

Mainland Affairs Council
Press Release

Second group of trial cities for independent travel to Taiwan by Mainland tourists to be implemented in two phases

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The Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) publicly announces today (April 1, 2012) that a second group of trial cities will be open for Mainland tourists to travel independently to Taiwan. After extensive consultations between the Tourism Bureau of the Ministry of Transportation and Communications (MOTC) and the tourism authorities on the Mainland side through the platform of the Taiwan Strait Tourism Association (TSTA) and the Mainland's Cross-Strait Tourism Exchange Association (CTEA), the two sides have reached a consensus on adding 10 new trial cities in the Mainland to the existing three (Beijing, Shanghai, and Xiamen). However, in consideration of the various states of specific preparation by each city, the opening will be implemented in two phases this year: Tianjin, Chongqing, Nanjing, Guangzhou, Hangzhou, and Chengdu in phase one, beginning on April 28, while Jinan, Xi'an, Fuzhou, and Shenzhen in phase two, to be implemented as soon as possible in 2012.

The said opening affairs are based on Item 2 of the First Amendment to the Cross-Strait Agreement on Travel by Mainland Residents to Taiwan." The arrangement has been finalized by an exchange of documents between the TSTA and the CTEA, and the administrative process will be completed by mutual notification between the SEF and the ARATS. Related preparations on the Taiwan side are being actively carried out by the Tourism Bureau, the National Immigration Agency

under the Ministry of the Interior (MOI), and other relevant agencies to ensure smooth implementation. In addition, the daily quota for Mainland individual tourists to Taiwan will be raised from 500 currently to 1,000. The Mainland side will also announce the list of tour organizing agencies for the additional trial cities and develop complementary measures.

From June 28 last year (2011) when Taiwan began allowing individual travel to Taiwan by Mainland tourists, to March 26 this year, over 56,000 Mainlanders have traveled independently to Taiwan and deeply experienced the life and cultural substance of Taiwan. In March, there were nearly 10 days in which over 400 Mainland tourists visited Taiwan daily, indicating a steady improvement in the number of visitors. In addition, information from the Tourism Bureau shows that Mainland tourists traveling independently to Taiwan have highly positive views of their visit. After more than nine months of implementation, the competent authorities of both sides have accumulated considerable experience. In the future after increasing the number of open cities, the two sides will continue to review and make improvements related to the operating procedures for Mainland tourists visiting Taiwan. The relevant agencies will also strengthen linkage mechanisms on tourism quality and security matters and coordinate with tourism organizations to receive visitors well.

The addition of the 10 trial cities is expected to bring further benefits that can increase benign exchanges between the people of both sides and improve the development of tourism industry. It also has certain significance for the peaceful and stable development of cross-strait relations. The MAC states that based on the principle of "putting Taiwan first for the benefit of the people," it will continue to coordinate with the MOTC, the MOI, and other relevant agencies to open Taiwan up to Mainland tourists in an orderly and gradual way, as well as to help tourism related agencies with promotion and supervision.