



**Sarawak promotes heritage parks at Taipei show**



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**Emirates crowned Best Airline**



## Lufthansa 40 years of flying to Korea

Lufthansa German Airlines celebrates its 40th anniversary of flights from South Korea to Germany and offers four weeks of special fares to major European cities, including Frankfurt, where it has operated for the last 40 years.

The offers are also bookable for those who depart from eight cities in Korea with Lufthansa Rail & Air...

## Travel by train in Thailand

The Tourism Authority of Thailand, in partnership with the State Railway of Thailand, has launched the E-Guidebook #MyRailJourney, designed to inspire eco-friendly travel experiences by rail.

The digital guidebook targets environmentally conscious travellers and kicks off with two popular train routes: Bangkok to Phetchaburi and Hua Hin in Prachuap Khiri Khan. Last week, the initiative was introduced...

## HK Express welcomes 10th A321neo

HK Express Airways (HK Express) welcomed its 10th Airbus A321neo, the largest passenger aircraft in its fleet, which serves 21 destinations.

HK Express Chief Executive Officer Jeanette Mao said: "As HK Express continues to introduce new routes, we are thrilled to welcome our 10th Airbus A321neo aircraft, marking a significant step..."

## Air India flies A350 to New York

Air India has introduced its flagship A350-900 aircraft on daily, nonstop flights between Delhi and New York's John F Kennedy International Airport (JFK). This will be followed by introducing five weekly A350 services from Delhi to Newark's Liberty International Airport (EWR) commencing 2 January 2025...

## Macau signals strong airline traffic

Macau International Airport (MFM) reports robust growth in passenger traffic for the first 10 months of 2024, reaching 6.34 million passengers, a 56.92% year-on-year increase.

Aircraft movements reached over 49,000, a 49.37% increase compared to the previous year. Passenger volume and aircraft movements have recovered to approximately 80% and 78%...

## LH presents summer 2025 destinations

Lufthansa Group Airlines has given travellers a glimpse of its 2025 summer flight schedule, which is now available for Lufthansa Airlines, Discover Airlines, Austrian Airlines, Swiss International Air Lines, and Edelweiss...



TTR Weekly is a reliable source of news for Asia's travel planners. Established in 1978, TTR Weekly is the property of Ross Publishing Co Ltd registered in Bangkok, Thailand. TTRW is an abbreviation of the original name Travel Trade Report.

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# GATEWAY TO BORNEO

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**SARAWAK**  
More To Discover



# Sarawak promotes heritage parks at Taipei show



The Sarawak Tourism Board (STB), in collaboration with Royal Brunei Airlines, presented Sarawak's distinct travel attractions to Taiwanese audiences at the Taipei International Travel Fair (ITF) 2024 earlier this week at Nangang Exhibition Hall 1.

With nearly 350,000 attendees, the event highlighted Sarawak's diverse tourism pillars, aligning with the Taiwanese preference for authentic cultural experiences and nature-focused holidays.

Sarawak's UNESCO World Heritage sites — Mulu and Niah National Parks — stood out as primary attractions, alongside popular wildlife tours and cultural heritage sites, such as the Sarawak Cultural Village and longhouse stays. Taiwanese visitors also showed keen interest in Sarawak's culinary offerings, including the Sarawak Laksa and Kolo Mee.

STB's booth emphasised Sarawak's CANFF pillars (Culture, Adventure, Nature, Festivals, and Food), offering a well-rounded representation of its natural and cultural riches. These experiences continue to draw Taiwanese tourists who seek immersive travel options, providing a vibrant introduction to Sarawak's heritage and landscapes.

Three Taiwanese travel companies introduced exclusive Sarawak travel packages, garnering significant interest. Royal Brunei Airlines further enhanced Sarawak's appeal by



promoting a dual-destination package, allowing Taiwanese tourists to explore both Kuching and Brunei, offering them an enriched travel experience.

“We are thrilled with the positive response from Taiwanese travellers at ITF 2024,” remarked STB’s Director of Marketing for North Asia and New Markets Dylan Redas Noel. “Sarawak’s offerings

align seamlessly with Taiwan’s market preferences, and we are confident that the enthusiasm generated will increase Taiwanese visitor arrivals.”

Earlier in 2024, a successful B2B session in Taipei and Taichung increased Taiwanese visitor interest, positioning Taiwan as one of Sarawak’s top 10 markets. With Taiwan’s outbound travel rising, STB is committed to enhancing its regional presence and providing Taiwanese travellers with unforgettable Sarawak experiences.

The Taipei International Travel Fair, showcasing 1,500 booths from 111 countries

alongside prominent Taiwanese travel agencies, hotels, airlines, and attractions, remains a premier platform for global travel. STB’s participation highlights its commitment to engaging this growing market and positioning Sarawak as a top holiday destination.

For more information on World Heritage National Parks and Sarawak’s diverse travel experiences, visit: <https://www.sarawaktourism.com>



# Pandaw spotlights Kaziranga Park

Pandaw is promoting its full Brahmaputra cruise, sailing from now until 15 March. The cruise spotlights an overland trip to the UNESCO World Heritage Site Kaziranga National Park.

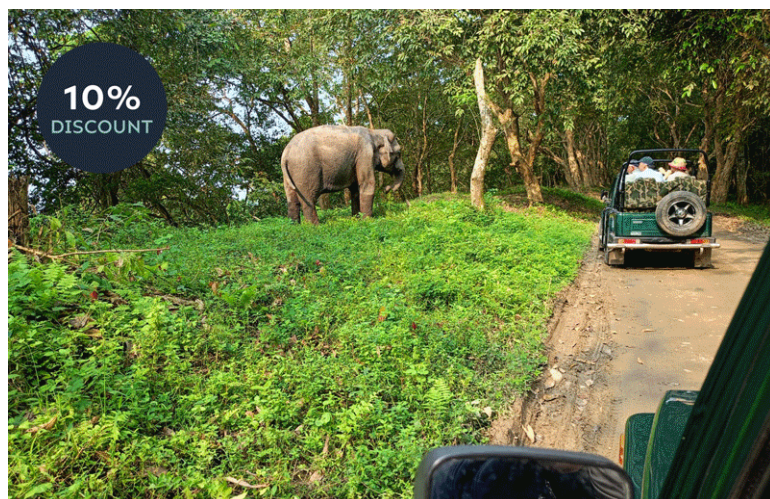
Explore India's far extremes from the Northeast Assam region to South-West Kerala. This combo cruise takes guests 3,000 km on two distinct small-ship river expeditions in the lesser-visited parts of the country. It allows travellers to combine Pandaw's popular expedition along the wild Brahmaputra River with its newest itinerary sailing the backwaters of Kerala.

## **Wildlife sightings**

Kaziranga National Park is a UNESCO World Heritage Site known for its diverse wildlife, particularly the one-horned

rhinoceros. Here are some of its key attractions:

**One-horned Rhinoceros:** Kaziranga is home to the world's largest population of



one-horned rhinoceroses. These majestic creatures roam freely in the grasslands and swamps.

**Indian Elephant:** The park also supports a significant population of Asian elephants, often spotted bathing in the Brahmaputra River or grazing in the grasslands.

**Royal Bengal Tiger:** Although less common than rhinos and elephants, tigers are also found in Kaziranga. Look for these elusive predators while on safari.

**Swamp Deer:** Large herds of swamp deer can be seen grazing in the open meadows.

**Wild Water Buffalo:** These massive herbivores are well adapted to the wetlands of Kaziranga.

**Birds:** The park is home to over 400 species of birds, including migratory waterfowl, eagles, and vultures.

**Gangetic River Dolphin:**

These shy mammals can sometimes be spotted in the Brahmaputra River.

# LIFE

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From pristine beaches and majestic temples to lush jungles and underwater wonders, Koh Samui offers an array of vibrant experiences for every traveller. Whether seeking adventure or relaxation, Centara welcomes your clients to embrace the warm hospitality of this tropical oasis.

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# Dusit Retreat India opens in March 2028

Dusit Hotels and Resorts, under Dusit International, one of Thailand's leading hotel and property development companies, has entered into a strategic hotel management agreement with Shравanathi

25 units also offering private plunge pools. Guests will enjoy exclusive wellness facilities, including a dedicated Devarana Wellness Centre with a movement studio, gym, and herbal steam room. A wellness

Manjarabad Fort with panoramic mountain views and Jenukallu Gudda peak, which offers breathtaking vistas of the Arabian Sea. Mangalore International Airport is 130 km away, and Sakleshpur Railway Station is a short 20 km from the property.

"We are delighted to bring our unique brand of Thai-inspired gracious hospitality to Sakleshpur, where we see a perfect alignment between the area's serene natural beauty and the holistic essence of Devarana – Dusit Retreats," said Dusit International Chief Operating Officer Gilles Cretallaz. "This beautiful destination is an ideal fit for our luxury, wellness-focused brand, which is dedicated to creating bespoke healing and transformational experiences in stunningly curated, private sanctuaries around the globe. With Devarana Sakleshpur, we look forward to offering our guests a unique wellness journey that enriches the mind, body, and soul while honouring Karnataka state's pristine environment and rich cultural heritage."

Shравanathi Hotels and Resorts Private Limited Executive Director Santosh Balakrishna noted: "We are delighted to partner with Dusit Hotels and Resorts to introduce the Devarana – Dusit Retreats brand to India. Dusit's commitment to authentic, transformative...

[Full Story...](#)



Hotels and Resorts Private Limited, a prominent developer of luxury hotels and resorts in India, to operate Devarana Sakleshpur, Karnataka – A Dusit Retreat.

Set to open in March 2028, this landmark project marks the first Devarana – Dusit Retreat signed outside of China, underscoring Dusit's commitment to expanding its luxury, wellness-focused resort brand across exclusive destinations worldwide.

Designed to deliver meaningful and transformative stay experiences for discerning domestic and international travellers, Devarana Sakleshpur, Karnataka – A Dusit Retreat will feature 75 luxurious villas and suites, ranging from 47 to 90 square metres, with

consultation service and personalised programmes will be available to cater to guests on different wellness paths. Additional facilities include an expansive infinity pool, a speciality restaurant serving authentic South Indian cuisine, and an all-day dining venue offering nutritious culinary delights.

Located in the picturesque Western Ghats, a four-hour drive from Karnataka's capital, Bangalore, Sakleshpur is known for its lush coffee, tea, and spice plantations, ancient temples, and beautiful trekking trails through the Bisle Reserve Forest, a globally recognised biodiversity hotspot. Popular attractions near the upcoming Devarana Sakleshpur retreat include the star-shaped





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# Emirates crowned Best Airline in the World



Emirates has once again won 'Best Airline in the World' at the prestigious ULTRAs 2024 Awards.

The airline was recognised by thousands of global travellers for its exceptional products, innovative services and superb value-for-money experiences on offer. Emirates' 'fly better' travel experiences have also been recognised by more than 20 awards this year, including 'World Best Airline' by Telegraph Travel, ranking first amongst 90 global carriers; and 'Best Airline' by The Times and Sunday Times Travel Awards.

The award was accepted by Jabr Al-Azeeby, Emirates Divisional Vice President in the UK (left) and Thierry Aucoc, Emirates Senior Vice President Commercial Operations in Europe and the Americas (right).

The ULTRAs are amongst the most respected awards in the industry, which recognise travel leaders in multiple categories with winners determined from the votes of a global network of active and affluent travellers. Ultratravel is an independent magazine with a global circulation of 1.2 million active travellers.

The award was accepted by Thierry Aucoc, Emirates Senior Vice President Commercial Operations in Europe and the Americas, and Jabr Al-Azeeby, Emirates Divisional Vice President in the UK, at a ceremony held last week at Kensington Palace in London. The event was attended by leading members of the travel industry and other notable guests.

Sir Tim Clark, President of Emirates Airline, said: "We're

delighted to be recognised as 'Best Airline in the World' by the prestigious ULTRAs. Our investments in products and services, in our people, training and technology, all aim to elevate the travel experience at every step of the journey so our customers truly 'fly better', and we'll always work hard to raise the bar for them. Our multi-billion dollar nose-to-tail refurbishment programme will see over 200 aircraft receive fully refreshed interiors that will take the Emirates experience to even greater heights. Thank you to our loyal customers, and we'll keep moving forward at pace to offer the very best in international air travel."

## ***Enhanced travel experiences***

Emirates continues to invest in innovative products, implement advanced technologies, and expand its network to make the travel experience even more seamless for customers.

In the last year, the airline rolled out 8 fully refurbished aircraft with refreshed interiors (3 A380s, 5 Boeing 777s) as part of its US\$ 4 billion retrofit programme; invested US\$ 11 million to open new lounges for premium customers in London Stansted and Jeddah as well...

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# Langkawi

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 Maha Tower



# Five urban hikes in Asia



Digital travel platform Agoda introduces five urban hikes across Asia, offering travellers a chance to experience the perfect blend of city life and nature.

The hikes, ranging from family-friendly to more challenging trails, provide an unmatched perspective on some of Asia's most dynamic cities.

Whether it's Elephant Hill in Taipei, with its stunning views of the Taipei 101, or Hong Kong's famous Dragon Back, active travellers are in for a treat when embarking on these city hike adventures.

Agoda Senior Vice President, Supply Andrew Smith said: "Asia is special to have so many incredible hike routes right in the heart of these popular cities. The five highlighted hikes are just a sample of the many breathtaking city trails the continent has to offer. Adventurous travelers

will want to try them all and thankfully Agoda helps make travel affordable with great value deals on over 4.5 million properties globally."

## ***Five city hikes***

Kuala Lumpur's Bukit Nanas Forest Reserve offers a distinctive trekking experience through a tropical rainforest in the city centre. The trail is relatively easy, with well-marked paths and informative signboards about the local flora and fauna, making it a great choice for families and nature enthusiasts.

Elephant Hill in Taipei offers a short (40-minute trek) but rewarding climb that is moderately challenging. The well-maintained trail provides stunning views of Taipei's skyline, including the famous Taipei 101. It's an ideal spot for those looking to enjoy a quick escape into nature without

straying far from the city.

In Singapore, the Southern Ridges trail offers a moderate hike through interconnected parks and gardens. Spanning 10 km, this trail provides a lush green corridor amidst the urban environment, with highlights including the Henderson Waves bridge and panoramic city views.

Namsan in Seoul presents a slightly more challenging hike, leading to the N Seoul Tower. The trail is popular among locals and tourists alike, offering a mix of natural beauty and cultural landmarks. Depending on the desired difficulty level, several routes are available.

Finally, Hong Kong's Dragon's Back is a favourite for its breathtaking views of the coastline and the South China Sea. This moderately challenging hike is known for its undulating ridges and scenic vistas.

# Your Sabah Bucket List

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