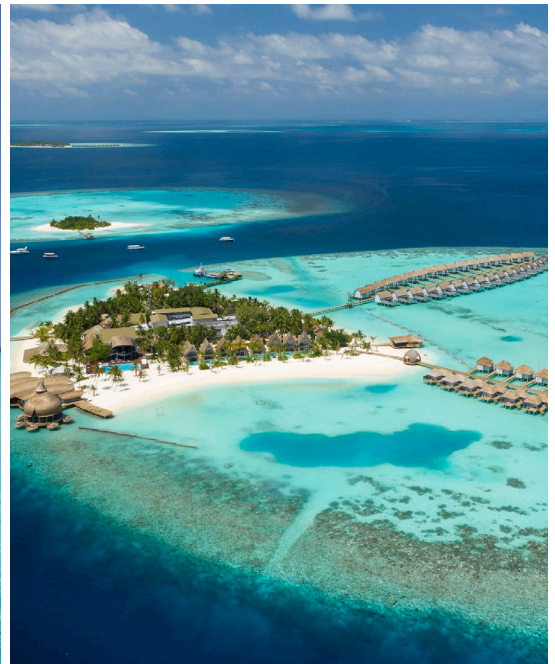




Early birds catch the festive season



MTF rethink recovery options



STB assists villages in welcoming tourists



MTF2023 heads for Cambodia



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Myanmar smooth talks tourism at MTF

Myanmar fielded a delegation at the 50th meeting of the Greater Mekong Subregion Tourism Working Group and the Mekong Tourism Coordinating Office board meeting, a day before the annual Mekong Tourism Forum hosted by Vietnam opened on 12 October.

The MTCO's operations are funded equally...

World Cup boosts airline bookings

Flight bookings to Qatar from the 31 countries competing in the football World Cup finals and from the UAE are currently 10 times the volume of pre-pandemic levels, according to the latest analysis by ForwardKeys.

The data is based on issued flight tickets, including day trips, as of 29 September, for travel to Qatar between 14 November and 24 December. 2019 travel is the benchmark...

Penang campaign shift to Singapore

Penang Global Tourism Rolled out its "Experience Penang" – The Diversity of Asia" campaign on Tuesday, aimed at Singapore travellers.

Singapore is identified as one of the state's most important inbound travel markets, making it the obvious choice for the campaign launch.

Penang State EXCO for Tourism & Creative Economy, YB Yeoh Soon Hin and Chief...

Princess lifts Covid protocols

Beginning 21 October, Princess Cruises lifted its Covid-19 protocols, meaning there are no longer vaccination or testing requirements on most voyages.

Guests sailing with Princess Cruises will no longer have to provide a negative test result, regardless of their vaccination status...

Let's Go to Sarawak campaign rolls out

Tourism Malaysia organised the 'Let's Go to Sarawak' Klang Valley Series roadshow programme at the weekend to promote a variety of interesting tourism products and packages by bringing together operators tourism from Bumi Kenyalang with industry activists in the Central Region in a business-to-business (B2B) session...

SiteMinder tracks travel appetite

A survey of more than 8,000 travellers globally, including 2,461 travellers in China, Indonesia and Thailand, reveals a growing appetite for overseas travel as countries reopen while rising living costs haven't dampened that.

Across the three countries polled in the Asia Pacific, 71% of travellers in China and 56% in Indonesia and Thailand said that inflation had "no impact" to "moderate impact"...

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MTF rethink recovery options

The annual Mekong Tourism Forum returned last week after a two-year Covid-19 inflicted pause.

Around 250 tourism experts gathered at the Hoiana Resort and Golf (Hoiana), Quang

based approaches and effectively leveraging technology to create a more sustainable and inclusive sector.”

Vietnam National Administration of Tourism, Ministry of Culture, Sports and

Laos on a limited scale using the new high-speed rail link later this year. But most tourism experts believe the return of Chinese tour groups is more likely during the Chinese New Year holiday season in late January 2023. Bringing back Chinese tourists to the GMS is seen as a life-saver that would help compensate for the slow return of European tourists.

Higher transport and accommodation costs also discourage tourism growth in the GMS. Airfares are likely to remain much higher than pre-Covid-19. Currently inter capital city fares in the region are double what travellers paid in 2019. This adds pressure to tourism businesses and traveller purchasing power, which could delay the sub-regional tourism recovery.

The VNAT chairman encouraged “tourism stakeholders of all sizes to leverage digital tools to support the sector’s resilience and sustainability and boost the tourism industry’s capacity through reskilling and upskilling programmes.

He commended the strong commitments of GMS NTOs to support the recovery of small to medium-sized tourism enterprises and called for equal opportunities for local employment.

Meanwhile, the MTCO office under the GMS Tourism Recovery Communication Plan announced it had completed various projects. They included a website remake, a monthly Mekong Tourism newsletter, and

[Full story.](#)



Nam Province, Vietnam, on 12 October to deliberate topics focusing on a forum theme of “Rebuild Tourism, Rebound with Resilience”.

Vietnam’s Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism hosted the event declaring it the region’s first in-person, government-led event since the pandemic began, marking a significant milestone in tourism recovery in GMS member countries. The GMS countries comprise Cambodia, China, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam.

Delegate deliberations focused on the theme “Rebuild Tourism, Rebound with Resilience” the event brought together regional tourism leaders to rethink the rebuilding of GMS tourism by “adopting resilience-

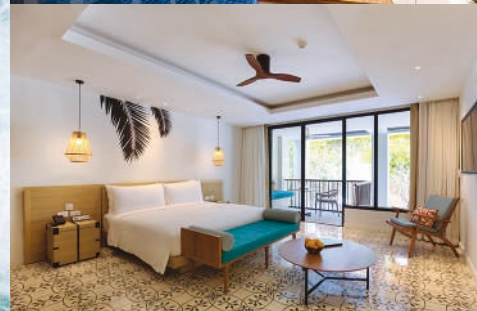
Tourism of Vietnam chairman, Nguyen Trung Khanh, urged public and private stakeholders to “rethink and reshape the tourism industry towards a more sustainable, inclusive, and resilient future”.

However, the day-long meetings also reflected concerns over the challenging economic environment created by high oil prices, inflation, and international supply chain disruptions threatening to slow tourism recovery across the six countries. Discussions on the forum’s sidelines focused on pinpointing China’s reopening schedule for outbound tours, with delegates hoping for an early announcement. It could lead to the return of package tours from Yunnan province to

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SURIN BEACH

Early birds catch the festive season



Outrigger Maldives Maafushivaru Resort has announced details of its Christmas and New Year programme, which runs from 19 December to 1 January.

A diverse and creative range of activities has been designed for guests who love to eat, drink, keep fit – physically and spiritually – chill or dance to music, learn about marine life such as manta rays and whale sharks and see them in the wild.

Guests who love to eat and drink can enjoy chef Christopher Long's Christmas market and sign up for hands-on classes on making sushi, Vietnamese hand rolls, seafood curing, cake decoration, and chocolate and

wine pairing. There will also be mojito madness and margarita mash-up sessions.

Ideal for couples, guests can request private sunset dinners on the beach and a floating breakfast in their pool villa, which can be over water or on the beach, depending on guest preference.

Surrounded by immaculately clear tropical waters, Outrigger guests can enjoy sunset cruises, big game fishing (catch & release), kayaking around the island, snorkelling safaris and guided scuba dives.

Apart from leading marine trips, the resort's resident marine biologist, Lynn Julia Kessler, will



give presentations on Outrigger's ZONE – OZONE – its global nature conservation initiative.

A key feature of the festive period on the island will be physical and spiritual fitness. Outrigger's resident yoga and fitness instructor Ajay Sharma has created a thoughtful and holistic regime of sunrise and sunset hatha yoga, balance and strength sessions, pilates classes, core training, flow yoga, and cross fit.

On New Year's Eve, management cocktails early evening will be followed by an around-the-globe gourmet journey and then a DJ session from 2230 onwards for guests to dance their way into 2023.

The resort will also run a festive Instagram contest. Guests who post images with certain hashtags could win a traditional dhoni sailing boat sunset cocktail for two, a 60-minute couples' massage, or a beach dinner for two.



The full list of optional Christmas and New Year guest activities is available here.

Only 25 minutes seaplane flight from the modern and efficient seaplane terminal at Male international airport, the newly refurbished Outrigger Maldives Maafushivaru Resort has been designed to regale guests with 81 bright and well-

appointed opulent villas and five engaging dining outlets – the foundation of a luxury lifestyle holiday, all with the friendly touch that Outrigger is known for.

For further information and to book Outrigger Maldives Maafushivaru Resort, visit outrigger.com or contact your preferred travel agent.

MTF2023 heads for Cambodia



The Ministry of Tourism of Cambodia will host the Mekong Tourism Forum from 16 to 21 March 2023, in Sihanoukville province, according to an announcement made at the closing session of MTF last week.

Cambodia Ministry of Tourism Under Secretary of State Koeut Puthvory confirmed next year's edition of the MTF will adopt the theme "Rethink for Resiliency and Digitalisation."

2023 has also been designated Visit Cambodia Year to help boost recovery after two years of Covid-19 lockdowns and strict entry rules.

Sporting events are high on the 2023 calendar as the country will host the 32nd SEA Games and the 12th ASEAN Para Games in the spirit of "Sports Live In Peace".

Scheduled for mid-March, the 2023 Mekong Tourism Forum is just six months away, representing the shortest gap between annual forums since its introduction in 1996. Cambodia has already identified



Sihanoukville province as the host destination. Cambodia last hosted the MTF in Sihanoukville in 2017.

The province is pivotal in the country's multi-purpose Special Economic Zone of the Southern Tourism Corridor plans. Home to the country's main commercial port, Sihanoukville is emerging as an essential economic gateway alongside the capital city, Phnom Penh, and the second-largest city, Siem Reap.

The province has completed important highway projects and has expanded its port and international airport, along with the 129-km Phnom Penh-Preah

Sihanoukville Expressway, which reduces the travel time between the two cities from four to two hours.

The undersecretary commented on the country's tourism trends: "Cambodia experienced a dramatic drop in international arrivals to Cambodia from 80.2% in 2020 and 85% in 2021. However, in August 2022, Cambodia welcomed 998,000 international arrivals, up 720.20% compared to August 2021. This year, we forecast at least 1.5 million international tourist arrivals and over 10 million domestic tourists."

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STB assists villages in welcoming tourists

Set against the backdrop of Mount Kinabalu, Kampung Terintidon in Kadamaian has the potential to develop into a tourist village noted for its clean environment and upbeat vibe.

of Tourism, Culture, and Environment cum Sabah Tourism Board chairman Datuk Joniston Bangkuai visited Kampung Terintidon to check out the tourism opportunities.

a model for other communities to emulate,” said Joniston.

He also encouraged the community to work with the Sabah Tourism product team to effectively package the rural



The village, a two-hour drive from Kota Kinabalu, has shown outstanding community efforts and camaraderie, which can enthrall visitors that come to explore the countryside.

The villagers plan tourism activities so visitors can stroll through the entire hamlet, stopping at various points to take in the sights and sounds.

To facilitate this initiative, Kampung Terintidon is divided into seven community groups, each with its committee charged with maintaining harmony and cleanliness and encouraging the development of various tourism-related activities like adventure, culture, agriculture, education, food, and handicraft.

Recently, Assistant Minister

He was accompanied by the Federation of Rural Tourism Association of Sabah (FeRTAS) president cum Kadamaian Tourism Association president Walter Kandayon, and Kadamaian Community Development leader Demis Rumanti.

“I am impressed with the unity shown by villagers in the effort to beautify and develop the village to its full potential. Adding tourism-related activities would further invigorate this village and position it as a must-visit rural tourism destination.

“The Sabah Tourism Board is always willing to assist rural communities in growing their tourism potential. I hope that Kampung Terintidon will serve as

village to promote it to both locals and tourists.

Kampung Terintidon was praised for its cleanliness drive during a recent Board meeting focusing on rural tourism, following a proposal by FeRTAS to run a cleanup campaign in rural villages.

According to Kandayon, the success of Kampung Terintidon’s initiatives to clean up their particular village with community engagement has motivated FeRTAS to lead the drive to free rural communities of rubbish by 2025.

This fits the goal and plans to make Sabah a world-class destination for rural tourism by 2030.

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19-25 November 2022

Venue: Fitz Club at Royal Cliff Hotels Group, Pattaya

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Tennis championship back at the Cliff

The AssetWise Tennis Masters Championship is back in action on the courts of Fitz Club, Pattaya, 19-25 November 2022.

FITZ Club – Racquets, Health and Fitness, together with AssetWise Public Company Limited and Carabao Group, will once again stage the premier tennis tournament for seniors, which is expected to attract more than 200 top players from over 10 countries worldwide.

An impressive lineup of international players from as far away as Europe, Australia and the Americas to countries close to home, including Japan, India and Singapore, will participate and compete for this prestigious ITF Championship title during the seven-day event. The event features the 35+ Singles and Doubles Open and is geared to help promote Pattaya and Thailand as outstanding sports destinations, especially for

tennis.

Royal Cliff Hotels Group, which shares the same landscaped parkland as the tournament venue, Fitz Club, is the official hotel. All players and their families are eligible for special room rates and exclusive benefits during their stay. Fitz Club is just a short walk from the resorts

Fitness, are SHA PLUS certified to provide all guests and attendees safe and superior service, numerous amenities, a great culinary experience, and sports facilities that are second to none. Both sponsors will have a booth showcasing their products and services during the event.

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register for the ITF tournament, please visit: <https://www.royalcliff.com/package/mt700-assetwise-tennis-masters-championship/>

AGE: 35+



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For more information or
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19-25 November 2022

Venue: Fitz Club at Royal Cliff Hotels Group, Pattaya

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