

Malaysia Welcomes The World



VISIT MALAYSIA YEAR 2014 GRAND LAUNCH

4 January 2014

Dataran Merdeka, Kuala Lumpur

Visit Malaysia Year 2014 is finally here! The Grand Launch officiated by Deputy Prime Minister YAB Tan Sri Dato' Hj Muhyiddin Hj Mohd Yassin at Dataran Merdeka, Kuala Lumpur's historical landmark attracted over 50,000 people. According to YB Dato' Seri Mohamed Nazri bin Tan Sri Abdul Aziz, Minister of Tourism and Culture Malaysia who also graced the event, there will be more than 600 international tour packages and 1001 domestic tour packages and more than 200 major events lined up during Visit Malaysia Year 2014.



Prior to the Grand Launch, tourists were given a rousing welcome at 37 entry points in various locations from air, sea and road such as Kuala Lumpur International Airport, Penang International Airport, Low Cost Carrier Terminal (LCCT), Padang Besar, Batu Kayu Hitam, KL Sentral and more.



Visitors were treated to some of Malaysia's delectable cuisines, exhibition and busker performances at daytime. By night, dazzling performances, such as a showstopping building mapping show that transformed the Sultan Abdul Samad Building into a magical storytelling work of art, spectacular songs from Malaysia's iconic songbird diva, Dato' Siti Nurhaliza and Datuk Khatijah as well as Datuk Jamal Abdillah, Amy Search, Hafiz, Nash, Azlan & the Typewriter, Awie and Najwa Latif. To give it a youthful zest, students from LimKokWing University performed Visit Malaysia Year 2014's theme song, "Celebrating 1Malaysia Truly Asia."



Malaysia Welcomes The World



1 January 2014

Kuala Lumpur International Airport

YBhg Datuk Dr Ong Hong Peng, Secretary General-Ministry of Tourism and Culture Malaysia, was at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA) to welcome 69 tourists from Beijing and 20 tourists from Shanghai as a symbolic gesture indicating the commencement of Visit Malaysia Year 2014.

1 January 2014

Penang International Airport, Penang

Nearly 700 passengers from four different flights received a grand welcome. The first batch with about 150 passengers on China Airlines, Taiwan were greeted by YBrs Encik Rashidi bin Hasbullah, Deputy Secretary General (Tourism Industry) from the Ministry of Tourism and Culture Malaysia and YB Datuk Abdul Malik Abul Kassim, Penang Religious Affairs, Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Committee Chairman and other dignitaries upon their arrival at the Penang International Airport.



1 January 2014

Low Cost Carrier Terminal (LCCT), Sepang, Selangor

Visitors were greeted by YBhg. Dato' Mirza Mohammad Taiyab, Director General Tourism Malaysia, YBhg. Datuk Musa Yusof, Director Domestic Market, Puan Aireen Omar, Chief Executive Officer Air Asia Berhad and YBrs. Encik Mohamed Razip Hasan, Director of Communications & Publicity at LCCT. It was a jovial mood with lots of merry-making in LCCT as the Proboscis Monkey, the official mascot of VMY 2014 and cultural performers entertained the tourists.

1 January 2014

Kota Kinabalu International Airport, Sabah

Tourists making their way into the country on the first day of the new year were surprised when they were given a grand welcome by YB Datuk Seri Panglima Masidi Manjun, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Environment Sabah, YB Senator Dato' Maznah Mazlan, Deputy Chairman of Tourism Malaysia, YM Dato' Seri Tengku Dr Zainal Adlin Tengku Mahmood, Board member of Tourism Malaysia, Dato' Haji Azizan Noordin, Deputy Director General of Tourism Malaysia, Datuk Joniston Bangkuai - Chairman of Sabah Tourism Board and Puan Nor Yahati Awang, General Manager VMY 2014 Secretariat.



Bidding Farewell and Welcome!

THE CLOSING CEREMONY OF LANGKAWI NATURALLY MAGIKAL & LAUNCH OF VISIT OF MALAYSIA 2014 KEDAH ZONE

5 January 2014

Lagenda Beach, Kuah, Langkawi

The closing ceremony of Langkawi Naturally Magikal (LNM) 2013 was held simultaneously with the launching of Visit Malaysia Year 2014 in Kedah at Pantai Lagenda in Langkawi. The event was presided by YAB Dato' Paduka Haji Mukhriz bin Tun Mahathir, the Chief Minister of Kedah. During the 18-day event, more than 300,000 tourists and locals visited Langkawi to watch their megastars perform at the nightly concerts. The evening shows utilised special effects technology to manage and sync its main show components – lasers, water jet fountain, ski show and fireworks. Visitors had a fun-filled time enjoying both local and International cuisines as well.

A 'Rail' Good Time



OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF RAILWAY TOURISM PACKAGES BROCHURE IN CONJUNCTION WITH VISIT MALAYSIA YEAR 2014

10 January 2014

KL Sentral Kuala Lumpur & Ipoh Train Station, Perak

Tourists have never had it better when it comes to travel by rail. They can now see more of Malaysia with comfort and ease. The "Railway Tourism Packages" which consisted of three new packages, "Day-Trip- by Rail", "North and East-bound Homestay by Rail" and "Resplendence Resort by Rail" was launched by YB Dato' Seri Mohamed Nazri bin Tan Sri Abdul Aziz, the Minister of Tourism and Culture. Tourists and media representatives boarded a train coach together with the Minister and various Ministry officials, departing from KL Sentral with Ipoh, Perak as the final destination during the launch.

Flash Mob Wowed the Crowd

VISIT MALAYSIA YEAR FLASHMOB

1 January 2014

Pavilion Kuala Lumpur

All traffic came to a halt as passers-by gazed in awe at the surprise Flash Mob at the Kuala Lumpur's premier shopping precinct. The 150 flash mobbers in their striking uniforms made the crowd roared with applause as they danced their way to the Visit Malaysia Year 2014 theme song, "Celebrating 1Malaysia Truly Asia". The 10-minute Flash Mob was a gimmick to garner attention as Malaysia welcomed the world to Visit Malaysia Year 2014.



Transformers Come Alive

MEDIA LAUNCH AND PRESS CONFERENCE TRANSFORMERS EXPO MALAYSIA 2014

9 January 2014

Times Square, First World Plaza, Resorts World Genting

Autobots, transform and roll out! In conjunction with the 30th Anniversary of Hasbro's Transformers franchise, a huge showcase of the brand's most iconic titular robots was held at Resorts World Genting. With 23-foot-tall reconstructions of Optimus Prime, Bumble Bee, and Camaro Chevrolet taking centre stage, "life-sized" Transformers took on a whole new meaning at the expo. Visitors were treated to a range of immersive attractions including experiencing Cybertron, the Transformers home planet in a 3D tunnel, an augmented reality station, and even Kreo versions of the Transformers themselves appearing during the meet and greet sessions. A wide range of merchandise was available for purchase, with many attendees taking their favourite Transformer home with them.

Gracing the event were Puan Hamdiah binti Ismail, Deputy General Manager, Visit Malaysia Year 2014 Secretariat, Mr. Kenny Yap, Assistant Vice President of Theme Park Operation & Marketing, Genting Malaysia Berhad, Mr. Raymond Tew, Chief Executive Officer, Target Exposition Sdn. Bhd, members of the media and bloggers.



ASEAN TOURISM FORUM 2014

16 January – 23 January 2014
Kuching, Sarawak

Advancing Tourism Together



The ATF 2014 was a resounding success as it helped further strengthen intra-regional cooperation and coordination in tourism through various meetings such as the 17th Meeting of ASEAN Tourism Ministers, and the 13th Meeting of ASEAN Plus Three (China, Japan, & Republic of Korea) Tourism Ministers and other meetings. In tandem with its theme ASEAN – Advancing Tourism Together, ATF 2014 has raised the tourism industry value-chain to a higher level through strong cooperation among ASEAN member states. The Forum also helped continue ASEAN's efforts of "Tourism Conserves, Preserves, and Protects" to explore the sustainable development of tourism and review various tourism initiatives and plans.

The ATF 2014 successfully attracted over 1,600 delegates, including 100 foreign and local travel trade media and offered Malaysia an excellent opportunity to showcase its diverse tourism products, particularly those in Sarawak and Sabah, and raise awareness of the celebration of Visit Malaysia Year 2014.

The 3-day Travel Exchange (TRAVEX), another component of the ATF saw a total of 450 booths set up by 353 exhibitors comprising 879 sellers to market regional individual tourism products from ASEAN member countries to 462 international buyers who attended the event.

ASEAN GREEN HOTEL AWARD 2014

Pullman Hotel, Kuching, Sarawak

Malaysia played host to the fourth ASEAN Green Hotel Award 2014 to recognise the hotels which complied to the ASEAN Green Hotel Standard, one of the six ASEAN Tourism Standards. The event graced by YB Dato' Seri Mohamed Nazri bin Tan Sri Abdul Aziz, Minister of Tourism and Culture Malaysia honoured the hotels which are environmentally-friendly and adopt energy conservation measures while being respectful of sustainable consumption of resources. A total of 86 hotels in ASEAN regions received their awards, including ten from Malaysia in which two are located in Sarawak, namely Riverside Majestic Hotel, Kuching and Miri Marriot Resort and Spa.



The 17th Meeting of ASEAN Tourism Ministers & The 13th Meeting For ASEAN Plus Three (China, Japan & Republic of Korea) Tourism Ministers

Pullman Hotel, Kuching, Sarawak

Tourism Ministers from ASEAN members; Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Vietnam, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Malaysia gathered together at the 17th Meeting of ASEAN Tourism Ministers and The 13th Meeting of ASEAN Plus Three (China, Japan & Republic of Korea) to discuss about facilitation of tourism professionals mobility, developing quality tourism, enhancing connectivity and ASEAN tourism product development. In a joint statement, it was noted that ASEAN continues to remain as an attractive destination for both regional and international tourists with an increase of 12% tourist arrivals in 2013 compared to 2012.

ASEAN Tourism Conference (ATC) – Advancing Tourism Together Panel Discussion

Borneo Convention Centre, Kuching, Sarawak

Four panelists comprising industry experts were invited to discuss about "Advancing Tourism Together" with emphasise on air, rail and sea travel. Ms Aireen Omar, CEO of Air Asia Berhad, Malaysia touched on ASEAN Open Skies Policy and air travel while Mr Sumit Srisanthithum, Operation Director of Bangkok Mass Transit System Public Company Limited discussed about travel by rail, citing on rail standardisation and high-speed train. Mr Farriek Tawfik of Carnival PLC, Singapore explained about today's cruise & sea transportation while Mr Xu Jing, Regional Director for the Asia & the Pacific, United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) enlightened the participants about river-based tourism. The moderator was YBhg Dato' Rashid Khan who wrapped up the discussion by urging the private and public sectors to work closely together and look into the common issues and promote ASEAN as an attractive tourist destination.



ASEAN TOURISM FORUM 2014

27th ASEAN Awards For Excellence 2013

Pullman Hotel, Kuching, Sarawak

In conjunction to ASEAN Tourism Forum, the 27th ASEANTA Awards for Excellence 2013 was held to recognise individuals or organisations from all sectors who have contributed significantly towards the growth and development of ASEAN tourism.

1. BEST ASEAN TRAVEL ARTICLE

Writer: Mr. Tawit Namkam; Organisation: Tourism Malaysia, Thailand;
Title of article : Living it up in the Wild East

2. BEST ASEAN MARKETING AND PROMOTIONAL CAMPAIGN

Writer: Ms. Cynthia Chung; Organisation: Airasia;
Title of article : Celebrating 2 million Airasia Facebook Fans with Free Seats

3. BEST ASEAN NEW TOURIST ATTRACTION

Writer: Mr. George Hong; Organisation: Borneo Nature Tours Sdn. Bhd;
Title of article : Canopy Walkway, Danum Valley

4. BEST ASEAN TOURISM PHOTO

Writer: Mr. Adam Lee Wai Loon; Organisation: Airasia;
Title of article : Cityscape



ASEAN TOURISM FORUM 2014 OPENING CEREMONY & WELCOMING DINNER

Sarawak State Assembly Hall, Kuching, Sarawak

The ASEAN Tourism Forum (ATF) 2014 Opening Ceremony and Welcoming Dinner was a colourful feast with diversity of cultures, food, music and dance filled the evening with excitement. The night with about 2,000 guests in beautiful batik gowns and shirts as well as black suits was a debonair affair steeped in tradition.

Gracing the event were YAB Dato' Seri Mohd Najib bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak, Prime Minister of Malaysia; YAB Pehin Sri Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud, Chief Minister of Sarawak; YB Dato' Seri Mohamed Nazri bin Tan Sri Abdul Aziz, Minister of Tourism and Culture Malaysia and dignitaries, comprising various Heads of Government from the ASEAN countries, ATF and TRAVEX delegates.

"The Magical Gardens of ASEAN" Coffee Table Book was also launched during this event by the Prime Minister. The book was produced by the Minister of Tourism and Culture Malaysia with contributions from the respective ASEAN Member States with the aim to promote ASEAN Parks and Gardens, and sustainable economic development through the conservation of natural and cultural heritage in the region.

ASEAN TOURISM FORUM 2014 Closing Ceremony and Handing Over to Myanmar

Borneo Convention Centre, Kuching, Sarawak

Next is Myanmar! The ASEAN Tourism Forum 2014 drew to a close with the handing over of ATF 2015 Chairmanship baton to H.E. U Htay Aung, Myanmar's Minister of Hotels and Tourism as the host of the next ASEAN Tourism Forum in Naypyidaw. ASEAN is now on the threshold of realising the goal of making the region as "One Vision, One Identity, One Community" by next year. YB Dato' Seri Mohamed Nazri bin Tan Sri Abdul Aziz congratulated ASEAN Tourism Association or ASEANTA in his speech for successfully co-organising TRAVEX and ASEAN Tourism Conference (ATC) 2014 and for the region's magnificent progress.





27th ASEAN Awards For Excellence 2013

Borneo Convention Centre, Kuching, Sarawak

A series of media briefings of ASEAN NTOs (National Tourism Organisations) were held during the ASEAN Tourism Forum 2014. These media briefings held individually by the heads of tourism of the respective countries were aimed to give a better insight into the country's tourism plan, aspiration as well as its achievements to the media representatives.

MALAYSIA

YBhg. Dato' Mirza Mohammad Taiyab, Director General Tourism Malaysia pointed out that Malaysia aims to achieve 36 million in tourist arrivals and RM168 in tourist receipts by 2020 under the Malaysia Tourism Transformation Plan (MTTP) 2020. He gave a great insight into the five major tourism themes and what to expect from Visit Malaysia Year 2014.

SARAWAK



From left: YBhg Datu IK Pahon Anak Joyik, Permanent Secretary Ministry of Tourism Sarawak, YB Datuk Amar A. R Zohari, Minister of Tourism Sarawak and YBhg Dato' Rashid Khan, Chief Executive Officer Sarawak Tourism Board

SINGAPORE



Mr. Oliver Chong, Director Communications & Industry Marketing, Marketing Group

THAILAND



Mr. Thawatchai Arunyik, Governor for Domestic Marketing

LAOS PDR



Mr. Saly Phimphinit, Director General Tourism Marketing Department, Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism

BRUNEI



(Left) Mr. AK Zulkhairi Pg. Abdul Razak, Tourism Officer from Brunei Tourism, Ministry of Industry and Primary Resource

PHILIPPINES



(Left) Mr. Daniel G. Corpuz, Undersecretary, Tourism Planning and Promotions

CAMBODIA



Mr. Lor Thoura, Deputy Director Marketing & Promotion Department

MYANMAR



Mr. Zeyar Myo Aung Assistant Director Ministry of Hotels and Tourism

VIETNAM



Mr. Le Dinh Chien, Secretary General of Vietnam Society of Travel Agents, Vietnam