



Government Liaison Committee Update: Phuket–Chinese Consular Coordination on Tourism Safety

This is a Government Liaison Committee Update

The Chinese Consular Office in Phuket, led by Mr. Li Chenglong, hosted a coordination meeting with approximately 50 representatives from key government agencies, enforcement bodies, transport authorities, hospitals, and tourism organisations on 17th December at the Merlin Hotel in Phuket Town. The Consulate highlighted that while Chinese visitor arrivals to Phuket have declined significantly from 2024 to 2025, travel patterns have shifted toward higher-spending, independent travellers (FITs), supported by increased direct flight connectivity from mainland China. The Consulate remains confident in Phuket's long-term appeal for Chinese visitors, noting growth potential in quality tourism and revenue despite lower overall volumes.

A key concern raised was the safety and security of independent Chinese travellers, many of whom travel without guides and face language barriers. Authorities discussed contributing factors affecting traveller confidence, including criminal incidents, misinformation around isolated cases, natural disasters, road and marine accidents, and regional competition. The Consulate thanked Thai police, rescue teams, and authorities for their continued care of Chinese tourists, while clearly stating that it does not support illegal behaviour and will only assist citizens within the framework of Thai law.

Phuket authorities outlined extensive measures already in place, including enhanced marine patrols, lifeguard and tour operator training, road safety enforcement, Chinese-language support across agencies, emergency response coordination, and certification programs such as "Trusted Thailand." Strong emphasis was placed on communication, particularly educating visitors on local rules, safety warnings, driving regulations, and respect for Thai laws and culture. The meeting concluded with reaffirmed cooperation across all agencies and recognition of frontline responders through the donation of equipment to the Ministry of Tourism and Tourist Police.

Key Actions and Follow-Up

- Strengthen Chinese-language safety communications, including do's and don'ts, through WeChat, airports, hotels, rental operators, and tour providers
- Enforce stricter controls on vehicle rentals to tourists without valid international driving licences
- Expand Chinese-language training for frontline staff across police, immigration, transport, healthcare, and tourism services
- Increase public education on marine safety, red-flag warnings, and weather alerts, with Consular support for outbound communication
- Continue and expand safety training for lifeguards, tour operators, hotels, and excursion providers
- Encourage broader participation in the "Trusted Thailand" safety certification program
- Enhance coordination between police, Consulate, hospitals, and emergency services for rapid response cases
- Promote responsible tourism messaging focused on cultural awareness, legal compliance, and personal safety

THIS WEEK EVENT



Spreading Christmas Cheer in Phuket

Phuket Hotels Association supplied soft drinks for Christmas celebrations for children at Phuket Sunshine Village Foundation. It was wonderful to see so many smiling faces and joyful moments that truly brightened the day. What small difference can you make to brighten someone's day today?

UPCOMING EVENT

Thailand Tourism Forum 2026 - 15th Annual Edition

Date: 22 January 2026
Venue: The Athenee Hotel, Bangkok

Register [HERE](#)

COMING SOON

The 2026 Thailand Tourism Forum, themed "A World of Change," showcases key shifts in Thailand's tourism and hospitality sector. Organized by C9 Hotelworks, the event covers emerging trends, investment insights, brand strategies, alternative accommodations, and social media's role in travel. The BRAC prequel explores Thailand's evolving F&B landscape through design, identity, delivery, and data-driven trends.

THIS WEEKS' NEWS UPDATE

THAI HOTELS EXPECT WEAKER SECOND-HALF REVENUES IN 2025, FOREIGN ARRIVALS SEEN RISING ONLY MODESTLY TO 33 MILLION IN 2026

A Thai Hotels Association–Bank of Thailand survey shows most hotel operators expect foreign arrivals in 2026 to remain near 2025 levels, at around 33 million, with 54% forecasting stability and 22% anticipating a decline. While fourth-quarter 2025 revenues improved slightly, operators expect overall second-half 2025 revenues to fall year-on-year, despite government stimulus measures. Average hotel occupancy rose to 76% in November, led by the South at 82%, supported by long-haul demand. However, labour shortages persist, particularly in Central and Southern regions. Operators are calling for stronger government support, including tourism stimulus, cost relief, soft loans, labour reforms, and infrastructure upgrades to sustain sector recovery.

For more information



TOURISM STILL A STALLED ENGINE



Thailand's tourism sector contracted for the first time since the pandemic in 2025, with arrivals cut to 33 million amid safety concerns, political instability, border tensions, and global economic headwinds. Government campaigns and subsidy schemes delivered limited impact, while competition from Vietnam, Japan, and China intensified across regional markets. Industry leaders highlight tourism's vulnerability to external shocks and urge renewed policy focus, stronger destination management, and infrastructure investment under the next government. A recovery to around 35.5 million arrivals in 2026 is expected, supported by increased flight capacity, major international events, targeted marketing, and more market-driven pricing strategies by operators.

For more information

TRIP.COM SUSPENDS TOURISM PARTNERSHIP WITH CAMBODIA AMID BORDER CLASHES, CYBER CONCERNS

Trip.com Group, China's largest online travel agency, has suspended its planned tourism partnership with Cambodia's tourism authority amid heightened safety concerns among Chinese travellers. The collaboration, scheduled for September 2025 to March 2026, was halted following multiple safety alerts issued by the Chinese embassy, including warnings over border clashes with Thailand and scam syndicates. The announcement triggered online backlash, with some users raising data security concerns, which Trip.com denied, stressing no data-sharing was involved. The suspension comes as Cambodia seeks to attract more Chinese visitors, despite embassy reports that dozens of Chinese nationals were recently rescued from scam centres.



For more information

UFO FESTIVAL ON THAILAND TOURISM CALENDAR IN 2026

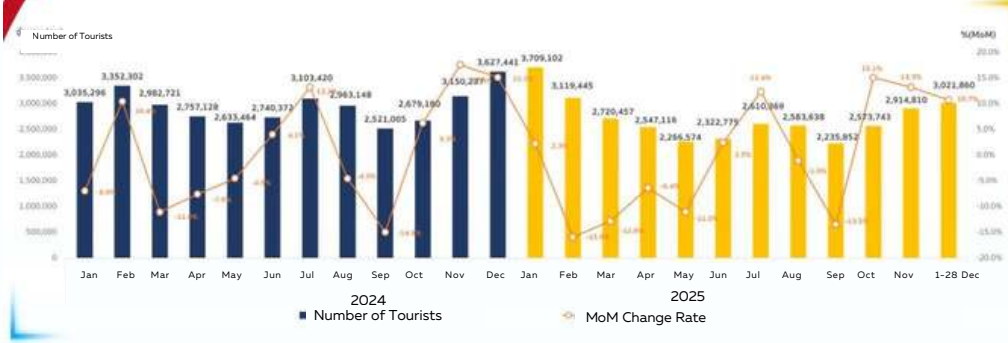


The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) has unveiled a series of year-end and early-2026 events to stimulate spending and lift international arrivals by at least 10% next year. Key initiatives include the launch of the Amazing Thailand Ambassador campaign featuring Lalisa "Lisa" Manobal, major nationwide countdown celebrations, and a UFO festival in Nakhon Nayok. TAT is also rolling out the "Hat Yai Rise Up" project to revive flood-affected areas in the South. For 2026, TAT has set a baseline target of 36.7 million foreign arrivals and 2.78 trillion baht in revenue, focusing on safety, trust, and wellness-led travel under the theme "Healing is the New Luxury," while revitalising nightlife, events, and regional destinations.

For more information

THAILAND TOURISM MARKET UPDATE

Number of tourists 1 JAN - 28 DEC 2025



Number of tourists
(1 JAN - 28 DEC 2025)

32,625,741 people

-7.29% (YOY)

Top 5 number of tourists

Rank	Country	People
1	Malaysia	4,480,937
2	China	4,438,351
3	India	2,463,620
4	Russia	1,870,011
5	South Korea	1,544,355



IMPORTANT FACTORS DURING THE PAST WEEK

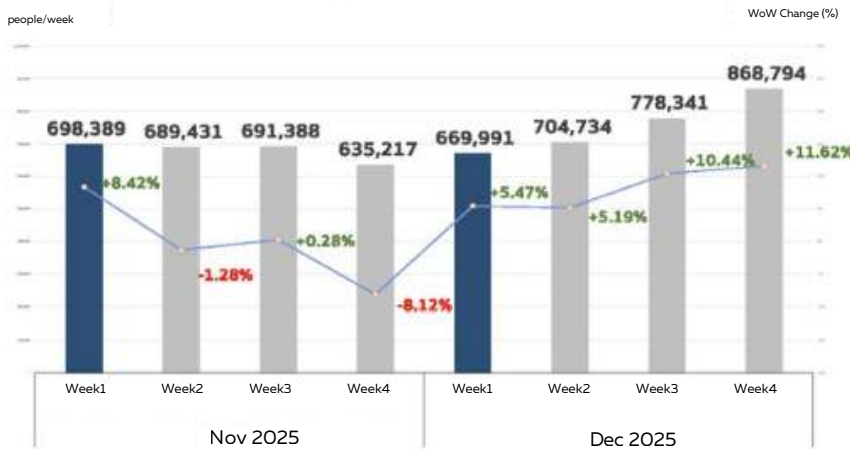
- (+) Increased outbound travel during long holiday periods, including the European Christmas season and school holidays in Malaysia.
- (+) Entry into the peak tourism season, along with government ease of travel measures that help improve convenience for travel to Thailand.



Source : Economics Tourism and Sports Division Information as of Dec 30, 2025

[For more information](#)

Number of International Tourists: Weeks 1-4 of November to Week 4 of December 2025



Top 5 source markets in Week 4 of December 2025

Rank	Country	People	Change (%)
1	Malaysia	102,415	+35.88%
2	China	80,634	-8.02%
3	Russia	70,860	+19.45%
4	India	63,034	+3.72%
5	UK	35,826	-1.09%

Source : Economics Tourism and Sports Division Information as of Dec 30, 2025

GHA DISCOVERY

2026 GLOBAL TRAVEL TRENDS*



IT'S PERSONAL

Travellers design trips that express who they are, not where they go.



SLOW AND STEADY

Meaningful, unplanned and restful trips with safety and comfort in mind are key.



NEW FRONTIERS

Exploration will rule with travellers seeking new places and splurging only on quality.

HOW IMPORTANT IS TRAVEL?

65%

"It expresses my identity and values."

44%

"It matters more than career or education milestones."

TRAVEL PREFERENCES

60%

Off-the-beaten path

Smaller cities and rural escapes

79%

Room first

Quality upgrades rather than splurge freely

60%

Time-savers

Concierge services, private transfer, priority access

50%

Exclusivity

Special access to experiences

2026 TRIPS PLANNED

Business Travel



4 trips planned



42% international

Leisure Travel



6 trips planned



93% international

TRAVEL DESTINATIONS IN 2026



JAPAN



CHINA



THAILAND



USA



AUSTRALIA

62%

prefer new places, a trend shared across generations and countries



TOP PRIORITIES FOR TRAVELLERS

Hotel quality	86%
Selective splurging	79%
Safety and comfort	57%
Cultural curiosity	41%



HOW THEY CHOOSE HOTELS

Location and neighbourhood	42%
Loyalty programme	39%
Price	36%



WHERE THEY BOOK HOTELS

Loyalty programme website or app	42%
Hotel website or app	30%
Online travel agent or tour operator site	7%

THE RISE OF AI



61% of travellers use AI for trip planning

79% of Gen Z travellers plan trips using AI

79% are comfortable with the idea of an AI concierge

*Based on Oct 2025 survey to GHA DISCOVERY members in EN, DE, SP, ZH and JP with D\$10 incentive. 4.2K responses analysed.

Sources: Hotel Inside

THAILAND TOURIST INSIGHTS: GEN Z & EAST ASIAN MARKETS

TAT REVIEW | DATALAB

GEN Z: BEYOND ESCAPE

Searching for meaning. Not just a vacation, but designing a life of their own choice. Focus on unique experiences, local culture, nature, and food.

TAIWAN: SOCIAL SAVVY TRAVELERS	HONG KONG: EAT & SHOP REPEATERS	JAPAN: CULTURE & LIFESTYLE BLEND	SOUTH KOREA: EXPERIENCE SEEKERS	CHINA: THE BIG WAVE TRAVELERS
VISITOR PROFILE First-time: 51.5% Repeat: 2-4 times: 37.6% Frequent: >5 times: 10.9%	VISITOR PROFILE Repeat Visitors: 46.6%	VISITOR PROFILE First Time: 77.5%	VISITOR PROFILE First Time: 63.6%	VISITOR PROFILE First-time: 59.8%
TOP ACTIVITIES Shopping: 95% Thai Food: 80.2% Historical Sites: 44.8%	TOP ACTIVITIES Thai Food: 94.3% Shopping: 96.6%	TOP ACTIVITIES Tasting Thai Food: 93.6% Historical Sites: 58.8%	TOP ACTIVITIES Massage/Spa: 66.4% Marine Activities: 45.5%	TOP ACTIVITIES Shopping: 95.5% Tasting Thai Food (Mandatory): 94.8%
DESTINATIONS Bangkok: 76.2% Pattays-Chonburi: 20.8% Chiang Mai: 11.9%	DESTINATIONS Bangkok: 84% (Main)	DESTINATIONS Bangkok: 81.4% Phuket: 21.1% Krabi: 10.8%	DESTINATIONS Bangkok: 53.6% Phuket: 25.5% Pattays: 15.5%	DESTINATIONS Start: Bangkok Then: Phuket & Pattaya
IMPRESSIONS & INFO Value for Money: 99% Info via Social Network: 53.5%	IMPRESSIONS & INFO Unique Thai Food: 95.5% Thai Hospitality: 94.3% Info via Social Network: 34.1%	IMPRESSIONS & INFO Unique Tourist Sites: 97% Thai Friendliness: 95.8% Info via Social Network: 32.4%	IMPRESSIONS & INFO Abundance of Nature: 98.2% Delicious Thai Food: 95.5% Charm of Tourist Sites: 97.3% Info via Social Network: 42.7%	IMPRESSIONS & INFO Thai Hospitality: 97.8% Unique Tourist Sites: 97.5%

Sources: TAT

Thailand Tourism: Year-End to New Year 2026 Outlook

5-Day Holiday Period Generates THB 38.5 Billion in Tourism Revenue

Research View: Thailand Tourism at Year-End

Total tourism revenue during the New Year holiday period estimated at THB 38.5 billion **-3.3% YoY decline**

Weaker international tourism offsets modest domestic growth.

International Tourism Revenue During the Year-End to New Year Holiday 2026

Tourism revenue (THB million)

Period	Revenue (THB million)	YoY Change
28 December 2024 – 1 January 2025	~24,000	-6%
31 December 2025 – 4 January 2026	22,560	-3.3%

Revenue comparison between the two New Year periods shows a decline.

International Flight Movements to Thailand (17–30 December 2025)

No. of flights

Region	% (YoY)
Asia	-4%
Middle East and North Africa	17%
Western Europe	12%
Eastern Europe	7%
Oceania	-2%
Sub-Saharan Africa	-10%
North America	40%

Domestic Tourism Revenue During the Year-End to New Year Holiday 2026

Tourism revenue (THB million)

Period	Revenue (THB million)	YoY Change
28 December 2024 – 1 January 2025	~14,000	+1.2%
31 December 2025 – 4 January 2026	~14,500	+1.2%

Modest growth in domestic tourism revenue year-on-year.

Top Destinations During New Year

Category	Rank	Destination
Top Destinations – Thai Tourists	1	Bangkok
	2	Chonburi
	3	Kanchanaburi
	4	Chiang Mai
	5	Prachuap Khiri Khan
Top Destinations – International Tourists	1	Bangkok
	2	Phuket
	3	Chonburi
	4	Surat Thani
	5	Krabi

Source: KResearch (Krungsri Research Center)
 Note: New Year holiday period refers to 31 December 2025 – 4 January 2026

USEFUL ARTICLES

ENGLISH

[Thailand’s Tourism Soars in 2026: How Thai Airways and Local Hotels Are Reaping the Rewards of the Solo Travel Surge!](#)

[Global Hotel Performance Remained Stagnant in 2025](#)

[The Hotel That Wins 2026 Starts Training Its AI Today](#)

THAI

[H World เซนโรงแรมจีน ครองโลก ?](#)

[‘ท่องเที่ยวไทย’ ส่อซิมยาว คึกซิงทัวร์สต์เดือน ‘จีน’ อดขายครบรส ‘เวียดนาม’ คادنัวไฮปนี](#)

[‘โรงแรมไทย’ คาดรายได้ครึ่งหลังปี 68 ลดลง ทัวร์สต์ ‘ต่างชาติ’ ปหน้าโตต่ำแตะ 33 ล้านคน](#)

Information sources

- <https://www.bangkokpost.com/>
- https://www.facebook.com/ETSMOTS?locale=th_TH
- IHA
- IAT
- THE.Nation

Disclaimer: members should seek and consult their lawyers / accountants / advisors accordingly and not rely only on the provided information as the information given is only for educational purposes and information as received from a third party.

ABOUT US

"The Phuket Hotels Association is a nonprofit organisation comprising a broad spectrum of hotels"

Phuket Hotels Association Leadership Team

Bjorn Courage	President
Daniel Muery	Director, Secretary - General
Brett Wilson	Director, Treasurer
Christoph Weidemann	Director, Vice President

Phuket Hotels Association Core Team

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Sulaiya Ritto	Administrative Manager
Wanwisa Chunuansri	Asst. Administrative Manager
Nuthamat Phetsawee	Event Support

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Jirarat Ninpradub (Pui)

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General Manager Le Meridien Phuket Beach Resort
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Le Meridien Phuket Mai Khao Beach Resort

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Hotel Manager, MSocial Hotel Phuket

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David Barrett
Dhapat Chotiratnarakool
Natthawadee Wongpanya

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Event Consultant, The Slate
Social Media & Partnership Manager, The Pavilions Phuket
MarCom Manager, Hyatt Regency Phuket Resort

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General Manager, Anantara Mai Khao Phuket Villas
General Manager, Doubletree by Hilton Phuket Banthai Resort

Affiliate Ambassador

Patrik Ilstam

Eden Beach Resort and Spa , Ocean Breeze Resort Khao Lak

Members


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Affiliates

Eden Beach Resort and Spa , Ocean Breeze Resort Khao Lak , Iniala Beach House, Khao Lak Marriott Beach Resort & Spa, JW Marriott Khao Lak Resort & Spa, Avani+ Khao Lak Resort



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