



PRESS RELEASE

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MALAYSIA'S HOMESTAY PROGRAMME DRAWS APPLAUSE AT INAUGURAL WORLD AGRITOURISM FORUM, CHINA

CHANGSA CITY, CHINA, 30 OCT 2013: Malaysia's Homestay Programme sparked significant interest amongst participants at the inaugural World Agritourism Forum here recently.

The over 200 delegates from 30 countries were glued to their seats attentively listening to a lively presentation from Tourism Malaysia Chairman, Dato' Sri Dr. Ng Yen Yen on how the award-winning Malaysia Homestay Programme became a leading example of a successful poverty reduction model by providing local rural communities with additional income revenue opportunities.

The Malaysia Homestay was awarded the prestigious UNWTO Ulysses Award for Innovation in Public Policy and Governance in 2012.

"Last year, a total of 325,258 tourists participated in the Homestay Programme, generating arevenue of RM18.5 million for the local rural community. The Homestay Programme helps to protect, preserve and conserve our nature, culture and tradition besides fostering friendship," said Dato' Sri Dr. Ng Yen Yen.

"During their Malaysia Homestay, tourists are encouraged to plant a tree and "give back" to Mother Nature. Up to December 2012, 14,023 saplings had been planted garnering a revenue of RM43,196 for the Homestay operators, " she added.

Tourism Malaysia Deputy Director-General Dato' Azizan Noordin said that the World Agritourism Forum provided an excellent platform in promoting cooperation and partnership among the world's industry leaders towards the development and sharing of knowledge and expertise in agriculture and rural tourism.

The forum was organised by the Hunan Qianlong Lake Investment Group and Beijing Shiji Xiandao Culture Development Centre. CPC Wangcheng (Changsha) District Committee, Wangcheng (Changsha) District People's Government and Guangxi Tourism Investment Group Limited were the co-organisers.

ENDS



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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 10th 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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