

HKTB Hong Kong Tourism Overview 2023

Opening Remarks by HKTB Chairman

Striding Forward in a Steady Recovery 穩步向前 邁進新程

Good morning Tourism Commissioner Ms Vivian Sum, fellow speakers, and friends from the travel trade:

1. Welcoming remarks: Hong Kong's travel resumption

What a tremendous pleasure it is to see so many familiar faces and so many friends old and new here at our Tourism Overview today.

- No Rat test before you come, and masks wearing entirely optional!

Since the resumption of travel to Hong Kong, I have been catching up with friends and colleagues from the Mainland and overseas whom I have not met in person for some time. We've been hiking together, we've been to concerts and shows together, we've sat together at meetings and events, and we've shared the simple delights of eating and drinking and chatting and laughing side by side.

These activities are a reminder of everything we've missed so much over the past three years. Now, at last, we can enjoy the thrill of being among the crowd at live events. At last, we can talk business face to face instead of by video call. At last, we can tell the world that our Hong Kong is back – and nothing sends that message out more clearly

to our friends everywhere than this event today, and the events in the weeks to come.

2. “Seeing is Believing” and “Reaching Out to the World”

From the global "Hello Hong Kong" campaign we launched last month to the calendar of mega events we have lined up in the months ahead, the HKTB is going flat out to promote our city to the world. In doing so, we have two guiding catchphrases: The first is ‘Seeing is Believing’, and the second is ‘Reaching Out’. We are inviting hundreds of members of the media and the travel trade, along with influencers and celebrities to experience Hong Kong, and join a host of trade shows worldwide to let the world know that Hong Kong isn’t just back, it’s even better than ever.

At the Hong Kong Tourism Board, we have drawn up our work plan for the coming year, to revive our city’s tourism industry. Our theme today, “Striding Forward in a Steady Recovery”, boldly reflects our confidence and our determination to get back to business in style.

3. Our unique edge remains

Building back our tourism industry on the foundations of Hong Kong’s core strengths, is the key to bringing us to the next level of excellence. Hong Kong is not only a destination with universal appeal and an astonishing array of attractions, but also a gateway between the

Mainland and the rest of the world. We have the unique advantage of being the portal between our country and a global audience.

The Central Government recently made it clear it would continue to fully support Hong Kong's economic development and enhance its international competitiveness, and that Hong Kong's status and role will only continue to grow in the future. With our geographical advantage, Hong Kong's role as a super-connector will continue to bring in business and leisure travellers from both the Mainland and the rest of the world, elevating our status as the city where East truly does meet West.

With our experience and strengths in tourism promotion, we can work with neighbouring cities to build a Greater Bay Area tourism brand for the region and the international market. Whenever visitors want to travel, they can think not only of Hong Kong but also plan exciting excursions around one of the most dynamic and fastest-growing regions in the world.

4. New assets, new offerings

During the last few years, Hong Kong has significantly enhanced its tourism experiences and offerings to capitalise on emerging travel trends. We are glad to see that, during the pandemic, our local tourism sector has actively participated in HKTB's various initiatives, including Holiday at Home, Hong Kong Neighbourhoods, and the

Spend-to-Redeem programmes, and leveraged on these programmes to develop new tourism products offering novel experiences, which have in turn become valuable assets that benefit visitors now. In addition, a wide range of tourism assets and attractions have been commissioned or upgraded to provide more in-depth and immersive experiences in arts and culture, leisure, natural scenery, and our iconic harbour front area.

The M+ visual arts museum and the Hong Kong Palace Museum in the West Kowloon Cultural district, for instance, have drawn in millions of visitors since they opened last year, while the new Water World at Ocean Park and the new castle show at Hong Kong Disneyland offer exciting new attractions for families and youngsters. Our great outdoors, the Crystal+ experience at Ngong Ping 360, the sixth-generation Peak Tram, the New Territories cycling tracks, and new facilities and attractions around Victoria Harbour have all proved big hits with residents and visitors alike.

5. Conclusion

Ladies and gentlemen, with more to offer than ever before and so many friends old and new still to welcome, Hong Kong stands ready to reclaim its place as one of the world's best and most thrilling destinations for business, for leisure or both "bleisure" and for MICE events. I would like to take this chance to thank the Hong Kong SAR Government, the Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau, and the Tourism

Commission for their support towards our work in sustaining the development of the tourism industry in Hong Kong throughout the challenges and drive its steady revival. The future of our tourism industry has never been so bright or so full of opportunity.

Thank you all for your continued support of the HKTb's work. I look forward to working with you as we together raise our tourism industry to new heights, to contribute to jobs and to our economy, to tell the positive Hong Kong story to the world, and stride forward with confidence into a bright world of post-pandemic travel.

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