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Korea is to Attract International Visitors with “Uniquely Korean Travel Experiences”

- “K-Tourism Mega Roadshows” in 25 cities across the world**
- Marketing campaigns specifically tailored to different source markets**

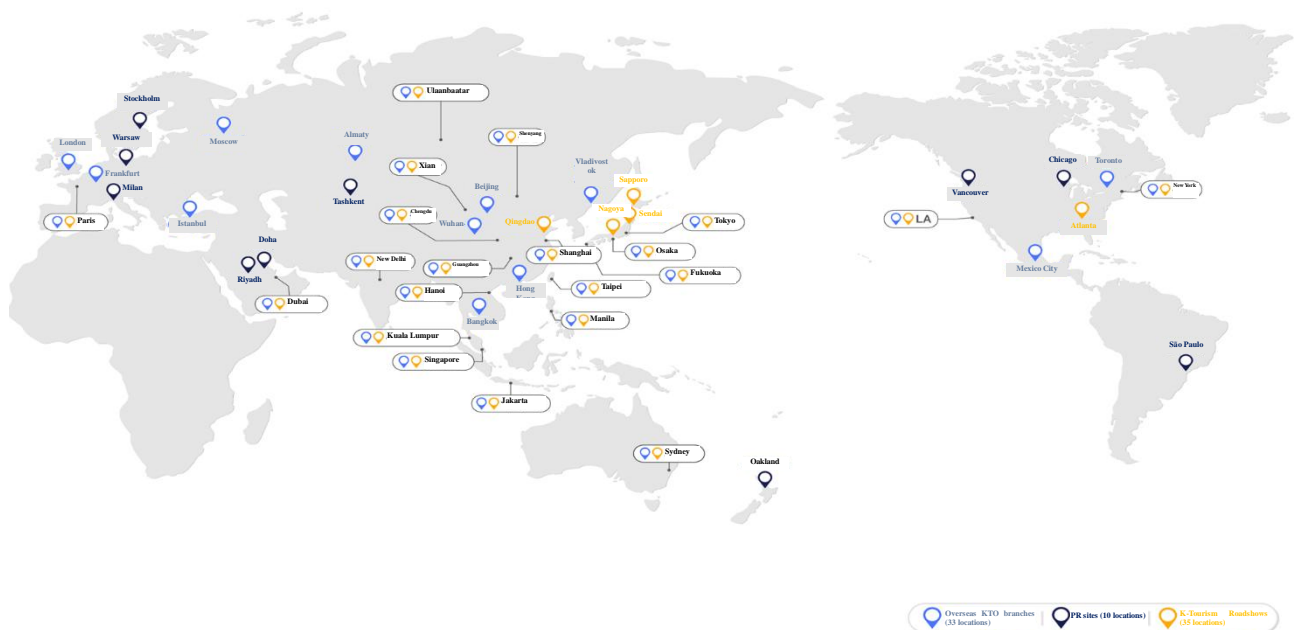
The Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism (Minister YU In Chon, MCST) and the Korea Tourism Organization (KTO) will aggressively expand marketing campaigns worldwide to bring forward the “20 Million Visitor” target and diversify the Korean tourism market.

In 2023, the Republic of Korea recorded around 11 million international tourist arrivals (preliminary estimate), reaching 63% of pre-pandemic levels that reported 17.5 million international inbound visitors in 2019. China, which was relatively late to relax its COVID-19 regulations, showed a 33% recovery compared to 2019-levels, with approximately 2.1 million inbound visitors to Korea. A total of 2.32 million Japanese visitors came to Korea, recovering 70% of 2019, whereas the recovery rates of Southeast Asian and European/American visitors were 77% and 90%, respectively. Meanwhile, the number of visitors from the United States (1.09 million, 103.6% recovery rate), Singapore (141.4%), Australia (114.4%), Germany (109.9%), and France (120.2%) exceeded pre-pandemic levels.

To facilitate the recovery of the inbound tourism market and actively promote Korea as a destination that offers “Uniquely Korean Experiences” to the global market, the MCST plans to hold K-Tourism Mega Roadshows in 25 cities worldwide and implement marketing campaigns specifically tailored to different tourism source markets throughout the year. In addition, the Ministry is to work with promotion agencies to position Korea as a unique destination in 10 countries including Sweden, Uzbekistan, Brazil, and Saudi Arabia, etc. that currently do not have KTO branch offices but show great potential in terms of air capacity, consumer base, and growth of visitors to Korea.

K-Tourism Mega Roadshows in 25 Cities across the World

The K-Tourism Mega Roadshow is designed to convert the garnered global attention on the “Korean-Wave” into greater traveler demand. It is a large-scale event held in major cities around the world to offer Korean cultural and tourism experiences (business-to-customer, B2C), tourism products, business-to-business (B2B) meetings, and media campaigns to potential visitors and the travel industry. Last year, road shows were successfully held in 15 locations, including TSUTAYA BOOKS in Tokyo, Japan; Rockefeller Center in New York, USA; ICONSIAM in Bangkok, Thailand; Global Harbor Shopping Mall in Shanghai, China; and Los Angeles Convention Center in Los Angeles, USA. This year, the MCST and KTO plan to significantly expand and diversify the event to 25 cities with the goal of attracting 1 million visitors and holding more than 12,500 business consultation meetings in Paris, Atlanta, New Delhi, Ulaanbaatar, Sydney, and Manila, in addition to key promotion areas such as Tokyo, Shanghai, Singapore, Dubai, Taipei, Kuala Lumpur, and New York.







The first K-Tourism Mega Roadshow in 2024 will be held in Jakarta, Indonesia, this February, followed by road shows in Tokyo, Fukuoka, and Osaka, Japan, in March, which will highlight Korea as a “tour destination for men,” introducing men’s fashion, e-sports, and other tourist attractions to potential male visitors, in addition to women in their 20s and 30s that form the main throng of Japanese visitors coming to Korea. From March to May, in Shanghai and Guangzhou, China, the MCST and KTO will promote the latest tourist destinations representing “today’s Korea” and

provide distinguished tour programs tailored to different preferences targeting the millennials and Generation Z sankers (Free Independent Travelers, FIT). The Vietnam road show will be held in Hanoi in May, providing realistic experiences for 2030 K-wave fans, such as e-sports, and introducing camping and gourmet tourism programs for families. In June, the MCST and KTO will organize another road show at Westfield Forum des Halles, one of Europe’s largest shopping malls, in Paris, France. The show is set to generate hype for K-wave tourism in anticipation of the Paris 2024 Summer Olympics. In August, in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, another road show will welcome visitors under the theme of “Let’s Go to the Land of Rainbows (Solongos: Korea),” promoting family tour programs and educational tours for young fans of K-culture. In September, the MCST and KTO will promote “Snowflake” winter tour products in Manila, Philippines, to attract visitors during the winter season, the peak Korean tourism season in the country. In addition to New York and Los Angeles in the United States, the Ministry and the KTO will promote Korean tourism, highlighting K-culture, in partnership with local Korean companies in Atlanta this October.

Marketing Campaigns Tailored to Different Regions and Tourism Markets: Women in Their 20s and 30s (China and Japan), Families (Southeast Asia), Asians and Koreans Abroad (United States), and Luxury Medical Tourists (Middle East)

The MCST will also carry out marketing campaigns tailored to different source markets based on region, age group, and theme through KTO branches in 32 cities across 22 countries.

	Mature market		Developing market	Emerging market	High value-added market
Countries	Japan	China	Southeast Asia	Europe and America	Middle East (GCC)
No. of visitors (2023)	2.316 million	2.006 million	2.67 million	2.62 million	31,000
Expenditure (2019)	USD 758.9	USD 1,632.6	USD 1,071	USD 1,146	USD 2,559
Recovery rate (2023)	70.8%	33.5%	81.0%	90.1%	88.2%
Core Targets	 Women in their 20/30s, hobbyists		 Families, K-wave fans	 Seniors, overseas Koreans, people interested in K-culture	 Luxury tourists medical

Japan, China, and Greater China are classified as “mature markets,” with the largest number of visitors in 2023 at 5.715 million, but this figure is still far from full recovery. In this regard, the MCST will carry out diversified marketing campaigns targeting specific traveler groups such as women in their 20s and 30s with keen interest in K-wave who have visited Korea multiple times, as well as educational tourists, men, and sports and e-sports enthusiasts. Taking into account that these visitors from mature markets tend to be repeat visitors that travel relatively short distances, promotional activities will be focused on encouraging them to visit local attractions such as restaurants and filming locations of Korean movies and TV shows, and lifestyle content that highlight various aspects of “Korea today,” such as cafés, fashion, and beauty online.

Southeast Asia is classified as a “developing market,” with 2.67 million inbound visitors in 2023. Although a medium-sized market, it is characterized by high pre-COVID-19 growth (11.2% of average annual growth from 2010 to 2019) and a high post-COVID-19 recovery rate (81.1%). More than one in two Southeast Asians visiting Korea travel with their families (58.8% on average across six major Southeast Asian countries as of 2019). Therefore, the MCST will focus on visitors traveling with family and K-wave fans. The Ministry will also support Korean content developers and travel agencies to jointly develop products featuring themes such as Korean film / TV show filming locations and Korean food factory tours and promote activity programs for different types of family visitors such as infants, children, teenagers, and seniors.

America and Europe are regarded as “emerging markets,” with 2.62 million inbound visitors in 2023. Although the number of visitors by country is not significantly large except for the United States (1.09 million), both regions are essential in the international tourism market because of their large number of long-term travelers and high recovery rate (90.1%). The main prong of American and European visitors to Korea consists of overseas Koreans, Asians, and seniors aged 50+. The MCST and KTO will strengthen promotion efforts for people interested in K-culture and family travelers. Given that long-distance travelers tend to stay for longer periods and visit multiple cities, the Ministry plans to promote joint tourism products with Japan and other Asian countries and actively introduce activity programs such as temple stays and mountain climbing, as well as themed products aimed at specific targets such as vegetarianism, workstation, and art fairs.

The Middle East is a “high value-added market,” with a small number of visitors at around 31,000 in 2023 contrasted by a high recovery rate of 88.1%. It is characterized by longer periods of stay and a

very high per capita spending of USD 2,559, which far exceeds the average expenditure of USD 1,239.2 in 2019. In order to attract visitors from the Middle East, the MCST launched Alam Arabi Korea (meaning “Arab World in Korea”), an association of companies operating luxury tourism infrastructure such as department stores, hotels, medical centers, and restaurants, with the participation of major companies in the Middle East. The launch was aimed at increasing tourism convenience in Korea based on the characteristics of Middle Eastern culture. In addition, to access emerging markets, KTO will promote educational and business tour programs for Kazakh, Mongolian, and Indian tourists to diversify visitors to the country.

2024 Inbound Trend Event on January 29 to Share the Latest in K-Tourism

In addition, KTO will work with new promotion agencies targeting 10 countries including Sweden, Brazil, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar, that currently do not have KTO overseas branch offices but show high potential as a source market in terms of interest in the Korean culture (K-wave), air capacity, and potential consumer base. The project will be carried out in the first quarter of 2024 and is expected to serve as a bridgehead for developing new markets and assessing market potential, including the provision of market information and local exchanges to diversify the Korean tourism market.

Furthermore, on January 29 (Mon), the MCST and KTO will host the “2024 Inbound Trends” event in Seoul for the travel industry, local governments, and local tourism agencies, where representatives from global online travel platforms, social media networks, and credit card companies will share the latest inbound travel post-pandemic trends to Korea.

Minister YU said, “Individual travelers are gaining importance in the Korean tourism market. As we celebrate the coming of the “20 Million Visitors” era, we will compete in the market by implementing specific promotion strategies tailored for each region and target group.”

	KTO Overseas Branch Offices	Overseas Promotion Agencies	K-Tourism Roadshow
China	Beijing Shanghai Guangzhou Shenyang Chengdu Xi'an Wuhan		Qingdao (1Q) Guangzhou (1Q) Shenyang (2Q) Chengdu (2Q) Shanghai (2Q)
Greater China	Hong Kong Taipei City		Taipei City (3Q)
Japan	Tokyo Fukuoka Osaka		Tokyo (1Q) Fukuoka (1Q) Osaka (1Q, B2B / 2Q, B2C) Nagoya (2Q) Sapporo (3Q) Sendai (4Q)
Asia and Middle East	Mongolia Thailand Singapore Malaysia Vietnam Philippines Indonesia India United Arab Emirates Türkiye Kazakhstan	Uzbekistan Saudi Arabia Qatar	Jakarta (1Q) Dubai (4Q) Hanoi (2Q) Kuala Lumpur (2Q) Singapore (2Q) Ulaanbaatar (3Q) Manila (3Q) New Delhi (4Q)
Europe and America	Los Angeles New York Toronto, Canada Germany France United Kingdom Moscow Vladivostok Australia	Chicago, United States Vancouver, Canada Brazil New Zealand Italy Sweden Poland	New York (2Q) Los Angeles (2Q) Paris (2Q) Sydney (3Q) Atlanta (4Q)
Total	32	10	25

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