

Striving Towards a Modern Coastal Metropolis

Booming! Domestic and Overseas Traveling

By Dong Na

China sees soaring domestic tourism and recovering outbound tourism as the country's adjusted COVID-19 response has lifted restrictions on trips both for domestic and overseas.

Recently, outbound group tours, which had been suspended for nearly three years due to the pandemic, by travel agencies, have officially re-opened. On February 10, Ningbo's first outbound tour group will depart to Bangkok, Thailand.

Long-awaited Outbound Tour

In the afternoon of February 6, a travel agency located near Moon Lake was filled with consumers, and most of them inquired about joining the outbound tour groups.

Since February 10 and operated by Airbus A320 on every Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Sunday, Spring Airlines resumes international flights from Ningbo to Bangkok, Thailand. "180 seats in the flight that the first tour group is on were almost fully booked since days before the departure, the passenger seat rate has reached 90%," a staff member in the travel agency said.

For Ningbo tourists, the Spring Tour Zhejiang first launched the 6 days-"Bangkok + Pattaya" tour project, each tourist's offer is 4699 yuan, including amusement programs, round-trip airfare, hotels, local tour buses, and food, among others.

"The attractions cover the Grand Palace, Wat Phra Kaew, Oriental Princess, night markets... Tourists can also enjoy the amusement programs such as elephant riding, crocodile fishing, speed boat trip, and Thai massage," Yang Shipai, General Manager of the agency said.

"The plan covers all the fine quality items of Thailand tour, as the first time to restart the overseas tour after three years of the epidemic, staff in both China and



A tourism promotion event held in Ningbo.

[Photo by Gou Wen]

Thailand are full of enthusiasm and eager to provide our guests the best quality of services," Yang added.

According to Yang, since Feb 10 is a weekday, the guests of the first group are mainly retired people, accounting for about 80 per cent.

Bustle in Domestic Tourism

In the just-past Spring Festival of the Year of the Rabbit, domestic tourism ushered in a long-awaited bustle.

As people return to their hometowns, short-distance tours to scenic spots around small cities are gaining popularity. In the meantime, data from Trip.com Group showed that long-distance travel orders during the Spring Festival holiday accounted for 70

per cent of the holiday's total travel orders of the company, up 72 per cent year on year.

Guessing lantern riddles, watching operas, hanging out at lantern fairs... In Ningbo, From New Year's Eve to Lantern Festival, the city held more than 100 cultural activities and more than 10 fine exhibitions, attracting the general public and tourists to experience the traditional customs and enjoy the festive atmosphere.

During the holiday, Xiangshan Global Studios, Xikou Scenic Area, Ningbo Zoo and other key scenic spots received more than 100% year-on-year growth in tourists; ancient towns like Cicheng, Qiantong, Shipu and Minghe received more than 80% year-on-year growth in tourists; Tianyige Museum, Ningbo Museum received more than 100,000 visitors, an increase of 120%.

According to experts, though industry insiders had already given an optimistic forecast for the tourism market over the Spring Festival holiday, the robust recovery has further cheered them up. "The life cycle for domestic tourism has shown a good trend, indicating that people's desire for travel has been stimulated after they have stayed at home for a rather long time."

Awaits More Routes to Open

At present, many international routes have not been fully restored. So, for travelers, if their cities do not have a suitable direct flight, they can only choose to go to the nearest city's airport.

Among Ningbo's first out-

bound tour group, in addition to local tourists, there are also a lot of tourists from Taizhou, Shaoxing, Zhoushan, and Wenzhou. This is related to the current scarcity of outbound travel routes.

The tourism industry is waiting for March 23-26 when the new season of international routes opens, which will be an important point for outbound travel this year. According to the relevant requirements, tourists returning home from an outbound tour still need to hold a 48-hour negative PCR-test certificate to enter the country, so it is important to carry out PCR testing promptly before the return trip. In this regard, the local travel agency in Ningbo guaranteed that the arrangements for PCR testing will be reasonably incorporated into the itinerary to avoid delaying the return trip.

SPOTLIGHT

Ningbo Voluntary Rescue Team leaves for Turkey

By Xu Zhuowei

In the afternoon of February 7, Huang Haihui, Shu Chongjie, Zhu Jiancheng, and Zhang Saixiao, four members of the Yinzhou Blue Sky Rescue Team (BSR), gathered at the airport and were ready to leave for Turkey for 15 days of earthquake rescue.

"At about 12pm yesterday, the BSR Headquarters informed us that 150 people were needed to go to Turkey for earthquake rescue, and each team signed up voluntarily." Chen Qing, the leader of Yinzhou BSR Team, said that after receiving the notice, the team members volunteered, and finally confirmed four members this morning.

Chen Qing said that the team members who went to Turkey for earthquake rescue had more than 3 years of disaster rescue experience, and some of them had been engaged in emergency rescue efforts such as flood and landslide.

"I have been in the BSR Team for 5 years and have accumulated some knowledge of medical aid. I hope to do my part!" Zhang Saixiao, one of the members said that this time she was mainly responsible for medical aid, and she felt that she must join in.

She told the correspondent that she received the assembly notice and signed up for the first time without much thought. Because of the urgent time and heavy task, she mainly carried some pre-hospital emergency equipment, including a thermometer, sphygmomanometer, stethoscope, etc.

This is also the first transnational rescue for Zhang Saixiao and her team members. "When we arrive in Turkey, we will follow the Team's arrangements to carry out rescue work and hope to help the local people as much as possible!" she said.

The Yinzhou Blue Sky Rescue Team is a voluntary group that was established in 2018, and now its members have grown from 6 to 115. The average age of these members is 38, the oldest is 55, and the youngest is just over 20. They gather for love, pursue love, and interpret the great love spirit of respect for life and selfless dedication in rescue after rescue.

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双语汇 Different Tongues

东冷艺术馆：月湖畔，寻香来

By Gou Wen

The Dongling Art Museum is built on the former site of the Huxin Temple in the Moon Lake area. The Huxin Temple is a witness to the spreading of Chinese culture overseas. And now, the Dongling Art Museum further becomes a bridge for communication for the ancient and the modern, the east and the west.

东冷艺术馆坐落于月湖湖心寺旧址。湖心寺见证了中国文化漂洋过海、传播海外的光辉历程，东冷艺术馆的入驻，连接起了古今交融、东西交流的桥梁。

The theme of this museum is fragrance. As a non-profit museum, it has the functions of collection and

display, culture and science popularization, academic exchange, and public education.

艺术馆以“香”为主题，集收藏陈列、文化科普、学术交流、公共教育于一体，是一家综合性非营利艺术馆。

The exhibition in the museum includes nearly 100 items of Chinese and Japanese incense vessels, classical perfume bottles, western ancient perfume, perfume posters, fragrance raw materials, modern classic perfumes, etc.

馆内展陈包括中日香器、古典香水瓶、西方古老香水、绝版香水海报、香氛原料、现代经典新香等近百件藏品。

"The Dongling Art Museum not only inherits the tradition of external cultural and artistic exchange of the Huxin



The Dongling Art Museum. /东冷艺术馆。

[Photo by He Keren] 何可人 摄

Temple, but also brings romance to the scenic spot and helps to enhance the international influence," said Kong

Ying, Curator of Dongling Art Museum.

“东冷艺术馆的入驻，不仅接续了湖心寺对外文化艺术交流的美好

传统，也为景区打开了一扇充满浪漫气息的时尚艺术之窗，更为景区提升国际影响力赋予新动能。”东冷艺术馆馆长孔颖说。

