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Headline	Penang launches campaign to woo local tourists
Media	Wartasaya.com
Date	30 July 2020
Page/Link	https://wartasaya.com/2020/07/30/penang-launches-campaign-to-woo-local-tourists/

Penang launches campaign to woo local tourists

by admin July 30, 2020 in Travel 0



MALAYSIANS craving for a holiday after being cooped up at home can now plan their travel while saving money through the “Jom! Experience Penang” campaign.

Organised by the Penang tourism, arts, culture and heritage committee and Penang Global Tourism (PGT), the campaign aims to boost domestic tourism which was badly hit by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Committee chairman Yeoh Soon Hin said the campaign was needed as the state tourism industry had ground to a halt.

“The pandemic had brought travel to a standstill as interstate and international borders were closed down and flights were suspended around the world. Many travel-related companies are struggling to survive, so it is indeed a challenging time for all of us,” he said at the campaign launch in Kuala Lumpur.

Penang, which received more than seven million tourists last year, was forced to cancel the annual Japanese festival Penang Yosakoi Parade 2020 on March 5, while all events that involved mass gathering were suspended since March 11.

“With interstate travel now allowed, we came up with a domestic campaign called ‘Jom! Experience Penang’, which is part of ‘Experience Penang Year (EPY) 2020’ campaign to spur our travel industry,” said Yeoh.

Although Penang had been declared a Covid-19 green zone since April 25, he said implementing the standard operating procedures (SOP) in hotels, tourist attractions and shopping centres was still required as the safety of travellers was top priority.

One of the measures taken by the state is through the Covid-19 safety accreditation programme for shopping centres and tourist spots.

“We will have our local councils inspect the sites, and those who fulfil all the SOP will be given an accreditation certificate that they can display in their premises as well as on the government website. This is a kind of appreciation and recognition to them for complying with the SOP, as well as a branding strategy to emphasise that Penang is a safe tourism destination



for all,” said Yeoh. He urged Malaysians to take advantage of the promotions and travel domestically.

“Many people know about George Town and Penang island, but actually there are still many hidden gems in Seberang Perai and Balik Pulau,” he added.

PGT chief executive officer Ooi Chok Yan said travellers could plan their trips based on their preferences — whether it was a family-oriented trip, outdoor activities, day trips or exploring George Town’s heritage, art and culture — by selecting from the various deals offered such as Best Hotel Deals, Best Attraction Deals, Best Tour Packages and Thank You Frontliners which was a special package for frontliners.

“We really appreciate their sacrifices, especially during long weekends and festive seasons, so we offer them hotel deals, attractions and weddings packages as we understand that some of them have had to postpone their wedding plans due to the pandemic,” he said.

He added that the campaign also hoped to promote the 7 World Wonders of Penang: World’s Steepest Tunnel Track, World’s First Tower Curved Skywalk, World’s Highest Ropes Course Challenge, World’s First Free Standing Vertical Drop Slide, World’s Highest Altitude Stressed Ribbon Bridge, Tropical World’s First Butterfly and Insect Sanctuary and World’s Longest Water Slide.

Also present at the event was Only World Group Holdings Bhd chief executive officer Tan Sri Richard Koh, Malaysian Chinese Tourism Association national chairman Datuk Albert Tan, Malaysia Inbound China Association president Datuk Dr Angie Ng and Malaysian Association of Tour and Travel Agents honorary secretary-general Nigel Wong.