

TRAVELERS VISIT WUHAN AGAIN AS THE PROVINCE REOPENS THE TOURIST ATTRACTIONS



As China recovers from the coronavirus outbreak that severely affected its economy, the country's domestic tourism industry is also resuming and recovering as people's desire to travel on a domestic level is increasing. Nearly 70 percent of scenic spots in China already reopened.

While many tourist attractions are accessible again to the visitors, various measures are still being applied across China – visitors need to reserve their place in advance, the daily number of visitors cannot exceed 30 percent the place's maximum capacity. Social distancing it to be kept at all times. Still, people are eager to travel.

According to a report by the Tourism Research Center under the Chinese Social Science Academy that sampled 15,163 respondents via questionnaires, **Wuhan tops the wish list of many travelers who plan to visit the city where the coronavirus outbreak began.**

For many travelers, the desire to visit Wuhan is based on their wish to contribute to the economy of the region that took a terrible hit from the virus. The second place on the wish list was taken by Beijing and then Chongqing.

According to the same report, low-income earners are also very eager to travel as many hotels and tourist attractions have lowered their prices in the wake of the epidemic in that region.

These low-income travelers are expected to take far more trips this year than they did last year. The report projects that they will make an average of 3.8 trips this year, a big step up from the 1.6 trips they took last year.

It is predicted that travelers will spend 5,746 yuan (US\$ 814) this year, which is an increase from the 5012 yuan (US\$ 710) spent in 2019.

From the same survey, about 72% of people said they had not canceled their travel plans over COVID-19 and they plan to take a trip soon after the epidemic passes.

While 30% of travelers set their travel dates between 3 and 6 months after the epidemic, 9.4% of respondents made their travel plans in the midst of the outbreak.

As travelers and tourists become more concerned about their safety, domestic and short distance tourism is recovering. However, the same is not the case for overseas tourist attractions.

The report also highlighted that travelers sampled see National Day and summer holiday as prime time to take vacations.

Meanwhile, on April 26 Wuhan reopened 'The Yellow Crane Tower', a landmark tourist attraction in the province. The tourist site is open to visitors from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm with a maximum visitor capacity of 5,400 visitors daily.

Safety and preventive measures rolled out for this park include advance online booking, ID, or QR scan at the entrance to the park, as well as temperature checks, followed by an issuance of green health code.

According to a report by the provincial department of culture and tourism on April 26th, The Central Province of Hubei, of which Wuhan is the capital city has reopened 266 major tourist attraction sites as the province recovers and the epidemic wanes.

Director of the Tourism Research Center, Song Rui has said that COVID-19 brought about the greatest challenge tourism all over the world had ever experienced.

She said tourism still faces a number of challenges as many people still fear the risk of getting infected while traveling, as they stress over cleanliness and safety in the wake of the epidemic

The dean of the Tencent Culture and Tourism Industry Research Center, Shu Zhan said as the epidemic wanes, **travelers are paying more attention to quality, also with regards to health, social security, and emergency response.**

Shu, who spoke at an online news conference, said the COVID-19 outbreak has totally changed the way people will view tourism going forward. According to Shu, the tourism industry now needs to make an upgrade to meet up with the rising demand for more qualitative tourism.

Shu also identified that senior citizens and low-income groups are expected to engage more in tourism than they did before.

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