

TTW Asia

Volume: 8, Issue: February 2019

Central Highlands of

Sri Lanka





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Dear Readers,

February marks the major event in Asia - Chinese New Year. In 2019, it is celebrated on Tuesday, 5 February as Year of Pig. Pig animal falls in the Water group as per the Chinese Five Element theory. It symbolizes wisdom, energy and enterprise. Our Cover Story captures the spirit of Chinese New Year in its entirety. The celebration spans from Jan. 21 to March. 1. As per Lian Weiliang, deputy director of National Development and Reform Commission 2.99 billion trips will be made over the Chunyun period.

Our Destination Diary features the highest peak of the Wuling Mountains in south western China, The Fanjingshan or Mount Fanjing. This Brahma's Pure Land has been included in the UNESCO's World Heritage List in 2018. We highlight what made it to the esteemed list.

In this edition our Meetings Point is ensconced in the middle of western Taiwan - Taichung. It had hosted one of MICE industry's leading events - The Asian MICE Forum. With hi-tech meeting spaces, myriad accommodations and an international airport, Taichung is attracting event organisers across the world.

Our Special Feature Central Highlands of Sri Lanka is a World Heritage Site presenting exuberance of diversity across three areas - the Knuckles Conservation Forest, the Peak Wilderness Protected Area and the Horton Plains National Park.

You would love to include these in your bucket list.

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For many business tourists, Taichung is the highlight of Southeast Asia trip as the city prospers with best convention centres and exhibition halls.

Taichung holds a majority of industry sectors of Taiwan. It is

where the smart-city technology is shining. Automated production lines, precision machinery and motion-sensing technology are used widely across Taiwan, especially in Taichung. Touched by both European and Asian cultures,

Taichung appeals to many business tourists, especially after the implementation of Intelligent Operation Center for citywide traffic monitoring system.

Taiwan's Best Business City

Taichung



Greater Taichung International Expo Center

Greater Taichung International Expo Center is located at the centre of the city and is close to a number of public transport hubs. Mainly because of its unique location, Greater Taichung International Expo Center is considered a leading venue to organize successful events. The well-planned floors are designed to accommodate a large number of guests. As the convention centre is served by a number of transportation facilities, the centre is a preferred destination especially for anyone visiting the city for the first time.

Nearby Hotels: Hotel Hesper HSR Taichung, Taichung HSR Homestay and Hip Spa Motel are the popular hotels located near Greater Taichung International Expo Center.

*Best
Convention
Centers*



World Trade Center Taichung

As Taichung lies at the centre of the highly populated industrial belt of the west coast of Taiwan with world-class transportation facilities, World Trade Center Taichung provides upscale services to conduct trade, obtain market information, organise meetings or stage exhibitions in the city.

Nearby hotels: VIP Hotel Taichung, Howard Prince Taichung and 53 Hotel offer comfortable stay during the event.

Taichung Convention Center

Taichung Convention Center was commissioned by the government

of Taichung City and is noted as the first state-sponsored project in Taiwan. This convention centre includes offices, a hotel, retail units and exhibition and convention halls. The design employs the Eastern philosophy of a harmonized synthesis between human and nature.

Taichung City Dadun Cultural Center

Taichung City Dadun Cultural Center consists of Da Dun gallery, exhibition rooms, document room, periodical room, children's room, reading room, open stack library, reference room, auditorium, conference room, training classroom, dance studio and music classroom.



Top Tourist Destinations

The cynosure of Taichung originates in its abundant ecosystems, the ancient glamour of history and incredible arts and literature.

Feng Chia Night Market

Feng Chia Night Market is within 1 km radius of Feng Chia University. It includes Wen-hua Night Market, Feng jia Road, Xitun Road, Fuxing Road and Beacon Sun Plaza.



Guguan Hot Spring

Guguan Hot Spring is situated amidst rugged terrain, with high mountain peaks reaching to the sky. The hot springs flow between the rocks at the foot of the mountains all year round. Due to the high sulfur content, the air close to the springs is filled with the pungent smell of sulfur.



Gaomei Wetlands

Located on the south side of the Dajia River Estuary in Qingshui, Gaomei Wetlands is an important ecological conservation area. It has both mud flats and sand beaches and is also connected to the estuary's swamp area.

Dajia Jenn Lann Temple

Dajia Jenn Lann Temple is a famous Mazu Temples in Taiwan. It has over 200 years of history, filled with pilgrims all year long. The inspection tour held in March every year has become a world-famous religious ceremony attracting domestic and international tourists.

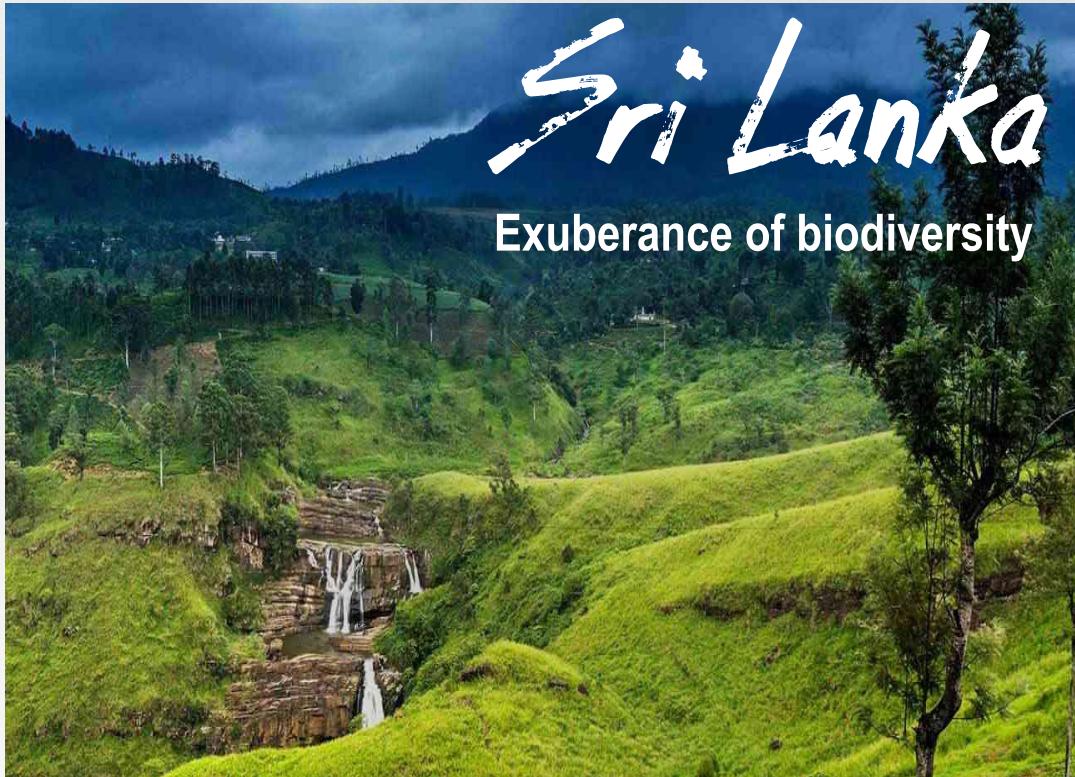
Taichung Park

Taichung Park is an important landmark in the city. The park has artificial lake, pavilions, arched bridges and other landscape features, as well as an outdoor stage, children's playground, tennis courts and other recreational facilities.



Central Highlands of

Special Feature



Sri Lanka

Exuberance of biodiversity

Central Highlands of Sri Lanka is a World Heritage Site. It comprises the Knuckles Conservation Forest, the Peak Wilderness Protected Area and the Horton Plains National Park. The region, a treasure of biodiversity is home to several endangered species such as the western-purple-faced langur, the Horton Plains slender loris and the Sri Lankan leopard. These rain forests have the land rising up to 2,500 metres above sea level.

The Sri Lanka montane rain forests represent the montane and submontane moist forests above 1,000 metres in the central highlands and in the Knuckles mountain range. About 50 per cent of Sri Lanka's endemic flowering plants and 51 per cent of the endemic vertebrates are found only in this region. The eco-region harbours eight near-endemic mammals, and five are strict endemics. There are 20 near-endemic bird species, of which five are strict endemics. In Sri Lanka, five endemic species of vertebrate animals consists of 3 freshwater fish species - Phillips Garra, Blotched filamented Barb, and Martenstyn Barb; one amphibian - Kirthisingha's Rock Frog and one lizard - Leaf nose lizard are that are confined solely to the Central Highlands.

Knuckles Mountain Range



Knuckles Mountain Range is a series of reclining folds and peaks that resemble the knuckles of a clenched fist from certain locations in the Kandy District. This name was given by the British surveyors. However, the Sinhalese residents traditionally referred to it as Dumbara Hills or Dumbara Kanduvetiya which means mist-laden mountain range. It spans across the Kandy and Matale districts and covers an area of about 21000 ha. The Dumbara Hills has 35 peaks over 1000 m above sea level, 20 over 1500 m, and 2 peaks over 2000 m.

The higher region of Knuckles Mountain Range is enveloped in thick layers of cloud. There are a few cloud forests that offer a wide variety of flora and fauna. A cloud forest is a tropical or subtropical forest characterised by persistent low-level cloud. More than 34 per cent of Sri Lanka's endemic trees, shrubs and herbs are only found in these forests. However, large scale cultivation of cardamom in the montane forest poses a threat to the fragile forest ecosystem. Visitors can trek or camp at the Knuckles Mountain Range to absorb its enormity.

Horton Plains National Park



Horton Plains stretches over 3,000 ha across the highlands to plunge at the World's End. It was officially declared a National Park in 1988. Three main rivers namely Kelani, Walawe and Mahaweli originate in this area.

Horton Plains is blessed with a diversity of flora and fauna. The stretches of grasslands are dotted with endemic woody plants and montane forest. There are many species endemic to Horton Plains. Nearly 54 woody plant species are found in the park, out of which 27 are endemic to Sri Lanka.

Apart from the biodiversity, the other tourist attractions include World's End and Baker's Falls. The park can be accessed by the Nuwara Eliya-Ambewela-Pattipola and Haputale-Boralanda roads and there are railway stations at Ohiya and Ambewela.

Peak Wilderness Protected Area



Sri Pada' Peak Wilderness sanctuary is a tropical rain forest spanning across 224 sqkm around the Sri Pada (Adam's Peak) mountain. Located 2,243 m above the sea level, Adam's Peak is the highest point in the region. It is believed that there is a footprint of Lord Buddha at the top. This adds to its spiritual significance and it draws Buddhist pilgrims from across the world. There are 3 access routes to the Peak Wilderness Protected Area - Hatton route, Kuruwita route and Palabaddala route. Kuruwita and Palabaddala route tear right across the Peak Wilderness sanctuary. Tourists can enter the sanctuary after taking permission from the Sri Lanka Wildlife Conservation Department.

Some of the tall mountains in the Peak Wilderness are Bena Samanala, Dotalugala, and Detanagala. This region is the source of rivers Kelani, Kalu, Walave which along with tributaries of the river Mahaweli form various waterfalls - Dotalu falls, Geradi falls, Galagama falls and Mapanana falls inside the sanctuary. An interesting fact of Peak Wilderness Protected Area is Adenomus kandianus. It is the rarest toad rediscovered in this sanctuary in 2009 after 133 years. Whether you love nature, have the spiritual bend or are passionate about mountain climbing, Central Highlands of Sri Lanka is a must add to your bucket list.



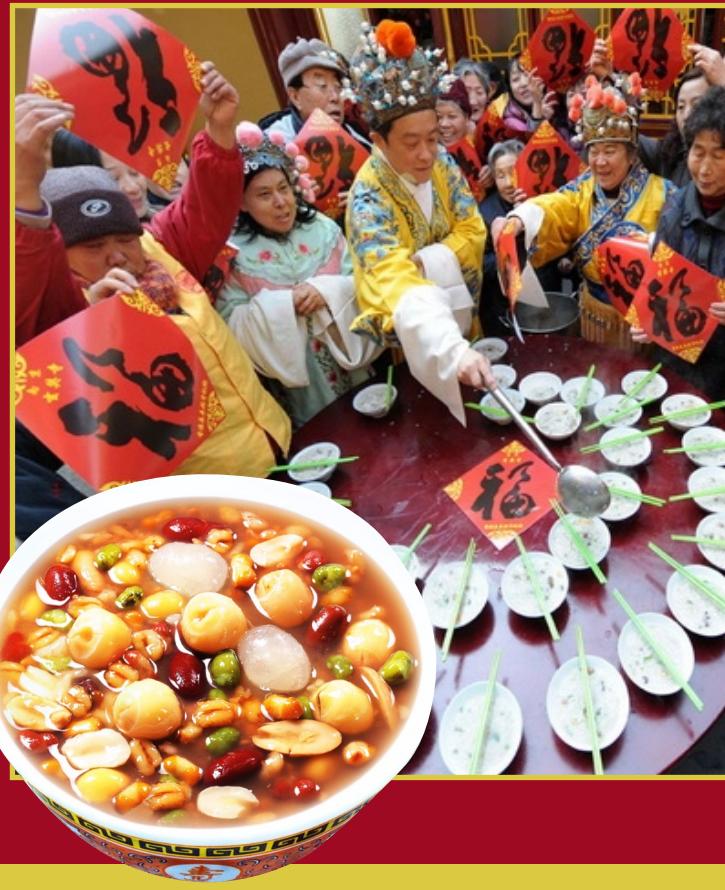
2019
Year of Pig



Chinese New Year is a high magnitude event in the world. It is celebrated not just in China but also in other countries like Singapore, United Kingdom, Edinburgh, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Cambodia and the Philippines as well as other Chinese communities across the world. Every year, this event is characterised by one of the 12 spirit animals of the Chinese zodiac. 2019 is the Year of Pig.

Chinese New Year celebrations traditionally run from Chinese New Year Eve, the last day of the last month of the Chinese calendar, to the Lantern Festival on the 15th day of the first month, making the festival the longest in the Chinese calendar. The colourful decorations, red paper lanterns, banners, dragon dances, festive atmosphere and complete excitement — these are the elements of the Lunar celebrations.





Longest Chinese Holiday starting from Laba Festival

From the Spring Festival to Lunar New Year, Chinese people celebrate 15 days holiday. It is known as the longest Chinese holiday. Generally, people start the celebration from Laba Festival. Laba Festival was originally an occasion when people offered sacrifices to their ancestors and prayed to the Heaven and the Earth for good harvest and good luck of the family. –The specialty of this event is a porridge made with different types of rice, beans, dried nuts, bean curd, and meat. This year Laba festival started from 13 January. The Chinese Lantern Festival, which is going to kick off from February 19, marks the end of the Chinese New Year Spring Festival period.



Largest Human Migration in the World

The Lunar New Year is the major annual human migration. There are millions of Chinese citizens on move, mainly to their hometowns to celebrate this New Year holiday with their family. Most of the elderly parents live in rural areas while their children work in the cities. This migration back home for a vacation is called chunyun or Spring Migration.

Celebration in London



Chinatown in the West End of London plays host to the largest Spring Festival celebrations outside Asia, with this year's 50-float procession taking place between Shaftesbury Avenue and Trafalgar Square on 10th February.



Year of Pig

The year 2019 is the year of pig. Animals like rat, snake, dog and pig are generally not liked in Chinese culture. But as a zodiac, their positive traits are bestowed on people born that year. They play a much bigger role than in Western culture. Pig is the 12th of all zodiac animals. According to myth, the Jade Emperor said the order would be decided as per their arrival to his party. Pig was late because he overslept. Another story says that a wolf destroyed his house. He had to rebuild his home before he could set off. When he arrived, he was the last one and could only take 12th place. Pig is also associated with the Earthly Branch *hài*, and the hours 9-11 in night. In terms of *yin* and *yang*, pig is *yin*. In Chinese culture, pigs are the symbol of wealth. Their chubby faces and big ears are signs of fortune as well.





Taste the best Chinese desserts

Take the *tangyuan* for example. It literally means 'soup balls.' It is a popular dessert during Chinese New Year. *Nian gao* is a type of rice cake. It symbolises success every year. *Fa gao* is a hybrid form of sponge cakes and muffins. People dye it in festive colours. The *fa* is the same as in *fa cai*, which means 'to get rich.'



Wine tasting in Chinese New Year

China is popular for tea. But the wine culture is more important. *Niánjiǔ* that literally means 'year alcohol' is one of the popular alcohol brands here. The most common alcohol in China is the white wine or *baijiu*. It gets its name from its clear colour. Because it is usually made from fermented *sorghum*, it is also known as white sorghum wine. Wheat, barley and glutinous rice are among the alternatives. A popular unflavored drink is *èr guō tóu*.

The most well-known flavored *baijiu* is probably *Moutai*.

This year China will celebrate its New Year from February 5th. In 2018, more than 6.5 million Chinese travellers travelled abroad during the Lunar New Year holiday whereas there were 386 million domestic trips in the same period. In 2019, China expects 7 million Chinese tourists to travel abroad, with another 400 million travelling domestically.



The Fanjingshan

Brahma's Pure Land

“The mountain sat upon the plain
In his eternal chair,
His observation omnifold,
His inquest everywhere. ”

Emily Dickinson

The highest peak of the Wuling Mountains in Southwestern China, The Fanjingshan or Mount Fanjing sits in its eternity at a height of 2,570 m.

The peak of Fanjingshan saw the light of the day in the Tertiary period that spans from 2 million to 65 million years ago. UNESCO included The Fanjingshan in its famed list of World Heritage Site in 2018. UNESCO describes the finger-like peak of Mount Fanjing as an 'island of metamorphic rock in a sea of karst'. Karst is an area of land made up of limestone and characterised by barren, rocky ground, sinkholes and underground rivers. The Fanjingshan, located in Tongren, Guizhou province, has three main peaks - the 'Old Golden Summit' (2,572 m), 'Fenghuang Summit', and 'New Golden Summit' (2,336 m).

Fenghuang literally means phoenix and the New Golden Summit is also called Red Clouds Golden Summit. Various strange rock formations and stone pillars including the Mushroom Stone (10 m) are embedded on the mountain façade.



Fanjingshan in Chinese means 'Buddhist tranquility'. Considered as the bodhimanda (or daochang), the mountain is a sacred site for Buddhists since the Tang Dynasty. Bodhimanda is a place where one reaches enlightenment of the Maitreya Buddha.

The mountain's name 'Fanjing' is an abbreviation of Fantian Jingtu, meaning 'Brahma's Pure Land'. Fantian is the Chinese name for the Buddhist heavenly king, Brahmā. Fanjingshan was dotted with 48 Buddhist temples that were built during the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). Most of them have been destroyed. The new temple constructions and those which are rebuilt draw Buddhist worshippers from far and near.

The Divine Ascent



Established in 1978, the Fanjingshan National Nature Reserve was designated a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve in 1986. The reserve spans over a total area of 567 km². Fanjingshan is wrapped in rich biodiversity. It is home to several rare species - Guizhou golden monkey, Fanjingshan fir and endangered species such as forest musk deer, Chinese giant salamander, grey snub-nosed monkey and Reeve's pheasant. The UNESCO World Heritage status helps to preserve these rare species. The Guizhou golden monkeys can be seen only in this region. Other important national protected animals include South China Tiger, clouded leopard, pangolin and antelope. Four-fifth of the conservation area is covered with virgin forest and plants. There are about 795 families of plants and 1,955 species. There are rare flowers as well such as dove flowers. Visitors will find the whole range of trees - evergreen broadleaf to deciduous trees. The sub-tropical alpine monsoon climate leads to the distribution of vegetation as vertically zonal.

The biodiversity in Fanjing Mountain National Nature Reserve is very well preserved subtropical forest ecosystems in China. There are over 800 wild animal species identified and documented. These include 68 species of mammals, 191 species of birds, 41 species of reptiles and 34 species of amphibians. Wildlife enthusiasts would be enthused with the rich diversity around. Whether it is spiritual inclination, love for nature or an ardent passion to conquer peaks, the Fanjingshan bestows strength and peace to all who approaches it.

Natural Biodiversity



The trip to Fanjingshan is arduous but highly rewarding just like any spiritual journey. An 11-hour flight from Heathrow to Guangzhou, northwest of Hong Kong is followed by a 95-minute flight to Tongren Airport. A two-hour bus drive from Tongren is followed by 5-hour challenging 8,888-step ascent from the foot to the summit. If this seems overwhelming then there is an easier transit through the cable car.

Visitors are advised to carry waterproof items, mountaineering shoes and warm clothes to make the journey to Mount Fanjing a comfortable one.



NYC welcomed 65.2 million tourists in 2018 with increased Chinese visitors

New York City welcomed 65.2 million tourists in 2018, by marking a ninth consecutive year of the growth. The city tourism board has confirmed this information. According to the latest statistics released by New York City & Company, 51.6 million of the 65.2 million visitors came from the United States and 13.5 million were international tourists, mostly from the United Kingdom, China, Canada, Brazil and France. Notably, the number of tourists from China rose to 1.1 million from 1.04 million in 2017, despite a months-long trade friction between the two countries which had concerned some tourism insiders.



Frankfurt Airport served 69.5 million passengers in 2018

Frankfurt Airport welcomed more than 69.5 million passengers in 2018. It recorded a 5 million passengers or 7.8 percent increase over that of last

year. There were 512,115 takeoffs and landings in 2018 – a rise by 7.7 per cent. The accumulated maximum takeoff weights (MTOWs) also increased by 5.1 percent to some 31.6 million metric tons. The cargo throughput posted a slight 0.7 percent decline to about 2.2 million metric tons, reflecting growing uncertainties in global trade, particularly during the second half of the year.

Luxembourg makes all public transport free

Luxembourg has announced that by March 2020 – all public transport — trains, trams and buses will be free. Luxembourg is one of Europe's smallest countries with a population of 602,000; but it suffers major traffic jams. Dany Frank, a spokesperson for the Ministry of Mobility and Public Works said that this move will bring environmental benefits and minimize dense traffic congestion. Luxembourg is one of the richest countries in Europe, with the highest per capita GDP in the European Union. It is roughly the size of Rhode Island. Belgium, France and Germany can all be reached by car in half an hour from the capital of Luxembourg City.





North China's Harbin Ice festival allures millions of global visitors

China's huge "ice city" Harbin is drawing tens of millions of visitors as it hosts month-long winter festival Harbin Ice Festival. Harbin has built its tourism sector into a ten-billion dollar industry and is renowned as one of the China's top winter destinations. The city received more than 77-million tourists in 2017 and made a total revenue of about \$17-billion.

World's first driver less trains to be launched by China

China will introduce the world's first driverless trains to run at speeds of up to 350kph on the Beijing-Zhangjiakou railway line. The China Railway

Corporation (CRC) in 2018 trailed the automatic operation bullet trains on a section of the Beijing-Shenyang line. The bullet train passed all safety tests. On the high-speed trains a driver is currently employed to perform the operations and it is expected that the automatic train operation (ATO) will be replacing the human drivers in China. Earlier the ATO was rolled out on two intercity lines in the Pearl River Delta region and the trains run at maximum speed of 200kph. In June 2017 the Beijing-Shanghai line the new Fuxing trains debuted which could travel up to 350 kph. For the 2022 Winter Olympic Games the Beijing-Zhangjiakou line also known as the Jing-Zhang line currently under construction to offer easy travel between Beijing and the Winter Olympic Village.

Asia Festivals

Kumbh Mela has the largest congregation of millions of people on the banks of sacred rivers. Pilgrims gather from all round the globe to participate in the stream of knowledge and spirituality. Millions of devotees take a holy dip in the sacred rivers with the belief that it cleanses their souls and leads to salvation.

Asian festivals offer an idiosyncratic cultural experience, with fundamental tropes and traditions taking on new life and interpretations within each nation's unique historic and contemporary contexts.

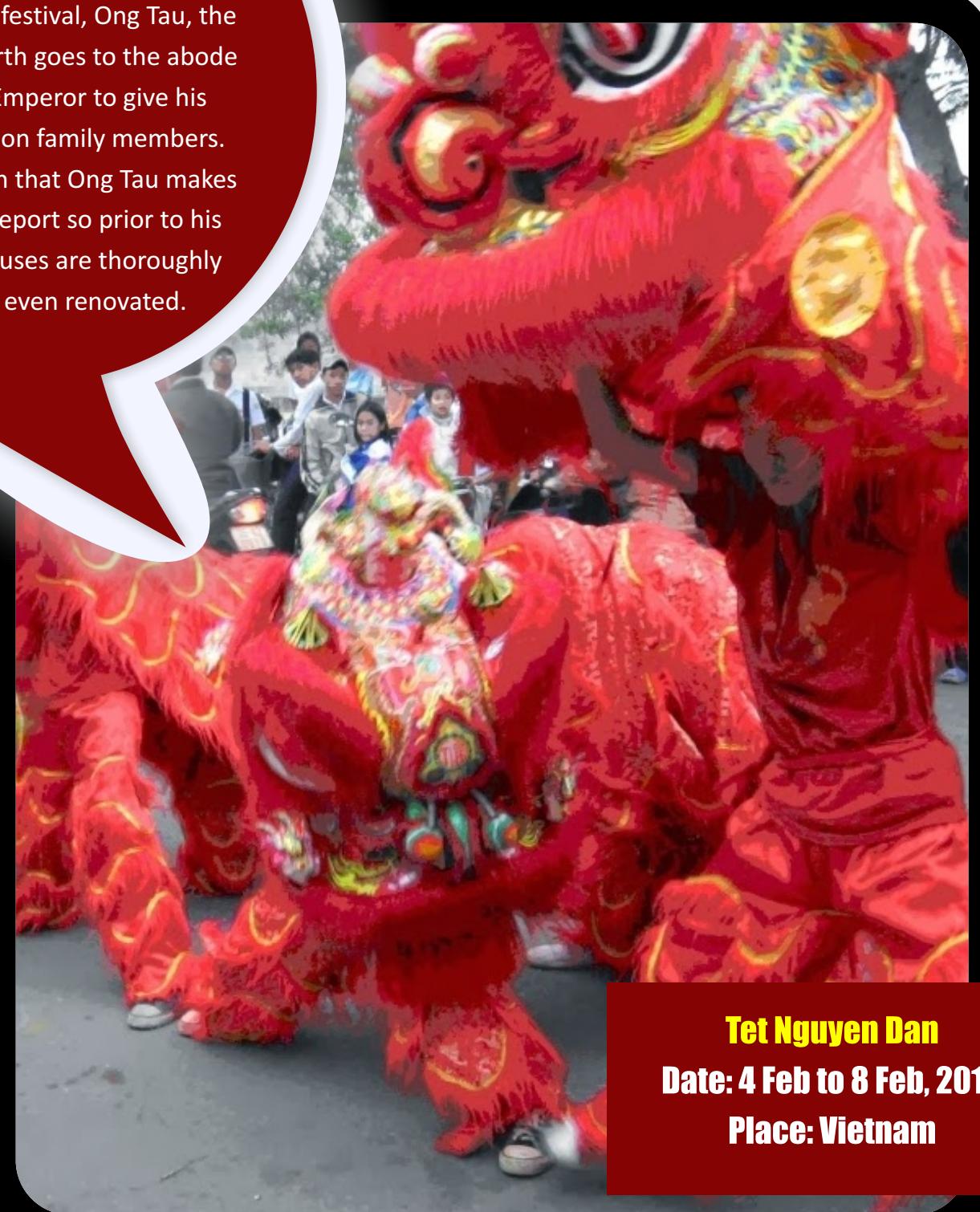


Prayagraj Ardh Kumbh Mela

Date: 15 Jan-4 March, 2019

Place: Prayagraj, India

Tet is Vietnamese New Year shortened from Tet Nguyen Dan. It marks the arrival of spring. At the start of the Tet festival, Ong Tau, the god of the Hearth goes to the abode of the Jade Emperor to give his annual report on family members. People are keen that Ong Tau makes a favourable report so prior to his departure, houses are thoroughly cleaned or even renovated.



Tet Nguyen Dan

Date: 4 Feb to 8 Feb, 2019

Place: Vietnam

Japan's most weird festival, Setsubun is all about throwing beans to ward off evil spirits! People gather at temples to pick up beans; gifts and candy are thrown to frenzied crowds from public stages. In homes, the head of the household wears a demon mask and family members throw beans and peanuts at him until he is driven away!



Setsubun

Date: 3 Feb, 2019

Place: Japan

Celebrated on the 15th day of the first Chinese lunar month, Qinhui International Lantern Festival comprised of lighting big lanterns in the mid of the night. This fiesta marks the return of spring and it symbolises the reunion of family.



Qinhui International Lantern Festival

Date: 19 February, 2019

Place: China

As per The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Outbound Travel Market', a report prepared by UNWTO and ETC with the support of Value Retail finds that per-capita international tourism spending from the GCC was 6.5 times higher than the global average last year, with expenditure estimated to be more than USD 60 billion. Emphasizing on the potential of outbound travel from the Middle East, the 7th Annual MICE Arabia and Luxury Travel (MALT) Congress 2019, the regions' exclusive business platform, will bring the world of outbound business and luxury travel from the Middle East under one roof. Given the potential of the increasing travelers and disposable income from the Middle East, 'Halal' tourism is clearly a growing market segment. It has become imperative for the hospitality industry to adapt to changing halal requirements to meet their needs to attract these travelers. By 2020, the number of Halal traveller numbers are projected to grow to 150-156 million, with Amadeus projecting a collective spend of USD200 billion.

According to an Allied Market Research report, the global luxury travel market may garner up to USD1,154 billion by 2022. Changing trends in the outbound luxury travel and tourism now include a great demand for new experiential travel and exotic destinations, in sync with the changing role of travelers into adventurers.



GCC travellers are increasingly giving more preference to engaging leisure with business while exploring new exciting and affordable destinations. Alina Drutman, Managing Partner, DMW Travel said, "MICE travel trends are dynamically changing and countries like Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia have now become the top destinations for their luxurious stay offerings while being great hosts to business needs. Additionally, these destinations have been preferred for its close proximity to language and cultural similarities."

Exploring emerging markets is a top trend witnessed from the Middle East region, Ravshan Turakulov, CEO Silk Road Destination, Central Asia Tours Incoming Agency, said "Uzbekistan is emerging as a top destination as Middle East buyers are continually looking to invest in new economies and offer new destinations as options for their MICE and Luxury travel requirements."

MICE travel is not just restricted to the meetings and events but to provide valuable employees family vacation as well. The MICE industry is one of the fastest growing segments in the travel sector generating millions of dollars in revenue every year. Offering Poland as an emerging market for MICE, Agnieszka Borowska, Managing Director, Visit Poland DMC said, "We are seeing an upward trend in Poland for Corporate Leisure travelers. We expect a high growth in number of tourists from the Middle East visiting Poland demanding for luxury accommodations."

He also adds, "Security, family friendly locations, comfort, direct flights, and more flexible pricing options allows Poland to be one of the preferred destinations."

Attendees at the MALT Congress include high caliber industry professionals, government policy makers, senior decision makers and MICE and luxury suppliers from different regions such as Central and Eastern Europe, Russia and the CIS, Uzbekistan and Poland, Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan along with MICE buyers and specialists from the top GCC companies.

The future of MICE travel can also be summed up as personalization being the key trend. The desire for greater personalization, individualization and face-to-face contact is on the rise, creating challenges and great potential at the same time for event planners and venue operators. Vittorio Marsiglio, CEO, Intercontinental Travel Company, "We have seen 7% increase in the number of travellers from Arabia. This, we learn is a great result of customer satisfaction, through the high standard quality of chosen services, the personalization (a unique selection of tailor-made offers), its experience and the deep knowledge of the products we are keen to offer."

Visa-free travel also becomes very important to attract GCC travelers, as they factor in this aspect while planning their itinerary.

Commenting on the congress, Sidh NC, Director, OnA International said, "As the Middle East sees a surge in outbound travel, there is more emphasis to recognize the importance of MICE and making MICE friendly destination offerings and unique experiences available. As Middle East buyers are continually on the lookout for new destinations and novel experiences, this year the key highlight at the 7th Annual MICE Arabia & Luxury Travel Congress will be to explore new destinations as well as address local, regional and global trends and challenges in the MALT MICE and luxury travel sector."

The MALT congress for seven consecutive years is touted as the "global meeting point" of influencers from the world of conferences, meetings, incentives, events, business and luxury travel who gather for two intensive days of making connections, learning, innovation & networking. Building on the tremendous potential of the growing outbound travel and luxury travel market in the MEMiddle east region, the 7th edition annual of the MALT Congress will focus on driving business success, benefiting from all year-round opportunities to making connections, exploring trends and technologies from around the world and deep dive into every aspect of travel.

The next edition of the WTM Latin America event, which will take place on 2 – 4 April in Expo Center Norte in São Paulo, will have a space dedicated to women who want to give a boost to their careers in the travel and tourism industry.

The Women in Travel program is already taking place in the WTM London and WTM Africa editions of the shows and with its personalized content and mentoring will become part of the Latin American edition, its core objective being to provide guidance for women who work in the market, invest in their careers and are entrepreneurial.

The project, which is led by Alessandra Alonso, the founder of the company of the same name, empowers women and helps them develop more incisive strategies and activities in the global travel, tourism and hospitality industry.

In Brazil, Alessandra is supported by Mariana Aldrigui, who looks after her business interests. Mariana is a tourism professor and researcher at the University of São Paulo and a member of the Advisory Board of WTM Latin America.

"I'm very happy to bring the Women in Travel Meetup to the most important travel event in Latin America and to extend our reach to cover all WTM platforms.

Women play a critically important role in this industry, whether as professionals or entrepreneurs, but they don't always have the chance to be recognized for their contributions, or to simply get together to learn

and inspire.

Women in Travel provides a platform for encouraging discussion, involvement and networking for women and men who think about highly relevant topics so that this sector continues to thrive and grow," says Alessandra.

This is the first time this Women in Travel programme is going to be held in Brazil and it will last for three hours and be divided into a panel on training, mentoring and a cocktail party. It is worth mentioning that it is not necessary to register beforehand to participate in the panel and attend the cocktail party. For the mentoring programme, however, registration on the WTM Latin America website is necessary; this facility will only be available in 2019.

Women in Travel will take place on 2 April, the first day of the event, in the Networking Area starting at 3pm.

Registration for the mentoring programme will be open shortly.



The largest and most popular in Russia and CIS 26th International tourism exhibition MITT 2019 will be held from 12 till 14 March 2019 in Moscow, Expocentre.

Thousands of representatives of tourism industry in Europe and the Mediterranean, the Middle East, Asia, America, Africa and island countries, as well as CIS countries will present their products for the coming season. Visit the show to be in industry trend!

MITT 2019 is:

- 20,000+ professional visitors from 80 regions of Russia and 90 other countries
- 1,700+ companies
- 230+ countries and regions of the world
- 40,000 sqm of exhibition space
- 7 halls and pavilions
- 3 full days of business programme
- 110+ speakers
- 12 conference sessions

For the first time, such areas as Qatar, Bahrain, Mongolia, Tanzania, Seychelles, the

Galapagos Islands, Cambodia and others will be presented at MITT. Among the regions of Russia: Saratov Region, Sverdlovsk Region, Kemerovo Region, Kursk Region, Tyumen Region and Khanty-Mansiisk autonomous district.

MITT annual exhibitors are also confirmed: Greece, Italy, Spain, Turkey, Bulgaria, Israel, Morocco, Vietnam, Venezuela, Thailand and many others.

The largest tour operators will present new flight programs and destinations in Russia and around the world. Representatives of inbound tourism will make large-scale offers for recreation, MICE-opportunities and wellness in the Russian regions.

Altai region has confirmed its status as a MITT 2019 Partner Region.

Schedule meetings with representatives of the tourism industry in this and other regions of Russia and get full information about the direction and conditions of cooperation for the coming season.



Digital Travel APAC 2019 has already over 80+ speakers already confirmed. Here check out why over 400+ Heads of eCommerce, Digital Marketing and Customer Experience in travel, hospitality and leisure are headed to Resorts World Sentosa, Singapore this 1-3 April.

Today's travelers are more digitally savvy than ever before and Digital Travel APAC 2019 is the one-stop shop where leaders in APAC's travel industries can discuss the evolution of digital customer engagement, master customer personalization and boost omni-marketing strategies.

2019 Topic Highlights:

- Delivering a seamless travel experience – How to meet the needs of the domestic and outbound traveller with AI, big data and intelligent hardware
- Mastering Localisation and Personalisation– How to diversify your offerings and create a truly frictionless and tailored customer experience
- Social media marketing in an experiential world – How is social media influencing today's 'experiential' travellers and how to adapt and profit from this new global trend to boost conversions
- Mobile site optimization - How to effectively adapt your overall e-commerce strategy given the vital importance of mobile in Asia, improving speed and efficiency

efficiency

- The future of money and loyalty – How to deliver smooth and innovative engagements with your customers
- Advances in ancillary technology – How to offer seamless transition between online and offline activity, whether that's before, during, or after a trip.



Here's a snapshot of some of the digital travel innovators and disruptors speaking:

- Jerome Thil, VP Digital Innovation, Singapore Airlines
- Candice Iyog, VP of Marketing & Distribution, Cebu Pacific
- Michael Perera, Head of Loyalty & Product Owner of GO-POINTS, GO-JEK
- Yuki Huang, Chief Marketing Officer, KKday
- Rotsen Quispe, Head of International Marketing, Traveloka
- Spencer Lee, Head of Commercial, AirAsia
- Anita Ngai, Chief Revenue Officer, Klook
- Mindy Teo, VP of Brand, Marketing & Digital Innovation, The Ascott
- Azran Osman-Rani, TEDx Speaker, Ex-CEO, iflix&AirAsia X

BLTM 2019

When: 18-19 January, 2019

Where: Leela Ambience

Convention Hotel, Delhi, India



Launched in 2016, India's first full-fledged travel mart BLTM is dedicated to Business, MICE and Luxury Travel. Recently concluded BLTM 2019 was held on 18th and 19th January at the Leela Ambience Convention Hotel, Delhi. Qualified buyers from the capital and the rest of India were hosted at the event.

115 exhibitors from 26 Countries and 13 Indian States and Union Territories showcased at the two-day event. BLTM Delhi experienced an unprecedented footfall of 1,225 B2B visitors and more than 200 buyers from India. All participants were fully hosted at the show venue hotel. The 2:1 Hosted Buyer to Seller ratio and additional footfall ensured the travel mart was always abuzz.

Dignitaries who graced the BLTM inauguration were H.E. John A.E. Amaratunga, Minister of Tourism, Sri Lanka; H.E. Austin Fernando, High Commissioner for Sri Lanka in India; Kumar De Silva, Chairman, Sri Lanka Convention Bureau; Dr Trust Lin, Director of Taiwan Tourism Bureau; Ismail Amer, Egyptian Tourism Counsellor; Subhash Goyal, Chairman, STIC Group; Suresh M, Chairman, EEMA; Sanjiv Agarwal, Chairman and CEO, Fairfest Media Ltd and V Suresh, President, Fairfest Media Ltd and others.

Dr Trust Lin, Director of Taiwan Tourism Bureau said that they have been participating at BLTM for the past two years and the show has grown enormously since then. Last year, we received some great response from the travel trade sector and this year too our co-participants were glad to be a part of BLTM. The buyers here at BLTM mean business and they have great potential as well. I would love to be a part of upcoming BLTMs.

The show opens doors to India's 6.5 million outbound luxury and MICE tourists, as well as the fastest growing business travel market in the world. Gracing the largest country pavilion at BLTM was Sri Lanka Convention Bureau, returning participant from last year. The tourist mart also saw enthusiastic participation from National Tourist Organisations (NTOs) from Dubai, Egypt, Bangladesh, Taiwan, Spain, Greece and Philippines.

Spain Tourism added a distinct flavour to BLTM by hosting an entertainment evening for Hosted Buyers together with Warq Tourism and Palladium Hotel Group. The evening was marked by dancing, sangrias, tapas and dinner.

Major Indian Tourism Boards matched up to their international counterparts. The Indian State Tourism Boards (STBs) of Andhra Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh,

Jharkhand, West Bengal and Punjab ensured their representation with a large number of sellers to showcase India at its best.

Some of the star exhibitors of BLTM 2019 include Hotel & Restaurant Association of Bhutan, Ambuja Neotia, Leisure & Luxury Hotels and Resorts, RailYatri.in, Denzong Leisure and Spiceland Holidays.

Some of the event partners put their best foot forward and put on a stupendous show. Cox and Kings, BLTM's knowledge partner organised a destination workshop on Georgia and Azerbaijan on the inaugural day. Air India and Ethiopian Airlines were the Partner Airlines while the Ground Transportation Partner was Eco Rent A Car - Europcar. Just Click Karo.Com was the online B2B Travel Partner.

Some exhibitors who attended another prominent travel mart in Greater Noida and then shifted to BLTM opined that the event provided a better Return on Investment (ROI) while others concluded the event was just as good.

The onsite meeting was one of the most anticipated features of BLTM. Buyers and sellers interacted face-to-face, fresh appointments were made on the floor and pre-made appointments were hosted with ease.

Hosted buyers at BLTM included corporate travel planners with purchasing authority, travel companies catering to business, leisure, MICE and luxury travel, MICE travel managers and buyers, MICE organisers and managers, business travel managers and buyers, film destination companies, associations, wedding planners and event management companies.

One of the Hosted Buyers, Preeta Venugopal, Executive Office Administration, Bekaert Industries Pvt Ltd said, "This was my first time at BLTM and I think organisers have put in a lot of effort to make the show look perfect. I got to see many different exhibitors from all over the world and India. I was amazed to see so many new destinations in India. BLTM will definitely help me in planning my next travel as it has provided me with perfect suppliers. I want to thank the organisers for giving me a chance to see a great show like BLTM."

"BLTM filled a vacuum in the evolution of travel trade shows in India by sustaining an event focused on business travel and MICE buyers. This year, the show attracted a large number of B2B visitors from leisure sector as well. However, presence of more than a 100 corporate buyers is what makes it unique," remarked Sanjiv Agarwal, Chairman & CEO of Fairfest Media Ltd, the organisers.

Many of the buyers and sellers at BLTM Delhi will be also participating in OTM Mumbai a couple of days later, from January 23 to 25, at the Bombay Exhibition Centre.

OTDYKH Leisure

When: 11-13 September 2018

Where: Expocentre Fairgrounds, Russia



The 24th edition of OTDYKH Leisure, took place on 11-13 September 2018 at Expocentre Fairgrounds in Moscow. The event brought together 870 exhibitors from 41 countries and 44 Russian regions, covering the total area of 15 000 sq. m with over 38 300 visits during the 3 days of the Expo.

The key feature of OTDYKH 2018 edition was a significant increase of the Russian domestic travel exposition as well as the strong advertising campaigns of well-established exhibitors.

Traditionally strong participation was shown by Asia and Latin America. European countries intensified their marketing efforts to attract more tourists to their destinations.

Large and exclusive expositions were demonstrated by the top destinations such as Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, China, Georgia, Spain, Greece, Serbia, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Hungary, Cuba, Tunis, Egypt and many others.

A record number of Russian regions took part at the event to introduce their tourist attractions to the exhibition's guests, increasing their exhibition area by 26% compared to 2017.

The exhibition was accompanied by a comprehensive business programme, featuring more than 40 business events in 11 conference halls with 200 speakers and over 2.000 participants including representatives of

government authorities and travel industry. During the exhibition, 15 governmental agreements have been signed.

The highlights in the field of outbound tourism became a Hosted Buyers Programme 2018 and a series of roundtable meetings between Russian large tour operators and international authorities in total of 4 roundtable meetings dedicated to Serbia, India, Indonesia and Japan. The meetings were co-organized by ATOR (Association of Tour Operators of Russia).

The key event in the area of inbound tourism became the conference on the domestic tourism development in Russia. The so-called "All-Russia Meeting on Inbound and Domestic Tourism Development" was held on 11th of September and attracted over 200 participants incl. key decision-makers, governors, heads of tourism-related ministries and authorities.

The Ministry of Culture of Russian Federation, the Association of Russian Tour Operators, the Russian Union of Travel Industry, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Russian Federation and other national and regional authorities have, once again, extended their support to OTDYKH, noting that the exhibition is well-established and high-demanded B2B platform.

Exhibition

- 870 exhibitors
- 41 Countries and 44 Russian Regions
- 38 303 Visits
- 15 000 sq.m Exhibition Area
- 287 Media Attendees
- 80 Media Partners

Business Programme

- 40 events in 11 conference halls
- Over 200 speakers
- Over 2000 participants
- 15 signed governmental agreements

OTDYKH 2018 welcomed numerous newcomers as well as a series of returning exhibitors. Among newcomer were Palestine, Andhra Pradesh, Taiwan and Sintra as well as the Republic of Bashkortostan, Omsk and Penza regions. Maldives and Japan returned to the leading travel exhibition with collective stands after a short break.

Numerous Russian regions, 44 in total, participated in OTDYKH 2018 edition. The extended exposition were demonstrated by the Republic of Tatarstan, the Republic of Komi, the Kaliningrad, Perm and Vologda regions. The highlight became a new photo and video contest, capturing top travel destinations across Russia. The competition featured 62 artworks from 28 Russian regions.

The European exhibitors for example Georgia,

Spain, Greece, Serbia, Bulgaria and Cyprus arrived to OTDYKH 2018 with collective pavilions. Thanks to a rich history, culture, heritage, architecture and cuisine, the European countries continue to market themselves successfully as year-round destinations with the tourism offerings that suites different tastes, culture and budget. The long haul and exotic destinations, with traditionally strong participation at OTDYKH, such as Cuba, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, China, Thailand, Egypt, Tunisia, and India, showed an outstanding participation with an intensive advertising campaign, choosing once again this event as an annual platform to meet business partners and to promote new products and services to the lucrative Russian outbound travel market.

The OTDYKH business programme was of great interest among experts, industry associations and companies actively engaged in the Russian tourism industry and covered a large number of events including conferences, seminars, work-shops, case-study presentations, roundtable meetings and other networking events. The business programme reflected the major industry trends and combined all relevant sectors of the tourism value chain, from MICE and Luxury Travel to Health and Gastronomy.

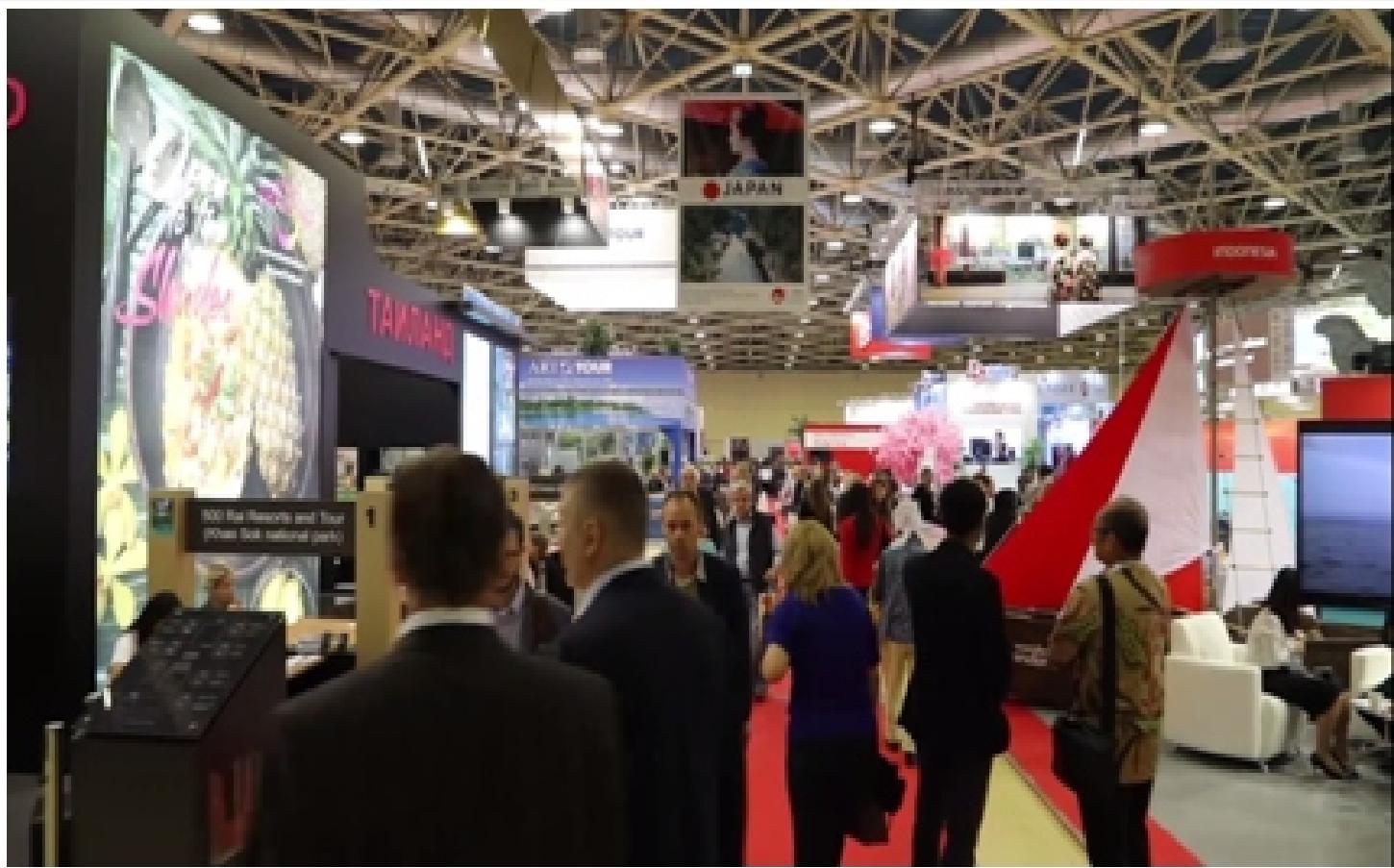
One of the key events of OTDYKH Leisure 2018 became the Conference on domestic and inbound tourism development in Russia, which was held on 11th of September. The outcome of the Conference became a draft resolution with practical proposals for tourism development in Russia.

The resolution will be submitted to the tourism-related ministers for their consideration and approval. The Hosted Buyers Programme 2018 received special interest. The high-level buyers, tour operators and travel agencies from 23 Russian regions attended the exhibition to conduct meetings with exhibitors.

The 14th International Conference Medical Tourism, SPA & Health: "Health tourism as a source of professional longevity. Global trends and international experience exchange" brought together leading experts in health

tourism and resort industry. The Conference covered a broad spectrum of topics including health-improving programmes, disease prevention & health improvement of the population, corporate healthcare initiatives, redevelopment of recreational tourism facilities and many others.

In 2019 OTDYKH International Travel Market will celebrate its 25th anniversary. Don't miss out the opportunity to enter one of the largest tourism markets in the world with over 20 million outbound travellers per year. Become part of OTDYKH 2019- where the world of travel is at home.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

31 Jan- 3 Feb

Emitt Istanbul

Istanbul, Turkey

<http://emittistanbul.com/>



1- 3 Feb

Balt Tour Exhibition

Kipsala , Rīga, Latvia

www.balttour.lv/?link=10000000



7 - 8 Feb

Forum Sur L'Investissement

Hotelier Afrcain

Marrakech, Morocco

<https://fiha-conference.com/>



08 - 10 Feb

TTF Chennai

Chennai, India

www.ttfotm.com/



13 - 15 Feb

PATA (ATRTCM)

Uttarakhand, India

www.pata.org/atrtcm



13-15 Feb

Jeddah International Travex

and Tourism Exhibition

Jeddah Hilton, Saudi Arabia

[https://www.jtx-sa.com/](http://www.jtx-sa.com/)



15 - 17 Feb

TTF Bangalore
Bangaluru, India
www.ttfotm.com/



17 - 20 Feb

Connections Luxury
Malaga, Spain,
<https://weareconnections.com>



20-22 Feb

ACE of MICE Exhibition
Istanbul, Turkey
<http://ameistanbul.com/>



18 - 20 Feb

AIME Australia
Melbourne , Australia
<https://aime.com.au/>



25 - 27 Feb

Global Restaurant Investment Forum
NH Collection Grand Hotel
Krasnapolsky, Amsterdam
www.grif.com



22 - 24 Feb

IITM Kolkata

Kolkata, India

<http://iitmindi.com/>



22 - 24 Feb

TTF Kolkata

Kolkata, India

<https://www.ttftm.com/>



26 - 27 Feb

MICE Arabia & Luxury Travel Congress

Dubai, UAE

www.mice-arabia.com/about.html



27 - 28 Feb

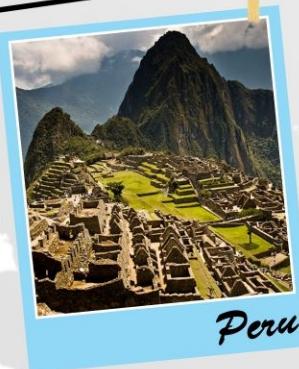
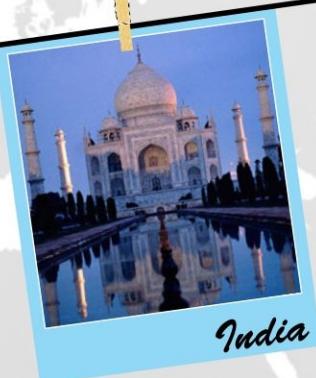
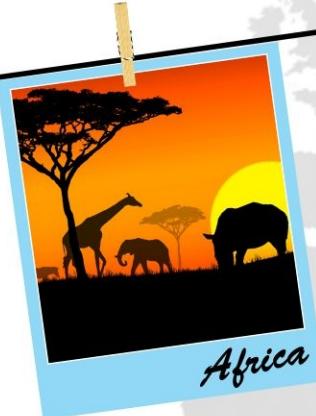
Aviation festival Asia 2019

Singapore

<https://www.terrappinn.com>



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