

Feature



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Leaders in trade



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WTCF Fragrant Hills Tourism Summit 2016 Host City - Chongqing

CHONGQING Spiritual Mountains And Rivers Construct Wonders

“ Great beauty of the Yangtze River and Wushan, that's the natural treasure of China and historical heritage of the Chongqing City. ”

The Sichuan section of the Yangtze River is one of the original birthplaces of Chinese civilization, and created China's first "Nongsang Fishing Boat" civilization. Mulberry sericulture, tea, netting, fishing, shipbuilding, sailing, four ancient and sacred totem, all contributed to create Sichuan's development in China's history.

Chinese civilization spans back five thousand years. "Gao Tang Fu" article by Mr. Song Yu and "Goddess Fu" article are the earliest and most beautiful texts describing this area and the glory of the history. After that, the history of Chinese literature could not outdo these two works of art. Both of which describe the birth of cloud water in the rivers and mountains of

eastern Sichuan. Great beauty of the Yangtze River, Wushan Mountain's great scenery, together with the beauty of eastern Sichuan, all represents the great life and historical heritage of the area.

Speak not of Lakes and Streams to One who Once has Seen the Sea

If the beauty of mountains and rivers can be injected into our mind and body, how beautiful would it be? Because there is charm in the heart, you can always feel the great beauty! "Speak not of Lakes and Streams to One Who Once has Seen the Sea"

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Metasequoia woods – Gan Haomin

is where the most appropriate description lies. Chongqing's landscape is with unique natural geographical, cultural, & historical advantages. Four distinct seasons with abundant rainfall, Cloud Mountains, rivers, all forms the warm and sunny place. Here, as long as the seed planted, there will be harvests with infinite energy.

Three Gorges is a collection of the power of the river, on both sides of Wushan Mountain, undulating hills and rivers. There are huge waterfalls and dangerous rapids between the mountains. For this reason, the ancients had issued an exclamation: "Speak not of Lakes and Streams to One Who Once has seen the Sea". The river has shared the waves of thousands of miles attitude with indomitable spirit, giving talents to the vast land of China, and casting on this land for generations!

Walt Disney World Cinerama Theater has always been one of the most popular attractions from the early 1970s, which is always circulating just two large circular screen documentaries: one is called the "Chinese," another is "Beautiful American Ami."

Every time I see the "Chinese" documentary on the movie screen, it made me extremely



Wuling Mountain Great Rift

“ **Three Gorges is a collection of the power of the river, on both sides of Wushan Mountain, undulating hills and rivers. There are huge waterfalls and dangerous rapids between the mountains.** ”

shocked and tears filled my cheek. One of the most astonishing segments of the Yangtze River documented in the file is the Chongqing section. It not only shows the background of the Yangtze River in Chongqing Mountain, but also the risk of capturing and harness of the Yangtze River on a heavy load of wooden boats. Commentary final says, "The great things will be never forgotten." It is most common to describe the unique geography and the people of Chongqing for their unique powerful brave and fearless spirit. Imagine people and a nation given such a strong united spirit and very courageously spirit, it will create their epic to a new world and a prosperous economy.

The Most Beautiful Place, Full of Scholars

Since ancient times, the Yangtze River in Chongqing is the hometown to beauties and knowledge. Chongqing, with its moist landscape, has offered the perfect environment for beautiful women and virtuous knowledge.

"Goddess Fu", the ancient article described the ancient beauty of the city and the charm visual obsession. It is the



“ We can say that Chongqing is the most beautiful and the most recommended major tourist destination. Chongqing is thriving and everyone in the city will have to feel the joy. When you think of Chongqing, whether the mountain, the water, the city, or the countryside, it is enough to surprise you with its beauty and glory. ”



earliest Chinese civilization depicted the most elaborated words. Chongqing and eastern Sichuan people's decisions are based not only on strong wills, but also traditionally strong sense of family values which is very homely and affectionate. The family value coming from the Yangtze River creates the cheerful ethnic groups with distinct characteristics.

Eastern Sichuan is China's most abundant rainfall portion of the mainland, which owns more than 60% of the rain at night. Rain provoked thoughts, adding more to the family and friends emotions.

The people here, with the hard work and the true emotion, are enough to make one unique world. When looking back, we will always treasure and take emotional attachment to Chongqing and eastern Sichuan villages in ancient culture and the long history.



Dazu Rock Carvings – Baoding Mountain

The Backbone of the Chinese Nation and Blood

Sichuan is in the intersection of Chinese history and geography. Most notably, before and after the expedition when the Mongolian army swept across Eurasia, Sichuan was hit by stiff resistance and put off for forty years. When the Mongolian army crashed repeatedly and cannot succeed. In the history of the world, it wrote the song of "God Whip Off" story. Later on, China, as the nation on horseback formed the Mongolian Yuan dynasty, completing the Chinese territory unification. Tibet became an integral part of China's territory, with the geography and history of Chuanshu.

The people in Sichuan territory built up Diaoyu and other 80 hilltop castles, and finally forced the Yuan army to bypass east of Tibet Yunnan. They set up the military Marshal Office and particularly in the province of Tibet, which fully implemented the administrative jurisdiction over Tibet. Tibet was officially incorporated into the Chinese territory, formally determined the meaning of "China". Ming Dynasty emperor continued to implement the policy of the Central Division set up by a Tibetan temporal and sent the Resident Minister to administer

the overall leadership and management of Tibetan affairs. In the twentieth century, the most critical time also showed the tough side of Chongqing people. The Eight-year war shows so much history and story looking back to Chongqing. Just a few years, Chongqing was built into the rear area of the national war of resistance. Especially the people of Chongqing in the mountains are the most generous spirit warriors, who fought to a steady stream of front-line soldiers.

Beautiful Yangtze River with the Most Beautiful Chongqing

In today's world, people are concerned about sustainable development, focusing on harmony between man and the nature. People are concerned about quality of life, as well as the physical and mental health. Contemporary Chongqing, in these areas, is especially remarkable. Its natural geological features, mountains and valleys, rivers and clouds, never-ending forests, historic sites, remote rural areas, distinct contrast between ancient and modern, and cultural heritage, all of these have become distinctive tourism features and new expectations for travelers.



Dazu Rock Carvings



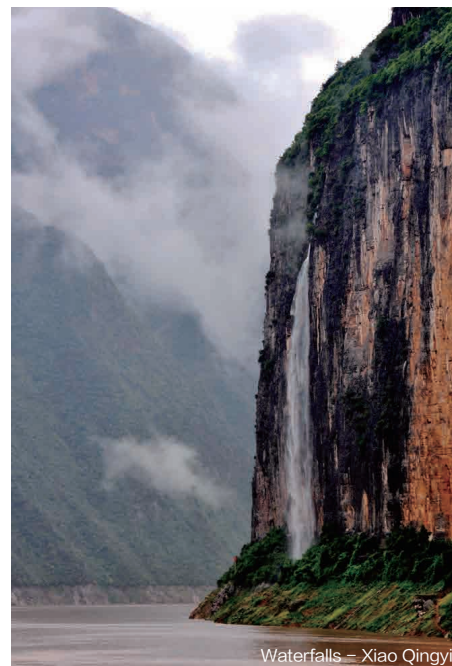
Courageously first – Zhang Yongqin



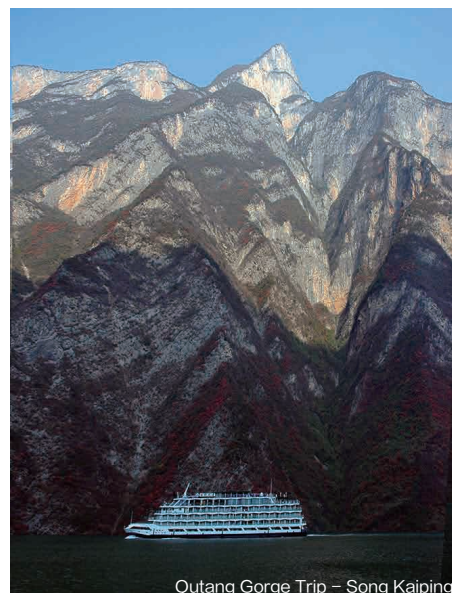
Avenue in Autumn – Zheng Yun



Cruise in the Yangtze River



Waterfalls – Xiao Qingyi



Qutang Gorge Trip – Song Kaiping



Overhauling – Wang Xiaoyong

“ Chongqing is thriving and everyone in the city will have to feel the joy. When you think of Chongqing, whether the mountain, the water, the city, or the countryside, it is enough to surprise you with its beauty and glory. ”

The territory of Chongqing Yangtze River has more than 360 branches, becoming the country's first water resources and forest resources in the country. Especially the Three Gorges Project, a significant and amazing piece of work, is the miracles of nature and reflects the efforts of human ecology in harmony.

Chongqing Three Gorges project and the development model, with a new look, new economic and ecological, shows the new advantages of convergence, new social momentum and growth flashpoint of effectiveness of China's reform and

opening. Chongqing in Western China has become the brightest shining star in China to make the best interpretation.

We can say that Chongqing is the most beautiful and the most recommended major tourist destination. Chongqing is thriving and everyone in the city will have to feel the joy. When you think of Chongqing, whether the mountain, the water, the city, or the countryside, it is enough to surprise you with its beauty and glory.

Some images are provided by Fengjie Tourism Bureau, the text is provided Lyou Ren. (Source: WTOF)



Interview with Tan Jialing, Deputy Mayor of Chongqing Municipal Government

1. Please tell us why Chongqing was chosen as the venue location for the “2016 World Tourism Cities Federation Fragrant Hills Tourism Summit.”

Thanks to the World Tourism Cities Federation, Chongqing was chosen as the 2016 venue for the summit. We also believe that the summit can bring more glory to Chongqing city. World Tourism Cities Federation Summit, held for the first time in a city that isn't a capital, and held the first time in the Midwest region of China, which in itself means that Chongqing has become one of the world's most famous tourist destinations and it shows the tourism potential of the city. In addition to the China factor, beautiful natural scenery, unique culture and charming style, and the broad support from the booming economy and the public, all add to Chongqing's obvious advantages.

Firstly, from a historical point of view, Chongqing has been set as the country's capital three times, and has had four major

constructions throughout the history. The city is one of China's historically famous cultural city and heritage market; in addition, the city is home to countless heroes and many historical sites that are full of ancient customs. Chongqing courts the world's attention with its various travel options in the city.

The city has 3,000 years of unique history and culture connotation. It retained many of the 25,000 extremely valuable cultural heritage items, including the World Heritage Site, "Dazu Rock Carvings" which shows the charm of oriental civilization; "Aikawa fishing city" changed the world history; and most notably, during World War II, Chongqing was the command center in the Far East.

Secondly, Chongqing has a large city landscape, a total of 82,000 square kilometers of land, rivers horizons, and mountains blending the city. It has a unique world natural heritage: Jinfo Mountain and Wulong Karst Geological Park, in addition to the Three Gorges, Wujiang River Gallery and other world

wonders. The city sits on various shapes of the bridges, like the natural moat into a thoroughfare. Therefore, Chongqing also enjoys the name "World Bridge Museum."

Thirdly, Chongqing is one of China's five national central cities, with many geographical advantages and owns the strategic position. It is an important fulcrum to the western development and also a junction point to the "One Belt One Road" strategy. Plus, it is a key city along Yangtze River economic belt. The city's infrastructure includes the Chongqing-Xinjiang-Europe international railway in the west, Yangtze River Golden Waterway in the east, and airlines covering more than 120 cities on five continents. The western city of Chongqing is China's youngest municipality and has emerged as an important inland development center for China.

Fourthly, Chongqing has a continuous GDP growth that maintains more than 10% growth rate. It is the fastest growing city in the first ten consecutive quarters in China.



The Melody of Tobacco Leaves – Deng Lunyu

The city has pillar industry development, state of modern manufacturing base, domestic functional financial center, and the National Center for Urban Construction in West innovation centers. In addition, urban and rural development takes shape, including automobiles, digital information, equipment manufacturing, consumer products and other expansion, notebook computers and other strategic emerging the rapid rise of modern service industry, financial industry and other booming new growth emerging. The city attracted nearly 300 "Fortune 500" companies to establish bases and under larger world economic pressures, presented positive economic development trends.

Fifthly, Chongqing is a world famous tourist city and an important tourist destination. It is the ancient capital, spa capital, bridges city, and the gastronomic capital. Chongqing has 1 World Heritage Site, 2 World Natural Heritage, and 198 national A-level scenic spots. The city has also opened 36 direct flights to Los Angeles, Rome, Helsinki,

“ Both domestic and overseas tourists are fond of the city landscape, Chongqing nightlife, Chongqing dishes as well as the light rail, elevated bridge, and the river tankers. ”

Sydney, Doha and Seoul. Also, visitors from The United States, Germany, France, Russia, Switzerland, Australia and other 51 countries visitors can enjoy the "72 hours transit visa." The total overseas tourists reached 390 million people. Both domestic and overseas tourists are fond of the city landscape, Chongqing nightlife, Chongqing dishes as well as the light rail, elevated bridge, and the river tankers. In recent years, Chongqing has been awarded by internationally renowned travel magazine "Frommer's" and "Lonely Planet" as "The World's Top Ten Tourist Destinations and The World's Top Ten Most Promising Destination." Its comprehensive tourist satisfaction ranks the first one among all Chinese tourist cities.

In addition, Chongqing has the expertise to organize exhibitions and for five consecutive years, it was named as "China Top Ten Influential Exhibition City and China's Best MICE Destination City". The city has held "AAPP AAPP, China Top 500 Enterprises Summit, West China Tourism Industry Expo" and other forums & exhibitions. The summit is to be held in Chongqing Yuelai National Convention Centre, which is a global leader in large-scale conventions, and is the West's largest conference venues, with a total construction area of 600,000 square meters. It is a multi-functional complex with various services including exhibitions, conference, catering, and accommodation. Chongqing Yuelai Wyndham



Jinfo Mountain – Turtle into the Sea

Hotel is an internationally renowned hotel that has earned a five-star standard.

In short, the unique charm of the city shows friends at home and abroad that the Chongqing has tremendous appeal, which makes Chongqing city the right choice to host the summit in 2016. We are deeply honored and would like to express our heartfelt thanks to the Federation and its member cities for their great support!

2. Please kindly introduce the current preparatory work underway in Chongqing.

Chongqing municipal government attaches great importance to the summit held in Chongqing. We see it as a major opportunity to accelerate the construction of an international tourist destination of the world, to improve the competitiveness of the city of Chongqing, its impact and visibility as an important carrier and platform to expand openness, accelerate the process of modernization and internationalization.

After the successful bid, the municipal government established the leadership and the city's upper and lower level working mechanism. We have set up a special committee and held a mobilization meeting and several conferences to develop an overall plan. To ensure that work is completed, the municipal government has done a good job in regards to preparations for the Summit, clearing all departments and county tasks and responsibilities. And to develop a work program into nearly 30, detailed working processes, clarify working schedule, strengthen inspection to ensure that the work is processed. During the preparations, we attach special importance to fine services and supports. We focused on different countries, different regions of

the guests, in order to develop a "one to one" comprehensive and detailed program reception. We also specifically recruited hundreds of volunteers for the Summit guests with attentive and thoughtful services. Airlines, hotels, travel agencies, financial companies and other tourism industry summit will also provide quality and efficient full-services.

This time, we will take the most stringent security measures to ensure the safety of guests. Currently, attendance rate has reached 66.7%, most of which are international buyers and international investors to senior management. Senior officials from UNWTO, PATA, GTEF, WTCF and other important international organizations have confirmed their attendance. In addition, 12 delegations led by the tourism city mayor or deputy mayor will also attend.

Chongqing will take this opportunity to vigorously promote the development of tourism industry. 1. To promote investment. We have pushed the successes of landscape Six Flags theme park, OCT Chongqing Wanda Culture Travel City and other tourism projects.

2. To promote the construction. Yangtze River Golden Triangle Tour started construction with an investment of 364 million yuan to promote the "Travel Toilet Revolution," and vigorously upgrade the tourist facilities.

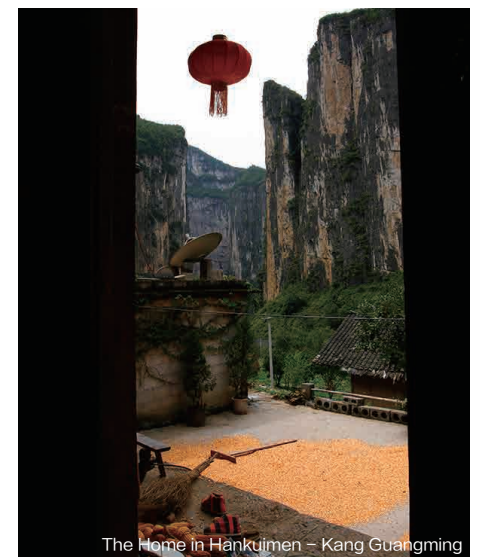
3. To promote the service. It will improve the quality of tourism services to enhance the implementation of the project, and to strengthen the tourist destinations, scenic spots, hotels, restaurants, parking, travel agency standardized management.

4. To enhance marketing. The city has mobilized the forces and resources to create a strong atmosphere of the summit organization, three-dimensional online and offline publicity

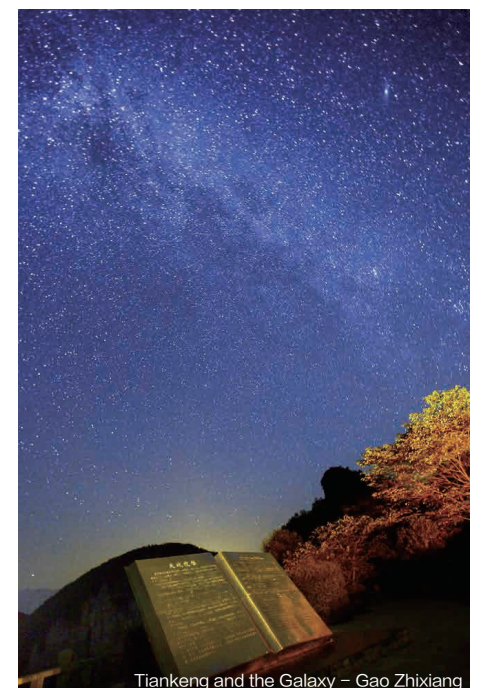
and promotion of tourism resources and specialty products.

5. To enhance the governance. It will be vigorously rectifying and standardizing the order of the tourism market, enhance the

“ After the successful bid, the municipal government established the leadership and the city's upper and lower level working mechanism. We have set up a special committee and held a mobilization meeting and several conferences to develop an overall plan. ”



The Home in Hankuimen – Kang Guangming



Tiankeng and the Galaxy – Gao Zhixiang



Contest – Guoli



24 Good Harvest Still - Peng Yan



A Good Harvest - Cheng Jinwei

tourism business practices, and create a safe and harmonious tourist environment.

6. To promote inbound tourism. We would like to vigorously promote global tourism, to highlight the Three Gorges, Red Rock line, the spa capital, Chongqing corridor, Wujiang River Gallery, World Heritage, Old Towns, beautiful countryside and other tourist spots to attract visitors to Chongqing for sightseeing.

We attach great importance to the communications with World Tourism Cities Federation and the Federation also gave Chongqing strong guidance and support. We will also learn from Beijing, Rabat and other cities who held summit before and had valuable experience. I believe with the joints efforts from WTOF and Chongqing; we can arrange an impactful, distinctive, and high quality summit, giving domestic and foreign guests a good impression.

3. You have participated in the summit held last year in Morocco. Chongqing is the first summit held in a city that isn't a capital. What are the characteristics and highlights of this year's summit? For this year's summit held in Chongqing, what goals and expectations do you have?

Last year's summit held in Morocco, North Africa, allowed us to experience the beauty and style of a splendid civilization. It left us with a deep impression. This year's summit, held in Chongqing, will be based on the previous summit and show the unique characteristics of the city.

The summit will be milestone significance. The summit will review the glorious history and bright future prospects of the WTOF since the establishment and share the bright future prospects of the organization. It is an important event for the Federation. During the scheduled agenda, it has arranged

for the transition of the World Tourism City Federation Council, the second session of the board meeting for the first time, the World Tourist City Federation member conference, announcing of the 2017 overseas host city and 2018 domestic host city, which is the first time in the WTOF's history.

The summit is in the "Five Development Concept" held under the guidance of a tour event. Summit Forum with the theme of "Sharing Economy on Tourism Opportunities and Challenges of Urban Development," and highlighting the "Five Concept of Development" and the core requirements. The "Five Development Concept" promotes tourism development in the world and will bring a better future to world tourism industry. At the same time, the summit forum will adapt a "3 + 1" method, that is one main forum plus three sub-forums, which will have government officials, corporate executives, experts and scholars, and industry representatives from various sectors coming together to discuss a new model of tourism.

The summit will launch three historical breakthrough results. First, the summit will publish the World Tourism Cities Federation Chongqing Declaration and the Chongqing to Build an Internationally Renowned Tourist Destination Case Study and a series of research documents. The World Tourism Cities Federation Chongqing Declaration will serve as the World Tourism Program for action in the next five years. Secondly, the summit will set up Committee of Investment of WTOF, jointly prepared and sponsored by China Equity Investment Association (CAPE), which has more than 400 members and over RMB one trillion administer funds. CAPE will be the first to fund to the Tourism Investment Fair and deepen international cooperation in tourism. Again, the summit will discuss the progress made in the tourism business for its significant results, in which Chongqing will have 20 projects to participate in the negotiations and more than 10 projects have identified investors.

The summit will fully reflect the trends of openness, interactive, and experience. Through the "Conference + Experience" innovative ways plus the "Online + Offline", "Land + Water" activities, the summit content will inevitably reach a new climax. At the same time, our guests will enjoy the summit tour, including experience tours and cruise trips, which will make them appreciate the beauty of Chongqing's unique landscape and cultural customs.

As the city council member of WTOF, Chongqing will be committed to the summit and make it into an event in history. Here, we sincerely issue a warm invitation to

international tourism organizations and agencies, the World Tourism Cities, and World Tourism Enterprises. Welcome to Chongqing! Let us together interpret and advertise the "Better City Life through Tourism" concept and to make new contributions to the development of world tourism!

4. During the summit, there will be representatives of international tourism organizations and institutions from around the world attending. Since Chongqing is World's Tourism Federation member city, what are the benefits we can gain to hold such a summit to promote the internationalization process of Chinese tourist cities? What's the significance for promoting the sustainable development of tourism in the world?

Chongqing made tourism as a comprehensive strategic pillar industry and made the goal to accelerate the construction of well-known international tourist destination. In the next five years, Under the guidance of "Beautiful Landscape Capital · Chongqing (promotional project)", the city will be focusing on building three major international tourist destinations, four themed boutique tourist routes, four destination system, and seven international tourism brand. According to the plan, the future of Chongqing international route numbers will reach to 100. The to-be built Chongqing Jiangbei International Airport T3 terminal will allow passenger number will reach 7 million, making Chongqing's contact with the world more closely. Holding such a summit can effectively promote Chongqing's

domestic and international tourism, which will enhance the domestic and international exchanges and cooperation between tourism enterprises and international tourism organizations and institutions.

World Tourism Cities Federation has 109 city members, including the major domestic and international tourist destination cities. Through the organization of the summit, members can effectively promote exchanges between cities for the world to understand Chinese tourist cities. And it will allow tourist cities in China the opportunity to better understand the world tourist cities in order to build a two-way communication platform. Through the organization of the summit,

“ Here, we once again invite everyone to Chongqing. We are ready, and we will offer the next safe, efficient, and unique tourist event. ”

the World Tourism can not only promote more Chinese enterprises to seek business opportunities, open up to the vast Chinese market, especially in central and western China, to allow more foreign tourists to visit China, but also for the more Chinese tourist cities, Tourism enterprises to go abroad to provide support, allowing more Chinese tourists learn about a foreign tourist city. It will allow Chinese tourism cities and the world tourism industry to better integrate into the global tourism, which enhances their level of

internationalization. "Sharing" is the key to the world's sustainable and healthy development of the tourism industry. By "sharing", it can effectively mobilize the world of tourism resources, and to achieve optimal allocation of resource elements.

Through the organization of the summit, it can effectively promote greater understanding between the World Tourism Cities, deepen cooperation and realize the sharing of resources among the world tourist cities, to complementary advantages, mutual benefit, boost world tourism including Chongqing tourism, and China's tourism industry. All above can forward through the development of tourism, promote the integration of industrial development, and promote the healthy and sustainable development of the whole economy. As a member of the World Federation of Municipalities tourist city, Chongqing will continue to support the summit to be held, to contribute to the development of China's tourism industry and the world of tourism!

5. Anything else you would like to add?

2016 World Tourism Cities Federation Chongqing Fragrant Hills Tourism Summit will be held during the autumn season during September 18-22. Here, we once again invite everyone to Chongqing. We are ready, and we will offer the next safe, efficient, and unique tourist event. Let us set out together to experience the charm of Chongqing, and to share the vitality of Chongqing! 🌟

some images are provided by Fengjie Tourism Bureau. (Source: WTOF)



Shanwangping - Autumn



Why Intermodal is the New Interline

“ Today, traffic has already shifted from air to rail; especially on shorter routes within Europe. However, these transportation models will not pose threat to airlines because intermodal traffic will become a trend. ”

Flying is a great and exciting way to travel. It allows us to overcome large distances in mere hours and has grown to be an affordable means of travel. However, there are certain situations when passengers are considering other forms of transportation as an alternative.

Today, traffic has already shifted from air to rail; especially on shorter routes within Europe and between Madrid and Valencia rail is the primary mode of transport.

Are these forms of transportation a threat to airlines? Competition in the aviation industry has definitely undergone a change in paradigm and today the entire transport industry is competing against each other.

So I was really excited the other day when I watched CNN Business Traveller. Doing some global crisscrossing on planes, trains and automobiles, Richard Quest was proving that intermodal is truly a driver in the industry.

The way to travel will continue changing: Uber is not only a clever and easy app, it is proof that the way we travel is fundamentally changing. And Airbnb shows that the same goes for the way we will

lodge in the future. So, what else comes next in this transportation evolution? That's right: intermodal. And there are three heavy weight reasons for why you shouldn't turn a blind eye to the trend.



Reason 1: Politicians want it

Around the world, rail services are rapidly expanding their route networks. In the EU, the Commission has shown its support for the development of a pan-European high-speed rail network, under the Horizon 2020 programme, with nearly €80 billion funding available between 2014 and 2020 for such developments.

The United States has a new high-speed rail service programme that will be in development from 2015-2030 to connect people by rail across the entire country. In addition, China will have one of the most extensive high-speed rail networks by 2020.

So what makes these rail services so attractive to governments? Modern rail services are better for the environment (through the use of clean energy and minimising pollution caused by individual road traffic); they are affordable and rail services support the further economic development of regions they connect.

Ferry services are beneficial transportation options as well, obviously and especially for islands. But they are very helpful in coastal regions that have easy access to water and where airports or other infrastructure supporting travel (railway tracks and roads) would be difficult to install.

Reason 2: Travellers want it

While cars are still considered the most flexible individual form of ground transportation, rail and ferry services are becoming more and more popular, as they not only take away the pains of sitting in traffic or navigating difficult routes, but they have also become a very affordable and fast alternative.

Bus services too are an even more affordable option for travellers. Although still thought of as an individual mode of transport, shuttle services are able to provide travellers with a touch of class offering a more intimate and comfortable option than travelling in a large train or bus. Shuttle providers can offer individual services, by departing from the airport and transporting passengers right to their doorstep or picking them up from their home on the way to the airport.

There are many limitations to flying as a single mode of transportation: airport infrastructure isn't always easily available (think of Tibet) and flights may not always be affordable, especially if countries have not yet adopted an LCC culture.

Other modes of transportation such as Deutsche Bahn's Rail & Fly service can also make it easier for passengers to arrive or depart from airports, before or after their flights.

In some cases it is simply easier and often faster to take a train that services passengers between city centres rather than going to the airport and through all of the procedures that go along with flying, twice! Rail to air services are now in place with train station check in facilities, where luggage can be checked right through. Rail to air services appear to become the primary feeder for long haul air traffic, especially with more and more airports being connected to high speed rail networks.

An additional upside to rail and bus services is that they usually offer trips at a higher frequency, therefore giving travellers more flexibility and choices in their travel plans.

Reason 3: The industry wants it

Airlines are able to widen their customer reach around an airport by adding or connecting other modes of transport to and from airports. Some of these services are already in action.

There are bus services connecting remote airports like Charleroi to Brussels and Buenos Aires to Ezeiza. High-speed train services give passengers access to major airports situated outside of metropolitan areas like Oslo Gardermoen and soon, Washington Dulles.



Even ferries are playing large roles in connecting passengers to airports like those between downtown Toronto and Billy Bishop Airport (although a pedestrian tunnel will be ready soon) and those that transfer passengers easily between Hong Kong airport, which has its own transit ferry terminal, and Macau.

By connecting with ground transport providers, airlines can broaden their network and generate more traffic by providing multi-airport connections in cities or regions where major airports are within close distance to each other.

For instance, a passenger could fly from New York JFK to London Heathrow, and then connect to London Gatwick via ground transportation to catch a connecting flight to Malta.

Coming from the ferry business, Argentinean Buquebus who operates ferries between Uruguay and Argentina, crossing the Rio de la Plata, have successfully extended their network with buses and even tried to integrate air services with BQB Airlines.

Broadening the access of airports to new regions gives airlines the benefit of concentrating on their core routes, so they don't have to operate smaller and unprofitable ones.

Instead, airlines can use various partners providing alternative forms of transportation to transport outlying passengers into their core market. Even more, airlines could use intermodal connections to create an end-to-end passenger experience, completed with rail seat reservations, check through luggage, and more.

Intermodal transport allows airlines to benefit from alternative forms of transport, and vice versa.

Distribution efforts should reflect the development and opportunities of alternate forms of transport by finding additional solutions to incorporate rail, road and ferry services into airline reservation systems. With many innovative developments in the realm of airline distribution, it is now time to open these innovations and opportunities up to intermodal traffic!

What are your thoughts about intermodal traffic? ➤

(source:Tnooz)

Malta Valletta: Beautiful Island, Happy Place

—Interview with John Aquilina, the Ambassador of Malta

“ It all started when WTCF was approached by the Ambassador of Malta to conduct an interview with him. Valletta is the city member of World Tourism Cities Federation (WTCF) and besides Beijing and Shanghai, Malta will open 13 Visa centers in China which will make easier for Chinese tourists to visit Malta. ”



It was extremely hot in Beijing's August and the weather report on the phone stated 35 degrees, but it felt more like 41 degrees when you are walking outside. John Aquilina, who is a good talker, gave an interview with enthusiasm, lively and interesting which made us curious about this small country in Southern Europe.

WTCF: Can you give me an introduction of our member city, Valletta?

Ambassador: Valletta is just such a beautiful city. I mean its ancient, it's modern, and it has everything going for it. The architecture of Valletta is breathtaking; the city is out on a peninsula which jots out onto the sea. So you've got virtually sea around both sides of it and it only has land at the back. You can only enter by land through a very narrow gateway, which of course made it a perfect place to fortify and a perfect place to make secure in the olden days. So when the Knights of Malta came to Malta in 1530, they decided that they were going to make their home there and they were going to make it a secure place to secure it against future invasions and future threats. And they built huge fortifications, huge bastions all around

Valletta and when you're sailing into Valletta today in the Grand Harbor of Malta, you see these huge beautiful limestone walls jutting up out of the sea. You see this great fortress city with architecture that is Baroque, is Norman, is Georgian, is Moorish; it has architecture from many different cultures, many different centuries and it is there to see almost all at once because it's not a very big city. If you spend a week in Valletta, you'll practically get to know every corner of Valletta but you'll always find something new to interest you.

WTCF: Aside from the ancient buildings and monuments, what are some of the natural landscapes?

Ambassador: We're talking about landscapes, were talking about beaches, we're talking about beautiful coastlines, deep harbors, wonderful scenery everywhere. One great thing about Malta is from almost every point in Malta, you can see the sea. So it's a small place and it is very densely populated but you don't have this feeling that you're being closed in. You don't have this feeling of overwhelming number of people on top of you because from almost any point in Malta, you can look out and you can see the sea and the sea goes on forever.

And of course the sea is beautiful as is the climate, on average, 300 days of sunshine a year, long beautiful summer days, very warm water in summer, 27 degrees, people just love to go swimming. Even at night they go swimming because it's so nice and warm and it's so accessible, the other thing about Malta is it doesn't take you hours to go from one point to another. It's very easy for example to many things in the one day. I'll give you an example, one of the great things Malta is noted for is its English language schools, and we have a large number of English language schools so we get people particularly in July, August and September, they come in from all over the world. Quite a number come from China, but also from Japan, and from Scandinavia and they come to study English.

WTCF: If I were to go to Valletta tomorrow, what could I do in a day?

Ambassador: I'll give you an example of my day in Valletta, I might get into Valletta somewhere around 10 o'clock and I'll go up to one of the many cafes that are open there for an outdoor coffee with maybe some Pastizzi, a traditional Maltese cheesecake, you can have them in either cheese or peas, and that will fill me up pretty well for some time.



“ And of course the sea is beautiful as is the climate, on average, 300 days of sunshine a year, long beautiful summer days, very warm water in summer, 27 degrees, people just love to go swimming. ”

Then I can go for a walk around and have a look at some of the architecture up high on a platform on the bastions overlooking the grand harbor and get a beautiful view of the huge panorama of the grand harbor, it's still quite cool at that time of the morning so I can probably walk around for a couple of hours, enjoy the shade of some of the palm trees on the top and stroll around looking at the sites down below the bastions.

Then maybe it might be time for a bit of lunch, so I might go over and have some lunch at one of the restaurants, maybe pick a small restaurant which serves a traditional Maltese meal. Maltese meals are very similar to the meals the south of Europe, particularly Neapolitan meals or Sicilian meals. We have a great affinity with that era because obviously we're very close. So we can have a nice pasta meal or perhaps a unique Maltese meat meal which we call Bragioli, it's actually a meat olive filled with a mixture of egg, vegetables and pork. I'll probably enjoy a glass of wine or two with lunch, I think that will go down very well. By then I'll probably be very tired, it's probably getting a bit hot so I might want to go in and find a bit of a shady spot, I might go into the museum perhaps and have a look at the Museum of Antiquities or go to the armory or

visit the president's palace and have a look at some of the great things that are there as they are so close by.

Maybe by about 4 o'clock it's cooled down a little bit perhaps or maybe a little bit later. I've brought my swimming gear with me so I might duck around to one of the spots where I'll go and have a swim. Still nice and warm, warm enough but not too hot and that would give me a great time. I would probably, if I was very adventurous, and I had a very short time in Malta, I might stay and do a bit more later on but I think I might be a bit tired by then so I'd probably go home and have a bit of a sleep and come back later, possibly about 8 o'clock, have another meal and enjoy a good dinner at one of restaurants with some family people or perhaps some friends.

WTCF: Malta is a really popular tourism destination, the tourism industry is a huge contributor to the GDP and in 2015, Malta received almost 1.8 million tourists, that's almost four or five times its population size.

Ambassador: Last year Malta got 1.8 million tourists about four and a half times of its population. The only country in the world I would

think that it can boast in any one year it receives four and a half times the number of tourists of its own population. I don't know of any other country that has that. The fact is any day of the year, any one of the 365 days of the year, there will be more foreigners in Malta than there are locals. So just, think about that, I mean that must make you think well this small country, this small island country must have some tremendous advantages if it keeps attracting people to come in those large numbers. And they don't just come once, or twice, there are some people that have been coming every year for 20, 30 years. And they keep coming back because they just love the experience there so much. That's what Malta has to offer.

You know I've lived in a lot of places and I have spoken to a lot of people about Malta and literally thousands of people have gone to Malta because they've heard me speak about it. Not one has ever come back to me and said to me ohh, John Aquilina, you know you exaggerated a little bit, you made it all sound very smart but you know



“ Literally thousands of people have gone to Malta because they've heard me speak about it. Not one has ever come back to me and said to me ohh, John Aquilina, you know you exaggerated a little bit, you made it all sound very smart but you know I went there and I didn't have all that great of a time. ”

I went there and I didn't have all that great of a time. Usually they come back the reverse and they say, why didn't you try and tell me to go there for four or five days, I could of spent two weeks there. I want to go back now because there was so much I missed and I was only planning to spend a week or four or five days there and there's so much more I can experience.

We haven't even spoken about Gozo for example, Gozo is the other little island north of Malta, it's part of the Malta archipelago, It is basically rural, very calm very quiet. Much smaller than Malta but beautiful farm houses everywhere you can spend a relaxing fort night there and just let all the worlds troubles pass you by, if you don't want to listen to news you don't have to. You've got beautiful facilities there, beautiful food you can go on long walks, and it's just very, very calm. So there's just so much to Malta, everywhere you go you see opportunities, you know this is very hard especially here in china because china is so big.

And there are so many people so you start talking about a country that's what, 14 km wide and 27 km long and yeah, just like you they start to smile they start to laugh, they don't want to be rude but they can't help it. And you're talking about a population of 400,000 people and they go oh yeah, just because it's small it doesn't mean that it's not beautiful, doesn't mean that it doesn't have things to offer. I always think of it this way, we often refer to Malta as being the pearl of the Mediterranean, a pearl is something that's very, very small, and that's also something that's very precious and something that's very beautiful

I always believed that the man who overlooks Malta can feel her beauty. So every time i think about Malta I think of the beauty, I think of the experience, what it has to offer. I think of richness. I think of enriching my life. I think of having good feelings and good thoughts. And I haven't even spoken about the people yet because they're really Malta's asset.

We have the beaches, we have our coast line, we have beautiful scenery, we have of course our architecture that goes back 7000 years, so many different types of architecture, the oldest man-made structures on Earth are to be found in Malta. The Neolithic temples we have both aboveground and underground. And we also have the people. The people of Malta are very hospitable, very warm, they're very friendly. Why? It's because where Malta is located. Malta is located in the middle of the Mediterranean. Halfway between North Africa and Southern Europe, it has been a destination for travellers and voyagers for 7000 years. They have been coming and going. The Maltese are used to seeing strangers there. They are used to welcoming people. And by now, also Maltese are very practical people, and they know it's their bread and butter. They know that if the tourists didn't come, the economy would suffer. So they have to be friendly to the strangers that come there. They have to be friendly to the new people who come there all the time.

WTCF: Speaking of economy, how do you think this boom in tourism benefits the local Maltese people?

Ambassador: Well of course tourism is vital for Malta. Last year, Malta had a GDP, gross domestic product of 6.5% in 2015. I mean, that's phenomenal for Europe. It's the same as China's. And for Europe, it's outstanding because if you have a GDP of 2% or 2.5%, you're doing very well in Europe and particularly because we all know Europe has experienced some financial problems recently, Malta has been immune to that the tourist industry has more to reflect but also other industries too, it's not just tourism. Malta has also been diversifying into other businesses and another sitting we'll talk about that as well. But the Maltese economy continues to grow, tourism continues to grow.



“ But now we’ll have 13 new centers located throughout the length and breadth of China and that would mean that people won’t have to travel that far, it will be so much easier for them to get their Schengen visas to come to Malta. ”

By the middle of this year, we’ve already have had almost 5 million people pass through Malta’s airport. Now for a country that size, 5 million people passing through the airport, it’s been there for the last 4 years, the 4th busiest airport in Europe. That tells you also that Malta is a great hub, great center. One of the other great things about Malta is its connectivity by sea or by air. It has daily flights to almost every capital in Europe and many other capitals outside Europe as well. So if you want to go to London, you want to go to Rome, if you want to go to Paris or Frankfurt or Zurich or Berlin or Geneva wherever even Brussels, they have flights every day and in some cases several flights a day. And timings, at the very most 1 and a half to 2 hours or a bit over 2 hours. It’s even shorter than many other domestic flights here in China. So it’s easy to get from Point A to point B.

And by sea of course there are these huge ocean cruises coming and going every day. It’s a great experience at Malta at about 6:30 or 7:00 in the morning to be in the grand harbor and to watch the ships leaving and the ships arriving. And when they pass each other, there’s horns blowing, there’s bands playing, it’s a great experience, people really enjoy it. And the grand harbor is so big that it can accommodate not 1 or 2 but many huge ocean liners all at the one time. Because these tourists they meet each other, they disembark, they go to Valletta, they go to spend a day in Valletta may be, may be 2 or 3 days, go inland a little bit and they meet each other from different cruises and talk to each other and many of them sort of end up meeting each other again in future cruises. It’s a great meeting point for people as well from all around the world.

WTCF: Aside from Europe, what percentage of the total tourists are from China?

Ambassador: A very small percentage and that’s why I am here, that’s why I am talking to you. Because the biggest problem about Malta in China is that there are a very few Chinese who have heard of Malta. I



mean, you think about it, the most populated country in the world and one of the least populated countries in the world. So at first thought, there’s very little connection there, very large and very small. And while I can say without any hesitation that very few people in China know about Malta. But I don’t have to sell to Malta to the Chinese, anything about the wonderful advantage Malta has to offer to Chinese tourists because if the Chinese were to go there, they would see for themselves; they would come back and they would want to talk to their family members, talk to their friends and say, wow what a wonderful time we had in Malta, you should go there as well.

WTCF: So I heard it in the news that Malta is planning to open 13 new visa application centers other than Beijing and Shanghai

Ambassador: Yes. That’s right, that’s fantastic. We’re so much looking forward to that. 13 visa application centers throughout the heart of China and that would make it so much easier for the Chinese waiting to come to Malta. At the moment with the Schengen requirements, it requires biometrics, which means in order to get a visa you need to have your fingerprints taken and photograph taken and up until now we have only had 2 centers which were able to do that here in Beijing and also in Shanghai. That meant that anybody else who wanted to travel to the Schengen visa to come to Malta had to travel to either Beijing or Shanghai in order to get their visas. But now we’ll have 13 new centers located throughout the length and breadth of China and that would mean that people won’t have to travel that far, it will be so much easier for them to get their Schengen visas to come to Malta. We’re looking forward to the opening of these new centers and hopefully welcoming many tens of thousands of Chinese move to Malta. ➤

(Source: WTCF)

This is a shortened version of the interview, for full version please visit: <http://en.wtcf.org.cn/MemberCities/MemberNews/201608119822.html>

TUI Group Sees Profits Increase Despite Terror-Driven Fall in Revenue

TUI Group has seen underlying operating increase by 1.1 per cent, to €180 million, for the April to June quarter of 2016.

Excluding FX and the timing impact of Easter, EBITA climbed by 14.1 per cent to €203.3 million.

This comes despite a 5.7 per cent fall in revenue, with TUI report turnover totalling €4.6 billion for the period.

This was driven by the timing impact of Easter, a decline in bookings to North Africa and Turkey and the impact of terrorist attacks on the market environment, for instance in Belgium following the terror attack at Brussels Airport.



For the first nine months of the financial year, turnover declined slightly by 0.9 per cent to €11.39 billion.

TUI is currently delivering a robust trading performance in line with the group's expectations, the company said in a statement earlier.

The summer 2016 source market programme is 87 per cent sold to date, with turnover up one per cent.

"In financial year 2015/16, we are planning to deliver at least ten per cent growth in underlying EBITA year-on-year," said Fritz Jousen, chief executive TUI Group.

"TUI's presence in more than 100 countries with our group's own businesses and employees and our advanced transformation to a hotel and cruises group make TUI Group more flexible and resilient – and thus stronger.

"Today, we are in a better position to cushion geopolitical challenges.

"No one is immune to external impacts.

"However, it has been demonstrated that we have launched the right strategy, engage in active management and control, and have developed a sophisticated risk management system."

Bangkok's Historic Hua Lamphong Railway Station Turns 100

Bangkok Railway Station was the primary source of transport for the local people as well as tourists before the advent of low cost airlines. It was the primary transit point for millions of travelers exploring Thailand each year.

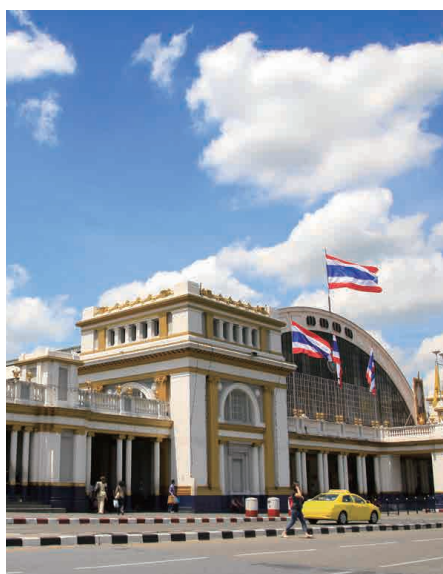
The station first opened to the public on 25th June, 1916 and this year the station celebrated its 100th anniversary. It is unofficially known as the Hua Lamphong station. The station is the main terminal to Northern, Eastern, Northeastern and Southern Thailand.

State Railway of Thailand staff told the media that about 200 trains carrying more than 27,000 travelers roll through each day from the station.

The historic station was designed by Italian architect Mario Tamagno. The station features neo-classical architecture. It connects with the MRT Underground system and features a distinct half-dome structure. Its appearance and interior layout have been compared with the Frankfurt Train Station, which also features the half dome façade, a giant clock on the front gable and open-air passenger galleries.

The fabled Orient Express still passes through a few times a month as well.

Those who want to experience Hua Lamphong's gritty charm have to hurry up because the State Railway of Thailand is planning to move operations to a new station further north. The new station is supposed to be set up in the city's Bang Sue district.



According to local media reports, the Hua Lamphong station will be turned into a railway museum and the new station will open in 2019.

Toronto to Get Urban Park Above Active Railway

Influenced by Chicago's Millennium Park, Toronto's mayor John Tory has planned to build a downtown park above an active railway track, connecting the Rogers Centre and Bathurst Street. The Millennium Park in Chicago has been built above a rail yard and bus lanes, costing about US\$ 490 million.

The park, known as the Rail Deck Park would occupy an area measuring about 21 acres. It would be built above the railway with an aim to connect the waterfront with downtown and support high-rise development in an area that is densely populated.



Councillor Joe Cressy and Mayor John Tory had announced the plan for this project on Wednesday.

Mr. Tory told the media-persons that the discussions with the owners of the site namely, Toronto Terminals Railway, Canadian National Railway Co. and transportation agency Metrolinx have been positive.

This project actually belongs to the TOcore project that has been created to counter the rapid developments of downtown of Toronto that has been draining its social infrastructure.

Joe Cressy said that the rapid development in cities urgently require creative ways of building public spaces thereby making way for new infrastructure facilities.

According to a report published in 2011, about 8,30,000 people travel to Toronto daily, and the current numbers are likely to increase steadily. Moreover, the population of the adjacent neighborhoods of the proposed park, particularly CityPlace and Kind-Spadina have expanded to 40,000 from 1,000 within 20 years. Following the development of brand new office, retail and residential space, an additional 30,000 people are estimated to start residing in this area.

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