

# ASIAN SHORT-HAUL TRAVEL



The economic growth observed in many parts of the Far East has had a positive impact on tourism and on local airlines as people find they have more discretionary income and can afford to travel more within their own region. This trend can be seen in Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and Macau, where some 90% of all outbound departures are to destinations within the region.

The short-haul market is growing faster than the long-haul. Short-haul departures were up by 20% between 2000 and 2005, compared to long-haul's growth rate of 12% over the same period. According to research carried out by Euromonitor International, the popularity of short-haul travel is going to continually grow in following years. Parita Chitakasem, Asia Pacific Travel and Tourism Manager at Euromonitor International said "The appeal of short-haul travel is plentiful. A cheaper ticket price, the shorter travel time and the perception of short-haul destinations being more familiar territory, are all key factors which encourage Asians to stay within their region when they travel. If you add to this the growing popularity of weekend breaks and the increasingly hectic lifestyles of consumers across Asia Pacific, which is restricting time available for longer breaks, we forecast that short-haul travel will witness strong growth over the next five-to-ten years."

Long haul travel, nevertheless, also expected to grow. The main problem is that people are not accustomed to long-haul destinations. Moreover, they also often face language problems when traveling for example to Europe. Parita Chitakasem says: "More aggressive marketing and tactics are needed to ensure that travellers are drawn to long-haul destinations". She also claims that "Those markets which invest the most in developing services tailored to Asian tourists are likely to be the first to win the highest growth in visitors from the region over the short-term."

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