

NUMBER OF VIETNAM'S FOREIGN VISITORS DROPPED BY 38%



As the coronavirus pandemic continues to rage all over the world, different nations are taking stock of their losses and making plans to deal with the challenges posed by the virus outbreak.

In the fight against the coronavirus pandemic, Vietnam adopted similar measures with other countries of the world as it closed its borders and suspended international flights.

Between January and April 2020, the country experienced a 38% drop in Vietnam's foreign visitors due to the pandemic, bringing the number of foreign visitors received to 3.7 million. **Of all foreign arrivals, Asians made up 72.7%**

In the past 4 months, the tourism industry earned a total of VND7.9 trillion, an equivalent of \$337 million, a drop by 45% year-on-year.

Vietnam suspended international flights on March 25th to prevent the importation of the virus, three days after the country banned the entry of foreigners.

With foreigners and tourists unable to enter into the country, the tourism industry has turned its focus towards domestic tourism in a bid to boost funds from that area as social distancing rules saw ease on April 22nd.

Vietnam's Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc declared the ease of social distancing restrictions on April 22nd as he declared that only some districts in Hanoi, Bac Ninh and Ha Giang in northern Vietnam were high-risk areas while every other city and province in the country was relatively safe.

Reacting to the ease, tourism industry experts assume that the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic on Vietnam's tourism sector will span till the end of 2020. Also, experts expressed that tourism companies should target domestic tourism as it would recover first. The reason for this advice is the assumption that locals don't plan to travel far yet, due to fears surrounding the coronavirus pandemic.

As focus turns towards domestic tourism, Vietnam's Transport Ministry has approved the proposal by the Civil Aviation Administration to increase the frequency of domestic flights to meet up to higher demands.

Projections have been made that frequency of flights on the Hanoi- HCMC route will increase to 36 flights per day between 1st and 15th May, while return flights from HCMC and Hanoi to Da Nang could be up to 12.

If this materializes, numbers can get as high as 53 and 20 return flights daily as of 16th May.

In line with the ease of movement and social distancing, **popular tourist destinations like Phu Quoc, Hoi An, Nha Trang, Da Nang, and Quy Nhon have opened up to tourists.**

The Imperial Citadel, a popular destination for tourists has also opened up after a long time, while a new holiday destination 'LySon Island has opened up in the central province of Quang Ngai.

Of all 270 Coronavirus cases confirmed in Vietnam, 219 people have been treated and discharged while 51 cases, including patients who suffered relapses, are still being treated.

With no new positive cases by the end of last week, it is now 8 days without any new Covid 19 cases and over 2 weeks without any case of community transmission.

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