisure tourists, especially from Western markets.
Price US\$89++-US\$129++
Opened October 19, 2012

Maison D'Hanoi Boutique Hotel, Vietnam
USP Its location in the heart of Hanoi's quaint Old Quarter – the shopping hub of the capital. The company also has four years of experience managing sister property, Maison D'Hanoi Hanova Hotel. Run by a Singaporean general manager, the hotel will offer 42 guest rooms and suites, complete with a piano bar and restaurant.
Target Leisure and business guests looking for something a bit more intimate and affordable.
Price US\$80-US\$100
Opening December 1, 2012

Sense Hotel Seminyak, Indonesia
USP Located in the upmarket area of Seminyak and within walking distance of Petitenget beach and Bali's best restaurants and bars such as Ku De Ta, La Lucciola, Potato Head, Hu'u and The Living Room Bali. Its 68 rooms fuse together modern and traditional Balinese architectural elements, and there are also free shuttle services within the Seminyak area.
Target Guests from Indonesia, Asia, Australia, New Zealand and Europe.
Price US\$250-US\$350
Opened June 2012

The Courtyard Boutique Hotel, Malaysia
USP Centrally located in the heart of Kuala Lumpur and within walking distances of two major shopping centres. There is a small grassy area on the ground floor known as the courtyard, which offers respite from the city bustle. With only 11 rooms, guests have more privacy compared to larger establishments.
Target Business and leisure travellers from regional countries.
Price RM200-RM350 (US\$65-US\$114)
Opened June 1, 2012

Seri Chenang Resort & Spa Langkawi,

Malaysia
USP The six heritage villas showcase the unique styles of Malay architecture from the states of Kedah, Selangor, Malacca, Negri Sembilan, Pahang and Terengganu. Butler services also incorporate Malay values, cultures and traditions.
 A haven for birdwatchers, the resort is also an ideal spot to catch bird species escaping the winter from November to February.
Target Leisure travellers from all markets, especially from regional, the UK and European markets.
Price RM1,800-RM6,000 (US\$588-US\$1,959)
Opening January 1, 2013

Navutu Dreams Resort & Spa, Cambodia
USP Building on the experience of its sister property in Fiji, Navutu Stars Resort, this Siem Reap property offers a Mediterranean-inspired resort setting in a tropical garden. The 18 rooms feature whitewashed interiors adorned with half-moon sofas and objets d'art sourced from around South-east Asia. Facilities include a saltwater pool, a yoga studio, a fitness centre, a spa offering Asian and South Pacific treatments, and a fine-dining restaurant spotlighting southern Cambodian and Italian cuisines.
Target Well-travelled professionals, honeymooners and families who want a relaxing and quiet destination.
Price US\$100-US\$200
Opened August 1, 2012

Song Saa Private Island, Cambodia
USP An indulgent experience in the undiscovered Koh Rong archipelago with 27 villas offering luxury such as handcrafted furniture, king-size beds, oversized baths, fully stocked fridges and private decks and pools. As well, Song Saa's commitment to protecting the local environment and supporting local communities, plus chefs serving customised menus and an over-water Vista Restaurant and Bar offering 360-degree views of the sea.
Target Discerning travellers who appreciate the natural environment.
Price US\$1,336-US\$5,153 (all-inclusive)
Opened March 2012

The House of Cebu, Philippines
USP 38 large rooms (four categories with sizes ranging 36m²-108m²) that combine unique themed murals and interior design with executive comfort. A great F&B experi-

ence is also offered, with German/European cuisine at Paseo Uno and flea market-inspired decor at the Scrapyard bar.
Target Business travellers visiting the nearby business and IT parks, as well as international leisure travellers interested in a boutique hotel experience.
Price US\$143-US\$172
Opened June 2012

The Amoy, Singapore
USP Guests enter by the Fuk Tak Chi Museum, which was once a Chinese temple. Dating back to the 1800s, it was one of the first stops for immigrants coming from China who went to this shrine to offer thanksgiving for their safe arrival. Located within shophouses and with only 37 keys, service is highly customised according to individual needs and preferences.
Target Business travellers who work within or close to the central business district, as well as leisure FITs.
Price S\$200-S\$300 (US\$163-US\$245)
Opening First half of 2013

Cabochoon Hotel, Thailand
USP Housed within a historic four-storey building, the hotel captures the charm of 1920s Shanghai chic with a lounge-cum-library – dubbed The Joy Luck Club – featuring vintage memorabilia from around the world, and the Thai Lao Yeh restaurant is decorated with century-old timber. There are only four suites and four studios, each personally appointed by Eugene Yeh who brought to Bangkok The Eugenia Hotel.
Target Couples, families and business travellers yearning for a peaceful and charming environment.
Price 4,000 baht-8,000 baht (US\$130-US\$260)
Opened April 2, 2012

Riva Surya, Thailand
USP In the historic heart of Bangkok, with easy access to treasured icons such as the Grand Palace and Wat Pho, as well as the lively Khao San road. Guests can expect panoramic views of the Chao Phraya river, while direct water transport offers a convenient way to reach most of the city's attractions. All 68 rooms feature modern designs and amenities, with Thai influences. The market-inspired Babble & Rum cafe also boasts a strong commitment to organic, locally sourced produce.
Target Business travellers, experiential independent travellers and small higher-end MICE groups.
Price 3,900 baht-15,000 baht



(US\$127-US\$488)
Opened September 15, 2012
Riverside Boutique Resort, Laos
USP The first luxury resort in Vang Vieng accessible as a weekend retreat from Vientiane via a three-hour drive. The decor is distinctly Lao, with each building featuring a different ethnic theme. Located in a quiet part along the Nam Song river, there are 32 rooms and two suites, a large swimming pool and a fully-equipped 120-pax conference room.
Target Western tourists en route to Luang Prabang or Vientiane, Vientiane residents seeking a weekend gateway or retreat/seminar location, and regional visitors from Thailand, China, Vietnam and South Korea.
Price US\$70-US\$300
Opened July 1, 2012

Burasari Heritage Luang Prabang, Laos
USP Set in a restored teakwood residence, the 23-room boutique hotel is decorated in French colonial style and equipped with modern amenities. Nestled right by the Nam Khan river, it is only a few minutes' walk to the night market and the main street where almsgiving to monks takes place every morning.
Target FIT and small groups, mostly from Asia, Europe, Australia, the US and the UK.
Price US\$140-US\$260
Opened November 14, 2012

Hotel 7 Mile, Myanmar
 Located 15 minutes from Yangon International Airport, Hotel 7 Mile offers 22 standard, nine superior and 22 deluxe rooms. The hotel guarantees 24-hour electricity, thanks to its standby generator, and free Wi-Fi Internet access. A meeting room for 15 pax and dining hall for 40 round up the property's features.
Target Mid-range travellers both foreign and local
Price US\$50-US\$80
Opened June 16, 2012

Hotel Alamanda, Myanmar
 Situated in the quiet and lush Golden Valley area within Yangon, the 10-key Hotel Alamanda takes pride in its exotic garden and bar restaurant, where guests can relax and enjoy a delicious meal. The hotel offers free use of a computer with Internet connectivity in the lounge, Wi-Fi access in all rooms and a library.
Target FITs and backpackers
Price US\$70-US\$100
Opened Early 2012



From left: Hotel 7 Mile, Myanmar; Riverside Boutique Resort, Laos

Fancy preludes to a busy week

A grand opening dinner and a lively golf game kick off a full schedule of business meets. By **Patrick Tan**

ASEAN tourism leaders and ATF 2013 delegates had a taste of Lao hospitality at the opening ceremony and gala dinner on January 20. Held at the Don Chan Palace Hotel's Grand Convention Hall, the glittery event featured traditional performances.

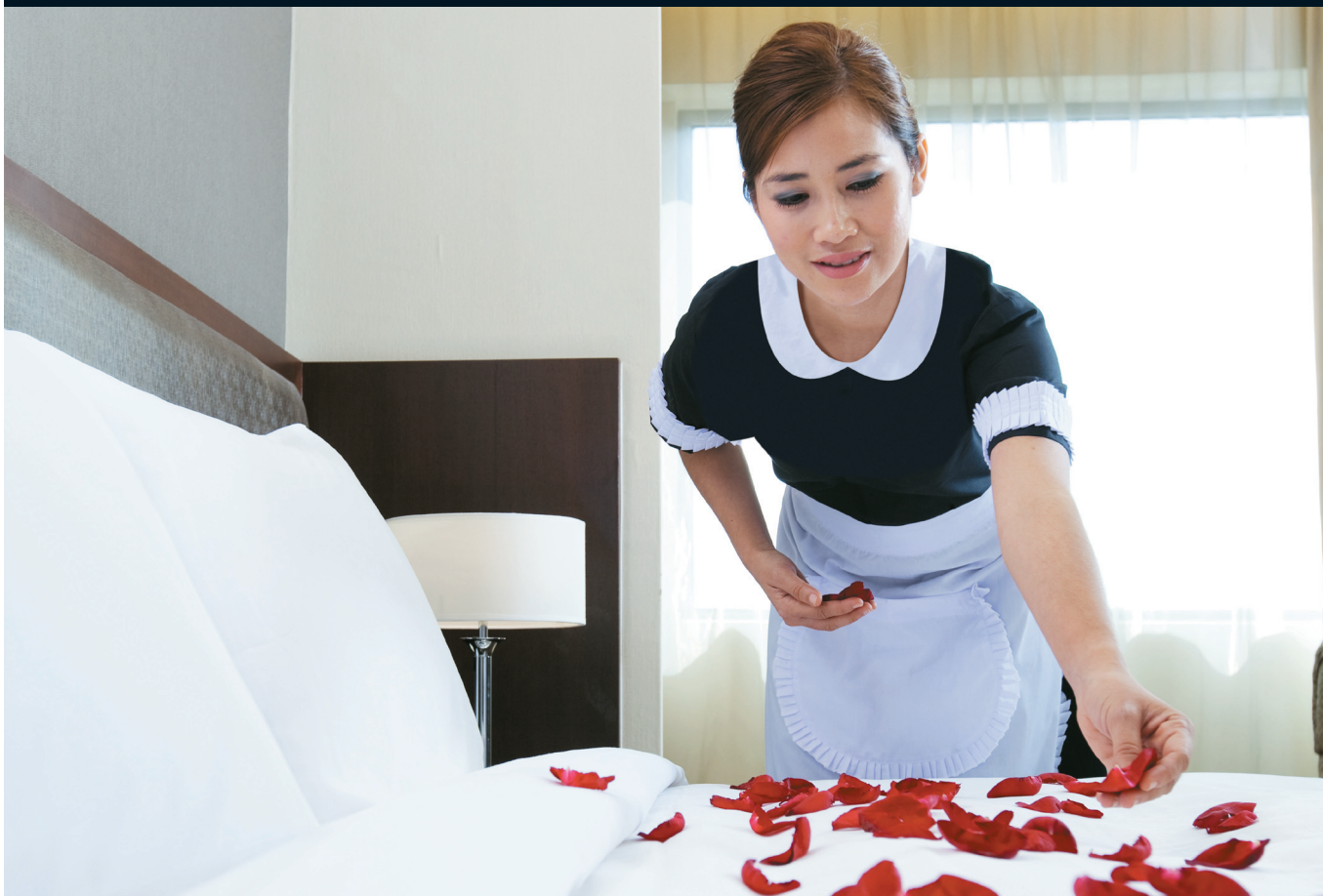


Great shots!

TRAVEX delegates and ASEAN tourism industry stakeholders gathered at the serene Lao Country Club in Vientiane for the ATF Friendly Golf Game yesterday morning.



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PANGKOR : Pangkor Island Beach Resort **KOTAKINABALU** : Cititel Express **YANGON** : MiCasa Hotel Apartments **MANILA** : St Giles Makati
ASSOCIATES : **LONDON** - St Giles Central London • St Giles Heathrow **NEW YORK** - St Giles The Tuscany • St Giles The Court



All ready and raring to go

The first wave of ATF delegates sets Lao ITECC off with a riot of colours and smiley faces. By **Patrick Tan**



Weltstudio Italy's Mariagrazia Crotti and Travel World News US' Helen Kitt Smith



Orientours US' Joebert Opulencia and Outbound Business India's Haider

Amiable Intertours Philippines' Bernadette Y de Leon, Goldlink Travel & Tours Philippines' Allan C K Sze, Celebrate Life TLC Philippines' Simon Ang and Blue Pacific Tours & Travel Malaysia's Anne Tan



Cocotinos Indonesia's Martinus Wawanda and Iwan Sitompul, and Taman Wisata Candi's Ngurah Paramartha

Right: Tourism Malaysia's Linawati Ismail and Daryl Yep, Tourism Malaysia in Laos' Keo Ou Done Chanthavongxai and Tourism Malaysia's Haryanty Abu Bakar



Left: The Partners Czech Republic's Jolana Schorchtová, Trips 4 Fundraising US' Alyssa Johnson and Tischler Reisen Germany's Kerstin Streich



Travel Leaders US' Shirish N Trivedi



The Lantern Resorts and Residences Thailand's Jirawat Worawong, Panarat Prangchaives and Thanakorn Prakaisriroj



S I Tours Thailand's Jaap van Hal and Omeir Travel Agency UAE's John Varkey Kailath



The Traveller DMC Singapore's Yvonne Low, The Traveller Malaysia's Jessica Koh and The Traveller DMC Singapore's Thomas Wong



DBA & Sons Travel & Tours UAE's T Prahlad

Right: Cascadia Sportsmanagement US' Glenn Parker



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Convention & Exhibition Centre
Chengdu, China



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Issue

2



ATF 2013
January 22, 2013
Vientiane, Laos



Kuching, Sarawak
MALAYSIA
16 – 23 January 2014

MALAYSIA CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2013

For more information, visit www.tourismmalaysia.gov.my

JANUARY
7 - 12 Jan

11th Royal Langkawi
International Regatta 2013
Langkawi, Kedah

JANUARY
27 Jan

Thaipusam
Batu Caves,
Selangor

February
18 - 24 Feb

Pasir Gudang World
Kite Festival
Bukit Layang-layang,
Pasir Gudang, Johor



Ma
8 Mar

1 Mala
GPS
Througho

March
30 - 31 Mar

Penang World
Music Festival
Quarry Park, Botanical Gardens,
Penang

April
26 - 28 Apr

LABUAN
INTERNATIONAL
SEA CHALLENGE
Labuan

May
4 - 5 May

Sabah Fest
A Cultural Extravaganza
Kota Kinabalu, Sabah

Ma
5 May

BORN
INTERNA
MARA
Kota Kinab

June
22 - 30 June

1Malaysia International
Tourism Night
Floral Parade
Magic of the Night
Precinct 2, Putrajaya

June
22 - 30 June

FLORIA PUTRAJAYA
FLORAL AND
GARDEN FESTIVAL
Precinct 2, Putrajaya

June
28 - 30 June

Rainforest
World Music Festival
Sarawak Cultural Village,
Kuching, Sarawak

JU
1 - 3

Kuala L
Festival
Kuala L

AUGUST
31 Aug

**MALAYSIA
NATIONAL DAY**
Kuala Lumpur

SEPTEMBER
13 - 15 Sept

ROYAL PAHANG
INTERNATIONAL
BILLFISH CHALLENGE
Kuala Rompin, Pahang

SEPTEMBER
13 - 14 Sept

Melaka UNESCO
World Heritage
Music Festival
Melaka



SEPTE
19 S

1MALAYSIA
LANTERN
Central Market,

October
13 Oct

**Malaysian
Motorcycle
Grand Prix**
Sepang International Circuit,
Selangor

October
20 Oct

**Mount Kinabalu
International
Climbathon**
Adventure Series & World Mountain
Music Festival - Rhythm of Kinabalu
Kundasang,
Ranau, Sabah

November
1 - 30 Nov

Fabulous Food 1Malaysia
ASEAN Heritage Food Trail
Throughout Malaysia



Novem
8 Nov 2013 -

1MALA
YEAR-EN
Througho



March
- 14 Apr

Malaysia
Sale
t Malaysia



March
14 - 17 Mar / 21 - 24 Mar

PUTRAJAYA INTERNATIONAL
HOT AIR BALLOON FIESTA
Precinct 2,
Putrajaya



March
22 - 24 Mar

FORMULA 1
PETRONAS MALAYSIA
GRAND PRIX

Sepang International Circuit,
Selangor

March
28 - 31 Mar

Malaysia International
Shoe Festival
Putra World Trade Centre (PWTC)
Kuala Lumpur



May

NEO
ATIONAL
THON
alu, Sabah

May
10 - 11 May

Borneo
Jazz Festival
Parkeity Everly Hotel,
Miri, Sarawak



May
25 May

COLOURS OF
MALAYSIA
Merdeka Square, Kuala Lumpur

June
14 June - 1 Sept

1MALAYSIA MEGA
SALE CARNIVAL

Throughout Malaysia



JULY

1 July
Kuala Lumpur
(KLFEST)
Kuala Lumpur

JULY
7 July

ANNIVERSARY OF
UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE
CITY CELEBRATION
Bandar Hilir, Melaka

JULY
19 - 21 July

PORT DICKSON
INTERNATIONAL
TRIATHLON

Port Dickson, Negeri Sembilan

JULY
July - Sept

1MALAYSIA CONTEMPORARY
ARTS TOURISM FESTIVAL
Throughout Malaysia



SEPTEMBER

pt
A TOURISM
FESTIVAL
Kuala Lumpur

SEPTEMBER
21 - 29 Sept

ATP World
Tennis Tour

Stadium Putra Bukit Jalil,
Kuala Lumpur

SEPTEMBER
26 - 29 Sept

MALAYSIA INTERNATIONAL
ORCHID SHOW AND
GARDEN FESTIVAL

"Showcasing Borneo's Native Species"
Sabah Agriculture Park,
Tenom, Sabah

October
1 - 31 Oct

Fabulous Food 1Malaysia
Malaysia International
Gourmet Festival
Throughout Malaysia



December
5 Jan 2014

AYSIA
ND SALE
t Malaysia

December
1 - 31 Dec

Fabulous Food 1Malaysia
Street and Restaurant
Food Festival
Throughout Malaysia



December
7 Dec

Cuti-Cuti 1Malaysia
Dance Tourism Carnival
Merdeka Square, Kuala Lumpur

December
7 - 9 Dec

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SURFING COMPETITION

Cherating Beach,
Kuantan, Pahang

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