

# PLANS FOR INCREASING TOURISM REVENUES IN VIETNAM



Tourism is developing in Vietnam. There is for example the Six Senses Spa at the Ana Mandara Resort. This spa incorporates traditional Vietnamese elements, natural colors and water features. The spa has three sunken outdoor treatment areas, surrounded by pools and small waterfalls. Features include sunken Jacuzzi baths, a Vichy shower and Japanese-style bath. A visitor can perform yoga or Tai Chi.

Usually a visitor consults a specialist who recommends a particular treatment. The increase in the number of foreign visitors in 2006 was no surprise as it is part of a continuing trend. Nearly 3.6 million international tourists visited Vietnam last year, an increase of 3% against 2005. Most of them were from the Republic of Korea, China, Japan, the United States, Canada, Germany, Malaysia, Thailand and Singapore. Nevertheless Vietnam's tourism industry faces serious problems. Deputy Prime Minister Nguyen Sinh Hung said that the tourism sector's progress remained slow in 2006. The Deputy Prime Minister suggested that there should be planning for local and key national projects with long-term strategies and vision. The industry faces a lack of skilled labour. For example there is a shortage of guides and many personnel are not trained in foreign languages. According to Deputy Prime Minister Nguyen Sinh Hung, development in tourism has boosted infrastructure such as post and telecommunications, in addition to improving food safety standards and increasing people's awareness on protecting natural resources and the environment.

The future is promising. Last year there were events that brought attention to Vietnam. Among those was the Fourth APEC Tourism Ministerial Meeting, Visit Quang Nam Year, Hue Festival, Mekong Delta Tourism Festival, APEC images, a Vietnamese Cultural Heritages Exhibition and a southern fruit festival. According to a survey conducted by the World Travel & Tourism Council, Vietnam is in the Top Ten of world travel and tourism development for 2007-2016.

Date: 2007-02-20

Article link:

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