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CTW China

China cities collaborate to spread MICE expertise

By Mimi Hudoyo

With more cities in China realising the potential and value of MICE, the Shanghai Municipal Tourism Administration (SMTA) is taking the lead in creating a platform at the annual two-day China International Meetings and Conferences Forum (CIMCF) to share expertise and raise standards.

Seven cities have joined forces to advance MICE and they are Shanghai, Beijing, Hangzhou, Nanjing, Suzhou, Jiaying and Ningbo.

Patrick Chen, deputy director, International Tourism Promotion, SMTA said: "Many cities want to attract MICE,



"Many cities want to attract MICE, but are not ready. Many of the issues will be discussed at CIMCF and we hope more cities will participate."

Patrick Chen

Deputy director, international tourism promotion, SMTA

but are not ready. Many of the issues will be discussed at CIMCF and we hope more cities will participate.

CIMCF is a networking and

educational platform for MICE industry players to learn about new trends and how cities have to develop to be more ready as MICE destinations.

"Apart from sharing knowledge and new trends, the forum also looks at how to attract business," Chen added.

Meanwhile, Business Events Hangzhou has come up with an ambassador programme, following in the footsteps and success of Shanghai which has appointed prominent figures in society, such as celebrities and well-known doctors or university professors, to promote the city as an association destination.

Roger Shu, MICE manager, Business Events Hangzhou, said: "What we do is to convince and help these ambassadors to bid for an event.

"It was not an easy start.

We needed to convince them that they are stars of their own fields. We support them with accommodation, transport, setting up meetings," he explained.

Last year, Business Events Hangzhou escorted an ambassador to bid for an event in Paris and won a meeting with an expected 700 delegates, 500 from overseas and the rest from China in 2016.

Such an initiative is not new to some cities in China, but not all have been successful.

Speaking of Shanghai's experience, Chen said: "Shanghai has 100 ambassadors from 30 industries.

"Looking after them is a tough job. Most of them are celebrities, scientists and professionals who are busy flying around the world. We have a team which is in contact with them, with a personal assistant sending updated information and small gifts as a token of our co-operation."

Visas no longer a major hurdle for mainland travellers

By Prudence Lui

More Chinese incentive groups are picking longhaul and exotic destinations thanks to improved air connectivity and more relaxed visa regulations, according to key DMCs interviewed at IT&CM China.

CITS International MICE Shanghai deputy general manager, Lu Yun, said 70 per cent of MICE traffic is longhaul, adding: "The market is booming and we are seeing new record numbers every year.

Clients rank ease of visa approval, security and connectivity as top criteria when selecting a destination.

Following an incentive of 10,000 people to the US last

year, the company also sent a group of 3,000 people to South Africa, while a client has just picked the Netherlands. Lu added: "This is unexpected and the key challenge is about logistics and capacity for a big group. Take the recent incentive to South Africa as an example, we had to transport all 3,000 staff to the destination within three days and we split them into groups."

According to CTS HK Shenzhen Int'l Travel Service project manager, Sabrinah Peng, most domestic clients have already seen China so they prefer to go abroad and the hotspots are Europe, the US, Australia and New Zealand.

She believes demand for more exotic destinations such as North Europe have potential.

Changsha China International Travel Service vice general manager, Bo Hong, has already received such requests from younger travellers who crave for new locations like Mauritius and Israel. "I want to find out more about Sri Lanka, Palau and Fiji at the show for our groups of around 20 people each."

Shanghai CS Innovation Consulting, sales and marketing executive vice president, Lee Kuan-lun, said he has received an incentive request for a small group to Reunion Island near Madagascar because of the volcanoes for teambuilding activities after their meetings.

However Shanghai-based Lord Corporation, China Region specialist, Aya Wang pointed out the choices are limited as the company's policy is to avoid politically unstable destinations, while CITS (Jiang Su) MICE manager, Xu Xian Chan, said only corporates in first-tier cities like Shanghai and Beijing can afford such trips as they are expensive. "But I believe the China market will mature and the trend will pick up," Xu said.

{ In brief }

Alila Purnama sails to Indonesia's Raja Ampat, Komodo

Alila Purnama, the luxury Phinisi Ship of Alila Hotels and Resorts, offers private voyages to the waters and islands of Raja Ampat and Komodo Islands. Each expedition includes island-hopping and world-class diving. Sailings to Komodo

and Raja Ampat are from May to September and from October to March, respectively.

Greater air access from Hong Kong to Tokyo, Fujian

Dragonair launched a daily Hong-kong-Tokyo (Haneda) connection in March, adding to the existing 14-weekly flights by sister airline Cathay Pacific Airways. Two-class A320 aircraft are deployed.

'Members' needs are priority'

By Paige Lee Pei Qi

Associations have to start treating members as king if they want to drive up membership numbers and retain existing members at the same time, said Song Tao, ASAE China advisory committee member and senior director of membership, China Automotive Dealer Association (CADA).

According to Song, CADA currently has 5,000 members and it had been enjoying double-digit growth every year for the past five years.

He said: "The most important thing is to show members that you are continuously creating value enough for them to want to stay, and which is compelling enough for pre-members to join the association.

"There must be this added advantage that they (members) can enjoy over others outside

the association. We have to treat them as king."

He cited training conducted by influential contacts, ready information updates and networking as some of the most

significant advantages his members enjoy.

For example, he uses social media platform Weibo to actively engage all his members to keep them updated on the latest industry insider news. He also uses the platform to find

out how to better serve them. Evident of his association's thriving, Song said CADA's membership fees have also increased in tandem with the rise in membership numbers.

"You will see that the members will continue to pay – even if it is more money – as long as they see that you are providing them good value for money," he explained.



Song: keep adding value to recruit, retain

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{ In brief }

Indonesia on airport upgrade and development drive

Indonesia's Ministry of Transportation has set aside US\$5.4 billion to develop airports around Indonesia over the next five years. The target is to open an average of 15 new airports annually in natural disaster areas, remote destinations as well as bordering cities and towns. There are also plans to upgrade existing airports.

Director general of air transportation, Suprasetyo, said: "Indonesian air passenger traffic between 2010 and 2014 totalled 335 million with 15 per cent average annual growth. This is moderate compared to the potential size of the market. The lack of infrastructure is a hampering factor."

The government is meanwhile working on more G2G agreements to improve accessibility to regional and international destinations, and will open 217 pioneering routes in 28 provinces this year.

Contract inked for new Centara resort in Zhaoqing

Centara Hotels & Resorts will be opening its newest property in China, the Centara Resort Zhaoqing, after signing a management contract with Zhaoqing Yuhao Properties Development last week.

Scheduled to open in 4Q2017, this four-star resort will have 250 rooms, with facilities including a water park complete with swimming pools and a pool bar. There will be three dining venues, a fitness centre, Spa Cenvaree, a Kid's Club and an 800m² ballroom, among other meeting facilities.

Get close to Picasso in Singapore

The famous Pinacothèque de Paris' first location outside Europe will open at Singapore's Fort Canning Park in May.

Space@FCAC offers signature unique events. The customisable 200m² open space between The Collections Gallery and Heritage Gallery is ideal for private events and art shows for up to 120 guests.

Fairmont Jakarta opens

Fairmont Jakarta opened in January with 380 keys in Senayan Square, a mixed-use complex in Jakarta's Central Business District. It is near the Sentral Senayan Office Towers, 18-hole Senayan National Golf Club, Gelora Bung Karno sports arena and Jakarta Convention Centre. It has five F&B outlets and meeting facilities including a 1,200m² ballroom and eight meeting rooms.

European MICE demand for China resurges

By Caroline Boey and Prudence Lui

Favourable factors like Europe's improving economy and China's introduction of the 72-hour visa-free policy to more than 50 countries are fuelling demand for longhaul MICE into China.

China may have become more expensive, but European buyers interviewed by the *Daily* said the destination still has a lot to offer.

Among the wishlist for Germany's Henry Waltz of Gecko Incentives & Events, who has been attending IT&CM China for a number of years, is the formation of a China CVB.

"A China CVB would be impartial and provide a central point of contact for the specific information buyers are looking for," Waltz said.

But Poland's Alco-Tours Kafarski's Boguslaw Kafarski said China is too big and access to the provincial authorities would be more useful to buyers.

Kafarski, who is attending his second IT&CM China, said

he is keen to expand into the less well-known provinces such as Shaanxi and Hunan. "Polish MICE groups are interested in mountainous and nature destinations.

"Although China has become more expensive in recent years,

it is popular because direct flights from Warsaw to Beijing take only about eight hours."

The Netherlands' First Class Business Travel handles high-end government-related mayors' visits and trade missions. Owner Gert

Bakker said: "With Europe's economy growing again, more companies are heading to China. In 2014, we organised four trade missions and this will be increased to five this year.

"A mayoral visit may have a delegation of 30 to 40 companies and we can pick up new ideas at IT&CM China for our clients."

Exclusive agent for Volkswagen in Germany and new buyer Eventives' managing director, York Schluter, said the company

is getting more business this year, citing the Pearl River Delta covering Hong Kong, Macau and Guangdong as suitable for first-time MICE participants and the north for subsequent trips.

"What appeals to Germans is the mixture of traditional and modern China. Measures like China's 72-hour visa-free transit policy does not only make access easier, there is also a cost saving," Schluter said.

On the rebound of longhaul MICE, Hong Kong's Destination Management Company managing director, Jenny May, said clients have become more safety and security conscious over the past few months.

She said: "A couple of the 2015/2016 contracts have specifically requested details of the coaches and cars like age, brand and insurance and details of the drivers' experience.

"We provided these details and the clients finally signed the contracts. This is the first time this has happened."

Almost 40 per cent of the International buyers at this year's IT&CM China are from Europe.



Bakker: more business into China



Developing future industry leaders

Budding MICE industry professionals learn the ropes from experts at the IMEX-MPI-MCI Future Leaders Forum 2015 held yesterday. Seated fourth from left: IMEX UK's Sarah Skavron, MCI Belgium's Hugo Slimbrouck and TTG Asia Media's Darren Ng

'Innovate products and services'

By Paige Lee Pei Qi

With the booming Chinese business travel market expected to be crowned as the world's largest in the near future, the travel industry has to innovate their products and services to keep up, according to Carlson Wagonlit Travel (CWT) China.

On the sidelines of the CTW China 2015 press conference yesterday, Albert Zhong, general manager of CWT China, told the *Daily*: "To meet the needs of the evolving market, we have to constantly improve and innovate to better serve China-based business travellers.

"Besides the usual procurement-related activities, managing internal and external stakeholder relationships...our role has expanded to identifying new technology solutions and applying business analytics to support clients' growth."

As such, CWT China rolled out the first online booking tool for the Chinese market - CWT Online - to make booking international travel easier for China-based business travellers in 2012.

While CWT China has the privilege of having the "first-mover advantage", he added

it was a challenge to move business travellers from offline to online initially. "We saw the need to move bookings online and companies were also pushing for the mandate. It took some time but now, we are seeing 70 per cent adoption."

TravelSky's general manager, Bo Peng, said GDSs have to be ready to simplify the booking process to help corporates who want their bookings done fast. He said: "The usual challenges are the many steps in the booking procedure, especially if there are changes to be made, which is common for corpo-

rates." TravelSky thus allows changes to be made even at the airport hours prior to departure, as corporates often make last-minute changes to their flights.

According to Global Business Travel Association's (GBTA) report in March, the Chinese business travel market will overtake the US as the world's largest by 2017 due to strong 16.2 per cent annual growth since 2000, with spend volume having surged from US\$32 billion in 2000 to US\$225 billion in 2013. GBTA forecasts the Chinese business travel market will grow 14.2 per cent this year, and 12 per cent in 2016 to reach US\$336 billion.

TCEB spices up campaign with TAT support

The Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB) has received a pledge from the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) in support of its *Spice Up Your Business Agenda* campaign to increase MICE visitor numbers and spending.

The campaign includes an aggressive digital marketing plan, development of an innovative Thai MICE web portal and launch of a mobile application for MICE travellers and professionals for easy access to the Thai MICE database.

A series of online marketing promotion and PR campaigns will be conducted throughout 2015 in high-potential markets.

Targeted at international business travellers, delegates and exhibitors attending trade exhibitions or organising meetings in Thailand from now until December, the campaign also offers discounts, value-added services and complimentary use of facilities.

Chattan Kunjara Na Ayudhya, executive director of advertising and public relations, TAT, said: "MICE travellers have high-spending power. Their contribution to the Thai economy starts from making business deals, topped up by recreational spending that follows. TAT will facilitate and attract MICE travellers to come to Thailand and stay longer for leisure. The benefits of the campaign are far beyond the MICE industry - it helps tourism as a whole."

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Photo ops galore By Eugene Tang



IT&CM China and CTW China opening ceremony at Shanghai Marriott Hotel Parkview with the hotel's Ricky Lam (right) and co-host Marriott International's Michael Malik (left) with (from left) Shanghai Pico Exhibition Management's Gordon Chen, MICE Committee of China Association of Travel Services' Jiang Qi Kang, CITS MICE China's Lu Yun, TTG Asia Media's Darren Ng, Shanghai Municipal Tourism Administration's Patrick Chen and Carlson Wagonlit Travel China's Albert Zhong



Groupe Express Roullarta Paris' Natalie Mukhi and Australian Sports Marketing's Chris Neville-Smith



Exciting drum action at Tuesday's opening ceremony



TTG Asia Media's Ooi Peng Ee with Microsoft China's Elaine Huang and HNA Hospitality Group China's Peter Chen, winners at the inaugural CTW China Awards



Thailand Convention & Exhibition Bureau's Pirat Savettanan, Nida Chunhacharti and Supanich Thiensing



ACTE Hong Kong's Benson Tang taking a selfie with Microsoft China's Elaine Huang



Resorts World Genting Malaysia's Freddy Zhu and Hedva Bao

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Buzz on the floor

By Eugene Tang



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Thailand Convention & Exhibition Bureau's Pirat Savettanan, Nida Chunhacharti, Supanich Thiansing and Shane Xin



Macau Tower Convention & Entertainment Centre's Simon Chow



Japan National Tourism Organization's Shinji Murakami and Eigo Onuma



The Walt Disney Company (Shanghai)'s Travis Zhu and Hong Kong Disneyland's Constance Kuk



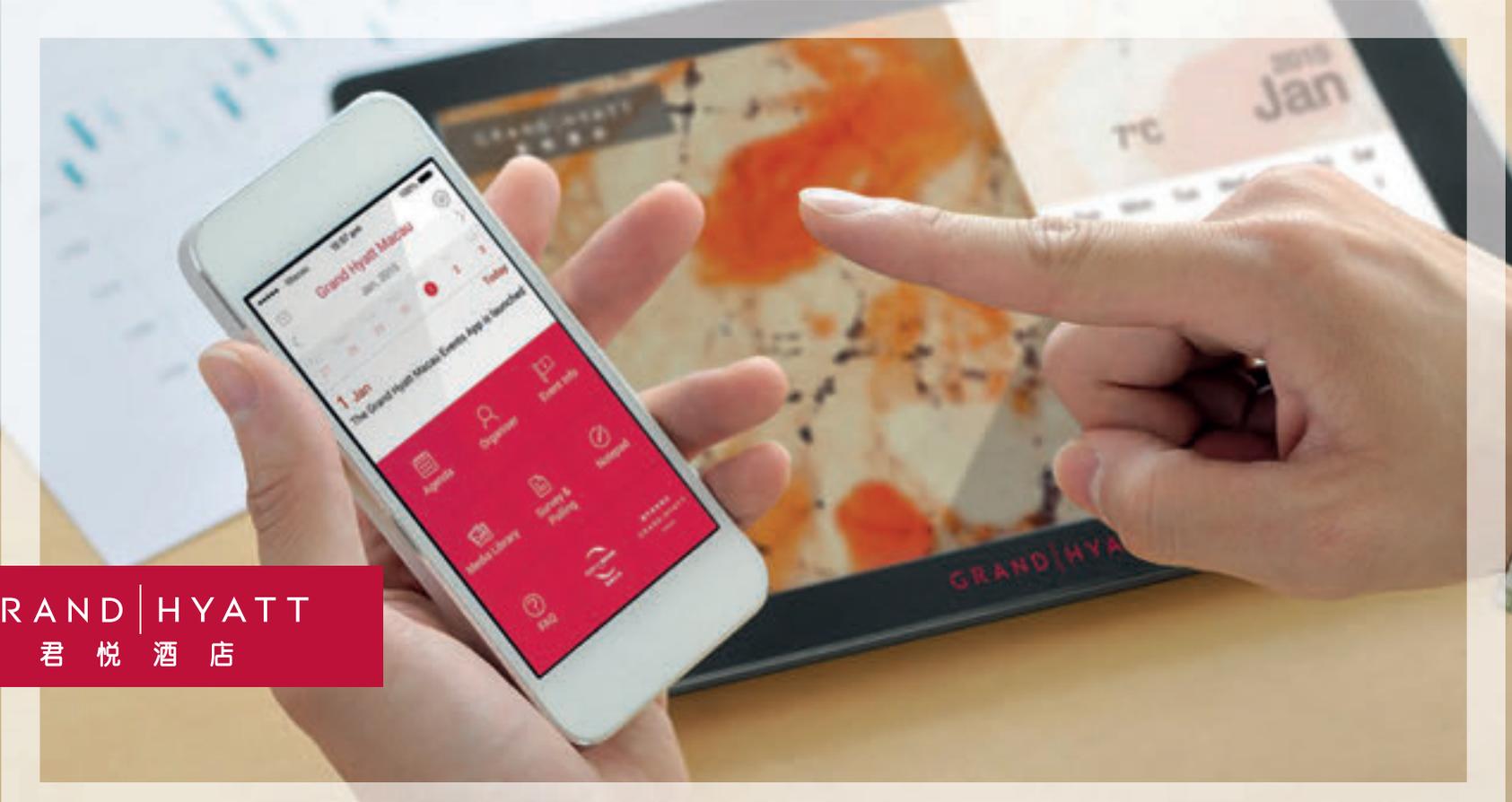
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Food for thought

Rising global food demand and waste is stressing the Earth. With the extent of F&B featured in business events, venues in Asia are doing their part to minimise impact on the environment, writes **Karen Yue**

As any good, hospitable host will ensure his guests are well entertained and nourished, business event organisers spend considerable effort developing strong content that educates attendees and opens new business avenues for them, as well as on how they are fed during welcome receptions, refreshment breaks in between meetings, networking cocktails and closing dinner galas.

In Asia, where it is customary to demonstrate hospitality with an overflowing supply of good food, the amount of food consumed and wasted should give pause to event organisers and venue operators especially at a time when satisfying global food demand has become one of the biggest environmental threats.

Environmental experts have blamed agriculture for being the biggest cause of global warming, due to the massive volume of greenhouse gases emitted by cattle and farmland, and through the clearing of land for farming. Farms also consume a lot of water while fertilisers pollute water systems.

Agriculture's impact on the environment is bound to intensify with the growing need for food. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United

Nations (FAO) projects that, under current production and consumption trends, global food production must increase 60 per cent by 2050 in order to meet the demands of the growing world population.

More events equals more food?

Considering how several dining activities are featured at business events, which are on the rise at major venues in Asia, is the MICE industry adding to this environmental woe?

According to Kevin Teng, executive director of sustainability at Marina Bay Sands in Singapore, there is a direct correlation between the amount of food prepared and business volume. While the integrated resort is unable to provide quantitative information on the extent of food consumed at business events held there, Teng said all staff dining rooms serve up to 7,000 meals daily.

Just how much goes into the belly?

A post-event sustainability report prepared by MCI Headquarters and Marina Bay Sands for the 500-pax Responsible Business Forum on Sustainable Development last year, found that the event had generated 215kg of food waste.

"Food waste is one of the highest

streams of solid waste for events," declared Roger Simons, group sustainability manager of MCI Headquarters, Asia Pacific.

"Events can produce a significant amount of food waste simply by their scale. A 6,000-pax congress (with a no-show of) 20 per cent for an evening function results in 1,200 meals being wasted."

Chucking food is a crying shame at a time when food demand is high but not equally distributed globally, causing some nations to starve. Food disposal is also cause for concern because it generates methane emissions, which also contributes to global warming, warned FAO.

Fortunately, some venues said a large portion of food prepared for business events goes into the bellies of delegates.

At the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre, 95 per cent of food prepared for an event is consumed, while the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre reports that the consumption rate is 90 per cent.

To minimise food wastage during events, venues have developed ways to calculate how much food is needed.

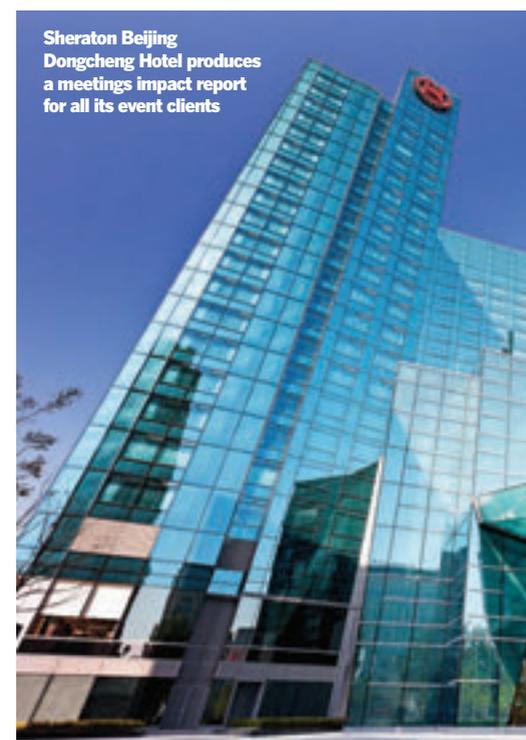
Chen Soo Yoong, director of facilities

at Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre, said: "We have a formula to calculate the amount of food required for a particular event. This formula has been enhanced over the years based on our experience and the consumption rate for a variety of events held here."

Marc van der Meer, director of food & beverage at Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre, said his venue uses a specific ratio system that is "based on the number of people being served, the type of event and the menu items ordered".

Sheraton Beijing Dongcheng Hotel actively tracks food wastage from each event, compares that with its food requirement estimates and makes

Sheraton Beijing Dongcheng Hotel produces a meetings impact report for all its event clients





“Events can produce a significant amount of food waste simply by their scale.”

Roger Simons
Group sustainability manager,
MCI Headquarters, Asia Pacific

adjustments, if necessary, for future events.

Meanwhile, Marina Bay Sands has spent the past 12 months developing a food waste tracking system “to monitor each meal option served and the waste generated in our team member dining rooms. With this tracking system, we are not only able to actively reduce food costs but also overall wastage”, revealed Teng.

Internal push

All the venues interviewed for this story said they are committed to sustainable practices and have procedures to follow and goals to meet.

Ross Grinter, hotel manager of Sheraton Beijing Dongcheng Hotel, said: “Sustainability is a key goal of all Starwood hotels as we want to ensure our business is run in an environmentally responsible manner that is integrated with the local community. We have aggressive goals as an organisation to meet this objective, and accordingly, our management team gives a great deal of focus to both reducing energy consumption from our daily operations and minimising food wastage.”

The hotel manages food waste by directing excess food that has not yet left the kitchen to the internal staff canteen and by composting leftovers.

Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre has an employee Environmental Taskforce dedicated to enhancing sustainability initiatives, which include looking at ways to reduce food waste. “We were the first convention centre in the world to be awarded a six-star Green Star environment rating, something we work hard to maintain,” said van der Meer.

Reducing waste in general is a priority for Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre. “To cut down on food waste,

the venue practises bookshelf cooking, whereby nonperishable items are pre-cooked and stored to be made à la minute. This keeps food fresh and reduces (over-production). Where possible, non-exposed food prepared for events but not consumed are served in the staff canteen while nonperishable (meat) is used for stock,” explained Chen.

On top of that, the centre has a licensed contractor who collects waste and turns food waste into fish food for local fish farms. These combined efforts have allowed the centre to reduce its annual food waste from 69 tonnes in 2010 to 37 tonnes in 2014, said Chen.

At Marina Bay Sands, the first MICE facility in South-east Asia to obtain the ISO 20121 Sustainable Events Management System certification, employees are educated on ways to manage food waste.

Teng said: “We continually run food waste awareness programmes such as monthly clean plate activities in the team dining room. Team members are reminded and encouraged to take only the required amount per serving.”

Marina Bay Sands also transfers unconsumed food prepared for buffet lines to executive team dining rooms and channel subsequent food waste to a processor that decomposes and breaks down such waste into clear reusable water that is then pumped into the public waste water system. As of October 2014, the system had converted up to seven tonnes of food waste to water, Teng said.

MCI Headquarters believes that venues with strong sustainability policies have an advantage in winning over event clients.

Simons said: “(We) have definitely seen a rise in corporate clients requesting for venues and suppliers with solid sustainability practices. Brands like Schneider, BASF, Oracle, Syman-tec and Intel are making it a strong requirement and many feature sustainability as a core part of their event programme.

“There is no denying that the trend is led by North America and Europe, but we are seeing global companies making commitments to responsible business wherever they are.”

Charitable solutions

Another way of minimising food waste is to direct surplus food to charities.

Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre has been working with community food programme Second-Bite for the past six years and OzHarvest since January 2014. Surplus food suitable for donation is kept refrigerated while collection arrangements with the charities are made. Donation amounts vary according to the events being held at the centre.

Non-profit organisation Food from the Heart receives unconsumed bread

from Marina Bay Sands’ buffet lines. According to the property’s spokesperson, Val Chua, some 2,400 pieces of bread are donated per month to the charity. Event clients are also encouraged to take part in this bread donation exercise.

Presently, Sheraton Beijing Dongcheng Hotel is “exploring options to partner with charities”, said Grinter.

Reaching out to clients

Venues are working closely with event clients to achieve smarter food management, by advising them on F&B requirements and providing options to manage unconsumed food responsibly.

Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre, for instance, can arrange for leftovers brought in by event visitors to be donated to one of its charities.

Marina Bay Sands’ ECO360° meeting packages offer planners the option to achieve waste targets for their events. Planners can also pick sustainably sourced F&B options from the Harvest Menu. An even more valuable option for planners comes in the form of the Sands ECO360° Event Impact Statement, a post-event report that consolidates sustainable event metrics such as energy and water consumption, recycling rate and carbon emissions.

Chen observed that “clients in gen-

eral are willing to listen and act on our advice and expertise”.

MCI Headquarters can also produce post-event reports for its clients.

“We’re encouraging as many clients as possible to be transparent about their event’s impact. As you can imagine there is a fair amount of time and resource required in engaging suppliers, tracking the relevant data and then calculating and presenting the information in an engaging manner, so not all clients want to head down this path,” said Simons.



MCI’s tips for reducing food waste

- ✓ Ensure accurate guest numbers and where needed, have delegates register specifically for meals to reduce attrition
- ✓ Reduce packaging waste by avoiding food that are individually wrapped
- ✓ Make sure that religious dietary needs are met and attendees have a choice of vegetarian, nut/dairy/gluten-free meals
- ✓ Avoid plated starters and pre-filled glasses
- ✓ Focus on FLOSS – Fresh Local Organic Seasonal and Sustainable food that people actually want to eat rather than typical dishes



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{ Guangxi Zhuang }

Four Points by Sheraton makes inroads into China

Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide is keeping up the expansion of its Four Points by Sheraton brand in China with the addition of Four Points by Sheraton Lingui Guilin, which brings the total number of properties under the brand in the country to 23.

Opened on December 31, the 242-room Four Points by Sheraton Lingui Guilin is operated in partnership with China's Fantasia Holdings Group, marking the first Four Points by Sheraton

in the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region.

The hotel boasts 16 meeting spaces totalling 538m². The Grand Ballroom can accommodate a banquet with 320 guests or 240 pax in a classroom setting. High-speed Internet access is available in all meeting rooms.

Event planners and hotel guests have a selection of onsite dining options, such as the all-day dining The Eatery, and China Spice Chinese restaurant.

For relaxation after a day of meetings, the hotel offers an indoor pool, an outdoor pool and a spa.

Four more Four Points are due to open in 2015, in Guangdong, Chengdu, Baohe in Hefei and Penghu in Taiwan.

Starwood is targeting to double its number of Four Points in China by 2018 to 50. China leads the global drive for the growth of Four Points, expanding the portfolio to 200 hotels worldwide in 2015.



"Four Points is one of Starwood's key growth leaders in China," said Qian Jin, president, greater China, Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide. "The primary focus for expansion is in China's secondary and tertiary cities where demand for

well-known global brands is on the rise."

Four Points has proved "a hit with business and leisure travellers worldwide" for its Experience Smart Travel concept of stylish comfort, great service and popular perks, Qian noted.

{ Shaanxi }

Wyndham expands into Xi'an

Wyndham Hotel Group has opened the 565-key Wyndham Grand Xi'an South in Qujiang New District, close to Xi'an Qujiang International Conference & Exhibition Center and iconic tourist attractions including the Mausoleum of the First Qin Emperor and Terracotta Warriors.

Xi'an Xianyang International Airport is also just 35km away.

The luxury hotel features a décor that blends traditional Chinese architectural influences with contemporary styling.

Guestrooms are large and offer plush bedding, a spa-like bathroom and free Wi-Fi and broadband Internet access.

For business travellers and event groups, the hotel provides a range of meeting facilities that include a grand ballroom and 11 break-out rooms.

A variety of culinary choices are available at the hotel. All-day restaurant, Tang Café, features interactive show kitchens and live cooking stations, and offers an international buffet line. The luxurious Yan Ming Xuan specialises in authentic Cantonese cuisine and local favourites, and offers eight private dining rooms. For a Japanese-style breakfast, a leisurely cup of coffee in the day or cocktails in the evening, The Lounge offers the perfect spot.

{ Guangdong, Hainan }

Mission Hills to reward environmentally-friendly event planners with discount



Mission Hills Shenzhen

China's integrated resort company Mission Hills, which has properties in Shenzhen and Hainan, is offering a price discount and additional benefits to meeting planners who submit a request for proposal with sustainability requirements.

Yum Siew Wah, group vice president of hospitality, said depending on the group size or requirement, a discount of around 10 per cent will be offered for groups with at least 30 people.

"The MICE group will also be able to take advantage of free sustainable

education activities such as visiting the Cultural Heritage Eco Trail and Eco Learning Gallery, and food for the sustainability-related event will be made from organic ingredients," said Yum.

He said Mission Hills is expecting up to a 20 per cent increase in sustainable MICE events as a result of the innovations the company has put in place since 2014, including solar-powered golf carts, water conservation and the establishment of an international scientific climate change research field station at Mission Hills Haikou.

{ Henan }

JW Marriott lands in Zhengzhou's city centre

JW Marriott Hotel Zhengzhou has opened its doors in China's Henan Province under a long-term management agreement with owners Greenland Group.

Located from the 41st to 55th floors of the Millennium Royal Plaza in Zhengzhou's CBD, the 416-room hotel is the first Marriott property in Henan as well as the seventh JW Marriott hotel in the Greater China region.

Simon Cooper, president and managing director, Marriott International



Cooper: significant addition for Marriott

Asia-Pacific, said: "This is a significant property as it is our first hotel in Zhengzhou which is an important transportation, business and convention hub in central China."

The new hotel is located in the heart of Zhengdong New District and positioned between the Zhengzhou International Convention

& Exhibition Center and Henan Art Center.

Guestrooms are luxurious and functional, while the 2,500m² event space includes the 1,000m² JW Grand Ballroom with an LED wall panel, six meeting rooms and a spacious pre-function ballroom foyer.

F&B offerings include The Grill, specialising in both Chinese and Western dishes; and Man Ho, featuring Cantonese classics as well as Henan and Sichuan delicacies.

{ Beijing }

Chinese capital welcomes second Grand Mercure property

Accor has launched its second Grand Mercure hotel in Beijing, the Grand Mercure Beijing Dongcheng.

Located next to Beixinqiao Station of Metro Line 5 and offering easy access to Dongzhimen Airport Express Station, the hotel provides a convenient base for guests to visit local sights such as the Forbidden City and the Yonghe Lama Temple, as well as

business areas including Wangfujing and China International Exhibition Center.

Grand Mercure Beijing Dongcheng offers 202 keys. Guests will be treated to slivers of Chinese culture throughout their stay: from being greeted by front-line staff wearing traditional qipao to partaking in traditional tea ceremonies and daily taichi exercises.

Dining options include the 101 All Day Dining Restaurant serving an international buffet, an a la carte menu, and a 24-hour congee menu, Chinese Restaurant for classic Chinese cuisines and seafood, and the Lobby Bar.

Other hotel facilities include an Executive Business Lounge, a fully-equipped gym, and sauna.

For meetings and events, the hotel boasts a 300-pax pillarless ballroom with an 8m high ceiling and 18m² LED screen, seven multipurpose function rooms with natural lighting, and a dedicated in-house events team.

{ Guizhou }

A faster way to commute

Commencement of the Guizhou-Guiyang railway, the first high-speed rail in South-east China, will reduce travelling time from Guiyang to Guangzhou from the current twenty hours to merely four hours, and the journey from Guiyang to scenic Guilin to two hours. By 2017, Guiyang will develop as a transport hub with high-speed rails bounded for Chongqing, Kunming, Chengdu, Changsha and Guangzhou with journeys spanning two to four hours.

Rising star of Down Under

liverpool/123RF.com



A view of Sydney's iconic skyline

Sydney is fast growing as a hotspot for Chinese incentives, writes **Paige Lee Pei Qi**

As Chinese delegates continue to head overseas in ever greater numbers, Sydney has emerged a popular destination for MICE visitors from China.

According to Kristian Nicholls, general manager business development, Business Events Sydney (BESydney), business from Asia has doubled over the past few years, with China accounting for almost 50 per cent of the corporate incentive wins from Asia last year to represent A\$72.9 million (US\$57.4 million) in new business.

Pro-Health China, which held its annual conference outside of Asia in Sydney for

the first time last year, was a 4,500-pax mega incentive that contributed an estimated A\$20.4 million to New South Wales (NSW).

Most recently, direct sales company Nu Skin confirmed Sydney for its 2016 incentive, which is expected to inject A\$50 million into the economy, making it one of the largest incentive wins to hit Australian shores.

The incentive will see Nu Skin's qualifying salespeople from China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau travel to Sydney for a five-day programme in April 2016.

BESydney's CEO, Lyn Lewis-Smith,

said: "Sydney shines as a strategically important destination for Asian corporates looking to reward, motivate and inspire their top sales people. The city is a firm favourite for Asian companies, and this win is testament to this."

CEO of Destination NSW, Sandra Chipchase, said China was the number one inbound market for NSW and supporting BESydney's efforts to win incentive groups from China was a central platform of the NTO's China tourism strategy.

"The NSW government aims to double overnight visitor expenditure by 2020 and events such as Nu Skin are central to

delivering that result," she said.

To improve its China readiness, Sydney has rolled out seminars for retailers in the city to help them understand the needs and expectations of Chinese visitors, said Nicholls.

She added: "Sydney is able to excel in understanding the Chinese delegate, from their culinary preferences and social sensitivities to their country's distinct way of doing business, and make them feel right at home."

On the accommodation front, there are also now 12 Accor properties across NSW that have attained Chinese Optimum Service Standards, an indication that the hotel provides services like welcome kits, dedicated TV channels and newspapers in Chinese.

COO of Accor Pacific, Simon McGrath, said this competitive edge has helped the hospitality group win several Chinese MICE groups last year, including the Pro-Health China conference.

As well, BridgeClimb Sydney also introduced in 2012 a daily Mandarin Climb, which is led by Mandarin-speaking climb leaders, offering Chinese visitors the opportunity to experience the Australian icon in their native language.

The settlement of a landmark air services agreement between Australia and China earlier this year also looks set to boost Chinese traffic onto the country.

Nicholls said: "This means Sydney is now directly accessible to China's second-tier cities, which opens up greater opportunities for even more (Chinese) corporate clients to consider Sydney."

Spotlight

New convention centre takes shape in Sydney

Opening in December 2016, the A\$1.1 billion (US\$861 million) International Convention Centre (ICC) Sydney has been lauded as the centrepiece of the New South Wales government's A\$3 billion transformation of Darling Harbour.

ICC Sydney CEO, Geoff Donaghy, said: "Attending business events in Sydney will never be the same again. ICC Sydney's ultramodern, integrated and highly flexible design is backed by high-end technology infrastructure and a world-class, waterfront city centre setting."

One of ICC Sydney's key highlights is the flexibility of its convention centre fa-

cilities, which can concurrently host three fully separate events across the tiered 2,500-seat theatre, tiered 1,000-seat theatre and flat-floor 800-seat theatre.

Donaghy said: "The ability to separate and quarantine events means we can run three self-sufficient conventions each with its own pre-function area, kitchen for bespoke catering and meeting rooms for breakouts or preparation areas."

"The flexibility theme continues to the open-air realm with a 5,000m² event deck and integration with Tumbalong Park, which is being reconfigured to hold events of up to 27,000 people."

ICC Sydney will also welcome the Grand Ballroom – set to be Australia's largest – which can seat 2,000 pax and cater to 3,500 pax for cocktail receptions. Located on the top floor, this ballroom will allow guests to immerse in the spectacular water and city views.

The exhibition halls in ICC Sydney stretches over two floors to provide an impressive 32,600m² space, making it Australia's largest exhibition space.

Another highlight at the centre is the red carpet theatre, which has a 8,000-pax seating capacity and is suitable for major convention plenary sessions and international entertainment acts, scalable for plenaries of 6,000, 5,000 and 3,500 pax.

"These offerings are highlighted by our waterfront location in the heart of the city, our own activated precinct which provides delegates with the ability to really connect with the local community," added Donaghy.

Viewpoints

How will you grow your MICE business out of China in 2015?



We will raise the profile of Australia among the Chinese by participating in more tradeshows because there is still a lack of awareness about what

they can do in Australia. We will work together with more attractions in Australia as well so we can join our forces to promote the destination better.

Rebecca Yan

Account manager, corporate meetings & events, Destination Asia (China)

Need to know



Hunter Valley welcomes new events centre

Crowne Plaza Hunter Valley has opened its doors to present the largest conference and exhibition facilities in the Hunter Valley region. This new space offers 2,000m² of pre-function, meeting and exhibition space, with two conference rooms that can be combined to fit 1,600 guests, and eight additional meeting and event rooms.

Building upon its unique location amid vast green fields, the signature events package, Harvest Hunter, brings together interactive live cooking stations, live entertainment, acclaimed chefs, award-winning wines and local producers sharing fresh breads, cheeses, chocolates for an authentic outdoor Hunter Valley experience.

Cosy up in the Great Barrier Reef

Set in the heart of the Great Barrier Reef, ultra-luxury resort One&Only Hayman Island has reopened after a US\$80 million investment. Surrounded by natural beauty, the island introduces new suite accommodation, redesigned spaces and restaurants. The 160 rooms, which offer literally front-row views to the famed reef, are nestled amongst expansive pools, lush gardens and two kilometres of pristine white sand. Meeting spaces in the resort's entertainment centre, which overlook the stretch of tropical coastline, can fit up to 300 delegates.

New waterfront function space opens in Perth

Perth's Old Port Waterfront has welcomed the opening of Aqua Bar, a multi-purpose venue for business events with a lounge, upper deck and terrace overlooking the Swan River and Perth skyline.

With the ability to accommodate up to 250 guests, Aqua Bar specialises in providing à la carte dining and cocktail functions for business groups visiting Western Australia's capital city.

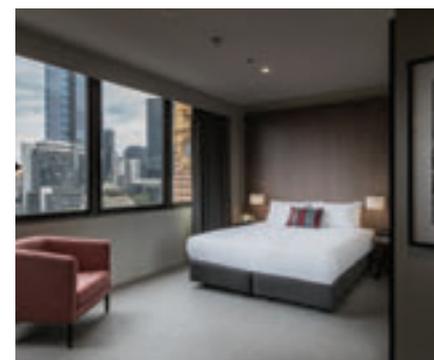
DoubleTree by Hilton debuts in Melbourne

DoubleTree by Hilton Melbourne made its debut last December in the heart of the city, following a comprehensive refurbishment as the former Citigate Melbourne.

Located opposite the iconic Flinders Street Station, facilities at the 180-key hotel include two meeting rooms that can accommodate up to 140 pax, a fitness centre, a business centre, a lobby bar and a restaurant.

Meeting in the park

Cairns' award-winning Ochre Restaurant and Catering is now offering a new offsite venue at the city's Botanic Gardens. With exclusive use of the gardens, the extensive lawn area can accommodate up to 500 guests for welcome functions and dinners.



More reasons to choose Macau

Local MICE specialists expect a decent year ahead, aided by the development of more non-gaming attractions and experiences as well as improved transportation infrastructure, writes **Prudence Lui**



Macau's MICE industry did well in 2014, with figures showing a four per cent growth in meetings and conferences (968 events in all), and a 21 per cent rise in exhibitions (87 in all). In all, the destination hosted 1,055 MICE events, 130 of which had at least 200 delegates.

In terms of MICE arrivals, Macau welcomed 120,000 people who came for meetings and conferences.

Sharing details on inbound Chinese incentive performance, the Macau Government Tourist Office (MGTO) told the *Daily* that nine groups from the mainland had sought support through the Incentive Travel Stimulation Program in 2014. These groups brought 19,793 delegates to Macau, and they spent an average of 4.3 days in the destination.

According to an MGTO spokesperson, the number of Chinese incentive groups that came in 2014 was almost

half of 2013's. Despite the dip, mainland incentive arrivals did well, as groups that came were larger in size.

A notable mainland incentive win for Macau was the 6,400-pax Nu Skin gathering.

"Also, the average length of stay (by mainland incentive visitors) increased 26.2 per cent," revealed the spokesperson.

Rutger Verschuren, general manager of Grand Lapa Hotel, expects to see moderate growth in MICE business from China this year. He believes that more

visitors will be drawn to Macau as they become aware of the destination's historical and non-gaming attractions.

Besides the construction of new integrated resorts that offer a wide spectrum of entertainment fit for leisure and business travellers, existing attractions such as the Macau Fisherman's Wharf are being revamped.

Much efforts have also been made in recent years to divert tourist attention to the destination's lesser-known quarters. MGTO's *Step Out, Experience Macau's Communities* programme, launched in 2013, was enhanced with four new walking routes (See *Need to know*, page 12).

However, Verschuren warned that pricey airfares for flights between China and Macau will pose a challenge.

"We're looking forward to a huge (improvement in business) once the connection from Zhuhai Airport to Macau via Hengqin is ready. That will cut the journey down to just 30 minutes, compared to the current 45-minute ferry ride. Things will get even better once the high-speed rail from the mainland connects with Macau via Hengqin," he said.

Grand Hyatt Macau general manager, Paul Kwok, also expressed concerns over the challenges posed by Macau's accessibility and visa restrictions.

Kwok said: "These factors can (make it difficult) to lure Chinese corporate groups to Macau. However, we've maintained a strong client relationship and enjoy valuable support from our Global Sales Offices in China. In 2014, we had several large corporate groups from China, each with 100-200 pax, staying for two to three nights."

Brendon Elliott, vice president of sales and resort marketing at Venetian Macau, is optimistic of better business ahead due to several tourism developments undertaken by the government.

"There are a number of factors – some of which are already in development – that could positively impact the industry. For example, issuing a dedicated MICE visa to Macau and the ability to apply for this visa online without (requiring applicants) to (return) to their home province. Other examples include developing more attractions, different types of entertainment, and special passages for MICE groups at border crossings, including the airport."

Meanwhile, Elliott shared that his property had seen "great performance" in China's direct marketing sector in 2014. Venetian Macau went on to have a good start to the new year when it welcomed a 20,000-pax convention in February, led by a direct marketing company from the mainland.

Viewpoints

How will you grow your MICE business out of China in 2015?



In terms of marketing, we will continue to join the Macau Government Tourist Office in overseas MICE trade shows. Operation-wise, we will improve services by rolling out point-to-point transfers. Our new Premier Plus Shuttle enables Premier Grand Class passengers to pre-book free shuttle services to any destination in Macau. We've also just introduced a cross-border roundtrip bus service between Macau Maritime Ferry Terminal and Chime-long Theme Park on China's Hengqin Island.

Alcuin Li
Director of commercial division,
Shun Tak – China Travel Ship Management Limited

By offering competitive products and services at the best (prices). We will not resort to price cuts to win business. Our group invests resources in selected international MICE trade shows annually, and this will continue in 2015.

Pun Cheng Man
Travel department sales and marketing manager,
China Travel Service (Macao)

Spotlight

Galaxy Macau to get bigger, better

The opening of Galaxy Macau Phase II on May 27 is expected to enhance Macau's appeal to non-gaming visitors.

The phase II development will include the world's first all-suite Ritz-Carlton Hotel and Asia's largest JW Marriott property. The former will offer 250 suites while the latter will have more than 1,000 rooms.

The new Broadway Macau, which was converted from the stand-alone Grand Waldo complex acquired by Galaxy Entertainment Group in 2013, will connect to the existing Galaxy Macau integrated resort by an air-conditioned footbridge. It will house the family-friendly 320-room Broadway Hotel and the 3,000-seat Broadway Theater.

The Grand Resort Deck will span 75,000m² and its highlight

is the Skytop Adventure Rapids, said to be the world's longest skytop aquatic adventure river ride at 575m in length.

Retail therapy is offered at The Promenade, which will be a wonderland of 200 outlets carrying high-street brands and designer labels.

The new development will also serve up a diverse array of dining options including world-class restaurants like Fook

Lam Moon, Lai Heen, and 8½ Otto e Mezzo Bombana which is helmed by three Michelin-star chef Umberto Bombana.

The new developments will also benefit business event planners, as there will be a stable of unique venues and banqueting facilities for up to 3,000 guests.

Presently, Galaxy Macau comprises three hotels – Banyan Tree Macau, Hotel Okura Macau and Galaxy Hotel.



Galaxy Macau integrated resort will have far more to offer come May 27



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行程 Itinerary

- 1 于下午5:30后进入乐园自由享受游乐设施及娱乐体验
- 2 观赏「星梦奇缘」烟花表演
- 3 于乐园三间指定主题餐厅尊享自助晚宴

- 1 Enter the park after 5:30pm to enjoy the attractions
- 2 Enjoy the "Disney in the Stars" Fireworks
- 3 Exclusive dinner buffet at one of the designated restaurants in the Park

套餐价目及详情 Package Price and Privileges

- ♥ 每位港币\$700起（另加10%服务费）
- ♥ 餐厅场地费用港币\$15,000
- ♥ 于乐园内其中一间指定主题餐厅享用自助晚宴
- ♥ 香港迪士尼乐园专用门票，每位一张（可于活动当日下午5:30后进入乐园）

- ♥ Starting from HK\$700 per person (plus 10% service charge)
- ♥ Restaurant venue rental fee of HK\$15,000
- ♥ Dinner buffet at one of the designated restaurant in the Park
- ♥ One Special Ticket to Hong Kong Disneyland per event participant (admission after 5:30pm on the day of event)

宴会场地选择 Choices of Venue

探险世界 - 河景餐厅
River View Café at Adventureland
容纳人数 Capacity : 80-140人 persons

迷离庄园 - 大冒险家餐厅
Explorer's Club Restaurant at Mystic Point
容纳人数 Capacity : 150-300人 persons

皇室宴会厅 - 幻想世界
Royal Banquet Hall at Fantasyland
容纳人数 Capacity : 200-650人 persons

以上套餐之最少参与人数由80人起。有效期至2015年9月30日，并受有关条款及细则约束。Minimum charge applies to the above Package, starting from 80 persons. The above Package is valid until September 30, 2015 and subject to terms and conditions.

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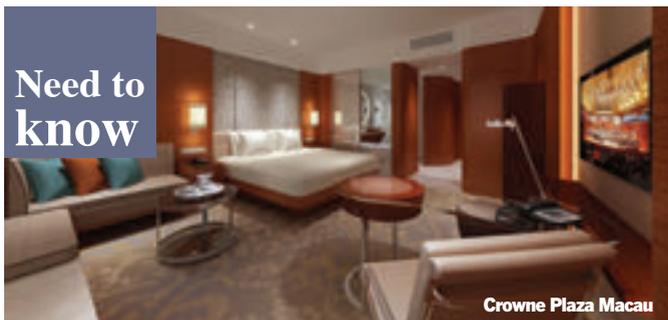
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Need to know



Crowne Plaza Macau

New hotels on the block

The 444-room Harbourview Hotel opened on February 11, becoming the first new hotel to go into business in the revamped Macau Fisherman's Wharf. Positioned as a four-star hotel modelled after 18th century architecture in Prague, facilities within Harbourview Hotel include bars, restaurants, a health club and retail spaces. Legend Palace Hotel and Legendale Hotel will join Harbourview Hotel when redevelopment of the attraction is completed in 3Q2016.

Meanwhile, the 208-room Crowne Plaza Macau at Areia Preta (Hac Sa Wan) is due to open in late 2Q2015. All rooms boast a seaview and overlook Zhuhai and the South China Sea.

Four more walking tour itineraries launched

The *Step Out, Experience Macau's Communities* programme has recently expanded with four more walking tour routes.

Distributed in various less-frequented districts of Macau, the new itineraries invite tourists to experience a different side of Macau.

Attractions and landmarks featured in the new routes include the Parish of the Nossa Senhora de Fátima, the Parish of the Santo António, the Parish of the Nossa Senhora do Carmo and the Parish of São Francisco Xavier.

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Buy one room, get one free at Conrad Macao

Conrad Macao, Cotai Central is offering event and meeting planners, who are also Hilton HHonors members, the opportunity to buy one room and get one room free for all new events contracted by April 30, 2015 and held between April 1 and August 31, 2015.

The offer is only available for stays of a minimum of two nights, with a minimum booking of 10 rooms.

The promotion also offers planners complimentary Wi-Fi for both rooms and meeting spaces, and Hilton HHonors Event Planner Points.

For more information contact the hotel at Conrad.macao.sales@conradhotels.com.

Three dimensional delights

Ponte 16 Macao 3D Museum will be the destination's first large-scale 3D museum when it opens in mid-2015.

The 1,500m² museum will feature more than 150 photography points in six theme zones, offering visitors a chance to pose for interesting photographs with various exhibits and 3D paintings. Sensory elements such as lighting effects, analog sounds and props will up the fun factor.



More integrated attractions

Studio City, designed as a cinematically-themed gaming, entertainment and leisure destination resort, is set to open in the middle of this year.

Besides boasting a gaming venue with 500 tables, the integrated resort promises to entice travellers with movie-inspired attractions such as the Batman Dark Flight digital ride and the 130m high Golden Eye ferris wheel. The House of Magic will stage live magic shows by world-renowned magicians.

Other facilities include a 300-seat live-audience TV broadcast studio, Pacha Nightclub, 2,800m² of retail facilities, and over 30 F&B venues.

Studio City is the second integrated resort in Macau by Melco Crown Entertainment.



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Sikh gurdwara Golden Temple (Harmandir Sahib). Amritsar, Punjab, India

Keener interest from China

Further growth in Chinese MICE numbers may hinge on whether a new e-visa facility is offered to Chinese travellers. By **Rohit Kaul**

Trade players in India have observed a surge in MICE arrivals from China, with exhibitions and meetings fuelling the growth.

Prasant Saha, chairman of CIM Global, told the *Daily*: “(Chinese arrivals) is much better than what it used to be two years back. (CIM Global) recorded a 20 per cent growth out of China in 2014.”

CIM Global recently received 100 Chinese attendees for an engineering event, and is now organising a lighting exhibition in Kolkata this November. Half of the exhibitors at this lighting show will hail from China.

According to sources, Chinese business travellers often attended trade events related to engineering, mining, pharma-

ceutical, machinery and textile. Some of these events included CPhI India Pharma Expo, bC India, India Engineering Sourcing Show and India International Trade Fair.

“There are no (official) statistics (on inbound MICE),” said Subhash Goyal, chairman of STIC Travel Group. “But China is a growing market for India and I expect 2014 to have a 12 per cent increase in overall Chinese arrivals although official figures are not yet released.

“Chinese corporate groups, especially those that have business partnerships in India, have started to come,” he added.

However, India’s stringent visa regime and a lack of focused marketing in China and Mandarin-speaking tour guides are retarding the growth of Chinese MICE business in the destination.

Competition from other Asian destinations hungry for Chinese MICE groups is yet another obstacle in India’s courtship of the Chinese market.

“Higher airfares on account of limited seats to Indian cities further discourage Chinese travellers from visiting India,” said Prashant Narayan, COO and head of Leisure Travel Inbound Business, Thomas Cook India.

Trade players are now keeping their fingers crossed that China will be one of the beneficiaries of a proposed e-visa scheme.

Lalit Panwar, tourism secretary of India, told the *Daily*: “China is one of the six countries that have been recommended by the ministry to the department of home affairs for the issuance of e-visa facility.”

CIM Global’s Saha commented: “(The availability of e-visa) to China will be a game changer. A Chinese cosmetics company, which takes a large incentive group to a new destination every year, is considering India but it is waiting for this e-visa scheme to be in place before deciding.”

India’s MICE players are hopeful that the Chinese market will continue to grow in 2015.

“Our internal research and analysis teams (have projected) an approximate increase of 20 per cent in inbound numbers from China in the coming season,” said Narayan.

Goyal, too, expects a rise in Chinese arrivals, pointing out that competitive fares offered by domestic Indian airlines will make post-show tours within India more affordable for corporate groups.

Viewpoints

How will you grow your MICE business out of China in 2015?

Our Delhi office has a few Mandarin-speaking employees who are able to deal with Chinese enquiries and Chinese clients visiting India. We have also appointed a partner in China who markets us to the Chinese B2B community.

Ashwani Kakkar

Executive vice chairman, Mercury Travels



We plan to participate in MICE fairs in China and engage with local partners regularly to educate them on what Odisha

has to offer, especially its Buddhist sites. Also, we are looking to train our staff in Chinese language so that we are in a better position to serve Chinese clients.

Ranjan Kumar Mishra

Managing director, Eastern Voyage

Spotlight

Water adventures at Adlabs Aquamagica



Adlabs Aquamagica

Corporate groups visiting India now have a new fun option for pre-/post-show extensions.

Adlabs Aquamagica, positioned as India’s first international standard waterpark, opened in 2014. Located conveniently off the Mumbai-Pune Express Highway, the attraction takes on a Mykonos theme and promises an exciting day of fun on various water-based rides. Fourteen water slides and wavepools are featured along with a host of water-based entertainment and facilities.

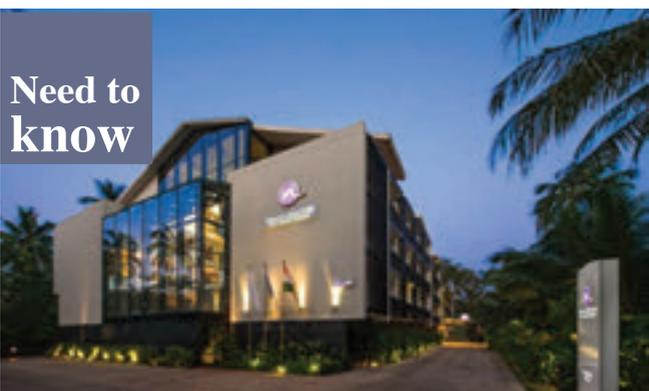
Dining options are aplenty too, such as the American diner Red Bonnet Express and the creperie and waffle specialist Blue Stone Café.

Beyond plain water fun, visitors can also look forward to year-long performances by popular Indian and international artistes and DJs.

Kapil Bagla, CEO of Adlabs Entertainment, describes the new attraction as “one of a kind” in India.

“For all those who are looking for adrenaline-pumping rides, and a great day of food and awesome music, Adlabs Aquamagica is definitely the place to be,” he said.

As Adlabs Aquamagica is located next to Adlabs Imagica theme park, visitors can combine both attractions to have more than a day of fun.



Need to know

Relaxing option for corporate getaways

Nestled in the serene countryside, the upscale Grand Mercure Goa Shrem Resort is designed to offer a relaxing hideaway for both leisure and business travellers. There are 121 room and suites, and facilities include 16 meeting rooms, two restaurants, two bars and a 10-room spa.

Boutique resort welcomes event groups

The new Acron Waterfront Resort offers 29 plush rooms that come with stunning views of the Baga River and the Arabian Sea.

Facilities include The River Restaurant, a jetty where boats may be hired, an infinity pool and a spa.

Resort staff can help plan special events and watersport activities.

Bottoms up!

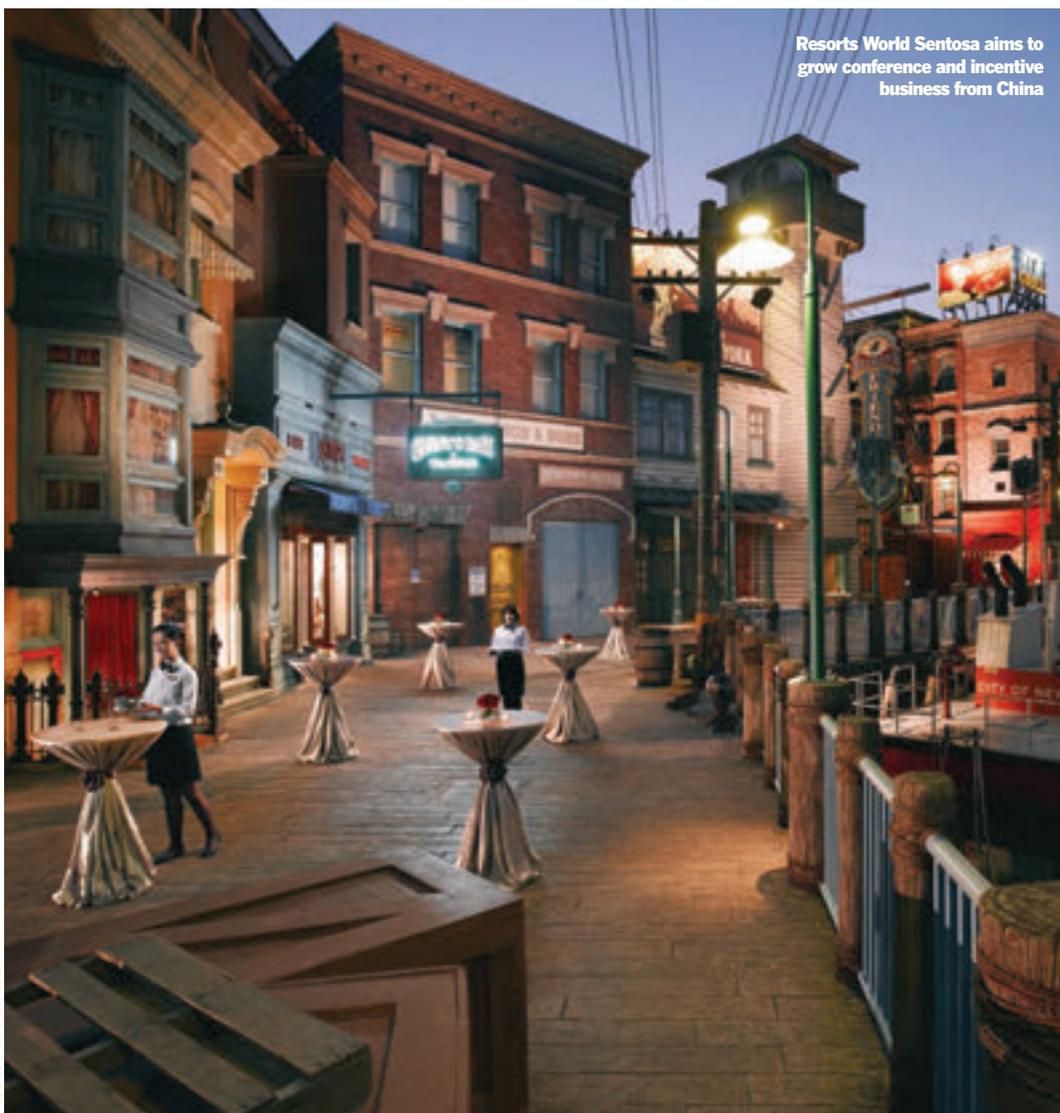
The aptly named Bottoms Up gastropub was launched recently in the Punjabi Bagh region of Delhi. It can seat 150 pax and specialises in Western pub grub that is given a local spin. Hits on the menu include Goan shrimp curry, mac and cheese lamb kofta and spicy pork chorizo.



Holiday Inn Express opens in Hyderabad

The third Holiday Inn Express in India has opened in the IT and financial district of Hyderabad.

The 232-key Holiday Inn Express & Suites Hyderabad Gachibowli makes a convenient accommodation option for people attending events at the HITEX Exhibition Centre. Three meeting rooms are available for hire, with the largest being able to host 49-pax in cabaret style.



Resorts World Sentosa aims to grow conference and incentive business from China

Resorts World Sentosa

Lion City intensifies MICE promotions

STB to target second-tier Chinese cities in destination marketing to combat slowdown in arrivals. By **Paige Lee**

Overall Chinese arrivals to Singapore from January to November last year recorded a dramatic year-on-year dip of 25.7 per cent, according to Singapore Tourism Board's (STB) latest statistics.

While STB does not track MICE arrivals by source countries, some local players have indicated a slowdown in business from Chinese corporate groups.

Jaclyn Yeoh, director of Siam Express, told the *Daily* that the Chinese MICE market performed "much weaker" in 2014 due to China's new tourism law against zero-fare tours.

Yeoh said: "Singapore as a mono destination is failing to appeal to Chinese corporate groups since we are expensive and are (already) similar to other Chinese cities in terms of hardware. Our competitive advantage (from being able to converse in Mandarin) is also waning as many other destinations worldwide already employ

Mandarin-speaking staff."

Defending Singapore's continued appeal to the Chinese market, Christine Choo, assistant vice president of resort sales of Resorts World Sentosa (RWS), said: "There are other factors that attract Chinese clients

(such as) our similar cultures."

Choo pointed out that China remains one of RWS' key source markets.

"We (still) see great potential from China in terms of MICE events, as we aim to attract

more conference and incentive groups. Our clients from China can accomplish more right here on this one-stop-shop property that caters for work in the day and leisure activities and networking opportunities in the evenings."

Major events held last year at the integrated resort include a 750-pax conference for Chrysler China dealers and a 900-pax international gathering organised by Chengdu Swan.

The Lion City also welcomed

Chinese delegates to the three-day Singapore-China (Ningbo) Import and Export Fair, held at Suntec Singapore International Convention and Exhibition Centre. According to the venue's spokesperson, Marc Bakker, the event was the single significant Chinese event for Suntec Singapore in 2014.

To reverse the downward trend of Chinese arrivals, STB will be intensifying promotions in China this year.

Assistant chief executive Lawrence Leong said the board will step up marketing efforts in tier-two Chinese cities.

"We have identified seven cities - Tianjin, Nanjing, Qingdao, Xiamen, Fuzhou, Chongqing and Wuhan - to reach out to more effectively. For instance, we will be doing roadshows and partnering the local trade by bringing them to Singapore on fam trips," Leong elaborated.

Social media promotion will be one of the key approaches as well, with new digital partnerships being forged with Baidu, Alibaba and Tencent Group "to widen our audience reach in China", he revealed.



Leong: intensified reach

Spotlight

Artistic institutions welcome corporate hire

Singapore's flourishing creative scene has led to a mushrooming of new and improved homes for the arts, giving business event planners a wider choice of beautiful unique venues.

The most prominent development is the National Gallery Singapore which will open this November. Occupying the former Supreme Court and City Hall, buildings that are steeped in history, the National Gallery Singapore will house 19th- and 20th-century art pieces from Singapore and South-east Asia. Facilities include an auditorium, a performance venue, a children's gallery and cafés.

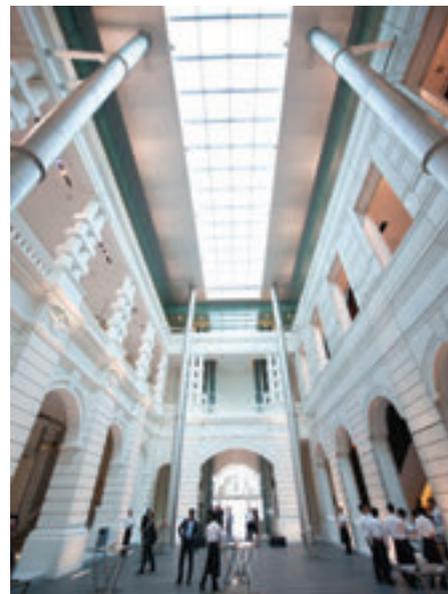
It will also offer two unique event spaces for corporate gatherings, one of them being a rooftop plaza with majestic views of the Padang and Marina Bay Sands. The other space can host a 300-pax standing reception.

Opening also this year is the Singapore branch of the famous Pinacothèque de Paris museum. Slated to welcome visitors in May, the 5,500m² attraction will have spaces for private rental. Event organisers can also work with Pinacothèque de Paris to come up with customised tours of exhibitions and unique entertainment opportunities.

Pinacothèque de Paris is positioned as a premier venue of cultural activities and educational events, and will feature retail

and F&B outlets.

While the National Gallery Singapore and Pinacothèque de Paris continue their construction in earnest, event planners seeking unique art inspired venues can already take their events to the Victoria Theatre and Concert Hall. The grand dame of Singapore's performing arts scene and a beloved national monument opened in July 2014 following



Victoria Theatre and Concert Hall

a S\$158 million (US\$127.1 million) refurbishment.

First launched in 1862, the refreshed Victoria Theatre and Concert Hall now offers new public spaces, changing rooms, a loading bay and a central atrium as an additional area for activities.

Since last July, the venue has played host to several events including the Singapore International Festival of Arts.

Viewpoints

How will you grow your MICE business out of China in 2015?



Edmund Chu
General Manager, Lex Travel

Singapore is not a cheap destination, thus the only way for cost-conscious Chinese clients to accept Singapore as a value-for-money destination will be through viable value propositions. By that I believe we can promote Singapore by incorporating quality uniquely Singapore experiences, and emphasising on comfort and safety - which money cannot buy.



Jaclyn Yeoh
Director, Siam Express

We should improve not just the linguistic capability of Mandarin-speaking service staff, but also their cultural awareness. We should also consider increasing the prominence of Chinese-language notices everywhere.

Need to know



Catch the classic Swan Lake

The internationally acclaimed St Petersburg Ballet comes to Singapore for the first time in May 2015 to present its full-length classic production of Tchaikovsky's Swan Lake. This 55-member company promises to thrill the audience with breathtaking scenery and magnificent costumes. It plays at the Marina Bay Sands MasterCard Theatres from May 28 to 31. Ticket prices from S\$55.

A top option for entertaining business partners

Located at the 43rd storey of Ocean Financial Centre – 240m above the ground and on the topmost floor, Italian restaurant Zafferano makes a memorable venue for corporate gatherings. It specialises in modernised classic Italian dishes and stocks an extensive range of wines by the glass. Zafferano can be hired entirely for exclusive events with up to 150 guests. For smaller cocktail parties, the open-air rooftop terrace is a delightful venue as it affords guests panoramic views of the island. Email events@zafferano.sg for enquires.

Leonardo da Vinci arrives in Singapore

Original masterpieces from Leonardo da Vinci are making their South-east Asian debut at the ArtScience Museum at Marina Bay Sands.

The exhibition presents 26 original pages of the Codex Atlanticus, da Vinci's largest notebook, which collects some of his most important drawings and writings. It also features six original paintings from the School of Leonardo.

The exhibition will end its run in May 2015.

New stay in the west

Slated to open in the first half of 2015, Genting Singapore will be the first hotel to open in Jurong Lake district, in the western part of Singapore.

Taking on a "hotel in a garden" theme, the 550-key property offers guests a stay amid beautiful landscapes and greenery as well as roof gardens and sky terraces.

Facilities include an all-day dining restaurant, a 24-hour deli, a swimming pool, a gym, a launderette, meeting rooms and a ballroom.

Zip down the waterfront on a Segway

Singapore's beautiful Marina Bay waterfront can now be enjoyed atop a Segway. Starting from the Marina Bay City Gallery, the two-hour tour takes visitors around sights like the Marina Bay Promontory, the Marina Bay Sands and the ArtScience Museum. Prices from S\$68 (US\$49) for the trip, which runs from Tuesdays to Sundays, 10.00 to 19.00. Visit www.segwaytours.com.sg/tours/marina-bay-signature for more details.



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Sichuan 四川优化会展业发展空间 建立开放平台

■张广文=采访报道

据四川博览事务局指出,为进一步迈向做大做强的目标,四川会展将于2015年从三方面持续推进,也就是加快会展业转型升级步伐、优化会展业发展空间布局,以及积极培育会展市场主体。

其中,加快会展业转型升级步伐方面,当前首要任务是要主动对接和适应经济新常态,促进四川省会展业,特别是政府性展会的转型升级发展。另一方面,由于加快市场化转型是今后发展的必然趋势,因此,要对西博会及全省其他政府主导型展会,不断加大其市场化运作力度。

另外,要实现转型升级,重点必须先推出三个服务:

- 一、确定服务开放大局,着力打造会展开放平台;
- 二、促进服务产业发展,着力

推动产业转型升级;

三、推动服务市场繁荣,着力拉动消费需求。

就优化会展业发展空间布局而言,目前四川省的会展业发展形势明显展示着不平衡的现象;

2013年成都市举办展览会的数量和面积分别是其他市州总和的1.3倍和3.7倍。2014年成都市举办重大展会活动530个,实现增加值超过310亿元,占该市服务业增加值比重约6%,对区域经济拉动效应明显,拉动率达到1:8。

虽然2014年,四川省多个市州会展业崛起,不平衡的情况有一定好转,但是要加快会展业发展、适应经济发展新常态、促进四川省经济平衡协调发展,重点要深入贯彻落实省委多点多极支撑发展战略部署,以成都市为龙头,着力优化会展城市布局;以西博会为龙头,着力优化会展品牌



布局;以中国西部国际博览城为龙头,着力优化会展场馆布局,积极培育次级会展城市,打造特色品牌展会,强化会展基础设施建设。

从积极培育会展市场主体来看,新型产业、服务业、小微企业的作用将更加凸显,市场竞争逐步向品质型和差异化转变,是经济新常态下的特徵。会展业也必须走品质型和差异化发展道路,同时,企业是市场的主体,也是竞争的主体,培育四川省展会核心竞争力,首先要培育出有核心竞争力的会展企业。目前四川省仅有会展企业200多家,数量少、

规模小、核心竞争力弱。

此外,陕西、广西、青海、重庆等省市均已出台了配套的会展政策,对会展企业和参展企业给予大力扶持。去年10月,重庆市工商局和财政局还联合发布了《重庆市微型企业会展补助申报工作暂行办法》。而四川省尚无完善的会展业发展配套政策,目前四川博览事务局正在著手起草《四川省会展业发展指导意见》,待这个宏观性档出台以后,还将与相关部门一道,研究制定相关配套档,为四川省会展业发展提供必要的政策支持。

四川博览事务局局长郑莉表示,2015年,四川将深入贯彻落实省委经济工作会议和全省两会精神,紧紧抓住新一轮西部大开发和「一带一路」、长江经济带建设等战略机遇,围绕省委省政府深化开放合作、发展五大高端

成长型产业和五大新兴先导型服务业的战略部署,牢固树立「对内靠改革、对外靠开放」的理念,推动高水平、高端化对外开放合作。

且积极组团参加2015德国汉诺威消费电子、资讯及通讯技术展览会,引进第八届中国国际中小企业交易会等品牌会展活动,承办好以省政府名义组团参加的政府性展会活动。

一名四川旅行社业者表示,四川会展目前仍以成都和重庆为主,虽然很多地方都有发展潜力,但是受到场地、人才和旅游配套的限制,难以成气候。未来期望更多政府单位能够重视会展业对于经济所能带来的巨大贡献,进而积极打造属于自己当地特色的展会;或根据当地产业,引进国际性大型活动,挖掘更多适合会展成长的新兴目的地。



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【电子邮件地址】businesses@tcvb.or.jp
* 优惠服务的适用条件:申请时还未决定活动举办地但最终举办地定为东京,且在东京的总入住天数(住宿人数×天数)超过100晚的团体游。

Tokyo Convention & Visitors Bureau
Various attractions and experience programs, welcome services at Haneda and Narita airports, and giveaways will be provided.* Contact the following for details.
【email address】businesses@tcvb.or.jp
* These benefits apply to overseas groups visiting a destination yet to be decided at the time of application, and who, after the destination has been decided, will comprise at least 100 nights accommodation.



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在福冈市入住时间超过1晚的旅游团体可享受以下优惠服务:以优惠价格参加地方性文艺的介绍活动*1、机场或港口的欢迎仪式*2、免费获取观光地图册等。详情请向以下电子邮件地址发送邮件咨询。
【电子邮件地址】chou@welcome-fukuoka.or.jp
* 1 200人以上的团体免费。* 2 原则上以100人以上的团体为对象。

Fukuoka Convention & Visitors Bureau
Discount tickets to traditional local performing arts and entertainment*1, a welcome ceremony at the airport or port*2, and a tourist guidebook will be provided for tour groups staying a minimum of 1 night in Fukuoka City. Contact the following for details.
【email address】chou@welcome-fukuoka.or.jp
* 1 This will be provided free of charge for tour groups comprising at least 200 participants.
* 2 In principle, this applies to groups of over 100 participants.

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【电子邮件地址】convention@plaza-sapporo.or.jp

Sapporo Convention Bureau
A party featuring an attraction or a welcome service at the airport or hotel will be provided for tour groups with a minimum of 200 nights accommodation. Contact the following for details.
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*以入住日期为准。

KIRORO ASSOCIATES
Until March 31, 2016, guests staying at the resort can bathe in the Kiroro Hot Spring for free (once only). Contact the following for details.
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* This free access applies to the check-in date only.



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【电子邮件地址】fukunari130192@mb.knt.co.jp

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East Asia

中日韩三国扩大旅游交流

根据日前《第七届中日韩旅游部长会议联合声明》，三国旅游部长认为，今后三国在亚洲乃至全球旅游领域中所发挥的作用会越来越重要，三国深化旅游合作将对东亚地区社会经济与和平发展起到极大的促进作用。三国旅游部长就进一步扩大三国旅游交流，达成了一致意见。而此良好的旅游合作基础，势将为三国的会奖旅游发展带来新契机。

签字仪式暨新闻发布会在日本东京举行。国家旅游局局长李金早、日本国土交通大臣太田昭宏、韩国文化体育观光部长官金鍾德出席，并签署发表了《第七届中日韩旅游部长会议联合声明》。

一、提升人员往来便利化，迎

接中日韩旅游交流新时代

三国间的人员交流规模已由2006年首届部长会议举办时的1,384万人次增加到2014年的2,047万人次，增长了1.5倍，首次突破2,000万人次。三国将共同努力，争取到2020年实现3,000万人次的互访目标。

为达成此目标，三国将促进航空和邮轮航线的扩充、各国国内交通的便利化，并利用互联网、优化信用卡结算环境等，为游客提供更加便捷的旅行环境，推动人员交流规模的扩大。

此外，为进一步扩大三国旅游交流，将「双向交流」、「地域·地方交流」、「文化、体育、青少年交流」三个方面作为重点，推进

三国间的政府和业界合作三国旅游部门将与旅游业界密切合作，加强工作磋商，努力实现包括：

1. 结合姊妹城市、友好城市之间交流，开展旅游合作。
2. 结合节庆、传统艺术、世界遗产等文化历史交流，开展旅游合作和联合宣传推广。
3. 以国际性体育赛事为契机，扩大旅游交流和联合宣传推广。
4. 继续办好中日韩教育旅游研讨会。
5. 推进智慧旅游合作。
6. 加强旅游教育、旅游研究机构之间的合作。
7. 共同培养旅游人才。
8. 三国共用旅游市场动向及统计信息。

9. 加强与中日韩三国秘书处的合作等。

二、开展联合推广，推进「游历东方」活动

以开创中日韩旅游交流新时代的大幕为契机，三国作为共同旅游目的地，吸引东亚地区之外游客，开展游历东方活动（Visit East Asia Campaign）。

1. 三国旅游部门将加强各自驻欧美等地区办事处之间的合作，共用旅游资讯，研究针对共同客源层的宣传推广内容。

2. 三国联合制作宣传海报、宣传手册等，联合参加在欧美等地举行的大型旅游展会，举办面向业界的洽谈会、面向公众的展示活动，联合开展宣传推广工作。

3. 三国旅游企业联合开发、销售经典旅游线路和产品。

三国旅游部门将共同努力，推动改善东亚区域内外互联互通环境，强化与旅游业界的合

作，有效利用航空及邮轮运力，促进区域内一程多站式旅游产品的开发。

三、三国强化监管，提升旅游交流品质

三国旅游部门加强合作，努力提升旅游交流品质和游客满意度，努力消除由于商业习惯和游客生活习惯不同而造成的负面影响，解决旅游纠纷，在面对公共危机事件时相互配合，确保安全，共同提升旅游安全保障水准。

自2011年5月举办第六届会议以来，亚洲旅游在全球旅游领域中的地位显著提升。2011年7月，国际奥委会决定将于2018年2~3月在韩国平昌举办冬季奥运会和残奥会。2013年9月，国际奥委会决定将于2020年7~9月在日本东京举办夏季奥运会和残奥会。作为世界旅游目的地，亚洲正迎来全面展示旅游魅力的绝好机遇。

Las Vegas

拉斯维加斯年接待游客超过4千万

■刘霏芯=采访报道

根据拉斯维加斯会展及观光局发布的2014年终统计报告，拉斯维加斯2014年接待超过4,110万来自世界各地的游客，创历史新高，且比之前2012年3,970万的纪录还超出了约140万人；其中的520万为商务会展游客。

根据拉斯维加斯会展及观光局发布的2014年终统计报告，拉斯维加斯旅游业复苏加快，所有旅游业关键指标全面增长。2014年旅游业为拉斯维加斯带来超

过450亿美元的经济效益，扶持了当地376,000个工作岗位。

拉斯维加斯会展及观光局总裁兼首席执行官罗西·瑞内考特（Rossi Ralenkotter）表示，旅游业的发展促进当地经济繁荣，近年来的增长趋势无论是对旅游业还是当地社区的发展，都无疑是一剂强心剂。当前，拉斯维加斯有超过90亿美元的新建旅游项目和开发计划项目，未来几年将朝着下一个目标—突破4,500万游客而继续努力。

此外，拉斯维加斯会展及观光局大中华区推广总监彭胜荣先生也表示，美国签证新政实施正逢其时，去年中国赴美游客增速位列第一，预计到2018年，中国将成为美国第一大入境游客源市场。中国的游客和商务人士是消费能力最强的群体，赴美签证有效期的延长，将真正减少中美互联互通的阻碍，赴美商务旅游也将更加便捷。

拉斯维加斯拥有1,080万平方英尺的会展场地和21.9万会展

服务人员，会展规模能达到15万人。2013年拉斯维加斯举办各类会展2.2万次，吸引参展人员510万人，经济收入超过80亿美元。2014年超过520万商务会展游客赴拉斯维加斯参加各类会议、世界顶级商贸展会，同比增加了1.2%。

自2008年以来，商务会展游客接待人数和会议出席率达到历史最高。2014年拉斯维加斯的入住率平均入住率增长2.4%，达86.8%，较其全国平均64.1%还高

出22%。目前拉斯维加斯拥有共计15万余间客房。

在美国，拉斯维加斯被誉为是一座永远没有重复的城市，因为它从来没有停止为游客带来惊喜，这座城市时刻都在变化中。

据介绍，2014年新开的酒店包括Stockbridge & SBE集团的SLS奢华酒店（新增1,622间客房）、凯撒娱乐集团的The Cromwell精品酒店（新增188间客房）和The LINQ酒店（新增2,235间客房）。同时还吸引了Ciel SPA中心、The Sayers Club夜店和The Bazaar餐厅等入驻，都是为了游客在一天的旅程或商务会谈后，彻底放松身心。

Malaysia

■张广文=采访报道

马来西亚推荐五大会展城市

日前，马来西亚会展局在中国北京、上海、广州和成都，举办了针对旅游同行的「马来西亚2014中国商务旅游推广巡回展」，并推荐其五大会展城市，包括：沙巴、砂拉越、吉隆坡、檳城、兰卡威。

马来西亚会展局商务活动总经理何玉萍表示，这次由17家代表团组成的巡回展中，沙巴旅游局和砂拉越会议局也一併出席，连同其他15家地接酒店的展商，一起推荐马来西亚五大目的地作为会展城市，同时也展示当

地丰富的资源，以及针对研讨会、奖励旅游、展览会议等的接待能力。其中，五大目的地包括：沙巴、砂拉越、吉隆坡、檳城、兰卡威。值得注意的是，在日前举办的「成冠国际网路2014年领导人大会」中，吸引了9个国家13,000名与会人员在吉隆坡武吉加里尔布特拉体育馆齐聚一堂，由此可见，马来西亚要接待上万人的团也都没问题。

由于「马来西亚双重优惠++」奖励政策的开展，2013年的商务旅游推广巡回展后，共吸引了超过6,000名中国业界人士到访马来西

亚，其中包括2014年8月2日来到马来西亚的「完美中国」会奖旅游团，其4,000名代表创造了价值7,520万马币的经济效益。据了解，虽然2014年的奖励旅游政策在年底就结束了，不过之后很可能会有全新的具体政策出炉。

一名广州旅行社业者表示，马来西亚天气好，游玩的项目多，很多景点在中国市场已经具有一定的知名度。企业的行程通常要有城市观光，也要有海边度假，如果比较高端的客人，还会要求传统Batik Painting体验。

Airlines

天合联盟提供PNR签转服务

去年以来天合联盟积极推动PNR SERVICING项目实施，旨在为旅客提供航班不正常情况下，联盟成员航空公司间的无缝隙签转服务，该项目第一阶段已于今年2月10日起在东航、南航、厦航三家使用中航信系统的公司间先行开通。

天合联盟PNR SERVICING项目第一阶段目标为，当航班发生不正常情况导致旅客行程受影响时，东航、南航、厦航三家联盟成员公司都能相互提取联盟旅客订座记录并进行修改。这意

味着，今后当航班发生不正常情况时，东航可以在上海浦东国际机场现场柜台直接查看和提取南航、厦航旅客的订座记录并直接进行修改，最大程度地减少了航班不正常情况对于旅客行程的影响。

在天合联盟PNR SERVICING项目上线之前，如果旅客所持为南航客票，作为实际承运人之一的东航无法为旅客更改南航的订座记录，旅客需重新购票而承担经济损失，更可能引发后续的投诉。

Suzhou

苏州成立会奖旅游推广中心 打造文化会奖

■刘霏芯=采访报道

继正式加入中国会奖旅游城市联盟、成为中国会奖旅游城市联盟14个会员城市后,去年苏州旅游局旗下亦正式成立苏州会奖旅游推广中心,未来将逐步完善策划及打造中国独有的「苏式」会议高端旅游品牌。

苏州会奖旅游发展有限公司会奖运营部总监王张荣表示,作为一座2,500年古城,苏州集中了古典园林、水乡古镇、古寺名刹等众多名胜古迹。得天独厚的自然、科技、社会景观完美结合,使苏州市的旅游区位优势突出。

近年,苏州市依靠优势旅游资源,加上从上海到苏州高铁仅半小时、开车也仅需一小时的高便利性,吸引不少游客前往,

但游客多半选择当天往返,鉴于此,苏州旅游局发现,如要进一步提升旅游收益,就必须往会议及会奖旅游方面延伸发展,进而成立苏州会奖旅游推广中心。

他进一步表示,未来苏州发展会奖旅游产品,除了要往高端品牌推进外,还要突显「文化」两字,从文化上做文章。因此,大苏州会奖产品具备四大特色:

第一, 园林会议。

比如私享拙政园,每天清晨拙政园只接待16人,置身于500百年前的苏州古典园林享用苏式早餐;另外,也可在留园安排户外会议活动,穿行于古代大户人家的日常生活场景之中,再安排评弹、舞蹈和插花等专场活动;或者选择夜游网师园。在古典园林里

欣赏昆曲、评弹等世界非物质文化遗产妙趣,也适合举办50人以下小型品牌发布活动;也可安排在虎丘,进行制作苏式盆景等活动,或者入住园林式酒店,如平江府书香。

第二, 湖畔会奖产品。

以金鸡湖为主要发展区域,包括苏州鸟巢文化艺术中心里可播放电影欣赏等观影活动、也可安排在金鸡湖中的游艇甲板上办酒会,金鸡湖号和姑苏号游船都可容纳400人,金鸡湖中心还有一湖心岛可哥作为高端活动举办地;此外,整个金鸡湖畔周边陆续有国际品牌酒店进驻开业,包括香格里拉、凯悦以及W酒店等。

第三, 古城会议活动。

近两年苏州市政府斥资重新修

复古城墙,可以安排在城墙上开会或进行鸡尾酒晚会活动,再搭配一些灯光音乐效果,一些汽车和时尚品牌发布会也可安排在城墙上做最新产品发布。

第四, 雅集活动。

主要将苏式特色昆曲、评弹、十二将、十二娘、苏式刺绣等文化方面集成雅集,作为会议及奖励旅游活动之外的软性附加活动价值,地道呈现在苏州举办活动的独特性。

目前市旅游局与文旅集团,工业园区、太湖国家旅游度假区等合作,成立会奖旅游推广机构,主要将高星级酒店、特色景区、文化娱乐等打包成会奖旅游产品,开展整合营销;此外,旅游部门还与园林部门联手,以网师园、留园等为平台,打造园林会

议品牌。

2014姑苏杯旅游商品研发设计大赛的举行,则促进了文化、商贸与旅游产业的深度融合,推出了一批苏州有礼特色旅游商品。

王张荣也表示,中国旅游资源如此丰富,许多旅游城市也都竞相发展会奖旅游,但城市竞争力在哪?绝非单靠政府提供会奖优惠政策就可取得成效,而是城市是否提供独特的旅游会奖产品及资源。

未来苏州将根据市场需求和特点,不断开发出特色化、针对性旅游产品,并积极在各大高端及会奖旅游专业展推广,吸引更多赴苏旅游和进行商务洽谈活动。

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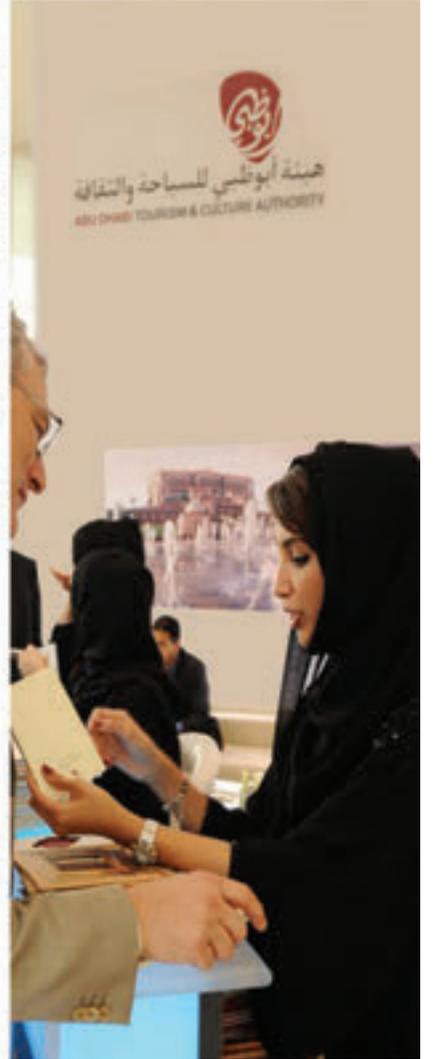
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