



# TOURISM MALAYSIA MARKETING PLAN 2022 ▶ 2026



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▶ MESSAGE FROM  
**DIRECTOR  
GENERAL**



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It gives me great pleasure to present **Tourism Malaysia Marketing Plan for 2022-2026**, which is an initiative to create **integrated** and **holistic** strategies to boost both **supply** and **demand** in our tourism industry.

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**DATO' HJ. ZAINUDDIN ABDUL WAHAB**  
Director General, Tourism Malaysia

The rapid spread of the coronavirus caught most of the world unprepared. Countries have to close their borders to foreign travellers, making the tourism industry the first to face the brunt of the impact.

Malaysia is no exception. Our international tourist arrivals recorded a sharp decline following the closure of our borders in March 2020, after COVID-19 was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organisation (WHO). According to the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), the world economy is projected to grow by 4% in 2022 and 3.5% in 2023, after a global contraction of 3.4% in 2020 and a rebound of 5.5% in 2021.

The sudden halt in tourism, both internationally and domestically, due to the pandemic, has highlighted the importance of the sector to both national economies and individual livelihoods. Therefore, the restarting of tourism in 2022 and beyond is crucial due to its devastating impact on the service industry, including hotels, tour agencies, food and beverages services, theme parks, and retail trade.

Although most tourism experts do not expect international tourism to return to pre-COVID-19 levels before 2023, we remain positive and hopeful that

## We are also optimistic that the domestic tourism industry will perform better in 2022, driven by the rising rates of vaccination, consumer confidence, and the government's regulations on relaxing travel restrictions in the new normal.

COVID-19 will become endemic and ease us into accepting more tourists and gradually welcome international tourists again.

We are aware that the challenges in the tourism industry will get tougher in the coming years; hence, it is crucial for the tourism industry to be well-prepared for the post-COVID-19 travel demands and expectations, and to remain focused in order to support its sustainable recovery and rebuild the sector in the coming years.

As such, it gives me great pleasure to present Tourism Malaysia Marketing Plan for 2022-2026, which is an initiative to create integrated and holistic strategies to boost both supply and demand in our tourism industry. It sets out the general outlook and perspectives for the overall marketing programme for Tourism Malaysia, and our strategies and priorities for the next five years to achieve a successful and sustainable tourism industry for the country.

This Marketing Plan is prepared upon discussions with industry players and stakeholders, and is in line with the National Tourism Policy 2020-2030 as well as our strategic direction over the next five years.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our tourism partners and stakeholders for their input in the formulation of our strategies and the preparation of this plan. We will continue to work closely with them in facing any challenges that may come our way and strive together to achieve the country's tourism goal and elevate the national economy.

Moving forward, let us be cognisant of the importance of digitalisation and innovation in working our way through revitalising the new tourism scene amid this era of technology.

Thank you.

**DATO' HJ. ZAINUDDIN ABDUL WAHAB**  
Director General

## ▶ EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Tourism Malaysia Marketing Plan 2022-2026 is based on Tourism Malaysia's strategic direction, which has been compiled in the Tourism Malaysia Strategic Plan 2022-2026. It is developed by taking into account the country's brand policy, market and travel trends, available resources, budget, network, trade and economic policy, travel formalities, technology know-how, manpower skills, and support from the stakeholders, at both international and domestic levels.**

Besides that, Tourism Malaysia Marketing Plan 2022-2026 is also in line with the objectives and strategies of the:



## GOALS/ OBJECTIVES

Generally, the Marketing Plan focuses on the domestic market, international recovery, health and safety, digitalisation, and innovation. It aims to:



Tourism Malaysia's domestic and international tourism promotion efforts have been strongly impacted by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. As there are still uncertainties in the reopening of international borders and positioning Malaysia back in the global map, the country is moving forward and focusing mainly on reviving its economy through domestic tourism, besides marketing the country as a safe holiday destination.

In terms of international promotion, our strategies for the period of 2022 to 2026 aim to boost tourist arrivals to Malaysia post-COVID-19. The strategies are formulated based on market trends and preferences throughout the period, and they are flexible enough to respond to any abrupt changes in travel patterns and in times of crisis.

Tourism Malaysia Strategic Plan stated that in the next five years, we are expected to see a continuation of the trend to move away from mass tourism and towards more flexible, experiential, and individualistic trips, with adventure tourism and special interest holidays gaining more and more importance over traditional and mass tourism.

To achieve our goals and objectives for 2022-2026 and taking into consideration the feedback and opinions of industry players through various engagements, Tourism Malaysia is focusing on six strategies for the successful implementation of the country's tourism promotion plan:

1. Boost Domestic Tourism
2. Forge Smart Partnership
3. Enhance Tourism Promotion (Online and Offline)
4. Optimise Strategic Communication/Media Engagement
5. Implement Travel Bubble
6. Undertake Strategic Transformation

## STRATEGY FORMULATION

Tourism Malaysia Marketing Plan 2022-2026 is formulated based on:



a. Tourism Malaysia Strategic Plan 2022-2026



b. Market Trends and Sentiment



c. Secondary Data Research



d. Input from Stakeholders and Industry Players



e. Background Analysis

*(Please refer to Tourism Malaysia Strategic Plan 2022-2026 for further details).*



### THREATS

- Readiness of tourism products (maintenance, facilities, etc.)
- Policies

### OPPORTUNITIES

- Malaysia is blessed with many public holidays and long holidays
- Flights accessibilities and hotels are available online

### WEAKNESSES

- Price competitiveness
- Lack of new products and packages
- Products competitiveness

### DOMESTIC

### STRENGTHS

- High vaccination that leads to herd immunity
- 'Cuti-Cuti Malaysia' branding is well-known amongst Malaysians
- Diversity of tourism products

### THREATS

- Competitors' strategies - more systematic
- Uncertainties
- Travel advisories
- Health risks

### OPPORTUNITIES

- Further penetration on niche products – medical, education, halal, etc.
- Short distance
- Branding of 'Malaysia Truly Asia' and create sub-tagline for 'Malaysia Truly Asia'



### WEAKNESSES

- Lack of advertising
- Limited airlines connectivity and seat capacity
- Uniformity of communication
- Insufficient persuasive online content

### STRENGTHS

- Travel Safe Alliance Malaysia (TSAM)
- Muslim-friendly destination
- Well-known 'Malaysia Truly Asia' branding

#### TOWS Analysis

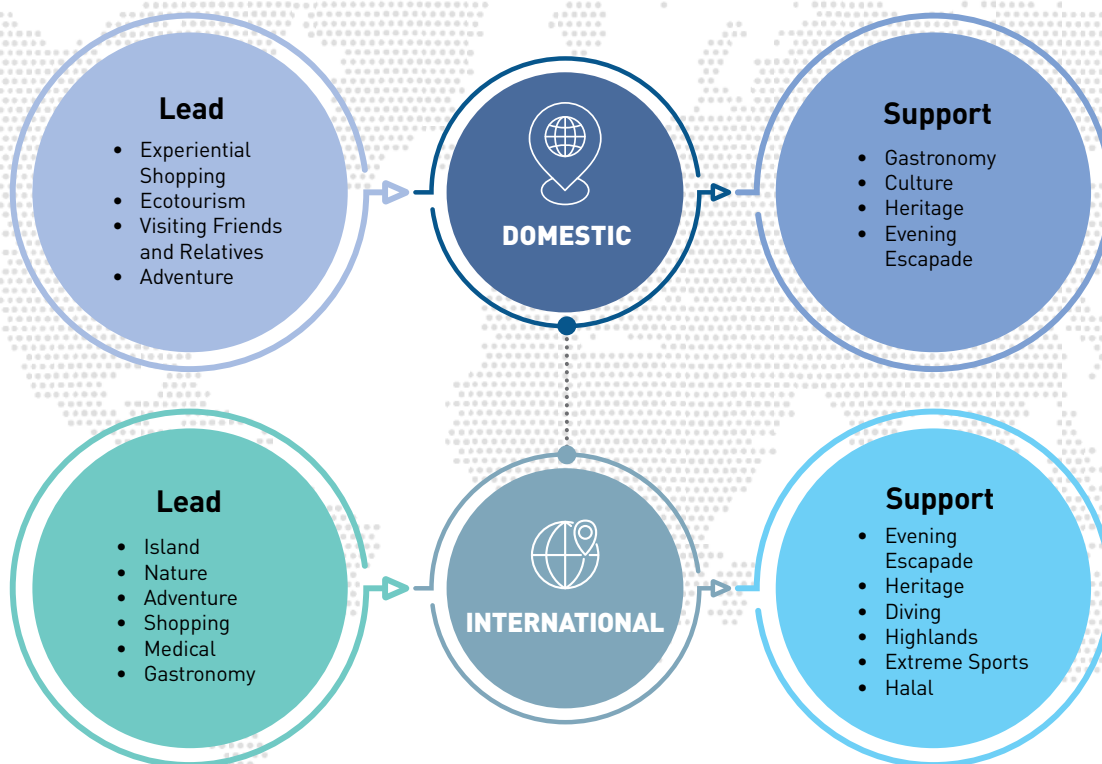
A TOWS Analysis is an extension of the SWOT Analysis framework that identifies an organisation's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. This strategic planning tool enables Tourism Malaysia to match the internal strengths of our tourism industry with external opportunities, and highlights our vulnerability to threats based on our weaknesses. This analysis enables Tourism Malaysia to take relevant actions to reduce threats, take advantage of opportunities, overcome weaknesses and exploit strengths.



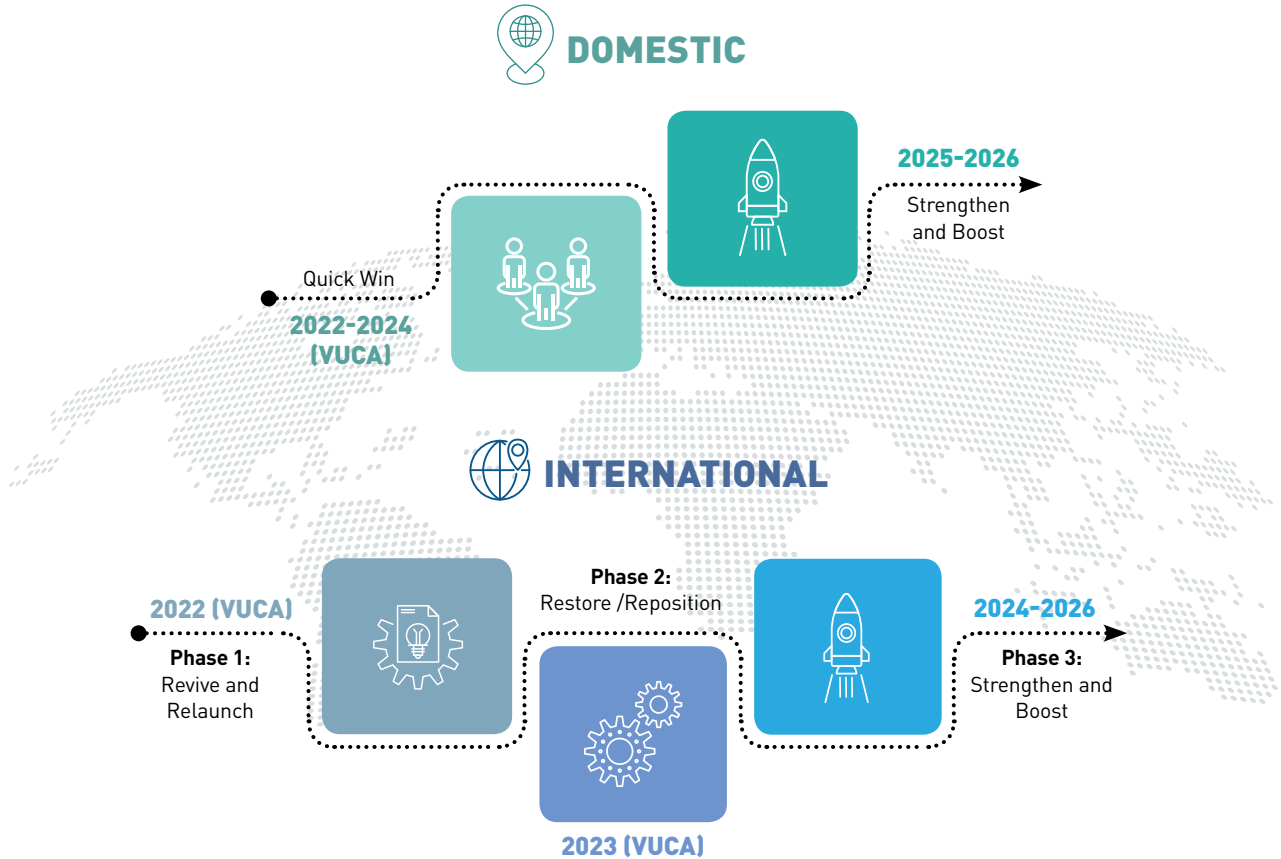


**Focus**

Our focus shows the lead and support tourism attractions that will be prioritised in Tourism Malaysia’s promotional efforts for the domestic and international markets.



## TIMEFRAME



VUCA stands for Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity and Ambiguity. It describes the situation of constant, unpredictable change that is now the norm in certain industries and areas of the business world. VUCA demands that you avoid traditional, outdated approaches to management and leadership, and day-to-day work.

## ▶ MARKET OVERVIEW

### GLOBAL

Based on reports from UNWTO, global tourism experienced a 4% upturn in 2021, compared to 2020 (415 million versus 400 million). However, international tourist arrivals (overnight visitors) were still 72% below the pre-pandemic year of 2019, according to preliminary estimates by UNWTO.

This follows on from 2020, the worst year on record for tourism, when international arrivals decreased by 73%. The pace of recovery remains slow and uneven across world regions due to varying degrees of mobility restrictions, vaccination rates and traveller confidence.



A rapid and more widespread vaccination roll-out, followed by a major lifting of travel restrictions, and more coordination and clearer information on travel protocols, are the main factors identified by experts for the effective recovery of international tourism.

According to the UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, the rising rates

of vaccination, combined with easing of travel restrictions due to increased cross-border coordination and protocols, have all helped release pent up demand. International tourism rebounded moderately during the second half of 2021, with international arrivals down 62% in both the third and fourth quarters compared to pre-pandemic levels.

UNWTO stated that tourism professionals will see better prospects for 2022 after turbulence in the early months because of the Omicron wave. It predicts a 30% to 78% rise in international arrivals in 2022 over 2021. However, this would still be 50% to 63% below pre-pandemic levels.

For the period of January-April 2022, the UNWTO Confidence Index shows a slight decline. The rise in COVID-19 cases and the Omicron variant are set to disrupt the recovery and affect confidence through early 2022 as some countries reintroduce travel bans and restrictions for certain markets. At the same time, the vaccination roll-out remains uneven and many destinations still have their borders completely closed, mostly in Asia and the Pacific.

**A challenging economic environment could put additional pressure on the effective recovery of international tourism, with the surge in oil prices, increase in inflation, potential rise in interest rates, high debt volumes and the continued disruption in supply chains.**

Nevertheless, the ongoing tourism recovery in many markets, mostly in Europe and the Americas, coupled with the widespread vaccination rollout and a major coordinated lifting of travel restrictions, could help to restore consumer confidence and accelerate the recovery of international tourism in 2022.

While international tourism bounces back, domestic tourism continues to drive recovery of the sector in an increasing number of destinations, particularly those with large domestic markets. According to experts, domestic tourism and travel close to home, as well as open-air activities, nature-based products and rural tourism are among the major travel trends that will continue shaping tourism in 2022.



**Major travel trends in 2022 are nature-based products and rural tourism**



Open-air activities



Domestic tourism



Rural tourism



The economic contribution of tourism in 2021 (measured in tourism direct gross domestic product) is estimated at US\$1.9 trillion (RM4.2 trillion), above the US\$1.6 trillion in 2020, but still well below the pre-pandemic value of US\$3.5 trillion.

## DOMESTIC

Domestic tourism has always been important to Malaysia, particularly when the country encountered a crisis. The COVID-19 pandemic has further highlighted the importance of domestic tourism; hence Tourism Malaysia has pivoted towards travel bubble with a focus on quality tourists. Through travel bubble, the entry of visitors for business or leisure travel from foreign countries is allowed.

The government has identified Langkawi as the pilot project for the Domestic Travel Bubble and the island was opened to domestic travellers beginning 16 September 2021.

This travel bubble pilot project has successfully revitalised domestic tourism and cultural activities on the island. Up till 31 December 2021, Langkawi recorded over 720,000 domestic tourists, which is more than the 200,000 target set earlier by MOTAC. In addition, these domestic tourists have contributed no less than



RM750 million from 16 September to 15 November 2021.

Following the success of Langkawi as the domestic travel bubble pilot project, the government has also opened the island to international tourists under the Langkawi International Travel Bubble (LITB) beginning 15 November 2021 with stringent Standard Operating Procedures (SOP).

Visitors who are allowed into Langkawi are based on their country of origin, and those from high-risk countries are temporarily banned. In addition, international visitors can travel to other states in the country



As the pilot project, Langkawi recorded over **720,000** domestic tourists



Contributed no less than **RM750 million** from 16 September to 15 November 2021

after staying for a certain period of time in Langkawi.

Apart from Langkawi, Malaysia is also allowing foreigners to travel from Singapore via a Vaccinated Travel Lane (VTL) between the republic and Malaysia beginning 29 November 2021. Under this programme, all VTL travellers will need to be fully vaccinated and will be required to undergo administered COVID-19 test once they arrived in Malaysia. Up till 31 December 2021, close to 38,000 tourists have entered Malaysia via the VTL.

Besides that, Malaysia is also working towards establishing the VTL with other neighbouring countries followed by other regions to increase inbound visitors to the country.

To ensure the success of Langkawi as the travel bubble pilot project, Tourism Malaysia has also set up helpdesks at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA) to assist tourists and ensure a smooth, hassle-free experience at the airport despite going through the stringent SOPs implemented by the government.

Tourism Malaysia will also collaborate with green countries on 'point to point' (city to city) travelling to focus on attracting high-value tourists and increasing tourist expenditure.

The pandemic has had a significant impact on tourism sector and players; hence, the government has introduced various initiatives and funds to assist them during these challenging times and to boost domestic tourism,

such as the "Galakan Melancong Malaysia (GAMELAN)" Fund and "Geran Sokongan Pelancongan, Seni dan Budaya" Fund (GSPSB 2021), which are special allocations from the Ministry of Finance channelled through MOTAC with Tourism Malaysia appointed as implementer.

Besides that, under Budget 2022, seven key initiatives, involving a total value of RM1.6 billion, will be implemented in 2022 to revive the tourism sector. They include the allocation of RM600 million as specific financing for the tourism sector under PENJANA Tourism Financing and BPMB Rehabilitation Scheme; RM85 million in special assistance to more than 20,000 tourism operators registered under MOTAC for a period of three months, and RM50 million

Vaccinated Travel Lane (VTL)

**38,000** tourists have entered Malaysia via the VTL





**RM1.6**  
billion to revive  
the **tourism**  
sector



**RM600**  
million for the  
tourism sector  
under **PENJANA**  
**Tourism**  
**Financing**  
and **BPMB**  
**Rehabilitation**  
**Scheme**



**RM85**  
million for over  
20,000 **tourism**  
**operators**  
registered under  
**MOTAC**



**RM50**  
million for the  
**maintenance**  
of **tourism**  
**infrastructure**



for the maintenance of tourism infrastructure.

Besides that, a sum of RM30 million is allocated in matching grants for the repair of 738 budget hotels that are registered under MOTAC and for registered homestay owners; RM50 million in matching grants to companies to organise arts and culture-related programmes, and RM60 million in incentive funds for activities to promote domestic tourism.

In order to revive the health tourism industry to strengthen Malaysia's position as a preferred health tourism destination, a total of RM20 million has been allocated to the Malaysia Healthcare Travel Council (MHTC).

Under the Twelfth Malaysia Plan (2021-2025), the government has set a target of 24.3 million international tourist arrivals with a contribution of RM73 billion in receipts by the year 2025, and a total revenue of RM100 billion from domestic tourists.