

Exotic Destinations Shaping Asia Travel Trends for 2014



By Michael Roney

Author and artist Mary Ann Radmacher has written, “I am not the same having seen the moon shine on the other side of the world.” So true, and Asia travel in particular offers the promise of leaving one delightfully transformed, thanks to its amalgam of striking landscapes, ancient historical relics and multilayered cultural influences. This allure, combined with expanded international flight schedules and special offers, is placing some of Asia’s most unique and fascinating experiences on travelers’ “must do” lists for 2014.

Yangon, Myanmar

This former capital of Burma (now Myanmar) is more accessible to world travelers today than at any time in the past 50 years. Known as the “Garden City of the East” for its lovely parks and lakes, Yangon incorporates British, Chinese, Burmese and Indian influences, and has the largest number of colonial buildings in the region. Only here can you experience a sight like the iconic Shwedagon Pagoda rising into the sky amid mosques, temples, churches and a synagogue. It’s no wonder that Yangon ranks high among Asia travel destinations for 2014.

Siem Reap, Cambodia

Siem Reap is the gateway to the UNESCO World Heritage Site of ancient Angkor temples, including Angkor Wat, the largest religious monument in the world. Containing the magnificent

remains of the Khmer Empire from the 9th to the 15th century, its walls are covered with astoundingly intricate carvings depicting Hindu mythology. Siem Reap itself offers colonial and Chinese-style architecture in its Old French Quarter, plus fascinating museums and other enchanting discoveries.

Maldives

This island nation in the Indian Ocean is a divers’ paradise, offering exceptionally clear waters and over 3,000 coral reefs that are home to thousands of species of fish, sea turtles, whales and dolphins. Here the underwater sights astound, while the white sands, mild tropical trade winds and friendly ambience relax and rejuvenate. It’s both the ultimate beach vacation and ecotourism at its finest, earning its place in the highest tier of Asia travel trends.

And more...

Other top experiences for 2014 include the cosmopolitan excitement of Bangkok and its environs; Bali’s sublime scenery and culture; India’s most popular destination, Chennai, with its ancient temples of Mahabalipuram; the exciting diversity of Mumbai and Bangalore; and of course the historic and 21st-century fascinations of Beijing and Shanghai.

Getting there

Cathay Pacific Airways was recognized for having the World’s Best Cabin Crew and being the Best Airline Transpacific in the 2013 Skytrax survey of over 18 million international airline passengers. The airline flies daily to Hong Kong and onward across Asia from the North American gateways of Los Angeles, New York (JFK), San Francisco, Chicago, Vancouver, Toronto and, commencing in March 2014, Newark.

The moon on the other side of the world beckons, and authentic and unforgettable experiences await. You just need to get there, and many will be doing just that in 2014. So where will you be going?



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