

Vietnam Aims for Tourist Development



The Vietnamese national tourist administration has announced plans to make Vietnam a centre of developed tourism by 2010. It aims to quash the Asian nation's image of a post-war and poverty-stricken state and transform it into an attractive South Asian outlet easily accessible by air, water and land with unique products.

The target has been set at a 10-20% increase in arrivals each year between now and 2010, thus attracting between 5.5 and 6 million tourists per year. This would double the figure of 2005. Optimistic as this may seem, numerous steps have been and are being made to reach this goal as the Vietnamese government hopes to earn revenue of around \$5 billion in 2010 from its tourist sector.

Tourists from Laos and Thailand have been singled out as being of particular importance, and efforts have been made to make their journeys easier. Every since caravans were given the green light to pass through the Cau Treo/Lao Bao border crossing, there has been a 46% increase in Thai tourists to Vietnam. Improved signposting has similarly facilitated the stays of Thai visitors.

On a financial front, investors promised a \$5 billion dollar investment into Vietnamese tourism in 2006 as the country aims to provide for the high-spending sector of tourists, which demands a high grade of services and facilities. These visitors mostly arrive from the U.S.A. and Europe. Furthermore, attempts have been made, by means of conferences and cultural events, to raise awareness of the importance of presenting Vietnam as a safe and exotic destination for a potential visitor.

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