



LUXE HOTELS

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A record year for the tourist industry

You can hear the clinking sound of Champagne glasses in hotel boardrooms as the tourist industry celebrates a record year for Hong Kong in terms of tourist arrivals.

Building on the momentum in 2017 when the tourist industry staged a comeback with arrival numbers growing by 3.2% to more than 58 million, the numbers for 2018 have gained further momentum, rising by 11.4% to top the 65 million mark.

But perhaps more relevant to the hotel industry is the number of overnight arrivals which reached 29.26 million, up 4.9% from 2017. Overnight arrivals from the Mainland, the major source destination, increased 7.4% to close to 20 million. The robust performance has, no doubt, been propelled by the opening of the Hong Kong section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link and the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge.

handling capacity of Hong Kong's International Airport by way of a third runway so that in Hong Kong.

Meanwhile, government is pushing ahead with a Travel Industry Bill aimed at strengthening trade regulations for safeguarding the rights and interests of visitors. It industry to further develop and prosper.

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The blueprint for tourism development

In her latest 2018 Policy Address, Chief Executive Carrie Lam underlines the Government's commitment to facilitate the balanced, healthy and sustainable development of the tourism industry and to formulate forward-looking strategies for the future. In this respect, the Government has promulgated the Development Blueprint for Hong Kong's Tourism Industry.

Cultural & green tourism

Lam reports that the Government is actively pressing ahead with various initiatives, including promoting in-depth district tourism to enable visitors to experience Hong Kong's local life and district characteristics. In this connection, following the launch of Old Town Central promotion in 2017, the Hong Kong Tourism Board has launched another district tourism campaign in Sham Shui Po last September to promote the distinctive characteristics of the district to our visitors.

"We will continue to identify suitable local areas for district tourism promotion," she promises.

The Government is, she says, also enhancing the supporting facilities of key hiking trails and piers with a view to strengthening the development of Hong Kong's green and eco-tourism.

Theme park upgrades

Lam notes that Hong Kong Disneyland and Ocean Park, the two major theme parks in Hong Kong, have for years attracted many visitors locally and from around the world. "We will continue to ensure that the two



theme parks can enhance their attractiveness so as to draw more high value-added overnight visitors," she emphasizes.

The Government is closely monitoring the existing expansion plans

of Hong Kong Disneyland and will explore whether there is room for its next-stage development, while Ocean Park will continue to receive support in reviewing its strategic positioning and future development plan, with a view to bringing more comprehensive recreational experience to visitors.

The iconic Peak Tram

In addition, Lam points out the Peak Tram has always been an iconic facility in Hong Kong since it commenced operation in 1888. The Peak Tramways Company Limited, to which the second 10-year operating right up to 2035 has been granted by the Government, will implement an upgrading plan of over \$650 million to improve the existing facilities so as to provide better services for tourists and locals alike.



"The improvement project will be conducive to enhancing the attractiveness of peak tramway as an important tourism and recreational facility," she adds.

Finally, Lam expresses the hope that the LegCo will pass the Travel Industry Bill in the near future, so that the Travel Industry Authority can be established as soon as possible to commence necessary preparations for setting up the new regulatory regime for

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