ZERIN PROPERTIES

ISSUE 339

Hospitality Industry Newletter

Weekly Insights

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Malaysia and China's Extended Visa-Free Travel to Spark New Opportunities Across Sectors

Malaysia's extension of visa-free travel with China strengthens ties and creates new opportunities in tourism, education, and business. Experts see this as a smart move to encourage deeper cultural and academic exchange.

Associate Prof Dr Roy Anthony Rogers from Universiti Malaya said the visa exemption would shift focus from government-to-government ties to building stronger people-to-people connections, promoting new forms of diplomacy.

Lee Chean Chung, Chairman of the Centre for Regional Strategic Studies, said the move would support longer visits, benefiting sectors like tourism, healthcare, and education. Longer stays allow visitors to better experience local culture and communities.

During President Xi Jinping's visit, Malaysia and China signed 31 agreements, including a deal for mutual visa exemption. Under the Visa Liberalisation Plan, tourists from both countries can now stay up to 90 days visa-free for the next five years.

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Malaysia and Maldives Strengthen Tourism, Trade and Cultural Ties Ahead of Visit Malaysia 2026

Malaysia and the Maldives are enhancing cooperation, aiming to boost tourism, trade, and investment ahead of the “Visit Malaysia 2026” campaign. The two countries plan to explore opportunities in Muslim-Friendly and Halal Tourism during Maldives President Dr Mohamed Muizzu’s visit.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and President Muizzu expressed confidence in increasing collaboration. Malaysia offered to share its expertise in developing the halal industry, while both leaders supported cultural exchanges in arts, literature, and education.

Muizzu highlighted Malaysia’s positive environment for Maldivians visiting for tourism, education, and medical services. He invited Malaysian investors to explore opportunities in various sectors in the Maldives.

This visit marks Muizzu’s first to Malaysia since taking office in November 2023. Bilateral trade grew by 4.3% in 2024. Muizzu also invited Anwar to visit the Maldives soon.

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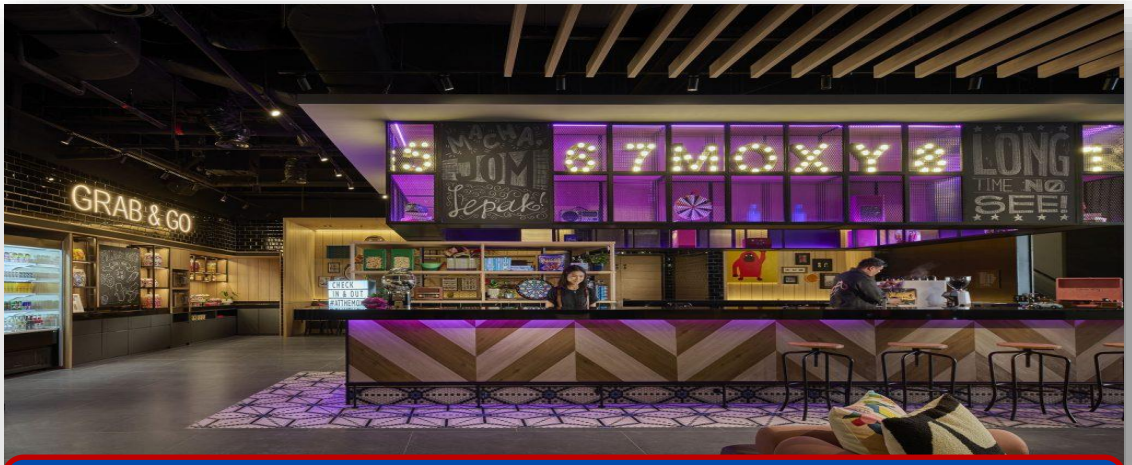

YTL Hotels Expands with Moxy Kuala Lumpur Chinatown and AC Hotel by Marriott Ipoh

YTL Hotels has expanded its portfolio with the opening of Moxy Kuala Lumpur Chinatown and AC Hotel by Marriott Ipoh. The move strengthens its commitment to innovative, guest-centric hospitality.

Moxy Kuala Lumpur Chinatown, the first of its brand in KL, offers 320 rooms in a restored 1970s building. Its design draws from Chinatown's rich heritage, featuring murals, neon art, and modular room setups. Social spaces like Zone In and Bar Moxy cater to leisure and connection.

AC Hotel by Marriott Ipoh features 291 minimalist rooms for business and leisure travellers. Guests can enjoy diverse dining options, event spaces, fitness amenities, pickleball courts, and recording studios.

YTL Hotels emphasized that these openings reflect its dedication to modern hospitality rooted in local culture. It also announced plans for Moxy Niseko Village in Japan, adding to its 33-property global portfolio.

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Aloft Hotels to Launch in Seremban, Bringing New Energy and Global Hospitality by 2025

Citta Worldwide and Marriott International will introduce Aloft Hotels to Seremban, Negeri Sembilan, with an expected opening by late 2025. Aloft Seremban will be the city's first internationally branded hotel, anchoring a mixed-use development with retail and office spaces.

Located in Seremban's town center, the hotel will connect directly to Terminal 1 Shopping Centre and offer easy access to major transport hubs, including the future Seremban Sentral railway station. It aims to serve modern travelers seeking style, innovation, and convenience.

Aloft Seremban will feature 173 contemporary rooms and suites, equipped with signature amenities. Dining options will include an all-day restaurant with a semi-open kitchen, Re:Fuel – a Grab & Go concept, and the lively W XYZ® Bar.

Marriott International views this project as a milestone in its Malaysian expansion, promising a fresh hospitality experience for Seremban's growing tourism and business market.

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Citadines Langit Kuching Set to Redefine Hospitality and Urban Living with Bold New Vision

Hock Seng Lee (HSL) and The Ascott Ltd have launched Citadines Langit Kuching, a mixed-use project near Kuching's city centre. The development will feature two 28-storey towers: Tower A with 64 condominiums and Tower B with 220 Citadines serviced residences. A three-storey public plaza will connect the towers, anchored by a grand staircase for events and activities.

Langit's design draws inspiration from Dayak culture and Borneo's rainforests, with interiors led by Ascott. The project targets Green Building Index certification through passive design, double-glazed glass, and energy-saving systems.

Condominium sales are expected to begin in late 2026, with units priced around RM1,000 per square foot. Unit sizes will range from 900 to 3,900 sq ft.

Set for completion by 2029, the project will create around 100 jobs and bring international flair to Kuching, positioning the city as a rising global destination.

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Malaysia Airlines and Atout France Partner to Boost Tourism and Increase Visitor Arrivals to Paris

Malaysia Airlines and Atout France have signed a three-year Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to promote tourism and increase visitor arrivals to Paris through Malaysia Airlines' global network. The partnership was officially launched on 20 April 2025.

This collaboration aims to drive tourism demand by combining Malaysia Airlines' global connectivity with Atout France's expertise in promoting French tourism. It offers seamless journeys, with travelers gaining access to France's cultural, culinary, and leisure experiences.

Dersenish Aresandiran, Chief Commercial Officer of Malaysia Aviation Group, expressed excitement about the MoU, highlighting France as a key market. The partnership underscores Malaysia Airlines' commitment to expanding its reach and providing exceptional travel experiences.

Agnès Angrand of Atout France emphasized the partnership's role in strengthening France's appeal for Malaysian and regional travelers, contributing to global tourism recovery.

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Malaysia Airlines Partners with Brisbane Airport to Relaunch Kuala Lumpur–Brisbane Route

Malaysia Airlines has signed a three-year partnership with Brisbane Airport and Tourism and Events Queensland (TEQ) to boost tourism and air travel between Malaysia and Queensland, Australia. The deal includes joint marketing efforts to promote Queensland as a key destination and position Malaysia Airlines as the preferred carrier.

As part of the agreement, Malaysia Airlines will relaunch its Kuala Lumpur–Brisbane route on November 29, offering five weekly flights.

Dersenish Aresandiran of Malaysia Aviation Group expressed excitement about the partnership, highlighting the expansion of their network. Brisbane Airport's Anthony Cicuttin mentioned Kuala Lumpur's strong connections to Asia and Europe. TEQ CEO Craig Davidson noted that the partnership makes it easier for Asian travelers to visit Queensland.

To celebrate the relaunch, Malaysia Airlines is offering special return fares available for booking until May 18.

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Batik Air Expands With Year-Round Direct Flights Between Kuala Lumpur and Melbourne

Batik Air will launch year-round direct flights between Kuala Lumpur and Melbourne starting July 12, building on its successful seasonal service. Operating four times weekly, this milestone strengthens air connectivity between Malaysia and Australia, offering greater convenience for travellers.

Batik Air CEO Datuk Chandran Rama Muthy said the expansion reflects their commitment to growing connectivity and meeting strong demand from leisure and business travellers across the region. Load factors rose from 50% in 2022 to over 65% in early 2025, underscoring the rising popularity of the route.

The new service will use the Airbus A330, offering 12 business class and 365 economy seats. February alone saw Melbourne Airport handle 2.7 million passengers, highlighting robust travel demand.

In addition to the direct service, Batik Air continues to offer daily flights via Denpasar, Bali, providing travellers with more flexibility and options between Kuala Lumpur and Melbourne.

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Batik Air Launches Direct Kuala Lumpur–Dili Flights, Opening New Gateway to Timor-Leste

Starting June 6, Batik Air will begin direct flights from Kuala Lumpur to Dili, the capital of Timor-Leste. It becomes the first Malaysian airline to offer this route, with two weekly flights using its B737 aircraft.

Batik Air CEO Datuk Chandran Rama Muthy said the four-hour journey will eliminate layovers, offering a faster, easier connection between Malaysia and Timor-Leste. He expects the service to boost accessibility and convenience for travellers.

Dili, the nation's largest city, offers a unique blend of Timorese and Portuguese culture. Tourists can explore historic architecture, vibrant churches, and museums that detail Timor-Leste's path to independence in 2002.

With its pristine beaches, rich marine life, and stunning mountain landscapes, Dili also invites visitors seeking natural beauty and adventure. Batik Air's new service aims to make discovering Southeast Asia's youngest nation easier than ever.

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Royal Brunei Airlines Partners with AirAsia MOVE to Expand Travel Options

Royal Brunei Airlines has joined AirAsia MOVE's network, boosting direct flight options across Asia, the Middle East, Australia, and the United Kingdom. The partnership aims to offer greater flexibility and convenience to modern travelers.

AirAsia MOVE CEO Nadia Omer welcomed Royal Brunei Airlines, highlighting a shared commitment to a seamless, all-in-one booking experience. Royal Brunei's West Malaysia sales and marketing manager Noor Hidayah Abdullah praised the app's intuitive interface for simplifying travel planning.

To celebrate, AirAsia MOVE and Royal Brunei Airlines are offering up to 35% off return flights to destinations like Brunei, Manila, Beijing, and Taipei. The promotion runs until April 30, 2025, for travel between April 18 and November 30, 2025.

AirAsia MOVE now partners with over 70 airlines, offering users access to 900,000 hotels, airport transfers, duty-free shopping, and travel insurance, all integrated with the AirAsia Rewards programme.

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