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Issue 26 Oct - Dec 2014

Quarterly Travel Newsletter
by Sri Sutra Travel Sdn Bhd

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ABUZZ in
UZBEKISTAN



Merry Christmas & Happy New Year 2015

international highlights

Of Apsaras & Angkor

06

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Home Highlight

04

Jerejak Island, is located on the southeastern tip off Penang. Now it is more accessible than ever with twice the fun and enjoyment as visitors can explore the island on foot and trace the natural colonial history of one of Malaysia's heritage islands. It was formerly established as the main leper asylum for The Straits Settlements, Quarantine Station and penal colony in the 18th century.



Memorializing Medan

08

Unlike the other major cities of Indonesia, Medan, has much to offer on its largest island in the archipelago. From natural wonders to culinary delights, from fantastic bargains at the modern shopping malls to captivating heritage buildings and historical sites, Medan may look lost in time but is fast moving into the realms of contemporaneity.



Abuzz in Uzbekistan

10

For hundreds and thousands of years, this great ancient country has been at the crossroads of trade and commerce connecting Asia and the West through the Grand Silk Route cities of Tashkent, Bokhara and Samarkand. Today, Uzbekistan still holds the charms and enigma of a mystical tourist destination in all its splendors, only much easier to explore and with a lot more to discover.



Getting 2 Know U

20

A personality like Winnie Chiam is not easy to acknowledge by many as she is always kept busy in her own work world. Getting to know Winnie through the Q & A interview almost duped us in astonishment. Obscure as we thought she might be, her role and contribution as part of the hardworking associate in the tour department contradicts all that and now Winnie has gained more fans than ever.



special highlights

A FIJIAN MARVEL



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A Khmer Heritage

My travel expedition to Siem Reap started off with the plane touching down at Phnom Penh International Airport (formerly Pochentong International Airport) and since this was my first trip to that South East Asian country, I was more than excited to explore the unknown and the mysterious. Such is the expectation Cambodia has conjured in me but Phnom Penh was set to change my presumptuous mindset as my guide cum driver headed into the crowded city of 2.2 million people which astonishingly, looked a little over populated than urban Kuala Lumpur. The city's urban landscape is braced with modern buildings and busy traffic. Judging by its vibrant environment, bustling Phnom Penh depicted itself as a new and progressive Asian metropolitan, whose burgeoning tourism industry is transforming itself into one of the most popular places to visit in the region. As our vehicle weaved slowly through the crowded morning avenues, one can sense that the transport users in the city are well mannered and respectful of each other. There was hardly any encounter of an accident even if it might seem to be a minor one.

The next few days in Phnom Penh made me to discover and apprise the Cambodian capital more profoundly but somehow or rather the real tourist draw for the Kingdom of Cambodia is still at the ancient city of Siem Reap, located some 6 hours drive to the north. By my own choice of indigence, I opted for the coach to travel over to Siem Reap which literally means "The Defeat of Siam". The surface journey allows you to see the country more intimately and meet the real people on the ground. Since my arrival to the Land Of the Khmers, I have discovered that the locals were indeed very tourist friendly and infectious generous with their warm smiles. The uninterrupted journey across the country encompassing the flat terrain of the northern provinces brings to your eyes the charms and

absolute stunning beauty of the local villages interspersed with the ubiquitous rice paddy country side vistas. Provided that you keep yourself awake most of the time, the snacks and refreshments served onboard would hardly make you survive the journey without sleeping.

Siem Reap is probably the most visited region out of Cambodia because of the Angkor Archaeological Park's existence. Even if you are "temped out" from neighboring countries like Thailand and Myanmar, you are highly recommended to visit the historical temples in Siem Reap for they are grand beyond a traveler's figment of realization. If you are visiting it for a few days it is definitely wise to hire a tuk-tuk (taxi) to see as much of Angkor and the outlying temples as you can fit in. Visitor passes that are valid from 1 to 3 days are available at the main entrance to entice even the most avid photographer, painter, writer or historian. True to its preservation efforts initiated by UNESCO, visitors also have the option to rent a bicycle if they prefer, but some of the distances under the scorching sun in high season requires a lot of physical stamina for the climbing endurance, and I mean really a lot! The temples of Angkor Wat, Angkor Thom and Bayon are generally the most heavily visited by tourists on a day's run.

And when you are already done with some of the world's most famous temples, head to the old market at Psar Chaa, where you can haggle over diverse locally produced souvenirs from the other provinces some colourful and some intricate but almost merely affordable. The markets not only trade in mementos and interesting genuine - like relics and artifacts but also in local preserved fruits and snacks, including fried insects like locusts and roaches which are strictly meant for the adventurous aphrodisiac lovers.

When night falls, Siem Reap injects an excitement of non-stop action packed social indulgences like no other secondary city in rural South East Asia can offer, be it bawdily or culturally. The pulse of activities are heavily concentrated at the Pub Street enclave, where backpackers and group tourists converged to savour international meals or live band entertainment, amidst the myriad of souvenir shops and retail massage service outlets that complement each other's presence. Notable for every tourist to experience would be the enchanting performance of the Apsara Dance specially choreographed by the Royal court artisans for so many generations and recognized by UNESCO as an extinct dance art form. With their snappy dance forms and colorful costumes, the Apsara represents what most Cambodian people truly hold in common i.e - grace, poise and persona.

BEST TIME TO VISIT ?

The best time to visit Cambodia is between April and November where there is a relatively lengthy wet season, otherwise generally Siem Reap adapts to a tropical wet and dry climate. The city is generally hot throughout the course of the year, the average high temperatures in the city never falls below 30 C in any month. The dry season covers from the month of December till March each year.



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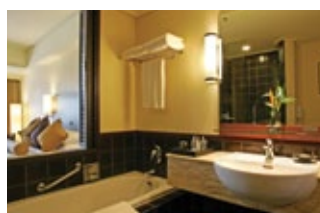
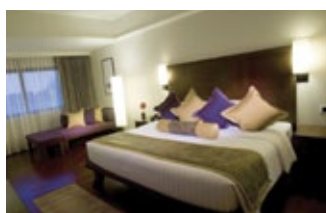
WHERE TO STAY?

The Le Méridien Angkor Hotel

The Le Méridien Angkor Hotel, is located some 14 kms away from the Siem Reap International Airport and position itself as the nearest property to the Angkor Wat UNESCO Heritage site. With 213 tastefully fusion themed guestrooms and suites, each embracing rich Khmer elements of dark timber floors, precious silk and textured stone work, the decor is truly a work of art in itself.

The 5 star establishment offers a tranquil sanctuary after a day of exploration. All its intimately inviting bathrooms feature a signature walk-in shower and a separate soaking tub that overlooks the bedroom through double French windows. The food and beverage outlets are considered to be the best among the rest delivering and serving the best croissants and colorful flavored macarons in the city.

With impeccable service and friendly staff, the Le Meridien Angkor Hotel sets itself apart from its competitors because of their extensive experience to cater for the incentive market including HALAL meals for that matter!





MEMORIALIZING MEDAN

unlike any other major city of Indonesia

Horas! That's "Welcome!" in the Batak language. While it may really sound like a roaring exclamation to the first time visitor, Medan exudes a fascinating exotic gateway to the Island Of Sumatra .

It is the regional capital of the North Sumatra province of Indonesia. True to its name, which means "vast field," it is also the largest city in the country outside Java Island. Its close proximity to nearby countries such as Malaysia and Singapore, makes it the hub for all international flights into Sumatra and to nearby Southeast Asian cities such as Penang and Kuala Lumpur.

Known for its unhurried friendliness, Medan has been dubbed "The Smiling City of Indonesia " and is home to around 2.5 million people, a population among the most diverse in the country. Thanks to its strategic geographical location, Medan is inhabited by many settlers from other countries who came to trade and live around it with the majority of its residents being part of the North Sumatra race, also known as the Bataks, whose regional diversity comprised of more than 52 tribal languages across the island. While there is no single ethnic group forming the majority; the largest ethnic groups in Medan are the Chinese, Malays, Javanese, Toba-Batak, Minangkabau, Mandailing Batak, Karo Batak, as well as surprisingly, Southern Indians !



Medan is indeed a big city sprawling in the pulsating development of its current modernity as a result of the migration of people seeking a better standard of living in the urban settlements vis a vis the booming Indonesian economy. It is fairly modern with a lot of good amenities, ranging from modern theme parks and enormous malls to the most well preserved hotels with a local identity and charming spas. However, it also has a great deal of past colonial heritage landmarks that distinguished itself uniquely from the Lake Toba region, which happens to be the main tourist attraction in Sumatra. The buildings from the Dutch era remain in remarkably good shape which were designed by a clutch of Dutch East Indies planners whose holistic features are considered to be the signature remnants of Dutch architecture in this part of the world. But then again, there are also many structures of Oriental origin built by the Dutch colonialists that can be found around the city namely the Maimoon Palace, Mesjid Raya, the General Post Office, the City Hall Building as well as the remarkable Tirtanadi Water Tower, better known as The Eiffel Tower of Medan constructed in 1896. Notwithstanding too are the Hindu temples and Buddhist shrines and quaint Chinese shop houses which are considered to be a common part of the city's local building landscape. A Dutch colony for 350 years, Indonesia has plenty of historical buildings still intact, and Medan is fortunate to have its share of this invaluable glorious treasures.



Grand Aston City Hall Medan

Some of modern Medan's tourist related establishments today include prominent hotels and shopping malls. The Grand Aston City Hall Hotel & Serviced Residences is one of them. Catering to the business executives and discerning travelers, this iconic local property of international standard located opposite Merdeka Square shares its building with the former City Hall (Town Hall), hence the derivation of its name was built in 1906 by the Hulswit & Fermont, Weltevreden Architect Consultant Office, in association with consultant Ed Cuyper from Amsterdam. To the left side of this building was the office of Javasche Bank (now known as BI - Bank Indonesia) also another prominent building built during the Dutch era. In 1913, a Chinese millionaire - Tjong A Fie donated a large clock made by Van Bergen Firm to be installed on the dome of the City Hall which till today symbolizes the main attraction of the Grand Aston City Hall Hotel & Serviced Residences.

This luxurious and elegant hotel facilitates 210 well-appointed rooms and 40 apartment rooms. There are four food and beverage outlets within the property showcasing innovative cuisine with opulent ambiance through its great dining places, such as Spoon Dining (all day dining), Ji Long Chinese Restaurant, Demitasse Lobby Lounge, and D'Heritage, a classic tea and coffee venue in the original Town Hall structure.

Your stay throughout The Grand Aston City Hall Hotel & Serviced Residences must include a visit to the expansive and well-equipped gymnasium, spa and swimming pool facilities fended by well-trained and courteous staff.

A trip outside the city will take travelers to Sumatra's natural highlight; the largest volcanic lake in Southeast Asia. Lake Toba is a five-hour-drive down south, while a four-hour-drive north from the city will bring tourists to the lush jungles of Sumatra, home of the Orangutan Conservation Center.

The new Kuala Namu International Airport is served directly by a train service between the new airport and Medan (almost 40 kilometers away) with a minimum ticket fare of Rp80,000 (approx. RM 26.00) per adult passenger. A new toll road and new feeder routes are still under construction, although there are two existing roads connecting the airport. Taking the train to the Kualanamu International Airport is the most convenient and fastest mode (30 minutes) currently.



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Uzbekistan embraces a different travel horizon backdrop unlike many of the world's established tourist destinations. As one of the new nations of Central Asia, this former state under the USSR dominion possessed undoubtedly the best-developed tourism infrastructure in that region, thanks to its famed Silk Road cities, namely Tashkent, Bukhara and Samarkand which truly defined its new standing popularity today. Currently, a wide range of modern hotels and boutique guest houses, train connections, and reliable tour companies connect the region with the rest of the world and Uzbekistan is fast becoming a top class tourist destination.

Since the airport was undergoing a major renovation exercise, visitors arriving at Tashkent International Airport (TAS) were taken by surprise by the long and disorganized queues at the immigration counters and baggage clearance terminals, which demonstrated a peculiar sudden standstill hitch of its operations. The premises, which was always under scrutiny by the authorities soon paved for a complete breather as we exited the premises in total transition. The fairly large modern aviation centre is located some 12 kms away from the city. Getting into and out of the airport area was assuringly convenient and comfortable as seen by the modern roads and highway that linked the aviation hub with the rest of the city.

Tashkent City

Tashkent is a city divided into two contrasting eras, the modern and the ancient. The city's main underground station was built in 1977. It is the only city in Central Asia which has a subway system. The architectural and artistic decoration of each station reflects its distinguished metro line character namely, the Chilanar, Uzbekistan and Yunus-Abad. The architecture of the Tashkent metro stations is one of the most beautiful in the world and it is a favourite mode of transport for tourists during sightseeing tours around the city.

Generally the Uzbeks are friendly and welcoming, but tourists must always be wary of the local customs such as not putting bread down on the ground, avoiding displays of wealth such as jewelry, and wearing modest clothing in public places which will place the unassuming visitors in good stead here.

Shopping in Uzbekistan's many bazaars or local markets is a truly unique travel experience. The most popular bazaars in Tashkent include the "Eski Djouva" or "Chor Su" bazaars, located in the Old City. Tourists and bargain hunters can search for beautiful rugs, soft silk, intricate khan atlases, dried fruits, spices, handicrafts as well as Uzbek style souvenirs and traditional hand-made clothes and footwear. The most popular fruits that are most commonly sold in the markets include huge watermelons, succulent peaches, fresh cherries, pears, and apricots, as well as good nut varieties such as almonds, macadamias and pistachios.

Bukhara

It is the capital of the Bukhara Province of Uzbekistan, which was formerly a part of Turkmenistan. You will be amazed to recognize that Bukhara is a city-museum in itself, endowed with a rich legacy of more than 400 impressive architectural monuments conceived as part of its heritage wonders. It is the nation's fifth-largest city, with a recorded population on April 24, 2014 of approximately 272,000, people, and is hardly considered as congested according to international urban standards. It is good to know that the region around Bukhara has been inhabited for at least five millennia, and that the city has existed for half that time. Located along the renowned classic Silk Road of the caravansera, the city has long been a center of trade, scholarship, culture, and religion. The historic center of Bukhara, which contains numerous mosques and madrasahs, have been acclaimed by by UNESCO as a custodian of a World Heritage site.

In its heyday of transformation, Bukhara was a meeting point for various cultures including the Zoroastrians, Persians, Buddhists and Turk tribes. The delightful Lyabi-Khauz Ensemble, a showcase of Bukharan architecture and a local gathering place in the heart of the

city exhibit a resplendent display of the glorious Islamic past as depicted in the magnificent Mogaki Attari Mosque. It was like a palatial renaissance of sorts because there is a mosque for every day of the year in Bukhara, including one of Uzbekistan's most miraculous buildings: the 10th-century Ismail Samani mausoleum. The 18th-century Bolo Hauz mosque is captivatingly elegant, with 20 elm columns lining the waterside.

An eye catching and spectacular structure called The Ark is a massive fortress located in the city of Bukha. It was initially built and occupied around the 5th century AD. By 500 AD it was already the residence of local rulers. Here, in the fastness of the citadel, lived the emirs, their chief viziers, military leaders and numerous servants. The Ark was used as a fortress until it fell to Russia in 1920. Currently, the ruins of the Ark is a tourist attraction and showcasing museums covering its impeccable history.

Samarkand

Samarkand is considered to have experienced its most significant development during the Timurid period that occurred from the 14th to 15th centuries. Samarkand was the capital of ancient Sogdiana, and is one of the oldest cities in the world. Located at the crossroads of the great trade routes that traversed the Central Asia region, Samarkand has a multi-millennial history and as history would have revealed it, the city was also a part of a Turkish kingdom in the 6th century, and was invaded by a Muslim conqueror named Kuteiba-ibn-Muslim in 712 CE, which catapulted the penetration of Islamic culture into the region. A combination of Arabs rulers and the Samanids of Iran later emerged to cause physical and social changes through their administration by converting ancient temples into mosques, as well as introducing places of learning, courts, and treasuries within the state. In the later part of the centuries, the capital city was devastated by the Mongol invasion of Genghis Khan in 1220. The city emerged again as a major centre through the efforts of Timur the Lame (Tamerlane, c. 1336-1405). It was rebuilt on its present site, south-west of Afrosiab, and became the capital of Timur's powerful state and the repository of the material riches from conquered territories that extended from Central Asia to Persia, Afghanistan and even India.

In its current remains, the Registan Square, a medieval center of trade is arguably the most popular attraction here. Visitors will have the opportunity to see the three beautiful "madrasahs" built in the 13th, 15th and 16th centuries. The Bibi Khanum Mosque, and the Shakh-i Zinda Necropolis, a pilgrimage site of more than 20 mausoleums built between the 11th-19th centuries is also another grand attraction, where you can see the finest samples of majolica, mosaic and terracotta tile work. Another remarkable must visit site is the fantastic Ulugbek Observatory, where Ulugbek and other scholars completed the famous "Tables of stars."

The ancient Silk Road Cities of Tashkent (capital of Uzbekistan), Bukhara and Samarkand are truly the must-see places which offer unparalleled glimpses of a unique travel experience anywhere in the world.

BEST TIME TO VISIT ?

Uzbekistan has an extreme continental climate. It is generally warmer in the south and colder in the north. The average temperatures in December are -8°C (18°F) in the north and 0°C (32°F) in the south while during the summer, temperatures can reach as high as 45°C (113°F) and above but humidity however is low. The Spring (April to June) and the Fall (September through October) are in general the most pleasant times to travel to the country. In the Fall, it is hailed as a reaping period where the markets are full of fresh agricultural produce and abundant seasonal harvest. If you are interested in trekking and some engaging physical adventure, then summer (July and August) is the most appropriate time because these months are almost dry. In recent years Uzbekistan was notably affected by the global warming and dry-out of the Aral Sea but this has not invariably affected travelers to visit the country and anytime is still the best time to visit this spell binding and magical country.

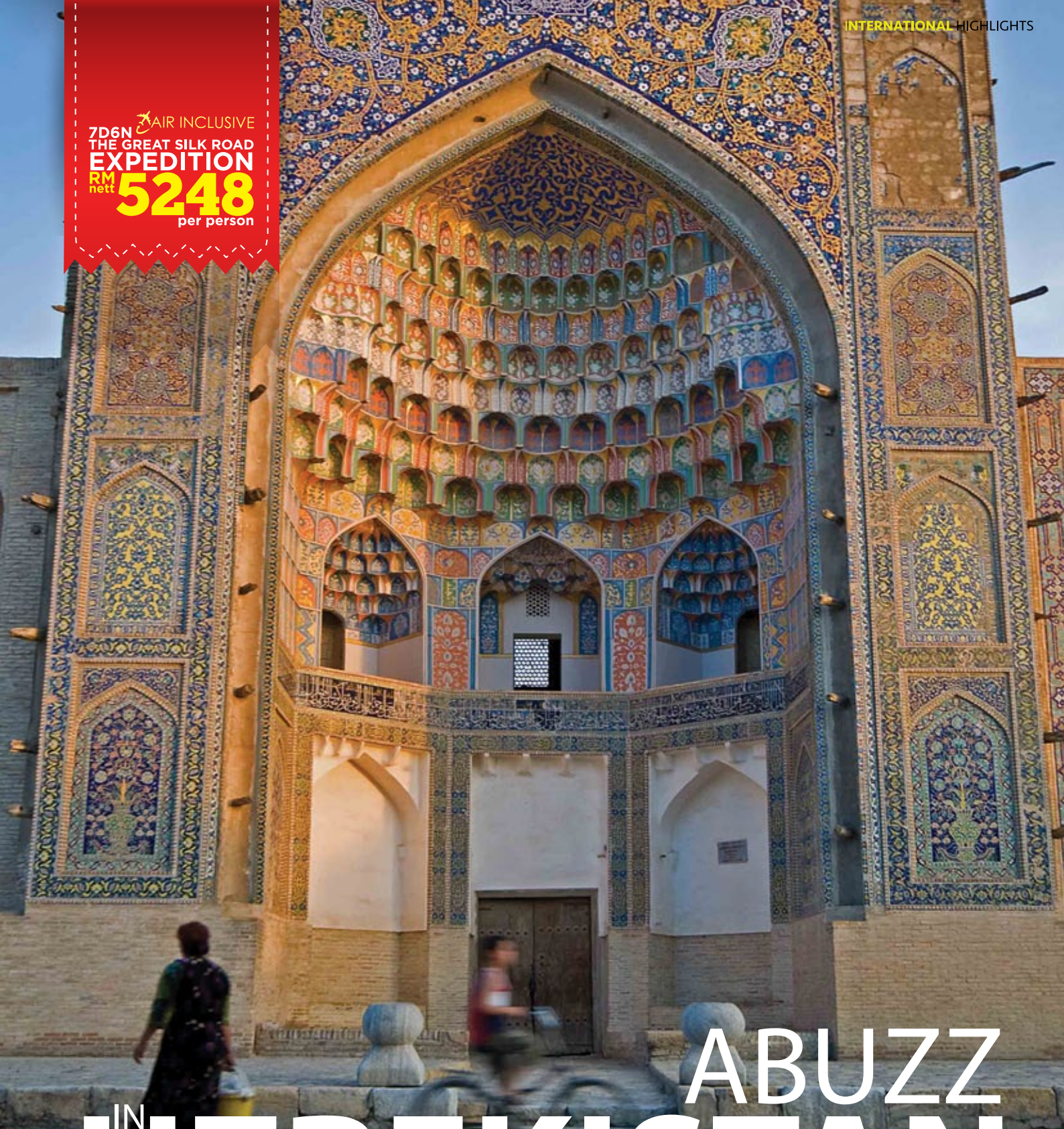


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ABUZZ IN UZBEKISTAN





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ACHIEVEMENTS & ACCOLADES

Our beloved MD, Dato Syed Razif was elected as President of BUMITRA (Bumiputera Travel Agents Association) on 24 June 2014 reprising his key leadership role in the most influential travel agent body in the country which he once headed from 2006- 2010. With his wise involvement and continued contribution, Dato Syed Razif's role is expected to nurture the current tourism trends in tandem with the members expectations.

1 July 2014, was conceived as a red letter day for our Managing Director, Dato Syed Mohd Razif Syed Yasin who was jubilantly elected as one of the Board Of Directors in the Malaysia Tourism Promotion Board. In his distinguished capacity, Dato Syed Mohd Razif will provide his extensive experience in the tourism enterprises and related activities by offering his advisory services and expertise to the development of both national and international tourism functions in the country. It is good to know too that his emplacement runs concurrently with his other significant portfolio as President of the Malaysian Bumiputera Travel & Tour Agents Association (BUMITRA)

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SIGN-UP OF NEW BUSINESS CONTRACT



Our latest corporate sign-up, Sime Darby Berhad was added to our list of business clients at a recent award signing ceremony held at their Headquarters in Jalan Sultan Ismail. The contract will enable Sri Sutra to handle all travel related corporate bookings encompassing all the different divisions of the GLC, one of Malaysia's most established multi national giants.

ISLAMIC TOURISM

TALK



On the 13th of November 2014, our Managing Director Dato' Syed Razif was invited to deliver a talk on Islamic Tourism in Malaysia for the Expert Group from The Republic of Tajikistan at MATIC in Jalan Ampang. Attendees included officials from the Tajikistan Embassy, Ministry of Tourism & Culture as well as other guests. Dato' Syed Razif gave a useful and interesting insight about how the Malaysian tourism industry and their partners collaborate to prepare a unique package to welcome muslim visitors from all over the world.



SWEET BOWLING VICTORY



★ Held on 23 August 2014 at Ampang Bowl in Berjaya Times Square, the league comprised of 19 KL based travel agents & 1 airline who merged their teams' strength with versatile rolls and refined performances but eventually our Sutra Active Club Team led by Best Bowler Mr Hairul and his consistent members catapulted to victory over the rest of their contenders with a score of 1,568.



MIGRATION TO

ABACUS SYSTEM

abacus

Recently, Sri Sutra Travel converted its global distribution system partnership from AMADEUS to ABACUS. This migration was mooted after several months of careful planning and consideration by the management to enhance and improve our online reservations in equilibrium with the demands of our clientele current needs and trade affiliations requirements. To consort the migration process, a training session was held for all travel operation consultants at the Abacus Headquarters as well as in-house.





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Saga

The prefecture's best known of pottery (Arita-yaki) from Arita



Fukuoka

Prefecture capital is Fukuoka city, Kyushu's largest and most vibrant city. Yatai (Food Stalls) along the street offering a special atmosphere every night



Oita

Capital City Beppu, Japan's most famous hot springs resorts



Nagasaki

Played a prominent role in foreign trade relations for many centuries. Has been destroyed by an atomic bomb towards the end of World War II.



Kumamoto

Kumamoto is known for Mount Aso, an active volcano in the center of Kyushu, and hot springs resorts such as Kurakawa Onsen



Miyazaki

Well known for beautiful mountainous and coastal scenery



Kagoshima

The prefecture's former name is Satsuma, played a crucial role in realizing the Meiji Restoration and during the Meiji period

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ITINERARY

Day 1 Fukuoka

Arrive at Fukuoka Airport / Hakata Station. Transfer to hotel. Check-in. Free & Easy.

Day 2 Fukuoka - Dazaifu - Kumamoto (B/L)

Breakfast at hotel. Hotel check-out. Visit Dazaifu Tenmangu Shrine. Transfer to Kumamoto. Prayers at Kumamoto Mosque. Lunch at local restaurant. Visit Kumamoto Castle. Shopping at Kamitori / Shimotori Shopping Street. Dinner (own arrangement) Transfer to hotel. Check-in

Day 3 Kumamoto - Aso - Beppu (B/L)

Breakfast at hotel. Hotel check-out. Transfer to Aso. Ride on Mt. Aso Ropeway. Enjoy Mt. Aso view from Daikanbo Observatory. Lunch at local restaurant. Transfer to Beppu. Prayers at Beppu Mosque. Shopping at Beppu Shopping Street. Dinner (own arrangement) Transfer to hotel. Check-in

Day 4 Beppu - Fukuoka (B/L)

Breakfast at hotel. Hotel check-out. Visit Jigoku Meguri. Transfer to Tosu. Shopping at Tosu Premium Outlet. Transfer to Beppu. Lunch at local restaurant. Prayers at Fukuoka Mosque. Shopping at Tenjin Shopping Street. Dinner (own arrangement) Transfer to hotel. Check-in

Day 5 Fukuoka (B)

Breakfast at hotel. Hotel check-out. Transfer to Fukuoka Airport / Hakata Station. Tour end



PACKAGE HIGHLIGHTS

- Tour conducted by Muslim tour leader
- Seafood / Vegetable / HALAL food served
- Perform Prayers at Japan's famous mosques
- Specially catered for small size group
- More shopping time for shopaholics!
- Affordable price with high quality arrangement

TERMS & CONDITIONS

- Price stated is not including flight tickets, visa application fee and travel insurance
- Above price is valid for minimum 4 adult travelling together
- Rates stated are based on lowest room category and is subject to availability.
- Airport limousine, bus and tour arrangements are subject to scheduled itinerary and seat availability
- Any changes or cancellation within 21 days is subject to Sutra's cancellation policy



DIVE THE WORLD IN FIJI



Nestled in the middle of the South Pacific Ocean is the paradise known as the Fiji Islands. As the hub of the Pacific with travel connectivity to all the Pacific Island countries as well as to the Americas, Europe and Asia, Fiji offers the travelling public from the three continents an experience of a lifetime. While Fiji's traditional source markets have been neighbours, Australia and New Zealand, its growing engagement with Asia is beginning to attract tourists from China and India. The number has increased significantly for the last few years and has resulted in a new direct flight route from Hong Kong to Nadi, the site of Fiji's international airport. Tourists from China, South East Asia and India are beginning to discover this Pacific Island Paradise as an alternative destination.

Everyone who goes to Fiji will go through Nadi. This town, in the Western part of Fiji, established itself as Fiji's tourist hub in the 1960s and continues to grow, even today. It is also the site of the largest integrated resort in the South Pacific, Denarau Island. It boasts eight large resorts, stunning beaches and an 18-hole championship golf course. You'll find an excellent range of accommodation, with the resorts offering designer suites, stunning swimming pools and a wide range of restaurants. Whether you want to shop, have some adventure or experience some of the best dining Fiji has to offer, you'll find it all at Denarau Island.

Nadi shares Fiji's tourist attractions with the other parts of Fiji. Spread throughout Fiji is something

unique that is a dream for sea lovers: Fiji's diving experience. As the "Soft Coral Capital of the World" and home to the "Great Astrolabe Reef", a network of brilliant coral reefs surrounds our 333 islands and atolls. With around 1000 species of fish and several hundred types of coral and sponges, Fiji offers a unique diving experience. With over 4000 square miles of coral reef, Fiji Islands offer divers unparalleled marine biodiversity. Tourists will discover its picturesque islands, crystalline waters and exceptionally hospitable locals it is little wonder that Fiji is close to the top of many divers' 'To Do' list.

The famous Somosomo Strait in the north, accessed from Taveuni, is the place of big pelagics and where incredibly colourful soft corals dominate the view. It is home to the highly rated sites of Rainbow Reef and the Great White Wall.

The nutrient-fed channel of Bligh Water and surrounding picturesque islands of Koro, Wakaya and Namena in the Koro Sea is Fiji's best claim as a world class dive destination and is a prime adventure cruising ground for liveaboards.

Kadavu Island offers the real Fijian experience topside, and healthy, colourful reefs below the surface where those who want to get away from it all, without compromising the quality of diving, will be richly rewarded. Easily the best diving in southern Fiji, you can explore the rugged untamed reefs of Kadavu's Great Astrolabe Reef where mantas play over vast fields of pristine hard corals.

As well as having a truly awesome shark feeding dive for more experienced divers and thrill seekers, Viti Levu dives sites are the easiest to access when you arrive in Fiji, and resorts are normally only an hour or two's drive from Nadi.

The world-renowned Beqa Lagoon offers some pretty handy resort diving, close to Fiji's main island. The Lagoon has bommies and pinnacles, and a good variety of marine life, which will be popular with less experienced divers and those with little time on their hands.

So if you want big fish action, macro-delights, pristine coral or adventurous liveaboards, Fiji promises it all, and there is always a warm Fijian welcome waiting for you.

Malaysians travelling to Fiji will fit in seamlessly because there are lots of similarities between the two countries. Like Malaysia, Fiji is a multicultural country with a population of 837,271 of which 475,739 are iTaukei (natives), 313,798 Indians and 47,734 of other ethnic groups, mostly Chinese. Although Fiji's Muslim population is about 5%, Fiji is still the halal hub of the Pacific. Malaysians will not have an issue with the local delicacies because most staple food are the same. There are also mosques all over Fiji where Muslims can perform their spiritual obligations without any hassle.

Dive Fiji will present you with an experience that will be hard to forget.



return airfare
Ex-KUL to
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1352
per person

* Price includes return airfare but exclude airport taxes fuel surcharges, insurance and other fees. Sutra Terms & Conditions apply



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Madrid	1400
Paris	1340
Rome/Zurich Vienna	1400

USA

Los Angeles	1800
San Francisco	1800

TERMS & CONDITIONS:

- Prices include return airfares excluding airport taxes, fuel surcharges, insurance and other fees.
- Fares quoted are based on the lowest seat available.
- Confirmation is subject to seats availability.
- Rates quoted are subject to change with or without prior notice.
- Individual Airlines' Terms and Conditions apply

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Having first started her travel career in Penang more than 30 years ago, Winnie Chiam fondly shares her work experiences with us in an exclusive interview recently. She is currently holding a position as Senior Executive in the Tour Department at Sutra Global Planners Sdn Bhd.

Q: Are you lucky?

A: I wouldn't consider myself lucky, but I am very grateful to life and my achievements

Q: Are you nice?

A: I would consider myself nice at times.

Q: How would you describe yourself?

A: I am easy-going, hardworking, full of passion towards my job and completing my tasks given to me.

Q: Describe a typical work week ?

A: Typical work week would be busy with quotations with short lead time to prepare

Q: Describe your work style?

A: I am typically organized, dedicated, and efficient

Q: Do you consider yourself successful? Why?

A: Success is very subjective, but to me I am very happy with my achievement to date in work and personal environment. So yes, I am successful in my own way.

Q: Do you work well with other people?

A: Yes, I am able to work with anyone who is willing to learn

Q: Do you take work home with you?

A: I try not to bring home my work because that would mean I am not fully utilizing my time at work for completing the job.

Q: How do you view yourself? Who do you compare yourself to?

A: I have a very high expectation of myself and I would want to achieve whatever I set out to do and complete my task diligently. There is no need to compare myself with anyone as I know my own capabilities.

Q: How many hours do you normally work?

A: That depends, I start work even before others, daily at 8am. That would mean an average of 10 hours per day

Q: How would you describe the pace at which you work?

A: I would rate my pace of work as acceptable

Q: How do you handle stress and pressure?

A: After a tiring and stressful day at work, I would normally go for a relaxing massage or watch a bit of tv.

Q: What motivates you?

A: My family is my main motivation. All I work for is for them

Q: Are you a self motivator?

A: Yes, I would consider myself to be one

Q: What do you find are the most difficult decisions to make?

A: When I have to choose between two unfavorable decisions, and requires to make a choice. This is the time when I really find it difficult to make a decision.

Q: Tell me about yourself.

A: Nothing much to say about myself. I am just your average down-to-earth person

Q: What are you passionate about?

A: I am passionate about my work!

Q: What are your hobbies?

A: I enjoy cooking, taking walks in the park, and reading.

Q: What are your pet peeves?

A: Grammatical errors are my pet peeves. I often get emails from my boss telling me that emails I've sent to clients contain many grammatical errors.

Q: What is your dream job?

A: I have always wanted to be a nurse

Q: What is your professional development plan?

A: At my age, would leave the development plan for the younger generation but I would still update myself with various products and industries update.

Q: If you could relive the last 10 years of your life, what would you do differently?

A: I believe everything happens for a reason. Therefore, there's nothing I would change but treasures the experiences I have gone through

Q: Describe a time when your workload was heavy and how you handled it.

A: My workload is heavy on a daily basis. I have to tailor-made 3 to 4 quotations per day. Includes sourcing for suppliers, costing, and information gathering. I just try to manage my time properly and at the end of the day at least 80% of my work will be completed.

Q: What applicable attributes / experience do you have?

A: I have been in travel / tourism industry for almost half of my life. I think my strongest attribute is the dedication to my work and the determination to not falter.

a WINNIE-ING^{style}



Winnie Chiam

Senior Executive, Tour Department
Sutra Global Planners Sdn Bhd

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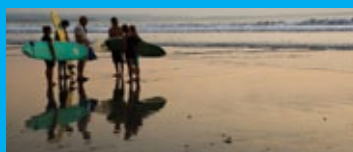
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Theme Park Extra **1309**

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4D3N Free & Easy Tokyo **1300**
4D3N Free & Easy Kyoto **1340**
4D3N Free & Easy Osaka **1570**
5D4N Kyushu Muslim Tour **3640**



Fr RM
5D4N Free & Easy Sapporo **900**

HONG KONG



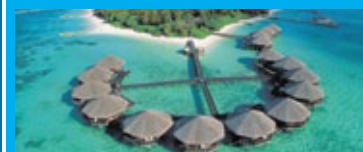
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4D3N Fun Disneyland
Hong Kong **1059**

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4D3N Ho Chi Minh
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5D4N London Splendid Winter **3999**

TERMS AND CONDITIONS:

- Min. 02 person to travel on the same date
- Ground package only
- The above rates quoted are subject to change with or without prior notice.
- The above rates quoted are based on the lowest category of room type of each hotel.
- We reserve the rights to amend the above pricing should there is any adjustments made by the respective parties involved in the packages
- Validity until Dec '14 and Feb '15
- Sutra Terms & Conditions apply.



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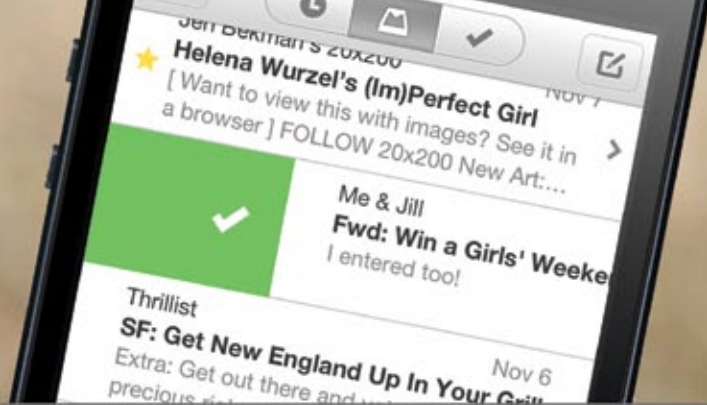
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Dear Sharifah,

We just came back from Pulau Perhentian last week and we want to inform you that we had a terrific time there. Both my husband and I went snorkeling and island hopping as part of our stay there. I have never seen such clear waters in our own country. I just want to let you know that we will return to Pulau Perhentian next year to celebrate our second anniversary honeymoon. It was a heavenly choice !

Thank you so much !

Yours truly,
Norsafrika Muhamat

Dear Ms Dayah,

We are sending you this email to thank you personally for the splendid tour arrangements to Medan and Lake Toba that you have made for our family. It made our Hari Raya holidays a memorable event for the 4 of us. The guide who accompanied us was very friendly and very knowledgeable and we can only thank him through you.

Since it was our first family trip overseas, we will surely look forward to using Sutra for our future travel plans.

Thank you
Mr Aladin

Dear Ms Sharifah Fairuz,

The trip you have arranged for us to Gold Coast, Australia was surely the best I have experienced so far. Our 6 Days 5 Nights package was not only reasonably priced but my husband thinks it was really a value for money destination. The Warner Bros Theme Park was most exciting and we had a fun time in reliving our childhood experiences again. My husband truly enjoyed his visit to the Ripley's Believe It Or Not! Odditorium.

Come September again next year, we would like you to suggest a special place like this for our honeymoon adventure. Thanks Fairuz for making things come true for both of us.

Regards,
Nor Fazira Ramdan.

Dear Ms Sharifah Fairuz,

Many thanks to you and your team for making our trip to the East Coast States of Malaysia a scenic and memorable one. We appreciate your dedication to ensure that our mission participants' wishes and needs have been catered for.

Thank you and best wishes for your future projects.

Best regards.
WenYing Ho
Manager (ASEAN & South Asia), Global Business Division
Singapore Business Federation

Dear Sharifah and All.

It was a very well planned and on time Trip. All were in place, Travel from location to location was smooth and easy. Food was well prepared and tastes good. All of the SBF delegation had a wonderful Trip. Thanks and Cheers Keep up with the Good Work.

Regards
James Aw.
(Mission Leader for SBF to ECER)

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