

THAI TOURIST NUMBERS DECLINE AND LOW SEASON STARTS



Recent figures from the Ministry of Tourism and Sports indicate that between March 24 and 30, Thailand welcomed 584,851 visitors—a modest 0.8% decline compared to the same period last year. These tourist numbers, while seemingly minor, set an interesting backdrop for what's unfolding.

In March overall, the country recorded around 2.72 million tourists, about 12.8% fewer than in February and roughly 8.8% lower than the same month last year. So far this year, approximately 9.54 million people have visited Thailand, which is **about 25.6% of the 2024 goal of 37.2 million, reflecting an annual growth rate of just around 1.91%.**

Shifting gears to the nuances of different markets, the trends are mixed. For instance, visitors from China have softened noticeably. Weekly Chinese tourist numbers slipped from 67,580 to 64,992—roughly a 3.8% drop when you look year-on-year. In March, Chinese arrivals peaked at 297,113; that's a 20.0% decline compared to February and a hefty 48.2% dip relative to last March. Meanwhile, flights arriving from China have fallen to about 143 per day, marking a 14.8% month-on-month decrease.

After Ramadan ended, Malaysian arrivals bounced back rather sharply. Weekly figures climbed from 57,523 to 81,790, a jump of about 42.2% on a yearly basis. Still, the overall tally for March reached 292,436, representing a 30.0% decline from the previous month and a 15.4% decrease compared to the same period last year. It's a bit of a mixed outcome, to say the least.

Russia, often eyed by the ministry as an alternative to European markets, experienced its own shifts. Weekly tourist numbers dropped from 54,689 to 48,705, about a 10.9% decrease year-on-year. Yet, on a monthly scale, Russian arrivals totaled 235,682; this is actually a slight 2.2% uptick over February and an 18.5% increase compared to the previous year, suggesting some resilience amidst the seasonal slowdown.

Looking ahead, the outlook seems somewhat unsettled. April marks the beginning of the low season, and it's expected that things will get challenging. A recent earthquake has, in most cases, rattled traveler confidence, and the Chinese market is still struggling to regain its footing.

Traffic figures echo this mixed sentiment. AOT's international traffic in March only reached 85.7% of the levels seen back in 2019, a drop from 93.0% in February—while domestic traffic slipped slightly from 84.7% to 84.1% compared to 2019. Overall, the recovery seems to have slowed, with total traffic now standing at about 85.1% of the 2019 benchmark, down from 89.7% in February.

Moreover, **average daily arrivals at Thai airports have also decreased, falling from 119,587 in February to approximately 103,970 in March.** That's roughly 385 fewer arrivals each day than the previous week.

The coming weeks will be crucial. With post-festival travel gradually resuming across Asia and ongoing changes in the Chinese market, it remains uncertain whether the recovery will pick up pace again or if this downward trend is here to stay.

Date: 2025-04-07

Article link:

<https://www.tourism-review.com/thailand-reported-decreased-tourist-numbers-news14882>