

# MALAYSIA TARGETING 30 MILLION INTERNATIONAL TOURISTS



A total of 25.8 million international tourists visited Malaysia in 2018. With the planned “Visit Malaysia 2020” campaign, the Malaysian Ministry of Tourism and Culture is targeting 30 million visitors by 2020 and revenues of 100 billion Malaysian ringgit (about 21.7 billion euros).

Malaysia is a melting pot of cultures with influences from Malay, Chinese and Indian ethnic groups as well as European, Arab and other influences. The result is a mixed but harmonious heritage. It is reflected in the architecture, clothing, language, cuisine and other aspects of Malaysia.

## **The economic contribution of tourism in Malaysia**

The number of people working in the tourism sector rose from 1.5 million in 2005 to 3.4 million in 2017. Employment in tourism contributed 23.2% of total employment in 2017 (15% in 2005). Most jobs in the tourism industry were in retail (33.7%) and gastronomy (32.3%).

Tourism is also important to Malaysia as it helps to strengthen the local community economically. This was exemplified by the Malaysia Homestay program. It offers villagers the opportunity to offer international tourists authentic homestay experiences. In 2017, revenues from the program reached 27.6 million Malaysian ringgit (about 6 million euros). Statistics show that in 2018, a total of 372,475 tourists (domestic and foreign) throughout the country participated in the host family program.

Malaysia is a diverse destination that offers many attractions. Some of these are nature experiences, shopping, adventure, island vacation, and numerous beaches as well as many international events. In addition, the country is also an important destination for health tourism and MICE events.

“The Slogan ‘Malaysia, Truly Asia’ has worked wonders by illustrating the diversity of our destination,” commented Minister Datuk Mohamaddin bin Ketapi.

“It conveys the message that Malaysia is a kaleidoscope of customs, religions, traditions, festivals, heritage, crafts and cuisine of the Malays, Chinese, Indians and various ethnic groups, that keeps attracting visitors from all over the world.”

## **New developments underway**

Future projects, such as Desaru Coast in Johor and Impression City Melaka, will, once completed, further strengthen the interest of international tourists in Malaysia. The tourism industry development continues to be stimulated by the opening of prestigious hotel real estate brands. Several established hotel brands have recently moved to Malaysia for the first time and some will enter the market in the

near future. There are Double Tree, Hilton, Marriott, Anantara, Westin, Mercure, Sheraton, W, St. Regis, Four Seasons, Hyatt and others who recognize the value of Malaysia for their expansion and investment.

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