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SINGAPORE VISITORS MORE SATISFIED THAN EVER

Singapore's investment in a quality tourism product is paying off, according to a survey of visitor satisfaction levels.

The Singapore Tourist Promotion Board's annual **Survey of Overseas Visitors to Singapore 1991** shows that visitors are more impressed than ever with the destination, suggesting the tourism industry's investment in an enhanced tourism product is paying off.

The proportion of first-time visitors who rated Singapore as "far exceeding expectations" or "better than expected" has risen by 3.4 percentage points and 1.5 percentage points respectively over 1990.

Those who thought Singapore was "about what was expected" or "disappointing" declined by 4.2 and 0.7 percentage points.

The expectation evaluation study showed that 11% of visitors found that Singapore "far exceeded" their expectations and another 56.1% rated Singapore "better than expected". 31% found Singapore to be as expected and a mere 1.9% said it was a disappointment.

Some 2,134 first time visitors from the total sample of 10,200 visitors who took part in the survey throughout last year gave the above feedback.

Shopping once again rated as the most popular pastime among visitors, followed by sightseeing, with trends in this area further underscoring the broadening of the destination's appeal and new attractions achieving positive results.

The proportion of visitors visiting sights and attractions rose to 81.5% from 76.9% in 1990. The four most popular sights were Orchard Road (visited by 88.6% of respondents), Chinatown (54.6%), Sentosa (42.4%) and Little India (25.8%).

Sentosa remained the most popular paid attraction, while Haw Par Villa appeared to have re-established itself as a prime tourist attraction. It ranked eighth most popular attraction, drawing 19.2% of respondents, up from the 13.3% who visited the former Tiger Balm Gardens before it closed in 1988.

The global economic slowdown last year is reflected in visitor expenditure figures, with average per capita visitor expenditure declining among both package and non-package visitors by \$162 and \$165 respectively. This lower expenditure was largely due to lower spending on accommodation (down 5%), food and beverage (down 22.3%) and shopping (down 12.6%).

The survey shows that more visitors opted for non-hotel accommodation. The proportion of visitors staying in hotels dropped from 75.8% in 1990 to 67.3% in 1991. Alternative accommodation gained market share: guest houses were up from 3.9% in 1990 to 5.4% in 1991; hostels accounted for 6.4% of the accommodation market in 1991, compared to 3.6% in 1990. The decline in the proportion of respondents using hotel accommodation underlines the fact that hotel occupancy levels are not directly tied to visitor arrival numbers.

Overseas visitor surveys have been conducted annually since 1974 to supplement the Board's monthly visitor statistics. The annual survey tracks more in-depth attitudinal and qualitative information about how visitors perceive the destination, as well as visitor expenditure and market trends.

Copies of the STPB's 1991 Overseas Visitor Survey, which includes a breakdown of visitor characteristics by market, are available from the Board's head office at \$60 each.

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