

Press Release
September 28, 2020



Top Asian Market - Large Pent-up Demand & Pandemic Continues Easing September Update (part C) by ITE Hong Kong

Hong Kong, which ranked World's 11th and Asia's 3rd largest by total outbound spending of US\$26.5 billion in 2018, has by mid-September cumulative confirmed Covid-19 cases around 5000, and daily number of new cases in single or low double digits!

Big spenders on outbound travel and relatively low number of cases, Hong Kong likely an attractive source market in this global pandemics! But does there exist pent-up travel demand and cost effective marketing platform?

First held over 30 years ago, the annual ITE Hong Kong will next be held in **2021 from June 17 to 18** for trade visitors only of whom around 35% from outside, and from **June 19 to 20** open to public of whom around 85% being FIT! Travel trade from Hong Kong and Southern China, and FIT well covered in ITE which provides a one stop platform.

Surveys reveal Strong Pent-up Travel Demand in Hong Kong & China

How keen are Hong Kong citizens to travel? On average, each again left the city for over 12 times in 2019! The pandemics did cause thousands of outbound package tour groups be canceled in February and March this year, which affected over some 100,000 people, but tenths of thousand Hong Kong travelers could still be found then in Asia, Europe, the Americas and Africa until travel restrictions imposed in late March.

Held in June this year were two surveys on ITE public visitors, which found strong pent-up demand! One with over 1000 replies on how soon travel be restarted found once restrictions eased / lifted, a whopping 69% of respondents will take outbound holiday at the soonest while 26% may be; and specifically 39% within one to two months and another 38% within three to four months.

The findings above echoed comment by the chairman of Hong Kong Association of Travel Agents, who according to media report, said Hong Kong people can't wait to travel again; and when borders open, Hong Kong travelers will first start booking trips in Asia then later long-haul trips.

The other ITE survey, which drew over 1500 replies, found pandemics have minor effects on destination preference! The Northeast Asia (70%) keep the top position, then neighbouring areas at over 40%. Europe and SE Asia, though lost some points to around 26%, remain popular, to be followed by the Oceania and Pacific islands at 22%; the Americas at 11%; then Central Asia, the Middle East and Africa each at 6%.

The China Tourism Academy held a survey, which found 80% of respondents interested to travel in the third quarter this year, a rising of 90% comparing to last year. Thus reflecting strong pent-up travel demand.

Pandemics & Restrictions continue Easing

Of the first 23 days in September in Hong Kong, 12 days had fewer than 10 daily new cases, 9 days between 11 and 20 cases and only 2 days had over 20 cases; and increasingly caused more by imported cases and there was even day with no new locally infected case! The city also just mass tested 1.783 million citizens and found only 32 hidden carriers and 10 confirmed cases! (More details in Sep'20 Update [Part A](#) and [Part B](#))

Lifting of restrictions continue but in steps! This round, theme park re-opening, civil servants back to office, schools resuming, restaurants stay opening till late evening, and exhibitions allowed to be held and in fact the Hong Kong Book Fair this year been rescheduled to next December.

Asia including Hong Kong pursuing Travel Bubble / Corridor

Some Asian countries and regions, where pandemics been in better control, start carefully re-opening borders. Lately, the Hong Kong Economic Secretary confirmed been in contact with 11 countries in Asia, Europe and the Oceania to arrange travel bubble. Macau accepts both package tour groups and FIT from mainland China. Quoting Japanese media, Japan considering to accept daily 1600 tourists, who will quarantine for 2 weeks, from 16 countries without major outbreak of Covid-19. Reported Singaporean media, Singapore has bilateral Green Lane Arrangement, for examples, with China from June 8, South Korea from September 4 and Japan from September 18.

ITE well covers Travel Trade from Hong Kong and Southern China

The above, in short, underline Hong Kong an important source market, and in fact ITE has regional trade visitors! Respectively, 7000 from Hong Kong, some 2000 from southern China and another 1000 from other provinces, while another thousand from various Asian markets. By sectors, over 50% from travel agents or operators, and some 20% from MICE and corporations.

Also attending ITE are nearly 74000 public visitors of whom in past year over 60% had 3 or more outbound holidays and 37% had 1 to 2 such holiday; and from 56 countries and regions 675 exhibitors of whom over 87% from overseas and China. (Note 1)

Besides advertising and sponsorship, for examples, ITE also offer B2B program which includes Business Matching, speaking opportunity, online and on-site trade seminars; and B2C programs which include help staging on-site travel seminars some of which can be attended by over 100 audiences each etc.

Organized by TKS Exhibition Services Ltd., ITE Hong Kong again is strongly supported by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the People's Republic of China, and have the Hong Kong Tourism Board, Travel Industry Council of Hong Kong and Macao Government Tourism Office etc. as its supporters. For further details, please visit www.itehk.com. For enquiries: travel@tkshk.com | Wechat: ite-hongkong | Tel: +852 31550600.

Note 1: Due to Covid-19, ITE2020 was canceled, and ITE's statistics here are from ITE2019 unless stated otherwise.

APPENDIX: Profiles of ITE2019 Trade & Public Visitors and Exhibitors

	TOTAL NO.	BREAKDOWN % - 1	BREAKDOWN % - 2
Trade Visitors – Tourism + MICE	11613	From Hong Kong 60% Guangdong 20% Other China 10% Other Asia 10%	<u>By Sectors</u> Travel Agents: 53% MICE & Corporate: 19% Media: 7% etc.
Public Visitors	73665	85% FIT/Private Tours <u>Well Educated</u> – 43% University or above – 34% Post-secondary	<u>No. of outbound holidays in past year</u> – 6 or above: 13.2% – 3-5 times: 47.3% – 1-2 times: 37.1%
Exhibitors	675	– 87.5% from Mainland China & International – 12.5% from Hong Kong	– 56 Countries & Regions – 32 Official Pavilions / Stands