

## Hong Kong-Japan Tourism Exchange Year extended for three months

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The governments of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) and Japan today (December 14) announced that the 2009 Hong Kong-Japan Tourism Exchange Year (TEY) would be extended for three months until March 2010.

In October 2008, the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office (Tokyo) of the HKSAR Government, the Hong Kong Tourism Board, the Japan Tourism Agency and the Japan National Tourist Organisation jointly announced that 2009 would be designated as the "Hong Kong-Japan Tourism Exchange Year" to promote two-way tourism and enhance cultural exchange.

Building on the success of the promotional events this year, the two governments have decided to capitalise on the momentum of the exchange year and extend it to the first quarter of 2010 when a number of major promotional events will be held in both Hong Kong and Japan.

Concessionary coupons for Japanese visitors patronising designated food and retail outlets in Hong Kong, as arranged by the Hong Kong Tourism Board, will continue to be valid until the end of March 2010.

Major promotional events will be held in Hong Kong in the next few months to coincide with the extension of the Tourism Exchange Year. They include the Hong Kong WinterFest, an exhibition on renowned Japanese film director Kurosawa Akira, the International Chinese New Year Night Parade and the Hong Kong Marathon.

Japanese traditional dance troupe, "Morioka Sansa Dance" from Iwate Prefecture, and the famous "Yuru Chara" mascots from Kansai Region will also be invited to participate in the International Chinese New Year Night Parade on February 14.

In Japan, a grand finale event next March will be organised by the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in conjunction with the Hong Kong Tourism Board to promote Hong Kong food and folk culture.

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