

Tourist arrival number 32m sets new Thai tourist record

The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) says a new record was broken at the end of December when it received its 32-millionth visitor.

The red carpet was laid out to welcome the fortunate arrival as part of 'Thailand's Luckiest Visitor' campaign which was originally started in 2015 to recognise and reward every millionth visitor to Thailand, from the 13 millionth to 29 millionth during June to December.

TAT says that this campaign has subsequently proved to be hugely popular, with both tourists and media helping to enhanced Thailand's brand image.

So much so, that Thailand is expecting to earn total international tourism revenue of around Baht1.62 trillion (US\$46bn) in 2016, representing a year-on-year increase of 11.68% compared to 2015.



Mrs. Shelby Pastor, the 32 millionth visitor flew in to Bangkok from San Francisco with her husband to a red carpet welcome.



Several high-ranking VIPs attended the relaunch of the Thailand Tourism Festival earlier this month: From Left to Right: Mr. Chattan Kunjara Na Ayudhya, TAT Deputy Governor for Marketing Communications; Mr. Santi Chudintra, TAT Deputy Governor for Policy and Planning; Mr. Choke Na Ranong, Deputy Managing Director, Manager in Credit Cards line, Bangkok Bank PCL; Mr. Yuthasak Supasorn, TAT Governor; Mrs. Rachneewan Asvathitanon, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Bangkok Metropolitan Administration; Mrs. Sujitra Jongchansitto, TAT Deputy Governor for Domestic Marketing; Mrs. Srisuda Wanapinyosak, TAT Deputy Governor for International Marketing Asia and South Pacific, and Mr. Noppadon Pakprot, TAT Deputy Governor for Tourism Products and Business.

To boost these numbers further, TAT says that several initiatives have been put in place to encourage more tourist arrivals, including visa waiver fees for visitors from 19 countries from 1 December, 2016, to 28 February, 2017 and a halving of visa-issue fees on arrival over the period.

BIG PUSH TO ENCOURAGE MORE ARRIVALS

Meanwhile, the Tourism Authority of Thailand and the Tourism Ministry have announced newly revised tourism revenue targets for 2017 Bt2.71 trillion (\$76.1bn) which represents an 8.2% rise on 2016.

This follows earlier statements suggesting that Thailand's tourist numbers for 2016 are now expected to total around 32.6m when the final count is in – an increase of around 8%.

In addition, TAT has confirmed that it is bringing back its Thailand Tourism Festival (TTF) to coincide with Chinese New Year 2017 between 25-29 January this month. It is hoping this will attract more than 650,000

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visitors.

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