

MALAYSIA RESPECTS CHINA/'S DECISION TO STAY AWAY



Chinese interest in global travel may be higher than ever before, as more of the country's citizens look to explore new, foreign destinations but while many Asian destinations are benefiting from this growth, there is one nearby nations that has actually seen a sharp decline. The number of visitors visiting Malaysia from China is down by a staggering 30% on the figures for 2013 and there is no sign of recovery for the remainder of 2014; bookings for the rest of the year practically non-existent, according to local tourism officials, and many of those that had already planned to visit have cancelled their holidays. It seems as though the Chinese have turned their backs on the country en masse.

Rather than try to tempt these Chinese visitors back, the Malaysian tourism ministry are respecting the decision.

This drop in interest in Malasian vacations and subsequent decline in visitor numbers is rightfully being blamed on the tragedy of Malaysia Airline flight MH370, which disappeared on March 8th. 154 of the 239 passengers on-board the Kuala Lumpur to Beijing flight were Chinese and, as the Malaysian government and other international authorities continue to search for the wreckage, the families of those lost still do not have the closure they need and are understandably wary of flying to the country they hold responsible. Because of these strong feelings, the Malaysian Tourism Ministry has cancelled all of the planned tourism roadshows in China for the year. The minister, Dato Seri Mohamed Nazri Abdul Aziz, has said that this decision was made out of respect for the families that lost loved ones in the event and it shows that the country understands the true significance of this consequence. Perhaps the short term losses they will see in temporarily moving away from this market and respecting this grief will lead to a stronger relationship in the future.

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