

## Expo expands travel horizons

Money glitz | Eunice Lam 7 Jun 2023



The International Travel Expo will feature more than 400 exhibitors from about 50 countries.

The public can visit the International Travel Expo at the Convention and Exhibition Centre next weekend for the latest travel information from a large of over 400 exhibitors from some 50 countries and regions, a scale more than double the size of last year.

The expo this year will take place from Thursday to Sunday next week.

The first two days will be dedicated to the tourism industry. The section for the public reserved for the weekend, with an admission fee of HK\$20 per head.

Themed "Reconnect & Recover", this year's International Travel Expo is expected to attract 60,000 visitors, about 75 percent of the pre-pandemic levels.

There will be over 80 seminars during the four-day event, some to be hosted by influencers including figures from the Greater Bay Area, said Tong Kam-shing, managing director of organizer TKS Exhibition Services.

To encourage former tourism workers to rejoin the industry, the business card requirement will be waived on Friday afternoon.

Tong likened the event to a "full recovery", saying it is twice as big compared to last year's even though it is still 20 percent below pre-pandemic levels.

Speaking at a media briefing, Travel Industry Council's executive director Fanny Yeung Shuk-fan said that up to last month, over 10 million travelers have visited the SAR and the industry has resumed 60 percent of its business pre-pandemic.

Yeung blamed a limited flight capacity for the slow recovery.

"The council has surveyed travelers and found that travelers are all saying travel has become more expensive after the Covid pandemic. They are willing to pay more, say, for up to 30 percent," Yeung said.

She said that increased travel costs caused tourists to expect more in-depth experience during their visits.

At the expo, three photo exhibitions will be held to focus on the themes of "Craftsman & Old Shops", "Revitalized Village" and "The City's Sky Mirrors" to showcase in-depth cultural travel in Hong Kong.

The mainland will have the biggest-ever presence with a total of 146 booths involving exhibitors from over 20 provinces. Director of the Asia Tourism Exchange Center, Zhang Dong, said tourist maps and guidebooks will be given to visitors for free along with performance and a lucky draw.

A booth offering Thai massage experience will be set up, where visitors can win souvenirs, Thai hotel vouchers or free air-tickets as giveaways and at booth games.

Napat Vudhivad, director of the Tourism Authority of Thailand in Hong Kong, said more than 280,000 Hongkongers visited Thailand from January to May.

<https://www.thestandard.com.hk/section-news/section/47358676/253104/Expo-expands-travel-horizons>