



# ASIAN TOURISM GUIDE

2010/2011

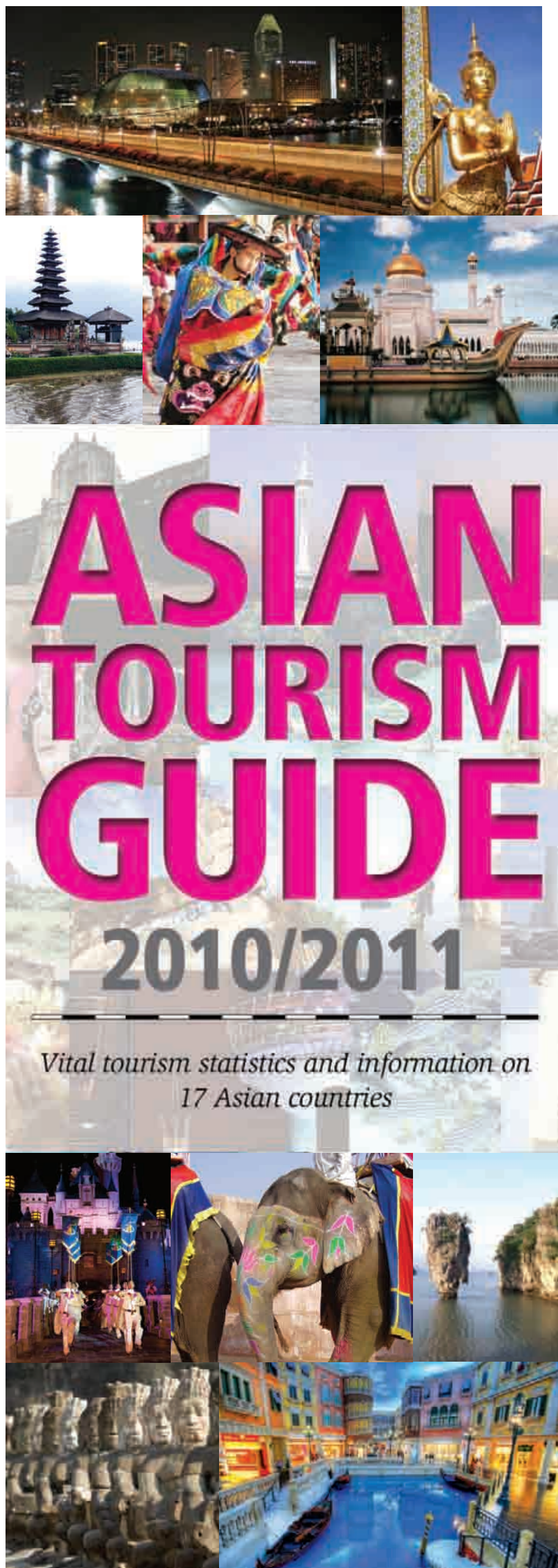
*Vital tourism statistics  
and information on 17  
Asian countries*

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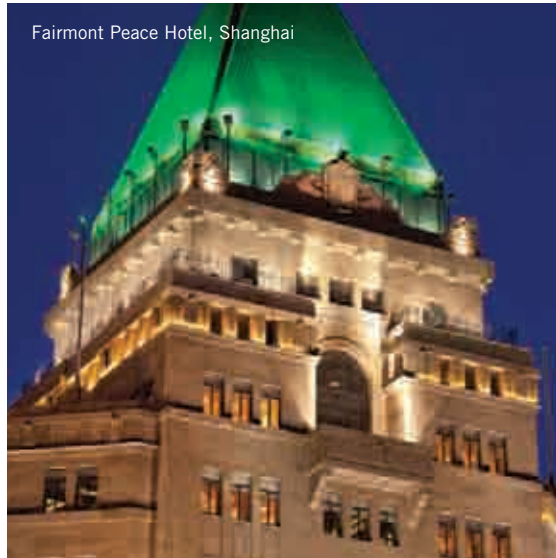
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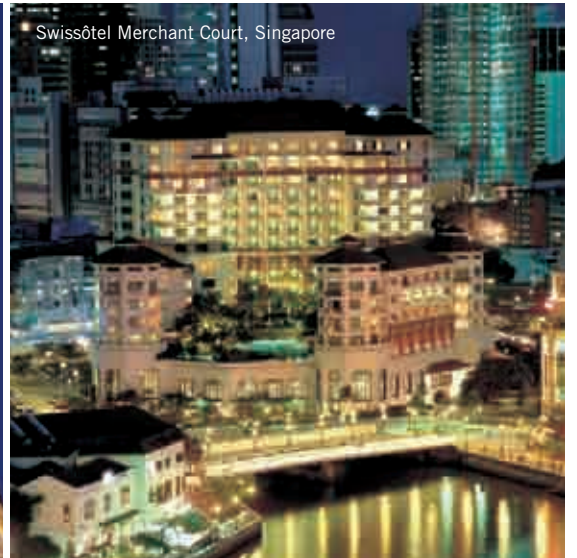




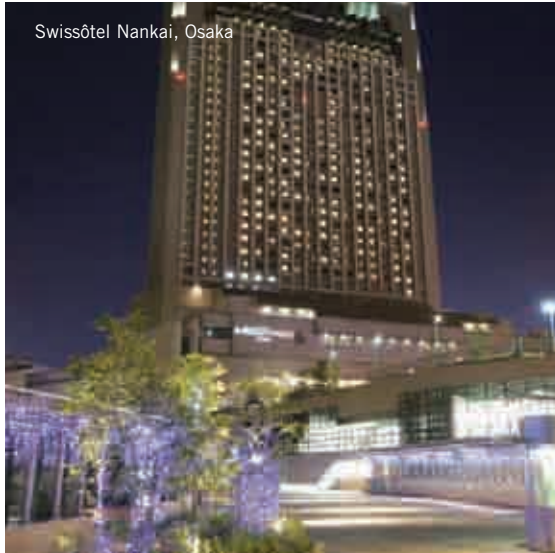
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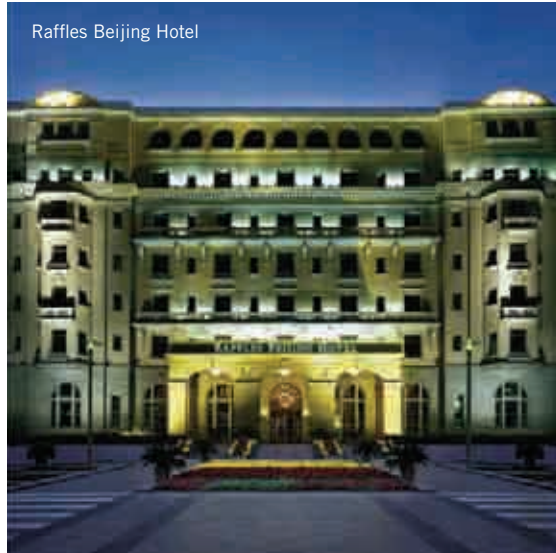
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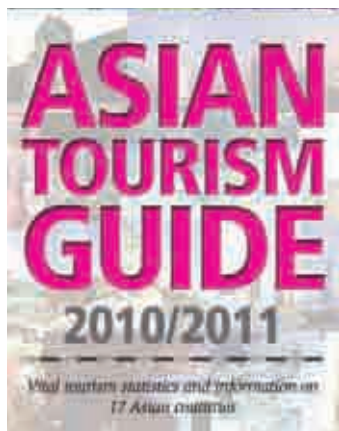
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# A brighter year

Welcome to the third edition of *Asian Tourism Guide*, produced by *TTG Asia* and Diethelm Travel Group.

As is the tradition now, the guide contains key statistics on travel and tourism on 17 countries across Asia and the most essential information – such as new attractions that have opened and insider tips on each of the destinations – that planners need to have at their fingertips.

The latest-available statistics in this report reflect a rebound in business in 2010. Thankfully, Asia's travel and tourism industry has seen a quick comeback of arrivals after a woeful 2009, when the global financial crisis and A/H1N1 saw many of its source markets registering huge declines.

With Asian economies remaining resilient in 2010, the travel and tourism industry was buoyed by a return of corporate travel and business events, as well as healthy intra-Asian leisure travel, where outbound markets such as China, India and South-east Asia propped up numbers. Chinese arrivals to Thailand, for instance, have been on a steep climb in the last few months, the political riots earlier in the year have all but been forgotten.

Mega events such as the World Expo in Shanghai, the Asian Games in Guangzhou and the Commonwealth Games in Delhi, and the opening of attractions such as the two integrated resorts in Singapore, all helped put the spotlight on the region.

In all, 2010 turned out to be much better than expected. Let us hope it stays that way for 2011. On that note, my team and I wish you a happy and prosperous new year.

**Darren Ng**  
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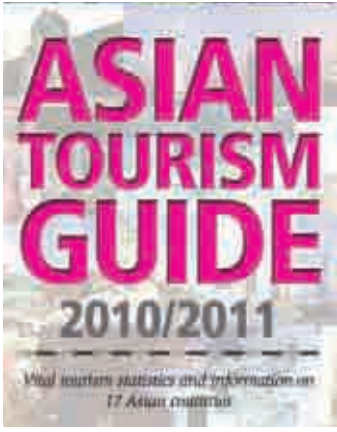
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Our customers and suppliers trust us implicitly with their businesses. Building and maintaining confidence among our business partners is a key objective within our company and a prime element of our strategy.

Things can go wrong even with the best-planned itineraries, given the complexity of the travel industry, but Diethelm Travel can resolve issues quickly and efficiently due to our large network of contacts throughout the region.

We are pleased to collaborate for the third year with an equally trusted name in the industry – TTG Asia Media, on the third annual *Asian Tourism Guide*. This reference tool has been well received since its launch in 2008 and has become an indispensable guide for the trade for planning and information purposes.

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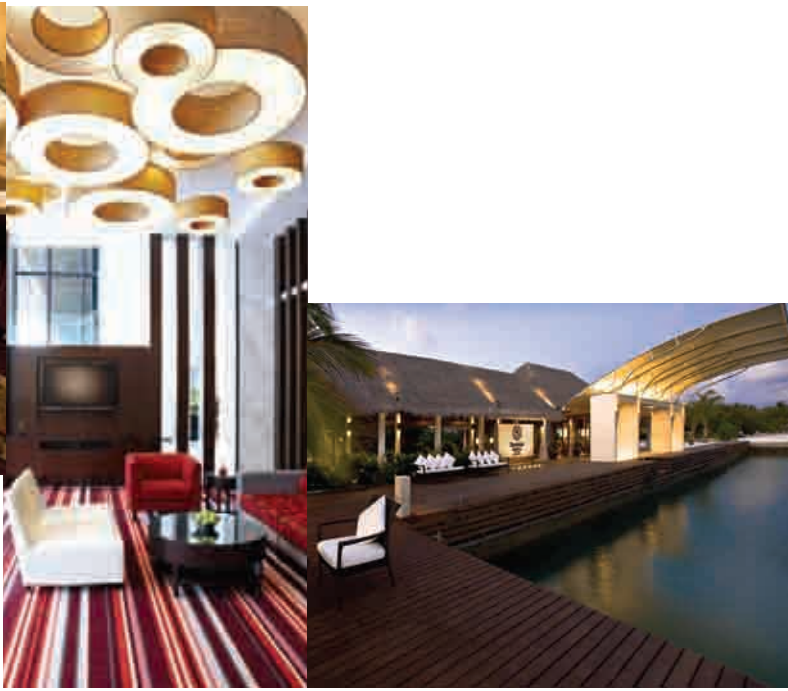
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# Bhutan

## General Overview

Official name	Kingdom of Bhutan
Capital	Thimphu
Population	691,141
Total area	47,000 sq km
Currency	Ngultrum
Official language	Dzongkha; English is widely spoken



The global recession and the H1N1 pandemic caused international arrivals in 2009 to plummet 15 per cent over 2008, to 23,480. Tourism revenue for the year consequently slid to US\$31.9 million, a 17.9 per cent decline over 2008. The mountainous kingdom recovered somewhat in 2010. The Association of Bhutanese Tour Operators reported 11,314 international air arrivals in the first half of the year, an increase of almost eight per cent over the same period in 2009. The country is looking to close 2010 with around 30,000 tourists.

### Climate

Average temperature	18°C to 22°C
Average rainfall	66.5mm
Average humidity	62 per cent in June

### Best time to visit

Autumn months from September to November attract the most number of visitors as the clear skies and cool weather create good trekking conditions and give unobstructed views of snow-capped mountains. The December to February period is ideal for day hikes, low-altitude trekking and bird-watching. Bhutan is attempting to reduce tourist seasonality by encouraging visits during the monsoon months of June, July and August through a 25 per cent discount on the US\$200 minimum daily tariff.

### Distances

Thimphu-Paro	65km, 1hr 30min
Thimphu-Phuntsholing	176km, 6hr
Thimphu-Haa	115km, 3hr 30min
Thimphu-Punakha	77km, 2hr 15min

### Visitor arrival statistics

Europe contributed the most visitors to Bhutan in 2009, with a 41.3 per cent marketshare. Asia-Pacific came in next with 33.2 per cent, and North America followed with 23.3 per cent.

The US was Bhutan's single largest foreign source market, accounting for 20.4 per cent of total visitors. The global financial crisis caused North American and European numbers to fall by 31.1 per cent and 28.6 per cent respectively, but Asia saved the day, with Japan, China, Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia recording significant growth.

India, Maldives and Bangladesh are considered regional tourist markets, so they are not included in Bhutan's official tally of foreign arrivals. India, however, is the kingdom's largest source market, contributing 20,847 arrivals to the 2009 tally.

In the first six months of 2010, Bhutan welcomed 11,314 international air arrivals, almost eight per cent higher over the same period in 2009. Its target for 2010 is 30,000 tourists.

### Total tourist arrivals

2008	27,636, +31 per cent
2009	23,480, -15 per cent
2010 (Jan – Jun)	11,314
	30,000 (target)

### Total tourism receipts

2008	US\$38.3 million
2009	US\$31.9 million
2010	N/A

### Average length of stay

2008	7.8 days
2009	7.6 days

### Percentage of BT-MICE to overall arrivals

2009	2.5 per cent
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### Top five arrival markets

Market	2008	2009	Marketshare (%)
US	6,941	4,786	20.4
Japan	2,745	3,136	13.4
UK	2,758	1,968	8.4
Germany	1,717	1,587	6.8
France	1,402	1,189	5.1

Source: Tourism Council of Bhutan

### Arrivals target

Bhutan is targeting 100,000 visitors by 2012 as it swaps its "low impact, low volume" tourism mantra for a "high value, low impact" policy that opens new areas to tourism and improves access within the country.

According to a 2009 tourist survey, most visitors to Bhutan combined it with Nepal, Thailand or India, whereas only 36.9 per cent had Bhutan as a mono-destination. Enhanced air access between Bhutan, Nepal and north-east India has given rise to a new three-country tourist circuit. Bhutan's national carrier, Druk Air, launched scheduled

flights from Paro to Guwahati, Assam on October 31, while Buddha Air connected Paro and Kathmandu in August. The latter also plans to introduce Paro-Baghdhara-Kathmandu services from the first quarter of 2011, while Druk Air will eventually fly to Singapore.

### Hotel statistics

In 2009, Bhutan had 109 accredited hotels with 2,385 rooms, and 49 projects with 576 rooms either proposed or under construction. In 2010, the country introduced a new international star-rating system for its 119 hotels. After a review had indicated that nearly 40 per cent of hotels was not up to three-star standards, all properties have been given a 2012 deadline for upgrading plans. They can avail of incentives such as duty exemption on imports and a reinvestment allowance. From 2012, only hotels with at least three stars can cater to tourists.

Bhutan is also wooing international hotel chains to enter its central, eastern and southern regions – all previously inaccessible – by offering a 10-year tax holiday for new properties, among other incentives.

### New attractions/tourism infrastructure

A domestic airport in Jakar, to be completed by mid-2011, will service domestic flights between Trashigang and Jakar. Bhutan is also coming up with a domestic airline. Three airlines are presently bidding for the account.

"Protected" areas have been opened for tourism. Five national parks, four wildlife sanctuaries and a strict nature reserve now allow tourist visits to offer new revenue streams for local communities.

The **Merak and Sakteng trek** was officially opened to tourists in October 2010. The moderate trek, in the north-east, takes eight to nine days to cover.

### Essentials in the city – Thimphu

**Food** Try the spicy curry-based *ema* and *datsi* (chilli and cheese) with red rice. Douse the heat with *ara* (Bhutan's sake) or *suja* (butter tea).

**Tippling policy** Tour prices are all-inclusive – no need to tip.

**Shopping** Colourful, handwoven fabrics make a good souvenir. Check out the Thimphu's Handicraft Emporium by the Women's Association of Bhutan.

**Maximise two hours of free time** Go shopping, then head to any of the many sports stadiums all over the country to watch Bhutan's national pastime – archery.

**Need to impress clients' lunch** The Bhutan Kitchen is the place to go.

**Lunch on your own** Mingle with the expats at Karma's Coffee, which offers free Internet access.

**Late nights** Space 34 in Thimphu

**Electricity** 230V AC/50 Hz, two-pin round blade or three-pin round or flat blade plugs

### Visa requirements

All visitors to Bhutan, except Indian nationals, need a visa. All foreign visits must be coursed through a tour operator. A two-week visa costs US\$20. A daily minimum tariff of US\$200, inclusive of all ground arrangements, meals and accommodation, applies. The minimum tariff was to be raised to US\$250 in 2010 but this has been deferred.

### Prices of common items in 2010

**Bottled water** US\$10 per case (12 bottles)

**Starbucks latte (small)** N/A

**A glass of open wine at a pub** US\$10

**Taxi fare** (2km) US\$5 for 10km

### Important contacts

#### NTO

The Tourism Council of Bhutan

[www.tourism.gov.bt](http://www.tourism.gov.bt)

#### Travel trade association

The Association of Bhutanese Tour Operators

[www.abto.org.bt](http://www.abto.org.bt)

Compiled by Ollie Quinquini and Gracia Chiang  
All information is correct at press time



# Brunei

## General Overview

Official name	Brunei Darussalam
Capital	Bandar Seri Begawan
Population	400,000
Total area	5,765 sq km
Currency	Brunei dollar
Official language	Malay; English is widely spoken



Brunei saw a significant drop of 30.2 per cent in air arrivals in 2009 as a result of the global financial crisis and the H1N1 virus. The country, however, has gained some lost ground this year, and air arrivals are expected to regain some strength in numbers, coming close to 2008's healthier level of 225,757.

Brunei Tourism is planning to appoint marketing representatives in its key markets – China/Hong Kong and Australia/New Zealand – by end-2010. Depending on the performance of representatives in these markets, more may be appointed in key markets in South-east Asia and Europe in 2010. Brunei Tourism is also working with Malaysia to promote tour packages focusing on the sultanate's religious aspects and experiences centering on the concept of Malay Islamic monarchy.

### Climate

Average temperature	23°C and 34°C
Average rainfall	3,200mm
Average humidity	98 per cent

### Best time to visit

Brunei is suitable for year-round visits. There are no seasonal room rates, and accommodation is easy to obtain any time of the year, except during Chinese New Year. It is advisable to book in advance during this period.

### Distances

<b>From Bandar Seri Begawan to:</b>	
Hong Kong	1,959km, 3hr
Kuala Lumpur	1,483km, 2hr 20min

### Visitor arrival statistics

Most travellers to Brunei are from Asia-Pacific. The five fastest-growing markets for the first half of 2010 were India (96.7 per cent), Indonesia (58.5 per cent), Thailand (40 per cent), Malaysia (30.7 per cent) and China/Hong Kong (19.4 per cent). India recorded the highest growth, mainly from business travellers.

The Philippines showed a small decline in the first six months, but was expected to show positive overall growth in 2010 after low-cost carrier Cebu Pacific started twice-weekly direct flights between Manila and Bandar Seri Begawan on August 21.

Malaysia is also expected to record further growth as AirAsia had increased Kuala Lumpur-Bandar Seri Begawan frequencies from daily to twice-daily on August 25.

### Total tourist arrivals

2008	225,757, +26.45 per cent
------	--------------------------

2009	157,474, -30.24 per cent
2010	200,000, +27 per cent (target)

### Top 10 arrival markets

	2009	2010 (Jan-Jun)	% Change
Malaysia	18,536	24,233	30.7
China/Hong Kong	8,508	10,157	19.4
Singapore	7,159	7,963	11.2
UK/Ireland	7,016	7,948	13.3
Australia	7,131	6,832	-4.2
Philippines	6,637	6,385	-3.8
Indonesia	3,912	6,201	58.5
New Zealand	4,688	4,242	-9.5
India	1,171	2,303	96.7
Thailand	1,578	2,208	40

Source: Brunei Tourism

### Average length of stay for the top 10 markets

Three days

### Estimated revenue per tourist of the top 10 markets (January – June 2010)

Malaysia	B\$651.14 (US\$496.49)
China/Hong Kong	B\$926.60
Singapore	B\$651.14
UK/Ireland	B\$774.26
Australia	B\$786.44
Philippines	B\$651.14
Indonesia	B\$651.14
New Zealand	B\$786.44

India	B\$774.26
Thailand	B\$651.14

Source: Brunei Tourism

### Estimated total tourism receipts (January to June 2010)

B\$69.48 million

**NTO overall budget** Around B\$8 million for 2010 and the same amount in 2011

**NTO marketing budget** B\$4 million to B\$5 million for 2010 and 2011 each

### Arrivals target for 2011

Brunei Tourism is targeting about 220,000 air arrivals, which is in line with its long-term annual growth target of around 11 per cent each year. Expenditure target is set at B\$160 million.

### Hotel statistics

Most hotels maintained their 2009 contract rates in 2010 and are expected to do so again in 2011 as there is an oversupply of inventory. Net rates are imposed by hotels, with no government taxes or peak season surcharges.

On May 1, the 142-room five-star Sheraton Utama Hotel was rebranded as Radisson Hotel Brunei Darussalam. Its refurbishment is expected to be completed by 2012. The average occupancy rate at Radisson Hotel is 50 per cent and the daily rate is from B\$170.

### Average occupancy rate/Average room rate

	AOR		ARR	
	2009	2010	2009	2010
Four-star	45%	50%	B\$95	B\$95
Five-star	40%	45%	B\$180	B\$180

Source: Brunei Tourism

### Room statistics

Overall number of rooms	3,000 (average)
Number of four-star rooms	1,000 (estimate)
Number of five-star rooms	650 (estimate)
Projected number of rooms (estimate for 2011 and 2012)	3,000

### New hotels in 2010

<b>BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN</b>
<b>Radisson Hotel Brunei Darussalam</b> 142 rooms
<b>Times Square Hotel</b> 115 rooms

### New attractions/tourism infrastructure

**Times Square Shopping and Entertainment Complex**, located a three-minute drive from Brunei International Airport, offers a range of retail options such as fast-food outlets, restaurants, clothing stores and electrical shops.

**Airport Mall** is a four-storey building that is scheduled for completion in 2011. To be located at Jalan Berakas, next to Times Square Shopping and Entertainment Complex, it will feature more than 100 shops, a 22-lane bowling alley and a big supermarket on the ground floor. [www.taib.com.bn](http://www.taib.com.bn)

**Kampong Sungai Matan tours** is the first community project in Brunei that has an entire village and a tour operator cooperating for the common good. Sunshine Borneo Tours & Travel is promoting this fishing village as a day programme for leisure groups and CSR-conscious international incentive groups to Brunei. The day tour allows visitors to go fishing at the village, learn how to prepare local food such as *keropok* (fish crackers) and *belacan* (shrimp paste) and observe how local handicrafts are produced. [www.exploreborneo.com](http://www.exploreborneo.com)

### Key events and festivals 2011

#### Brunei Open (second half of the year)

Brunei Open, part of the Asian Tour golf tournament, is held at The Empire Hotel & Country Club's Jack Nicklaus-designed golf course. Since its inauguration in 2005, Brunei Open is an established tournament that has attracted many top players in Asia. It was held from July 29 to August 1 in 2010.

Co-organisers: Asian Tour and Brunei Tourism [www.bruneitourism.travel](http://www.bruneitourism.travel)



**Essentials in the city**

**Food** Brunei's traditional *ambuyat* set (sticky sago with side dishes) and *kelupis*, a popular rice-based snack, are must-tries.

**Quirky** You will hear common phrases like "*karang*" ("wait") and "*malas ta ku ingau*" ("I just cannot be bothered") being used in conversations.

**Tipping policy** Tipping is usually not expected. Some establishments include a service tax, but if they do not, it is acceptable to tip about 10 per cent of the total bill.

**Shopping** Buy lovely *songkets* (handwoven fabric) and local handicraft at Gadong Complex.

**Maximise two hours of free time** Visit Kampong Ayer and the Kampong Ayer Cultural and Tourism Gallery for an insight into Brunei's rich history that dates back to the 10<sup>th</sup> century.

**Insider's tip for half a day off** Visit the morning market at Kianggeh in Bandar Seri Begawan. Then make a photo stop outside Nurul Iman Palace, which is the biggest residential palace in the world. Go on to visit the Royal Regalia Museum, which houses a collection of royal paraphernalia.

**Need to impress clients' lunch** I-Lotus restaurant, just off Tungku Link Highway, is Brunei's best-kept secret and is worth a trip for its Chinese and Thai dishes.

**Lunch on your own** Fratini's Pizza and Pasta Restaurant at Yayasan Shopping Mall is great for a solo meal while enjoying the view of Kampong Ayer.

**Late nights** Organise your own private party in your home, restaurant or hotel.

**Electricity** Voltage is 240V/50Hz, standard three-pin square plugs and sockets are used.

**Visa requirements**

Foreign nationals entering Brunei for employment purposes must have the appropriate visa and employment pass prior to their arrival. Pass holders' spouses and children under 18 years old are required to obtain dependents' passes.

A 72-hour transit visa issued on arrival is available at B\$5 nett per passport. For further details regarding visas and entry procedures, log on to [www.mofat.gov.bn/visainformation/visaarrangements.htm](http://www.mofat.gov.bn/visainformation/visaarrangements.htm)

**Visa requirements by nationality**

Nationality	Visa requirements
US	90-day entry with no visa
Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Malaysia, Malta, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Oman, Poland, Portugal, Singapore, South Korea, Romania, Spain, Sweden, United Arab Emirates, UK	30-day entry with no visa
Australia, Kuwait	Visa-on-arrival for visits not exceeding 30 days
Bahrain, Qatar	Visa-on-arrival for visits not exceeding 14 days
Canada, Indonesia, Japan, Maldives, Peru, Philippines, Switzerland, Thailand, Vietnam	14-day entry with no visa
China	Visa-on-arrival (14 days) only for tourists handled by travel agents while those on business visits require sponsors in Brunei Darussalam.

Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade

**Prices of common items in 2010**

**Bottled water** B\$0.65 for 500ml, B\$1 for 1 litre

**Starbucks latte (small)** not available

**A glass of open wine at a pub** Brunei is a dry country.

**Taxi fare (2km)** Rates are open to negotiation as taxis do not use the metre. A 2km fare could range from B\$5 to B\$10. Taxis from the airport charge more.

**Important contacts**

**NTO**

**Brunei Tourism**, headed by CEO Sheikh Jamaluddin Sheikh Mohamed, is targeting mature and well-travelled market segments and intends to project Brunei as a new and exotic destination.

Brunei Tourism is a department in the Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources, and it does not have overseas representation. Its marketing focus is directed at high-arrival markets as well as those with direct flights to Brunei or with tour operators within the country. Regional ASEAN markets, the Far East, Australia, New Zealand, the UK, West Europe and the Middle East are current targets.

Tel: (673) 238-2822/(673) 238-2832; fax: (673) 238-2824  
[www.bruneitourism.travel](http://www.bruneitourism.travel)

**Travel trade associations**

**The Association of Travel Agents Brunei (ATAB)** is the officially recognised professional association representing the travel industry in Brunei Darussalam.

It works closely with the Brunei Tourism Board and

the Brunei Tourism Department in developing strategies and implementing procedures that enhance the quality and diversity of travel-related services available in Brunei Darussalam.

Contact: P.O. Box 485, Gadong, Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei; tel: (673) 242-7340/242-7440/2442-980; email: [info@bruneitravelagents.org.bn](mailto:info@bruneitravelagents.org.bn)  
[www.bruneitravelagents.org.bn](http://www.bruneitravelagents.org.bn)

**Brunei Association of Hotels' (BAH)** function is to maintain and develop the hospitality industry in Brunei by working closely with the government and other tourism bodies.

BAH strives to create and sustain local employment opportunities within the hospitality industry and enhance awareness of the local hospitality industry.

Contact: PO Box 2033, Bandar Seri Begawan BS8674, Brunei Darussalam; tel: (673) 234-2026; email: [bahsecretariat@gmail.com](mailto:bahsecretariat@gmail.com)  
[www.hotelsofbrunei.com](http://www.hotelsofbrunei.com)

Compiled by S Puvaneswary

All information is correct at press time



Canopy walk, Ulu Temburong National Park



Masjid Jamek



Mosque Soas





ALIVE

The mist over a pristine rainforest canopy. A glimpse at a rare proboscis monkey. One of the earth's last unspoiled ecosystems. Thriving. Untamed. Diverse. Here is the world as it was meant to be. **Explore Brunei.**

**Brunei Tourism**

Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources  
Jalan Menteri Besar, Bandar Seri Begawan - BB3910  
BRUNEI DARUSSALAM  
Tel: (673) 238 28 22 / (673) 238 28 32  
Fax: (673) 238 28 24 E-mail: [info@bruneitourism.travel](mailto:info@bruneitourism.travel)



# Cambodia

## General Overview

Official name	Kingdom of Cambodia
Capital	Phnom Penh
Population	14.8 million
Total area	181,035 sq km
Currency	Riel, but US dollar is widely accepted
Official language	Khmer



The Cambodia Ministry of Tourism (MOT) launched a number of stimulus measures in 2009, including reducing ticket prices for main attraction Angkor Wat as well as tourism packages after the economic crisis. The industry has benefited from an upswing in arrivals in 2010 as international travel started to recover in Asia-Pacific.

In the first quarter of 2010, Cambodia recorded 683,692 arrivals, a 9.9 per cent rise over the same period in 2009, while the second quarter registered 537,464 tourists, an increase of 15.8 per cent over the same period in 2009.

### Climate

Average temperature	27°C to 28°C
Average rainfall	1,000mm to 1,500mm
Average humidity	80 to 90 per cent

### Best time to visit

During the wet season from May to October, average temperature ranges from 20°C to 27°C. For the dry season from November to April, average temperature is from 28°C to 35°C. The best time to visit Cambodia is from September to March.

MOT, the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts and the private sector have developed a year-round calendar of events to attract more visitors, especially during the low season.

### Distances

#### From Phnom Penh to:

Siem Reap	314km
Sihanoukville	214km
Koh Kong	350km
Kompot	148km
Kratie	340km
Steung Treng	481km
Ratanakiri	636km
Mondulakiri	543km
Preah Vihear	292km
Kompong Thom	162km

### Visitor arrival statistics

In 2009, 84.3 per cent of overall visitors to Cambodia were leisure travellers. Business travellers comprised 6.7 per cent; visitors on official trips, 2.5 per cent; and VFR (visiting friends and relatives) arrivals, 4.8 per cent. The remaining 1.8 per cent were unspecified visits.

Phnom Penh welcomed 46.6 per cent of visitors, while 46.2 per cent headed to Siem Reap. Of the total arrivals, 48.9 per cent were independent travellers and 51 per cent were part of tour groups.

### Total tourist arrivals

2008	2.1 million, +5.5 per cent
2009	2.2 million, +1.7 per cent
2010 (Jan-Aug)	1.6 million, +14.63 per cent
	2.4 million, +11 per cent (estimate)

### Top 10 arrival markets 2008

	Arrivals	% Change
South Korea	266,525	-19.21
Vietnam	209,516	67.02
Japan	163,806	1.13
US	145,079	5.48
China	129,626	9.47
Thailand	109,020	7.31
UK	98,093	8.79
France	97,517	15.95
Australia	84,957	18.63
Taiwan	83,000	-29.77

Source: Ministry of Tourism

### Top 10 arrival markets 2009

	Arrivals	% Change
Vietnam	316,202	50.92
South Korea	197,725	-25.81
US	148,482	2.35
Japan	146,286	-10.7
China	128,210	-1.09
UK	106,837	8.91
France	105,437	8.12
Thailand	102,018	-6.42
Laos	94,181	54.56
Australia	84,581	-0.44

Source: Ministry of Tourism

### Top 10 arrival markets 2010 (January to August)

	Arrivals	% Change
Vietnam	302,833	49.92
South Korea	190,781	34.45
China	114,299	41.73
Japan	97,755	8.83
US	96,843	-4.11
France	72,547	1.47
UK	70,129	-3.75
Taiwan	63,536	29.25
Australia	61,627	19.59
Thailand	61,545	-9.3

Source: Ministry of Tourism

### Average length of stay and daily expenditure

2008	6.65 days and US\$112.85
2009	6.45 days and US\$111.96

### Arrivals target for 2010-2011

MOT estimated that about 2.4 million tourists would visit Cambodia in 2010, a figure that took into account the high growth seen in the first eight months following the Asian travel industry's recovery.

With improved business prospects and the resumption of previously suspended flights to Siem Reap from Incheon by Asiana Airlines, South Korean tourists – the second-largest visitor market – have returned in 2010 after a large drop last year. Vietnamese visitor numbers have also continued to soar following bilateral agreements on border crossings in both directions.

MOT's arrivals target for 2011 is 2.8 million.

### Hotel statistics

Investments in high-end hotels in Cambodia continue despite stalled projects resulting from the economic crisis and stagnant hotel construction in the capital city.

The new Sofitel Phokeethra is set to open by the Mekong River in Phnom Penh in December. Sokha Hotels and Resorts' second high-end resort in Sihanoukville, west of Otres Beach, is still underway.

Projects such as Koh Pous in Sihanoukville and the new Bokor Mountain Resort in Kampot are far from completion.

Cambodia's star-designation system, launched last year, continues to make progress. Raffles Hotel Le Royal is the only official five-star rated hotel in the capital, while Blue River Hotel is one of the two four-star hotels in Phnom Penh. Siem Reap welcomed a new five-star resort in 2010, the Borei Angkor Resort and Spa, the seventh five-star property in the city. Sihanoukville has one five-star hotel, the Sokha Beach Resort, and its first accredited four-star hotel: Independence Hotel.

### Number of rooms by star rating (estimate)

	Four-star	Five-star
Phnom Penh	171 (official) 963 (estimate)*	170 (official) 871 (estimate)*
Siem Reap	1,979	1,397
Sihanoukville	88	166

Source: Ministry of Tourism

\*To be ranked

### Total number of rooms

City	Hotel rooms
Phnom Penh	6,920
Siem Reap	8,935
Sihanoukville	1,762
Koh Kong	214
Kampot	58
Battambang	1,096
Preah Vihea	118
Kampong Thom	166
Kratie	269
Stung Treng	174
Ratanakiri	251
Mondulakiri	87

Source: Ministry of Tourism



Overall average occupancy rate in key tourist destinations in 2009 63.6 per cent  
Overall average room rate in Phnom Penh US\$50

### New hotels in 2010

#### SIHANOUKVILLE

Independence Hotel 88 rooms  
Sokha's chalet (unnamed) 68 rooms  
Sokha's new hotel (unnamed) 112 rooms

#### PHNOM PENH

Sofitel Phnom Penh Phokeethra 240 rooms

### New hotels in 2011 and 2012

#### PHNOM PENH

Sokha's convention hotel (unnamed) 580 rooms

#### BOKOR MOUNTAIN

Sokha's convention hotel (unnamed) 700 rooms

### New attractions/tourism infrastructure

**Sihanoukville Airport** has been upgraded with a new airstrip extension. The airport, located 18km outside of the city centre and close to Ream National Park, is ready for business, but there are no scheduled flights in operation. Airport operator Societe Concessionnaire des Aeroports has held discussions with airlines on starting scheduled flights, with the government estimating operational routes by year-end.

[www.cambodia-airports.com](http://www.cambodia-airports.com)

**Lucky Department Store** opened in Phnom Penh in early October. Offering premium-priced goods and international fashion brands, Lucky is the first of its kind in the country. The new mall is located at 37-39 Monireth Boulevard, close to the Olympic Stadium.

### Key events and festivals 2010

#### Chaul Chhnam Thmei or Khmer New Year Festival (April 14 to 16)

The popular festival is celebrated after the end of the harvest season and reflects the joy of spring. It is the equivalent of Songkran in Thailand and Thingyan in Myanmar.

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

#### Johnnie Walker Cambodian Open (December)

Organised by Phokeethra Country Club, the week-long tournament has been held for three consecutive years since 2007.

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

#### Bon Om Took or Khmer Water Festival (early November)

This three-day festival is probably the most extravagant event on the Cambodian calendar. The highlights are the boat races on Tonle Sap River, held in conjunction with fairs, shows, parades, fireworks and performances.

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

#### International Half Marathon (early December)

Usually held at the Angkor temples complex, the event attracts competitors and thousands of spectators from around the world.

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

### Essentials in the city – Siem Reap/Phnom Penh

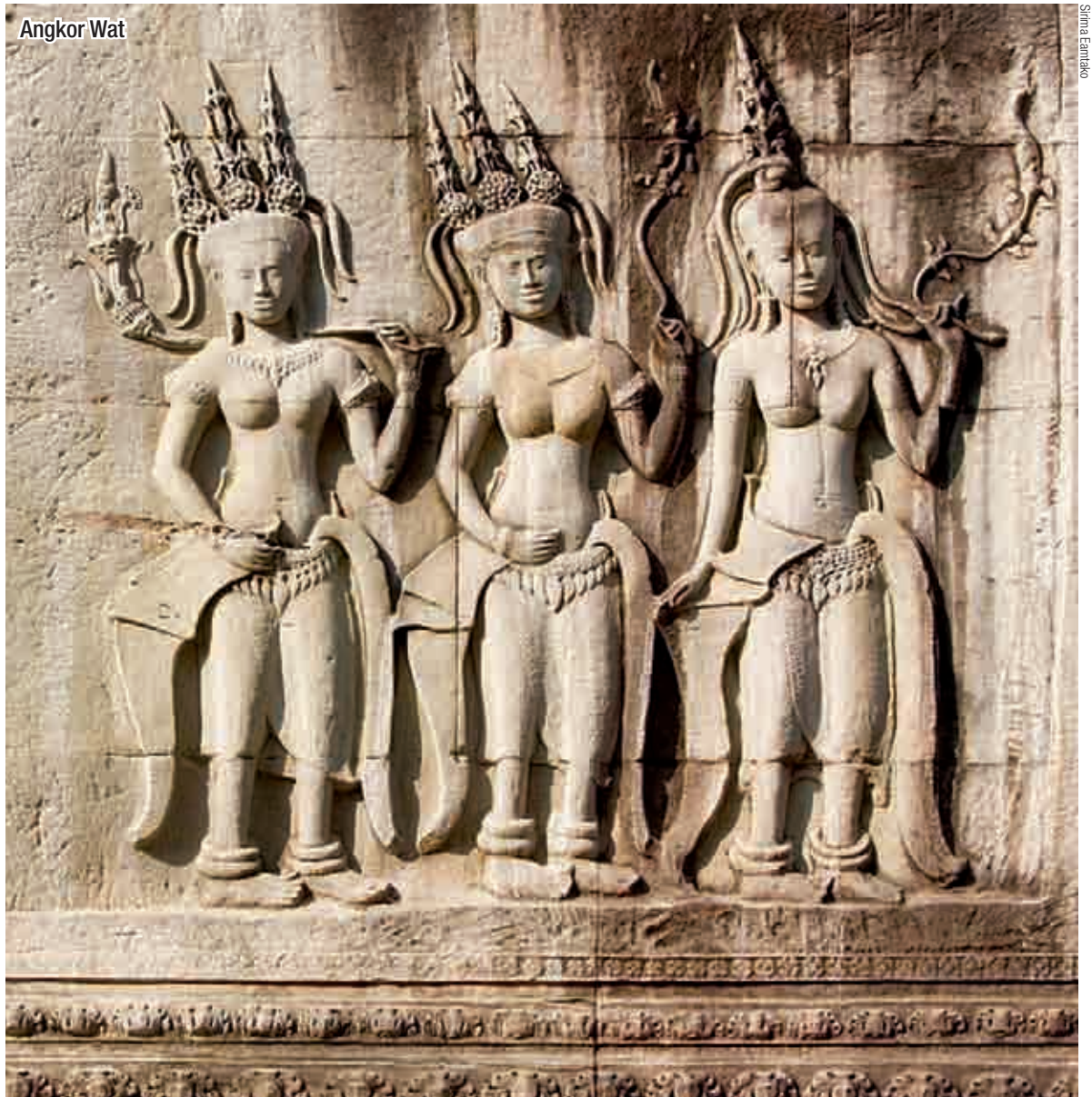
**Food** Phnom Penh and Siem Reap offer a range of fine dining options. For exquisite Cambodian cuisine, try Kampot pepper crab in Kep City, located southwest of Phnom Penh. It is second to none.

**Quirky** Cambodians in Phnom Penh, including taxi drivers, usually won't know the street numbers, except for major roads that are named. Do it the local way – point out a landmark that is near your destination and give directions from there. A map is a must.

**Tipping policy** It is becoming a common practice to tip as the local upper-class swells and more visitors enter the country.

**Shopping** Sihanouk Boulevard in the capital has many high-end clothes stores, with most offering good discounts. For even cheaper bargains, go to the Russian Market in Phnom Penh. For souvenirs, visit Siem Reap's Night Market.

Angkor Wat



**Maximise two hours of free time in Phnom Penh** Watch a football match for a taste of the local sports scene. Enjoy the bustling culture at the Olympic Stadium, where visitors can watch a professional game in the iconic open-air venue for free.

**Insider's tip for half a day off in Siem Reap** Take the popular hot air balloon ride over the temples. For a memorable experience, rent a bicycle and take in the tranquil scenery – especially during winter when the air is fresh and chilly.

**Need to impress clients' lunch in Phnom Penh** Try the affordable Khmer Surin restaurant on Street 57, just off Sihanouk Boulevard. It truly meets expectations when it comes to authentic, high-quality local dishes.

**Lunch on your own in Phnom Penh** Try Taste Budz on Street 288 for cheap but excellent South Indian food, including tasty dosas. Or for really good Vietnamese noodles, the best choice is Pho 294, found on the corner of Street 294 and 63.

**Late nights in Siem Reap** Backpackers head to the likes of Temple Bar on Pub Street where there is a variety of pubbing choices. If nothing suits your fancy, head down the street, nearer to the canal, to check out other late-night options.

**Electricity** Single-phase voltage of 220V and a frequency of 50 Hz, primarily two- and three-pin sockets.

### Visa requirements

A visa on arrival, valid for 30 days, is issued for US\$20 for tourists and US\$25 for businessmen at Phnom Penh International Airport, Siem Reap International Airport and international border checkpoints. A valid passport and a photograph are needed.

Visas can also be obtained at embassies or consulates abroad, and can be extended at the Immigration Department in Phnom Penh.

Visa exemptions are only for holders of diplomatic and service passports from all ASEAN countries except Indonesia, as well as those from India, Bulgaria, Hungary, Cuba, Slovakia and mainland China (excluding citizens of Hong Kong and Macau).

### Prices of common items in 2010

Bottled water US\$0.45

Starbucks latte (small): N/A

A glass of open wine at a pub US\$4

Taxi fare (2km) US\$1.00 (taxi metre)

### Important contacts

#### NTO

**Cambodia Ministry of Tourism**, led by tourism minister Dr Thong Khon, is continuing its Cambodia, Kingdom of Wonder campaign, which was launched last year and features a new tagline, "clean city, clean resort and good service". The ministry and the private sector have been collaborating to spearhead initiatives such as special tour packages to stimulate demand.

Contact: Marketing and Promotion Department, No 3 Monivong Boulevard, Phnom Penh 12258, Cambodia. tel: (855-23) 211-593; fax: (855-23) 217-503; email: [marketing@mot.gov.kh](mailto:marketing@mot.gov.kh)

[www.mot.gov.kh](http://www.mot.gov.kh)

### Tourism-related authority

**Apsara Authority** was set up with the objective of heading initiatives concerning research, protection and conservation of cultural heritage, and urban and tourist development for Siem Reap.

[www.autoriteapsara.org](http://www.autoriteapsara.org)

### Travel trade associations

**Cambodia Association of Travel Agents (CATA)** was established in 1996 with the main objective of working closely with the public and private sector to develop and increase tourism while giving its own members the strongest possible united voice in industry initiatives and development plans.

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

**Cambodia Hotel Association** brings together hotel and resort operators and owners in Cambodia and keeps them abreast of industry developments.

[www.cambodiahotelassociation.org.kh](http://www.cambodiahotelassociation.org.kh)

Compiled by Steve Finch

All information is correct at press time



# China

## General Overview

Official name	People's Republic of China
Capital	Beijing
Population	1.34 billion
Currency	Yuan (renminbi = RMB)
Total area	9,596,960 sq km
Official language	Mandarin ( <i>putonghua</i> )



Inbound tourism recovered in 2010 after a significant slump in 2009. Much of it was stimulated by the 2010 World Expo in Shanghai, which attracted inbound leisure and MICE visitors. Some eight million tourists visited Shanghai during the “Golden Week” national holiday in October, and 22.6 million visitors, an increase of 16 per cent year-on-year, visited 119 leading tourism sites nationwide.

The World Expo averaged around 390,000 visitors per day between May and October. As a result of the Expo, China and overseas nations forged new tourism agreements, which are expected to aid the expansion of international flight routes at airports in emerging Chinese cities beyond Shanghai, Beijing and Guangzhou.

### Best time to visit

China has climates that vary across regions from the tropical Hainan Island south of the mainland to the Siberian borderlands of Heilongjiang province in the north and the western deserts bordering Central Asia. Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou all have long, hot summers. Winter in Beijing (November to April) can be bitterly cold, and in Shanghai, wet and grey.

The key MICE seasons in mainland cities are in Spring (April to June) and Autumn (September to November). Hainan Island, which enjoys year-round sunshine, offers a more flexible MICE calendar.

### Distances

Beijing-Shanghai	1,000km, 2hr
Shanghai-Guangzhou	1,300km, 2hr
Beijing-Guangzhou	1,900km, 3hr
Beijing-Sanya	2,400km, 4hr
Shanghai-Sanya	1,990km, 3hr
Guangzhou-Sanya	650km, 1.2hr

### Visitor arrival statistics

International arrivals to mainland China grew by 5.8 per cent year-on-year from January to July, an increase of 4.2 million arrivals over the same period in 2009, according to the China National Tourism Administration (CNTA) and the Pacific Asia Travel Association.

This increase was attributed to a rebound in corporate arrivals to key cities, and the trend is expected to continue as increased accessibility and new flight routes take shape. Shanghai's two airports are projected to handle 72 million passengers this year.

The expansion of cross-strait flights between Taiwan and Chinese cities and new flight services between emerging Chinese cities and destinations across Asia look set to give inbound tourism a strong boost.

### Total tourist arrivals (including Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan)

2008	130,000,000, -1.4 per cent
2009	215,660,000, +8.97 per cent
2010 (Jan-Aug)	150,710,000, -20.99 per cent

Sources: Jones Lang LaSalle Hotels and China National Tourism Administration

### Average length of stay in 2009 7.6 days

### Average expenditure in 2010 (January to August)

RMB1,280 (US\$192.73) per person

### Top 10 arrival markets

	2010 (Jan-Aug)	% Change
South Korea	2.79 million	25.62
Japan	2.52	-13.4
Russia	1.50	4.0
US	1.32	-6.0
Malaysia	0.76	-2.0
Singapore	0.62	-5.0
Philippines	0.55	-4.5
Mongolia	0.50	3.4
Australia	0.41	-5.9
Thailand	0.40	-9.4

Sources: Jones Lang LaSalle Hotels and China National Tourism Administration

### Total tourism receipts

2009	RMB1.29 billion
2010	RMB3.37 billion (January to September)

### Arrivals target for 2010

No overall target for inbound travel was published, although inbound corporate and leisure travellers were expected to contribute to the targeted 70 million visitors to Shanghai's World Expo and the anticipated two million visitors to Guangzhou's 2010 Asian Games – the two major international events taking place in China in 2010.

From January to August, Chinese airports handled 178 million passengers, up 17.8 per cent over the same period in 2009. Domestic tourism growth continued to surge, with 254 million visitors (up 20 per cent year-on-year, according to the CNTA) recorded at tourism sites nationwide during the “Golden Week” national holiday in early October.

### Hotel statistics

Rates and occupancies across China's gateway cities recovered from recession-hit 2009. For the first eight months of 2010, average occupancy nationwide was 64 per cent, an increase of 11.7 per cent over the same period in 2009. Average daily rate (ADR) was RMB731.94, up 14 per cent, and RevPAR was RMB468.23, up 27.4 per cent, according to STR Global.

Boosted by the 2010 World Expo, Shanghai reported an AOR of 69.5 per cent in August, while Beijing recorded 66.6 per cent. Guangzhou was expected to report a strong final-quarter rates and occupancy boost due to its hosting of the Asian Games in November. Hainan Island reported another strong year, while cities such as Tianjin, Hangzhou, Suzhou and Chongqing absorbed significant new hotel room supply this year.

### Average room rate in 2010 (January to August)

Beijing	RMB617.61
Shanghai	RMB847.55
Guangzhou	RMB765.21

Source: STR Global

### Average occupancy rate

	2008	2009	2010 (Jan to Aug)
<b>Overall</b>			
Beijing	39.4%	48.2%	62%
Shanghai	–	–	63.9%
Guangzhou	–	–	59.7%
<b>Five-star hotels</b>			
Beijing	–	–	61.43%
Shanghai	–	–	63.8%

Sources: STR Global and China National Tourism Administration

### Total number of rooms

Beijing	144,247
Shanghai	142,183

Source: STR Global

### Projected number of new rooms in 2011

Beijing	3,096
Shanghai	10,658

Source: STR Global

### New hotels in 2010

#### BEIJING

**Langham Place Beijing Capital Airport** 372 rooms  
**Hilton Beijing Capital Airport** 22 rooms  
**Fairmont Beijing Chaoyang** 222 rooms  
**Shangri-La China World Summit Wing Chaoyang** 200 rooms  
**Langham Place Beijing Chaoyang** 422 rooms  
**Pullman Beijing West Wanda Shijingshan** 312 rooms

#### SHANGHAI

**Fairmont Peace Hotel** 269 rooms  
**Waldorf-Astoria on the Bund** 269 rooms  
**The Ritz-Carlton, Pudong** 285 rooms  
**Hotel Nikko** 382 rooms  
**Gran Melia** 686 rooms  
**InterContinental Shanghai Puxi** 533 rooms  
**InterContinental Shanghai Expo** 400 rooms  
**Langham Shanghai Xintiandi** 357 rooms  
**Marriott Changfeng Park** 501 rooms  
**Guoman** 442 rooms

#### HAINAN

**Pullman Oceanview Sanya Bay Resort** 413 rooms





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FORMULE1

AICLUB



InterContinental Sanya Resort Luhuitou 343 rooms  
 Conrad Sanya Haitang Bay 101 rooms

GUANGZHOU

Sofitel Guangzhou Tianhe 493 rooms

**New hotels in 2011**

BEIJING

Andaz Beijing Dongcheng 227 rooms  
 Conrad Beijing Chaoyang 300 rooms  
 Mandarin Oriental Beijing 270 rooms  
 Four Seasons Beijing Chaoyang 334 rooms  
 Sheraton Beijing Dongcheng 470 rooms  
 Hyatt Regency Hotel Dongcheng 400 rooms  
 EAST Beijing Chaoyang 369 rooms  
 Taj Hotel Temple of Heaven 46 rooms

SHANGHAI

Banyan Tree North Bund 150 rooms  
 Hotel Indigo Shanghai The Bund 180 rooms  
 Kempinski Shanghai Xuhui 620 rooms  
 Jing'an Shangri-La 600 rooms  
 Shangri-La Kerry Hotel Pudong 574 rooms  
 W The Bund 600 rooms  
 VENU Jumeirah Pudong 400 rooms  
 Mandarin Oriental Pudong 362 rooms

HAINAN

Jumeirah Qing Shui Bay 250 rooms  
 Raffles Sanya Resort Qing Shui Bay 250 rooms  
 JW Marriott Qing Shui Bay 450 rooms  
 Hilton Qing Shui Bay 500 rooms  
 Fairmont Haitang Bay Resort 702 rooms  
 Park Hyatt Sanya Sunny Bay 196 rooms  
 Andaz Sanya Sunny Bay 183 rooms  
 Shangri-La Sanya Haitang Bay 508 rooms  
 Sheraton Sanya Haitang Bay 500 rooms  
 Taj Palace Resort Sanya Xiangshui Bay 500 rooms  
 The St. Regis Sanya Yalong Bay 402 rooms

GUANGZHOU

Sheraton Guangzhou 445 rooms  
 Guangzhou Marriott Tianhe 339 rooms  
 Guangzhou West Tower Hotel Zhujiang New Town 900 rooms  
 Hotel Nikko Guangzhou Tianhe – Software Park 400 rooms  
 Jumeirah Guangzhou Zhujiang New Town 205 rooms  
 Langham Place EDZ Guangzhou Luogang 320 rooms  
 Mandarin Oriental Guangzhou Tianhe 401 rooms  
 W Guangzhou Zhujiang New Town 320 rooms

**New attractions/tourism infrastructure**

The Shanghai 2010 World Expo spurred important developments such as the re-landscaping of the iconic Bund waterfront, the expansion of the metro network to 12 lines, the opening of new hotels and the expansion of Pudong and Puxi airports.

Several World Expo pavilions will be reconfigured, including the Expo Performance Centre, which will reopen as a Mercedes Benz Arena hosting international sporting, musical and theatrical events. The Expo Centre will also reopen in 2011 as the new Shanghai Convention Centre.

Guangzhou will welcome new attractions in 2011, including the expanded Baiyun Airport, the Guangzhou Opera House designed by Zaha Hadid and the Guangzhou TV Tower, the world's highest sightseeing tower. Beijing opened the Water Cube Water Park this year at the Beijing National Aquatics Centre, which was the site for the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games swimming competitions. Nationwide, 97 new airports are under construction, including a second in Beijing.

**Key events and festivals 2011**

Chinese Lunar New Year (February 3)

27<sup>th</sup> Harbin Ice and Snow Festival – Harbin (January 5 to February 29)

PATA 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference – Beijing (April 9 to 12)

[www.pata.org](http://www.pata.org)

Shanghai Literary Festival, M on the Bund (March 4 to 20)

[www.m-restaurantgroup.com/mbund/literary-festival.html](http://www.m-restaurantgroup.com/mbund/literary-festival.html)



Great Wall of China

F1 Chinese Grand Prix, Shanghai International Circuit (April 15 to 17)

14<sup>th</sup> FINA World Swimming Championships, Shanghai (July 16 to 31)

[www.shanghai-fina2011.com/en](http://www.shanghai-fina2011.com/en)

Beijing Music Festival (October)

[www.bmf.org.cn](http://www.bmf.org.cn)

Shanghai ATP Masters 1000 – Qizhong Tennis Centre, Shanghai (October 10 to 16)

[www.shanghaimasters1000.com](http://www.shanghaimasters1000.com)

**Essentials in the city – Shanghai**

**Food** *Xiaolongbao* (steamed soup dumplings) and hairy crab, an Autumn delicacy available from October to November, are must-tries.

**Quirky** Hire a colourful bicycle from one of the stations easily found on street corners of several downtown districts and explore the French Concession, located within the Luwan and Xuhui areas. Passport is required, as well as a RMB300 deposit.

**Tipping policy** Generally, tipping is not accepted, although hotel bellboys and tour guides do accept tips.

**Shopping** Try on a classic Shanghai *qipao* (cheongsam) and pick a traditional porcelain tea set as a gift.

**Maximise two hours of free time** Head to the 100<sup>th</sup> floor observation deck at the Shanghai World Financial Centre, followed by shopping at the city's glitziest retail plaza Shanghai IFC Mall. Sip cocktails on the 58<sup>th</sup> floor alfresco deck of Ritz-Carlton Pudong's Flair for jaw-dropping views of Shanghai. Make sure you book in advance.

**Insider's tip for half a day off** Start with a cup of green tea at the Old China Hand Reading Room on Shaoxing Road, followed by a stroll through the historic lanes of the former French Concession. Then, catch a cab to the Rockbund Art Museum (a block back from the Bund), and wander along the re-landscaped riverside Bund before heading to the legendary Long Bar at the Waldorf-Astoria on the Bund.

**Need to impress clients' lunch** Take your pick of cuisines at Maison Pourcel (modern French), Yi Long Court at The Peninsula Shanghai (upscale Cantonese) and Table No.1 at the Waterhouse at South Bund (contemporary European).

**Lunch on your own** Relish signature *xiaolongbao* dumplings at Din Tai Fung, salads and paninis at Wagas or Taiwanese noodles at Bull Noodle.

**Late nights** Immerse yourself in burlesque and vaudeville cabaret at Gosney & Kallman's Chinatown, bluesy jam sessions at House of Blues & Jazz or head over to Drop for late-night dancing and lounging.

**Electricity** 220V with both two-pronged Type A (US) and three-pronged Type I (Australia) plugs.

**Visa requirements**

All visitors require a pre-paid/pre-stamped visa to enter China. There is no visa on arrival.

**Prices of common items in 2010**

**Bottled water** RMB1.50 for local brand (500ml), RMB12 for Evian (330ml)

**Starbucks latte (small)** RMB26

**A glass of open wine at a pub** RMB45 to RMB65

**Taxi fare** RMB12 (RMB16 after 23.00), RMB2.4/km after the first 3km

**Important contacts**

**NTO**

**China National Tourism Administration (CNTA)** is directly affiliated to the State Council and has eight institutions in 14 countries and regions.

The focus of the CNTA in 2010 is to boost market demand in all areas of tourism. Further stimulating the domestic tourism market is the key focus, following the success of the 2010 World Expo and the hosting of the 2010 Asian Games in Guangzhou.

Domestic and inbound tourism is booming in the tropical island of Hainan, and new services, attractions and hotels will open in the next two to three years.

Tourism promotion for cities like Shanghai will focus strongly on MICE groups from international markets with easy access to China, most notably Hong Kong, Macau, South Korea and South-east Asia, as well as Russia, South America and the Middle East.

Tel: (86-10) 6520-1114; <http://en.cnta.gov.cn>

**Travel trade associations**

**China International Travel Service**

1 Dongdan Beidajie, Beijing; tel: (86-10) 8522-8888

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

**Shanghai Municipal Tourism Administration**

100 Dagou Rd; tel: (86-21) 2311-5527

[www.meet-in-shanghai.net](http://www.meet-in-shanghai.net)

**PATA China**

1805C, Citic Building, 19 Jianguomenwai Dajie, Beijing; tel: (86-10) 6500-1397

Compiled by Gary Bowerman

All information is correct at press time



# Hong Kong

## General Overview

Official name	Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China
Capital	Hong Kong
Population	7.02 million
Total area	1,104 sq km
Currency	Hong Kong dollar
Official languages	Chinese, English



Despite 2009's financial crisis that caused global tourism to nosedive, Hong Kong was still able to maintain growth, recording 29.6 million arrivals, a 0.3 per cent increase over 2008's figures. Total inbound tourism receipts for 2009 rose to HK\$162.9 billion (US\$21 billion), a 3.2 per cent increase over 2008's figures.

Arrival numbers were also boosted by Russian travellers, who had added incentive to visit the city after the implementation of mutual visa-free arrangements between Hong Kong and Russia in July 2009. As a result, overall growth in Russian arrivals hit a record 15.7 per cent for that year.

### Climate

Average temperature	23°C to 28°C
Average rainfall	2,214.3mm
Average humidity	69 to 82 per cent

### Best time to visit

Hong Kong's subtropical climate gives it four distinctive seasons. Pleasant breezes, plenty of sunshine and comfortable temperatures grace November and December, making this period the best time to visit. The conducive weather makes it ideal for leisure and business travellers. It is also the peak season for the MICE industry.

January and February are prone to cloudy weather, with occasional cold fronts followed by dry northerly winds. It is not uncommon for temperatures to drop below 10°C in urban areas.

Springtime starts in March and April, with occasional spells of high humidity, and foggy weather that could affect visibility; air traffic and ferry services are occasionally disrupted as a result. The summer season from May to August is hot and humid with occasional showers and thunderstorms.

Severe weather phenomena that could affect Hong Kong includes tropical cyclones (July to October), strong winter monsoon winds and thunderstorms with squalls from April to September.

### Distances

<b>From Hong Kong to:</b>	
Beijing	1,971km, 2hr 27min
Shanghai	1,208km, 1hr 30min
Taipei	812km, 1hr
Fukuoka	2,049km, 3hr 50min
Kuala Lumpur	2,504km, 3hr 7min
Manila	1,111km, 1hr 23min
Seoul	2,097km, 2hr 36min
Singapore	2,569km, 3hr 1min

Bangkok	723km, 2hr 8min
Sydney	7,349km, 9hr 8min
Vancouver	10,278km, 12hr 46min
San Francisco	11,121km, 13hr 49min
New York	12,983km, 16hr 8min
London	9,646km, 11hr 40min
Moscow	7,156km, 8hr 54min

### Visitor arrival statistics

Mainland China dominated the arrivals market from January to September, followed by South and South-east Asia, Taiwan, North Asia and Europe/Africa/the Middle East. Arrivals traffic has been high this year, with most visitor countries showing double-digit growth.

Overnight visitor arrivals for the first three quarters of 2010 totalled 14.7 million, which represented 56.2 per cent of overall visitor arrivals, an increase of 21.8 per cent over the same period last year. India, an emerging market, recorded robust growth of 54.7 per cent from January to August, contributing 352,987 visitors. Meanwhile, South Korea benefited from the appreciation of the won, which resulted in 660,152 arrivals, an increase of 43.2 per cent for the first three quarters of 2010.

Average expenditure figures for the year reflected China, Taiwan and Australia as the top spenders.

### Total tourist arrivals

2008	29,506,616, +4.7 per cent
2009	29,590,654, +0.3 per cent
2010 (Jan to Aug)	23,447,843, +24 per cent

### Percentage of BT-MICE (Business Travel and MICE) to overall arrivals

2008	Four per cent
2009	Four per cent
2010 (Jan to Jun)	2.8 per cent

### Top 10 arrival markets 2008

Market	Arrivals	% Change
Mainland China	16,862,003	8.9
Taiwan	2,240,481	0.1
Japan	1,324,797	N/A
US	1,146,364	-6.9
South Korea	904,320	3.2
Australia	643,538	1.6
Singapore	632,637	0.1
Philippines	568,540	2.8
UK	563,984	-6.2
Malaysia	490,561	-2.8

Source: Hong Kong Tourism Board

### Top 10 arrival markets 2009

Market	Arrivals	% Change
Mainland China	17,956,731	6.5
Taiwan	2,009,644	-10.3
Japan	1,204,490	-9.1
US	1,070,073	-6.7
Singapore	623,730	-1.4
South Korea	618,694	-31.6
Australia	600,085	-6.8
Philippines	563,750	-0.8
UK	513,984	-8.9
Malaysia	441,698	-10.0

Source: Hong Kong Tourism Board

### Top 10 arrival markets 2010 (January to August)

Market	Arrivals	% Change
Mainland China	14,868,849	28.7
Taiwan	1,468,976	9.7
Japan	862,971	14.6
US	752,997	8.8
South Korea	585,514	37.8
Singapore	419,572	18.2
Philippines	415,158	15.4
Australia	406,574	9.0
India	352,987	54.7
UK	333,103	-0.4

Source: Hong Kong Tourism Board

### Average length of stay/ Average per capita expenditure (HK\$)

Market	Average length of stay 2008	Average expenditure 2008	Average length of stay 2009	Average expenditure 2009
Mainland China	2.7	7,110	2.6	8,489
Taiwan	3.5	5,410	2.3	5,577
Japan	2.1	4,289	2.1	3,976
US	3.2	5,913	3.3	4,872
South Korea	2.0	4,327	2.2	3,733
Australia	3.4	6,311	3.4	5,533
Singapore	3.0	5,370	3.0	5,090
Philippines	3.7	4,212	3.4	4,211
UK	3.8	5,716	3.8	4,902
Malaysia	2.9	4,265	2.9	4,040

Source: Hong Kong Tourism Board

### Total tourism receipts

2008	HK\$158.95 billion
2009	HK\$162.81 billion

### NTO budget

2009-2010	HK\$367.9 million
2010-2011	HK\$378 million

### Hotel statistics

The first sign of recovery was seen in the last quarter of 2009 and, since then, the hotel industry has achieved a rapid rebound. For the first nine months of 2010, oc-



cupancy rose to 85 per cent and room rate stood at HK\$1,100, compared to 78 per cent and HK\$1,023 for the same period last year.

The upward trend is expected to continue in 2011, with room rate increasing by five to 10 per cent. Serviced suite hotels, which offer long-stay packages, are becoming popular. Also, while building new hotels in old industrial districts is not a current trend, there may be a gradual need for it as land availability is becoming more scarce in centralised business locations.

**Average occupancy rate/Average room rate**

	AOR		ARR	
	2009	2010 (Jan-Sept)	2009	2010 (Jan-Sept)
Overall	78%	85%	HK\$1,023	HK\$1,100
Four-star	72%	85%	HK\$779	HK\$880
Five-star	72%	79%	HK\$1,808	HK\$1,874

Source: Hong Kong Tourism Board

**Total number of rooms**

2009	59,627
2010 (Jan-Sept)	60,432

**Number of four- and five-star rooms**

• Four star

2009	21,638
2010 (Jan-Sept)	21,289

• Five star

2009	15,116
2010 (Jan-Sept)	16,052

**Projected number of rooms in 2011 and 2012**

2011	213 hotels, 67,010 rooms
2012	228 hotels, 69,818 rooms

**New hotels in 2010**

- L'hotel Island South 432 rooms
- EAST Hotel 345 rooms
- Regal iClub 50 rooms

**New hotels in 2011**

- Cosmopolitan Kwai Chung Hotel 600 rooms
- Hotel ICON 262 rooms
- The Ritz-Carlton Hong Kong 312 rooms
- The Bauhinia (Central) Hotel 249 rooms
- Cosmopolitan Kowloon Hotel 380 rooms
- The Kush Hotel 252 rooms
- Magnificent International Hotel 460 rooms

**New attractions/tourism infrastructure**

**Ocean Park's** master redevelopment plan is funded by a HK\$5.5 billion budget that will see the amusement park totally refreshed by 2012. Attractions such as Amazing Asian Animals, SkyFair and the Ocean Express have been completed, while the new Aqua City is set to open by end-2010. It will feature a lagoon and a spectacular special effects show with pyrotechnics, water jets, lighting and the first 360-degree water screen in the world. [www.oceanpark.com.hk](http://www.oceanpark.com.hk)

**Ngong Ping Piazza** was revamped in August and now features a *pai lau* (pillars forming the piazza entrance), a Bodhi Path, a *di tan* (site for religious ceremonies) and a landscaped garden. It is located near Po Lin Monastery, Giant Buddha and the Wisdom Path Buddhist-themed village at Ngong Ping on Lantau Island. [www.discoverhongkong.com/eng/.../outlying-nppiazza.html](http://www.discoverhongkong.com/eng/.../outlying-nppiazza.html)

**Observation Deck "Sky 100"** at International Commerce Centre (ICC) Kowloon is scheduled to open by end-2010 and will feature a 360-degree panoramic view of Hong Kong. Located on the 100<sup>th</sup> floor of the 118-storey ICC, it will be part of the tower that houses the Ritz-Carlton Hotel, a dining area and offices. [www.shkp-icc.com/index.html](http://www.shkp-icc.com/index.html)

**The Tai O Police Station** will be transformed into the Tai O Heritage Hotel in the fourth quarter of 2011. The new boutique hotel will combine hospitality with heritage by collaborating with local communities to organise activities such as Old Tai O Police Station heritage tours, Tai O food expos and ecotours. It will also work with NGOs to promote Tai O's festive celebrations, night fishing tours

and Chinese white dolphin tours. [www.hkheritage.org/en/events\\_taiogbceremony.asp](http://www.hkheritage.org/en/events_taiogbceremony.asp)

**Key events and festivals 2011**

**Cathay Pacific International Chinese New Year Night Parade (February 3)**

Location: Tsim Sha Tsui  
Organiser: Hong Kong Tourism Board

**Hong Kong Arts Festival (February 17 to March 27)**

Organiser: Hong Kong Arts Festival Society  
Various locations  
[www.hk.artsfestival.org](http://www.hk.artsfestival.org)

**Hong Kong Rugby Sevens (March 25 to 27)**

Location: Hong Kong Stadium, Causeway Bay  
Organiser: Hong Kong Rugby Football Union  
[www.hksevans.com](http://www.hksevans.com)

**Essentials in the city**

**Food** Apart from Michelin-starred restaurants, the city also offers an exotic range of local delicacies such as rice noodles, congee and roasted meats that must be tasted to be appreciated.

**Quirky** Hong Kong people adopt a fast pace in almost everything they do, including walking and eating.

**Tipping policy** No need to tip.

**Shopping** It is bargains galore at Ap Lei Chau. The South Side area near Aberdeen is known primarily for its discount furniture and clothing warehouses.

**Maximise two hours of free time** Hop onto a tram and enjoy the change of skyline from Sheung Wan to Shau Kei Wan.

**Insider's tip for half a day off** Venture over to Lantau Island and take a ride on the Ngong Ping 360 cable car to Ngong Ping. View the city's largest outdoor bronze statue and then take the bus down to an old fishing village – Tai O for a memorable experience.



**Need to impress clients' lunch** Pearl on the Peak at the Peak Tower offers the most spectacular panoramic views of Central, Victoria Harbour and Kowloon.

**Lunch on your own** Grab a bite from various fastfood chains or try Italian at Al Dente on Staunton Street, which serves pasta cooked to perfection.

**Late nights** Temple Street in Kowloon is popular with tourists and locals alike and gives a glimpse of buzzing nightlife at the flea market.

**Electricity** European and British standards, 220V/50Hz.

**Visa requirements**

Tourists from about 170 countries enjoy visa-free visits ranging from seven to 180 days. Citizens of Australia, Canada, the UK, Denmark, Japan and New Zealand are allowed three-month visa-free stays.

For mainland China visitors, the Individual Visit Scheme (IVS) has been extended to cover 49 mainland cities, including 21 cities in Guangdong province, Shanghai, Beijing and Chongqing. Frequent visitors with valid passports and who are eligible to enter the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) without visas or entry permits may apply for the HKSAR Travel Pass. [www.immd.gov.hk/ehtml/hkvisas\\_visit.htm](http://www.immd.gov.hk/ehtml/hkvisas_visit.htm)

**Prices of common items in 2010**

- Bottled water HK\$6
- Starbucks latte (small) HK\$28
- A glass of open wine at a pub HK\$40 to HK\$60
- Taxi fare (2km) HK\$18

**Important contacts**

**NTO**  
**The Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTb)** is a government-funded body under the control of the Tourism Commission. It has a worldwide network of 15 offices and has representatives in five markets. HKTb focuses on promotional efforts in emerging markets such as India, Russia and the Middle East.

A series of mega events, including anchor event "Hong Kong Dragon Boat Carnival" in July, are staged throughout the year. These events are promoted along with traditional festivals, cultural celebrations and other major events with the aim of enriching visitor experience and reinforcing Hong Kong's image as the "events capital of Asia". HKTb also works closely with cities in the Pearl River Delta and other regional destinations to promote multi-destination itineraries. [www.discoverhongkong.com](http://www.discoverhongkong.com) (for consumers and general resources)  
<http://partnernet.hktb.com> (for trade and in-depth resources)

**Travel trade associations**

**Tourism Commission of the Government of the HKSAR**  
[www.tourism.gov.hk](http://www.tourism.gov.hk)

**Quality Tourism Services (QTS) Scheme**  
[www.DiscoverHongKong.com/hk/qts](http://www.DiscoverHongKong.com/hk/qts)

**Hong Kong Association of Travel Agents (HATA)**  
[www.hata.org.hk](http://www.hata.org.hk)

**Travel Industry Council of Hong Kong (TIC)**  
[www.tichk.org](http://www.tichk.org)

Compiled by Prudence Lui  
All information is correct at press time



# India

## General Overview

Official name	Republic of India
Capital	New Delhi
Population	1.16 billion
Total area	3.3 million sq km
Currency	Indian rupee
Official language	*Hindi, English

\*There are 22 national languages that have been recognised by the Constitution of India, of which Hindi is the official language. Besides these, 844 different regional dialects are spoken in various parts of the country.



Arrivals growth in 2009 was weak, which led India Tourism to adjust its 10 million visitor target for 2010 to 2012. The 10 per cent growth in arrivals during the first nine months of 2010, however, offered a glimmer of hope. One contributor to the encouraging arrivals was the 2010 Commonwealth Games, which spurred infrastructure development and room supply in Delhi.

Buoyed by the growing economy and positive indicators, the India government has allocated about US\$350 billion for infrastructure development in its 11<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan (2007-2012), which is expected to translate into increased arrivals in the next few years.

### Climate

Average temperature	10°C to 15°C (Winter) 32°C to 40°C (Summer)
Average rainfall	912.8mm
Average humidity	49.2 per cent

India is divided into four climatic zones: alpine, subtropical, tropical and arid. Its meteorological seasons are Winter (January to February), pre-monsoon (March to May), Southwest monsoon (June to September) and post-monsoon (October to December). India has 2,856 hours of sunlight a year, an average of 7.8 hours per day.

### Best time to visit

The winter period from October to March is ideal for travel. April to September is considered low season and is a good time to take advantage of discounts offered by hotels. Monsoon season is best avoided in most parts of the country, but Kerala offers special monsoon packages with ayurvedic treatments that apparently yield the best results during that time.

The best times to visit the Golden Triangle of Delhi, Agra and Jaipur are October to November and February to March. The winter months (November to February) are the best time to visit Mumbai.

### Distances

#### From New Delhi to:

Agra	209km, 45 min
Mumbai	1,407km, 1hr 50min
Bengaluru	2,061km, 2hr 35min
Kolkata	1,461km, 2hr
Chennai	2,095km, 2hr 35min
Jaipur	258km, 55min
Hyderabad	1,499km, 2hr
Ahmedabad	915km, 1hr 25min
Thiruvananthapuram	2,814km, 4hr 30min
Ahmedabad	915km, 1hr 25min

Amritsar	447km, 1hr
Guwahati	1,959km, 2hr 50min
Srinagar	876km, 1hr 20min

### Visitor arrival statistics

India's arrival figures were considered healthy in 2009 as its negative growth of 3.3 per cent was still lower than the global average decline of four per cent. Although overall arrivals to India declined in 2009, there was positive growth from Africa (17 per cent), Central and South America (9.6 per cent) and South-east Asia (4.7 per cent).

The marketshare of the top 10 countries in 2009 remained largely the same, with a slight 0.2 per cent decrease over 2008's figures. Canada and Sri Lanka swapped places as Sri Lanka moved up to fourth position with 240,836 arrivals in 2009. Similarly, Malaysia and Japan switched positions as Malaysia climbed to ninth position with 134,340 arrivals in 2009.

India's tourism receipts declined by three per cent, compared to the global decline of six per cent. In 2009, India ranked 11<sup>th</sup> in Asia in 2009 for arrivals and sixth for tourism receipts.

#### Total tourist arrivals

	2008	2009	2010 (Jan-Sept)
Arrivals	5,282,603	5,108,579	3,836,000
% Change	4.0	-3.3	10

Source: Ministry of Tourism, Government of India

#### Tourism revenue (US\$)

	2008	2009	2010 (Jan-Sept)
Receipts	11.75 billion	11.39 billion	10.01 billion
% Change	9.5	-3.0	30.5

Source: Ministry of Tourism, Government of India

### Top 10 arrival markets 2009

	Arrivals	Marketshare (%)
US	803,021	15.7
UK	748,765	14.7
Bangladesh	458,063	9.0
Sri Lanka	240,836	4.7
Canada	221,448	4.3
France	195,307	3.8
Germany	193,557	3.8
Australia	148,846	2.9
Malaysia	134,340	2.6
Japan	124,219	2.4

Source: Ministry of Tourism, Government of India

Average length of stay of tourists 28 days

### MICE arrivals

According to the International Congress and Convention Association, India hosted 73,712 international participants for meetings in 2008 and 91 meetings in 2009. The country ranked 33<sup>rd</sup> among top meeting destinations in the world in 2009.

### NTO budget

India Tourism's total budget for financial year April 2010 to March 2011 is Rs 1,050 crore (US\$237.42 million), while the marketing or overseas publicity and promotion component gets US\$68.18 million, up by 10 per cent. Product and infrastructure development for destinations and circuits receives US\$118.05 million.

### Arrivals target for 2011

India Tourism has revised its target to 10 million arrivals by 2012, instead of 2010, and 15 million visitors by 2015. The revision was made in 2009 after the negative impact of the world economic slump and the Mumbai attacks.

### Hotel statistics

Financial year April 2009 to March 2010 has been challenging for the Indian hospitality industry, with the first half experiencing tremendous turbulence caused in part by the drop in corporate travellers.

Hotels, however, saw a marked recovery in demand in the second half of the financial year, although IT-dependent markets like Pune, Hyderabad and Bengaluru suffered declining occupancy rates. Ahmedabad's decline in occupancy is attributed to the entry of many new branded hotels in the city. Leisure destinations such as Jaipur, Goa and Agra witnessed healthy growth rates, while Delhi-NCR and Mumbai posted smaller increases. HVS India expects hotel rates across categories to become more aligned with global industry benchmarks.

The financial year also welcomed the highest number of hotel openings, adding 14,081 rooms to the supply. This substantial growth was also boosted by increased room inventories in Delhi-NCR and Mumbai.

#### Average occupancy rate

	2008-2009	2009-2010	% Change
Delhi (NCR)	67.3	67.9	0.9
Agra	52.4	55.7	6.3
Ahmedabad	61.2	56.8	-7.1
Bengaluru	54.6	52.5	-3.9
Chennai	63.1	61.8	-2.0
Goa	61.1	66.4	8.7
Hyderabad	55.8	53.1	-4.8
Jaipur	54.1	58.9	8.9
Kolkata	69.5	67.5	-2.9
Mumbai	60.6	63.0	4.0
Pune	62.2	48.9	-21.4

Source: HVS India

#### Average room rate (US\$)

	2008-2009	2009-2010	% Change
Delhi (NCR)	214	180	4.7
Agra	116	121	6.7
Ahmedabad	104	87	2.0

Continued next page



Continued from previous page

Average room rate (continued)

	2008-2009	2009-2010	% Change
Bengaluru	207	138	4.9
Chennai	145	118	2.3
Goa	137	118	3.9
Hyderabad	137	108	6.3
Jaipur	130	100	5.5
Kolkata	146	129	2.1
Mumbai	233	176	0.7
Pune	163	114	5.5

Source: HVS India

Average occupancy rate of star-category hotels

Hotel	2008-2009	2009-2010	% Change
Overall	168	135	-19.4
Five-star deluxe	242	195	-19.4
Five-star	158	128	-19.3
Four-star	125	103	-18.0
Three-star	77	70	-9.2

Source: HVS India

Total number of hotels

	Existing no of hotels 2009/2010	Proposed hotel increase over five years	% Change
Agra	1,439	510	35
Ahmedabad	1,521	2,339	154
Bengaluru	5,597	9,819	175
Chandigarh	653	1,482	227
Chennai	3,806	5,995	158
Delhi (NCR)	11,018	20,021	182
Goa	3,402	1,736	51
Hyderabad	3,782	5,302	140
Jaipur	2,472	2,664	108
Kolkata	1,520	3,481	229
Mumba	9,877	7,477	76
Pune	2,672	5,196	194
Other cities*	14,759	23,427	159
<b>Total</b>	<b>62,518</b>	<b>89,449</b>	<b>143</b>

Source: HVS India

New hotels in 2010

- Westin, Mumbai 269 rooms
- Holiday Inn, Mumbai 225 rooms
- Courtyard by Marriott, Mumbai 340 rooms
- The Leela Palace Kempinski New Delhi 260 rooms
- Grand Hyatt Pune 325 rooms
- Hyatt Regency Chennai 329 rooms
- Four Points by Sheraton Pune 215 rooms
- Marriott Hotel & Convention Center Pune 418 rooms
- The Westin Gurgaon, Delhi-NCR 300 rooms
- Aloft Bengaluru Whitefield 170 rooms
- Aloft Chennai, OMR IT Expressway 129 rooms
- Aloft Coimbatore Singanallur 173 rooms
- JW Marriott Chandigarh 175 rooms
- Courtyard Pune city centre 153 rooms
- Pullman Gurgaon Central Park 285 rooms
- Mercure Lavasa 130 rooms
- Grand Hyatt Goa 314 rooms
- Hyatt Regency Chennai 333 rooms
- Hyatt Regency Pune 222 rooms
- Ibis Mumbai Airport 148 rooms

New hotels in 2011

- JW Marriott Hotel Bangalore 250 rooms
- JW Marriott Hotel Gurgaon, Delhi NCR 206 rooms
- Sheraton Bangalore Hotel 300 rooms
- Sofitel Mumbai Bandra Kurla 302 rooms
- JW Marriott Hotel New Delhi International Airport 510 rooms
- Bengaluru Marriott Whitefield Hotel 250 rooms
- Jaipur Marriott Hotel 365 rooms

- Park Hyatt Kolkata 228 rooms
- Park Hyatt Chennai 201 rooms
- Novotel Bangalore 219 rooms
- Ibis Bengaluru 340 rooms
- Shangri-La Hotel Mumbai 410 rooms
- Ibis Delhi Airport 315 rooms
- Novotel Lavasa 200 rooms
- Holiday Inn Kochi 215 rooms
- Grand Hyatt Pune 325 rooms
- The Pullman Lavasa 258 rooms
- JW Marriott Hotel Pune City Center 250 rooms
- JW Marriott Hotel Kolkata 300 rooms

New attractions/tourism infrastructure

**New Delhi's new Terminal 3** at Indira Gandhi International Airport has a handling capacity of 34 million passengers annually. All domestic and international flights operate from this US\$2.73 billion terminal, which has 168 check-in counters, 24 mobile check-in counters, 98 immigration counters, 78 aerobridges and a 100-room transit hotel.

[www.newdelhiairport.in](http://www.newdelhiairport.in)

**Bollywood Tourism** is the new theme for tours that provide a peek into the movie industry. Tourists get to visit live studios, participate in Bollywood performances, identify star homes, and observe acting sessions, behind-the-scenes activities and set preparations.

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

**Mohabbat the Taj** is a mesmerising dance drama of the epic love story of emperor Shah Jahan and his third wife, Mumtaz Mahal. It is held daily at Kalakriti International & Convention Centre in Agra.

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

**Kingdom of Dreams** is an entertainment complex that offers a range of art and cultural performances and activities such as a permanent mega Bollywood musical show at its Nautanki Mahal, a unique 4D theatre; and a showcase of Indian culture, cuisine and art at Culture Gully.

[www.kingdomofdreams.co.in](http://www.kingdomofdreams.co.in)

**Della Adventure** is an integrated resort near Mumbai. It offers 86 activities that include 42 adventure attractions such as the flying fox, jet skiing and night rappelling. A choice of accommodation is available: Della chalets with 100 rooms and Della camp with 100 luxury tents.

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

Key events and festivals 2011

**Dasara Festival, Mysore, Karnataka (October 6 to 15)** Dasara is a 10-day festival culminating in a grand procession on Vijayadashami. Organiser: Karnataka Tourism [www.karnatakaturism.org](http://www.karnatakaturism.org)

**Navratri Festival, Gujarat (September 28 to October 6)** People throughout the state congregate during this nine-night dance festival to honour Goddess Shakti, the feminine divinity. Organiser: Gujarat Tourism [www.gujarattourism.com](http://www.gujarattourism.com)

**Goa Carnival (February)** A traditional celebration, Goa Carnival attracts attention with its colourful parades and religious services. Organiser: Goa Tourism [www.goa-tourism.com](http://www.goa-tourism.com)

**Visit Maharashtra festivals** The state will be organising many festivals in 2011 as part of Visit Maharashtra Year celebrations. At least one festival will be held every month at popular locations. Organiser: Maharashtra Tourism [www.maharashtratourism.gov.in](http://www.maharashtratourism.gov.in)

Essentials in the city – New Delhi

**Food** Try butter chicken; it is mouth-watering.

**Quirky** Brave the crowds of Chandni Chowk to savour *parathas* (Indian stuffed bread) at Parathawali Gali.

**Tipping policy** Tipping is accepted but is not a must. Tipping the tour guide US\$5 per day is fine.

**Shopping** Indulge in exotic purchases of jewellery, art and craft, silk and cotton at Dilli Haat, Chandni Chowk,

Connaught Place, Karol Bagh and Hauz Khas village.

**Maximise two hours of free time** Go to City Walk Mall at Saket in South Delhi. It offers a vibrant, upscale and unique shopping and leisure experience.

**Insider's tip for half a day off** Take your pick of local activities at the Akshardham Temple complex spread across 24.2ha on the banks of river Yamuna. Check out the musical fountain that plays Indian *ragas* (classical music).

**Need to impress clients' lunch** Make an impression – go to Masala Art, a classy and modern Indian restaurant at Taj Palace Hotel.

**Lunch on your own** Have a Thali meal, a selection of regional dishes, at Andhra Bhawan, Chanakya Puri.

**Late nights** Shalom at The Hyatt Regency Delhi has a popular disco-cum-bar worth checking out if one feels restless at night.

**Electricity** 220V (circular pins).

Visa requirements

Valid passports and visas are required to enter India. Visa fees vary according to country of origin and type of visa.

To attract more foreign tourists to India, the government launched a visa-on-arrival (VoA) scheme in January 2010 for citizens of five countries: Finland, Japan, Luxembourg, New Zealand and Singapore. From January to August that year, 4,022 VoAs were issued. The scheme will be extended to citizens of Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam and the Philippines from January 2011.

[www.meaindia.nic.in](http://www.meaindia.nic.in)

[www.incredibleindia.org](http://www.incredibleindia.org)

Prices of common items in 2010

**Bottled water** US\$0.35 to US\$0.9

**Starbucks latte (small)** US\$1.5

**A glass of open wine at a pub** US\$4

**Taxi fare (2km)** US\$0.45

Important contacts

NTO

**India Tourism** has a network of 13 overseas offices: six regional overseas offices in Sydney, Frankfurt, Tokyo, Dubai, London and New York and seven subregional offices in Toronto, Paris, Milan, Amsterdam, Los Angeles, Johannesburg and Singapore.

Contact (leisure): Rajen Habib Khwaja, Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, Room No. 109, Transport Bhawan, 1 Parliament Street, New Delhi 110001 Tel: (91-11) 2371-1792, 2332-1395; fax: (91-11) 2371-7890; [www.incredibleindia.org](http://www.incredibleindia.org)

Travel trade associations

**The Travel Agents Association of India** [www.travelagentsofindia.org](http://www.travelagentsofindia.org)

**Federation of Hotel and Restaurant Associations of India** [www.fhrai.com](http://www.fhrai.com)

**The Indian Association of Tour Operators** [www.iato.in](http://www.iato.in)

**The Travel Agents Federation of India** [www.tafionline.com](http://www.tafionline.com)

**IATA Agents Association of India** [www.iaai.in](http://www.iaai.in)

**India Convention Promotion Bureau** [www.icpb.org](http://www.icpb.org)

**Adventure Tour Operators Association of India** [www.atoai.org](http://www.atoai.org)

**Association of Domestic Tour Operators of India** [www.adtoi.in](http://www.adtoi.in)

**Hotel Association of India** [www.hotelassociationofindia.com](http://www.hotelassociationofindia.com)

Compiled by Anand & Madhura Katti  
All information is correct at press time



# Indonesia

## General Overview

Official name	Republic of Indonesia
Capital	Jakarta
Population	237.6 million
Total area	1.9 million sq km
Currency	Rupiah
Official language	Bahasa Indonesia



Arrivals to Indonesia grew by 13.5 per cent in the first seven months of 2010 over the same period last year. Total arrivals to date were 4.04 million.

A comparison of monthly arrivals for the year over the respective period in 2009 showed a growth rate of between 11 per cent and 24 per cent. The only exception was January at 4.3 per cent. Looking at forward bookings and the positive trend in the market, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism expects the monthly double-digit growth rate to continue till end-2010, allowing it to exceed the seven million arrival target for the year.

The industry is projecting another good year for Indonesia in 2011, buoyed by the interest of overseas investors in opening offices in Indonesia and in seeking new partners for business expansion.

A modest target of 7.6 million arrivals in 2011 has been set by the tourism authority, no doubt a figure that could well be surpassed if this year's achievement is anything to go by.

### Climate

Average temperature	22°C to 35°C
Average rainfall	180mm to 280mm per month
Average humidity	70 to 80 per cent

### Best time to visit

Indonesia is suitable to visit year-round. June to August, December and early January are peak holiday seasons for Bali. However, Bali has seen changes in travel patterns as leisure visitors become more savvy in seeking the best airline rates available.

January to May are the best months for MICE events as hotel occupancy would be lower. Destinations like Jogjakarta and Bandung are packed with domestic travellers during long weekends and school holidays.

### Distances

Jakarta-Denpasar	977km, 1hr 20min
Jakarta-Jogjakarta	443km, 50min
Denpasar-Jogjakarta	541km, 50min
Denpasar-Lombok	57km, 20min

### Visitor arrival statistics

Australia recorded the highest growth in the first seven months of 2010 with a 42 per cent hike, thanks to increased seat capacity from Australia to Bali and Jakarta. Middle East arrivals have also increased 34.7 per cent compared to the same period last year. China

recorded the third-biggest growth of 250,909 arrivals, a 20.9 per cent increase, while Japan was the only market with a 12.7 per cent decline. The cessation of Japan Airlines flights to Bali in October could lead to an even greater year-end dip.

### Total tourist arrivals

2008	3,469,968
2009	3,558,887
2010 (Jan-Jul)	4,039,020

### Top 10 arrival markets (January-July)

	2009	2010	% Change
Singapore	602,173	641,553	6.54
Malaysia	554,250	648,865	17.07
Australia	276,864	393,059	41.97
Japan	260,360	227,254	-12.72
China	207,607	250,909	20.86
South Korea	142,908	165,991	16.15
Taiwan	107,361	122,140	13.77
US	91,859	102,020	11.06
UK	96,382	107,487	11.52
France	87,563	87,410	-0.18

Source: Ministry of Culture and Tourism

### Average length of stay (days)

	2008	2009
Singapore	5.01	4.51
Malaysia	5.20	5.28
Australia	10.79	10.22
Japan	7.44	6.50
China	7.49	6.21
South Korea	6.48	5.49
Taiwan	6.73	5.79
US	14.01	11.11
UK	11.64	10.75
France	12.89	11.85

Source: Ministry of Culture and Tourism

### Average expenditure per visit (US\$)

	2008	2009
Singapore	818.07	602.81
Malaysia	684.86	684.81
Australia	1,484.34	1,447.35
Japan	1,196.94	916.00
China	1,112.71	888.54
South Korea	1,014.68	847.77
Taiwan	1,044.24	789.00
US	1,675.41	1,409.49
UK	1,456.84	1,210.72
France	1,478.65	1,405.95

Source: Ministry of Culture and Tourism

### Total tourism receipts

2008	US\$7.35 billion
2009	US\$6.29 billion
2010	US\$7 billion (target)

### NTO marketing budget

The budget for 2011 is 492 billion rupiah (US\$54.66 million).

### Arrivals/expenditure targets 2011

A target of 7.6 million visitors and a spend of US\$1,000 per visitor per visit has been set for 2011, based on the growth trends of arrivals to Indonesia in the last 18 months and World Tourism Organization's optimistic projections of future growth in global travel trends.

### Hotel statistics

Investors' confidence in Bali and Jakarta as destinations for hotel development continues. Both destinations expect more three-star and budget brands such as Santika Indonesia Hotels & Resorts' Amaris, Aston International's Quest Hotel and FaveHotel, and Panorama Group's The 101 Hotels, to enter the market. A number of four- and five-star projects are also expected to open between 2010 and 2012.

Secondary destinations such as Semarang and Solo (Central Java), Bogor, Bandung, Ambon (Maluku) and Manokwari (Papua) will be seeing more two- and three-star hotels.

Hotel rates in 2010 rose from three to 10 per cent over 2009's figures.

### Average occupancy rates/Average daily rates

	2009		2010 (Jan to Aug)	
	AOR	ADR	AOR	ADR
<b>Jakarta</b>				
Five-star	60%	US\$70	63%	US\$85
Four-star	72%	US\$50	75%	US\$55
Combined	66%	US\$60	70%	US\$70
<b>Bali</b>				
Luxury	55%	US\$350	3%	US\$385
Five-star	70%	US\$135	75%	US\$135
Four-star	82%	US\$77	85%	US\$75
Three-star	80%	US\$50	80%	US\$52
Overall	73%	US\$120	75%	US\$160

Source: Horwath HTL, Jakarta



**Total number of rooms**

	2010	2011	2012
<b>Jakarta</b>			
Five-star	9,842	9,842	10,898
Four-star	10,715	10,875	10,875
Combined	20,557	20,717	21,773
Overall	26,512	26,672	27,728
<b>Bali</b>			
Five-star	11,987	12,251	12,846
Four-star	5,606	5,606	5,606
Three-star	1,521	1,521	1,521
Combined	19,114	19,378	19,973

Source: Horwath HTL, Jakarta

**New hotels in 2010**

**JAKARTA**

**Amaris Hotel Cengkareng - Jakarta** 110 rooms

**Aston Paramount Hotel & Conference Center** 173 rooms

**HARRIS Kelapa Gading** 319 rooms

**BALI**

**The Royal Kamuela Villas & Spa Nusa Dua** 38 villas

**Royal Kamuela Villas at Monkey Forest** 12 villas

**Amaris Hotel Legian - Bali** 102 rooms

**Pullman Nirwana Bali** about 400 keys

**Villa Alam Ubud, an Aerowisata Hotel** 24 villas

**New hotels in 2011**

**JAKARTA**

**Hotel Santika Hayam Wuruk - Jakarta** 80 rooms

**HARRIS fx Suites** 88 rooms

**Hotel Santika Taman Mini - Jakarta** 100 rooms

**Amaris Hotel Tendean - Jakarta** 112 rooms

**BALI**

**Hotel Santika Raya Kuta - Bali** 108 rooms

**Swiss-Belhotel Segara Nusa Dua** 150 rooms

**The Oasis Legian** 80 rooms

**W Retreat & Spa, Bali-Seminyak** 158 suites and 79 villas

**All Seasons Bali Denpasar** 160 rooms

**HARRIS Hotel and Residences Sunset Road Kuta-Bali** 181 rooms

**Amaris Hotel Denpasar - Jakarta** 88 rooms

**New hotels in 2012**

**JAKARTA**

**Aerowisata Jakarta** 150 rooms

**All Seasons Gajah Mada** 130 rooms

**BALI**

**Swiss-Belhotel Resort Watu Jimbar** 258 rooms

**Favehotel Kuta** 100 rooms

**HARRIS Raya Tuban** 150 rooms

**HARRIS Seminyak** 150 rooms

**New attractions/tourism infrastructure**

Garuda Indonesia has placed a new order for six Airbus A330-200 worth US\$1.15 billion, with delivery scheduled for the fourth quarter of 2012. Garuda now operates four A330-200 and six A330-300. The new aircraft, which is equipped with Trent 700 engines from Rolls-Royce, will serve Asia-Pacific, Middle East and Europe routes.

Kartika Airlines has ordered 30 Sukhoi Superjet (SSJ) 100 aircraft worth US\$951 million. Kartika is the first South-east Asian airline company to purchase the SSJ-100 aircraft. Delivery is expected between 2012 and 2015.

**Key events and festivals 2011**

**Jakarta International Java Jazz Festival, Jakarta International Expo, Kemayoran, Jakarta (March 4 to 6)**

Organiser: Java Festival Production

www.javajazzfestival.com

**Essentials in the city – Jakarta**

**Food** Try *ketupat sayur* (spicy vegetable curry with egg, tofu and beef with rice cake) and *lapis legit* (layer cake).

**Quirky** It is typical of Indonesians to smile even though they may be crying over sad news, and vice versa.

**Tipping policy** Five to 10 per cent when no service charge is levied.

**Shopping** Mangga Dua Mall sells a variety of clothes ranging from 3XL to 6XL sizes. Thamrin City (Pusat Batik Nusantara) offers quality batik.

**Maximise two hours of free time** Since traffic is horrible in the city, find one-stop-shop places such as a shopping mall and indulge at leisure: shop, have your hair done, go for a reflexology session, watch a movie and have a bite at a café while surfing the Internet if there is free Wi-Fi access.

**Insider's tip for spending half a day** Go to the Taman Mini and catch a glimpse of Indonesian houses and traditional culture. Visit Tajur for a bargain buy of locally-made bags and stop by a *warong* (stall) for *asinan bogor* (vegetable salad with peanut sauce and assorted fruit in spicy sweet and sour sauce), a famous local delicacy.

**Need to impress clients' lunch** Visit themed restaurants such as Kembang Goela Restaurant or Harum Manis, which serve authentic Indonesian food in stylish environments.

**Lunch on your own** Plaza Indonesia EX, Cilandak Town Square (Citos) and Grand Indonesia Shopping Town offer a range of cafés and restaurants suitable for solo diners looking for either quick bites or quiet environments.

**Late nights** Go clubbing at Dragon Fly or enjoy the brews at beer houses such as Pizza e Birra and Paulaner Brauhaus.

**Electricity** Two-pin (round) plug.

**Visa requirements**

Each visitor must be in possession of a passport that is valid for at least six months at the time of arrival. Non-extendable visa-free entry to Indonesia for 30 days is available to passport holders of Brunei, Chile, Hong Kong SAR, Macau SAR, Malaysia, Morocco, Peru, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

Visa-on-arrival is extended to 65 nationalities and can be obtained at major airports in Indonesia; visa fee is US\$25 for 30 days and is extendable up to another 30 days. The facility applies to nationals of Algeria, Australia, Austria, Argentina, Bahrain, Brazil, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Canada, Czech Republic, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Egypt, Fiji, France, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, India, Iran, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Latvia, Laos, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Maldives, Mexico, Monaco, New Zealand, Norway, Netherlands, Oman, Panama, China, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, South Africa, South Korea, Suriname, Switzerland, Sweden, Taiwan, Tunisia, Timor Leste, Turkey, the UAE, the UK and the US.

**Prices of common items in 2010**

**Bottled water (1.5 litre)** 3,500 rupiah

**Starbucks latte (small)** 36,000 rupiah

**A glass of open wine at a pub** 125,000 rupiah to 250,000 rupiah

**Taxi fare (2km)** 11,000 rupiah (Jakarta)

**Important contacts**

**NTO**

The **Directorate General of Marketing**, headed by director general of marketing Sapt Nirwandar, is part of

the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. Nirwandar reports to Minister of Culture and Tourism Jero Wacik.

For 2011, the tourism authority will intensify marketing efforts in 10 major markets and develop products within the country. An important initiative is the Destination Management Organisation (DMO) programme, which revitalises and improves the management of 15 destinations in Indonesia, including Lake Toba, Bunaken and Toraja. The DMO programme will be executed in stages, scheduled for completion in 2014.

Targeting 7.6 million arrivals in 2011, the ministry has extended its reach, aided by 12 Visit Indonesia tourism offices (VITO) in Australia, China (two offices), Germany, India, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, the UAE (for Middle East), the Netherlands and Russia to promote the country.

**Contact for Leisure**

Directorate of International Marketing

Tel: (62-21) 383-8309

Fax: (62-21) 386-0628

**Contact for MICE**

Nia Niscaya

Director of MICE

Tel: (62-21) 383-8300

Fax: (62-21) 344-9268

Email: nia\_niscaya@yahoo.com

www.budpar.go.id

**Travel trade associations**

**Association of the Indonesian Tours and Travel Agencies (ASITA)** is a grouping of wholesalers and inbound, outbound, and ticketing agents. Managed under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, it has chapters in almost all provinces.

**Indonesia Ticketing Agents Association (ASTINDO)** members come under the auspices of the Department of Communications. This is a young association that is still adding chapters in various regions.

**Indonesia Hotel and Restaurant Association (IHRA)** comprises hotels, owning companies, restaurants and hotel institutes. IHRA was founded in 1969 and now has 9,500 members.  
www.ihra.co.id

**Indonesia Congress and Convention Association (INCCA)** was founded in 1998 and now has 12 chapters and 300 members. The association of MICE stakeholders in Indonesia, INCCA initiated the opening of MICE departments at colleges and developed a competency standard for the country's MICE industry.

**Indonesia Exhibition Companies Association (IECA/ASPERAPI)** was established as a non-profit organisation comprising 250 active members from exhibition and convention sectors as well as supporting industries.  
www.ieca.or.id

**Indonesia National Air Carriers Association (INACA)** is a trade association of the Indonesian airline industry. Founded in 1970, it now brings together 33 airlines.  
www.inaca.org

Compiled by Mimi Hudoyo

All information is correct at press time



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# Laos

## General Overview

Official name	People's Democratic Republic of Laos
Capital	Vientiane
Population	6.8 million
Total area	236,800 sq km
Currency	Kip (US dollar and Thai baht accepted)
Official language	Lao



The global economic crisis and Thailand's turmoil turned Lao tourism upside down in 2009. Although arrivals climbed 16 per cent to two million, revenues fell. The Lao National Tourism Administration (LNTA) credited a 43 per cent jump in Thai visitors and a double-digit drop in longhaul arrivals for the anomaly.

In 2010, long-staying, big-spending international visitors bounced back while mainland China figures soared, pushing mid-year arrivals to 1.1 million. Still, a cautious LNTA maintained its 2010 forecast at 2.1 million visitors spending US\$270 million, and 2.2 million arrivals generating US\$289 million in 2011.

### Climate

Average temperature	28°C to 34°C; 15°C between January and February
Average rainfall	1,500mm to 2,100mm; 3,000mm in southern Laos
Average humidity	75 to 85 per cent

### Best time to visit

Mild weather from October through mid-March lures visitors to Laos, though mornings turn chilly in January and February, especially in the mountainous north. Temperatures soar from March to May, before four months of daily showers draw tourists to flourishing rice paddies, blossoming flowers and swollen waterways, facilitating river rafting and boat cruises. But such downpours also increase the possibility of road closure in southern Laos.

### Distances

Vientiane-Luang Prabang	390km, 40min
Vientiane-Pakse	685km, 1hr 15min
Vientiane-Vang Vieng	160km
Vientiane-Thakhek	354km
Vientiane-Savannakhet	470km, 2hr 30min
Vientiane-Luang Namtha	698km, 50min
Vientiane-Xieng Khouang	435km, 30min
Luang Prabang-Pakse	1,075km, 1hr 40min
Luang Prabang-Vang Vieng	230km
Luang Prabang-Luang Namtha	308km
Luang Prabang-Houei Xai	447km
Luang Prabang-Xieng Khouang	280km (by boat)
Pakse-Savannakhet	306km
Pakse-Thakhek	215km, 35 min
	331km

### Visitor arrival statistics

After a lacklustre seven per cent growth in 2008 and a three per cent drop in 2009's first half, arrivals rebounded to top the two million mark that year for the first time.

Revenue, however, fell short of predictions, finishing at US\$268 million.

Arrivals from Europe and the US leapt 75 per cent and 38 per cent respectively in the first six months of 2010, and look set to reach pre-crisis levels. Asia-Pacific visitors also rose 22 per cent through June, making LNTA's annual forecast of 2.1 million arrivals spending US\$270 million appear modest.

Thailand, Vietnam and China commanded 85 per cent marketshare in 2009, but international visitors, only 15 per cent of the arrivals, generated 52 per cent of the income.

### Total tourist arrivals

2008	1,736,787, +7.0 per cent
2009	2,008,363, +16 per cent
2010 (Jan-Jun)	1,109,167, +26 per cent
	2,125,766, +5.9 per cent (estimate)

Source: Lao National Tourism Administration

### Top 10 arrival markets

	2009	% Change	2010 (Jan-Jun)	% Change
Thailand	1,274,064	43	601,277	8
Vietnam	296,763	-16	169,489	31
China	128,226	21	110,998	154
US	39,339	-28	24,992	31
France	31,775	-19	25,944	75
Japan	28,081	-11	15,518	13
UK	27,044	-25	24,146	89
Australia	24,209	-14	17,974	60
South Korea	17,786	-1	11,951	49
Germany	17,710	-30	15,463	75

Source: Lao National Tourism Administration

### Total tourism receipts

2008	US\$275.5 million
2009	US\$267.7 million
2010	US\$270.1 million (estimate)

Source: Lao National Tourism Administration

### Arrivals target for 2011

LNTA envisioned 2010 as a recovery year, and downgraded its forecast to 2.1 million arrivals from the previous 2.2 million. Even with mid-year results jumping 26 per cent to 1.1 million, LNTA officials noted this did not necessarily signal similar results in the second half. They said that early 2011 results would present a better indicator of whether the projection of 2,226,473 visitors spending US\$289 million was feasible.

Although LNTA's budget remained modest, it planned to spend US\$229,000 on 10 regional and international trade events between November and October next year that would target European and Asia-Pacific markets.

### Hotel statistics

Laos saw the addition of 1,846 rooms in 26 new hotels and 60 guesthouses in 2010, bringing the nation's total supply to 28,123. Vientiane had 715 new rooms, with Anara Hotel's 14 rooms and suites leading the luxury category, while Best Western Vientiane added 44 rooms in the US\$60 range. Meanwhile, Luang Prabang's high-end property shortage is being eased: Alila opened 23 suites in October, while Luang Say Residence, Le Palais Juliana, and Shinta Mani are slated for early-2011 openings.

Upscale developments are being pursued by Lao National Institute of Tourism and Hospitality (LANITH), which is seeking a private-sector investor to open an 80- to 100-room upscale hotel to complement the Mekong riverfront academy in Vientiane.

### Overall number of rooms

	2009	2010	% Change
<b>Vientiane</b>			
Total rooms	7,972	8,512	6.7
Hotels (15-plus rooms)	5,471	6,011	9.8
Guesthouses (less than 15 rooms)	2,501	2,501	-
<b>Luang Prabang</b>			
Total rooms	2,703	2,817	4.2
Hotels (15-plus rooms)	993	1,021	2.8
Guesthouses (less than 15 rooms)	1,710	1,796	5.0
<b>Pakse/Champasak</b>			
Total rooms	2,669	2,705	1.3
Hotels (15-plus rooms)	1,302	1,365	4.8
Guesthouses (less than 15 rooms)	1,367	1,340	-1.9
<b>Luang Namtha</b>			
Total rooms	939	944	0.5
<b>Xieng Khouang</b>			
Total rooms	992	992	-
<b>Savannakhet</b>			
Total rooms	2,302	2,302	-
<b>Khammouane</b>			
Total rooms	992	992	-
<b>Oudomxay</b>			
Total rooms	817	1,158	41.7

Source: Lao National Tourism Administration

### Average occupancy rate

	2008	2009	2010
<b>Vientiane</b>	60%	63%	63%
<b>Luang Prabang</b>	73%	68%	75%
<b>Pakse/Champasak</b>	65%	62%	66%

Source: Lao National Tourism Administration

### New hotels in 2010\*

**Vientiane** 14 hotels, 715 rooms

**Luang Prabang** Three hotels, four guesthouses, 160 rooms

**Champasak** Three hotels, one guesthouse, 70 rooms



**Vang Vieng** 34 guesthouses, 423 rooms  
**Oudomxay** Four hotels, 10 guesthouses, 160 rooms  
**Salavan** One hotel, eight guesthouses, 150 rooms  
**Sayaboury** Four guesthouses, 50 rooms

Source: Lao National Tourism Administration  
 \*Only data was available, but not the names of properties

### New attractions/tourism infrastructure

**Tea Caravan Trail** was developed after the completion of the 180km Lao Route 3 that links Thailand and China through north-west Laos. Named after an ancient trade route, the trail features attractions such as a French fort, handicraft villages, visitor centres, viewpoints, nature trails, a cave and waterfalls.  
[www.ecotourismlaos.com](http://www.ecotourismlaos.com)

**Chao Anouvong Park**, part of Vientiane's designated 3km Mekong Riverfront facelift project, is slated for a December 2010 opening. The facelift marks the capital's 450<sup>th</sup> anniversary and commemorates King Chao Anouvong, who ruled from 1767 to 1835.  
[www.tourismlaos.org](http://www.tourismlaos.org)

**Sayaboury Elephant Sanctuary** The 100ha Sayaboury Elephant Sanctuary, located some 100km south of Luang Prabang, is set for a February 2011 soft opening. When completed, the sanctuary will offer an intense training course for aspiring mahouts, elephant treks for tourists, bungalows, dormitories and a restaurant/bar set among the botanical gardens.  
[www.elefantasia.org](http://www.elefantasia.org)

**Luang Prabang Airport's US\$86.4 million upgrade** started in 2010 and will include a new 3,000m runway for the landing of 400-seat aircraft and improvements to the terminal. The airport will remain open during the construction period, scheduled for completion in 2013.  
[www.luangprabangairport.com](http://www.luangprabangairport.com)

**Public-Private Partnerships** are being offered by LNTA for the development of attractions along Laos' intra-regional transportation routes. Backed by the Asian Development Bank's Sustainable Tourism Development Project, LNTA is seeking investors to develop restaurants, handicraft centres, eco-lodges, tour companies and canopy walkways.  
[www.stdplaos.com](http://www.stdplaos.com)

**Viengxay Audio Tours** of Viengxay's hidden cave city in north-east Laos' Houaphan Province have been launched. The tour covers 18 highlights at the expansive cave network that sheltered some 20,000 people during the Indochina War and headquartered Laos' independence movement.  
[www.visit-viengxay.com](http://www.visit-viengxay.com)

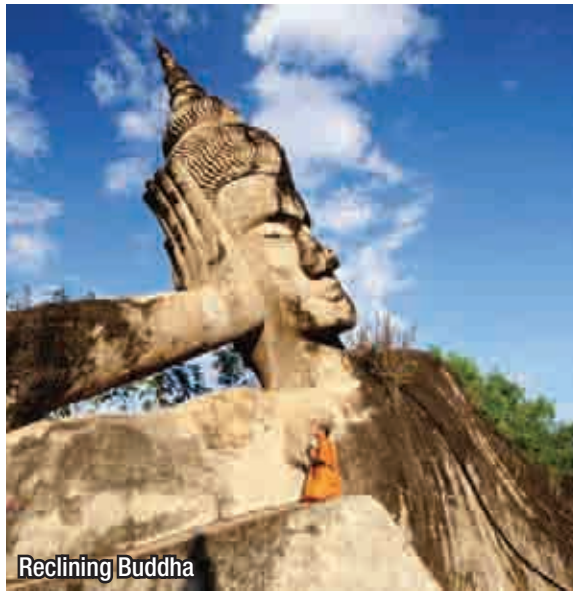
**Savannakhet Historic Trail** was opened by LNTA in July. It comprises five circuits that showcase some 50 historical, cultural and natural sites along Route 9, which links Thailand to Vietnam. Travellers can opt for one of the eight trekking and cycling programmes, with overnight homestays offered by the province's eco-guide unit.  
[www.stdplaos.com](http://www.stdplaos.com)

**The latest Thai-Lao Friendship Bridge**, linking Thailand's Nakhon Phanom Province to Thakhek in Khammouane Province and Laos' main north-south Route 13, is slated for completion in late 2011. A fourth Friendship Bridge connecting Chiang Rai to Lao Route 3 will provide seamless travel from Bangkok to Yunnan, China when it is completed in 2012.

### Key events and festivals 2011

**Mekong Tourism Forum (May 27 to 28)**  
 Fast-developing Champasak Province was selected to host the Mekong Tourism Forum 2011 at Pakse City's new Champasak Grand Hotel. Running concurrently is a Greater Mekong Subregion travel exhibition with some 100 booths, most of which offer sustainable tourism products. Champasak features the UNESCO World Heritage-listed Vat Phou Temple Complex, South-east Asia's largest waterfall by volume, the Mekong's 4,000 islands, and rare freshwater dolphins.  
[www.mekongtourism.org](http://www.mekongtourism.org)

**Mekong River Boat Races (October 12)**  
 Laos' biggest annual event, the Mekong River Boat Races, are held to commemorate the end of the three-month



Reclining Buddha



Vientiane

Buddhist Lent. The longboat races ply all sections of the Mekong, including Vientiane, Luang Prabang, Pakse, Savannakhet and Sayaboury. The races, featuring crews of 30 to 60 men or women paddling colourful narrow longboats, also take place at selected destinations on major inland waterways.  
[www.tourismlaos.org](http://www.tourismlaos.org)

**Sayaboury Elephant Festival (February 18 to 20)**  
 Sayaboury Province's Paklai District, some 300km west of Vientiane, has been selected to host Laos' annual Elephant Festival. The event features about 60 brightly adorned pachyderms competing for "Elephant of the Year", along with elephant processions and bathing, mahout demonstrations, traditional Buddhist blessings, fun fairs, night markets and live performances.  
[festival.elefantasia.org](http://festival.elefantasia.org)

### Essentials in the city – Vientiane

**Food** Settha Palace offers a broad and distinctive Lao menu. Helmed by a German chef who orchestrates ingredients to "balance and match Western flavouring", guests are served traditional dishes that appeal to their palates.  
[www.setthapalace.com](http://www.setthapalace.com)

**Quirky** A few kilometres south-east of Vientiane, Sisattanak District presents a bizarre juxtaposition of Lao village life and Western living. Massive walled-in residences occupied by expats sit shoulder-to-shoulder with stilted wooden houses, while goats, chickens and cows roam the dirt streets.

**Tipping policy** Tipping is not expected, but leaving small notes received as change is appreciated. Most upscale restaurants include a service charge in the bill.

**Shopping** The Talad Sao Mall offers three floors of shops selling clothes, woven silk products, electronics, handicrafts, jewellery, toys, luggage, coffee shops and a variety of curios. The mall is always packed with locals and boasts the city's only escalator.

**Maximise two hours of free time** The Museum of the Revolution showcases dinosaur bones, weapons used in Laos' struggle for independence, artefacts such as ancient pots, drums and tools, and relics from the Lane Xang Kingdom dating back to 1353.  
[www.tourismlaos.org](http://www.tourismlaos.org)

**Insider's tip for half a day off** Lao office workers often refer to Friday afternoons as "extended Saturdays", with lunches at open-air Lao restaurants that stretch into extended Beer Lao sessions. Pull up a chair.

**Need to impress clients' lunch** The upscale Le Cote d'Azur on the Mekong road serves Provençal-style cuisine in a French country house atmosphere. The menu includes steaks, fresh seafood, basil-seasoned pizza and rabbit stew.

**Lunch on your own** Just for Fun at That Dam Stupa offers a simple Thai and Lao menu along with sandwiches. An ample noodle or rice dish accompanied by a Beer Lao generally costs less than US\$4.

**Late nights** The Jazzy Brick boasts a 150-drink cocktail menu and a sophisticated ambience. It often stays open past the city's 23.00 curfew.

**Electricity** Single-phase voltage of 220V and a frequency of 50 Hz, primarily two-pin.

### Visa requirements

A passport valid for at least six months and a visa are required for most foreigners entering Laos. Visas cost from US\$8 to US\$42, depending on government agreements, and can be obtained at embassies, consulates or designated tour agents. Visa-on-arrival for most countries costs US\$35 and can be obtained at Wittay, Luang Prabang and Pakse Airports as well as at major overland gateways. Visa exemptions apply to visitors from eight ASEAN countries (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam), Japan, Russia and Mongolia. Visa extensions are available at US\$2 per day at immigration headquarters or via designated tour operators at major destinations for an additional fee.

### Prices of common items in 2010

**Bottled water (small)** US\$0.25  
**Starbucks latte (small)** N/A  
**A glass of wine at a pub** US\$2.50  
**Taxi fare (2km)** US\$1.50 (Vientiane)

### Important contacts

#### NTO

**Lao National Tourism Administration (LNTA)** falls under the Prime Minister's Office and is headed by minister and chairman Somphong Mongkhonvilay.

LNTA has begun preparations for the Mekong Tourism Forum 2011 and Visit Laos Year 2012, and is formulating plans for hosting the ASEAN Tourism Forum in 2013.

LNTA's Tourism Marketing and Promotion Department takes care of all marketing and promotional activities. Tel: (856-21) 212-248/212-251; fax: (856-21) 212-769/212-248/217-910; email: [lnta\\_info@tourismlaos.org](mailto:lnta_info@tourismlaos.org)

**Lao Tourism Marketing and Promotion Board (TMPB)** held its inaugural meeting in July to discuss its work plan. An October meeting focused on funding and implementation. TMPB aims to improve cooperation among stakeholders and maximise private sector involvement to better promote Lao tourism.

**Lao National Institute for Tourism and Hospitality (LANITH)**, a joint LNTA-Ministry of Education project, plans to break ground on its Vientiane riverfront property in 2011.

### Travel trade associations

**Lao Association of Travel Agents (LATA)** was established in November 2004 with the formal approval of the LNTA. LATA is an independent, voluntary, private sector representative association. Its 100-plus members are travel agents and tour operators operating in Laos.  
[www.latalaos.com.org](http://www.latalaos.com.org)

**Lao Hotel and Restaurant Association (LHRA)** comprises a group of public and private sector entrepreneurs in the hospitality sector, set up with the objective of promoting their services and contributions to the sustainable development of the tourism industry.  
[www.laohotelgroup.org](http://www.laohotelgroup.org)

Compiled by *Bernie Rosenbloom*  
 All information is correct at press time



# Macau

## General Overview

Official name	Macau Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China
Capital	Macau
Population	544,200 (estimate)
Total area	29.2 sq km
Currency	Pataca
Official languages	Cantonese, Portuguese



The economic tsunami in 2009 triggered a small drop of 5.2 per cent in visitor arrivals to 21.8 million. However, the figures were propped up slightly by a 1.5 per cent increase in overnight visitors. The average length of stay also increased by 0.06 per cent to 1.5 nights.

Despite negative growth in many source markets in Asia, Macau still recorded positive gains from Japan, Indonesia and India – 3.4 per cent, 6.2 per cent and 30.5 per cent respectively.

Industry insiders expected a bright end to 2010 as the city was geared for a rebound, aided by robust arrival figures and new infrastructure developments.

### Climate

Average temperature	20.5°C to 25.4°C
Average rainfall	2,122.9mm
Average humidity	82.5 per cent

### Best time to visit

The best time to visit Macau is in Autumn (October and December) and Spring (March to May) when temperatures are mild. Winters can be fresh with cold northern winds sweeping down from mainland China.

### Distances

#### From Macau to:

Beijing	1,988km, 2hr 28min
Shanghai	1,253km, 1hr 33min
Hong Kong	64km (by helicopter and ferry)
Taipei	87km, 1hr 5min
Tokyo	2,947km, 3hr 40min
Kuala Lumpur	2,461km, 3hr
Manila	1,147km, 1hr 26min
Seoul	2,140km, 2hr 40min
Singapore	2,532km, 3hr 10min
Bangkok	1,664km, 2hr
Sydney	7,376km, 9hr 10min
London	9,617km, 12hr

### Visitor arrival statistics

Riding on the wave of Asia's economic rebound, total visitor arrivals reached 18.6 million in the first three quarters of 2010, up by 17.1 per cent year-on-year.

China was ranked as the highest spender and dominated the traffic with 9.8 million arrivals, followed by Hong Kong with 5.6 million and Taiwan with 991,881. Same-day visitors accounted for 52 per cent of the total but the ratio of overnight visitors continued to grow, marking a 1.2 per cent gain for the period. Per capita spending also grew 3.1 per cent to MOP1,592.90 (US\$199.35) in the second quarter. Strong markets such as India recorded

year-on-year growth of 71.6 per cent, followed by South Korea at 55.5 per cent.

#### Total tourist arrivals

2008	22,933,185, -15 per cent
2009	21,752,751, -5.2 per cent
2010 (Jan to Sept)	18,588,579, +17.1 per cent

#### Number of BT-MICE to arrivals

2008	364,320
2009	660,881
2010 (Jan-Jun)	224,301

#### Top 10 arrival markets 2009

Market	Arrivals	% Change
China	10,989,533	-5.37
Hong Kong	6,727,822	-4.11
Taiwan	1,292,551	1.77
Japan	379,241	3.36
Malaysia	332,529	-22.42
Singapore	256,520	-2.70
Philippines	247,459	-12.54
Thailand	242,514	-3.81
South Korea	204,767	-26.82
Indonesia	191,425	6.16

Source: Macau Hotel Association

#### Top 10 arrival markets 2010 (January to August)

Market	Arrivals	% Change
China	8,913,001	26.8
Hong Kong	5,009,560	9.5

Continued next column

Continued from previous column

#### Top 10 arrival markets 2010 (January to August)

Market	Arrivals	% Change
Taiwan	890,183	3.4
Japan	271,374	16.8
South Korea	219,755	55.5
Malaysia	207,230	3.6
Philippines	170,831	5.3
Singapore	161,518	5.4
Thailand	141,567	-12.7
US	121,807	2.4

Source: Statistics and Census Service (Macau SAR)

#### Average length of stay

2008	2009
China 1.32	China 1.29
Hong Kong 1.27	Hong Kong 1.32
Taiwan 1.72	Taiwan 1.79
Malaysia 1.48	Japan 1.89
Japan 1.79	Malaysia 1.68
Philippines 1.77	Singapore 1.68
South Korea 1.66	Philippines 1.93
Singapore 1.62	Thailand 1.65
Thailand 1.63	South Korea 1.77
US 2.87	Indonesia 2.02

Source: Statistics and Census Service (Macau SAR)

#### Average expenditure (MOP millions)

Market	2008	2009
China	3,571	1,616
Hong Kong	1,109	1,159
Taiwan	1,361	1,349
Japan	967	1,286
South-east Asia	1,864	1,659
Europe	1,008	1,226

Source: Statistics and Census Service (Macau SAR)

#### Total MICE receipts

2008	MOP 52.7 million
2009	MOP 76.79 million
2010	N/A

#### Total tourism receipts (MOP millions)

	Total visitor expenditure	Gaming	Accommodation & others
2008	124,485	107,066	17,419
2009	132,908	117,388	15,520
2010 (Jan-Aug)	93,942	84,964	8,979

Source: Statistics and Census Service (Macau SAR)

### Hotel statistics

The pace of hotel development slowed down in 2010 as only two five-star hotels were launched – Encore at Wynn Macau and Mandarin Oriental Macau. New hotel projects along the Cotai Strip, however, would create a surge in supply in 2011. The 2,200-room Galaxy Resort is set to open in the first quarter of 2011, while projects on Venetian's parcels five and six are scheduled for completion in the fourth quarter. About 6,500 hotel rooms would go online once Shangri-La, Sheraton, St Regis and Traders hotels are opened.

#### Total number of rooms

2009	20,316
2010 (Jan-Sept)	20,963

#### Average occupancy rate/Average room rate

	AOR		ARR (MOP)	
	2009	2010 (Jan-Aug)	2009	2010 (Jan-Sept)
Overall	71.6%	79.3%	1093.06	1129.65
Four-star	77.5%	83.0%	524.73	618.64
Five-star	70.8%	77.9%	1,286.8	1,307.18

Source: Macau Hotel Association



**Number of four-star and five-star rooms**

2009	Five-star 10,529
	Four-star 4,530
2010 (Jan-Sept)	Five-star 12,226
	Four star 4,530

**Projected number of rooms in 2011 and 2012**

A total of 8,629 rooms are planned for the next two years (8,589 hotel rooms and 40 guesthouse rooms).

Source: Macau Hotel Association

**New hotels in 2010**

**Encore at Wynn Macau** (an extension of Wynn)

414 rooms

**The Mandarin Oriental, Macau** 214 rooms

**New hotels in 2011**

**Galaxy World Resort (Cotai): Resort Galaxy, Okura and Banyan Tree** 2,500 rooms (estimate)

**Venetian's Orient Lot 5 and 6 (Cotai): Sheraton, Shangri-La, St. Regis and Traders** 6,500 rooms (estimate)

**New attractions/tourism infrastructure**

**The Mandarin's House**, which opened on February 5, was the ancestral home of Zheng Guanying, an eminent intellectual figure in the late Qing Dynasty. Built before 1869, it reflected the design elements of a traditional Guangdong dwelling. After an extensive refurbishment, it is now a modern tourist attraction that features a fusion of architectural influences from the West and the East.

[www.wh.mo/mandarinhouse/en/](http://www.wh.mo/mandarinhouse/en/)

**MALO Clinic Health & Wellness** opened in May 2010 at The Venetian Macao-Resort-Hotel. It offers a comprehensive array of world-class health and clinical services, and spa and wellness treatments.

[www.venetianmacao.com/en/show/malo\\_clinic\\_spa\\_new#i2](http://www.venetianmacao.com/en/show/malo_clinic_spa_new#i2)

**The House of Dancing Water** opened with a spectacular performance on September 16. Staged at City of Dreams, it features the world's largest water extravaganza, held in the purpose-built Dancing Water Theater.

[www.thehouseofdancingwater.com/en/#/home](http://www.thehouseofdancingwater.com/en/#/home)

**The Border Gate expansion project**, expected to be completed in 2010, will handle 500,000 people a day, 200,000 more than the current number. The number of manned immigration counters will be increased from 56 to 98 and the number of automatic immigration counters will also rise from 34 to 80.

[www.gdi.gov.mo/pt/index.php](http://www.gdi.gov.mo/pt/index.php)

**Macau International Airport's expansion project** is due to be completed by 2012. The airport's five-year development plan includes improvements to the aircraft parking position (apron), the passenger terminal and the runway.

[www.macau-airport.com/site/php/en/main.php](http://www.macau-airport.com/site/php/en/main.php)

**Key events and festivals 2011**

**Macau Arts Festival (May)**

Location: Theatres around town, heritage sites and other venues

Organiser: Cultural Affairs Bureau

[www.icm.gov.mo/fam](http://www.icm.gov.mo/fam)

**Macau International Fireworks Display Contest (September/October)**

Location: Macau Tower waterfront area

Organiser: Macau Government Tourist Office

[www.macautourism.gov.mo](http://www.macautourism.gov.mo)

**Macau International Music Festival (October/November)**

Location: Theatres around town, heritage sites and other venues

Organiser: Cultural Affairs Bureau

[www.icm.gov.mo/fam](http://www.icm.gov.mo/fam)

**Macau Grand Prix (November)**

Location: Guia Circuit (city circuit)

Organiser: Macau Grand Prix Committee

[www.macau.grandprix.gov.mo](http://www.macau.grandprix.gov.mo)

**Essentials in the city**

**Food** Try African chicken, it is a zesty dish unique to Macau.



Macau Tower



House of Dancing Water

**Tipping policy** There is no need to tip but good service deserves a reward.

**Shopping** Traditional-style rosewood Chinese furniture, porcelain wares, lacquer, bronze wares, wood carvings and Chinese paintings are available at Rua de Sao Paulo Area.

**Maximise two hours of free time** Hop onto the Tour Machine, a replica of a 1920s English Royal car, and discover new sights and attractions.

**Insider's tip for half a day off** Macau's best-kept secret is its remarkable Portuguese and Chinese heritage and wonderful little restaurants. A trip to Macau would not be complete without a visit to traditional districts at Peninsula, where you can patronise antique shops, cookie and cake shops and Macanese restaurants.

**Need to impress clients' lunch** Book in advance for a slot at three-Michelin-starred restaurant Robuchon A Galera at Hotel Lisboa. It serves French haute cuisine at its finest.

**Lunch on your own** Visit Lung Wah Tea House for an authentic Cantonese tea house experience. It has been around for more than 50 years and is loved by the locals.

**Late nights** The new Club CUBIC will soon open at level two of City of Dreams. It will be three times larger than its former incarnation, making it the ultimate clubbing experience.

**Electricity** European and British socket types with three rectangular prongs, 220V/50Hz.

**Visa requirements**

From July 1, 2010, citizens of Bangladesh, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Vietnam must have Macau entry visas obtained from their home countries.

Visas are required for all visitors except:

a) Nationals of Andorra, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and

Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cape Verde, Croatia, Czech Republic, Cyprus, Denmark, Dominica, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Mali, Malta, Mexico, Mongolia, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tanzania and the UK (six months) for a stay of up to 90 days

b) Nationals of Australia, Canada, Chile, India, Indonesia, Kiribati, Malaysia, Monaco, Namibia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Samoa, Seychelles, Singapore, South Africa, Thailand, Turkey, the US and Uruguay for a stay of up to 30 days

c) Holders of "Hong Kong Permanent Identity Card" or "Hong Kong SAR Re-entry Permit"; valid "Hong Kong Identity Card" holders are required to bring their valid passports or travel documents when they enter Macau.

d) Nationals of China with valid Macau entry/departure documents

e) Holders of consulate/diplomatic documents issued by the Macau SAR or Hong Kong SAR

f) Holders of diplomatic passports

g) Holders of "Laissez Passer" issued by the United Nations; in the course of duty

h) Holders of travel document issued by the Portuguese authorities for foreign citizens

Visas can be obtained from the Immigration Services through embassies or consulates of the People's Republic of China and should be used within the validity period. Visas may also be applied for upon arrival at the immigration counter.

There are three types of visas:

- Individual – MOP100; children under 12 years of age pay MOP50
- Family passport – MOP200
- Group – MOP50 per person for bonafide groups of 10 or more and children aged 12 or under.

The above information is for reference only. For further information on entry formalities, log on to [www.fsm.gov.mo](http://www.fsm.gov.mo) or email: [psp-info@fsm.gov.mo](mailto:psp-info@fsm.gov.mo)

**Prices of common items in 2010**

**Bottled water** MOP5 (at a supermarket or normal shop)

**Starbucks (tall latte)** MOP33

**A glass of open wine in a pub** MOP50-80

**Taxi fare (2km)** MOP15

**Important contacts****NTO**

**The Macau Government Tourist Office (MGTO)**, headed by director João Manuel Costa Antunes, has five subdivisions: licensing and inspections; promotion and marketing, product development and special projects, research and planning and administrative and finance.

MGTO falls under the Secretariat for Social Affairs and Culture and has 17 representatives. Macau's tourism industry continues to move towards diversification of tourism products and source markets. Tel: (853) 2831-5566, tourist hotline: (853) 2833-3000; fax: (853) 2851-0104; email: [industry@macautourism.gov.mo](mailto:industry@macautourism.gov.mo); [www.macautourism.gov.mo](http://www.macautourism.gov.mo)

**Macau Business Tourism Centre**

Contact: Edif. Ritz, Largo do Senado, Macau; tel: (853) 8396-3008; fax: (853) 2872-7310; email: [projects@macautourism.gov.mo](mailto:projects@macautourism.gov.mo)

**Travel trade associations**

**Association of Macao Tourist Agents**, established in 1967, is a leading trade association that bridges communications between members and overseas agents as well as fosters communication among industry members. Email: [amta@macau.ctm.net](mailto:amta@macau.ctm.net)

**Macau Hotel Association** is a non-profit local association that has been established since 1985 and is continually promoting and supporting high-quality standards and tourism growth by working in tandem with the Macau Government Tourist office.

Email: [mhacmo@macau.ctm.net](mailto:mhacmo@macau.ctm.net); [www.macauhotel.org](http://www.macauhotel.org)

Compiled by Prudence Lui

All information is correct at press time



# Malaysia

## General Overview

Official name	Malaysia
Capital	Kuala Lumpur
Population	28.4 million
Total area	329,758 sq km
Currency	Ringgit Malaysia
Official language	Bahasa Malaysia. English is widely spoken



Malaysia attracted 23.6 million tourists in 2009, a 1.6 million increase from the previous year. Despite the global economic crisis, most major longhaul markets showed an increase in arrivals over 2008's performance.

Positive double-digit growth was seen from the Netherlands (22.4 per cent), France (27.9 per cent), Germany (15 per cent), Russia (11 per cent), Italy (19 per cent) and the UK (17.4 per cent).

The Tourism Ministry has set a target of 24 million arrivals in 2010. Based on improved accessibility and increased frequencies into Kuala Lumpur, the ministry is confident of meeting its goal.

Foreign airlines such as Royal Jordanian Airlines, Oman Air and Mahan Air started flights to Kuala Lumpur in 2010.

### Climate

Average temperature	21°C to 32°C (lowlands) 15°C to 25°C (highlands)
Average rainfall	2,000mm to 2,400mm
Average humidity	70 to 90 per cent

### Best time to visit

Malaysia's weather is moderate, making the country good to visit year-round. But do take note of rainy seasons: the east coast of Peninsular Malaysia has heavy rainfall in December and January, while Langkawi sees downpours from July to October.

The low season during the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan would also be a good time to visit as travel agents would be able to negotiate for better hotel rates during this period, which starts on July 31 and ends on August 30 for 2011.

### Distances

#### From Kuala Lumpur to:

Penang	369km, 50min
Johor Bahru	368km, 45min
Kota Kinabalu	1,622km, 2hr 25min
Kuching	977km, 1hr 45min

### Visitor arrival statistics

Arrivals from January to June this year reached 11.9 million, an increase of 4.6 per cent compared to the same period in 2009.

According to Tourism Malaysia, the highest spenders in 2009, based on average per capita expenditure, were from Iran at RM7,455.40 (US\$2,400), followed by Oman at RM6,608.60, Saudi Arabia at RM6,430.80 and the UAE at RM6,264.70.

Canada and China (including Hong Kong and Macau)

generated the two highest increases in per capita expenditure in 2009 compared to the previous year. Canada logged in a 12.9 per cent increase from RM2,298.40 to RM2,595.40, while China came in with a five per cent increase from RM2,599.30 to RM2,729.60.

#### Total tourist arrivals

2008	22 million
2009	23.6 million
2010 (Jan-Jun)	11.9 million
	24 million (target)

**Total tourism receipts 2009** RM53.4 billion

**Total MICE receipts 2009** RM9.9 billion

#### Top 10 arrival markets

	2009	2010 (Jan-Jun)	% Change
Singapore	6,139,965	6,294,144	2.5
Indonesia	1,126,681	1,253,560	11.3
Thailand	734,115	712,410	-3.0
Brunei	567,172	578,636	2.0
China/ Hong Kong/ Macau	466,685	516,160	10.6
India	359,461	289,184	-24.3
Philippines	250,131	224,498	-11.4
Australia	230,117	261,695	13.7
UK	202,720	195,881	-3.4
Japan	183,222	186,603	1.8

Source: Tourism Malaysia

### Average per capita expenditure

	2008 (RM)	2009 (RM)	% Change	Average length of stay in 2009 (nights)
Singapore	2,089.00	2,159.70	3.4	5.0
Indonesia	1,882.00	1,861.90	-1.1	8.5
Thailand	1,128.70	1,013.40	-10.2	8.3
Brunei	2,346.00	2,352.00	0.3	4.9
China/ Hong Kong/ Macau	2,599.30	2,729.60	5.0	6.8
India	2,716.50	2,715.70	0.0	6.6
Philippines	1,872.90	1,683.00	-10.1	7.3
Australia	3,974.70	4,011.80	0.9	9.1
UK	3,797.60	3,885.20	2.3	10.2
Japan	2,620.80	2,610.30	-0.4	6.1

Source: Tourism Malaysia

### NTO overall budget and marketing budget

Tourism Malaysia's budget for advertising and promotions for 2010 is RM150 million.

### Hotel statistics

Hotel rates in Malaysia are among the lowest in Asia. The average room rate for a five-star property is RM356.94 in Kuala Lumpur, RM290.90 in Penang and RM390.61 in Kota Kinabalu.

Since early 2010, the government had been advising hotels to raise their rates to be on par with those of regional counterparts and for hotels to have necessary funds to refurbish and maintain their properties. Due to a room supply surplus, many hoteliers, however, did not comply for fear of losing marketshare to competing hotels that were offering lower rates.

Rates in 2011 are expected to increase between eight and 20 per cent at three- to five-star hotels.

### Average occupancy rate/ Average room rate

	Average occupancy rate		Average room rate (RM)	
	2009	2010	2009	2010
<b>Kuala Lumpur</b>				
4-star	69.85	72.52	230.18	214.64
5-star	67.60	73.85	355.29	356.94
Overall	64.28	65.46	217.01	243.50
<b>Penang</b>				
4-star	62.90	58.81	176.95	183.01
5-star	66.90	65.45	302.32	290.90
Overall	65.28	62.08	226.19	225.02
<b>Langkawi</b>				
4-star	75.74	92.13	409.28	411.21
5-star	63.96	62.52	720.06	752.60
Overall	65.13	63.87	568.00	555.36
<b>Kota Kinabalu</b>				
4-star	57.46	61.00	149.25	153.88
5-star	54.42	50.24	356.64	390.61
Overall	56.56	55.30	275.32	258.93

Source: Malaysian Association of Hotels

### New hotels in 2010

**G Tower Hotel, Kuala Lumpur** 180 rooms  
**Seri Pacific Hotel Kuala Lumpur** 556 rooms  
**DoubleTree by Hilton Kuala Lumpur** 540 rooms  
**Empire Hotel Subang** 198 rooms  
**Premiere Hotel Klang** 250 rooms  
**Golden Palm Tree Resort & Spa, Sepang** 392 villas  
**Casa Del Rio, Malacca** 64 bedroom suites, 32 apartments  
**hangout@jonker, Malacca** 22 rooms  
**Pullman Kuching** 389 rooms  
**Lone Pine Hotel, Penang** 90 rooms  
**The Danna, Langkawi** 125 rooms  
**Tang Dynasty Bay Hotel, Sepanggar, Sabah** 122 rooms  
**Dream World Resort, Ranau, Sabah** 42 rooms

### New hotels in 2011

**Park Regis Kuala Lumpur** 445 rooms  
**Pullman Kuala Lumpur Bangsar** 513 rooms



**Sun Sodavy**

Housekeeping  
Allson Angkor  
Siem Reap, Cambodia

Nothing makes her happier than a clean, tidy room.

**Do Thi Ngoc**

Front Office Receptionist  
Sunway Hotel Hanoi  
Vietnam

Assist in checking in our 3,426th guest today.

**Ker Sokunthea**

Executive Chef  
Sunway Hotel Phnom Penh  
Cambodia

Ensuring the freshness of ingredients for all dishes.

**Sunil**

Bellman  
Sunway Resort Hotel & Spa  
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Shy personality but physically strong. Handles 827kg of luggage daily.

**Li Ting**

Chinese Restaurant Host  
Sunway Golden Diamond Hotel  
Zhongshan, China

Always deliver the highest level of service standard with a great smile.

*The*  
**Hospitality Faces of Asia**



At Sunway International Hotels & Resorts, you will find the similar warmth of welcome, courtesy and desire to be of service at all our Sunway Hotels & Resorts, Allson Hotels & Resorts and The Banjaran properties.

Our collection of rooms, luxurious villas, suites and fully-furnished service residences are set off by a fusion of international cuisine, world-class convention, meeting and exhibition services, spa, wellness and fitness facilities, and nearby local attractions and landmarks.

Our goal is not merely to please you. We take pleasure in hearing you say, "I look forward to my next stay."



**SUNWAY INTERNATIONAL  
HOTELS & RESORTS**

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



**ALLSON**  
HOTELS & RESORTS

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



**SUNWAY**  
HOTELS & RESORTS

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



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

CAMBODIA

CHINA

INDONESIA

MALAYSIA

VIETNAM



**Gold Coast Morib Resort, Selangor** 673 suite rooms  
**Hatten Square Suites and Shoppes Malacca** 700 rooms  
**Four Points by Sheraton Sandakan, Sabah** 285 rooms  
**Grand Uno Hotel & Residences Kota Kinabalu** 167 rooms  
**YTL's property at Pulau Gaya** 132 rooms  
**YTL's property at Pulau Tiga** 65 rooms

### New attractions/tourism infrastructure

**The Banjaran Hot Springs Retreat** is a luxury wellness retreat located in Tambun, Perak. Opened in January 2010, it offers 25 luxury villas and a variety of wellness programmes, including holistic exercises such as yoga, *qi gong* and *tai chi*. Attractions include natural hot springs, a thermal steam cave and a meditation cave.  
[www.thebanjaran.com](http://www.thebanjaran.com)

**Kota Kinabalu International Airport's new runway**, which is being extended from 2,988m to 3,780m, is scheduled for completion on March 18, 2011. With the extension, the airport would be able to handle 25 flights an hour, an increase from the current 12, as well as accommodate the A380.  
[www.malaysiaairports.com.my](http://www.malaysiaairports.com.my)

**Fahrenheit 88** is a modern lifestyle mall catering to the young and trendy. Opened in August, the five-storey mall is located at Jalan Bukit Bintang, opposite Grand Millennium Kuala Lumpur.  
<http://fahrenheit88.com/content/index.php>

**The upgrading of Penang Hill Railway**, which costs RM63 million, is expected to be completed by end-2010. Its iconic funicular train will be replaced by a modern version.

**Golden Palm Tree Resort & Spa's** 399 luxurious sea villas are positioned along the Sepang coastline, stretching out almost a kilometre into the sheltered waters of the Straits of Malacca. Constructed with minimal impact to the environment, Golden Palm Tree is perfect for eco adventures and non-motorised water sports.  
[www.goldenpalmtree.com](http://www.goldenpalmtree.com)

**i-City Park** in Shah Alam features millions of colourful LED lights that make up a forest of "trees" and animal figurines. There is also a 10-minute audiovisual laser show held every night at 20.30 and 22.30. Visitors enjoy free entry.  
<http://i-city.my/>

**Terrapuri Heritage Village Penarik, Terengganu** comprises 20 villas equipped with modern facilities. Centuries-old Malay aristocratic houses and a 19<sup>th</sup> century palace have been restored and are scheduled to open in March 2011. Inspired by the 19<sup>th</sup> century palace of Sultan Mansur II, the village would appeal to frequent travellers looking for a novelty factor as well as the chance to experience local heritage.  
 Contact details: [patrvl@tm.net.my](mailto:patrvl@tm.net.my)

### Key events and festivals 2011

**Le Tour de Langkawi (January 23 to February 1)**  
 Organiser: Ministry of Youth and Sports Malaysia

[www.ltdl.com.my](http://www.ltdl.com.my)

**Petronas Malaysian F1 Grand Prix (April 10 to 12)**  
 Organiser: Sepang International Circuit  
[www.malaysiangp.com.my](http://www.malaysiangp.com.my)

**Colours of 1Malaysia (May)**  
 Organiser: Ministry of Tourism

**Rainforest World Music Festival (July 8 to 11)**  
 Organiser: Sarawak Tourism Board  
[www.rainforestmusic-borneo.com](http://www.rainforestmusic-borneo.com)

### Essentials in the city

**Food** Roti canai and satay are must-tries for those who like savoury dishes.

**Quirky** When speaking with the locals, work in phrases such as "*boleh*", which means "can do" in Malay to give an affirmative reply.

**Tipping policy** Tipping is usually not expected. Some establishments include a service tax. Otherwise, tip about 10 per cent of the bill if the service warrants it.

**Shopping** Purchase a *Sayong* gourd from Karyaneka in Kuala Lumpur. This is a unique carafe that you would not be able to find elsewhere.

**Maximise two hours of free time** Visit Royal Selangor's visitor centre at Setapak Jaya for insights into pewter-smithing and to purchase innovative pewter ware. The centre also offers a pewter-smithing workshop for visitors interested in trying their hand at the craft.

**Insider's tip for half a day off** Spend half a day at Resorts World Genting. There are indoor and outdoor theme parks with rides for adults and children. It is also a great place to shop, with over 90 retail brands to choose from. Dining options are aplenty, with over 80 outlets offering casual and fine dining.

**Need to impress clients' lunch** Check out Madam Kwan's high-end hawker fare at Suria KLCC. It is a great place to sample favourite Malaysian dishes such as *nasi lemak*, *nasi bojari* and *assam laksa*.

**Lunch on your own** Check out Little Penang Café at Suria KLCC for decent local dishes.

**Late nights** Euphoria by Ministry of Sound at Sunway Lagoon Resort is a popular nightclub for clubbers with a liking for house, techno and hip hop music.

**Electricity** 240V AC/50 Hz, standard three-pin square plugs and sockets.

### Visa requirements

Single-entry visas are issued to foreign nationals who enter Malaysia on social visits. They are valid for three months from the date of issue.

Multiple-entry visas are issued to foreign nationals who enter Malaysia on business or government-to-government trips. They are valid for three to 12 months from the date of issue.

India and China citizens who wish to enter Malaysia

on social visits are eligible to apply for multiple-entry visas. The multiple-entry visa costs RM100 for India citizens and RM30 for China citizens.

No visa is required for:

- US citizens visiting Malaysia for social, business or academic purposes (except for employment).
- A stay of less than one month for nationals of all ASEAN countries except Myanmar. For a stay exceeding one month, a visa will be required, except for nationals of Brunei and Singapore.
- For Israel nationals, visas are required and permission must be granted from the Ministry of Home Affairs.

For more details, visit [www.imi.gov.my](http://www.imi.gov.my)

### Prices of common items in 2010

**Bottled water** RM1.60 for 500ml

**Starbucks latte (small)** RM10

**A glass of open wine at a pub** About RM16

**Taxi fare (2km)** Taxi fares are not standardised in Malaysia. The metre is not always used; negotiations are needed. In Kuala Lumpur, the flag-down rate is RM3 for the first 2km and increases by 10 cents for every 115m.

### Important contacts

#### NTO

**Tourism Malaysia** is the promotional arm of the Ministry of Tourism. It has 42 overseas offices.

The ministry is targeting high-yield tourists from all market segments in 2010 and 2011. Niche segments such as business, health, education and sports tourism would be tapped to attract the high-yield market.

Enquiries pertaining to leisure must be submitted online via the form available at <http://www.tourism.gov.my/corporate/aboutus.asp?page=enquiries>  
[www.tourism.gov.my](http://www.tourism.gov.my)

**Malaysia Convention & Exhibition Bureau (MyCEB)**, a subsidiary of Tourism Malaysia, is a one-stop centre that coordinates MICE activities in the country. Contact: MyCEB's public relations manager, Phang Wei Yin; email: [weiyin@myceb.com.my](mailto:weiyin@myceb.com.my)  
[www.myceb.com.my](http://www.myceb.com.my) (under construction at press time)

### Travel trade associations

**Malaysian Association of Tour & Travel Agents' (MATTA)** main objective is to promote the interests of the travel and tour industry in the country.  
[www.matta.org.my](http://www.matta.org.my)

**Malaysia Inbound Tourism Association (MITA)** is a non-profit membership association dedicated to building responsible travel to and within Malaysia.  
[www.mitamalaysia.com](http://www.mitamalaysia.com)

**Malaysian Association of Hotels (MAH)** is the umbrella body for hotels in Malaysia. Formed in 1974, the association's vision is to build a workforce of highly skilled, innovative and disciplined individuals who would enhance the efficiency of the hotel industry.  
[www.hotels.org.my](http://www.hotels.org.my)

**Malaysian Association of Hotel Owners (MAHO)** is a grouping of hotel owners in Malaysia with the common objectives of representing the interests of members in safeguarding their return on investments through a conducive business environment, and to promote and support healthy industry development.  
[www.maho.org.my/](http://www.maho.org.my/)

**The Malaysia Association of Convention and Exhibition Organisers and Suppliers (MACEOS)** was established in 1990 to provide a platform for discussion among exhibition and convention organisers.  
[www.maceos.com.my](http://www.maceos.com.my)

**PATA Malaysia Chapter** activities include monthly and quarterly meetings, educational workshops/seminars and overseas workshops.  
 Contact: Executive secretary, Veronica Chong; tel: (603) 5633-3223; email: [patamalaysia@po.jaring.my](mailto:patamalaysia@po.jaring.my)  
[www.pata.org/Chapters/6510](http://www.pata.org/Chapters/6510)

**Skal Kuala Lumpur** brings together all sectors of the travel and tourism industry in Malaysia by organising networking opportunities. It has 85 members.  
 Tel: (603) 5634-6921; email: [uniserv@po.jaring.my](mailto:uniserv@po.jaring.my)  
[www.kul.skall.org.my](http://www.kul.skall.org.my)

Compiled by S Puvaneswary  
 All information is correct at press time



National Monument, Kuala Lumpur



# The Maldives

Continued from previous column

## Top 10 arrival markets 2009

	Arrivals	Marketshare (%)	% Change
Germany	69,085	10.5	-0.2
China	60,666	9.2	46.1
France	50,373	7.7	4.7
Russia	40,014	6.1	-18.3
Japan	36,641	5.6	-4.1
Switzerland	26,783	4.1	0.7
South Korea	16,135	2.5	-22.9
India	15,850	2.4	-4.9

Source: Ministry of Tourism

For most of 2009, the Maldives experienced negative growth in total visitor arrivals, a trend that was reversed from November 2009. Although a weak growth of two per cent was recorded in April 2010, the drop was a direct result of European airspace closure due to the volcanic eruption in Iceland.

Total international visitor arrivals from January to September 2010 stood at 568,703, a growth of 22.1 per cent over the same period in 2009. Average length of stay of visitors was 7.6 days.

## Top 10 arrival markets (January – September 2010)

	Arrivals	Marketshare (%)	% Change
China	90,672	15.9	133.4
UK	85,167	15.0	9.8
Italy	68,114	12.0	-0.6
Germany	53,502	9.4	11.1
France	37,869	6.7	8.6
Russia	34,393	6.0	23.8
Japan	27,971	4.9	3.6
Switzerland	19,032	3.3	1.1
India	16,050	2.8	51.4
South Korea	15,150	2.7	51.1

Source: Ministry of Tourism

Europe continued to contribute the lion's share of total visitor arrivals (67.5 per cent) in the first half of 2010, a growth of 8.3 per cent. Key markets such as Sweden, Portugal and Greece, however, recorded negative growth, with the exception being Turkey's positive growth of more than 58 per cent.

Chinese arrivals from January to September 2010 grew by an overwhelming 133.4 per cent, resulting in China taking top spot in the ranking of source markets. The Maldives Tourism Promotion Board (MTPB) held a series of roadshows in China this year, and regular flights are now operated by China Eastern Airlines, China Southern Airlines and Shanghai Airlines. Sichuan Airlines operated a series of chartered flights in 2010.

The new tourism tax of 3.5 per cent, from January 1, 2011, could however potentially dampen arrival numbers. The tax will be levied on all goods and services consumed by visitors, including accommodation and domestic transportation.

This is proving to be unpopular with European tour operators as they would not be able to factor the tax into their tariffs for the Winter 2010 season. Already deemed a premium destination, the Maldives would become even more expensive for tourists.

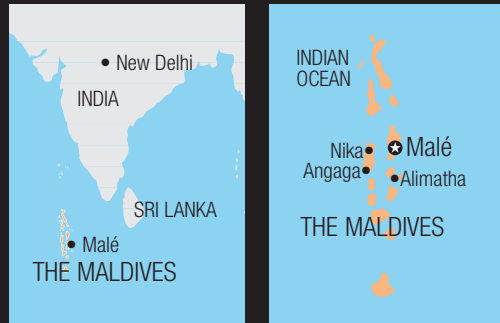
## Tourism contribution to GDP

Year	GDP (Rufiyaa in billions)	Tourism contribution (Rufiyaa in billions)	% share of GDP
2005	7.93	1.80	22.7
2006	9.35	1.56	27.4
2007	10.03	2.80	27.9
2008	10.65	2.88	27.1
2009	10.31	2.73	26.5

Source: Ministry of Tourism

## General Overview

Official name	Republic of Maldives
Capital	Malé
Population	396,334
Total area	90,000 sq km archipelago of 1,190 islands in 26 atolls
Currency	Rufiyaa
Official language	Dhivehi (but English is widely spoken)



The Maldives is a sprinkling of 26 atolls and 1,190 islands – of which only about 200 are inhabited – in the Indian Ocean. Its unique one-island, one-resort concept ensures that resorts have private beaches. An extremely low-lying country with its highest elevation at 2.4m above sea level, the Maldives, along with some Pacific islands, face the possibility of becoming submerged when global warming melts the polar ice caps.

Visitors arrive via Malé International Airport, located on Hulhule Island. Expansion plans are in store for the airport, and land is being reclaimed to facilitate development. A speedboat transfer is the primary mode of transportation from the airport to nearby resorts, while air-taxi transfers using float-planes are available for those located further away.

The Maldives has been a favourite destination for honeymooners as well as those renewing their vows. This image was blemished when news broke in October 2010 of an European couple being insulted in Dhivehi during a ceremony to renew wedding vows. The Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture held a meeting on October 30 to address the issue and implement new regulations that would prevent a repeat of such incidents.

## Climate

Average temperature	25.2°C to 30.9°C
Average rainfall	2,053mm
Average humidity	79 per cent
Average daily sunshine	7.6hr

## Best time to visit

From December to April, the weather is at its most pleasant. The prevailing north-east monsoon brings little precipitation and mostly sunny skies and low humidity are to be expected.

December is the coolest month while the highest temperature is recorded in April. This makes the Maldives a premier winter escape destination for Europeans and the slew of scheduled and charter flights from this continent bears testimony to this trend. Regular showers are expected in June and July.

## Distances

### From Malé to:

Colombo	777km, 1hr 25min
Thiruvananthapuram	605km, 1hr 40min
Bangkok	3,167km, 4hr 20min

Kuala Lumpur	3,135km, 4hr 20min
Singapore	3,402km, 4hr 40min

## Visitor arrival statistics

Total visitor arrivals numbered 655,852 in 2009, a decline of 4.3 per cent year-on-year. Asia-Pacific recorded a two per cent drop, while arrivals from all other regions fell by more than five per cent. The global recession, rising fuel prices and the threat of H1N1 influenza were the key triggers. Meanwhile, China continued to be the largest Asian source of visitors, having overtaken Japan in 2008.

At Malé International Airport, 83.8 per cent of all passengers arrived on scheduled flights and the remaining 16.2 per cent were on chartered flights.

## Top 10 arrival markets 2009

	Arrivals	Marketshare (%)	% Change
UK	105,950	16.2	-9.3
Italy	89,292	13.6	-14.0

Continued next column



**Tourism receipts 2005 – 2009**

	Receipts (US\$ in millions)	% Change
2005	288.6	-39.1
2006	512.4	78.8
2007	602.4	17.5
2008	663.6	10.2
2009	608.3	-8.3

Source: Ministry of Tourism

**Hotel statistics**

As of end-September, the Maldives had 90 resorts with 20,172 beds, 14 hotels with 1,354 beds and 93 live-aboard safari vessels with 1,456 beds.

During the first half of 2010, average occupancy at resorts, hotels and live-aboard safari vessels averaged 68.3 per cent.

**Average occupancy rates (January to September 2010)**

Resorts	74.9 per cent
Hotels	36.0 per cent
Live-aboard safari vessels	20.8 per cent

**New/rebranded hotels in 2010**

The Holiday Inn Malé has been taken over by the Shangri-La Hotel Group and rebranded as the Traders Hotel Male.

The 273-villa Herathera Island Resort has been rebranded an Amari Hotel from December 1, following the appointment of ONYX Hospitality Group as management company.

**New hotels in 2011**

- Anantara Kihavah Villas – Baa Atoll 164 beds
- Berimadhoo Island, Haa Alif Atoll 200 beds
- Uligamu 100 beds
- Hanimaadhoo, Haa Dhaal Atoll 200 beds
- Dolhiyadhoo, Shaviyani Atoll 200 beds
- Gaakoshihi, Shaviyani Atoll 200 beds
- Vagaru, Shaviyani Atoll 70 beds
- Maavelaavaru, Noon Atoll 100 beds
- Randheli, Noon Atoll 100 beds
- Mudhdhoo, Baa Atoll 200 beds
- Kanifushi, Lhaviyani Atoll 300 beds
- Nasandhura Palace Hotel, Malé 62 beds
- Male’fushi, Thaa Atoll 100 beds
- Meradhoo, Gaaf Alif Atoll 44 beds
- Konotta, Gaaf Dhaal Atoll 100 beds
- Maguddhuva, Gaaf Dhaal Atoll 200 beds
- Vatavarreha, Gaaf Dhaal Atoll 150 beds

**New attraction/tourism infrastructure**

As more resorts are developed and opened in the south, the Maldives government has injected new life into Gan Airport, a former Royal Air Force base that the British forces abandoned in 1976. The airport is being renovated and upgraded for both domestic and international chartered flights.

**Essentials in the city – Malé**

**Food** Sample *fihunu mas*, a barbecued Maldivian savoury snack made from fish and chilli paste.

**Tipping policy** A service charge of 10 per cent is usually added to the bill but customers may choose to tip more.

**Shopping** Bring home a couple of red mats woven by the women folk of Gaafu Dhaalu Atoll using *haa*, a type of reed from nearby Fioari Island.

**Maximise two hours of free time** Head to a local tea-house in Malé to enjoy local snacks and beverages along with a spot of people-watching. Most teahouses are open from 05.00 to 01.00.

**Insider’s tip for half a day off** Pack a camera, head off to Malé International Airport and take an airborne excursion with Maldivian Air Taxi or Trans Maldivian Airways. Enjoy the sights of the beautiful atolls and islands.

**Need to impress clients’ lunch** Azur Restaurant on the top floor of the Holiday Inn Malé (soon to be rebranded The Traders Male) is the place to be. The restaurant menu boasts well-executed modern Japanese and French dishes.

**Lunch on your own** Go to the Sea House, which operates round the clock, for a simple meal of avocado shrimp salad and spicy steak fajita, washed down with a Bull Blaster – a red concoction of red grape juice and Red Bull.

**Late nights** A naughty nightspot just does not exist in Malé.

**Electricity** 230-240V, three-pin round or rectangular blade plugs or two-pin flat blade

**Visa requirements**

Visitors of all nationalities travelling with a valid passport are granted a complimentary 30-day visa on arrival, provided they also possess sufficient funds and a ticket out of the country.

Visa extension may be obtained at the Department of Immigration and Emigration in Malé.

**Prices of common items in 2010**

**Bottled water** Rf 62.30 (US\$5)

**Starbucks latte (small)** Not available

**A glass of open wine at a pub** N/A

**Taxi fare** Speedboat transfers from resorts to Male range from US\$50 to US\$200 depending on distance. Alternatively, cash-rich but time-poor visitors may book a sea-plane transfer that costs between US\$200 and US\$400. The best transportation deal is offered by the traditional *dhoni* ride from the airport to the capital city of Malé – this sets you back US\$0.80.

**Important contacts**

**NTO**

**Maldives Tourism Promotion Board (MTPB)** has started the ball rolling for a comprehensive rebranding exercise. While the current campaign focused on the sun and sea appeal of the destination, the new campaign would encompass culture, history and the Maldivian people. The MTPB intends to launch the new campaign in 2011.

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

**Travel trade associations**

**Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture**

[www.tourism.gov.mv](http://www.tourism.gov.mv)

**Maldives Association of Travel Agents and Tour Operators (MATATO)**

[www.matato.org](http://www.matato.org)

**Maldives Association of Tourism Industry (MATI)**

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

**Maldives Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC)**

[www.mtdc.com.mv](http://www.mtdc.com.mv)

Compiled by Sim Kok Chwee

All information is correct at press time



Aerial view of the Maldives



Maldives oriental sweetlips



Club Med Kani, Maldives



# Myanmar

Continued from previous column

## Top 20 arrival markets 2009

	Arrivals	Marketshare (%)
Singapore	10,712	4.71
France	10,225	4.50
Malaysia	9,668	4.25
Germany	8,788	3.86
India	8,609	3.79
Australia	7,090	3.12
UK	6,088	2.68
Italy	5,931	2.61
Spain	4,459	1.96
Switzerland	3,165	1.39
Hong Kong	2,702	1.19
Russia	2,033	0.89
Belgium	1,838	0.81
Middle East	2,033	0.67

Source: Ministry of Hotels and Tourism

## Top 20 arrival markets (January to August 2010)

	Arrivals	Marketshare (%)
Thailand	35,501	19.32
China	21,685	11.80
South Korea	11,929	6.49
Japan	10,494	5.71
US	10,321	5.62
Taiwan	9,935	5.41
Malaysia	9,191	5.00
France	8,145	4.43
Singapore	7,452	4.06
India	6,673	3.63
Germany	6,075	3.31
Italy	4,712	2.56
UK	4,567	2.49
Australia	4,426	2.41
Spain	3,397	1.85
Switzerland	2,124	1.16
Hong Kong	2,041	1.11
Canada	1,514	0.82
Russia	1,479	0.80
Middle East	1,361	0.74

Source: Ministry of Hotels and Tourism

## Total number of hotels and rooms

	Hotels	Rooms
Yangon	172	7,305
Mandalay	69	2,912
Bagan	74	1,953
Mrauk Oo	5	126
Ngapali Beach	12	420
Ngwe Saung Beach	19	840
Chaung Tha Beach	14	470
Nay Pyi Taw	9	435

Source: Respective hotels

## Hotel statistics

According to the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism (MHT), Myanmar has 646 licensed hotels and more than 21,368 rooms nationwide.

MHT's data for the past 20 years showed some US\$1.13 billion investment in 36 hotels and 6,276 rooms by foreign investors from six nations, including Singapore (US\$595.75 million), Thailand (US\$248 million), Japan (US\$189.76 million), Hong Kong (US\$77 million), Malaysia (US\$20 million) and the UK (US\$3.4 million). Thirty-one hotels and 5,231 rooms are operational, with five other projects yet to be completed. New hotels being built in Nay Pyi Taw, Inle and Ngapali are slated to open between 2010 and 2011.

According to Myanmar hoteliers, bookings for the

## General Overview

Official name	Union of Myanmar
Capital	Nay Pyi Taw
Population	59.12 million
Total area	676,577 sq km
Currency	Kyat
Official language	Myanmar



The Myanmar Tourism Industry enjoyed a healthy 2009, welcoming 227,421 visitors, a 17.6 per cent increase over 193,319 visitors in 2008. From January to August in 2010, visitor numbers registered a record 37.9 per cent growth to 183,729 visitors.

Citing high booking demand and tourist interest in Myanmar, the country's travel trade expects the high tourist season from October 2010 to March 2011 to record an increase of 40 per cent in visitor arrivals.

Meanwhile, a new hotel zone is being developed near Pho Zaung Hill in new Oaktara Thiri Township in the Myanmar capital of Nay Pyi Taw. This is in preparation for the 27<sup>th</sup> South-east Asian Games (SEA Games), which Myanmar will be hosting in 2013.

## Climate

Average temperature	20°C to 24°C (October to March)
Average rainfall	5,000mm (coastal region); less than 1,000mm (central region)
Average humidity	82.6 per cent

## Best time to visit

Myanmar's tropical climate makes the country suitable for year-round visits. October to February are the best months to visit, as temperatures are mild and hover between 20°C and 24°C.

The summer season runs from March through May, with average temperatures ranging between 30°C and 35°C, while the monsoon season is from June through September with temperatures of between 25°C and 30°C.

Yangon normally receives early morning and afternoon showers while rainfall in Bagan and Mandalay is very low. The weather around Inle and Shan State is quite pleasant year-round, but it gets cold at night from December to February.

## Distances

Yangon-Mandalay	695km, 1.3hr
Yangon-Bagan	700km, 1.2hr
Yangon-Heho (Inle)	700km, 1.1hr
Yangon-Ngapali	496km, 50min
Yangon-Mytikyina	1,703km, 3hr
Mandalay-Mytikyina	902km, 1.1hr

## Visitor arrival statistics

In the first eight months of 2010, Myanmar welcomed

183,729 visitor arrivals, a 37.9 per cent increase over the same period in 2009. Asian countries represented 68.2 per cent or 125,309 visitors of the total figure. Thailand topped the Asian market with 35,501 visitors, followed by China with 21,685 visitors, South Korea with 11,929 visitors and Japan with 10,494 visitors.

The European market represented 21 per cent, with 38,639 visitors, of the total arrivals in the first eight months of 2010. France is the largest market from Europe with 8,145 visitors, followed by Germany with 6,075 visitors and Italy with 4,712 visitors.

Myanmar's move to introduce a visa-on-arrival from May 1, though the facility was unexpectedly shelved on August 31, was cited as reason for the substantial growth in independent travellers. The number of FITs jumped 58.4 per cent to 103,617 compared to 65,416 recorded in the same period in 2009.

Meanwhile, package tour visitors increased 33 per cent to 15,194. Visitors with business visas and social visas rose 14.2 per cent and 9.6 per cent respectively.

## Top 20 arrival markets 2009

	Arrivals	Marketshare (%)
Thailand	42,684	18.77
China	23,634	10.39
US	14,398	6.33
Japan	13,796	6.07
South Korea	12,501	5.50
Taiwan	12,217	5.37

Continued next column



peak season from October 2010 to March 2011 are higher than that of the same period last year. In preparation for the 27<sup>th</sup> Southeast Asian Games in 2013, local hotel developers and owners are adding new rooms to cater to the anticipated increase in demand.

**New hotels in 2010**

**Royal Naypyitaw Hotel, Nay Pyi Taw** 200 rooms  
**Hotel Ayeyarwaddy, Nay Pyi Taw** 20 rooms  
**Eden Bagan Resort and Spa, Bagan** 60 rooms

**Average occupancy rate/Average room rate**

	Total rooms	Average occupancy fiscal year 2009-2010	Average occupancy fiscal year 2010-2011 (estimate)	Average room rates
<b>Yangon</b>				
Sedona	366	N/A	N/A	US\$100-160
Traders	233	60%	70%	US\$50
Chatrium	303	60%	65%	US\$80
Park Royal	267	55%	65%	Undisclosed
<b>Mandalay</b>				
Mandalay Hill	206	N/A	N/A	US\$65-600
<b>Bagan</b>				
Bagan River View	107	60%	65%	Undisclosed
Aureum Palace	114	65%	70%	US\$100-150
Myanmar Treasure Resort	94	70%	75%	US\$75
<b>Inle Lake</b>				
Myanmar Treasure Resort	60	70%	75%	US\$90
Golden Island Cottage	65	55%	60%	US\$40-80
<b>Popa</b>				
Popa Mountain Resort Hotel	50	65%	65%	US\$80-145
<b>Mrauk Oo</b>				
Mrauk Oo Princess Resort	21	N/A	N/A	US\$120
Vesali Resort	18	N/A	N/A	US\$35
<b>Ngapali Beach</b>				
Aureum Palace Hotel	42	55%	60%	US\$100-150
<b>Ngwe Saung Beach</b>				
Bay of Bengal	62	60%	70%	US\$170-230
Sunny Paradise	112	50%	60%	US\$30-150
Aureum Palace	97	60%	65%	US\$70-100
Myanmar Treasure Resort	60	65%	65%	US\$20-40
<b>Chaungtha Beach</b>				
Hotel Max	70	70%	80%	US\$40-170
<b>Pyin Oo Lwin</b>				
Aureum	40	60%	65%	US\$40-60
<b>Nay Pyi Taw</b>				
Aureum	30	55%	65%	US\$75-325
Thingaha	30	60%	65%	US\$70-90
Amara	67	55%	60%	US\$35-250

Source: Respective hotels

**New hotels in 2011**

**Centre Towers Hotel, Yangon** 300 rooms  
**Inle Max Hotel, Inle Lake** 66 rooms  
**Ngapali Max Hotel, Ngapali Beach** 70 rooms  
**Sky Blue Hotel, Nay Pyi Taw** 102 rooms

**Myanmar Treasure Resort Ngapali, Ngapali Beach** 90 rooms

**New attractions/tourism infrastructure**

**National Landmark Garden** opened in February, boasting a garden that spans 161.9ha in Nay Pyi Taw and featuring a model version of the states and divisions of the country. It is open daily from 08.00 to 18.00, with an entrance fee of 1,000 Kyat (US\$1) and a buggy rental fee of 5,000 Kyat per hour.

**One of the twin-towered Centrepoint Towers**, located at the corner of Merchant and Sule Pagoda Roads in Yangon's Kyautada Township, opened in September. Providing 72,000m<sup>2</sup> of floorspace, the project features a hotel, commercial offices and retail space.

**Coffee Flight Cafe** provides a unique dining experience in a decommissioned Myanmar Airways' Fokker F28 aircraft. Situated on Yaza Thingaha Road in Nay Pyi Taw's hotel zone, the café serves good European food.

**MAI Sky Smile Lounge** was opened by Myanmar Airways International (MAI) in September at Yangon International Airport. The facility offers lounge seating, international TV channels, free Internet access and business secretarial services for US\$8 per passenger.

**Nay Pyi Taw International Airport's** construction started in January 2009, and will take about 30 months to complete. Expected to handle 3.5 million passengers per year, the airport will have a two-storey terminal with separate wings for domestic and international passengers.

**Key events and festivals 2011**

**Naga New Year Festival (January)**  
 This traditional Naga New Year Festival takes place in villages in Sagaing town, with festivities that include Naga clan ceremonies and the New Year ceremony.

**Thingyan Water Festival (April 13 to 16)**  
 Myanmar people celebrate their New Year with a famous four-day water festival called "Thingyan", which has everyone throwing water at one another.

**Taungpyone Nat Festival (August)**  
 Taungpyone Nat Festival takes place every year at Taungpyone Village, about 10km north of Mandalay. This spirit festival attracts mediums and devotees from all over the country as well as curious tourists.

**Taunggyi Hot Air Balloons Festival (November)**  
 The annual Tazaungdine Lighting Festival, also known as Lu Ping festival, features unique 'rocket' fireworks and hot air balloon competitions.

**Essentials in the city – Yangon**

**Food** Try *mont hin gar*, a well-known Myanmar breakfast that is a mix of thick fish soup and thin rice noodles. Roasted chilli powder, lime juice, fish sauce and chopped coriander are added to heighten the flavour.

**Tipping policy** From 200 Kyat at local restaurants, and from 500 Kyat at international or hotel restaurants.

**Shopping** Local souvenirs and crafts from all over Myanmar can be found at Bogyoke Aung San Market, also known as Scott Market in Yangon.

**Maximise two hours of free time** Take a sightseeing tour of colonial-style buildings from Yangon City Hall through Pansodan Road, Strand Road, the Central Post Office and Bo Aung Kyaw Street to Anawrahta Road. Appreciate beautiful buildings such as the Strand Hotel and one of South-east Asia's largest churches, St Mary's Cathedral.

**Insider's tip for half a day off** Visit Thanlyin, located on the banks of Yangon River, and about 20 minutes by car from downtown Yangon. See the ruins of a Portuguese church and Kyaikkhauk Pagoda, and do check out the Yeyl Pagoda set on an islet in the middle of the river.

**Need to impress clients' lunch** Try the Royal Thazin Restaurant on Inya Road for authentic Myanmar food. If Western fare is desired, go to the Signature Fine Dining and Garden Bistro in Bahan Township.

**Lunch on your own** Check out the roadside food stalls along Anawrahta and Sule Pagoda Roads that serve My-

anmar and Indian dishes. For Chinese food, go to Chinatown at Latha Township.

**Late nights** DJ Bar in the Inya Lake Hotel, 50<sup>th</sup> Street Bar at 50<sup>th</sup> Street in Botataung Twyut Township and Paddy O' Malley's at Sedona Hotel are popular venues.

**Electricity** Single-phase voltage of 220-230V/50 Hz, primarily two-pin sockets

**Visa requirements**

A visa must be obtained in advance from a Myanmar embassy or consulate abroad and is valid for a 28-day stay. Several types of visas are available, including 28-day tourist visa (US\$30, non-extendable), 70-day business visa (US\$40, extendable), 28-day social visa (US\$40, extendable) and 24-hour transit visa (US\$18).

Pre-arranged visa-on-arrival (VOA) is applicable only to tourists buying tour packages with authorised Myanmar-based travel companies. Subject to approval by the Ministry of Hotel and Tourism (MHT), the pre-arranged VOA must be applied for at least 10 days prior to travel date.

When a visa is approved, the tour company will notify the applicant, airline and airport. The applicant will receive an approval letter that can be presented at the immigration counter upon arrival at the airport in Myanmar, after which the immigration officer will double-check that the applicant is not blacklisted, check the security code, confirm that the visa fee has been paid, and then issue the on-arrival visa.

**Prices of common items in 2010**

**Bottled water** 300 Kyat  
**Starbucks latte (small)** N/A  
**A glass of open wine at a pub** US\$3 to US\$5, depending on location  
**Taxi fare (2km)** 1,000 Kyat

**Important contacts**

**NTO**  
**Myanmar Ministry of Hotels and Tourism (MHT)** does not have tourism representatives overseas. It appointed about 30 tour companies overseas to promote Myanmar as a tourism destination. MHT, Myanmar Marketing Committee, Union of Myanmar Travel Association and Myanmar Hoteliers Association are all promoting the country to increase current visitor arrivals fivefold.

Myanmar is also promoted and marketed through ASEAN Promotional Chapters for Tourism in Seoul, Sydney and Beijing. Myanmar's embassies and consulates overseas disseminate tourism information in their respective markets and MHT's Department of Hotels and Tourism regularly distributes tourism collaterals and information through these offices.

Contact: Department of Hotels and Tourism, tel: (95-67) 406-056; fax (95-67) 406-057; email dht.mht@myanmar.com.mm, dg.dht@mptmail.net.mm  
[www.hotel-tourism.gov.mm](http://www.hotel-tourism.gov.mm), [www.myanmar-tourism.org](http://www.myanmar-tourism.org)

**Travel trade associations**

**Myanmar Marketing Committee (MMC)**, an initiative of hotel and tourism sectors, was formed with the objective of marketing and promoting Myanmar as a tourist destination.

MMC is the marketing arm of Myanmar Tourism Promotion Board and spearheads activities such as participation in global travel trade fairs, roadshows, annual fundraising balls, tournaments and events. Email: mmc-pr@tradersyangon.com.mm;  
[www.tourismmyanmar.org](http://www.tourismmyanmar.org), [www.myanmar-tourism.com](http://www.myanmar-tourism.com)

**Union of Myanmar Travel Association (UMTA)** was formed under the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism in 2002 with the main purpose of overseeing private travel agencies, tour operators and travel-related businesses in promoting Myanmar. Email: umta@mptmail.net.mm; [www.umtanut.org](http://www.umtanut.org)

**Myanmar Hoteliers Association (MHA)** was set up under the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism to systematically develop the hotel industry and resolve problems and difficulties faced by members. Email: myanhotelier@myanmar.com.mm; [www.myanmarhotelier.org](http://www.myanmarhotelier.org)

Compiled by Rahul Khanna  
 All information is correct at press time



# The Philippines

## General Overview

Official name	Republic of the Philippines
Capital	Manila
Population	98 million
Total area	299,764 sq km
Currency	Philippine peso
Official languages	Filipino and English



The profile of the Philippines as a destination was given a shot in the arm when *National Geographic* magazine named it one of 25 new travel destinations in its November 2010 issue. Aiming to promote travel to the Philippines and to conserve cultural treasures, the government is seeking help from Spain, including advice on hotel construction, manpower training, networking with tourism organisations and tourism planning.

On the marketing front, the Department of Tourism (DoT) is taking advantage of growing arrivals at Clark Airport to encourage visitors to travel to Cagayan Valley and Ilocos regions for their rich culture, history, traditions and natural attractions. The theme – Go North! A wellspring of diversity – was launched in November 2010.

Much still needs to be done, however, to improve tourism infrastructure and create a new branding as the Philippines' standing in the 2009 World Economic Forum Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report slipped to 86 out of 133 countries.

Domestic tourism is being strongly touted, with places such as Camarines Sur, Puerto Princesa, Bohol, Boracay, Baguio, Tagaytay and Ilocos being highlighted.

### Climate

Average temperature	27°C
Average rainfall	2,030mm
Average humidity	77 per cent

### Best time to visit

Cool, dry and sunny weather typically greets visitors during the period from November to February. From March to May, the weather remains dry and sunny but the temperature begins to soar.

Wet weather and typhoons with speeds of up to 120 km/h are common from June to October. These are formed in the Pacific Ocean and bring much precipitation and mayhem to the western and northern parts of the archipelago as they move in westerly or north-westerly directions. On October 18, 2010, an unusually late super typhoon Megi slammed into the Philippines at 155 km/h. Coastal resorts in the east and south such as Palawan are generally unaffected by these storms.

### Distances

**From Manila to:**  
Boracay (via Caticlan) 302km, 1hr 10min

Cebu	565km, 1hr 10min
Davao	960km, 1hr 45min
Puerto Princesa	583km, 1hr 10min
Zamboanga	847km, 1hr 40min

### Visitor arrival statistics

Total international visitor arrivals in 2009 totalled 3.02 million, a negative growth of 3.9 per cent over 2008's figures. Set against the tumultuous economic landscape in 2009, this was probably considered a stellar performance. Strong growth, however, was recorded from markets such as Kuwait (143 per cent) Iran (33 per cent) and Egypt (38 per cent).

January to July 2010 registered 2.04 million foreign visitors, a 14 per cent growth over the same period in 2009. The top 10 source markets reflected minor changes, with South Korea overtaking the US.

With East Asia (China, Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea and Taiwan) accounting for 43 per cent of all arrivals and ASEAN countries accounting for a further 8.3 per cent, it was conceivable that the bullish growth achieved in the first half of 2010 could be significantly dampened by the August 23 incident in which 22 tourists from Hong Kong

were taken hostage, resulting in eight killed. The Filipino government's report on the incident, issued in September 2010, was closely watched throughout the region.

Improved air access is expected to have a positive effect on arrivals. All Nippon Airways' daily B767-300ER services between Tokyo-Narita and Manila will start in March 2011. Meanwhile, low-cost carriers from the Philippines are aggressively expanding, with Cebu Pacific overtaking flag carrier Philippine Airlines (PAL) in passenger throughput.

Airphil Express, PAL's LCC arm, is fighting back with expansion plans for domestic services and new international services to Singapore from Manila and Cebu.

### Top 10 arrival markets 2009

	Arrivals	Marketshare	% Change
US	582,537	19.31	0.74
South Korea	497,936	16.50	-18.59
Japan	324,980	10.77	-9.55
China	155,019	5.14	-5.30
Australia	132,330	4.39	8.90
Hong Kong	122,786	4.07	5.26
Taiwan	102,274	3.39	-13.9
Canada	99,012	3.28	-3.29
Singapore	98,305	3.26	-1.87
UK	91,009	3.02	4.10

Source: Department of Tourism

### Top 10 arrival markets (January – July 2010)

	Arrivals	Marketshare	% Change
South Korea	406,348	19.93	34.74
US	368,057	18.05	2.13
Japan	201,814	9.90	9.59
China	110,642	5.43	30.16
Hong Kong	85,615	4.20	18.12
Australia	79,116	3.88	11.58
Taiwan	79,039	3.88	28.38
Singapore	67,748	3.32	24.49
Canada	60,892	2.99	2.37
UK	57,572	2.82	11.1

Source: Department of Tourism

### Tourism receipts

According to a World Travel and Tourism Council report, tourism receipts would contribute PHP580.1 billion (US\$12 billion) – or about 6.9 per cent – to 2010's GDP. It further reported that this was expected to track upwards and reach US\$28 billion, contributing 7.9 per cent to 2020's GDP.

The DoT, under new secretary Alberto Lim, intends to double tourism revenues within six years by attracting well-heeled visitors who seek culture, history and nature in new and exotic destinations.

### Hotel statistics

In 2009, the most popular destinations were Cebu, Camarines Sur, Metro Manila, Baguio, Davao City and Boracay, with hotels in these regions registering healthy occupancy rates.

From January to May 2010, Metro Manila, which has 160 accredited hotels, was the leading destination with a 23.2 per cent share of tourists staying in accommodation facilities. Cebu and Boracay followed, with the latter enjoying a spike in Chinese and Taiwanese visitors following the launch of direct charter flights from Taipei, Kaohsiung and Shanghai to Kalibo.

The Central Philippines Super region, which includes Albay, Bohol, Boracay, Camarines Sur, Cebu, Palawan and Sorsogon, along with Metro Manila and Tagaytay, offer a total of 2,343 accommodation facilities providing 65,052 rooms. Metro Manila accounted for 24,004 rooms, followed by Cebu with 18,009 rooms and Boracay with 6,984 rooms. These new investments are expected to generate employment for 17,782.

Four boutique hotels will be developed in Lagen and Miniloc Islands in Palawan over the next few years. Ground-breaking for these properties will be in 2011, with completion expected in one and a half years.



Hotels in Metro Manila reported average occupancy rate (AOR) of 69.1 per cent from January to June 2010, up from 65.6 per cent for the same period in 2009. AOR for accredited hotels increased 5.6 per cent while non-accredited hotels registered a 2.1 per cent growth.

From January to May 2010, first-class and deluxe hotels in Metro Manila enjoyed occupancy rates of 64.08 and 71.5 per cent respectively. Standard hotels, however, saw a slight dip in occupancy rate to 67.9 per cent, down from 68 per cent in 2009.

**Additional properties and rooms 2010 to 2012**

	2010		2011		2012	
	Propert-ies	Rooms	Propert-ies	Rooms	Propert-ies	Rooms
Albay	N/A	N/A	2	162	N/A	N/A
Bohol	15	149	2	302	N/A	N/A
Boracay Island	15	277	3	156	4	504
Camarines Sur	3	14	4	30	N/A	N/A
Cebu	22	2,291	23	2,299	1	422
Palawan	20	407	14	318	3	216
Metro Manila	5	605	1	262	N/A	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>3,743</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>3,529</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1,142</b>

Source: Department of Tourism

**New hotels in 2010**

**MANILA**

- Hotel H2O Manila** 128 rooms
- Berjaya Manila Hotel** 167 rooms
- Microtel Mall of Asia** 150 rooms
- St Giles Hotel Makati** 415 rooms
- Midas Hotel** 217 rooms
- Maxim's Tower** 172 suites

**CEBU**

- Radisson Blu Hotel Cebu** 400 rooms
- The Hotel Elizabeth Cebu** 131 rooms

**BORACAY**

- Fairways & Bluewater Residences Newcoast** 116 rooms
- The RESIDENCES at Fairways & Bluewater** 2 villas

**New hotels in 2011 – 2014**

**MANILA**

- The Fairmont Makati** 300 rooms
- Raffles Makati** 30 suites
- Novotel Manila Araneta Center** 400 rooms
- Radisson Hotel Manila Bay** 500 rooms
- The Regent Manila Bay** 10 suites, 69 executive suites, 1 presidential suite
- Remington Hotel** 700 rooms
- Shangri-La at The Fort** 500 rooms

**BORACAY**

- Palmerston Boracay Resort** 59 suites and 18 villas
- Continent Fairways Resort** 56 suites

**Key events and festivals 2011**

**Feast of the Black Nazarene (January 9)**

The procession and the accompanying Feast of the Black Nazarene take place every year. It is the single largest festival in the Philippines and thousands of devotees go to Quiapo in Metro Manila to participate.

Organiser: Quiapo Church

**Ati-Atihan Festival (January 12 to 18)**

The Ati-Atihan Festival is celebrated in the town of Kalibo and is reputed to be the wildest of celebrations in the Philippines. Participants paint their faces with soot, don bright and outlandish costumes, and hit the town.

[www.kalibo.gov.ph/Ati-Atihan/schedule-of-activities.html](http://www.kalibo.gov.ph/Ati-Atihan/schedule-of-activities.html)

**Sinulog Festival (January 16)**

Sinulog is the most popular festival in Cebu, held in honour of the holy image of Senyor Santo Niño de Cebu (Infant Jesus).

Organiser: City Administration of Cebu

[www.sinulog.ph](http://www.sinulog.ph)

**Panagbenga Festival (February 26)**

The month-long annual flower festival in Baguio cel-

brates the city's flowers and recovery from the Luzon earthquake in 1990. Floral floats and street dancing by performers wearing flower-inspired costumes are some of the festival's attractions.

**Essentials in the city – Metro Manila**

**Food** Try *adobo* – a stewed dish of pork or chicken (and often both) with soy sauce, vinegar, garlic, bay leaf and black peppercorn. If you fail to get invited to a home-cooked dinner, head to a local restaurant before you leave the country.

**Quirky** Filipinos tend to pronounce the letter “F” as a “P” (eg. My friend from France sounds like “My prend prom Prance”). Ask a Filipina (a lady) on the street for direction and chances are that she will pout her lips and point it in the direction you should be heading. Both add to the immense charm of Filipinos.

**Tippling policy** A service charge of 15 per cent is usually added to the bill but customers may choose to give extra if the service is worth it.

**Shopping** Get a *barong Tagalog* – a traditional shirt or dress that features a fabric made from pineapples and is embellished with amazing hand or machine embroidery.

**Maximise two hours of free time** Sign up for a walking tour of Intramuros with Carlos Celdran. His walking tour is so popular that even locals join him for a dose of nostalgia. Through Carlos' passionate and charismatic commentary, each wall, gate (and there are eight of them in distinctly different designs) and crumbling ruin yields wonderful tales. Alternatively, grab front-row seats in a nice café and watch colourful jeepneys (many sporting Mercedes Benz, BMW and Ferrari emblems) zip by.

**Insider's tip for half a day off** Slip on good walking shoes and a suitably light set of clothes, tonnes of pesos and head for Tiendesitas – a huge local market in Pasig. You will find great local food, an amazing array of local handicraft, clothes and household decorations, and the opportunity to see Filipinos in their most natural state – warm, friendly and hospitable. Haggling over prices is a joy, not a hassle, at Tiendesitas.

**Need to impress clients' lunch** Bet on being marooned at Blackbeard's Seafood Island, which boasts a mind-boggling array of crabs and seafood dishes from the Philippines and around the world.

**Lunch on your own** Krazy Garlik at Greenbelt 5 is defi-



El Nido Resorts activities

nately the place for those who love garlic or want a boost of antioxidants.

**Late nights** Absinth Club in Greenbelt 3 is the place to be for a charged-up atmosphere and loud music. Filipinos are some of the best singers and dancers around.

**Electricity** 220V/60 Hz, flat-blade plug with two round pins.

**Visa requirements**

Nationals of countries with reciprocal agreements with the Philippines are able to enjoy visa-free stays for up to 21 days. Extension of such stays is possible with a 59-day tourist visa obtained at the Bureau of Immigration.

Hong Kong and Macau nationals enjoy visa-free entry for seven days, a privilege also extended to Chinese visitors with valid and current visas for entry into the US, Japan, Australia, Canada and Schengen countries.

Visa-on-arrival for 14 days is extended to individuals and groups from all markets, except restricted nations – if vouched for by a Philippine-registered or accredited tour operator which has to submit details of each person to the DoT and the Bureau of Immigration two days prior to arrival in the Philippines.

Visa-on-arrival costs US\$25 per person for groups of three to 19 people and US\$15 per person for groups of 20 or more.

**Prices of common items in 2010**

- Bottled water** 20 pesos for 200ml (US\$0.42)
- Starbucks latte (small)** 85 pesos
- A glass of open wine at a pub** 240 pesos
- Taxi fare (2km)** 40 pesos

**Important Contacts**

**NTO**

Following the inauguration of a new government this year under President Benigno Aquino III, a new secretary of tourism, Alberto Lim, was appointed to head the **Department of Tourism**.

Aside from beach holidays, cultural and historical tourism, the DoT also intends to tap medical tourists. The NTO first launched a programme targeting this segment in 2006.

The DoT rolled out a new campaign, *Pilipinas, Kay Ganda!* (Philippines, So Beautiful!) in November 2010 to replace the eight-year-old *WOW Philippines* brand. The new brand was to highlight the warmth and hospitality of Filipinos, considered the country's greatest asset. The country, however, quickly pulled the plug on the new brand when the latter was met with heavy criticism on the use of the vernacular, among other things. At press time, the DoT had gone back to the drawing board to devise a new brand in consultation with the private sector.

DoT has overseas offices in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, New York City, Seoul, Beijing, Tokyo, Osaka, Taipei, Sydney, Frankfurt and London. It has also appointed marketing representatives in Hong Kong, Guangzhou, Singapore, Malaysia and Vietnam.

[www.tourism.org.ph](http://www.tourism.org.ph)

**Travel trade associations**

**Philippine Travel Agencies Association**  
[www.ptaa.org.ph](http://www.ptaa.org.ph)

**Philippine Tour Operators Association**  
[www.philtoa.org](http://www.philtoa.org)

**Philippines IATA Agents Association**  
[www.piata.com.ph](http://www.piata.com.ph)

**National Association of Independent Travel Agencies**  
[www.naitas.org.ph](http://www.naitas.org.ph)

**Hotel and Restaurant Association of the Philippines**  
[www.hrap.org.ph](http://www.hrap.org.ph)

**Hotel Sales and Marketing Association**

**Movement of Incentive Travel Executives**

**Philippine Association of Convention/Exhibition Organizers and Suppliers**  
[www.paceos.com](http://www.paceos.com)

Compiled by Sim Kok Chwee

All information is correct at press time



# Singapore

## General Overview

Official name	Republic of Singapore
Capital	Singapore
Population	5.07 million
Total area	710.3 sq km
Currency	Singapore dollar
Official languages	English, Malay, Mandarin and Tamil



Singapore logged in a good year for 2010, with all key tourism performance indicators pointing at a healthy outlook. Tourist arrivals registered continual month-on-month growth in the first eight months, with July being the star month for having welcomed over one million visitors, a record performance.

Average room rate (ARR) and average occupancy rate (AOR) between January and August reflected a corresponding increase. AOR hit 85.9 per cent, while ARR stood at S\$209.60 (US\$162.98), up from 2009's average of S\$191.

The Singapore Tourism Board's (STB) promotions for regional markets resulted in strong growth from Indonesia, China, Malaysia, Australia, India, the Philippines, Japan and Thailand. Malaysia made the biggest leap of 45.2 per cent to contribute 629,130 visitors to Singapore. It was Singapore's third-biggest market for the first eight months of 2010.

### Climate

Average temperature	22°C to 34°C
Average rainfall	2,342.2mm a year
Average humidity	60 to 90 per cent

### Best time to visit

Heavy rain dominates the weather between November and February, while April is a hot and humid month. Wet weather may, however, still persist during drier months, and it is best to be prepared for intermittent wet surprises year-round.

### Distances

#### From Singapore to:

Kuala Lumpur	325km, 45min
Jakarta	894km, 1hr 35min
Manila	2,397km, 3hr 35min
Bali	1,690km, 2hr 30min
Bangkok	1,425km, 2hr 20min
Phuket	939km, 1hr 45min
Beijing	4,457km, 6hr 15min
Shanghai	2,358km, 5hr 20min
Hong Kong	2,573km, 3hr 45min
Ho Chi Minh City	1,090km, 2hr
Hanoi	2,186km, 3hr 25min
Melbourne	6,061km, 7hr 20min
Perth	3,903km, 5hr
Tokyo	5,313km, 7hr
Seoul	4,667km, 6hr 25min
Taipei	3,248km, 4hr 40min

### Visitor arrival statistics

The majority of Singapore's top 10 markets showed a dip in arrivals in 2009. However, 2010 arrivals painted a rosy picture. All top markets, except the UK, registered growth in the first eight months. Indonesia and China retained their positions on the arrivals chart as the top and second-biggest source markets respectively.

Singapore's tourism industry received a boost from July's 1.1 million visitors, a record for arrivals in a month. STB attributed the growth to improved travel sentiment, the allure of Marina Bay Sands, Resorts World Sentosa and the Great Singapore Sale.

Marketing initiatives by STB's regional offices and tactical promotions by airlines and hotels were pivotal in securing robust arrivals. The inaugural Youth Olympic Games in August also boosted arrivals for the month, as did the appeal of the new integrated resorts and improved economy.

#### Total tourist arrivals

2008	10,115,638, -1.6 per cent
2009	9,681,259, -4.3 per cent
2010 (Jan-Aug)	7,621,547, +22.2 per cent

#### Total length of stay of top 10 markets

2007	38 million days
2008	41.3 million days
2009 (Jan-Jun)	39.1 million days

Source: Singapore Tourism Board

### Top 10 arrival markets 2008

	Arrivals	% Change
Indonesia	1,765,404	- 10.0
China	1,078,637	- 3.2
Australia	833,146	8.4
India	778,299	4.0
Malaysia	647,339	0.3
Japan	571,020	- 4.0
UK	492,928	- 0.6
South Korea	423,011	- 8.9
Philippines	418,920	N/A
US	396,618	- 3.0

Source: Singapore Tourism Board

### Top 10 arrival markets 2009

	Arrivals	% Change
Indonesia	1,745,057	-1.1
China	936,727	-14.2
Australia	830,249	- 0.3
Malaysia	764,164	18.0
India	725,536	-6.8
Japan	489,940	-14.2
UK	469,723	-4.7
Philippines	432,055	3.1
US	370,536	-6.6
Thailand	317,896	-4.8

Source: Singapore Tourism Board

### Top 10 arrival markets (January to August 2010)

	Arrivals	% Change
Indonesia	1,444,441	35.3
China	810,728	31.7
Malaysia	629,130	45.2
Australia	572,269	9.5
India	552,057	14.7
Philippines	346,080	23.8
Japan	339,950	8.0
UK	309,656	-0.5
US	283,712	15.7
Thailand	271,930	30.8

Source: Singapore Tourism Board

### Top 10 markets in tourism receipts 2009 (\$ million)

Indonesia	2,123
China	1,403
Australia	934
India	891
Malaysia	673
US	599
UK	559
Philippines	545
Japan	514
Thailand	501

### Percentage of BT-MICE to overall arrivals

2008	29.7 per cent
2009	27 per cent
2010 (Jan to Aug)	N/A

### Hotel statistics

In line with the sharp improvement in tourist arrivals in the first eight months of 2010, the hotel industry recorded a healthy average occupancy rate of 85.9 per cent.

Inbound travel agents have seen a return in travel demand since late 2009, resulting in a steady pick-up in hotel room bookings. By mid-2010, many travel agents in Singapore faced the problem of a room supply deficit in city hotels and budget hotels beyond the city centre.

Rising hotel rates did not deter visitors who were drawn by the country's new casinos and attractions. Average room rate in Singapore from January to August stood at S\$209.60, an increase from 2009's average of S\$191.

New rooms coming online also did little to quell rising room rates. Singapore's room count is expected to reach



42,000 by end-2010, up from 39,000 in 2009. Over 15,000 new rooms are expected by 2013.

**Projected number of rooms**

As of first quarter 2010, the Urban Redevelopment Authority had 15,031 hotel rooms in the pipeline, most of which are expected to be completed between the second quarter of 2010 and 2013.

**Average occupancy rate/Average room rate**

	Overall average occupancy	Overall average room rate	Total number of rooms
2008	81%	S\$245.90	37,000
2009	76%	S\$191.00	39,000
2010 (Jan-Aug)	85.9%	S\$209.60	42,000

Source: Singapore Tourism Board

**New hotels in 2010**

- The Fullerton Bay Hotel** 100 rooms
- Marina Bay Sands Hotel** 2,500 rooms
- Hotel Michael** 473 rooms
- Festive Hotel** 387 rooms
- Hard Rock Hotel** 364 rooms
- Crockfords Tower** 120 rooms
- The Saff Hotel** 79 rooms
- The Club Boutique Hotel** 22 rooms

**New hotels in 2011**

- Spa Villas** 40 rooms
- Equarius Hotel** 372 rooms
- Shangri-La's Rasa Sentosa Resort** 454 rooms

**New attractions/tourism infrastructure**

**Gardens by the bay**, spanning 101ha, comprises Bay South, Bay East and Bay Central, located across the mouth of the Singapore River in the heart of downtown Marina Bay. Dining and retail outlets will open in November 2011.  
[www.gardensbythebay.org.sg](http://www.gardensbythebay.org.sg)

**International Cruise Terminal** at Marina South will double Singapore's berth capacity to four when it is completed end-2011. The S\$500 million facility will ease the capacity crunch at the Singapore Cruise Centre.

**Knightsbridge** is a four-storey luxury shopping centre integrated within the newly refurbished Grand Park Orchard hotel. It will be fully operational in 2011.  
[www.knightsbridge.com.sg](http://www.knightsbridge.com.sg)

**Resorts World Sentosa**, which opened its Universal Studios theme park, casino and four hotels in 2010, is now gearing up for Phase 2 attractions such as the Marine Life Park and Maritime Xperiential Museum.  
[www.rwsentosa.com](http://www.rwsentosa.com)

**Marina Bay Sands** will be launching additional attractions such as two state-of-the-art theatres and two crystal pavilions, one housing a Louis Vuitton "island" boutique,

and the other, an ultra-lounge bar Pangaea and nightclub Avalon, in 2011.  
[www.marinabaysands.com](http://www.marinabaysands.com)

**Key events and festivals 2011**

**The Singapore Arts Festival (May 13 to June 5)**

Organiser: The National Arts Council  
[www.singaporeartsfest.com](http://www.singaporeartsfest.com)

**Singapore Food Festival (July)**

Organiser: Singapore Tourism Board  
[www.singaporefoodfestival.com.sg](http://www.singaporefoodfestival.com.sg)

**Formula 1 Grand Prix (September 23 to 25)**

Organiser: Singapore GP  
[www.singaporegp.com](http://www.singaporegp.com)

**Singapore Sun Festival (October)**

Organiser: IMG Artists  
[www.singaporesunfestival.com](http://www.singaporesunfestival.com)

**Zouk Out (December)**

Organiser: Zouk Club  
[www.zoukout.com](http://www.zoukout.com)

**Essentials in the city**

**Food** Singapore has a vast variety of culinary delights from different ethnic cultures, including its own darling dish – chilli crab, which is a must-try.

**Quirky** Singaporeans are not incapable of speaking the Queen's English. They merely prefer to punctuate their sentences with "lah" or "loh" for a Singaporean touch.

**Tipping policy** Tipping is not a common practice as a 10 per cent service charge is included in the bill.

**Shopping** Explore Arab Street, Chinatown and Little India for unique home décor, handicrafts and accessories.

**Maximise two hours of free time** Take a jaunt down Orchard Road to see how it has changed.

**Insider's tip for half a day off** Head to the Marina Bay Sands SkyPark's observation deck at night, where live bands play from 18.30 to 22.00, Fridays to Mondays.

**Need to impress clients' lunch** The Marina Bay Sands and Resorts World Sentosa integrated resorts brought several Michelin-starred restaurants to Singapore's shores. Take your pick.

**Lunch on your own** Swing down to Dempsey Hill, a green pocket in the city centre offering a variety of pubs, bistros and restaurants.

**Late nights** Visit Clarke Quay for its dance clubs and themed bars that feature live music of various genres.

**Electricity** Singapore's voltage is 220-240 AC, 50 Hz. Most hotels can provide a transformer to convert it to 110-120 AC, 60 Hz.

**Visa requirements**

Foreigners holding travel documents issued by the following countries will require either a business or social visit visa to enter Singapore:

- Assessment level one countries: Commonwealth of Independent States (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan), India, Myanmar, China and holders of Hong Kong Document of Identity and Macao Special Administrative Region (MSAR) Travel Permit.
- Assessment level two countries: Afghanistan, Algeria, Bangladesh, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, Yemen, and holders of Palestinian Authority Passport, Temporary Passport issued by the UAE and Refugee Travel Document issued by Middle East countries.

**Prices of common items in 2010**

- Bottled water** S\$1.20
- Starbucks latte (small)** S\$5.30
- A glass of open wine at a pub** S\$15
- Taxi fare (2km)** S\$5

**Important contacts**

**NTO**

**The Singapore Tourism Board (STB)** was first established as the Singapore Tourist Promotion Board in 1964. It now has an extensive network of 22 regional offices and two marketing representatives across eight regions.

Apart from courting the leisure market, STB has a Business Travel & MICE Group to promote Singapore as a premier business events destination.

Contact: Tourism Court, 1 Orchard Spring Lane, Singapore 247729; tel: (65) 6736-6622; fax: (65) 6736-9423; email: STB\_Visitsingapore@stb.gov.sg  
[www.visitsingapore.com](http://www.visitsingapore.com)

**Singapore Exhibition and Convention Bureau**

Email: [secb@stb.gov.sg](mailto:secb@stb.gov.sg)  
<http://visitsingapore.com/businessevents>

**Travel trade associations**

**National Association of Travel Agents Singapore**

[www.natas.travel](http://www.natas.travel)

**Singapore Hotel Association**

[www.sha.org.sg](http://www.sha.org.sg)

**Association of Singapore Attractions**

[www.singapore-attractions.com](http://www.singapore-attractions.com)

**Pacific Asia Travel Association**

[www.patasingapore.org.sg](http://www.patasingapore.org.sg)

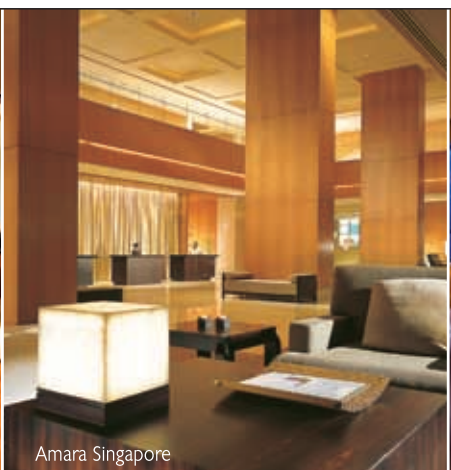
**ASEAN Tourism Association**

[www.aseanta.org](http://www.aseanta.org)

Compiled by Karen Yue  
All information is correct at press time



Amara Sanctuary Resort Sentosa



Amara Singapore



Amara Hotels & Resorts offers its guests unique individual experiences. With luxurious and contemporary interiors, and attention paid to every detail, our hotels and resorts are as individual as you are.

[amarahotels.com](http://amarahotels.com)

Amara Sanctuary Resort Sentosa | Amara Singapore | Amara Bangkok (2012) | Amara Signature Shanghai (2013)



# Sri Lanka

## General Overview

Official name	Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka
Capital	Colombo
Legislative capital	Sri Jayewardenepura Kotte
Population	20.5 million
Total area	65,610 sq km
Currency	Sri Lanka Rupee
Official language	Sinhala



Sri Lanka Tourism has declared 2011 “Visit Sri Lanka Year” to further boost the fast-growing tourism industry. The campaign is aimed at raising global awareness of the country among Internet users from the current three per cent to five per cent and to increase the average expenditure of tourists per day from 8,932 rupees (US\$80) to US\$90.

National transport infrastructure plans include international airports at Hambantota and Mattala and the 25km Colombo-Katunayake Expressway that will connect the airport to the city by 2012.

The government has also identified Hambantota, Kalpitiya and Arugambay as major tourist zones and is in the process of developing the necessary infrastructure in these areas. Other areas targeted for development include Pasikudah, Trincomalee and Nilaweli.

Air access has been improved, with the commencement of Indian low-cost carrier SpiceJet’s daily flights from Chennai to Colombo from October 9 and Jet Airways’ daily services from Delhi and Mumbai to Colombo from November 5.

### Climate

Average temperature	27°C to 29°C
Average rainfall	1,500mm to 2,100mm
Average humidity	79 per cent

### Best time to visit

Sri Lanka has a good climate throughout the year. The southwestern coastal area is best for visits from November to April, while the central highlands are pleasantly cool and relatively dry from January to April. The peak season is from mid-December to mid-January and from March to April, with a mini peak season in July and August when festivals and pageants are held in the country.

### Distances

#### From Colombo to:

Mount Lavinia	12km
Galle	116km
Anuradhapura	206km
Dambula	148km
Sigiriya	169km
Hikkaduwa	99km
Kandy	116km
Hambantota	238km
Kalpitiya	150km
Bentota	64km
Yala	305km
Trincomalee	257km

### Visitor arrival statistics

The tourism industry improved considerably during the second half of 2009, recording an upward trend in key indicators. The determining factor was a 2.1 per cent increase in overall arrivals and receipts.

This trend continued in 2010 with a dramatic rise in arrivals. Earnings from tourism in Sri Lanka jumped 68.8 per cent during the first eight months of 2010 to US\$350.1 million. Arrivals from North America increased by 70.2 per cent, while arrivals from Western Europe, the island nation’s largest market, grew by 50.4 per cent. The next largest arrival increase was recorded by Australasia with 46.6 per cent, followed by East Asia with 38.9 per cent and South Africa with 31.6 per cent.

India is the largest tourist market and it is rapidly growing, accounting for 18.7 per cent of tourist arrivals. The UK, being the second-largest market, accounts for 18.2 per cent of the visitor tally. Maldives, Germany and Australia are the other main markets, contributing 7.1 per cent, 6.6 per cent and 5.2 per cent respectively.

#### Total tourist arrivals

2008	438,475, -11.2 per cent
2009	447,890, +2.1 per cent
2010 (Jan-Oct)	497,598, +43.5 per cent

Source: Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority

#### Total tourism receipts

2008	US\$319.5 million, 2 per cent
2009	US\$326.3 million, 2.1 per cent
2010	US\$350 million, 68.8 per cent

Source: Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority

#### Top 10 arrival markets 2009

	Arrivals	Marketshare (%)
India	83,634	18.7
UK	81,594	18.2
Maldives	31,916	7.1
Germany	29,654	6.6
Australia	23,239	5.2
France	15,886	3.5
US	16,205	3.2
Netherlands	11,297	2.6
Russia	11,390	2.5
Canada	10,926	2.3

Source: Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority

#### Average length of stay in 2009

9.1 nights

#### Average expenditure in 2009

US\$81.8 per tourist per day

#### Percentage of BT-MICE arrivals to total arrivals in 2009

Business: 8.6 per cent

Conventions & meetings: 1.4 per cent

### NTO budget

The Sri Lanka Government estimates that it will spend US\$3 billion on tourism development, in addition to foreign direct investment and private and government sector investments in 2010.

The Tourism Act that came into effect in October 2007 legally established the Tourism Development Fund, comprising financing from two sources: airport tax collections and one per cent of the turnover of all Sri Lanka Tourist Board-registered establishments.

### Arrivals target

Sri Lanka Tourism aims to increase arrivals from 600,000 to 2.5 million and boost tourist receipts from US\$600 million to US\$2.8 billion by 2016.

MICE is expected to increase exponentially due to service quality and good connections. India is expected to top MICE arrivals, followed by the Middle East.

Medical tourism is another segment that could give Sri Lanka a boost on the back of nearly two million expatriate Sri Lankans returning for medical treatments. City hospitals are expanding with the objective of entering this market, while hotels and resorts are already providing ayurvedic treatments.

### Hotel statistics

Tourist arrivals are increasing but Sri Lanka only has 14,000 rooms, which is insufficient to meet the demand. Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority (SLTDA) has indicated that the number of rooms would increase by 20,000.

Additional supply would come from the continual upgrading of many hotels and new business ventures between local hoteliers and investors, which could add about 800 to 1,000 rooms by end-2013.

The Winter of 2009 (October 9 to March 10) was deemed as the turning point for the hotel industry in view of the 30 per cent growth in tourist arrivals. Hotels have increased rates by 20 per cent and are expected to bump these up by another 20 per cent in the first half of 2011 as demand outstrips supply. The outlook remains buoyant for hotels as they are expected to run at near full occupancy till end-2011.

According to Asia Research, all regions of the country, including the East Coast, recorded overwhelming room occupancy in 2009 compared to 2008.

Colombo recorded the highest occupancy at 65 per cent, followed by the Greater Colombo region at 60 per cent and South Coast at 55 per cent. Colombo occupancy levels rose to 85 to 90 per cent while resort occupancies surged up to about 70 per cent during the first quarter of 2010.



**Average occupancy rate by region**

	2008	2009
<b>Region</b>		
Colombo City	57.1	57.8
Greater Colombo	52.6	52.7
South Coast	46.1	49.6
East Coast	21.6	37.8
High Country	34.2	42.2
Ancient Cities	35.2	44.4
Northern Region	N/A	N/A
<b>All regions</b>	<b>43.9</b>	<b>48.4</b>

Source: Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority

**Average occupancy rate by hotel grades**

	2008		2009	
	Hotels	AOR	Hotels	AOR
5-star	13	52.9	13	56.6
4-star	9	51.7	13	52.3
3-star	6	45.1	13	48.5
2-star	30	43.4	39	44.9
1-star	22	29.2	30	41.9
Unclassified	176	40.1	134	46.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>43.9</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>48.4</b>
Supplementary establishments	578	48.2	629	50.7

Source: Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority

**Total available rooms in graded hotels**

	2008	2009
<b>Region</b>		
Colombo City	3,188	3,190
Greater Colombo	2,651	2,494
South Coast	5,370	4,940
East Coast	230	230
High Country	772	928
Ancient Cities	2,582	2,679
Northern Region	N/A	N/A
<b>All regions</b>	<b>14,793</b>	<b>14,461</b>

Source: Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority

**Average room rate** of a five-star hotel in Colombo is US\$120. Five-star hotel rooms in other cities cost around US\$110; four-star resort rooms, about US\$80.

**Hotels with new star-category rankings (Jan 1-Apr 30)**

	Location	Rooms	Star rating
Full Moon Green Hotel	Seeduwa	30	1
Kandyan Reach Hotel	Kurunegala	23	1
Randiya Hotel	Moratuwa	10	1
Yapahuwa Paradise	Yapahuwa	20	2
Browns Beach Hotel	Negombo	140	2
Grand Hotel	Nuwara Eliya	155	4
Hilton Residence	Colombo	172	4
Emerald Bay	Induruwa	50	1
Induruwa Beach	Induruwa	90	2

Source: Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau

**New hotels in 2011**

New developments will be carried out in Passikudah, Kuchaveli and Kalpitiya. Thirteen hotels are being constructed in Passikudah, with an anticipated room capacity of 1,000 by 2011/2012. Fourteen islands in Kalpitiya have been arrowed for development, yielding an expected capacity of 4,000 rooms.

**Six Senses Hideaway at Dutch Bay, Kalpitiya**

60 rooms, 20 villas

**Passikudah Resort Development** 40 rooms

**New attractions/tourism infrastructure**

**Air Force Museum Rathmalana**, which was recently re-



Sri Lanka elephants

refurbished, is home to exhibits such as De Havilland Chipmunk TMK 10s, De Havilland Tiger Moth DH 82A and Douglas DC-3s.

[www.museum.airforce.lk](http://www.museum.airforce.lk)

**Jetliner** is the Sri Lanka Navy's largest passenger craft that served as a lifeline between the North and East during humanitarian operations. It is now docked at Colombo Port, serving as a recreational cruise ship.

<http://jetliner.navy.lk/>

**Kiralakelle**, a wetlands conservation project, has been earmarked as a new tourist attraction. It was introduced by SLTDA to mark World Tourism Day on September 27 and is being promoted as an ideal place for bird-watching, crocodile-watching and enjoying the best of nature.

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

**Bandarnaike Memorial International Conference Hall** has been refurbished to include an exhibition centre taking up 4,500m<sup>2</sup>. It comprises two exhibition halls, a lobby, a dining room, a lounge, a kitchen and other amenities. The conference hall accommodates 1,500 delegates.

[www.bmich.lk](http://www.bmich.lk)

**Central Highlands of Sri Lanka** is a new world heritage site comprising the Peak Wilderness Protected Area, the Horton Plains National Park and the Knuckles Conservation Forest.

<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/>

**Hambantota International Convention Centre**, with a capacity of 1,500, is expected to be ready by April 2011.

**Key events and festivals 2011**

**2011 ICC Cricket World Cup (February 20 to March 29)**

The biggest tournament in the sport is held once every four years.

[www.iccevents.yahoo.com](http://www.iccevents.yahoo.com)

**Vesak Poya Day (May 1)**

This important day marks the Buddha's birth, enlightenment and passing away (Pariniwana).

[www.srilanka.travel](http://www.srilanka.travel)

**Arugam Bay Surfing Competition (June)**

The annual competition generates international attention as Arugam Bay has been ranked among the 10 best surfing locations in the world.

[www.arugam.info](http://www.arugam.info)

**World Spice Food Festival (November)**

Held for 10 days at Hawkers Street at Green Path in Colombo, the festival brings in chefs from Asian and Middle East countries to present international spice cuisines.

[www.srilanka.travel](http://www.srilanka.travel)

**Essentials in the city – Colombo**

**Food** Try *kothu rotti* – the quintessential Sri Lankan snack consisting of sliced-up bits of *rotti* (flat bread), expertly blended with chicken, beef, egg, onions, tomatoes and green chillies.

**Quirky** When a Sri Lankan says “no problem”, it means you're welcome to ask for anything. Whether you get what you asked for is another thing.

**Tipping policy** Usually between US\$3.28 and US\$4.37.

**Shopping** Check out Noritake ceramic shop, House of Fashion and Odel. Ceylon Tea masks and ayurveda products are good buys.

**Maximise two hours of free time** Visit the Cricket Club Cafe, located off Duplication Road, Colombo, which features dishes named after personalities.

**Insider's tip for half a day off** Visit the Elephant Orphanage at Pinnawela, located 90km from Colombo, and experience bathing and feeding baby elephants.

**Need to impress clients' lunch** Nuga Gama, an authentic Sri Lankan restaurant created by Cinnamon Grand Hotel, offers a good variety of dishes.

**Lunch on your own** Raja Bojun is synonymous with delicious, authentic Sri Lankan food. Unwind with a spicy meal while gazing at the sea view.

**Late nights** The Blue Elephant at Hilton Colombo is the hottest nightclub in town. Go after midnight.

**Electricity** 230 to 240V, AC. Those travelling with laptops are advised to bring power stabilisers.

**Visa requirements**

Nationals from 80 countries who visit Sri Lanka for tourist purposes are exempt from visa requirements and automatically receive a free 30-day visa on arrival. Visitors from these countries who visit for business should obtain prior visas from a Sri Lankan Consular Office. For nationals of other countries, there is a varying fee for the 30-day visa. The 30-day visa can be extended for up to 90 days upon a fee payment.

**Prices of common items in 2010**

**Bottled water** US\$0.45 to US\$0.90

**Starbucks latte (small)** US\$2

**A glass of open wine at a pub** US\$5

**Taxi fare (2km)** US\$1.80. Taxis are metered but it is advisable to agree on a rate before setting off. For tuk tuks, it's about US\$0.75 every 2km.

**Important contacts**

**NTO**

The **Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau (SLTPB)** is responsible for all marketing and promotional activities. In addition to its overseas office in the UK, the SLTPB has appointed destination representation companies in France, Germany, Russia, the Middle East and India.

The **Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority (SLTDA)** is the apex body for Sri Lanka Tourism.

Contact: Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau; tel: (94-11) 2426-900; (94-11) 2437-055/59/60

[www.srilanka.travel](http://www.srilanka.travel); [www.sltda.gov.lk](http://www.sltda.gov.lk)

**Sri Lanka Convention Bureau** is the government arm that monitors the development of the country's meetings industry. It functions under the Ministry of Economic Development.

[www.visitsrilanka.net](http://www.visitsrilanka.net)

**Travel trade associations**

**Sri Lanka Association of Inbound Tour Operators (SLAITO)**, established in 1982, has 84 members.

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

**IATA Agents Association of Sri Lanka**, formed in 1988, has 87 members and is affiliated to the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce.

[www.iata-agents.lk](http://www.iata-agents.lk)

**Tourist Hotel Association of Sri Lanka (THASL)** is affiliated to Ceylon Chamber of Commerce.

[www.chamber.lk](http://www.chamber.lk)

**Travel Agents Association of Sri Lanka (TAASL)**, established in 1974, is the national body of travel agents.

[www.visitsrilanka.org](http://www.visitsrilanka.org)

**Federation of Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Sri Lanka (FCCISL)**

[www.fccisl.lk](http://www.fccisl.lk)

**The PATA Sri Lanka Chapter** is affiliated to the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce and has 72 members.

[www.patasrilanka.org](http://www.patasrilanka.org)

Compiled by Anand & Madhura Katti  
All information is correct at press time

# Thailand

## General Overview

Official name	Kingdom of Thailand
Capital	Bangkok
Population	67.2 million
Total area	513,115 sq km
Currency	Baht
Official language	Thai



Visitor arrivals climbed 13.3 per cent to reach 11.2 million between January and September 2010 even as Thailand faced one of its worst political crises, spanning nearly three months from March to May.

In 2009, visitor arrivals came up to 14.1 million, down by 2.9 per cent compared to 2008's figures. Foreign tourism revenue for the year was estimated by the Ministry of Tourism and Sports at 600 billion baht (US\$20.15 billion).

The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) had set a target of just over 14 million foreign tourist arrivals for 2010, generating 530 billion baht in foreign tourism revenue. For 2011, the NTO wants to attract 15.5 million visitors and 600 billion baht in revenue.

### Climate

Average temperature	20°C to 32°C (November to January), 34°C (February to May) 29°C (June to October)
Average rainfall	150mm (February to May) 1,500mm (June to October)
Average humidity	75 per cent (February to May) 87 per cent (June to October)

### Best time to visit

Thailand is ideal for year-round travel, but the best time is from November to January. Dry and hot seasons are from February to May, and during the rainy season from June to October, hotels and tour operators usually offer discounted rates or special deals to attract more bookings.

While the 2009/2010 high season recorded a strong rebound, the industry faced yet another domestic political crisis, which prompted a round of widespread discounts and deals during the 2010 "off-peak season" in the aftermath of the crisis.

This triggered nationwide concerns that price wars would hurt the country rather than help it. Rates of Thai hotels and tour products were already the cheapest among key Asian cities, according to industry leaders.

### Distances

Bangkok-Chiang Mai	695km, 50min
Bangkok-Chiang Rai	785km, 1.5hr
Bangkok-Phuket	862km, 1.2hr
Bangkok-Pattaya	150km, 20min
Bangkok-Hua Hin	123km, 45min
Bangkok-Krabi	814km, 1.2hr
Bangkok-Koh Samui	769km, 1.05hr
Bangkok-Koh Chang	345km, 1.05hr
Bangkok-Had Yai	950km, 1.30hr

Bangkok-Ubon Ratchatani	629km, 1.05hr
Bangkok-Udon Thani	564km, 55min
Chiang Mai-Mea Hong Son (Pai)	245km, 35min
Chiang Mai-Chiang Rai	180km, 36min
Koh Samui-Phuket	317km, 55min
Koh Samui-Krabi	234km, 50min

### Visitor arrival statistics

From January to September, East Asia remained the largest foreign visitor market with 5.7 million arrivals, up 15.5 per cent.

The second-largest market, Europe, recorded a growth rate of 9.9 per cent with 3.06 million arrivals. The Middle East and South Asian markets also registered strong increases, at 27.7 per cent and 18.3 per cent respectively.

Market growth was attributed to the increase in direct and indirect air access from Australia and India, while the return of travellers' confidence also helped to pull up the numbers.

Meanwhile, the Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB) estimated the number of international MICE visitors to be on par with 2009's figures, with about 620,000 visitors and 45 billion baht revenue, achieved through its wide range of stimulus measures.

### Total tourist arrivals

2008	14.6 million, +0.88 per cent
2009	14.1 million, -2.98 per cent
2010 (Jan-Sept)	11.2 million, +13.30 per cent
	14 million plus (target)

Source: Ministry of Tourism and Sports (2008 - 2010 year-to-date), Tourism Authority of Thailand (2010 estimate)

### Total tourism receipts

2008	505 billion baht
2009	600 billion baht (estimate)
2010	530 billion baht (estimate)

Source: Ministry of Tourism and Sports (2008 and 2009)/ Tourism Authority of Thailand (2010)

### MICE arrivals & earnings

	Arrivals	Earnings (million baht)
2008	727,723	52.70
2009	630,000	45.56
2010	620,000 (estimate)	45 (estimate)

Source: Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau

### Top 10 arrival markets 2008

	Arrivals	% Change
Malaysia	1,805,332	17.22
Japan	1,153,868	-9.69
South Korea	889,210	-17.94
China	826,660	-8.8
UK	826,523	-3.78
Australia	694,473	5.52
US	669,097	-1.89
Laos	621,546	21.00
Singapore	570,047	-5.72
Germany	542,726	N/A

Source: Ministry of Tourism and Sports

### Top 10 arrival markets 2009

	Arrivals	% Change
Malaysia	1,757,813	-2.63
Japan	1,004,453	-12.95
UK	841,425	1.80
China	777,508	-5.95
Laos	655,034	5.38
Australia	646,705	-6.88
US	627,074	-6.28
South Korea	618,227	-30.47
India	614,566	14.45
Germany	573,473	5.67

Source: Ministry of Tourism and Sports

### Top 10 arrival markets 2010 (January to September)

	Arrivals	% Change
Malaysia	1,404,248	1.54
China	785,721	54.81
Japan	728,875	-1.32
UK	589,087	-1.71
South Korea	574,763	28.49
India	531,017	21.62
Australia	502,778	10.46
Laos	466,720	-5.87
US	435,058	-1.14
Germany	430,542	10.25

Source: Ministry of Tourism and Sports

### Arrivals target for 2011

TAT has set a target of 15.5 million visitor arrivals, representing a nine per cent increase, and 600 billion baht revenue for 2011.

The NTO will initiate digital marketing efforts in tandem with traditional media and through overseas tour operators and wholesalers, to attract global markets. It will also spearhead promotional activities under the "Amazing Thailand, Always Amazes You" campaign.

TAT also plans to increase domestic tourism to a level comparable to international tourism, targeting a three per cent growth to about 91 million visits, generating around 432 billion baht.

Of the total estimated arrivals for 2011, TCEB projects MICE figures to grow by 15 to 20 per cent to about 720,000 visitors, generating 57.6 billion baht revenue.



### Hotel statistics

New hotels continue to mushroom in key destinations such as Bangkok, Phuket and Koh Samui. The majority of the new properties are in the upscale category.

According to hoteliers, 2010 room rates were similar to 2009's, which had dropped 20 to 30 per cent from 2008's. Hotels in destinations such as Phuket, however, managed to see rate increments as visitors diverted their trips from Bangkok, especially during the protests.

Going into 2011, the continued strengthening of the baht and somewhat weak confidence of travellers were cited as factors that would continue to suppress room rates, particularly in destinations with a surplus of rooms.

#### Room count by regions (January to March 2010)

	No. of hotels	% Change	No. of rooms	% Change	Length of stay
North	1,309	N/A	53,157	-0.07	1.68
Central, excl Bangkok	261	N/A	16,135	0.30	1.51
West	799	1.52	27,028	3.64	1.95
East	1,214	N/A	69,031	N/A	1.86
North East	632	0.64	32,077	-0.38	1.39
South	2,455	0.04	107,497	-0.15	2.22

Source: Ministry of Tourism and Sports

#### Room count by regions (April to June 2010)

	No. of hotels	% Change	No. of rooms	% Change	Length of stay
North	1,356	3.75	53,989	1.66	1.65
Central, excl Bangkok	261	N/A	16,136	N/A	1.45
West	739	3.26	26,219	0.92	1.72
East	1,149	-3.93	69,481	1.09	1.80
North East	689	9.02	34,532	7.65	1.41
South	2,456	0.04	107,556	0.33	2.25

Source: Ministry of Tourism and Sports

#### Room count by key cities (January to March 2010)

	No. of hotels	% Change	No. of rooms	% Change	Length of stay
Bangkok	336	N/A	63,823	N/A	1.91
Pattaya	360	N/A	38,550	N/A	2.43
Hua Hin	210	24.26	6,532	12.52	1.69
Cha-am	125	7.41	5,844	7.35	1.45
Chiang Mai	410	N/A	22,493	N/A	2.08
Koh Samui	425	N/A	15,404	N/A	5.54
Phuket	636	N/A	37,884	N/A	2.63
Krabi	351	N/A	12,446	N/A	2.46
Phang-nga	149	N/A	5,803	N/A	4.73

Source: Ministry of Tourism and Sports

#### Room count by key cities (April to June 2010)

	No. of hotels	% Change	No. of rooms	% Change	Length of stay
Bangkok	336	N/A	63,823	N/A	2.16
Pattaya	367	1.94	39,003	1.18	2.45
Hua Hin	210	24.26	6,532	12.52	1.61
Cha-am	135	N/A	5,523	N/A	1.11
Chiang Mai	410	N/A	22,493	N/A	2.22
Koh Samui	425	N/A	15,404	N/A	4.63
Phuket	636	N/A	37,884	N/A	2.74
Krabi	351	N/A	12,446	N/A	2.43
Phang-nga	149	N/A	5,803	N/A	3.46

Source: Ministry of Tourism and Sports

#### Average occupancy rate by key cities

	Jan-Mar			Apr-Jun		
	2009	2010	% Change	2009	2010	% Change
Bangkok	54.34	59.66	9.6	48.04	39.70	-17.36
Pattaya	37.86	41.78	10.35	30.73	25.31	-17.63

Continued next column

Continued from previous column

#### Average occupancy rate by key cities

	Jan-Mar			Apr-Jun		
	2009	2010	% Change	2009	2010	% Change
Hua Hin	53.75	41.11	-23.51	43.76	33.01	-24.56
Cha-am	42.57	32.55	-23.53	44.14	38.67	-12.39
Chiang Mai	35.33	34.02	-3.70	24.82	26.28	5.88
Koh Samui	40.42	28.42	-29.68	36.90	28.42	-22.98
Phuket	56.89	44.33	-22.07	45.00	31.37	-30.28
Krabi	52.26	58.70	12.32	45.41	30.23	-33.42
Phang-nga	40.14	50.83	26.63	18.75	14.89	-20.58

Source: Ministry of Tourism and Sports

### New hotels in 2010

#### BANGKOK

- Renaissance Bangkok Ratchaprasong** 333 rooms
- Siam Kempinski Hotel Bangkok** 306 rooms
- Four Points by Sheraton Bangkok Sukhumvit 15** 276 rooms
- Ibis Bangkok Riverside** 272 rooms
- Novotel Bangkok Fenix Ploenchit** 380 rooms
- Novotel Bangkok Fenix Silom** 225 rooms
- All Seasons Bangkok Victory Monument** 162 rooms
- Oakwood Apartments Trilliant Sukhumvit 18 Bangkok** 131 residences
- Somerset Sukhumvit Thonglor** 262 residences
- SilQ** 40 rooms
- Praya Palazzo** 17 rooms
- Sivatel Bangkok** 75 suites
- Ramada Hotel & Suites Bangkok** 97 rooms
- Amari Residences Bangkok** 128 residences
- Radisson Suites Bangkok Sukhumvit** 150 rooms
- Furama Silom** 280 rooms

#### PATTAYA

- Pullman Pattaya Aisawan** 206 rooms
- Hilton Pattaya** 302 rooms
- Page10 Hotel & Restaurant Pattaya** 79 rooms

#### PHUKET

- Best Western Allamanda Laguna Phuket** 129 rooms
- Westin Siray Bay Resort & Spa Phuket** 261 rooms and villas
- Centara Grand Beach Resort Phuket** 262 rooms and villas
- The Pavilions Phuket** (25 pool villas), 24 new pool villas
- Thanyachitra Retreat** 38 rooms
- Centra Ashlee Hotel Patong** 106 rooms

#### KOH SAMUI

- Hansar Samui Resort and Spa** 74 rooms
- Banyan Tree Samui** 78 pool villas
- W Retreat Koh Samui** 75 pool villas
- Upni Duniya** 9 rooms
- Anantara Bophut Resort & Spa** (106 keys), 20 new rooms
- Infinity Residences and Resort** 65 rooms

### New hotels in 2011

#### BANGKOK

- The St Regis Bangkok** 198 rooms
- Aloft Bangkok - Sukhumvit 11** 308 rooms
- Novotel Bangkok Impact** 380 rooms
- The Siam** 39 pool villas
- Oriental Residence Bangkok** 145 serviced apartments
- Hotel Muse Langsuan – an M Gallery Collection** 166 rooms
- W Bangkok** 403 rooms
- Four Points by Sheraton Bangkok, Sathorn** 436 rooms
- Le Meridien Suvarnabhumi Golf Resort & Spa** 214 rooms

#### KOH SAMUI

- Conrad Koh Samui Resort and Spa** 118 rooms
- Vana Belle Samui Resort and Spa** 180 rooms
- Mövenpick Resort & Spa Mae Nam Beach Koh Samui** 81 pool villas

#### PHUKET

- Rawai Palm Beach Resort** 198 rooms
- U Phuket** 140 rooms
- Thanyachiva Lifestyle Resort** 77 rooms

#### Four Points by Sheraton Phuket, Makhum Bay

200 rooms

#### Holiday Inn Phuket Mai Khao Beach Resort

244 rooms

**West Sands Phuket** 426 rooms

**Regent Phuket Cape Panwa** 106 rooms

#### CHIANG MAI/PATTAYA

**Mövenpick Suriwongse Hotel Chiang Mai** 286 rooms

**Le Meridien Pattaya Resort** 239 rooms

### New attractions/tourism infrastructure

**The Suvarnabhumi Airport Rail Link** opened for commercial operations in August after much delay. The 28km rail link connects commuters between the airport and the City Air Terminal at Makkasan Station in Bangkok city centre. It operates daily from 06.00 to 24.00 with two train systems. The Express Line takes 15 minutes while the City Line takes 30 minutes to commute. Flight and luggage check-in services will be available at a later stage.

[airportraillink.railway.co.th](http://airportraillink.railway.co.th)

**Rattanakosin Exhibition Hall** is an interactive self-learning centre with state-of-the-art multimedia technologies. It provides information on the history, arts and culture of the Rattanakosin era (1782 to present). Housed in a renovated colonial-style building are seven exhibition rooms that highlight different parts of Rattanakosin, the former capital of Thailand.

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

**Madame Tussauds in Bangkok** opened in December, making it the 10<sup>th</sup> Madame Tussauds attraction in the world. Located on the sixth floor of Siam Discovery, in the heart of Bangkok, it features more than 75 wax figures and various interactive experiences.

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

**Paradise Park** is a two billion baht shopping mall offering 700 shops of branded products – with 100 shops of designer items at Fashion Avenue, 100 restaurants and bars, eight cinemas, the 3,000m<sup>2</sup> Sports World, the 14,000m<sup>2</sup> Digital World (IT), the 14,000m<sup>2</sup> Home Pro (home improvement), Beauty Park (cosmetics and skincare), Money Park (financial and insurance), Living & Lifestyle and The Promenade's health and aesthetic zone.

[www.paradisepark.co.th](http://www.paradisepark.co.th)

**Phuket International Academy**, which opened in November, is a 1.34 billion baht premier sports and corporate events facility geared towards conferences, incentives, retreats and teambuilding events. It occupies 18.2ha in the north-eastern region of Phuket. Besides first-rate sporting facilities, it also has two boutique hotels, an arts centre and a spa.

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

### Key events and festivals 2011

#### Phuket International Blues Rock Festival (February)

The line-up is expected to include artistes from Norway, Sweden, the UK, the US, Australia, Malaysia and Thailand. Hilton Phuket Arcadia Resort and Spa is the venue.

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

#### Songkran Festival (April)

The Thai New Year festival lasts about a week.

[www.tourismthailand.org](http://www.tourismthailand.org)

#### King's Cup Elephant Polo Tournament (September)

The tournament has grown from a two-day event with six teams into a week-long affair. It will be held at Anantara Resort, Hua Hin.

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

#### Loi Krathong Festival (November)

The festival is held across the country to celebrate the god of the river or *pra mea kongka* on the full-moon night of the 12<sup>th</sup> lunar month. Thais will float lotus-shaped baskets or *krathong* made of banana leaves in the rivers, wishing for good luck in the year to come.

[www.tourismthailand.org](http://www.tourismthailand.org)

#### Laguna Phuket Triathlon (December)

Organised by Laguna Beach Resort, this international sports competition comprises 1.8km of swimming, 55km of cycling and 12km of running.

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

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**Essentials in the city – Bangkok**

**Food** Try a traditional Thai dish, *tom yum goong*, a spicy prawn soup that is famous throughout the world.

**Quirky** Thais like to add “ka” for woman or “krub” for man at the end of the sentence, even in English. In Thai culture, this is considered polite and respectful speech.

**Tipping policy** Tipping is not expected, but leaving small notes received as change is appreciated. Most upscale restaurants include a service charge in the bill.

**Shopping** Roam Chatuchak Weekend Market and practise bargain skills for a variety of products.

**Maximise two hours of free time** Plenty of choices. Shop till you drop. Treat yourself to a Thai massage or foot reflexology. Or hire a long-tail boat to observe local lifestyles along the banks of the Chao Phraya River.

**Insider’s tip for half a day off** Ride a tuk-tuk around Rattanakosin Island and Bangkok’s old quarters. Visit the country’s historical buildings including the Grand Palace, Temple of the Emerald Buddha, City Pillar Shrine and the newly-opened Rattanakosin Exhibition Hall.

**Need to impress clients’ lunch** Head to The Table, Grand Hyatt Erawan, or any fine-dining outlet in five-star hotels.

**Lunch on your own** Look out for food courts in department stores or shopping malls for a variety of delicious Thai and international dishes at reasonable prices, or be adventurous and go to any roadside stall for a bowl of noodles or other local dishes.

**Late nights** Popular venues in Silom, Thong Lor, Sukhumvit, Nana, Ekkamai and RCA offer many opportunities for mingling.



Royal Palace and Temple, Bangkok

**Electricity** Single-phase voltage of 220V and a frequency of 50 Hz, primarily two- and three-pin sockets.

**Visa requirements**

A valid passport for at least six months and a visa are required for foreigners entering Thailand. Citizens of 42 countries, including the UK, US and Germany can obtain upon arrival visa-free stays of not more than 30 days. Nationals of 21 countries, including China, India and Russia can obtain visas-on-arrival at a fee of 1,000 baht for stays not exceeding 15 days.

In a bid to encourage tourists to visit Thailand, the government has extended the waiving of fees for tourist visa applications until March 31, 2011 for those who applied at overseas embassies and consulates and upon arrival in Thailand.

**Prices of common items in 2010**

- Bottled water (small) seven baht
- Starbucks latte (small) 75 baht
- A glass of open wine at a pub 200 baht
- Taxi fare (2km) 40 baht

**Important contacts**

**NTO**

The Ministry of Tourism and Sports works closely with its tourism marketing arm, Tourism Authority of Thailand.

[www.mots.go.th](http://www.mots.go.th)  
[www.tourismthailand.org](http://www.tourismthailand.org)

**Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau**  
[www.tceb.or.th](http://www.tceb.or.th)

**Travel trade associations**  
**Tourism Council of Thailand**  
[www.thailandtourismcouncil.org](http://www.thailandtourismcouncil.org)

**Association of Thai Travel Agents (ATTA)**  
[www.atta.or.th](http://www.atta.or.th)

**Thai Hotels Association (THA)**  
[www.thaihotels.org](http://www.thaihotels.org)

**Association of Domestic Travel (ADT)**  
[www.domesticthai.com](http://www.domesticthai.com)

**Thai Travel Agents Association (TTAA)**  
[www.ttai-thai.com](http://www.ttai-thai.com)

**Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA)**  
[www.pata.org](http://www.pata.org)

Compiled by Sirima Eamtako  
All information is correct at press time

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# Vietnam

## Top nine arrival markets 2009

	Arrivals	% Change
China	527,610	-18.0
US	403,930	-2.6
South Korea	362,115	-19.4
Japan	359,231	-8.6
Taiwan	271,643	-10.4
Australia	218,461	-6.9
France	174,525	-4.1
Malaysia	166,284	-4.7
Thailand	152,633	-6.3

Source: Vietnam National Administration of Tourism

## Top 10 arrival markets 2010 (January to August)

	Arrivals	% Change
China	598,248	98.4
South Korea	331,518	29.0
US	295,778	0.7
Japan	277,685	21.3
Taiwan	227,686	21.0
Australia	184,408	28.3
Cambodia	165,126	104.4
Thailand	144,032	36.1
France	137,541	13.0
Malaysia	132,316	21.6

Source: Vietnam National Administration of Tourism

## Total tourism receipts

2008	US\$3.58 billion
2009	US\$3.6 billion
2010 (Jan-Aug)	US\$3.28 billion
	US\$4.1 billion (estimate)

## Arrivals target

*Vietnam Tourism Industry Forecast to 2012*, a report released by global market research firm RNCOS in April, projected staggering growth over the next three years.

The report stated that Vietnam's tourism industry looked set to experience a compound annual growth rate of 22 per cent from 2010 to 2013. A net tourism profit of US\$8.7 billion by 2013 was also projected.

Institute for Tourism Development Research deputy director Pham Trung Luong pointed out at a tourism trade conference in Ho Chi Minh City in October that while foreign arrivals fell due to the global economic slump, Vietnam's domestic tourism jumped from 20 million trips in 2008 to 25 million trips in 2010. He expected foreign arrivals to grow at 10.1 per cent per year and domestic tourism to rise by 4.8 per cent annually.

## Hotel statistics

Vietnam is making a slow recovery in the hotels sector after a huge glut in room supply. Five-star hotels are predicting only modest room rate increases going into next year as companies like Accor plan to double the number of its rooms in Vietnam by 2013.

Hotel-related figures were vague at press time, however, a conservative estimate, given by an unpublished Grant Thornton 2010 report, has Vietnam's room supply as 12,399 (five-star) and 12,657 (four-star).

CB Richard Ellis estimated significant supply would come online in the next three years. Meanwhile, major hotels in Ho Chi Minh City are upgrading their facilities in a bid to improve star category rankings and to differentiate themselves in the increasingly competitive market.

## Average occupancy rate

	Five-star	Four-star
2007	65.7%	66.3%
2008	56.9%	60.7%
2009	53.3%	53.8%
2010	N/A	N/A

Source: Grant Thornton's Hotel Survey 2010

## General Overview

Official name	Socialist Republic of Vietnam
Capital	Hanoi
Population	89.6 million
Total area:	329,560 sq km
Currency	Dong but US dollar is widely accepted
Official language	Vietnamese



Vietnam enjoyed a 34.2 per cent rebound in international arrivals, totalling 3.7 million, during the first nine months of 2010. Its strong recovery, after a near 20 per cent dive in 2009, has left tourism officials optimistic that Hanoi's much-anticipated 1,000<sup>th</sup> anniversary would bring 2010's visitor total to around five million, surpassing the target of 4.2 million.

Room rates were down year-on-year, according to CB Richard Ellis' third quarter Ho Chi Minh City report. The findings also indicated that hotels and tour operators were more flexible in pricing and booking systems.

## Climate

Average temperature	22°C to 27°C
Average rainfall	1,500mm to 2,500 mm
Average humidity	80 per cent

## Best time to visit

Vietnam's temperate north and tropical south keep its tourism industry active throughout the year. Southern beaches are best visited when it is cool and dry from November to January.

Travellers could take advantage of certain seasons, when less-than-ideal climates would cause room rates to drop: the hot season from February to May and the rainy season from June to October.

Cool, damp winters cover Vietnam's north from November to April, when Hanoi's competitive room rates attract an influx of MICE businesses, while hot summers from May to October give travellers reason to head to the cool mountain resorts.

## Distances

Hanoi-Ho Chi Minh City	1,710km, 2hr
Hanoi-Danang	763km, 1hr 15min
Hanoi-Haiphong	103km
Hanoi-Halong Bay	180km
Hanoi-Sapa (Lao Cai)	340km
Hanoi-Hue	658km, 1hr 10min
Hanoi-Nha Trang	1,299km, 1hr 40min
Ho Chi Minh City-Phan Thiet	198km
Ho Chi Minh City-Dalat	308km, 40min
Ho Chi Minh City-Phu Quoc	383km, 1hr
Ho Chi Minh City-Nha Trang	448km, 1hr 10min
Ho Chi Minh City-Danang	954km, 1hr 10min
Ho Chi Minh City-Hue	1,071km, 1hr 20 min
Danang-Hue	108km
Danang -Hoi An	30km

Source: Vietnam National Administration of Tourism

## Visitor arrival statistics

Visitor arrivals in 2009 proved disappointing, ending on a low note with a 10.9 per cent year-on-year drop. Figures for 2010 looked promising, with a 34.2 per cent year-on-year increase recorded during the first nine months. China arrivals nearly doubled compared to last year, while visitors from Cambodia more than tripled.

Vietnam National Administration of Tourism (VNAT) general director Nguyen Van Tuan said that the country's 2010 tourism target of 4.2 million foreign visitors would be reached by October. In the first eight months of 2010, tourism revenue was US\$3.34 billion, and looked set to surpass VNAT's target of US\$4.2 billion.

## Total tourist arrivals

2008	4.25 million, +0.6 per cent
2009	3.77 million, -10.9 per cent
2010 (Jan-Sept)	3.7 million, +34.2 per cent
	4.2 to 5 million (estimate)

## Top 10 arrival markets 2008

	Arrivals	% Change
China	650,055	13.1
South Korea	449,237	-5.5
US	417,198	2.2
Japan	392,999	-6.1
Taiwan	303,527	-4.9
Australia	234,760	4.5
Thailand	183,142	9.6
France	182,048	-0.9
Malaysia	174,008	13.4
Singapore	158,405	14.6

Source: Vietnam National Administration of Tourism



**Average room rate**

	Five-star	All categories
2007	US\$198	US\$104
2008	US\$195	US\$114
2009	US\$130	US\$78
2010	N/A	N/A

Source: Grant Thornton's Hotel Survey 2010

**Overall number of rooms**

	2007	2008	2009 (July)	2010 (Sept)
Hanoi	4,428	5,091	5,499	6,062
Ho Chi Minh City	4,899	6,290	7,632	9,583
Halong Bay	2,090	2,396	2,794	N/A
Nha Trang	1,446	1,887	2,155	2,491
Danang	847	965	965	2,491
Phan Thiet	1,407	1,667	1,920	3,373
Hoi An	1,024	1,418	1,618	1,809
Hue	991	1,266	1,628	1,885
Hai Phong	623	878	878	N/A
Sapa	137	137	222	N/A
Phu Quoc	90	90	90	760

Source: Vietnam National Administration of Tourism for 2007, 2008 and 2009, and CB Richard Ellis for 2010

**Number of five-star rooms**

	2007	2008	2009 (July)	2010 (Sept)
Hanoi	2,361	2,720	2,720	2,830
Ho Chi Minh City	2,277	3,048	3,972	4,298
Halong Bay	0	206	206	N/A
Nha Trang	610	742	742	1,021
Danang	198	198	198	565
Phan Thiet	0	0	0	147
Hoi An	164	164	164	472
Hue	205	314	423	413
Hai Phong	0	0	0	N/A
Sapa	0	0	0	N/A
Phu Quoc	0	0	0	111

Source: Vietnam National Administration of Tourism for 2007, 2008 and 2009, and CB Richard Ellis for 2010

**Number of four-star rooms**

	2007	2008	2009 (July)	2010 (Sept)
Hanoi	841	992	1,094	1,404
Ho Chi Minh City	728	874	1,020	1,455
Halong Bay	1,033	1,033	1,431	N/A
Nha Trang	394	394	394	897
Danang	118	118	118	541
Phan Thiet	769	979	1,232	1,782
Hoi An	823	823	823	928
Hue	419	525	765	1,016
Hai Phong	457	712	712	N/A
Sapa	77	77	77	N/A
Phu Quoc	90	90	90	260

Source: Vietnam National Administration of Tourism for 2007, 2008 and 2009, and CB Richard Ellis for 2010

**New hotels in 2010**

- Sheraton Nha Trang 284 rooms
- Best Western Premier Nha Trang Plaza 200 rooms
- Life Resort Danang 182 rooms
- Movenpick Saigon 278 rooms
- Crowne Plaza Danang 630 rooms
- InterContinental Danang Resort 200 rooms
- La Bellhamy Hoi An Resort and Spa 131 rooms
- Crowne Plaza West Hanoi 393 rooms
- Novotel Phu Quoc Resort, Phu Quoc Island 200 rooms
- Six Senses Hideaway Con Dao, Con Dao Island 51 villas

**New hotels in 2011**

- Saigon Times Square 231 rooms
- InterContinental Hanoi Landmark 383 rooms
- Le Meridien Saigon-Starwood 320 rooms
- Novotel Hoi An Imperial 230 rooms
- Mercure Danang 279 rooms
- Nikko Saigon, Saigon 335 rooms
- Hotel De L'Opera, Hanoi 111 rooms
- Pullman Danang Beach 207 rooms
- Pullman Hanoi Horizon 250 rooms
- Pullman Vung Tau 360 rooms

**New attractions/tourism infrastructure**

**Vietnam's 200km Route 12** is set to benefit from US\$10 million upgrade plans by a Thai bus firm. The new route, which snakes through Thailand, Laos and Vietnam's central region, would allow travellers to ride from north-eastern Thailand to Vietnam's scenic Quang Binh Province for US\$30 to US\$60. [www.vietnamtourism.gov.vn](http://www.vietnamtourism.gov.vn)

**Ho Chi Minh City's proposed River Bus System** is intended to ease the city's traffic congestion problem. Over the next nine years, city authorities will look at the extensive river system and consider routes that would link Can Tho, Cu Chi and Phnom Penh. [www.saigon-gpdaily.com.vn](http://www.saigon-gpdaily.com.vn)

**Thien Duong (paradise) cave**, discovered in Central Vietnam in 2005, has been deemed more impressive than the nearby Phoung Nha Cave – a Unesco World Heritage site. Since its discovery, more than US\$4.3 billion has been spent to turn it into a tourist destination. The Truong Thinh Corporation has launched a cave package offering lodging at the nearby Sun Spa resort. [www.vietnamtourism.com](http://www.vietnamtourism.com)

**Phu Quoc Island's airport** is on schedule for completion by 2012. Government officials said they hoped the airport would be able to welcome two to three million visitors per year.

**Key events and festivals 2011**

**Khmer Ox Races in An Giang (October)**  
Every summer, from the 29<sup>th</sup> day of the eighth lunar month to the first day of the ninth lunar month, the Mekong Delta's Khmer community gets together for a crazy, wet and wild ox and plough race. Hundreds of people turn up to watch the races. Packages are available at the Victoria Chau Doc Hotel. [www.vietnamtourism.com](http://www.vietnamtourism.com)

**National Day (September 2)**

If you're looking for a great day to be in Vietnam, consider National Day – it is sort of like the Vietnamese Labour day. Young lovers ride around with abandon, old men and women turn out with flags, the nation travels and finds time to relax – a rare feat in a country with the lowest number of national holidays in the region. [www.Sgholiday.com](http://www.Sgholiday.com)

**The Lim Festival (February 15)**

Those looking to visit Vietnam in winter should check out a little festival held in the town of Lim, just 18km from Hanoi. Every year, about two weeks after the end of the hectic Lunar New Year, tens of thousands of locals flock to the town for a ceremony honouring the traditional Northern folk-song-style, *quan ho* – typically a duet performed by alternating groups of male and female singers. [www.threeland.com](http://www.threeland.com)

**Hue Festival 2011 (April 30 to May 3)**

Organised with the theme "Vietnamese cooking in the Garden of Hue", the festival will focus on Hue's celebrated culinary tradition as well as its lesser-known flair for cultivating ornamental plants. [www.Dantri.com](http://www.Dantri.com)

**Essentials in Ho Chi Minh City**

**Food** One Californian restaurateur called *Bun Think Nuong* "Vietnam in a bowl". Imagine cold noodles, roast pork, cucumbers, fried spring rolls and fresh herbs doused in spiced fish sauce.

**Quirky** Late at night, you will see hordes of teenagers getting together in motorcycle packs, looking for places to race or make out. You may see 100 to 200 in a group.

**Tipping policy** Tipping is not expected, but leaving small notes received as change is appreciated. Most upscale restaurants include a service charge in the bill.

**Shopping** Local shoppers will direct you to Saigon Square, the town's towering mall, where surprisingly good buys can be found without the potentially harrying experience of bargaining at Ben Thanh market.

**Maximise two hours of free time** Take a stroll through Cong Vien Tao Dan and amble your way towards the Reunification Palace. While most focus on callisthenic classes or tour the palace, do make time to enjoy one of the city's few green spaces.

**Insider's tip for half a day off** Wander through District 5's (Cholon) old temples, market stalls and restaurants. The world's biggest "Chinatown" is a confusing maze of fabric shops, pungent herbal apothecaries and old pagodas. Whether you choose to explore this off-the-beaten-path part of town via cyclo (cycle rickshaws), motorbike or foot, you could easily spend an afternoon just wandering and discovering surprises along the way.

**Need to impress clients' lunch** Take your clients to Quan Nuong to enjoy a high-class open-air Vietnamese BBQ experience. Enjoy tender grilled goat udder and skewered giant prawns with a view of downtown Saigon's growing skyline.

**Lunch on your own** Ben Thanh market is a wonderful place to go if you are looking for great eateries offering authentic local food.

**Late nights** While Vietnamese clubs abound, few places are as welcoming to foreigners as the city's most famous club, Apocalypse Now.

**Electricity** Single-phase voltage of 220V and a frequency of 50 Hz, primarily two-pin sockets.

**Visa requirements**

Most visitors to Vietnam require a 15- or 30-day tourist visa to enter the country, and it can be applied for at any Vietnamese embassy or consulate, either by post or in person. The fee may vary, depending on the issuing country, but the cost is usually around US\$25 to US\$40, and one passport-sized photo is required. Processing takes five days, or two days via an express service. A same-day express service is also available for those staying less than 15 days, and it generally takes an hour to process. There are no visas on arrival.

Citizens of Thailand, the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore are exempt from visa requirements.

Holders of passports from Japan, South Korea, Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden and Russia enjoy a waiver of tourist visa fees.

**Prices of common items in 2010**

- Bottled water US\$0.50 (large), US\$0.25 (small)
- Starbucks latte (small) No Starbucks but about US\$2.50 at Highland Cafés
- A glass of wine at a pub US\$2.50
- Taxi fare (2km) US\$1.50 (Ho Chi Minh City)

**Important contacts**

**NTO**

**Vietnam National Administration of Tourism (VNAT)** operates under the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, and is headed by general director Nguyen Van Tuan.

VNAT is promoting the country under the Vietnam: The Hidden Charm branding campaign aimed mainly at Western markets. It is also in the process of beefing up tourism cooperation and regional investment with its South-east Asian neighbours. [www.vietnamtourism.com](http://www.vietnamtourism.com)

**Travel trade association**

**Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA)** Vietnam Chapter has 138 members and conducts monthly/quarterly meetings, promotional presentations, educational training seminars and chapter exchange tours. [www.patavietnam.org](http://www.patavietnam.org)

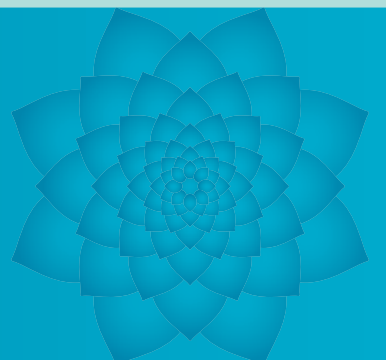
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