



PRESS RELEASE

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TOURISM MALAYSIA GOES ALL OUT TO PROMOTE HALAL TOURISM IN ABU DHABI

ABU DHABI, 19 Oct 2015: Tourism Malaysia is promoting the country's flourishing Halal industry and rising Islamic tourism at the 3-day World Halal Travel Summit & Exhibition (WHTS15), which begins today at the Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre. The event is deemed the largest B2B gathering of global Halal travel specialists ever assembled.

Tourism Malaysia's Senior Director of International Promotion (Asia/Africa) Datuk Musa Yusof is leading 14 Malaysian sellers from eight organisations comprising hotels and tour agents, as well as the Malaysia Healthcare Travel Council (MHTC), to participate in the event.

This year's WHTS also sees Tourism Malaysia participating as the Headline Partner, giving it various benefits to help maximise the country's participation in the summit. As the Headline Partner, Tourism Malaysia garners greater exposure and publicity at the event, which is attended by over 6,000 invited participants, including travel and tourism professionals and agencies, hospitality groups and hoteliers, tour operators, developers, destinations and key industry decision makers from around the globe.

The summit also includes seminars and panel discussions to highlight key issues facing Halal tourism. Malaysia is represented by the Islamic Tourism Centre (ITC), which is one of the agencies under the Ministry of Tourism and Culture Malaysia, tasked to focus on the promotion of the country's Halal and Islamic tourism.

On 20 October, the Director General of ITC Zulkifly Md. Said will deliver a talk titled "Muslim Friendly Malaysia – Developing and Branding the Islamic Tourism Sector in a Muslim Majority Country". The case study presentation aims to provide practical insights, tips, and best practices on destination management and marketing strategies on how to cater to Muslim travellers. Besides that, Zulkifly is also one of the panelists to discuss on the topic "Outbound Tourism Trends from Muslim Majority Countries".

The WHTS15 also includes an award ceremony, the World Halal Travel Awards, which will take place at The Emirates Palace in Abu Dhabi on 20 October. The event aims to celebrate outstanding products and services within the international Halal tourism sector. Malaysia's capital city Kuala Lumpur has been shortlisted in the 'World's Best Halal Tourism Destination' category while the country is one of the finalists in the "World's Best Halal Culinary Destination" category.



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Besides participating in the summit, Tourism Malaysia is collaborating with Etihad Airways to organise a workshop in Abu Dhabi on 22 Oct, Al-Ain (25 Oct), and Dubai (26 Oct), where a business session will be held for the local industry players to meet, network, and establish business opportunities with their counterparts from Malaysia.

Tourism Malaysia's participation in the World Halal Travel Summit & Exhibition 2015 goes in line with the country's objective to promote its Halal and Islamic tourism to attract more Muslim travellers to the country. Malaysia was ranked first in the World's Top Muslim-Friendly Destination, out of 100 destinations around the world, based on the report by the MasterCard-CrescentRating Global Muslim Travel Index 2015.

In 2014, Malaysia received a total of 19,772 tourists from UAE, signifying a drop of 0.3% compared to 19,830 in 2013.

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MALAYSIA TOURISM PROMOTION BOARD OR TOURISM MALAYSIA is an agency under the Ministry of Tourism & Culture, Malaysia. Tourism Malaysia focuses on the specific task of promoting Malaysia at all levels. Since its inception, Tourism Malaysia has grown by leaps and bounds and it has emerged as a major player in the international tourism scene. In 2014, Malaysia registered 27.4 million tourist arrivals and RM72 billion in receipts, making tourism its second largest foreign exchange earner.

Malaysia celebrated its fourth **VISIT MALAYSIA YEAR (VMY)** in 2014 with the theme "Celebrating 1Malaysia Truly Asia". The promotion of the country continues with the **MALAYSIA YEAR OF FESTIVALS (MyFEST)** campaign in 2015 with the theme "Endless Celebrations" emphasising the various festivals celebrated by its multicultural society. Both campaigns are key drivers towards achieving the country's target of 36 million tourist arrivals and RM168 billion in receipts by 2020, as outlined in the Tourism NKEA (National Key Economic Area).

Through the Tourism NKEA, collaborative efforts between the Ministry of Tourism and Culture, other Government agencies and the private sector have been enhanced to help secure Malaysia's position as a leading tourist destination. The targets set under the Tourism NKEA will be achieved through the implementation of twelve Entry Point Projects (EPPs) clustered under five themes: Affordable Luxury; Nature Adventure; Family Fun; Events, Entertainment, Spa and Sports; and Business Tourism.

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