

# WINGS CHAMBER

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Chinese film star Jingchu Zhang enjoys a memorable encounter with a dolphin at Atlantis,



### FDI BY FOREIGN AIRLINES MAY BE ALLOWED SOON

In an encouraging step for domestic civil aviation sector, a group of key ministers on 17th January, 2012 took a policy decision to allow foreign airlines to invest up to 49% in domestic carriers.

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## CANTON FAIR 2012



111<sup>th</sup> Session of China Import and Export Fair  
China Import and Export Fair Complex, Guangzhou, China

# WORLD BUSINESS MAGAZINE



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WORLD  
TRAVEL  
AWARDS



## World Travel Awards issues call for nominations

World Travel Awards (WTA), 'the Oscars of the travel industry', is issuing a call to those organisations that aspire to be the best in their sector to participate in its 2012 programme.

Established 19 years ago, WTA is recognised globally as the highest accolade in travel and tourism, and serves to raise the standards of customer service and business performance throughout the tourism industry.

Self nominations for its 2011 Grand Tour rose an outstanding 28 percent compared to the previous year, and in 2012 the competition is set to be the fiercest yet as growing numbers of companies and destinations realise the commercial benefits and kudos that accompany winning a WTA.

Entry is now open for categories in Africa, Asia, Australasia, Caribbean, Europe, Indian Ocean, Middle East, and North, South & Central America.

Entry forms can be completed online or downloaded from [www.worldtravelawards.com/nominate](http://www.worldtravelawards.com/nominate) and the nomination submission deadline will be 29 February 2012.

The complete list of nominations will be announced in time for ITB in March. Voting will then open and be carried out by an audience of 213,000 travel agents and tourism professionals from 164 countries, including visitors to WTA's website who are encouraged to submit their votes via the online voting system.

WTA's 2012 Grand Tour will include regional legs in Dubai, the Algarve, South Africa, Miami and Thailand. The winners of these regional heats will progress to the Grand Final, which will take place in India.

Graham E. Cooke, President & Founder, WTA said: "Although 2011 continued to challenge every strata of travel and tourism, all our winners demonstrated their world-class pedigree in the face of adversity. In 2012 we are looking for those organisations that are spearheading the global recovery of travel and tourism by outperforming their peers and offering something new and exciting."

The ceremonies are widely regarded as one of the best networking opportunities in the travel industry, attended by government and industry leaders, as well as international media.

The 2011 WTA nominations featured more than 5,000 companies in 1,000 categories across 164 countries, and WTA ceremonies were attended by more than 3,000 guests from 92 countries, as well as media from 192 TV channels and publications.

World Travel Awards was launched in 1993 to acknowledge and recognise excellence in the global travel and tourism industry. Now celebrating its 19th anniversary, it is regarded as the very highest achievement that a travel product could hope to receive.

Votes are cast by 213,000 travel professionals including travel agencies, tour and transport companies and tourism organizations in more than 160 countries across the globe.

Main sponsors include Qatar Tourism Authority, BBC World News, the Jamaica Tourist Board, Tourism Authority of Thailand, Cornelia Diamond Golf Resort & Spa, Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority, Conrad Hotels, World.mobi, Armani Hotel Dubai, Emaar Hospitality Group, Dusit Thani Bangkok, Sandals Resorts, Savoy Sharm el Sheikh and WeClickMedia.

WTA's global media partner network includes: ABTA Magazine, ASTA Network, Breaking Travel News, CNBC Arabiya, eTurboNews, Khaleej Times, Trav Talk, Trade Arabia, TTN, Travel Daily News International, Focus on Travel News, Vox Africa, New Focus Travel Magazine, Tourism Review, JAX FAX, Passport Magazine, Travel & Leisure China and National Geographic Traveller.

This global media partner network has a monthly readership of 1.2 million and a TV audience reach of 90 million.

To download WTA logos visit: [www.worldtravelawards.com/logo](http://www.worldtravelawards.com/logo)  
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w: [www.worldtravelawards.com](http://www.worldtravelawards.com)

## QUO CALLS FOR CHANGE IN PERCEPTION OF BRAND THAILAND

A leading tourism brand strategist based in Bangkok has called for a "structural" change in the perception of brand Thailand. A new brand should better reflect the warmth and humility of Thai people, he said.

Addressing over 400 travel industry stakeholders at the inaugural Thailand Tourism Forum in Bangkok today, David Keen, the CEO of [QUO Keen](http://www.QUO.com), said that current promotions based on "amazing" and "miracle" taglines don't accurately present Thailand.

In his presentation, Keen told the audience: "Thailand needs to come together and form a perception of the country that is based on truth. Thailand has extraordinary assets none greater than its multi-cultural and dignified people. It is the people who should form the essence of a new perception of the country," he said.

The QUO CEO showed a four-minute video called, "Harnessing Our Potential" to illustrate the diversity of Thailand's assets. The video combined images of attractive locations with interviews with Thai people and foreign residents.

Keen said: "In my opinion, we should define our brand as a convergence of our greatest assets and take that perception to the market. Thailand should form an identity that conveys all the wonderful things about the country and its people. I believe it would be far more meaningful and have a greater impact than traditional or existing strategies."

The Thailand Tourism Forum 2012 was organized by the American Chamber of Commerce in Thailand under the guidance of Bill Barnett of [C9 Hotelworks](http://www.C9Hotelworks.com). The event, held at the Inter Continental Bangkok, positioned itself as "the country's first report card on the state of the tourism industry".

QUO is a global brand creation, communication and representation specialist for the tourism and hospitality sectors. Its client portfolios cover most of the globe and embrace small and large destinations and multiple hospitality companies. QUO leaders bring with them decades of experience. QUO Keen evolved from Keen Media which was established in Bangkok in 1997. QUO officially launched in October 2011. Further information: [www.QUO-global.com](http://www.QUO-global.com).



DAVID KEEN



# RIYADH TRAVEL FAIR 2012 LAUNCHED AT ATLANTIS, THE PALM

## FAIR AIMS TO GROW TOURISM ACROSS THE MIDDLE EAST

Atlantis, The Palm, the leading entertainment destination in the Middle East and major sponsor of Riyadh 2012 Travel Fair, hosted its launch today along with The Centre for Arab Media. The Fair is focusing on working together to grow tourism in the Middle East.

Brett Armitage, Senior Vice President of Sales at Atlantis, The Palm said, "Atlantis, The Palm is delighted to support the Riyadh Travel Fair because of our commitment to growing the Middle Eastern Tourism Industry. "We have demonstrated our dedication to the region, by investing heavily in sales and marketing strategies targeting the region as well as broadening awareness of it as a tourism destination internationally."

Also announced today were the winners of the third session of the press Arab Tourist 2012 competition, a Pan-Arab media initiative designed to guide the Arab tourists to Middle Eastern tourism destinations in particular, Egypt and Tunisia.

Supporters of the Riyadh Fair include the first Board of Tourism, and the Emirates Centre for Media Tourism and Atlantis, The Palm which has made particularly excellent success in Riyadh.

"Atlantis, The Palm is the perfect holiday destination for Middle Eastern families," said Mr. Armitage. "We have welcomed high numbers of guests from the GCC

region during the previous half term holidays, in particular over 8000 visitors from the Kingdom Of Saudi Arabia. We will continue to create a bespoke programme and activities that will enable Arab families with their kids to enjoy a memorable experience at the resort." Ahmed bin Mohammed of the Prime Arab Centre said, "The initiative is based on four main locations in the countries of the Cooperation Council for the Arab Gulf States, as sponsored by Emirates of Dubai and Atlantis, The Palm on behalf of the Emirates Center for Media and Tourism Forum and Riyadh Riyadh Travel, Kuwait and one of the major tourism bodies. "The initiative will commence in Dubai at the Atlantis, The Palm and then in Abu Dhabi in March before moving to Cairo in April and concluding in Riyadh in May."

He pointed out that the initiative offers extensive media events and interviews for those involved in the GCC tourism industry. There will be substantial opportunity for meetings with decision makers and media organizations, travel agencies, as well as showcasing Egyptian tourism products.

Abdul-Rahman, Vice President of the Saudi Centre for Information Tourist Member of the Tourism Committee in the Chamber of Commerce and Industry said, "It's very

important to support tourism bodies in the UAE, as represented Atlantis, The Palm today." At a major ceremony in Riyadh he will stress the close relations between Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the UAE "This will be extended over time working toward the need to support Egypt and its tourism development said the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Al Saud."

"It's important to strengthen mutual co-operation in the tourism and media fields. The Centre aims to grow Egyptian tourism and is already making arrangements to hold a press conference of the Egyptian tourism, events and meetings associated with the largest travel agents involved in tourism. He pointed out that the Centre held meetings with Saudi businessmen in cooperation with the Saudi and Egyptian authorities in Riyadh."

Hussein Immunaie, President of the Emirates Centre For Tourist Information, said. "The Committee has received nominations for the prize for the work of around 100 journalists from eight Arab countries. The winner will be chosen from the top 10 of the applicants who receive the highest ratings during the conference. The winner will be honored at a ceremony March in Abu Dhabi and in May in Riyadh."

## Khiri Travel Announces 'Millionaires' Tour of Central Myanmar

*An innovative private jet tour from Bangkok opens up four days of bicycling, elephant rides, forest hikes and boat trips in the heritage-rich Bagan and Inle Lake areas of Myanmar*



Khiri Travel has announced a unique private jet tour to experience the cultural and natural attractions of central Myanmar. The trip is for high-end clients who want to be treated like 'millionaires' and have an active holiday of cultural insights

The four-day, three-night trip from Bangkok uses a luxurious six-seat Cessna Citation CJ3 private jet. For a six-person group, the whole trip is US\$8,500 per person including visa on arrival, transfers, deluxe accommodation and most meals.

"This is an exceptional trip for people who want a very distinctive, active and culturally rewarding holiday with the convenience of starting and finishing in Bangkok," said Edwin Briels, General Manager of Khiri Travel Myanmar. "A private jet means that you can have one of the greatest little holidays in Asia all within four days and go back to the office with a unique story to tell."

Briels said the trip had been designed for guests who want a "hands-on" holiday. The flight lands in Bagan where guests enjoy guided bicycle

rides among the remote temples of Bagan, many of which are nearly a thousand years old. The Bagan experience includes a boat ride on the Irrawaddy River for sundowners on a sandbank.

Guests then fly in the private jet to Heho near Inle Lake in central Myanmar's Shan hill country. Visitors enter a mature hardwood forest which is now an elephant and wildlife sanctuary with villagers taking ownership of the conservation process. Guests ride (and wash) elephants with local mahouts and villagers.

The trip then visits Inle Lake where guests ride a boat to see the floating gardens and the 'pagoda forest' of Indein. On the water guests see colourful markets frequented by traditional Shan and Pa-O tribes in costume. This is followed by lunch in a local house. Throughout the boat trip there are chances to see the legendary leg rowers of Inle Lake.

Continuing the active theme, the trip includes a bicycle ride on the east bank of Inle Lake through Shan and Intha villages. Visitors stop and chat to villagers

and to monks in a local monastery. Lunch is served on a tranquil rice barge in the middle of Inle Lake. Guests then fly back to Bangkok on the private jet.

Khiri Travel is offering the 'millionaires' trip to central Myanmar between 1 May and 30 September 2012. If four passengers travel, the fee is US\$11,350 per person. If two passengers go, the fee is US\$22,000 per person

The Pacific Asia Travel Association reports that Myanmar attracted 400,000 international visitors in 2011. (To put this in context, this compares to over 16 million in Thailand). The Bagan and Inle Lake areas still only receive about 100,000 international tourists a year. After Indonesia, Myanmar is the 2nd largest country in Southeast Asia.

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