

VIETNAM GETTING READY TO REOPEN TO FOREIGN TOURISTS



The total revenue of more than USD 30 billion that the "smoke-free industry" contributes annually to national Vietnam's GDP is not at all small. A large part of this amount comes from the international market. For this reason, at the moment, almost all travel agencies and service providers are waiting for the reopening of the country to foreign tourists.

However, in order to ensure a safe reopening, it is necessary to have a thoughtful and comprehensive preparation. The head of the secretariat of the Vietnam Tourism Advisory Board (TAB), Hoang Nan Chinh, said that in a letter sent to the Prime Minister on the reopening of international tourism, his board had expressed strong **support for the government's policy of not sacrificing and endangering public health in exchange for economic benefits.**

"The Tourism Advisory Board also stresses that there must be a clear policy. Reopening is only possible when there is a two-sided approach, one is the place of origin of tourists and the other is the place of reception. We can learn from international experiences, both successes and failures," said Hoang Nhan Chinh.

As for solutions, the Tourism Advisory Board proposes to create a group bringing together organizations or experts from different sectors: health; public security; national defence; diplomacy; culture, sports and tourism for cooperation and mutual support in the reopening, ensuring safety of Vietnam and foreign tourists.

According to this proposal, all foreign tourists arriving in Vietnam should carry a vaccination passport or vaccination certificate, and be tested for coronavirus with PCR tests before departure and upon arrival at the airport in Vietnam. Furthermore, the experts believe that appropriate measures should be taken to shorten the quarantine period while absolutely guaranteeing the safety of the prevention and control of the COVID-19 epidemic.

Warming up the Domestic Market

In the current context where the epidemic is not yet completely under control, the tourism sector needs a safe process to welcome and assist guests. It is also important that employees in the tourism services sector are on the priority list for vaccination.

As one of the country's major tourist centers, Hanoi has implemented many activities to "warm-up" the domestic market and get ready to welcome back foreign tourists as soon as possible.

Director of Hanoi Tourism Department Dang Huong Giang said, "Although in 2021, our main goal is still to focus on the domestic market, we are preparing necessary conditions for reopening to foreign tourists."

Regarding communication and promotion, according to Dang Huong Giang, in 2020, the Hanoi Tourism Department worked with the CNN channel to promote the capital. This program, which had to be stopped due to the pandemic, will continue in 2021, she said.

Statistics show that the revenue from Vietnamese tourists each year is less than that

brought by international visitors. Therefore, the head of the Hanoi Tourism Department said that the festivals to be held in 2021 in the capital would be international in scope with a message appealing to foreign tourists to visit Vietnam.

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