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## **“Visit Korea, the Home of K-Culture” Commencing K-tourism sales efforts in Japan where K- Culture celebrates its 20<sup>th</sup> year**

The Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism (Minister PARK Bo Gyoon, MCST) together with the Korea Tourism Organization (President KIM Jang-sil, KTO) held the first K-Tourism Roadshow in Tokyo, Osaka, and Fukuoka, three of Japan’s major cities, from February 14 (Tue) to February 17 (Fri) to celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> year of *hallyu* there.

The K-Tourism Roadshow is part of an annual campaign to intensively publicize the charms of K-tourism together with K-culture in 15 cities around the world together, marking the Visit Korea Year 2023 and 2024 campaign. The international tourism market is showing clear signs of recovery and Japan currently holds the top spot in terms of visits to South Korea. Japan is also the country where K-culture started gaining global popularity, making it more meaningful as the first destination of this campaign under the slogan, “Visit Korea, the Home of K-Culture.”

MCST Minister PARK stated, “K-culture is a fantastic boost to tourism exports. With the K-Tourism Roadshow, we intend to carry out a marketing campaign in connection with K-content towards making South Korea a must-visit for people around the world to experience, and include a visit to Korea on their bucket list.”

### **Business events in February and consumer events with local K-culture fans in April**

The K-Tourism Roadshow in Japan is be divided into B2B events in February and B2C events in April. B2B events are designed to encourage businesses to develop new products targeting Japan’s Golden Week holidays (April 29 to May 7) and summer vacation. Korean tourism campaigns will be prepared together with major Japanese and online travel agencies.

This effort to attract tourists by the MCST will be joined by ten local governments across the nation (Seoul, Incheon, Gyeonggi, Gangwon, Gwangju, Jeollabuk-do, Gyeongsangbuk-do, Daegu, Busan, and Jeju), regional KTO branches, the Korea Association of Travel Agents, Incheon International Airport Corporation, and the Korea Cultural Heritage Foundation. They participate in onsite presentations on South Korean tourism for Japanese travel businesses, offer consulting, and explore ways to cooperate in marketing.

In April (April 13 to 23), festive events involving Japanese K-culture fans will be held in four cities simultaneously—Tokyo, Osaka, Fukuoka, and Nagoya—to stoke the desire across the nation to visit South Korea.

**“Come and experience K-culture directly, as it has continued to capture hearts for the 20 years since the airing of ‘Winter Sonata’”**

**The 2nd MCST Vice Minister to carry out K-tourism sales activities in Japan, including discussions on activation of Korea-Japan tourism exchange**

This year celebrates the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the *hallyu* boom’s beginning, triggered as it was by airing of the TV drama “Winter Sonata” on NHK in 2003. As such, K-culture, which South Korea and Japan have long shared and enjoyed together, will be used as the key to recovering bilateral tourism exchange. Korean tourism presentations held in different cities introduce “100 K-culture tourism events (100 reasons to visit Korea, K-charms)” selected on the occasion of the Visit Korea Year; tourism content by K-culture themes popular among Japanese; and regional tourism courses themed on K-culture and things to see, eat, and do as recommended by regional Korean governments and regional KTO branches. Such *hallyu* stars as CHOI Ji-woo, SONG Seung-heon, LEE Young-ae, LEE Byung-hun, and SONG Joong-ki will lend their support to efforts towards publicizing travel options to Korea through video messages.

The event entitled “Korean Tourism Exchange Night,” gathers people from both national governments and relevant organizations, travel agencies, and media. Of particular note is that the 2nd MCST Vice Minister, CHO Yong-man, will attend the Tokyo event to be held on February 17 (Fri) to participate in activities around supporting K-tourism sales. Mr. CHO also met Mr. Ishii Hiroo, the State Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, on February 16 (Thur) to discuss ways to activate Korea-Japan tourism exchanges and possible cooperation in the bidding of World EXPO 2030 Busan.

**K-Tourism Roadshow to Continue through the Year with Residents of 15 International Cities including Hong Kong, Dubai, London, Los Angeles, and Kuala Lumpur**

Starting with Japan, the K-Tourism Roadshow is to unfold in 15 cities across the globe throughout the year. The next stop will be Hong Kong where a “Travel like a Local” campaign will take place in March with a publicity focus on activity tours for individual tourists. In Dubai in May, publicity will be combined with efforts to attract investment in K-tourism ventures. In London in June, collaborations with young artists will target young people in the UK to discover K-culture in a new light under the theme of “‘H.O.F.E.” for *hansik* (Korean cuisine), *OTT* (over-the-top) services, *field trips*, and *e-sports*. In LA in August when KCON, a K-pop concert, will be held, K-culture experience events will be put up for K-pop fans in cooperation with locally-present Korean companies. In Kuala Lumpur in August, a winter family trip campaign will be held for middle-class Muslims, the main K-culture consumer group there.

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