

Opening Report

Already the largest Chinese B2B exclusive travel trade show ITB China is expecting 30 % more trade visitors for its third edition

800 exhibitors from 84 countries – many newcomers – Customized & Themed travel major topic – emphasis on 850 quality buyers – Italy as Official Partner Destination – New: ITB China Buyers Circle and ITB China Travel Trends Report – 120 industry speakers at ITB China Conference: Newly launched IT & Travel and Hotel Marketing & Distribution sessions – strong commitment by industry partners

Berlin/Shanghai, 14 May 2019 – ITB China 2019 opens this evening with the Opening Dinner in Shanghai and the travel industry in China enjoying confidence: Expected trade visitor numbers at the three-day B2B travel show organized by MB Exhibitions Shanghai are expected to increase based on the latest pre-registration numbers which are up 30 percent compared to last year. The event organizers expect an attendee number of far more than 15,000, with 17,500 meetings pre-scheduled before the event. ITB China reports a strong showing of 800 exhibiting companies coming from 84 countries reflecting the show has already established itself as the must-attend event for the Chinese travel industry. The Italian National Tourist Board will make its debut at ITB China 2019 and is also this year's official partner destination. China's marketplace for the travel industry brings streams of business, such as online, corporate, technology or MICE, and other segments, corresponding with 850 top Chinese buyers to attend the show. With 40 percent in total, the share of buyers coming from 2nd and 3rd tier cities has increased significantly compared to last year. Various networking events and a unique matchmaking system offer multiple ways to maximize business opportunities. Customized travel has a huge growth potential in China and is also the main trend according to the results of the newly launched ITB China Travel Trends Report. As the main theme, customization is reflected in numerous areas and events at the trade show. Decision-makers and opinion-formers from the Chinese and international travel industry will impart their knowledge at the ITB China Conference: With over 4,000 attendees featuring 120 outstanding speakers and 70 topics, this year the conference is once again expecting the leading travel organisations and tourism officials active in the Chinese market. The Conference runs parallel to ITB China from 15 to 17 May and is co-organized by the leading conference organizer TravelDaily China.

Dr. Martin Buck, Senior Vice President, Travel & Logistics, Messe Berlin: "It gives us great pleasure to see ITB China broaden its influence and scope with the participation of new exhibitors and partners this year. The third edition is characterized by three major topics: High-valuable innovations, a strong focus on content and the commitment and insights of industry partners of the ITB China Buyers Circle – a new nationwide

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community for China's travel buyers."

ITB China 2019 kicks-off with exclusive Opening Dinner

On the eve of the show, the third ITB China kicked off with an exclusive Opening Dinner, co-hosted by Partner Destination Italy, with 600 senior guests from the global and Chinese travel industry, among others **H.E. Sen. Gian Marco Centinaio** (Italian Minister of Agriculture, Food, Forestry Policies and Tourism), **Jane Sun** (CEO of Ctrip), **Leo Liu** (President of Wyndham Hotels & Resorts, Greater China), **Jun Xue** (Deputy General Manager, Sales, Air China), **Feng Bin** (Chairman of Utour), **Wu Xiaomei** (Deputy Secretary General of China Tourism Association, CTA) and **Dr. Martin Buck** (Senior Vice President, Travel & Logistics of Messe Berlin) giving welcome speeches. ITB China 2019 will officially open its doors on 15 May at the Shanghai World Expo Exhibition and Convention Centre, with high-ranking industry representatives having the honor to perform the ribbon-cutting ceremony in the lobby area to be followed by the official opening guided tour which traditionally starts at the stand of the current partner destination Italy.

ITB China Travel Trends Report: Customized and themed travel major topics

Customized and Themed Travel, with special focus on Island travel, Adventure travel, Sports travel and Culture travel are the most frequently mentioned trends in the **ITB China Travel Trends Report**. The report is a yearly publication commissioned by ITB China and conducted by Kairos Future covering the main upcoming trends in Chinese outbound travel demand. As China's outbound tourism continues to rise, the demand for customized travel will not only bring huge opportunities, but also the inherent necessity for the industry to adapt to the changing demands from the Chinese travelers: For the first time there will be a special **Customized travel area** for companies offering customized tours tailored to individual travelers. For each of the four themes ITB China was able to win strong partners: The Bahamas (Island Travel Partner), The Adventure Travel Trade Association (Adventure Travel Partner), JTB (Sports Travel Partner) and Israel (Culture Travel Partner). Numerous sessions at this year's **ITB China Conference** also address these trend topics.

For the first time ITB China will be fully devoting a **travel experience hub** for China's travel KOLs (Key Opinion Leaders) to be hosted by Qyer, China's biggest online travel community. KOLs have a strong influence on the travel choices of Chinese travelers. All eyes will be on the presentation stage, where KOLs will have the opportunity to talk about their travel experiences. At the stand there will also be a gallery about **customized and themed travel** as well as an exhibit area displaying the works of all KOLs about their travel experience. Each morning and afternoon session will be dedicated to one special topic informing visitors about the latest trends and developments in customization. The networking area will enable Chinese top KOLs to establish valuable links with exhibitors from all over the world in the shortest possible time.

Italy is the official ITB China 2019 Partner Destination

Along with 32 co-exhibitors Italy has a major presence in hall 1 of the Shanghai World Expo Exhibition and Convention Centre. Italy is the largest national exhibitor displaying its history and culture that is enriched with a unique combination of nature, food and lifestyle. The ITB China Italian pavilion will be showcasing the multitude of Italian tourism products and destinations among others: Regione del Veneto, Vicenza e' Soc cons.R.L., Save Spa – Venice Airport, Venezia Unica Citypass by Vela Spa, Biella Tourist Board, Turismo Torino e Provincia Tourist Board, Easy Nite SRL, Verticalife, DMO Piemonte, PromoTurismoFVG - Friuli Venezia Giulia Region, Doubletree by Hilton Venice North and Venice events. The strong support from **industry partners** has been the key to ITB China's success since its inception. This year the organizers continued to strengthen existing relationships and forged new partnerships. For the second time in a row, **Wyndham Hotels & Resorts** has become the official Partner Hotel. **Air China** is the partner airline of this year's show marking the first time that China's national flag carrier will hold this title and the **China Tourism Association** (CTA) also renewed their strategic partnership.

This year ITB China's exhibitors will engage with **850 top-quality buyers** from Greater China, with a 40 percent share of buyers coming from 2nd and 3rd tier cities, underlining the huge potential of the emerging Chinese source-market. Diversity will be also higher this year, with the Chinese buyers coming from around 400 companies (2018: 300), representing the full range of China's largest industry players: 54 percent leisure, 30 percent MICE and corporate and 15 percent travel technology.

The newly launched **ITB China Buyers Circle** expands the presence and activities of ITB China far beyond the exhibition itself. More than 35 of China's leading travel agencies have become official partners of the ITB China Buyers Circle and travel agents from more than 400 different agencies have joined the circle by becoming Founding and Segment Partners. The ITB China Buyers Circle will be identifying the trends and developments of the Chinese source-market in the form of the ITB China Travel Trends Report. Based on the know-how and data of Chinese travel buyers, the findings will empower international destinations and travel suppliers to better understand the needs and potentials of the Chinese travel market.

Many new exhibitors

In addition to established exhibitors from last year, ITB China has been able to secure many newcomers. This year's new registrations include National Tourism Offices (NTO) exhibitors from **Azerbaijan, Philippines, Qatar, Romania** and **Zimbabwe**, as the first-ever African NTO at ITB China, as well as Regional Tourism Offices (RTO) such as **Penang** or **Marianas Visitors Authority** and many more. Whilst European exhibitors slightly continue to dominate the exhibition space this year, the organizers see a strong growth in the number of exhibitors from the **Americas** participating in the show for the first time, these include: **The Bahamas, Chile, The Dominican Republic** and **Salvador**. After a one-year break **Jordan** returns to ITB China in 2019. The **Adventure Travel Trade Association** (ATTA) is this year's Adventure Travel Partner and also a newcomer to the show.

European destinations reflect the trend of Europe remaining the number one long-haul destination for Chinese tourists. The European Travel Commission (ETC) will again have a strong exhibition presence with 24 co-exhibitors participating this year. With the help of an initiative by Verband Internet Reisevertrieb e.V. (VIR), Germany's leading association for the digital travel industry and also a newcomer, eleven German tourism companies such as The German National Tourist Board, Solamento or Sunny Cars are due to make a joint appearance at the new **Germany Pavilion**. The ITB China Market Introduction Program, which was launched last year, will also be continued with VIR leading a delegation of 35 senior European travel representatives to the event. The program is designed for international travel industry professionals who have no or little experience with the Chinese travel market and who are looking to forge business ties with Chinese firms.

The exhibition space occupied by exhibitors from the USA will be largely increased compared to the previous event, cementing ITB China as the must-attend event for US suppliers reaching out to the Chinese traveler. Brand USA, the destination marketing organization of the United States, have conducted a first-ever **Brand USA Pavilion®** at ITB China this year. Las Vegas, the Great Lakes, Visit California, Visit Seattle or New York City are among others this year's exhibitors.

Demand from the **Middle East** region is also high this year. That is reflected in the large number of bookings from the Middle East countries with around 25 exhibitors in total. New exhibitors there include Iran Pardisan Tour & Travel Company, methabook and TBOHOLIDAYS from the UAE. Altogether, exhibitors from Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates will highlight their tourism products at this year's ITB China.

Visitors interested in the booming field of online travel and travel technology will also find a grown **eTravel World China segment**. New attendees this year include kiwi.com, SiSi HK Limited, Special Tours Wholesalers LTD or WORLDPAY.

Among established exhibitors such as Ctrip, Expedia, Jin Jiang Hotels, Meituan or Mafengo, the following **hotels, Online Travel Agencies (OTA)** and **transportation providers** will be showcasing their portfolio at ITB China for the first time: FLIPOINT HOTELS & RESORTS, LN Interation Hospitality Management Co Ltd., KLOOK, Outrigger Hotels & Resorts, Park Hotel Management Pte Ltd., Swandor Hotels & Resorts and S.I.M. Special Interest Magazines. Shouqi Limousine&chauffeur is returning to ITB China after a one-year break with even more commitment by becoming the show's VIP Shuttle partner. On the **aviation** side new exhibitors include Air China, American Airlines, Airport Authority Hong Kong and United Airlines.

China's leading Travel Think Tank: ITB China Conference

ITB China Conference brings together top speakers delivering hours of discussion to offer a well-rounded experience where industry leaders will network and discover the future of Chinese travel. Prominent speakers from China's leading travel service provider and Conference Partner **Ctrip, Partner Hotel Wyndham, Partner limousine services Shouqi, Fliggy, Mafengwo** and many more will provide exciting insights into their

expanding markets. China's travel think tank kicks off with the opening keynote speech by **James Liang** (Chairman of **Ctrip**) on 15 May, 10.10 a.m. in room A. The three-day conference will provide up-to-date key insights relating to ten topics in total: "Destination", "Travel Tech", "Online Travel", "MICE", "Business Travel" and the "Education and Job Day", the latter welcoming even more exhibitors and newcomers this year. For the first time the conference topics are being extended to cover all aspects relevant to "**Hotel Marketing & Distribution**", "**IT & Travel**" and due to the shifting of Chinese traveler's behavior "**Themed & Customized Travel**" as the ITB China Travel Trends Report revealed. Full details of the conference program are available at: <http://www.itb-china.com/conference/conference-program/>

ITB China Startup Award 2019

The following **six nominees** were shortlisted and can hope to win the ITB China Startup Award 2019 for the best innovative travel technology idea: **Air Black Box, Nobility Technology Group, the Robins Barrier-free Travel, Pointmark, SeeVoov and TravelRight**. The award acknowledges outstanding new products and services that were introduced less than three years ago. The pitches and the award ceremony take place on 16 May 2019 from 3 p.m. in Conference room A. For the second time Qyer and ITB China will launch the **IT'S MY WORLD TRAVEL AWARD CEREMONY**. The award recognizes innovative tourism destinations, organizations and businesses driving the positive transformation of the tourism industry and presenting the latest outbound travel trends of Chinese travelers.

Trade visitors may register [here](#) for ITB China 2019 and **media** can obtain their accreditation [here](#).

About ITB China and the ITB China Conference

ITB China 2019 will take place from Wednesday to Friday, 15 to 17 May, at the Shanghai World Expo Exhibition and Convention Centre in Hall 1. ITB China is a three-day business to business travel trade fair that focuses exclusively on the Chinese travel industry. The ITB China Conference will take place parallel to the show and is co-organized by the leading conference organizer TravelDaily (www.traveldaily.cn).

About ITB Berlin, ITB Asia and ITB India

First launched 53 years ago, ITB Berlin is recognized as the most successful trade show for the global travel industry. Some 10,000 exhibitors from more than 180 countries regularly attend this event. Every year in October for the last eleven years Messe Berlin has successfully organized ITB Asia in Singapore. Boasting more than 1,000 exhibitors from 127 countries, ITB Asia in Singapore has established itself as Asia's Leading Travel Trade Show. Messe Berlin will be organising the inaugural ITB India in 2020. The 3-day business-to-business travel trade show and convention will take place at the Bombay Exhibition Centre in Mumbai, India, from 15 to 17 April 2020. The show will bring together industry leaders and buyers from cities across India, and international exhibitors from the MICE, leisure and corporate sectors.

More details are available at www.itb-china.com

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