

Tourism Overview 2024

Chairman's Opening Remarks

Commissioner Sum, distinguished guests, friends from the travel trade, a very Good Morning to you !

On behalf of the Hong Kong Tourism Board, I extend a warm welcome to each of you joining us today for this pivotal industry event.

2023: A Year of Reconnecting and Rebuilding

Last year marked a milestone for Hong Kong, as we reopened to visitors from all over the world and re-positioned ourselves once again on the global stage. And I am proud to announce that we welcomed an impressive 34 million visitors in 2023, a figure that exceeded our expectations. This achievement underscores the tenacity and resolve of our sector.

Over the course of the year, we experienced the revival of major events, coupled with a significant resurgence in our MICE sector, as evidenced by the increase in visitor numbers. Furthermore, our visitor satisfaction surveys have yielded results that exceed the benchmarks set before the pandemic, underscoring Hong Kong's enduring appeal and ability to look after our global guests.

2024: A Year of Conversion

As we head into the 2024-25 season, the Hong Kong Tourism Board is implementing our three strategic visions that will reinforce Hong Kong's standing on the global stage.

(1) Consolidate Hong Kong's Status as an International City

Long known as Asia's world city, Hong Kong has always been a cultural melting pot where east meets west. Our reputation as an international city is defined by our rich diversity, with a fusion of cultural influences reflected in our architecture, cuisine, arts, and multilingual population. The city's dynamic character is further enriched by its resident expatriate community, global culinary offerings, a vibrant arts and entertainment scene, accessible countryside, and unique movie culture that draws global travellers to our iconic landmarks.

Under our "One Country, Two Systems", Hong Kong has the distinctive and unique advantage of enjoying strong support of the Motherland and being closely connected to the entire world. The Hong

Kong Tourism Board is working to further broaden our tourism appeal, positioning our city as the quintessential "Events Capital of Asia," an unmatched "World's Meeting Place," and the strategic "Cruise Hub of Asia," thereby strengthening and elevating our status as one of the most international cities in the world.

(2) Strengthen our Role as a Tourism Hub

As the international gateway to the Greater Bay Area (GBA), Hong Kong is a super-connector that brings China and the global business community closer together. The 14th National Five-Year Plan fosters Hong Kong's growth in eight strategic sectors, including finance, technology, cultural exchange, trade, shipping, aviation, legal services, and intellectual property. The plan also seeks to promote new industries, and the focus of some of these initiatives will directly benefit Hong Kong's position as an international tourism hub for business travellers.

Hong Kong's exceptional transport infrastructure and connectivity provides seamless access within five hours **by air, sea and land** to locations where half of the world's population resides. The opening of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge and our national high-speed railway terminus, has taken Hong Kong's connectivity to new heights. With such world-class infrastructure in place, Hong Kong is not only a travel destination, but also a tourism hub that attracts visitors to travel via Hong Kong into and out of the Mainland and neighbouring Asian countries or regions.

(3) Advance Toward a Paradigm of High-Caliber Growth

By providing visitors with exceptional experiences, the Hong Kong Tourism Board aims to target new and emerging markets and segments, including Muslim and Middle Eastern markets, continuing to pursue high-quality growth, and reinforcing the competitiveness and sustainable development of Hong Kong tourism while expanding its contribution to society and the economy.

Expressions of Gratitude

Before I conclude my remarks this morning, I would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to our industry partners for their relentless dedication, drive and co-operation in revitalising tourism in Hong Kong.

I would also like to extend our sincere thanks to the government, in particular, the Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau and the Tourism

Commission, as well as to our partners in various sectors including the many chambers of commerce, leading academics, the media, and the community at large for their unwavering encouragement and support.

Closing Thoughts

Ladies and Gentleman. It is our collective mission to convert interest in Hong Kong from all around the world into actual and frequent visits to our dynamic metropolis. To realise this ambition, we are heavily reliant on the proactive engagement and steadfast support of everyone in the travel industry. Collaboration is crucial. By embracing the theme 'Driving Success Together as One' for today's event, we emphasize our dedication to joint collaboration, to accelerating the growth of our tourism sector, and amplifying its considerable economic and social impact on Hong Kong.

We at the Tourism Board greatly value your support. Let us advance together with unity towards a future of unparalleled achievement.

Thank you.

###