



PRESS RELEASE

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CELEBRITIES, MEDIA & TOUR AGENTS FROM ASEAN PARTICIPATE IN THE EXPLORE QUEST MALAYSIA 2013 TO BOOST VMY 2014 ARRIVALS

KUALA LUMPUR, 11 Nov 2013 – A total of 107 celebrities, media and tour agents from ASEAN gathered in Malaysia to participate in the week-long *ASEAN Explore Quest Malaysia 2013*, which begins today until 17 November.

The programme, specially organised by Tourism Malaysia for the first time, marks an effort to ensure the continual growth of tourist arrivals from the ASEAN market especially during the celebrations of Visit Malaysia Year (VMY) 2014.

The ASEAN Explore Quest Malaysia 2013 is a combination of exploring, corporate social responsibility, homestay, and photography competitions. The participants will be travelling from Kuala Lumpur to Perak and Langkawi by train and bus, while engaging in various activities along the way.

They will get to enjoy city tours, visit KidZania and Kellie's Castle, experience rail tourism, witness a mock traditional Malay wedding ceremony, and participate in community activities and traditional games.

In conjunction with the event, a press conference chaired by the Director General of Tourism Malaysia, Dato' Mirza Mohammad Taiyab, was held today at the Seri Pacific Hotel Kuala Lumpur. It was followed by a welcome dinner to thank all the participants for their support to the programme.

"As in previous years, the ASEAN market was the largest contributor of tourist arrivals to Malaysia in 2012, recording 18.8 million visitors. It encompassed 75.1 percent of the country's total arrivals," said Dato' Mirza.

"As such, Tourism Malaysia will continue to carry out promotions to constantly excite the markets with new attractions and holiday ideas to rejuvenate their interest in returning time and time again," he continued.



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The programme offers the media and travel agents first-hand information on the country's tourism products, which will enable them to promote and sell Malaysia better and with more confidence. Other elements like culture, people, and nature will also be given emphasis in all the activities especially for the photography competition.

Through the tours, it is hoped that travel agents can provide more exciting and attractive holiday packages, while the media can share their first-hand experiences with their readers.

The ASEAN Explore Quest Malaysia 2013 also involves the participation of ASEAN celebrities, who will help to boost the promotion of the country's tourist destinations and raise the awareness of VMY 2014 through social media and their fan clubs. They include supermodel and singer Phan Le Ai Phuong from Vietnam, TV host and choreographer Sheenaly Vera Cruz from the Philippines, actress Chaw Chaw Yu Mon Kyaw Tint from Myanmar.

In order to ensure the success of this programme, Tourism Malaysia has forged a smart partnership with The Star and Star Radio Group which comprises Suria FM, Capital FM, Red FM and 988 (the official media partners), Malaysia Airlines (the official airline), and AirAsia (the official low cost carrier).

In addition, Tourism Malaysia also received support from various organisations, which include the Perak State Government, the Langkawi Development Authority (LADA), and Malayan Railways (KTM), as well as DiGi, KidZania Kuala Lumpur, Munchy's, Nippon Paint, Pensonic and Pepsico.

In 2012, a total of 18.8 million tourists from ASEAN countries visited Malaysia. For this year, the country has set a target to attract 19.9 million tourists from this region. For the first half of 2013, Malaysia has already received 9.2 million tourists from ASEAN countries.

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For further information on ASEAN Explore Quest Malaysia 2013, kindly contact Mr. Abdul Rauf Abu Hassan, the Deputy Director of International Promotion (Southeast Asia), Tourism Malaysia, at 603-8891 8252 or via email at abdulrauf@tourism.gov.my

For more media releases, media info and media features on Malaysia's tourism industry, kindly visit the Media Centre of Tourism Malaysia's website at <http://www.tourismmalaysia.gov.my/>

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 2012, Malaysia registered 25 million tourist arrivals and RM60.6 billion in tourist receipts, placing the country firmly as the 10th most popular tourism destination in the world.



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In 2014, Malaysia will celebrate its fourth **VISIT MALAYSIA YEAR (VMY)** with the theme "Celebrating 1Malaysia Truly Asia". The VMY 2014 promotional campaign has started this year with a series of year-long special events and activities leading to VMY 2014. It will contribute to the Government's target to receive 36 million tourist arrivals and RM168 billion in receipts by 2020, as outlined in the Malaysia Tourism Transformation Plan (MTTP) 2020.

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