

ISSUE 212

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WEEKLY INSIGHTS

HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY NEWSLETTER



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Business booming again for hotels, homestays

The Aidilfitri public holiday was the perfect time for the people to reunite with their families, but many, including foreign tourists, also took the opportunity to visit interesting destinations in the country.

This was evident with the increase in bookings for hotels and homestays across the country, which helped the country's hotel and tourism sector bounce back after a two-year downturn due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

According to Malaysia Budget & Business Hotel Association (MyBHA) deputy president Sri Ganesh Michiel, the highest number of bookings were recorded in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah and Genting Highlands, Pahang, which saw an increase of up to 100% compared to normal days.

Besides major towns, several small districts like Batu Pahat and Mersing in Johor also recorded a significant increase in hotel bookings and the trend is expected to continue until the end of May or early June.

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MITM organiser eyes RM70 mil sales from travel fair in July on revenge tourism

After a two-year hiatus, the Malaysia International Travel Mart (MITM) travel fair will be back in July this year and targeting a sales turnover of RM70 million.

The last time the Malaysian Chinese Tourism Association (MCTA) organised the MITM travel fair was in 2019 at the Mid Valley Exhibition Centre in Kuala Lumpur. It had stopped for two years due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

MCTA president Paul Paw said the MITM Travel Fair 2022 is scheduled from July 8-10 at the Mid Valley Exhibition Centre and the Penang government is the official sponsor for the event.

"We are expecting a high turnover of RM70 million this year, on revenge tourism and (rising) demand for tourism products after the two-year lockdown due to the pandemic," he told reporters here on Friday (May 6) at an event to promote the travel fair. [READ MORE](#)



'Amazing and unprecedented': Penang hotspots see up to 500pc increase in visitors during Raya holidays

In Penang, tourist attractions, eateries and hawker centres are reporting an increase of between 100 and 500 per cent in business over the long Hari Raya Aidilfitri holidays as visitors throng the island.

A check of popular tourism hotspots such as Penang Hill, the beaches and various “bucket list” spots in inner city George Town found large crowds and long queues.

Main roads, such as those heading to Batu Ferringhi, Air Itam, Gurney Drive and around the inner city, were also congested.

According to Penang Hill Corporation general manager Datuk Cheok Lay Leng, the hill resort saw between 7,000 and 8,000 visitors per day on the first and second days of Raya. [READ MORE](#)



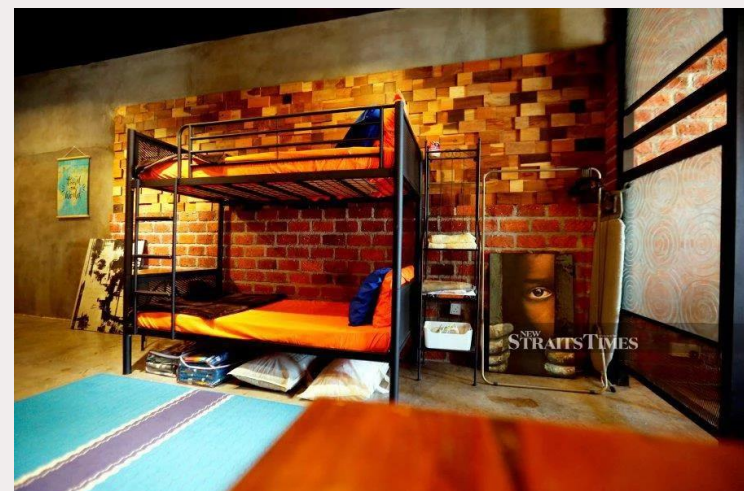
Penang plans to regulate short-term rentals, homestays

Despite recently announcing a ban on short-term rental homes or homestays, the Penang government is still open to the option of regulating the activity.

State Tourism and Creative Economy Committee chairman Yeoh Soon Hin said for this, many parties such as the Ministry of Tourism, Art and Cultural (Motac), the Ministry of Housing and Local Government and local councils would need to be involved.

He said short-term rental homes or homestays have created unfair competition for licensed hotels that abide by Motac's regulations, including by paying taxes and hotel fees.

"We will discuss with all the ministries and agencies involved to set up new rules and regulations to regulate short-term rental homes or homestays in the state," he told reporters after launching the "High Fun Penang Project", an initiative to stimulate Penang tourism's industry here today. [READ MORE](#)



The Ascott Star KLCC Kuala Lumpur has officially opened for business

The Ascott Ltd, a lodging business unit of CapitaLand Investment Ltd, has opened Ascott Star KLCC Kuala Lumpur, one of the city's tallest high-end serviced apartments.

The 58-story luxury property, formerly known as Star Residences Tower 3, is located on Jalan Yap Kwan Seng.

Masterfully designed for a stylish and luxurious stay, Ascott Star KLCC has 298 units in total ranging from studio, one- and two-bedroom apartments. It offers premium accommodation options for business and leisure travellers.

Members of Ascott's complimentary loyalty programme Ascott Star Rewards (ASR) can take advantage of promotional rates starting at RM360 per night (for a studio executive) until October 31, 2022. [READ MORE](#)



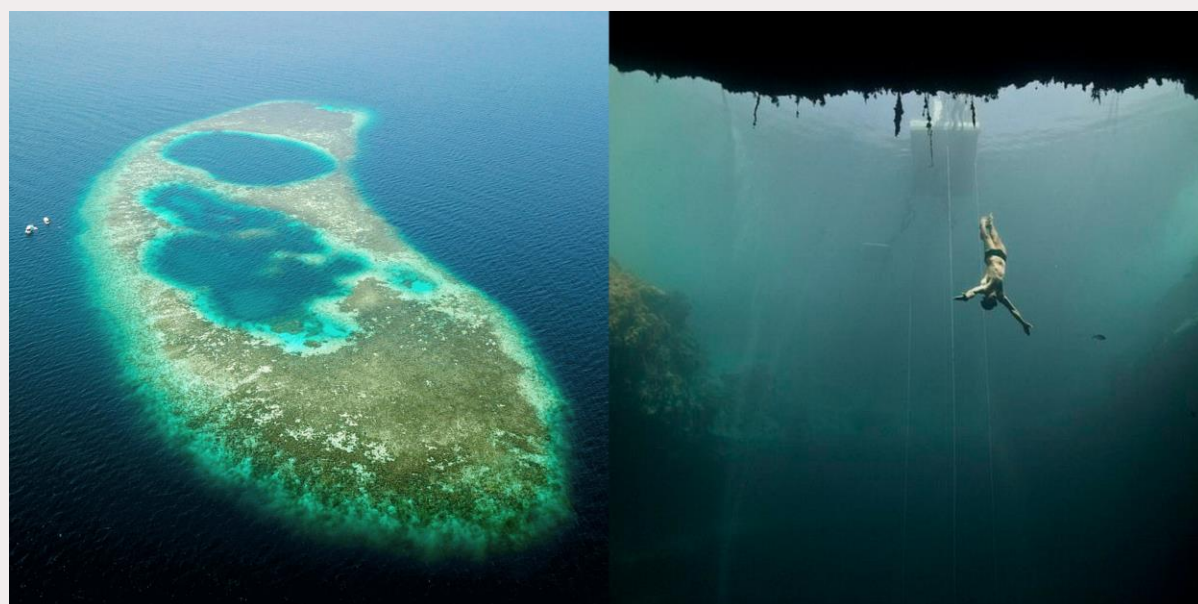
Sabah Blue Ring Hole to be new tourism product

The tourism, arts and culture ministry (Motac) has identified an iconic scuba diving spot known as Blue Ring Hole at the Tingkayu Reef, Teluk Darvel, here, as the country's new tourism product.

Its minister, Nancy Shukri, said it is believed that there are only 10 Blue Ring Hole sites in the world, each with a blue hole structure, but more interestingly, the Tingkayu Reef has two marine sinkholes.

“Our visit to the Blue Ring Hole today was to assist in promoting this new tourism product. As we gradually recover from the Covid-19 pandemic, we're searching for new tourism products for the country,” she told reporters.

The Blue Ring Hole, known as Takat Tenggara among local fishermen, is about 20km from Lahad Datu town and it takes about 30 minutes by speedboat to get there. [READ MORE](#)

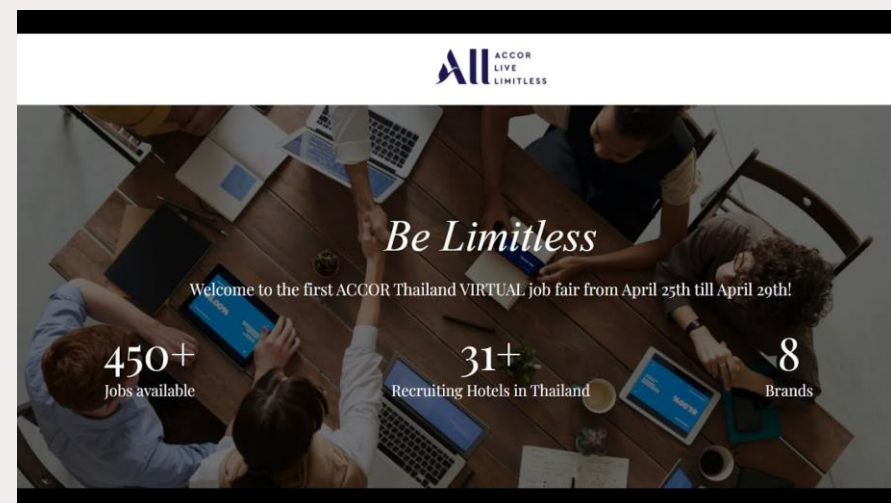


Accor hotels across Thailand debut virtual job fair

As Thailand reopens to the world, Accor is debuting its first-ever virtual job fair in the country from 9th to 13th May 2022. Over 450 jobs will be available during the event, with candidates able to access the platform to organise virtual interviews, share their CVs and learn more about the group's limitless opportunities across 30+ hotels and resorts in destinations such as Bangkok, Phuket, Hua Hin, and Pattaya.

Accor is the largest international hotel operator in Thailand, offering a collection of 87 hotels under 11 brands, each with its own unique character.

The Thailand Accor Job Fair website is now live in both English and Thai. The group is encouraging anybody with a passion for people to browse through the available positions and book a virtual interview to learn more about the limitless opportunities that a career in hospitality can offer. [READ MORE](#)



Swiss-Belhotel International Ups Expansion Plans

Swiss-Belhotel International has announced ambitious expansion plans with a strategic focus on Central and Southeast Asia, the Middle East and Africa. As part of the move the group recently signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Odyssey Group to support its expansion in Japan.

Swiss-Belhotel International is looking at other asset management alliances globally to support its expansion and is presently negotiating on more opportunities. This is a real pivot and change in the expansion approach by working with third party asset managers and investment bankers.

As part of its robust expansion in Southeast Asia, Swiss-Belhotel International has recently set up a regional office in Thailand. The company is looking to capitalize on new opportunities in priority markets like Thailand and Vietnam where it has multiple hotel projects in advanced negotiations. [READ MORE](#)



Marriott International Signs Agreement to Debut JW Marriott Brand in Tokyo

Marriott International, Inc. announced it has signed an agreement with East Japan Railway Company to bring the JW Marriott brand to Tokyo, Japan. The hotel is located in the heart of Tokyo between Shinagawa and Tamachi Stations and is a key component of JR East's extensive redevelopment project of the former JR Shinagawa Depot Railway Yard. The hotel is expected to open in spring 2025.

The new luxury hotel will mark the second JW Marriott hotel to open in Japan and will welcome guests to an oasis of peace and serenity in the bustling heart of Tokyo.

The interiors of the 200-key hotel will be led by Yabu Pushelberg, and are set to be balanced, subtle, and elegant with deep indigo as the accent colours.

In addition, the hotel will feature 740 square metres of event space, as well as 250 square metres of pre-function event space, making it a prime destination for small to medium scale events. [READ MORE](#)

