

# CHINESE TRAVELERS DISCOVER SOUTH KOREAN RESORTS



The traditional image of an average Chinese tourist includes travelers in large groups who want to do as much sightseeing and shopping as possible. However, this could start to change because China's leading travel agencies are planning to replace traditional tour packages with high end ones.

China Travel Service, one of the biggest players in the travel industry, announced cooperation with vacation resorts in South Korea. **The packages on offer are aimed to attract upper class families that are into eco-golf and winter sports.**

According to Zhang Ping, the president of CTS, the usual in and out from tour buses somewhat seems like travel agencies are rushing the tourists. He also mentioned that the only way to go is upstream especially when it comes to the quality of the whole package.

The company believes that their cooperation with South Korea's GB Networks, one of the agencies that provides travel services to 14 different resorts, will provide Chinese tourists access to the best recreational spots in the area including top of the line golf courses, ski resorts, water parks and the like.

Jin Chengxiu, the director of the CTS' branch in Seoul, mentioned that this was the first time that this specific Chinese travel agency has tried to reach the South Korean resort market. A lot of Koreans and tourists from all over the world go to these places, but so far there have been just a few from China.

**The resorts in Northern Gangwon Province have a smooth and sandy coastline and are considered the epicenter of winter sports in Korea.** This province is also the site for the Winter Olympic Games to be held in 2018. The event is expected to lure 10,000 visitors.

Remote but captivating destinations were believed to be too expensive for tourists coming from China but they are starting to become popular again. The increase in the number of Chinese tourists is affecting the prices. Air fares and hotel rates are getting lower. Amidst the economic issues, people are still most likely to spend money on tourism as a means of relieving their stress.

Also the industry is being promoted by the Chinese government. The National Tourism Administration said that 38 million Chinese tourists traveled abroad and that is only half of the year. This is an 18 per cent increase to the numbers recorded a year ago.

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