

THAI TOURIST DESTINATIONS LAUNCH OWN CAMPAIGNS TO BOOST TOURISM



Two of Thailand's most popular tourist destinations, Phuket and Pattaya, have launched new promotions as the Covid-19 epidemic subsides.

Phuket launched an online campaign called "Have you ever..." while Pattaya launched "500 Baht free for a reservation in Chonburi".

Phuket Is Confident to Attract Visitors

Phuket Governor Narong Wunsiew said that **the island's tourism sector had been severely affected by the coronavirus** and it was time for the province to start boosting its economy.

With Phuket's natural beauty, it won't take much investment to attract tourists back to the island, he said, adding that its main attractions were included in a new promotional video broadcast on social media.

Nanthasiri Ronsiri, director of the Tourism Authority of the Phuket office in Thailand, said the "Have you ever..." campaign also promoted a sub-culture being developed in the province, which potential visitors were invited to discover.

Phaithun Silapawisut, an adviser to the president of the Phuket provincial government organization, called on Thais across the country to share the campaign's Facebook page to encourage foreigners to visit Phuket again.

Moreover, Phuket tourism professionals want to finance and roll out their own campaign to vaccinate residents to allow Thailand's top tourist destination to reopen by October. More than a dozen business groups, including the Phuket Chamber of Commerce and the Phuket Tourism Association (PTA), plan to pool funds to immunize 70% of the island's population over 18 years without waiting for the deployment of the government campaign.

Pattaya to Distribute Coupons

Pattaya launched a campaign entitled "500 Baht free for a reservation in Chonburi".

Guests who check into a hotel in the eastern province of Chon Buri will be rewarded with 100 bahts (about US\$3.3) coupons redeemable at about 130 restaurants, spas and tourist attractions.

On the first night, 5 coupons will be distributed and this can be increased to a maximum of 10 coupons for 2 nights.

Thitiphat Siranattasikun of the Chonburi Attractions Association said the promotion is only open to visitors from outside the province.

Steep Drop of Tourist Numbers

Over the past six months, Thailand has welcomed fewer tourists than it would normally receive in a single day before Covid-19. Statistics on the number of foreigners entering Thailand since July last year reveal the devastating impact of the pandemic on the tourist destinations and the economy of the country as a whole.

According to data released by Foreign Ministry Deputy Permanent Secretary Chutintorn Sam Gongsakdi, only 78,328 foreigners with entry certificates (COEs) entered Thailand between July 9, 2020, and February 6, 2021. Among them, 1,157 were elite cardholders and 2,457 were holders of special tourist visa. **In 2019, nearly 40 million foreigners visited Thailand, more than in any other year.** On average, this equates to around 110,000 foreigners entering the country every day.

Currently, the tourism industry stakeholders require the Thai government to lift the 14-day quarantine requirement for foreigners who have already been vaccinated against Covid-19.

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