

Tourism Commission co-ordinates "National Day Golden Week" measures

The Tourism Commission has co-ordinated relevant government departments and the tourism industry, and liaised with the Mainland tourism authorities, to draw up measures to prepare for the arrival of Mainland visitors during the "National Day Golden Week" travel peak period.

These measures include enhancing the flow of visitors at various boundary control points, stepping up promotion of "honest and quality tourism" to better protect tourists' interests, and advising locals and Mainland visitors to cross the boundary via Lo Wu, or Shenzhen Bay Port and Lok Ma Chau Spur Line Control Point commissioned last year as far as possible.

"The 'National Day Golden Week' is one of the peak travel periods for Mainland visitors. The Tourism Commission earlier exchanged views with the Guangdong Provincial Tourism Administration regarding the preparatory work and measures for the 'National Day Golden Week'. Both sides have established an emergency notification mechanism for handling unexpected events concerning travellers of both places," the Commissioner for Tourism, Miss Au King-chi, said.

"Relevant government departments will deploy appropriate manpower resources and arrange transport facilities to ensure smooth cross-boundary service for visitors.

"The Joint Command Centre set up by the Immigration Department, the Police and other relevant departments will be activated during the Golden Week period to monitor the situation at land control points and take prompt and flexible contingency action when necessary.

"The Tourism Commission has also co-ordinated major tourist attractions to suitably extend their operating hours and devise measures and contingency arrangements for crowd control," Miss Au said.

"To reduce any congestion at Lok Ma Chau Control Point, we encourage Mainland visitors and local residents to cross the boundary via Lo Wu Control Point, which has a larger handling capacity, or the Shenzhen Bay Port or Lok Ma Chau Spur Line Control Point commissioned last year, and to avoid crossing the boundary during peak hours in the mornings and evenings during the period," she said.

She said that to better protect the interests of visitors, the Government and the tourism industry would continue to implement various measures to promote “honest and quality tourism”.

In respect of law enforcement, the Customs and Excise Department will closely co-operate with the Police in stepping up inspection of retail shops targeting Mainland group tours.

As regards publicity, the Consumer Council will continue to promote the “Shop Smart in Hong Kong” website dedicated for Mainland tourists.

The Government and the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTb) will also distribute pamphlets and publicity material to enhance visitors’ awareness of their consumer rights and consumption choices in Hong Kong.

Customs, the Police, the Consumer Council and the Travel Industry Council of Hong Kong (TIC) will continue to handle visitors’ complaints in Hong Kong with the fast-track referral system.

“To strengthen the regulation of inbound travel agents receiving Mainland tour groups, the TIC will continue to strictly enforce a series of measures.

“These include requiring retail shops receiving Mainland package tour groups to implement the six-month ‘100% Guaranteed Refund Scheme’; requiring local agents receiving Mainland tour groups to register with the TIC the ‘tour confirmation agreement’ before the tour groups arrive in Hong Kong; and to distribute the itinerary to tour group visitors to enhance transparency,” Miss Au said.

“We have reminded the TIC to step up inspection and severely punish travel agents and tour guides who don't comply,” she said.

To assist visitors in planning their trip, the Immigration Department will upload the daily arrivals at all control points on its website from September 26 to October 8. The Hong Kong Hotels Association will also provide the hotel occupancy forecast on its website (www.hkha.org). Such information will also be hyperlinked to HKTb’s website (www.discoverhongkong.com) and the Visit GD website (visitgd.com) for visitors’ reference.

The TIC and HKTB will extend their hotline service 2807 0707 (TIC) and 2508 1234 (HKTB) to 8pm and 9pm respectively during the Golden Week period (September 29 to October 5) to help visitors with enquiries. The service hotline of the Consumer Council (2929 2222) will also continue to operate during the “National Day Golden Week”.

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