

ASIA LEADS WORLD TOURISM RECOVERY



Asia and the Middle East are ahead of many western developed nations in recovering from the financial woe of recent times. Asia is enjoying its best period for tourism ever and the future looks even better for certain Asian nations.

Once the world financial crisis began to die down and businesses began to get back on their feet, there was a general presumption almost everywhere that the world's most developed nations would recover the quickest. This is actually quite far from the truth, as UNWTO points out. **Asian and Middle Eastern nations have made massive amounts of progress** yet America and some of Europe's bigger powers are still dizzy from the huge financial punch of 2009.

The reason for this is not that Asian nations have skilfully dealt with financial turmoil. However, it is a mixture of a number of elements, from luck to improved services. **Nations such as Vietnam, Myanmar and Sri Lanka have taken more than their fair share of tourists who used to visit the nations, which are now somewhat floundering.** Whereas it used to be too expensive for, say, a British couple to get to Asia, it is now just a little more expensive than visiting Greece.

The availability of services, including flights and travel agencies has certainly helped the Asian nations a great deal. Flying such distances has never been so easy, or so cheap. The airline industry and changes in the habits of western tourists are playing into the hands of Asian tourist operators. To put it in figures: **in 2010, the Asia-Pacific region has so far enjoyed a rise in tourism of 14%, whereas the Middle East has enjoyed a 20% rise.** As long as the trends continue, these figures are almost certain to rise.

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