

Malaysia eyes 500,000 Indian tourists in 2008

Eyeing 500,000 Indian tourists during the current year, Malaysia has launched a strategic marketing initiative that focuses on short breaks and other options beyond the customary Kuala Lumpur destination.

Toward this, Tourism Malaysia director Tuan Haji Azizan Noordin led a 35-member trade delegation to Chennai, [Mumbai](#) and [New Delhi](#) and said later he anticipates some 200,000 Indian tourist arrivals during the approaching summer alone.

'Focusing Tourism Malaysia's India initiatives under 'One Golden Celebration' the strategic emphasis will be on destination product showcase from the earlier event led promotion,' he said in a statement Monday.

'This will be aligned with the tourism board's objective to bring within the ambit of the travellers new diversified product beyond Kuala Lumpur. Three states - Terengganu, Kelantan and Kedah are celebrating their respective Visit State Year, will offer an inimitable diversity of niche tourism options.

'Terengganu as an idyllic getaway offers unspoiled beaches for holistic relaxation. Kelantan dubbed as the cradle of Malay culture presents an opportunity to explore unique traditions through its folk-based activities. Kedah offers unmatched eco-tourism indulgences to discerning travellers,' Noordin added.

During 2008, he explained, short breaks to Malaysia will feature customized itineraries 'including an ideal mix of both new and conventional activities focusing on active tourism, eco-tours, soft adventure, island retreats, city getaways, spa-sojourns, and driving holidays'.

These will be coupled with sporty indulgences of Golf and Formula 1, 'in-sync with Tourism Malaysia's strategic destination product marketing efforts to target a varied segment of holiday makers'.

India today is the sixth most prominent tourism generating source market for Malaysia, with 422,452 arrivals from this country during 2007 - an increase of a staggering 51.4 percent. This has seen the share in tourism receipts from India surging by 30 percent.

Overall, Tourism Malaysia surpassed industry targets by achieving 20.97 million arrivals during the Visit Malaysia Year 2007, an increase of 19.5 percent over the previous year.

Tourism Malaysia aims to achieve 22.5 million arrivals during 2008.

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