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Langkawi

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Lao PDR presents its green credentials

Lao PDR is set to welcome regional tourism leaders to the Mekong Tourism Forum (MTF) 2025 in the World Heritage town of Luang Prabang from 19 to 28 June.

In a special interview, HE Suanesavanh Vignaket, Minister of Information, Culture and Tourism (MICT), shares Lao PDR's priorities...

New Zealand monitors 5.5% visitor boost

Stats NZ reported on Wednesday that New Zealand received 3.36 million international visitors in the year ended 30 April 2025.

Tourism New Zealand noted that the number was around 176,000 more than the previous year (+5.5%)...

Star Voyager sails between Vietnam and Singapore

The all-new StarCruises celebrates the arrival of the Star Voyager cruise ship in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, with about 1,000 passengers from Singapore as it starts a mini homeporting session in Ho Chi Minh City for Vietnam's summer school break.

Star Voyager offers Vietnamese travellers...

CX debuts Munich flights

Cathay Pacific welcomed the launch of its new direct flights between Hong Kong and Munich on Monday, marking the first time the airline has directly connected its home hub to the Bavarian capital.

The four weekly flights to Munich further bolster Cathay Pacific's presence in Europe, coming shortly after the launch of its seasonal flights to...

Norwegian boosts summer Alaska fleet

Norwegian Cruise Line will boast the youngest fleet sailing to Alaska this summer, with five ships cruising to the region from departure ports in the US and Canada, including Seattle, Washington, and Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.

Three of NCL's recently renovated Breakaway-Plus class ships, Norwegian Bliss...

THAI explores Italian travel market

Thai Airways International organised an event, "THAI Networking in Milan 2025: Grace to Growth – Soaring Beyond Boundaries", in Milan, Italy, to strengthen its sales and marketing strategies in Europe.

The initiative, part of the airline's efforts to boost sales on key routes and expand the airline's network accessibility...



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Managing Editor: Don Ross: donr@ttrweekly.com

EDITORIAL: news@ttrweekly.com
Editor: Don Ross

MARKETING: sales@ttrweekly.com
Content editor: Danai Stephen Ross
Publishing director: Lars Magnusson

PRODUCTION:
Creative director: Danai Stephen Ross
Graphics: Kamolapat Srivirawan

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Selling Thailand: Insights from buyers at TTM+

As Thailand continues to strengthen its appeal among global travellers, international buyers attending this year's Thailand Travel Mart Plus (TTM+) shared their firsthand insights into evolving traveller behaviour, market expectations, and the potential of Thai tourism. Drawing from diverse markets — China, France, India, and Indonesia — their perspectives reveal both promising opportunities and areas for strategic refinement.

China: Collaborating to Regain Momentum

Wanwisa Kritsanaphan, Regional Director of DidaTravel Technology (Thailand) Co., Ltd., said Chinese travellers make up about 80% of its business. Since late April, the market has softened due to various external factors. Instead of waiting, her team is targeting other markets like the Middle East to fill the gap.

Looking to Q3, a gradual rebound is expected during the summer holidays, with campaigns planned to support this. She also emphasised the need for stronger coordination between TAT and travel agents, noting that agents are sometimes excluded from the process.

"Some of the recent activities launched by TAT have been useful. But if we can align

efforts with agents and work together more closely, we can stimulate the market more successfully.

Thailand, she added, continues to attract all segments—from middle-class travellers to the high-value market—offering quality services and diverse experiences to meet their expectations. The key now is to restore travellers' confidence in returning.

France: Quality, Longevity, and All-Inclusive Appeal

Kanita Rattanaburee, Director of Commercial, CEL Tours Thailand, Co. Ltd., shared that French travellers typically stay 7 to 14 nights in Thailand, favouring 4-star and above properties, often booking half-board, full-board, or all-inclusive packages. Key destinations include Phuket, Khao Lak, Krabi, and Samui.

"TTM+ highlights hotels that cater to agents' needs in the French market. The key challenge, however, is persuading these hotels to reconsider their pricing strategy because competitive rates are essential. Unlike room-and-breakfast guests who rarely linger, this segment spends more time in-house—enjoying meals and hotel facilities—providing ample opportunity

to boost revenue across F&B and other on-site services. This makes the French market a high-potential source for hotels."

She noted that the market is resilient and has a long booking window, as bookings are already coming in for the next low season. With Air France launching three weekly Paris–Phuket flights in November, the market holds strong potential for Thailand.

India: Expanding Thailand's Reach Beyond the Big Three

Sumit Kumar, Director of TravelGen at MMN Advisory Private Limited, shared that Thailand continues to enjoy strong brand recognition among Indian travellers, with Phuket, Pattaya, and Bangkok dominating most itineraries. However, awareness of destinations beyond these popular hubs remains limited.

"Young travellers, families with kids, and conference groups make up the bulk of outbound travel from India, and there's a clear appetite for new experiences," he said. "The challenge is that most DMCs tend to promote only the well-known destinations. But Thailand has so much more to offer beyond these. Our clients rely on us for something

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Langkawi's flying five: Nature's aerial oddities

Mention Africa's Big Five and images of lions and elephants come to mind. But tucked away in Malaysia's mystical Langkawi archipelago is another set of marvels — smaller, stranger, and just as captivating.



Welcome to the world of Langkawi's Flying Five. Here, on this island where rainforest meets reef and ancient legends float on sea mist, nature has evolved to defy gravity. On islands like Langkawi, where resources are limited, and survival often means staying off the ground, many creatures have found astonishing ways to take to the air — or, at least, glide through it. The result? A cast of five airborne residents: the Flying Fox, the Colugo, the Flying Snake, the Flying Squirrel, and the Flying Lizard.

Of the five, only one truly flies: the Flying Fox, Langkawi's majestic fruit bat and one of the largest bats in the world. With leathery wings stretching nearly a metre across, they take to the skies each dusk from Pulau Dangli, a small island near Teluk Yu. At twilight, hundreds rise like smoke into the orange sky, gliding in search of ripe island fruits. By dawn, they return to roost — silent, upside down, and otherworldly — in their coastal tree havens.

Then there's the Colugo, an elusive nocturnal glider that looks like something between a lemur and a hang-glider. Often clinging to tree trunks in the island's denser jungle interiors, this gentle herbivore stretches a web of skin called a patagium — the most expansive of any gliding mammal — to coast silently from branch to branch. Its closest relatives? Not rodents, but primates. Its movements are so smooth. You'll likely never see it unless you know what you're looking for — a shadow melting from bark, drifting on air.



Even stranger is the Flying Snake, part of the Chrysopelea family — the only snake on earth capable of gliding. Native to Southeast Asia's tropical forests, Langkawi's variety flattens its ribcage mid-leap, transforming its body into a serpentine wing. The result is a graceful undulation that lets it "swim" through the canopy. Despite its acrobatics, it's harmless to humans — though perhaps not to the frogs and lizards it stalks in the trees.

If you find yourself hiking at twilight, you might glimpse a blur that seems to levitate

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Langkawi

99 Magical Islands

 Gorilla Mountain

EMBRACE THE WHISPERING WILDERNESS

Delve into the heart of Langkawi's Gorilla Mountain, where nature's embrace is a sanctuary of silence and splendor. Surrounded by the verdant tapestry of the rainforest and the calm of pristine waters, find a retreat designed by the earth itself. Here, every breath is a story, every view a masterpiece.

Sarawak elevates Northeast Asia tourism promotions



“Our focus goes beyond a single event – we’re building market clusters that make long-term sense for Sarawak,” said Sarawak Tourism Board Chief Executive Officer Puan Sharzede Datu Haji Salleh Askor. “By deepening engagements in Korea while expanding collaborative networks across North East Asia, we’re shaping Sarawak’s visibility in line with global travel trends. Our goal is to ensure Sarawak resonates with travellers not just in Seoul but in Osaka and beyond.”

The Sarawak Tourism Board (STB) continues to expand its presence in Northeast Asia markets with its participation at the recent Seoul International Travel Fair (SITF) 2025 and its first-ever trade outreach in Busan.

This marks a significant milestone in STB’s broader regional strategy to strengthen its footprint across key market clusters, particularly within the Northeast Asia region. The ongoing efforts in South Korea also reflect STB’s growing momentum ahead of its participation at the World Expo 2025 in Osaka, Kansai — a global platform to further elevate Sarawak’s presence in the North East Asia market and beyond.

Held from 5 to 8 June at COEX Convention Centre in Seoul, SITF 2025 marked



Sarawak’s third consecutive participation in South Korea’s largest tourism exhibition, which also celebrated its 40th anniversary. Sarawak’s colourful showcase featured cultural performances and interactive experiences that brought the state’s Culture, Adventure, Nature, Food, and Festivals (CANFF) pillars to life.


Product Updates in Seoul and Busan

Korean arrivals to Sarawak reached 12,972 in 2024, representing a 20% increase compared to 2019, before the Covid pandemic. This steady growth highlights the effectiveness of STB’s sustained

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GATEWAY TO BORNEO

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 Three Sisters Keluan Waterfall, Long San, Miri
www.sarawaktourism.com

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Centara Hotels & Resorts, Thailand's leading hotel operator, invites travellers to explore the rich traditions, vibrant flavours, and captivating sights of Thailand with its 'Culture Connect' offer.

Available for bookings until 30 September 2025 for stays until 31 October 2025, this limited-time experience is perfect for families and friends looking to share in the beauty of the Land of Smiles together.

Guests staying at Centara hotels in the stunning cities of Korat, Udon Thani, Ubon Ratchathani, or Ayutthaya can enjoy an array of special benefits designed for shared experiences. A complimentary

stay for a third guest makes travelling even more rewarding, while food and beverage credit valued at 10% of each stay invites guests to indulge in regionally inspired menus crafted by Centara's talented chefs. Exclusive shopping vouchers open the door to nearby shopping hubs, where travellers can discover authentic Thai craftsmanship and take home meaningful mementoes from their journey.

From the ancient temples of Korat and peaceful lakes of Udon Thani to the dramatic landscapes of Ubon Ratchathani and the iconic UNESCO World Heritage Site of Ayutthaya, just an hour from

Bangkok—Centara's prime city-centre locations, warm hospitality and exceptional service make every stay a seamless blend of comfort and discovery.

Whether wandering through historic ruins, enjoying authentic Thai cuisine, or uncovering local wonders, Centara's Culture Connect offers an incredible opportunity to create lasting memories in some of Thailand's most fascinating destinations.

For more information on the Culture Connect offer or to make a reservation, visit: <https://www.centarahotelsresorts.com/cultureconnect-2025>



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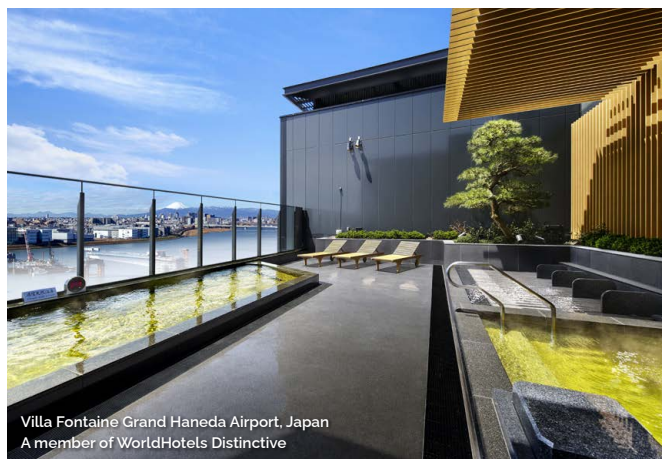
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WITH FAMILY & FRIENDS

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