





**Messages from  
Chairman &  
Executive Director**

## Chairman's Message



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*I firmly believe that Hong Kong's tourism industry has strong foundations, and the commissioning of large-scale transport infrastructures such as the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge and the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link will fuel further tourism growth for Hong Kong and the region. Our tourism future also relies on how best we capitalise on the business opportunities brought by the Belt and Road Initiative through continued close partnership with the local and regional travel trade and related industries.*

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**Dr Peter Lam, GBS**  
Chairman, Hong Kong Tourism Board

The Hong Kong tourism industry has risen to many challenges in the past year. With the impact of external factors such as the strong Hong Kong dollar and the Mainland's "one trip per week" measure for Shenzhen residents, visitor arrivals to Hong Kong in 2015 and 2016 fell, with a particular drop in same-day arrivals. However, thanks to solid growth in both long-haul and short-haul arrivals from international markets, visitor arrivals to Hong Kong reached 56.65 million in 2016, bringing total tourism receipts of approximately HK\$300 billion.

The Hong Kong Tourism Board has been striving to maintain a diverse visitor portfolio to ensure sustainable development of the tourism industry. Throughout the year, we rolled out promotions in 20 source markets, including 15 key markets and five new markets, with the objective of attracting people from different parts of the world and widening our source of visitors. Meanwhile, our major strategic focus has been to encourage more overnight visitors and to proactively develop MICE and cruise tourism, so as to bring in more high-yield visitors, create more business opportunities for different business sectors, and ultimately maximise tourism's contribution to the economy.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to the Government for allocating additional funding to support the HKTB in enhancing the promotion of Hong Kong's diverse tourism experiences. With the help of that funding, we have launched the new brand campaign "Best of all, it's in Hong Kong" in source markets, drawing the attention of visitors, the international media, and overseas trade bodies to the unique and diverse experiences that Hong Kong has to offer.

We also continued to launch a variety of subsidy programmes for the travel trade to encourage them to develop more innovative tourism products that allow visitors to explore the city more intimately. In addition, a number of mega events were staged and promoted to strengthen the city's image as the events capital of Asia.

Hong Kong has for decades been a popular destination offering an array of unparalleled experiences, but the tourism industry is susceptible to external influences. With intensified competition in the region and an ever-changing business environment, it is a challenge for Hong Kong to stay ahead as a leading travel destination.

Having said that, I firmly believe that Hong Kong's tourism industry has strong foundations, and the commissioning of large-scale transport infrastructures such as the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge and the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link will fuel further tourism growth for Hong Kong and the region. Our tourism future also relies on how best we capitalise on the business opportunities brought by the Belt and Road Initiative through continued close partnership with the local and regional travel trade and related industries.

Looking ahead, I would like to call for continuing wholehearted support from the Government, our trade partners, and our sponsors to showcase Hong Kong's diverse appeal and unique culture to the world. Together, we can take Hong Kong tourism to the next level of excellence.

## Executive Director's Statement

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*Today's increasingly sophisticated and demanding travellers are no longer satisfied with simply visiting a succession of established and popular tourist sites. Instead, they are keen to explore destinations in depth and to immerse themselves in the local culture. To address this trend and to encourage visitors to explore different aspects of our city, we have put our emphasis in promotions in recent years on seven core Hong Kong experiences: living culture, arts and entertainment, sports and great outdoors, attractions, nightlife, dining, and shopping.*

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### **Anthony Lau**

Executive Director, Hong Kong Tourism Board

Hong Kong is just a tiny speck on the map, yet it has been one of the top tourism destinations in the world for decades. In the Euromonitor International Top 100 City Destinations Ranking for 2017, Hong Kong was ranked first for the seventh consecutive year.

Hong Kong has an edge in our advanced tourism software and hardware, but we also recognise the importance of upholding our city's outstanding reputation in order to maintain our competitiveness as a leading global destination.



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To address this trend and to encourage visitors to explore different aspects of our city, we have put our emphasis in promotions in recent years on seven core Hong Kong experiences: living culture, arts and entertainment, sports and great outdoors, attractions, nightlife, dining, and shopping.

In the year just gone, we launched a striking new brand campaign called "Best of all, it's in Hong Kong". It featured four promotional videos starring celebrities from Hong Kong and overseas showcasing Hong Kong's tourism appeal under the themes "Gourmet and Nightlife", "Trendy Arts and Entertainment", "Family Fun", and "Great Outdoors and Living Culture".

To capitalise on the trend towards social media that has become such a major part of modern life, we used our digital platforms to capture user-generated content from visitors. Through these platforms, we encourage visitors and celebrities to share videos, images, and reflections on their personal Hong Kong experiences.

The HKTB works relentlessly to keep its publicity strategy relevant and up to the minute. We use a variety of channels and platforms including digital media, public relations activities, exhibitions, and consumer fairs to showcase Hong Kong's diverse appeal. The results in 2016 were encouraging. The global publicity generated reached a value of nearly HK\$6 billion, up 36% on the previous year, while a total of 134 million page views were recorded for DiscoverHongKong.com, a 46% year-on-year rise, and the number of followers for all HKTB social media reached 7.5 million, up 35%.

Throughout the year, we staged and promoted a number of mega events which were not only bigger than in previous years but also featured exciting new elements. We enjoyed extended routes on the Sun Hung Kai Properties Hong Kong Cyclothon, the biggest ever CCB (Asia) Hong Kong Wine & Dine Festival, and a new street party at the BOCHK Hong Kong New Year Countdown Celebrations 2017. All these

expansions and improvements brought an enhanced experience to local people and visitors alike, and burnished our reputation as the events capital of Asia.

The HKTB continued to strengthen trade support through the New Tour Product Development Scheme and the Matching Fund for Overseas Tourism Promotion by Tourist Attractions, encouraging our trade partners to develop distinctive tourism products and supporting local tourist attractions in their overseas promotions. To attract more overnight visitors, we worked with local trade partners, airlines, hotels, and tourist attractions to introduce products targeting young people and family visitors from the Mainland and short-haul markets.

To boost MICE tourism, the HKTB engaged with the organisers of large-scale, strategic MICE events to encourage them to hold their events in Hong Kong. With additional funding from the Government, we also introduced a subsidy programme which supports the travel trade in enticing more small and medium-sized MICE groups to Hong Kong. To promote cruise tourism, we not only approached cruise companies which use Hong Kong as a homeport or major turnaround port to launch the Fly-Cruise Co-op programme, but also successfully attracted many international cruise companies to include Hong Kong in their cruise itineraries.

I would like to thank the Government, as well as all of our sponsors and partners, and members of the community, for their wholehearted support for our events and promotions. I would also like to thank all members of the HKTB Board for their invaluable opinions and input, and every colleague in the company for their tireless efforts, without which these impressive results would have been impossible.

Looking ahead, we will continue to do everything we can to work with people from every sector and to launch imaginative and targeted promotions to let more people around the world know about the unique experiences that make Hong Kong such an unforgettable destination.