



PRESS RELEASE

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## TOURISM MALAYSIA SHOWCASES MALAYSIAN CULTURE AND CUISINE IN DUBAI

**DUBAI, 31 Oct 2013:** Tourism Malaysia is organising the Malaysia Food & Cultural Week at the Shangri-La Hotel here beginning 1 to 7, November. The week-long event is set to introduce and promote Malaysia through the country's rich and multifarious cultures and equally diverse cuisines.

The cultural fiesta will feature an exciting array of cultural performances and traditional music of multi-ethnic Malaysia by versatile and skilled artistes. Visitors will also have an opportunity to savour delicious and popular Malaysian cuisine in typical hawker fare.

Malaysia is currently preparing to usher in the country's grandest tourism celebration, the Visit Malaysia Year (VMY) 2014. The Food & Cultural Week is in tandem with the country's aim of raising awareness of VMY 2014 and boosting its arrivals and receipts to 28 million and RM76 billion (USD24.5 billion) respectively next year.

Prior to the Malaysia Food & Cultural Week, a Gala Evening was held last night at the Grand Hyatt Hotel Dubai, jointly organised by Tourism Malaysia and the country's national carrier Malaysia Airlines (MAS). UAE's Minister of Environment and Water, Dr. Rashid Ahmed Fahad was the Guest of Honour.

Malaysia's Ambassador to UAE, H.E Dato Ahmad Anwar Adnan and Consul General of Malaysia H.E. Dato' Ahmad Fadil Shamsuddin were also present. Tourism Malaysia was represented by its Deputy Director General (Planning) Dato' Haji Azizan Noordin while MAS Group CEO Ahmad Jauhari Yahya represented the airline.

In his speech, Dato' Haji Azizan encouraged members of the travel trade fraternity to bring their friends and business associates to the Malaysia Food & Cultural Week.

"For some people, coming to our food and cultural promotion is their first step towards knowing Malaysia. Besides, delicious food always works like a charm to ensure repeat visits to a destination," said Dato' Haji Azizan.



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"I certainly hope that this event will stimulate more interest among people in Dubai to travel to Malaysia soon, especially for those who have never set foot on our shores," Dato' Haji Azizan added.

Besides thanking the travel trade fraternity and media for their strong support and assistance in promoting Malaysia as a top-of-mind holiday destination in Dubai and UAE, the dinner was also to celebrate the resumption of MAS flights to Dubai from Kuala Lumpur.

Effective 5 August 2013, MAS has reinstated its daily flights to Dubai, after suspending the service in January 2012. The resumption of MAS flights to Dubai is expected to strengthen the profile of the airline among the 130 airlines that are currently operating in Dubai.

The Kuala Lumpur-Dubai return sector on Boeing 777-200 aircraft will fly daily on MH162 and MH163. The return service is set to offer a total capacity of 282 seats in each flight, which is equivalent to 3,948 seats weekly.

Since 6 August, flight MH163 departs Dubai daily at 4.10 am, arriving Kuala Lumpur at 3.25 pm. The return flight MH162 departs Kuala Lumpur daily at 11.30 pm, arriving Dubai at 2.20 am the following day.

The national carrier is offering attractive promotional fares starting from only AED1,765 for an all-inclusive economy class return travel. On the same note, business class starts from AED7,265 for an all-inclusive return journey.

The return of MAS service to Dubai is set to boost Malaysia's tourism industry. Indeed, Malaysia has been enjoying a steady growth in both its arrivals and receipts. Last year, the country received 25 million tourists with RM60.6 billion in receipts, making it the tenth most visited country in the world, according to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). Malaysia was ranked 13<sup>th</sup> in terms of global tourism receipts.

Other promotional efforts in UAE include the 56<sup>th</sup> Malaysia National Day Evening on 27 October at Dusit Thani Hotel Abu Dhabi hosted by the Malaysia Ambassador to UAE, H.E Dato Haji Ahmad Anwar Adnan as well as a fashion show on 28 October at the St. Regis Saadiyat Island Resort Abu Dhabi, showcasing Suhara Omar's jewellery art collection and Tom Abang Saufi's batik collection.

In 2012, a total of 18,233 tourists from the UAE visited Malaysia, while the first half of 2013 recorded 7,804 tourists from this market.

Malaysia also welcomed 370,535 West Asian tourists to the country in 2012, which was an increase of 3.2% compared to the previous year.

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

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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