

Family travel is a burgeoning market

By Travel Weekly Asia / September 8, 2015



Travelling with kids can be a fun yet harrowing affair, there is the tendency to pack more than what is needed and I know of countless parents who have squeezed in a tin of milk powder into their luggage and hoped it'll get by customs. There is always the little one piping in the inevitable "Are we there yet and the older ones demanding that we stay in a hotel with wifi.

Increasingly, there are also more families travelling with grandparents making it a multi-generational trip. This is true for adults born in the 1970s to travel with both their parents and children, while millennials are in the age bracket to travel with their young kids with more discretionary income to spare.

Sojern, an organisation that has helped brands to more efficiently and meaningfully engage with travellers to drive conversations, loyalty and monetization has found that 30% of all travellers in the region consisted of families. This figure would be higher said Stewart Hunter, director of Sales & Partnerships, APAC, Sojern if package tours with travel agents were taken into account. Sojern only measures trips booked online with its hotel and airline clients.

Families are indeed a segment that travel agents should pay attention to as they are more likely to travel on package tours or on customised trips.

Said Crystal Sim, CEO, Albatross World Travel & Tours, "The trends are definitely for more families to travel together. I imagine that the up market family travel can be as profitable as the other segments. Depending on how imaginative the travel agency is they should be able to attract more family travel.

"It all depends if the families are accustomed to travel together for their holidays than they are more likely to go for customised travel. If not, they will try to travel whenever they can and wherever they can for short trips during the school holidays."

Short getaways are the norm for families

So it's little wonder that families like a stint in nearby destinations over the weekends or shortbreaks. These would be destinations like Bintan, Bali and Malacca. Bintan boasts several resorts catering to the family like Bintan Lagoon Resort that has a new extensive kid's club to Club Med Bintan Island which is a haven for families.

With Bintan's newly developed Lagoi Bay area, there are more new sights and attractions on Bintan that would appeal to families even couples and a cruise down the mangrove swamp in Bintan is an educational affair for the kids and grandparents too.

Over In Malacca, hotels see a spike in business over the weekend as families from Singapore and Malaysia make a quick getaway. Increasingly, more multi-generational family travel is seen and that is set to rise with recent developments. Said Adrian Chung, general manager of Hotel Equatorial Melaka, "Malacca is developing rapidly. Currently plans are in place to create more attractions such as "Gateway to Malacca" which is a mixed development consisting of entertainment, shopping and marina.

"Malacca airport will be extending its runway to cater to bigger planes. Currently flights are available to and from Penang and Indonesia. By year end flights from Guangzhou will be initiated as it was recently declared that Guangzhou and Malacca as Twin City."

While at the Grand Nikko Bali, the spend by a family can go up to US\$3000 as they book 2 rooms and stay an average of 7 nights said Jean-Charles Le Coz, general manager of Grand Nikko Bali. Key features of Grand Nikko Bali are family rooms, a safe and always manned kids club called Jungle Camp, several pools of various depths, including a man-made sand pool and also one of the longest waterslides in an hotel in Bali.

More families stay in luxury resorts

Families are also travelling in luxury and stay at high-end resorts. Families are more likely to splurge and spare no expense to travel in the lap of luxury.

At The St. Regis Sanya Yalong Bay Resort, the percentage of its guests who travel with family is around 63.2% of this year. Said William Gai, executive assistant manager, The St. Regis Sanya Yalong Bay Resort, "As a show of filial piety, they also want to take their parents overseas. More and more people are also starting to recognise the value of travel in expanding children's mind and that's why we are seeing an increase in the number of guests from this segment.

"The St. Regis brand has always cherished customers who travel with family, that's why we have Family Traditions package. We offer bespoke services to every family traveling with children as well as with elderly parents. A well-trained butler is assigned to the family to take care of their needs."

Another luxury resort that caters to families is the The Andaman, Luxury Collection Resort, Langkawi. The resort has a Coral and Marine Conservation programme which aims at educating both children and adults thus offering a programme for the whole family.

Said, Christian Metzner, general manager of The Andaman, Luxury Collection Resort, Langkawi "Because we are trying to position our self as a family resort. The amount of activities the resort offers are specifically targeted to families. We are committed to educating children on the importance of marine and coral conservation thus the young generation is the ones we target to bring this message forward. Hopefully the young generation travelling with their parents in the future will become our guests with their families as well."



ALBATROSS WORLD
TRAVEL & TOURS PTE LTD (TA 1193)
Your Destination Our Highest Mission
SINCE 2001

信天翁寰球
旅游私人有限公司(TA 1193)自2001
达成您的目的地是我们至高使命



Accredited
Agent

