



## Untapped potential

Cambodia Bay surfaces as next destination to watch



**By Hannah Koh and Mimi Hudoyo**

CAMBODIA Bay's Kep is being touted as a destination with star potential as buyers seek out fresh offerings beyond Siem Reap and Phnom Penh.

ICS Travel Group sales manager, Kanoungnit Thongpunparn, observed growing demand from not just Europe and the US, but also an increase in regional business.

Services Excellent Tours Phnom Penh general manager, Hem Chan Piseth, said: "Kep gives tourists another feeling compared to Siem Reap, as well as Sihanoukville (also located in Cambodia Bay), which draws a younger crowd. Kep is for middle-aged to older tourists."

Calling Cambodia's coastal destinations "underfocused (on) and underdeveloped", Angkor Expeditions' general manager, Paula Harrigan, said: "Sihanoukville is a kind of Vegas by the sea,

very racy and vibrant, but Kep is a small town with an unspoiled stretch of beach.

"You can still see the remnants of Kep's past glory in the old villas, of what it was before. It's now undergoing a renaissance."

The southern province, popular among Cambodians for its fresh seafood, was a beach town during colonial rule, drawing French residents and elite Cambodians who built beachfront villas.

Hem elaborated: "You can go cycling, visit waterfalls and nearby islands. There are a lot of French colonial buildings and new hotel investments are also coming into Kep...There are nice, almost five-star resorts such as Veranda Natural Resort."

The Phnom Penh-Kep road has also been reconstructed, he pointed out.

Cambodian tourism minister Thong Khon told media at PTM

yesterday that the government is also considering easing visa restrictions for travellers heading to Cambodia Bay, which stretches across four provinces.

The authority is deciding among cheaper visa fees, offering visas on arrival or waiving visa fees entirely, in order to attract more tourists such as the important South Korean market.

However, it may be a while before Kep gets its time in the sun. Having gone on a pre-tour to Kep before PTM, Petrina Sutton, senior sales consultant, Inspired By Asia UK, said: "Kep's not in our brochure, but I think it could sell as people want to relax by the beach. People just don't really know about it."

Most of her tours of Cambodia combine Thailand and Malaysia, since there are no direct flights to the UK.

Thong said Cambodia is working on improving accessibility, having this year signed an air service agreement with Australia. Indian airlines have also been urged to start direct flights to Cambodia.

According to latest government statistics, January to July arrivals numbered 2.5 million, up from 2.4 million last year, representing a 4.5 per cent year-on-year increase. The ministry wants to attract five million visitors by 2015 and 7.5-8 million by 2020.

## Philippines seeks to correct misperceptions

**By Paige Lee Pei Qi**

THE Philippines is feeling the impact from the travel advisory issued last week by the Chinese government in response to what has been called an "isolated incident".

Several Chinese buyers at PTM said they are steering clear of the Philippines following the warning, which was issued after the kidnapping of an 18-year-old Chinese in Zamboanga, Mindanao and an alleged plot against the Chinese embassy and Chinese companies in the country.

A travel consultant who only wanted to be known as Zeng said he typically sends at least two groups every month. However, he is now cancelling all trips to the Philippines, and will be redirecting them to other beach destinations like Phuket and Bali.

Zeng added: "In fact, the travellers themselves are requesting to cancel their trips because they are worried too."

Chen Kebin, assistant general manager of Shihua Holiday, said: "We will follow the government's advice; it is safer for travellers to go to countries like Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia."

According to Nikki Mesa-van Der Tak, director of sales & marketing, Ambassador In Paradise Resort in Boracay, Chinese travellers comprise the bulk of guests

especially during the year-end period. She further revealed that a Chinese group of 14 pax whose booking is for next week had just pulled out yesterday.



Gonzales: merely an isolated incident

The Bellevue Resort in Bohol had also received cancellations from two Chinese groups of around 40 pax each last week, said resident manager Rommel Gonzales. "It is a misperception that the whole of the Philippines is dangerous just because of one isolated incident.

However, one of China's biggest travel agencies has seen "little concern" from its travellers, who still consider the islands of Boracay and Cebu safe.

Ye Chang Jiang, duty general manager of China International Travel Service, pointed out that Boracay and Cebu are top destinations among the Chinese. "The Philippines is rising as a must-see destination for the Chinese," he observed.

Domingo Ramon Enerio, COO of the Philippine Tourism Promotions Board, said: "We have been enjoying robust growth from China since the beginning of the year and this (travel advisory) is unfortunate because (what happened was) an isolated incident. I believe our Department of Tourism and Department of Foreign Affairs are negotiating with China on this."

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# PATA's CEO steps down

Mario Hardy takes the reins on Nov 1 as Martin Craigs moves on

By Gracia Chiang

AFTER three years at the helm, PATA's CEO, Martin Craigs, is leaving an association that has managed to shed some of its old boys' image and create new value for its members.

Speaking to the *Daily* at PATA Travel Mart (PTM), Craigs cited personal reasons for not seeking a further three-year term. "I've never had three non-stop weeks at home for 30 years," he shared.

In a memo to members, Craigs described what he called a hard year, "with three close family losses and an unrelenting travel schedule".

"I'm leaving on a high note because I think PATA has significantly enhanced its offering to its members... (on another high note, my last sales job was to secure PTM in Bengaluru next year," he revealed.

We need to take (PATA) forward, so that Martin's efforts will not be lost.

**Kevin Murphy**  
PATA vice-chairman and PATA Life Member

"These three years have been about pioneering and changing mindsets. Now we've got so many programmes and activities; they need to be operationally perfected. And Mario (Hardy) is an excellent COO who can carry this forward."

Hardy will become interim CEO, but PATA's board will have to decide whether he eventually takes the top post.

When asked what areas the new CEO could work on, he remarked: "The internal process and constitution need to be radically updated. We cannot justify having an AGM that stretches out two or three days. IATA's formal AGM takes 90 minutes."

There also has to be more diversity on the PATA board, Craigs observed.

He said: "People who have served their time on the board should happily share their knowledge and hand over to the next generation, otherwise they are inevitably going to refer to their old experience."

"We'd like to see more Asian females on the board and people with specialist knowledge, e.g. a legal person or someone in IT, which is usually next-gen. We also discussed, and it's been agreed in principle, that our Face of the Future (award winner) should come to an executive board meeting at least once, twice a year."



Commenting on Craigs' departure, long-time PATA member and vice-chairman of the board, Kevin Murphy, told the *Daily*: "Martin is leaving a legacy that PATA can build on. His background, particularly in airlines, has been of great value... but PATA is bigger than one person. PATA is still here after 63 years and will be in the future. We need to take it forward so that Martin's efforts will not be lost."

As to the association's next steps, Murphy, who is also president & CEO, Asiawide Hospitality Solutions, said: "We need to re-engage with the growing sectors in our industry. We've done some of that with our (intelligence tool) PATAmPower."

"PATA is also able to continue helping destinations in many ways. Working with PATA to gain access (at the government level), tourism ministries in emerging destinations, for example, can have a more co-ordinated approach (within their destinations) to master planning, so that tourism remains more positive than negative."

# Jababeka helps secondary destinations go digital

By Mimi Hudoyo

PATA's Indonesia chapter (PIC) is taking the lead in developing secondary destinations in Indonesia, beginning with a pilot programme in Cirebon that aims to drive tourism to the port city, which is on the north coast of Java and three hours away from Jakarta.

With support from Indonesian industrial estate developer, Jababeka, PIC is creating B2B and B2C platforms, making tourist attractions and other services in a destination more accessible to both the travelling public and the trade.

A B2C booking platform for Cirebon will be launched on October 23.

Agus Canny, director of Jababeka investment & promotion board, who is also PIC's director of marketing & new business development, said: "Most cities in Indonesia have different tourist attractions, but many of them are not managed or promoted well."

In Cirebon, for example, there still remains palaces of the late 15<sup>th</sup> century Muslim sultanate (Keraton Kasepuhan, Kraton Kanoman, Keraton Kacirebonan and Keraton Keprabonan).

Explained Agus: "We are first developing an online ticketing system that enables domestic travellers to buy entry tickets to

the palaces.

"PIC (through Jababeka) is inviting Telkom Indonesia and financial institutions to develop a distribution system to sell the palaces (with Kasepuhan as the first)."

Hotels, travel companies and convenience stores within Indonesia can also connect with the network, enabling travellers to buy entry tickets through offline means or directly via the website.

Added Agus: "PIC will also develop a B2B platform by linking the system with the worldwide business network that it has and promote it to international wholesalers (for packaging)."

After Cirebon, PIC will facilitate the development of similar digital platforms in Semarang (Central Java) and Medan (North Sumatra). Currently, 17 destinations are in the pipeline.

"These cities will be linked to each other and content in the website will grow," Agus said.

While Jababeka's flagship development is the 5,600 ha industrial township of Kota Jababeka in Cikarang, it has also invested in tourism projects.

Using Kota Jababeka as a blueprint, the company is developing an integrated resort destination in Tanjung Lesung, approximately 200km south-west of Jakarta.

## HOT LEADS

**Seeking the spiritual side of Cambodia**  
Managing director of Zimbabwe-based Harvey World Travel, Arvind Nayer, is keen to meet with tour operators in Cambodia specialising in traditional spiritual and heritage trips. Email Nayer at arvind@hwtvintagettravel.co.zw or (263) 4751-916. – **Paige Lee Pei Qi**

**On the hunt for Khmer incentive ideas**  
Managing director of Singapore-based Discovery Holidays (Asia), Rodney Yew, is seeking incentive ideas and gala dinner venues in Siem Reap and Phnom Penh to host MICE groups. Email tourbookings@discoverholidays.com.sg. – **Paige Lee Pei Qi**

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## News/Snapshots

# Riding out the Ramadan slump

M'sian trade diversifies markets to counter dip in summer holiday sales

By S Puvaneswary

INBOUND tour operators in Malaysia are diversifying their source markets in the face of a decline in the lucrative Middle Eastern market, as the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan will coincide with the Gulf's peak summer travel season until 2017.

"We don't think the market will improve much for the Middle East summer next year," said Ally Bhoonee, World Avenues Malaysia's executive director, who saw a 10 per cent drop in business from the GCC countries this year.

"We have started to promote to Maghreb countries in North Africa – Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco – which are a good diversification alternative as most travellers from these countries spend seven to eight days in Malaysia and buy full-board packages."

World Avenues has also opened a representative office in

Paris in July to attract more business from France.

Likewise, Ganneesh Ramaa, manager at Luxury Tours Malaysia, has started promoting Malaysia to the East African states of Kenya and Tanzania to offset the arrivals decline.



Azizan: market to recover in 2018

Meanwhile, Yap Sook Ling, managing director at Asian Overland Services Tours & Travel, saw a 15 per cent year-on-year drop in business from the GCC market, in addition to an ongoing price war among tour operators eager to seize a piece of the market.

AOS is therefore intensifying efforts to get more regional business. "ASEAN is a volume market. Stays are shorter, but you get

volume year-round," she said.

Tourism Malaysia's deputy director-general (promotion), Azizan Noordin, believes the Middle East market will recover in 2018, when Ramadan no longer clashes with the summer season.

Meanwhile, to attract Middle Eastern travellers to experience Ramadan in Malaysia and make them feel at home, the Malaysian NTO has rolled out efforts to educate hoteliers and inbound tour operators on how they can fulfil the needs of this market.

"We also worked with the religious department in Malaysia to invite *imams* from the Middle East to lead the Tarawih prayers in key mosques in Kuala Lumpur," he added.

Tourism Malaysia has also stepped up promotion of the annual Malaysia Mega Sale Carnival in the Middle East, as the festival coincides with the peak summer travel season.

## River cruise gains steam

By Xinyi-Liang Pholsena and Mimi Hudoyo

AS Myanmar becomes an increasingly popular tourist destination, river cruises along the Irrawaddy and Chindwin have become a segment to look out for buyers and sellers alike.

"We are seeing about a 50 per cent increase in demand for river cruises over the last two years," said Swe Swe Myint, managing director, Legendary Myanmar Travel and Art. "We used to operate with just two cruises, but now we have expanded to five cruises."

"The demand is coming strongest from European and American visitors, who are keen to view the daily lifestyles on riverbanks, experience parties on sandbanks and spot the Irrawaddy River dolphins," she added.

Thomas Carnevale, managing director of Asian Trails Myanmar, opined that while ocean cruising might have reached its limits in Myanmar mainly due to limited port facilities, the country's river cruise market is "still in its infancy and further growth can be expected, especially from the US and Australia". Demand for river cruises is coming strongest from the UK market, he added.

Cruise lines are also responding to this demand, with an influx of boutique vessels set to make their debut in the next two years. *AmaPura* and *Sanctuary Ananda* will begin sailing in November this year, while *Avalon Myanmar* and *Shin Arahan* will debut in 2015.

Union of Myanmar Travel Association general secretary, U Naung Naung Han, said: "All vessels are full until March 2015."

"(In fact), tour operators need to pay deposits of between 50 per cent and 100 per cent when making bookings."

However, Myanmar's dearth of hotels is stymieing the growth of the river cruising market.

"Myanmar definitely has potential and many Americans haven't been to Myanmar yet, but the price factor is stopping them from readily purchasing Myanmar, especially when they compare prices with countries in the Indochina region," observed Cindy Lam, president of US-based Solutions Travel Service.

"I expect the surge (in river cruising) to really pick up after 2015 when more hotel rooms come online and prices become even more competitive."

# A warm Cambodian welcome

Delegates were treated to a colourful spectacle of song and dance at the opening ceremony dinner. Patrick Tan captures the pomp



Golden Sand Hotel Cambodia's Steven Lim, Pan Pacific Journeys US' Irene Chen, Solutions Travel Service US' Cindy Yam, White Sand Palace Cambodia's Helen Pheakdey Kong, PATA Cambodia's Kheng Chenda and 5Oceans Travel & Tours Cambodia's Sotana Vong



Tulip Events UK's Rosemarie Collins, PRM Brokers UK's Glyn Abbott and The Vira Bali Hotel's Puri Angelina



PATA Thailand's Scott Supernaw and Ministry of Tourism Cambodia's Thong Khon



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## Intelligence

# In a youth state of mind

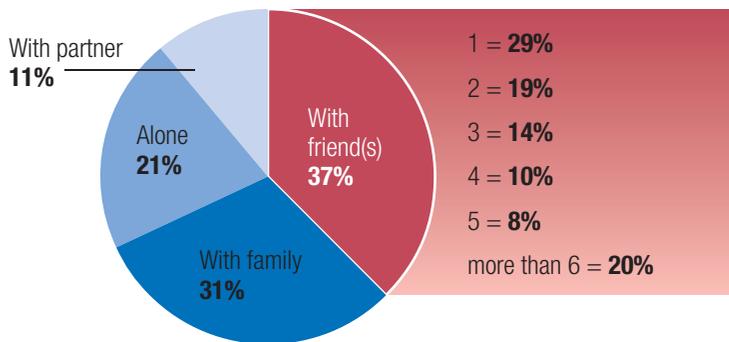
PATA rounds up the favourite information sources and dream destinations of Asia's new generation of tech-savvy travellers

A great deal of attention is currently given to the rise of young travellers from Asia-Pacific, especially with high Internet penetration rates and growing disposable income in the region. In presenting the second part of the key findings from PATA's *The Rise of the Young Asian Traveller* report, we look at the travel habits and behaviour of young Asians as well as their travel bucket list.

### Small group travel is a firm favourite

For young Asian travellers, solo travel is still relatively uncommon. Of those who said they travelled with friends (37% overall), going as a couple (29%) or in groups of up to five was the favoured option among our respondents. A desire to experience travel activities as a group and the effect of 'safety in numbers' are key drivers of this trend.

Overall, industry research on the Asian youth market confirms a gradual decline in group sizes consistent with growing confidence among travellers to plan and manage their own travel.



### Traveller review websites are the most trusted source of information about destinations

Sites such as TripAdvisor are the first stop for young Asian travellers looking to find out more about their chosen destination. In recent years traveller review sites in different languages and for different audiences have sprung up around Asia, giving young consumers the opportunity to exchange advice on activities and accommodation options. A refreshing alternative to 'official' tourism sources, sites such as Eurang (South Korea) and Mafengwo (China) have become popular; while Lagisatu (Malaysia) is a rapidly growing travel portal offering reviews and booking options for Muslim travellers, an example of the diversity of the outbound travelling public in the region.

### Which apps can't our survey respondents travel without? Social media of course!

Our survey respondents were asked to rate 11 different types of apps used when travelling (maps, language tools, deal of the day, social media, dating and friendship...) and social media apps were chosen as the most indispensable. When heading for the airport, discovering a new city, travelling home or sharing special memories, social media comes into play at every stage of the journey.

Interestingly, language translation apps were also highly popular as well as those that offer quick searches of local transport and accommodation options

### Dream destinations for young Asian travellers

When asked which would be their top three dream destinations to visit in the next 10 years, the US was in the top five dream destinations for every nationality surveyed. France also appeared in the top five for every nationality except Singaporeans, and was rated first overall. The results demonstrate a balance between the classic heritage destinations of Europe, the allure of the modern US and Canada, and the 'urban cool' exuded by South Korea and Japan. Some countries' ratings may also be explained by cultural ties or by big sporting events, for example, the recent FIFA World Cup or 2016 Olympic Games.

### Top 10 destination wish list

- France
- UK
- US
- Canada
- Australia
- Brazil
- Japan
- New Zealand
- Italy
- South Korea



### Top three dream destinations for different nationalities

<b>CHINESE</b> • Australia • France • Japan	<b>JAPANESE</b> • France • US • Australia	<b>KOREANS</b> • France • US • Australia	<b>MALAYSIANS</b> • US • Japan • UK
<b>FILIPINOS</b> • France • US • Japan	<b>THAIS</b> • Japan • US • France	<b>CAMBODIANS</b> • Australia • South Korea • US	<b>INDONESIANS</b> • France • Turkey • US
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## Destination Vietnam



# Standing firm

Despite a dip in arrivals from top source market China, Vietnam manages to register growth in total international footfalls. **Greg Lowe** reports

Vietnam's tourism industry is posting steady growth despite anti-Chinese riots in May which dampened the performance of a destination that was already faltering due to structural issues such as deteriorating product quality and a lack of strategic vision at the administrative level, travel specialists say.

Arrivals from China, the country's key source market, still rose 26 per cent in the first seven months of the year, according to Vietnam National Administration of Tourism (VNAT). In July, however, they declined 28.8 per cent on the same month a year earlier, showing the heavy price the industry has paid as a result of violent protests in response to Beijing's expansion in the South China Sea.

Edouard George, president of Phoenix Voyages Group, said there has been some recovery since May with more requests for longhaul MICE business, though regional corporate travellers remain cautious.

"VNAT is trying hard to restore confidence (in the destination) but with limited effects. Everyone was caught by surprise (by the riots). Hopefully, we will see more action towards the third and fourth quarters," said George.

Given the poor relations with China and a lack of tourism infrastructure and product diversity, Vietnam will find it increasingly difficult to compete with regional destinations unless VNAT develops a clear strategy for the industry which includes high-quality marketing campaigns and efforts to attract higher spending visitors, said Pham Manh Ha, CEO of Luxury

Travel Vietnam.

"Our government should focus more on investment and comprehensively upgrading infrastructure... VNAT should focus on strategic planning to develop tourism before even (increasing fees)," Pham urged. "Raising (visa) prices without upgrading service quality will reduce the number of visitors to Vietnam. Look at the other South-east Asian destinations like Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore – they always have policies to encourage tourists for each season. These policies (come) from their government (so ours needs to play a more active role)."

Some industry players take a more positive view of the sector's performance. Josephine Lim, vice president global sales Asia Pacific and regional director South-east Asia at Preferred Hotel Group, is confident Vietnam will reach VNAT's target of 8.2 million visitors by 2015, mainly thanks to increased air access.

During the first seven months of the year international arrivals rose 15.6 per cent to 4.9 million over the same period the year before, according to recent data from VNAT. Figures had risen steadily from January to April, with both month-on-month and year-on-year increases for every month except March. Then after the fracas in May, foreign visitors declined each month when compared with the previous year, falling 4.9 per cent in June and 14.2 per cent in July. Cumulative year-to-date growth remains positive thanks to strong performance in the first four months of the year.

Leisure and business travel have been

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### 2 InterContinental Nha Trang

Located a 40-minute drive from Cam Ranh International Airport, the beachfront InterContinental Nha Trang features 279 rooms, three F&B outlets, Spa InterContinental and three pools. A MICE

team is at hand to help clients make the best use of the facilities which include seven meeting rooms, pre-function space and a grand ballroom. Visit [www.ihg.com](http://www.ihg.com) for details.

### 3 Vietnamese Culinary Journey

Remote Lands, a luxury travel specialist, launched its Vietnamese Culinary Journey tour this year which gives food lovers the chance to spend up to 14 days immersing themselves in Vietnamese cuisine, from grazing at local markets to dining in Ho Chi Minh City's top restaurants. Prices from S\$460 per person per day. Visit [www.remote-lands.com](http://www.remote-lands.com) for details.

## VIEWPOINTS How do you rate tourism authorities in Vietnam?

**Lothar Pehl, senior vice president, operations and global initiatives, Starwood Hotels & Resorts Asia Pacific**

"The Vietnamese government has launched a new website which is expected to ease the visa application process for visitors. The new website tackles the industry's feedback about the inconvenience of its visa application and the high fees involved. (This) demonstrates strong commitment from the government and its tourism body to attract more MICE groups as well as leisure travellers."



equally affected by the troubles, with the former dipping by 15.4 per cent to a total 2.9 million tourists in the first seven months and the latter declining 13.9 per cent to 815,000.

Overall the hotel sector, which STR Global data shows has 494 properties with 47,770 rooms, remained steady with slight increases in both average daily rate and RevPAR despite a slight dip in occupancy. There are another 44 hotels with 9,499 keys in the pipeline.

"There is an increasing supply of new room inventory into the country, with both international and independent hotel brands planting flags in gateway and secondary cities," said Lim. "This reflects the potential that multinational companies and international tourists see in Vietnam as both a business and leisure destination of choice in the region."

Lothar Pehl, senior vice president, operations and global initiatives, Starwood Hotels & Resorts Asia Pacific, observes similar trends.

"Short-haul Asia business continues to grow year-on-year with markets such as South Korea and Japan leading percentage growth. In the longer-haul markets, we are seeing growth from Russia and Australia."

MICE travel to Vietnam was also on the rise, he said.

## Destination in numbers

### 2.9

The year-to-date percentage decline in average occupancy rate of hotels in Vietnam at June 2014, according to data from STR Global. Hotels saw an average occupancy rate of 62.2 per cent

### 4.4

The year-to-date percentage gain in average daily rate of hotels in Vietnam as of June 2014, reaching 2,762,038.39 Vietnamese Dong (US\$130.50)

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## Destination Hong Kong

# Keeping a cosmopolitan mix

Hong Kong is grappling with ways to attract visitor dollars without crowding out the territory. Prudence Lui reports



With increasing number of visitor arrivals, locals worry about rising prices and overcrowding

Hong Kong's inbound market painted a rosy picture in the 1H2014, posting a 12.5 per cent year-on-year increase to 28.5 million arrivals.

The mainland Chinese and shorthaul markets (excluding China) achieved satisfactory growth of 16 per cent (21.8 million arrivals) and 3.5 per cent (4.1 million arrivals) respectively, while longhaul markets kept up a steady performance (2.1 million arrivals; +0.1 per cent).

Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB) executive director, Anthony Lau, said: "Our goal is to attract overnight visi-

tors, particularly visitors who are likely to spend more during their stay. Therefore, our key target visitor segments are the higher-spending, mid-career and achiever segments, while we also tap the potential of the sizable youth and family segments, especially those in the shorthaul markets."

To meet rising demand for authentic experiences, HKTB has launched the *My Time For* branding campaign earlier this year to showcase the vast array of experiences in Hong Kong. The NTO will continue to highlight core mega events such as Hong Kong Wine & Dine Festival, Hong Kong WinterFest and New Year

Countdown celebrations.

However, apart from ongoing challenges like manpower shortage and escalating rentals, the deluge of Chinese visitors – more than 70 per cent of total arrivals to Hong Kong – has sparked widespread concern over the city's capacity to sustain future growth.

HKTB is striving to maintain a balanced mix of visitors to Hong Kong, Lau commented. "We are allocating the majority of our marketing budget to 19 international markets, especially shorthaul markets that promise greater growth potential," he said.

Via Vai Travel, director, Sef Lam, contended: "From an economic point of view, it is always a danger to depend on a single market. We do have a big proportion of tourists coming from across the border, but there is enough space for everyone.

"I feel that we get too emotional and political about the issue," Lam added, citing examples of how European countries are now eager to court the Chinese market by easing visa policies and hiring more Mandarin-speaking service staff.

Lam also noted such attractions as the Bruce Lee and Studio Ghibli exhibitions at Hong Kong Heritage Museum could potentially draw Chinese tourists, especially families, away from the crowded city centre. "There is also more awareness (among Chinese visitors) of Geopark, hiking trails, boat rides, etc, not just shopping for milk powder!"

Despite a drop in government spending from China, the Chinese corporate and leisure markets continue to perform

for Grand Hyatt Hong Kong, according to the hotel's director of sales and marketing, Cecilia Lo.

She added: "While MICE lead time remains short, we notice that longhaul association and convention inquiries for 2015/2016, especially from the US, are more active this year."

With more infrastructure by 2017 – Wanchai Bypass, Sha Tin to Central Link, West Kowloon Cultural Centre and the likely launch of the third airport runway – Lo is sanguine that Hong Kong will attract more international events and visitors.

In 1Q2014, overnight MICE arrivals to Hong Kong grew 4.2 per cent year-on-year to exceed 318,000.

### Destination in numbers

## 28.5

The total number of visitor arrivals, in millions, to Hong Kong in 1H2014, up 12.5 per cent year-on-year

## 21.8

The number of visitor arrivals, in millions, from China during the same period, up 16 per cent year-on-year

## 90

The occupancy rate of Hong Kong hotels, in percentage, from January-May 2014

## VIEWPOINTS What do you think of limiting the number of Chinese visitors under the Individual Visit Scheme (IVS)?



**Wing Wong, managing director, W Travel Service**

"I agree to limiting the number of visits by IVS holders, especially those who enjoy multi-entry access per year. These are mostly same-day visitors shopping for daily necessities without contributing to hotel or tour business.

"Tourist traffic should also be diverted from key downtown shopping districts like Mongkok to New Territories like Tuen Mun and Sheung Shui. More shopping facilities can be opened there."

**Anthony Lau, executive director, Hong Kong Tourism Board**

"The IVS has brought significant economic benefits to Hong Kong. Reducing the number of visitors under the scheme is going to cause some impacts on Hong Kong's economy, especially the service sector, and affect employment. We understand that the continuous growth of visitor arrivals may affect the community, and it is important to try to maintain a balance between tourism development and addressing public concerns."



## PRODUCTS

### 1 Revitalization Experience Tour by Lotus Tours

The six-hour Revitalization Experience Tour by Lotus Tours immerses visitors in the colourful history of Hong Kong.

Visitors can learn about the city's oldest public housing complex through the Heritage of Mei Ho House museum, create their own handicrafts at a repurposed factory building and enjoy lunch at Gingko House which supports the elderly through its re-employment scheme. The tour also includes a visit to Jao Tsung-I Academy, a gallery devoted to Chinese culture, and Lui Seng Chun, a historic shophouse now home to a Chinese medicine school.

### 2 Aberdeen Street Social

Located at the revitalised PMQ heritage site in Central, Aberdeen Street Social is

the brainchild of Michelin-star chef Jason Atherton and entrepreneur Yenn Wong. It serves Atherton's modern British cuisine, creative cocktails and desserts in a convivial atmosphere.

The upper floor houses a contemporary restaurant with a private room and balcony overlooking the garden below. The ground floor features a more casual restaurant and bar with outdoor dining on its front terrace, plus Sweet Social, a retail shop for pastries, gelati, homemade chocolates and beverages.

### 3 Club Bauhinia - Hong Kong Airlines lounge

Hong Kong Airlines has launched its new VIP lounge, Club Bauhinia, to cater to its business class passengers and frequent flyer members.

The 506m<sup>2</sup> lounge accommodates up to 120 pax, boasting iMacs, Wi-Fi Internet, shower service, a semi-private resting area and two private conference rooms (seven

pax and 10 pax respectively) with apron views, alongside a buffet featuring local delights such as egg puffs, soya beancurd and dim sum.

### 4 Shark Mystique, Ocean Park

Opened since June 2014, the Shark Mystique at Ocean Park is one of Asia's largest shark exhibits with over a hundred sharks and rays, viewable through a 360-degree glass panorama spanning three levels. Extensive educational displays, interactive games and educators are stationed at various narration points to help guests understand the characteristics and living habits of different shark species and convey the message of marine conservation.

### 5 Hong Kong 3D Museum

The Hong Kong 3D Museum opened its doors in July to boast a total exhibition area of over 930m<sup>2</sup>. Situated at Hilton Tower in Tsim Sha Tsui, it displays



Aberdeen Street Social

70 paintings across five different zones – Modern Hong Kong, Hong Kong Memories, Chinese Culture, Love Journey and Imaginary Wonderland. In the designated 3D experience zone, visitors can enjoy a starry sky, mirror maze, infinity tunnel, virtual projection and trick art games.

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Thailand's southern beaches have always been popular with travelers. The idyllic white sands, lapped by azure seas and fringed by palm trees, are among the most iconic images of this exotic region. And southern Thailand is also now home to some of Best Western International's most modern and stylish new developments, which are bringing a new level of cutting-edge comfort and connectivity to this dream destination.



The latest example of Best Western International's modern, design-led Asian portfolio is the **BEST WESTERN Patong Beach**, which opens on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014. Located in the heart of one of Thailand's foremost resort areas, this modern hotel is set to revitalize the midscale hotel segment in Phuket.

With a sleek and stylish design concept, this brand new hotel provides a series of facilities that make the most of the hotel's stunning tropical setting. An outdoor, infinity-edged swimming pool overlooks the Andaman Sea, while a light and spacious restaurant serves up delectable local and international cuisine, with both indoor and outdoor seating. Guests can also relax and enjoy a cooling cocktail at the poolside bar.



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And in the Royal Thai beach resort town of Hua Hin, located just a few hours' drive south of Bangkok, the **BEST WESTERN PLUS Serenity Hua Hin** offers a stunning example of the new era of upscale hotels that Best Western International is unveiling across the region.



Located just a short walk from the golden sands of the Gulf of Thailand, this modern resort provides another excellent example of the company's 21<sup>st</sup> Century design focus. All rooms in this low-rise hotel are light and spacious, and an 80-meter swimming pool runs alongside the main wing, providing the perfect place to relax and soak up the tropical sun. And with free Wi-Fi throughout the hotel, guests at the BEST WESTERN PLUS Serenity Hua Hin can keep in touch with the outside world from anywhere in the hotel, at all times of day.

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## Destination Philippines

# Resilience and transformation

The Philippines gives new vigour to its marketing campaign by highlighting selected destinations. By Rosa Ocampo



Bohol's famed Chocolate Hills, which suffered damage from the recent earthquake, is ready to welcome visitors

The Philippines has experienced a string of natural catastrophes and testy diplomatic relations in recent years, but the country has also shown immense resilience to bounce back from the misfortunes that have wrecked havoc on its tourism industry.

Tourists are returning to Bohol, a year after the earthquake clobbered its heritage and natural attractions. Parts of Palawan, Boracay and Cebu damaged in varying degrees by super typhoon Haiyan last November have since recovered.

The inbound market is poised for some growth, with international arrivals rising 2.2 per cent year-on-year to over 2.4 million in 1H2014. Among its traditional source markets, China has recorded a double-digit performance while Japan is showing stable single-digit growth.

A closer look at the inbound numbers, however, also reveals pressing concerns. South Korea – the Philippines' top source market with a 22 per cent market share – has slowed for the first time in years. South Korean arrivals dropped 6.4 per cent year-on-year to 547,971 in 1H2014.

The lifting of travel bans by Taiwan and Hong Kong in the last 12 months did not help to improve visitor arrivals too. In 1H2014, Taiwanese arrivals dipped 21.9 per cent to 67,213 while Hong Kong arrivals decreased 12.5 per cent to 57,470.

The Russian market slid 6.6 per cent to 17,719 arrivals during the same period, owing to the Ukraine crisis, the bankrupt-

cy of several big tour operators and Western sanctions against Russia. The slowdown is expected for the rest of the year, said Ala Enache, Russian market sales executive, Blue Horizons Travel and Tours.

In response to the challenge of growing these declining Asian markets while tapping other markets, particularly the mid- and longhaul markets, the Tourism Promotions Board (TPB) has tweaked the *It's More Fun in the Philippines* campaign earlier this year to give a stronger focus on specific destinations like Manila, Boracay and Davao instead of the entire country.

The new approach seeks to step up the "power branding" and overcome the lack of awareness of these tourist destinations, explained Domingo Ramon Enerio III, COO of TPB. He added that although only Tacloban and few other provinces felt Typhoon Haiyan's fury, tourists thought the whole Philippines was devastated.

The campaign will also ramp up its focus on Europe, a small but steadily growing market after Philippine Airlines began direct services from Manila to London last year, Enerio informed. Other markets targeted are the Muslim, Middle Eastern, Indian and other new Asian markets, as well as Russia and Eastern Europe.

New destinations being promoted include Aurora in Quezon, Cagayan and the Ilocos region in the north, which pack heritage and adventure attractions apart from sun, sea and sand, informed John Paul Cabalza, president, Philippine Travel

Agencies Association.

Thanks to a robust economy and investment surge, Manila's room supply is expected to increase by 30 per cent over the next three years. City of Dreams Manila, the second integrated resort at the Manila Bay Entertainment City, will open this October with 981 keys.

According to STR Global, the Philippines is one of Asia's strongest performers in terms of occupancy growth, which rose 13.7 per cent to 70.6 per cent in May 2014 due to a 17.6 per cent rise in demand.

On the other hand, the Philippines still faces longstanding issues in its tourist infrastructure. The country has seen better accessibility from the addition of air service agreements and new routes launched by LCCs. However, the recent transfer of five foreign carriers from Terminal 1 to Terminal 3 at Manila's highly congested Ninoy Aquino International Airport is just a mere palliative; a new, modern and bigger airport is still needed.

On a brighter note, airports in secondary gateways such as Bohol, Boracay, Palawan and Cagayan de Oro are currently being built or upgraded.

Urging more relaxed visa policies, Angel Ramos Bognot, president and managing director, Afro Asian Travel and Tours, said: "Japan has eased visa policies for many Asian travellers. Thailand has waived visa fees for Chinese and Taiwanese tourists... We should ease visa restrictions to lure more tourists into the country."

## VIEWPOINTS

What should the Philippines do to develop its potential in high-end tourism?

**Guy Louis Roger,**  
president, Asiana  
Pearl Vision

"The Philippines should be promoted not only for mass tourism but also for the high-end clientele, especially in Europe. It has huge potential for luxury tourism.



Amid the international competition, the hospitality industry and all other tourism stakeholders have to improve their quality of service and offer real value for money.

The Philippines should look at Thailand and Bali, which are performing very well in many aspects of tourism.

Hotel developers should consider building holiday villas. With good management and service quality, they can bring more high-end clientele. The Philippines is 20 years late; Bali and Thailand have invested in villas many years ago."

## Destination in numbers

**5**

The number of LCCs based in the Philippines

**2.4 million**

The number of international arrivals to the Philippines in 1H2014

**1,703**

The number of luxury and upscale rooms opening in Manila this year

## PRODUCTS

### 1 Bohol GeoScience tour

The 7.2-magnitude Bohol earthquake has resulted in new geologic transformations in the province – some lands disappeared

while new ones rose from the sea, and portions of Chocolate Hills were sliced and scraped off. Ideal for geologists, students and the curious alike, this tour takes a peek at the landscape changes in Bohol. More information available at [www.tourism.bohol.gov.ph](http://www.tourism.bohol.gov.ph).



Crystal-blue waters and white sands line beaches in Pagudpud, Ilocos Norte

### 2 Videoke Jeepney Party

What better way to tour Manila than on the city's most famous transport icon, the jeepney? Furthermore, Jeepney Tours has customised the colourful jeepneys into air-conditioned, wireless videoke machine on wheels, featuring comfortable seats and higher ceiling so passengers can stand up while belting out their favourite tunes. There's also a built-in cooler with beer, soda and water on board. Visit [www.JeepneyTours.com](http://www.JeepneyTours.com).

### 3 Pagudpud

Pagudpud, a picturesque resort town with pristine white sands and crystal blue waters in Ilocos Norte, boasts one of the country's best spots for surfing, kitesurfing and other marine sports. Round the holiday with visits to plethora of attractions in Ilocos Norte and Sur. Visit [www.itsmorefuninthephilippines.com/ilocos-norte](http://www.itsmorefuninthephilippines.com/ilocos-norte).

### 4 Bambike Ecotours

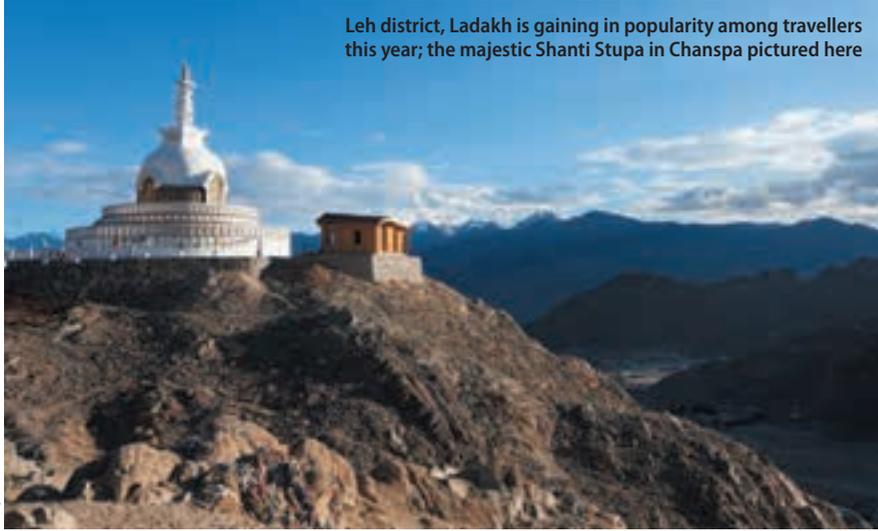
Traverse Manila's Walled City, Intramuros, on a bambike, a bicycle made of bamboo and abaca fiber. Lightweight yet safe and sturdy, bambikes are handcrafted in adherence to fair trade and sustainable building principles by members of the Gawad Kalinga, a community in a rural town in Tarlac.

Contact Bambike Ecotours at (63-2) 525-8289 or email [ecotours@bambike.com](mailto:ecotours@bambike.com) for more details.

### 5 100 Revolving Restaurant

For a top-of-the-world dining experience, nothing beats the 100 Revolving Restaurant, located on the 33<sup>rd</sup> floor of MDC 100 Building in Quezon City. Offering 360-degree views of Metro Manila and an extensive French menu, the venue is great for business meetings and special occasions. For more information, visit [www.Cheffessie.com](http://www.Cheffessie.com).

## Destination India



Leh district, Ladakh is gaining in popularity among travellers this year; the majestic Shanti Stupa in Chanspa pictured here

benjiuer/123RF.com

# New government, new tourism hopes

Better visa facilities, fresh destination branding and new tourist circuits are being rolled out, inspiring hopes of better business among local players, writes **Rohit Kaul**

The year 2014 began on a positive note for India's tourism sector, with foreign arrivals hitting 3.52 million in the first five months. It represented a year-on-year growth of 6.6 per cent, a more energetic climb compared to the same period from 2012 to 2013 which registered a 2.6 per cent growth.

The year has also started out with an improvement in visa facilities – the Indian government extended visa-on-arrival and Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA) to tourists from 180 nations.

According to local tour operators, this development, along with the devaluation of the Indian rupee and the increased frequency of roadshows led by the Indian tourism board in international markets, has reaped benefits for the inbound sector.

Speaking to the *Daily*, Prashant Narayan, COO and head leisure travel inbound business, Thomas Cook India, said: "We have observed a 10 to 12 per cent growth in our inbound business over last year. The rupee devaluation has added more appeal to the summer travel season."

Narayan added that Kashmir, Leh, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Goa and the Golden Triangle Buddhist circuit have been "extremely popular among inbound vacationers".

Ravi Gosain, managing director of Erco Travels, shared that traditional markets such as Germany, France, the UK and the US have been "progressing well so far".

He hopes that new business opportunities will arise from roadshows conducted by the Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) and the Ministry of Tourism in new markets such as Mauritius, South Africa, Poland, Hungary and Romania.

Rishi Puri, vice president of Lords Hotels & Resorts India, welcomes the change in India's tourism fortunes this year, saying: "The Indian hospitality industry was on a decline the past two years. However, since 1Q2014 we have seen substantial growth in inbound business. (In terms of corporate business) we have seen arrivals from German, French and other European pharmacy sectors, as well as Japanese and South Korean technology sectors.

"With global economies improving

now, leisure travellers from the UK and the US have also contributed significantly to our inbound business."

Despite the rosy beginnings, some Indian travel trade players are not celebrating too soon. Government elections this year had caused business travellers to hold off their trips to India, as they chose to wait and watch how the new government would shape investment policies.

On a positive note, the new government has made tourism one of its key areas of development. In its maiden Union Budget 2014-2015 presented in July, the government had proposed the creation of five tourist circuits to the tune of US\$83.2 million. The Sarnath-Gaya-Varanasi Buddhist circuit would also be developed with world-class tourist amenities.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Tourism has joined hands with Experience India Society to revamp the country's international image through a publicity campaign that will first be launched in the UK, Germany, the US and Japan.

"The inbound season begins in September and early bookings (have indicated) that this year will be a very productive one," said Karan Anand, head of relationships, Cox & Kings. "The new government has ushered in changes and this has led to an improvement in business sentiments. More (foreign) companies will be encouraged to send their executives to India to initiate business with Indian firms, thereby fuelling corporate travel traffic."

Sharing the same observations, Subhash Goyal, president of IATO, said: "Business travel has increased after the new government announced a slew of investment friendly policies (and) we expect inbound tourism to grow 30 to 40 per cent once (the new e-visa system) is implemented."

### Destination in numbers

# 8 billion

The value of foreign exchange earnings India enjoyed during the first five months of this year

## VIEWPOINTS

What are you doing to tackle safety concerns of female travellers?

**Shripad Yesso Naik, minister of state (independent charge), culture and tourism**

"We have advised all state governments to deploy tourist police in their respective regions. All chief ministers of state governments and administrators of Union Territory Administrations have been requested to take immediate and effective steps to ensure conducive and friendly environment for all tourists. We have also requested that they publicise the steps being taken or proposed to increase the sense of security among tourists and also to counter the negative publicity."



**Ranjan Kumar Mishra, managing director, Eastern Voyage**

"We assure our clients that India is a safe destination for all travellers. We inform them about existing safety measures for tourists. We also educate tourists that the government, along with other players in the sector, is sensitive towards the matter and are taking steps to ensure their well-being."

## PRODUCTS

### 1 Keys Ras Resort, Silvassa

Located in picturesque Silvassa, on the shores of the Daman Ganga river, Keys Ras Resort occupies 10 acres of lush greenery. Guests can choose to stay in rooms that offer views of the river or garden, or in Portuguese-style suites. Facilities include banquet and conference spaces, a business centre, a spa and wellness centre, and a swimming pool. Sports and recreational activities are also offered to guests.

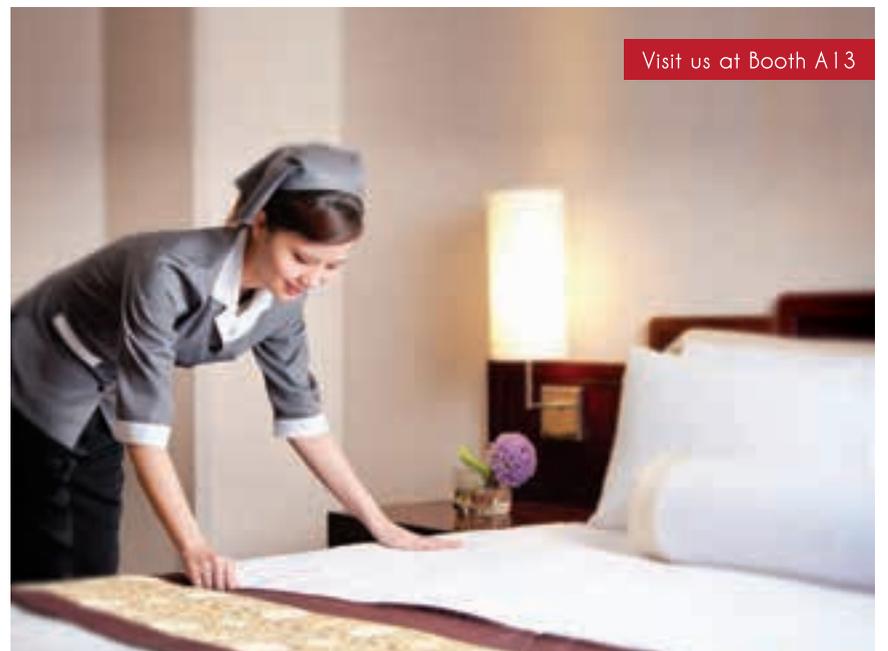
### 2 The Deltin Hotel and Casino, Daman

The Deltin integrated casino resort in Da-

man offers 176 suites, a casino with 1,000 gaming positions, four restaurants, three bars, MICE facilities that can support events with 20 to 2,000 guests, and other recreational options. The property is accessible from major urban centres.

### 3 Porterhaus

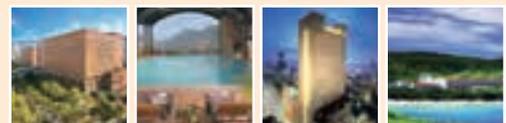
Located at DLF South Court Mall, Saket in New Delhi, Porterhaus is a new gastro pub that specialises in hearty steaks. The extensive menu also features non-beef options such as sautéed scallops and salmon ceviche. Porterhaus' lush interior, thematic retro music and regal cigar room come together to offer diners a memorable experience.



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## Destination Thailand

Phuket's Patong Beach is ground zero for the Thai junta's clean-up efforts to return the area to its natural state



Thailand/123RF.com

### VIEWPOINTS

How has the political crisis affected your business?

**Stephen McEvoy, managing director, Asia World Enterprises**

"To be objective, it is good to consider the different markets and market segments. We've seen positive performance from France, the UK and Russia and negative performance in MICE and from Asia and North America.

"OTAs have gotten even stronger, as have flash sales companies, (while average) length of stay has been reduced."

**Songkran Grachangnetara, owner and operator, Seven Seas Resort Koh Krachang**

"This year has actually been pretty good for us. We've seen growth. A lot of that has to do with our customers, who are mostly from Scandinavia and Europe. They know Thailand and have been here many times so they tend to be more resilient to problems (than group tours or first-timers)."

# Reclaiming lost ground

Protracted unrest has crimped arrivals, but the NTO has scaled up its efforts to woo back tourists. By **Greg Lowe**

Domestic politics has clouded Thailand's tourism industry for the majority of the last twelve months, leading some operators to expect flat growth as a best-case scenario for the year, although others say stronger performance can be achieved through customer segmentation and targeting more resilient markets like Europe.

Either way, the outlook for Thai tourism this year is gloomier than last year's 18.8 per cent growth and record 26.5 million international arrivals. The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) has revised down its 2014 target from 28 million arrivals and 1.3 trillion baht (US\$40.8 billion) to 25.9 million arrivals and 1.2 trillion baht in revenue. Next year's target has been set at 29 million international arrivals and 1.4 trillion baht revenue.

This projection is supported by the Department of Tourism's 1H2014 figures, during which Thailand received close to 11.8 million international visitors, down 9.9 per cent from 13.1 million over the same period in 2013. The most significant regional declines were from East Asia (-17.2 per cent), Middle East (-14.8 per cent) and South Asia (-13.3 per cent).

Fewer visitors from Asia is particularly problematic as the region accounts

for more than half of foreign arrivals to Thailand, including big spenders from Hong Kong (-39.1 per cent) and Singapore (-24.1 per cent). Double-digit declines were recorded in the Thailand's two largest source markets – China fell 20.4 per cent to some 1.9 million and Malaysia slid 20.5 per cent to 1.1 million – while the kingdom also saw a 5.3 per cent decline in arrivals from the US and a 4.5 per cent drop from Canada in the first half.

On the upside, despite a slew of cancellations during the peak of the political crisis, Russia – Thailand's third largest inbound market – grew 8.7 per cent to 971,127 arrivals. Europe as a whole was also up 6.4 per cent with 3.8 million arrivals, with only Sweden showing a slight dip.

Performance has improved slightly after the May 22 coup d'état ended months of protracted anti-government protests, according to Patricia Weismantel, product manager at Spice Roads.

"At the beginning of the year bookings were performing well, but sales dropped as the situation escalated," she said. "Bookings have started to increase again since the military has come into power."

The impacts vary from business to business and also depend on operators' main source markets, said Stephen McE-

voy, managing director of Asia World Enterprise. Showing clients first-hand that Thailand remains a safe destination is the best way to restore confidence, he opined.

"We are encouraging media and trade FAM trips, as is the TAT, so we can bring influential people here to view the real situation," he said. "For some time now, we also been showing live video of major tourist attractions to help our (consultants) feel more confident in the product."

TAT has also been on the media offensive and organised a number of events in line with the military-run National Council for Peace and Order's (NCPO) "happiness" campaign. Concrete initiatives include a three-month visa fee waiver for visitors from China and Taiwan, launching the Thailand Travel Shield insurance, installing new taxi kiosks at Suvarnabhumi International Airport and supporting a number of the junta's enforcement initiatives like breaking up taxi mafias and cleaning up public beaches in Phuket.

Despite a more stabilised situation, the fact that Thailand remains under martial law continues to put off many foreign visitors, remarked Duangkamol Chansuriyawong, tour manager at Wild Thailand.

"Even though Thai people feel that there is no threat and things are quite okay now, that is not the case for international tourists who still feel this (political) uncertainty and are very sensitive to the political situation and the coup," she said.

### Destination in numbers

**61**

Thailand's occupancy in 1H2014, a dip of 17.2 per cent

**3,774**

The ADR (in baht) in 1H2014, a hike of 5.2 per cent

**2,302**

The RevPAR (in baht) in 1H2014, a 12.9 per cent decline

"The best chance for Thailand tourism industry this year is zero growth due to the negative figures for international tourists and martial law declared by the NCPO-led government."

According to STR Global's 1H2014 data, Thailand's hotels have been severely affected by the crisis with occupancy plummeting 17.3 per cent to 61 per cent; average daily rate still managed to grow slightly as most hoteliers have avoided slashing rates to attract guests.

### PRODUCTS

#### 1 Thailand Travel Shield

The Tourism Authority of Thailand has partnered four local insurance companies – Muang Thai Insurance, Chao Phaya Insurance, Siam City Insurance and Krungthai Panich Insurance – to provide instant online coverage for foreign visitors who cannot buy travel insurance from overseas insurers as Thailand remains under martial law. Thailand Travel Shield offers a range of policies from 650 baht (US\$20) to 12,000 baht for duration varying from one day to a year, available for online purchase at [www.tourismthailand.org/ThailandTravelShield](http://www.tourismthailand.org/ThailandTravelShield).

#### 2 Cartoon Network Amazone

Thailand became home to one of the world's largest aqua parks when Cartoon

Network Amazone debuted in August in Bang Saray near Pattaya. Currently phase one is open to the public, but when complete the 5.7ha development will feature 10 themed zones, water roller coasters and more than 150 different water features. Other attractions include meet-and-greet activities with key Cartoon Network characters, Foodville dining facility and live acrobatics shows. Prices start from 1,590/1,190 baht (adult/child). Visit [www.cartoonnetworkamazone.com](http://www.cartoonnetworkamazone.com).

#### 3 Central Embassy

After several delays, Central Embassy finally opened its doors in May to offer a new luxury shopping option in Bangkok. The mall offers eight floors of upscale retail brands, both international and domestic, scores of high-end restaurants, bistros and cafes as well as Embassy Diplomat Screens for an indulgent cinematic

experience. The connecting Park Hyatt Bangkok is tabled to debut next year.

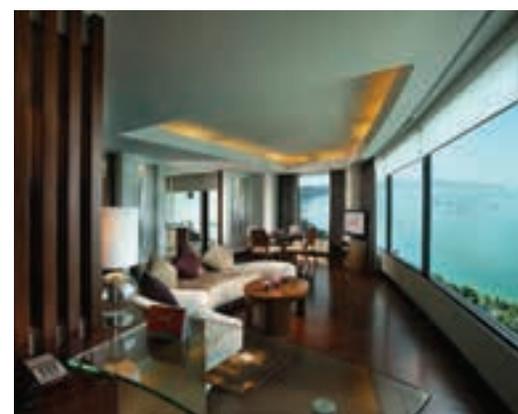
#### 4 North Pattaya Alliance

Seven hotels – Amari Pattaya, Cape Dara, Dusit Thani Pattaya, Holiday Inn Pattaya, Pullman Pattaya Hotel G, The Zign Hotel and Centara Grand Mirage Beach Resort – have teamed up with the Tourism Authority of Thailand, Thailand Convention & Exhibition Bureau and Pattaya City Hall to form North Pattaya Alliance. Leveraging the *North Pattaya – More Than You Think* campaign, the alliance seeks to combat the city's sleazy image and rebrand it as a business, MICE and Indian wedding destination. More details at [www.pattayamore.com](http://www.pattayamore.com).

#### 5 Terminal X

Phuket International Airport expanded its facilities with the opening of Terminal

X in February. All international charter flights will now be channelled through the 1,320m<sup>2</sup> terminal, which has 10 check-in counters, a waiting area and baggage storages space, plus a processing capacity of 1,000 passengers per hour.



Amari Pattaya, part of the North Pattaya Alliance

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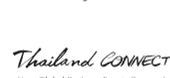
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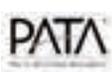
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# Snapshots

## All fired up and ready to go

Sellers go all out to impress buyers with their best offerings. By Patrick Tan



Province of Bohol Philippines' Edgar Chatto (centre) with the country's lively contingent



Concord Group Russia's Olga Ikonnikova and Macau Tower Convention & Entertainment Centre's Simon Chow



The Jayakarta Bali's I Wayan Waras, Travelport Singapore's Larry Tan and The Jayakarta SP Jakarta Hotel & Spa's I Gusti Rai Tantra



Iskandar Regional Development Authority Malaysia's Mohammad Rosly Md Selamat and Wan Suziana Wan Othman, Peak Destination Management Company Thailand's Michael Stewart, Iskandar Regional Development Authority Malaysia's Farhana Nazaruddin and Johor Tourism Department's Badrul Hisham Kassim



Tourism Bureau Ministry of Transportation and Communications Taiwan's Wayne Liu (centre) with team



Hong Kong International Airport's Gary Lam, Janice Shiu and Becky Yung



The Samaya Seminyak-Bali's Virgi (seated), Hotel Santika Jakarta's Agustinus Agung Pramudito, Santika Indonesia Hotels & Resorts' Guido Andriano, The Samaya Bali's Ray Clark, Infinity Holidays Australia's Judy Anglim and Hotel Santika Jogja's Denny Ermansyah



Indochina Heritage Travel Cambodia's Dang Van Nhan, Vietravel Vietnam's Jimmy Hai Phan and Nguyen Thi Bich Thuy, and Sunshine Director Worldwide Air Holidays UK's Steve Gouldby



Korea Tourism Organization (KTO) in Vietnam's Jeong Seonhee, KTO's Lee Keunhee, KTO in Vietnam's Nguyen Thi Quyen, Kim's Travel South Korea's Jocelyn Ha and Holiday Planners South Korea's Daehong Kim



Nagaworld Phnom Penh's Philip Ommen and Melanie Loong, Nagacorp Cambodia's Pern Chen, and Nagaworld Phnom Penh's Ngai Fong Chin and Jerome Lee

## See you in Bengaluru for PTM 2015!



Government of Karnataka's RV Deshpande (fifth from left) with the Indian delegation

# Snapshots

# Taking big strides forward

Sellers and buyers make good progress in networking and exchanging ideas. **Patrick Tan** checks out the buzz



Air Tours Club Poland's Jakub Koczur and Best Western Phanganburi Resort Thailand's Chanon Poonthanawath



Jakarta City Government Tourism and Culture Office's Cucu Ahmad Kurnia (fourth from right)



Garuda Indonesia Thailand's Somchai Attasivanon, S Sugito and Aree Hapermpool



Abercrombie & Kent India's Vinay Dhall and Vikram Madhok



Egyptian Tourism Office India's Adel El Masry and Phoenix Voyages Vietnam's Edouard George



IATA Singapore's Craig Astridge and Patrina Mak



The Howard Plaza Hotel Taipei's Amy Chen



Mekong Discovery Cambodia's Leakheana Rov and Huy Chhin, and HS Travel International Hong Kong's Hazen Tang, John Mong and Yorkki Choi

## TTG celebrates 40 years

THE fun's not over yet as TTG Asia Media continues to surprise readers as part of its 40<sup>th</sup> birthday. In case you missed it, drop by our booth to pick up your copy of our August 8 special edition, a bumper 72-page publication packed with content that looks not only at the industry's rich history and tradition, but also what lies ahead.

Come September 26, subscribers will also be able to interact with *TTG Asia* in fresh ways with the launch of our very own app, allowing mobile users to read analyses and features on the go.

And on October 30, join us in lauding the winner of our 40<sup>th</sup> Tude Innovator Award at our technology conference, which will be held at Marina Bay Sands Singapore as part of ITB Asia's official programme. Themed the 5Cs, topics that will be covered at the complimentary event range from content and channels to customer marketing ([www.ttgasia.com/ttgconference](http://www.ttgasia.com/ttgconference)).

Finally, look out for *TTG Asia Luxury* in December, which will reach out to luxury travel buyers twice – instead of once – this year.





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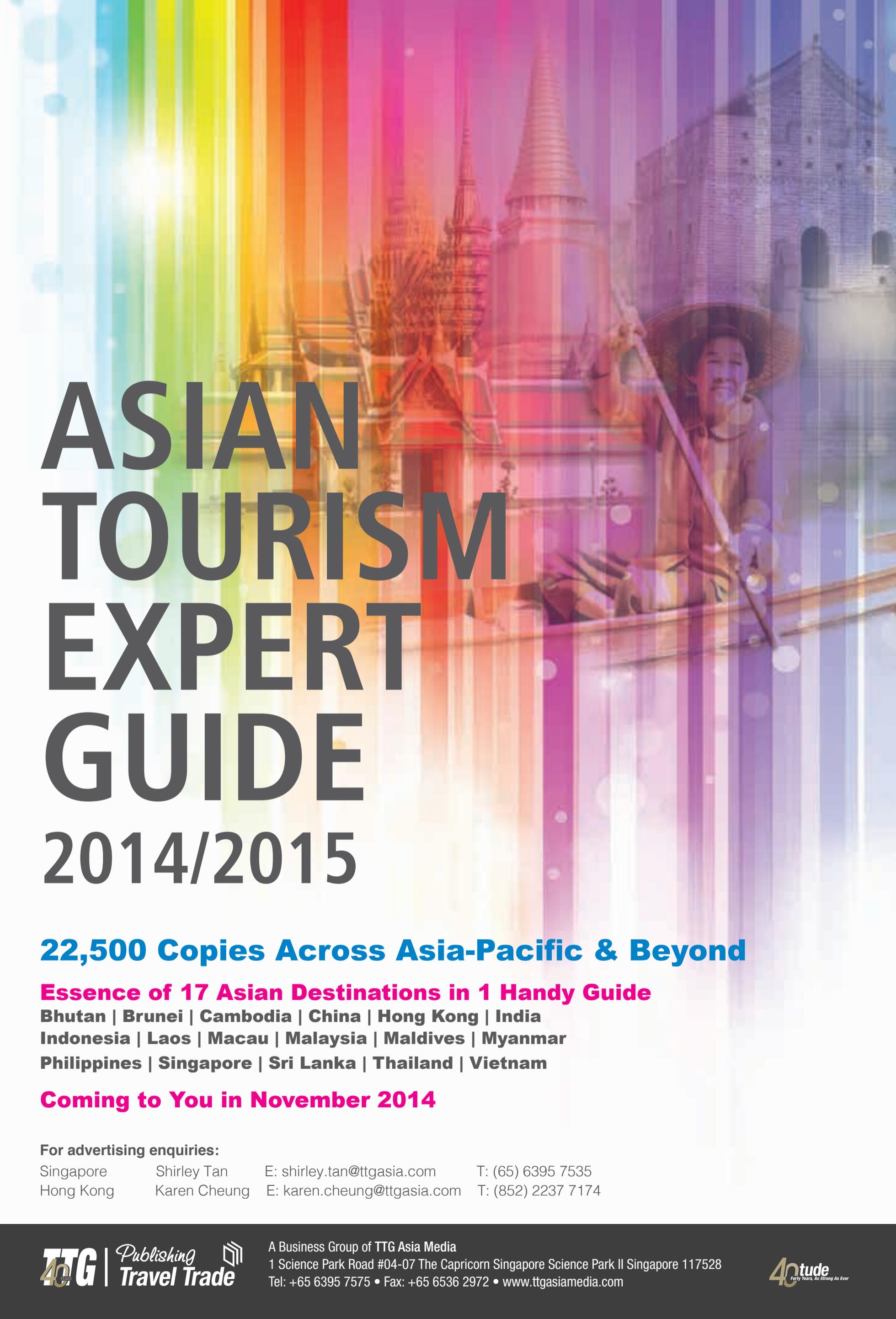
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