

香港務須積極爭取日本及歐美旅客

Hong Kong needs to do more to draw Japanese and long-haul visitors

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(編按：鑒於香港的日本及歐美來港市場久未復甦，香港日本人旅客手配業社協會會長蔡百泰先生特為本刊撰寫下文，探討日本及歐美旅客卻步的原因，並提出吸引他們重返香港的方案。)

(Editor's note: In view of the prolonged slump plaguing the inbound markets of Japan, Europe and the United States, Mr Choi Pat Tai, Chairman of the Hongkong Japanese Tour Operators Association, has written the following article for The Voice, in which the reasons why visitors from these markets have stayed away from Hong Kong are explored and a battery of solutions aimed at attracting them back is given.)

沙士過後，訪港旅客人數迅速攀升，酒店業、零售業再顯笑顏，旅遊收益大增，失業率也因此回落，實在是可喜可賀。

根據香港旅遊發展局一至六月的統計資料，中國內地的訪港旅客人次達五百六十六萬八千一百三十一，比去年同期增加百分之七十五點二，佔訪港總人次一千零一萬二千六百一十八的百分之五十六點六。內地旅客大幅增加，使訪港旅客的總人次也增加了百分之六十八點三。雖然其他區域的訪港人次也有顯著增加，但這是因為去年四至六月沙士肆虐期間，除了中國內地的旅客外，其他國家的訪港旅客人次幾近於零的緣故。以日本為例，今年一至六月的旅客人次只比去年同期增加百分之二十七點九而已。

日本旅客躊躇卻步，原因之一是他們非常重視人身安全，所以對外遊地區的治安、交通、衛生等情況特別敏感，而日本政府也會呼籲國民避免前往危害自身健康和安全的地方。今年年初，廣州再次出現沙士個案，而香港周圍的國家，包括日本在內，都發生禽流感，唯獨香港沒有發生，這表示香港的衛生環境很優越，今後應利用這個優勢大力宣傳，爭取日本人來港旅遊。除衛生之外，香港的治安也一直得到日本人很高的評價，他們也很放心，這也應大力宣傳。

另一個吸引旅客來港的重要因素是香港的景點。香港的維多利亞港是世界三大天然良港之一，晚上由太平山頂

It is good news to hear that when the SARS crisis was over, inbound visitors to Hong Kong have surged rapidly, hotels and retail outlets have been bursting at the seams, tourism receipts have seen big rises, and unemployment figures have since been on the decline.

According to visitor arrival statistics from the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB), the total number of arrivals for January to June this year was 10,012,618, of which 56.6%, or 5,668,131, were from mainland China, an increase of 75.2% over the same period of last year. This remarkable increase in mainland visitors contributed to a surge of 68.3% in total arrivals. Although other markets also showed significant rises, that was chiefly due to their close-to-nil arrivals when Hong Kong suffered from SARS between April and June last year. Take, for example, Japan, whose visitor numbers in the first half of this year were just 27.9% more than those of the same period of last year.

One of the reasons why Japanese visitors were hesitant about going to Hong Kong is that they are very concerned about personal safety and therefore pay much attention to such matters as law and order, transport and hygiene of their outbound destinations. The Japanese Government often warns Japanese travellers not to go to places that might jeopardise their health or safety. Earlier this year, SARS infections re-emerged in Guangzhou and outbreaks of avian influenza were found in countries surrounding Hong Kong, including Japan. Hong Kong, however, was affected by neither SARS nor bird flu, reflecting the superb hygienic conditions of the city. This should indeed be widely promoted to attract Japanese visitors. Apart from that, Hong Kong is also highly praised by Japanese travellers as far as law and order is concerned, which should also be a focus of our promotional campaigns.

俯眺海港兩岸林立的高樓大廈，燈光璀璨瑰麗，令人心曠神怡，故此香港享有「東方之珠」的美譽。再加上淺水灣、赤柱等地的景點，對於初次來港的旅客，確實有一定的吸引力，但對於已多次訪港或需要在港逗留較長時間的渡假人士，卻未免有景點不足之憾。因此，本人自一九九三年起，一直建議加強旅遊設施，充份利用現有的旅遊資源，以及借重我們的後花園中國內地，特別是珠江三角洲的旅遊資源，以吸引旅客。

在充份利用香港旅遊資源方面，海洋公園景點眾多，活動創新，教育與娛樂並重，但可惜宣傳十分不足。要是日本人知道海洋公園節目豐富，園中又有熊貓的話，相信會吸引不少家庭旅客。此外，香港回歸祖國後仍然保留很多西方建築物，是世界上唯一中、西文化共治一爐的城市。至於我們的後花園珠江三角洲，像深圳、珠海、中山、廣州、番禺、佛山、肇慶、清遠、韶關、桂林、南寧等城市，天然名勝古蹟處處可見，加上多姿多采的主題公園、高爾夫球場，還有一九九九年回歸祖國的澳門，不斷改善和加強旅遊設施，最近又開了兩家美式賭場，這些都可彌補香港旅遊資源的不足。希望當局今後多安排日本及歐美的旅行社人員前往澳門和深圳等地考察，爭取把這些地方納入香港的行程之內。

日本雖然長期處於經濟不景，但其國民在過去經濟繁榮時都有儲蓄習慣，加上薪金年年增加，相當富有，所以每年都有超過一千六百萬國人出國旅遊。那麼我們怎樣才能使這些日本人或歐美人士再產生來港旅遊的興趣呢？本人認為以下各點值得當局參考：

1. 重視城市衛生，嚴防傳染病發生。
2. 大力宣傳海洋公園，並強調香港中西文化薈萃的特色。
3. 積極推動生態遊和「行山」(登山)的行程。
4. 邀請國際知名的演藝明星來港按手印，以增加星光大道的魅力。

Another allure of Hong Kong is its attractions and sights. When viewed at night from the Peak, the glistening neon lights decorating countless skyscrapers along both sides of Victoria Harbour, one of the top three natural harbours in the world, have earned Hong Kong its reputation as the Pearl of the Orient. Besides the magnificent night view, many scenic spots such as Repulse Bay and Stanley also appeal much to visitors first set foot in Hong Kong. However, to repeat visitors or those holidaymakers who have been around in Hong Kong for a considerably longer time than usual tourists, Hong Kong may not have too much to offer. Therefore, ever since 1993, I have been trumpeting about the need to enhance tourism facilities and make full use of our existing tourism resources while at the same time taking advantage of the tourism resources of our back garden, mainland China as a whole and the Pearl River Delta in particular, in order to attract visitors.

As far as Hong Kong's tourism resources are concerned, I think Ocean Park deserves a special mention. Given its many attractions and activities that combine education and entertainment, it is a pity that it has not been sufficiently promoted. If Japanese travellers had known Ocean Park better and realised that there are two pandas inside, it would have certainly attracted much more family visitors. Also, being the only city in the world that boasts a perfect blend of Eastern and Western cultures, Hong Kong is still characterised by plenty of buildings with Western architectural features after the return of sovereignty in 1997. As to our back garden, the Pearl River Delta, natural and historical sites, theme parks and golf courses abound in cities like Shenzhen, Zhuhai, Zhongshan, Guangzhou, Panyu, Foshan, Zhaoqing, Qingyuan, Shaoguan, Guilin and Nanning. And we should not forget Macao, which, since its return to China in 1999, has striven for better tourism facilities and recently seen two American-style casinos opened. All of them can be great complements to our tourism resources. Hong Kong's tourism authorities, therefore, should organise more familiarisation tours to Macao, Shenzhen and neighbouring cities for travel agents in Japan, America and Europe in the hope that these places will be included in their itineraries for Hong Kong.

Despite having been in recession for a long time, Japan is still a very affluent country, with over 16 million citizens travelling abroad each year, which might perhaps due to their saving habits during the boom years and the incremental increases in salary. Having said that, what should we do in order to attract Japanese, American and European travellers back to Hong Kong? I believe the following are worth considering by the authorities:

1. Set great store by hygiene, and prevent infectious diseases.



照片蒙香港旅遊發展局惠予提供。By courtesy of Hong Kong Tourism Board.

5. 邀請日本的著名歌星來港開個人演唱會，以吸引日本歌迷來港。
6. 每天數次在香港大會堂附近的愛丁堡廣場和鄰接香港文化中心的鐘樓一帶舞獅、舞龍，每個月由不同的文化團體在上述地點免費表演(但要憑票入場)，供旅客觀賞。
7. 開放電影製片廠、電視直播室、啤酒廠、香港交易所，以及航空公司的飛機餐製造廠給旅行團或外國旅遊業者參觀。
8. 各大百貨公司、名牌專賣店等給予訪港旅客優惠折扣，使香港再顯「購物天堂」的魅力。
9. 香港的航空公司和酒店應長期為日本旅客提供優惠機票和房租，使香港得以提高競爭力，壓倒其他對手。
10. 機場的各種告示牌加上日文。
11. 日本人經常光顧的酒樓食肆的餐牌應中日文對照。
12. 日本人很重視禮貌，所以接待日本人時應特別注重禮儀。
13. 三星級以上的酒店，房間內的各種說明文字都要加上日文，電視機要能接收日本頻道，並聘用日本人，以便與日本住客溝通和作緊急事故時的翻譯。
2. Aggressively promote Ocean Park as well as Hong Kong's unique feature of a synthesis of Eastern and Western cultures.
3. Put more effort in promoting ecotourism and hiking.
4. Invite internationally acclaimed show-business stars to come to Hong Kong to leave their handprints in the Avenue of Stars.
5. Invite famous Japanese singers to hold concerts in Hong Kong so as to attract their fans to come here.
6. Perform lion dances and dragon dances several times a day at Edinburgh Place, near Hong Kong City Hall, and around the Clock Tower close to the Hong Kong Cultural Centre; and allow cultural organisations to stage performances there (free admission by ticket).
7. Film studios, television broadcasting rooms, breweries, the Hong Kong Stock Exchange and flight kitchens should be open to visits by tour groups and overseas travel professionals.
8. Major department stores and designer brand outlets should offer discounts to visitors to keep up Hong Kong's reputation as a shopping paradise.
9. Hong Kong's airlines and hotels should provide Japanese visitors with special offers on a long-term basis to make Hong Kong outperform other rivals in attracting them.
10. Add Japanese to all signs in the airport.
11. Restaurants frequently patronised by Japanese visitors should have bilingual menus in Chinese and Japanese.
12. Always treat Japanese visitors with the utmost courtesy since they are very sensitive to politeness.
13. Hotels of three-star standard or above should have their instructions inside rooms translated into Japanese and make TV sets able to receive Japanese channels. They should also employ Japanese staff for better communication with Japanese customers particularly during emergencies.
14. The Government should earmark more funding for tourism promotion so that the HKTB can promote Hong Kong vigorously in Japan and other countries, for example, by launching large-scale advertising campaigns in electronic and printed media.

14. 政府應增加撥款，由旅遊發展局不斷在日本和各國推廣香港，包括在電視台和報章大力宣傳。
 15. 旅遊發展局應每年數次與澳門、深圳、廣東省旅遊局聯袂到日本和各國推廣珠江三角洲的旅遊資源和旅遊路線。
 16. 特區政府應與深圳合作，爭取香港持牌旅行社的旅遊車可以接載海外旅客直抵深圳的邊境口岸，使香港的旅行社能充份利用珠江三角洲的旅遊資源安排套餐行程，使港深兩地達成雙贏。
 17. 充份借重日本公司的駐港日籍職員和曾駐港返日的日本人的力量，委以「香港旅遊親善大使」名銜，向日本的親戚朋友和同事推介香港，每年並且在港舉行表揚大會，頒獎給有貢獻的人士。
 18. 政府應邀請旅遊發展局、旅遊業議會、航空公司、酒店、零售、飲食以及經營歐、美、日、中國內地、台、東南亞各線的旅遊組織的代表定期開會，促使旅遊業興旺。
 19. 中國內地的旅客激增，三星級酒店已供不應求，政府應提供優惠地價給予有興趣經營酒店的投資者興建酒店，條件是永遠不可變更用途。
15. The HKTB should co-organise promotional campaigns in Japan and other countries with the tourism bureaux of Macao, Shenzhen and Guangdong in order to popularise journeys to the Pearl River Delta region.
 16. Hong Kong should work with Shenzhen to make tour coaches owned by licensed travel agents be allowed to take overseas visitors to Hong Kong directly to Shenzhen checkpoints. In such a way, a win-win situation will be created whereby Hong Kong agents can devise itineraries that make good use of tourism resources in the Delta region.
 17. Japanese people who are or were once working in Hong Kong and are interested in promoting Hong Kong to their friends and relatives should be selected to become Hong Kong's tourism ambassadors. An award ceremony should be held each year to present awards to those ambassadors whose performance is outstanding during the year.
 18. The Government should hold regular meetings, which should be attended by representatives from the HKTB, the TIC, airlines, hotels, the retail and dining industries, and travel agents specialising in the markets of Europe, America, Japan, mainland China, Taiwan and Southeast Asia in order to pool ideas for tourism development.
 19. The supply of three-star hotels has been outstripped by demand because of a rapid upsurge in mainland visitors. The Government should sell land at reasonable prices for hotel development on condition that the land use cannot be changed.

日本人愛好旅行，他們把旅行當作生活的一部份。香港曾是他們出國旅行的首選，是以政府、業界，以至市民都要共同努力，使日本再形成來港旅遊的熱潮。澳門當局現在非常積極爭取日本人直飛澳門，已有很多日本直飛澳門的包機正在接洽之中。還有剛開幕的新白雲國際機場，不但可提供日本直飛廣州的廉價機票，更會以各種優惠、優勢，吸引各國航空公司開辦直飛廣州的班次。其實這幾年間，已有經上海或廣州到香港作一天遊行程的日本旅行團，這是很大的威脅，我們應正視這個問題，早日補救。總括而言，爭取日本和歐美旅客才是香港旅遊業的生存之道。✎

Japanese people have a liking for travel and take it as part of their life. Given that Hong Kong once topped their list of holiday destinations, the Government, the tourist industry and all of us should join hands to make Hong Kong become the first city that crops up whenever Japanese travellers plan their overseas journeys. Macao is now vying for direct-flight services to and from Japan and many chartered direct flights between the two places are also being negotiated. The new Baiyun International Airport not only can offer competitive rates for direct flights between Japan and Guangzhou, but also will lure other international direct flight routes through various special offers. As a matter of fact, in the past few years, there have been Japanese tours spending just one day in Hong Kong after touring Shanghai or Guangzhou. This is a severe threat to Hong Kong and we have to tackle it, the sooner the better. In a word, attracting Japanese, American and European visitors back is essential for the survival of Hong Kong tourism. ✎