

INTRODUCTION OF BEIJING CULTURAL TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

Beijing, a complex of sightseeing, Food, shopping, leisure and recreation, has attracted millions of visitors home and abroad. Cultural tourism is Beijing’s core tourism product and the root of Beijing’s sustainable tourism development.

Key Words: Beijing, cultural tourism, tourism market

JEL Classification: L83

I. INTRODUCTION OF BEIJING CITY

Beijing, the capital of China, siting in next to the Bohai Bay and the northern part of the Northern China Plain, covers a total area of 16,410km², about 64% of which are mountains. Beijing has together 16 districts with a total population around 20,693,000 (The Year 2012), ranking the second largest city after Shanghai. It is one the four municipalities directly administrated by the center government of China. It is also one of the four ancient capitals in Chinese history.



Figure 1. Map of Beijing

Source: Five Themes of Geography-Beijing, China

Now Beijing plays more the role as the political, culture, international exchanges, science and technology and innovation center of China. It is home to headquarters of most the largest state-owned companies and it has also developed large networks of national highway, expressway, railway, airlines and high-speed railway. The most frequently used words to describe Beijing are Culture and people, History and civilization, Modern and high-tech architecture, Old and now, Simple and Complex. Beijing is perceived as an affordable destination which offers high value for low price compared with western countries. As a result of Beijing's rich cultural heritage, the city has been known as the "cradle of the masters of all arts" in China.

In economy, Beijing is among the most developed cities in China, with tertiary industry accounting for 73.2% of its gross domestic products. According to the "2017 Statistical Communique on the Economy and Social Development of Beijing Report" released by Beijing Municipal Bureau of Statistics and Survey office of the National Bureau of Statistics in Beijing, Beijing's annual GDP totaled 2.8 trillion Yuan (US\$443.6 billion); the per capita GDP reached 129,000 Yuan by the end of the year 2017. Beijing has 41 Fortune Global 500 companies and is only second to Tokyo.

Due to its important status in China and the development of Chinese language and cultural promotion worldwide, Beijing is also the land for a great number of universities and institutions. Every year many international students from all over the world come to Beijing to study with exchange programs or by themselves.

With seven UNESCO heritage sites, Beijing is also the city with the largest number of world heritage sites globally. Beijing has 99 key cultural sites under state protection, five national geological parks, 15 national forest parks and 151 registered museums, including the National Museum of China, the largest museum in the world, and the Palace Museum, one of the world's five largest museums. The UNESCO world heritage sites that draw visitors to Beijing are: The Imperial Palace Museum, The Great Wall, and Peking Man Site at Zhoukoudian, Temple of Heaven, The Summer Palace, The Ming Dynasty Tombs, and Beijing-Hangzhou Grand Canal.

II. THE INFORMATION OF TOURISM MARKET IN BEIJING

In recent years, Beijing tourism sees a steady development. The dense network of road, rail, and airline connections with other major cities also allows Beijing to embrace mass tourists. In the end of 2017, Beijing enjoys rapid development with total tourism revenue of 546, 9 billion Yuan (about 82,035 billion dollars), an increase of 8.9%; the total number of tourists reaches 297, 46 million, an increase of 4.3%. Tourism, catering and shopping totaled 289, 1 billion Yuan (43,365 billion dollars), an increase of 8%, accounting for 25% of the city's retail sales of social consumer goods revenue, an increase of 0.7 percentage points.

- The domestic tourism market maintained a steady growth

The total domestic tourism revenue was 512, 2 billion Yuan (76, 83 billion dollars), an increase of 9.4%; the total number of domestic tourism was 293, 54 million, an increase of 4.4%. The markets of tourism from other provinces to Beijing and Beijing citizens travel inside the city have maintained steady growth.

According to the research, the number of tourists from other provinces and cities to Beijing reached 17, 924 million, an increase of 4.7%; tourism revenue obtained 467, 4 billion Yuan (70, 11 billion dollars), an increase of 9.4%; per capita consumption was 2,607 Yuan (391, 05 dollars) an increase of 4.5%. The number of Beijing citizens visiting Beijing was 11, 43 million, an increase of 4% with a tourism revenue of 44, 87 billion Yuan (6, 73 billion dollars), an increase of 9%; per capita consumption was 393 Yuan (58, 95 dollars), an increase of 4.8%.

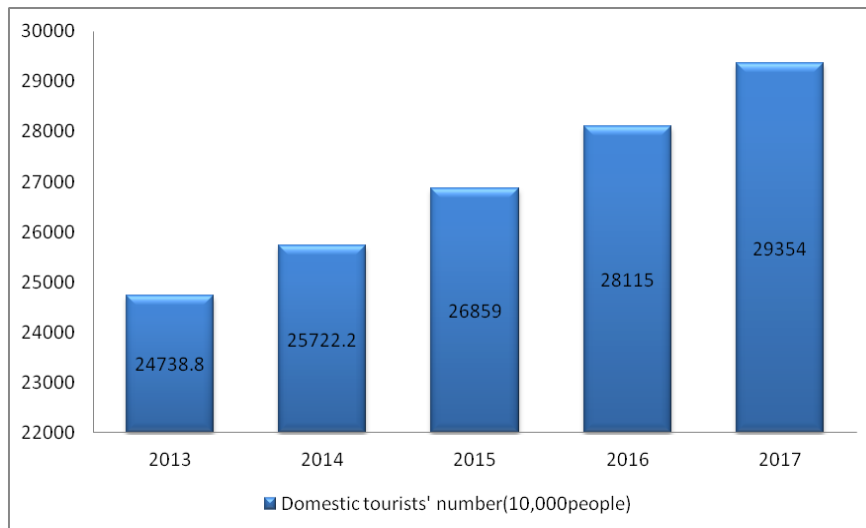


Figure. 2 2013-2017 Beijing Domestic Touristic Statistics

Resource: The Chinese Academy of Industry Economy Research Official Website

- The number of inbound tourists decreased, and foreign exchange income increased slightly

In 2017, the city received 3, 926 million inbound tourists, a decrease of 5.8% compared with 2016, and the decrease in tourist arrivals in South Korea was 144,000, which was the main reason for the decrease in the number of inbound visitors. Among all the inbound tourists, 3, 32 million were foreign visitors, a decrease of 6.4%, accounting for 84.6%. The top three source countries were the USA with 673,000 tourists, a decrease of 4.3%; the second were Japanese tourists with 242,000, a decrease of 2.5%; the third were South Korean tourists with 235,000, a decrease of 38%. The number of tourists from Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan received 606,000, a decrease of 2.0%, of which were 357,000 Hong Kong tourists, and an increase of 1.1%; visitors from Taiwan received 235,000, a decrease of 5.6%; visitors from Macau received 14,000, a decrease of 12.5%. Tourism foreign exchange income was US\$5.13 billion, an increase of 1.2% (RMB 34.64 billion, an increase of 2.8%). Per capita spending is \$1307.

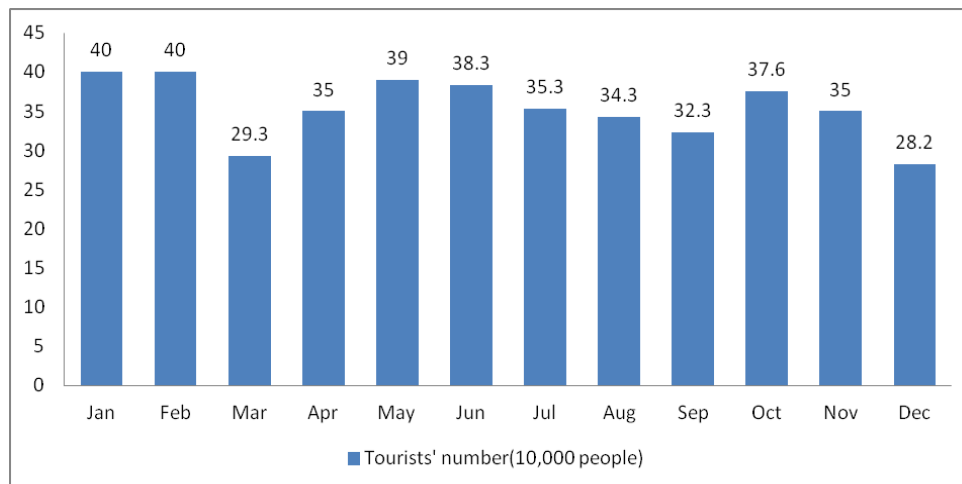


Figure 3. 2017 Beijing Inbound Touristic Statistics, January to December

Resource: The Chinese Academy of Industry Economy Research Official Website

However, the tourism market in China as a whole country continued to grow. In 2017, the domestic tourism market witnessed rapid growth and the inbound and outbound markets grew steadily. The structural reforms on the supply side showed a significant improvement in the number of domestic tourist arrivals by 50, 01 billion, up by 12.8% over the same period of the previous year; the total number of inbound and outbound travellers was 270 million, an increase of 3.7% compared with 2016. The total tourism revenue for the year was 5.40 trillion Yuan (0, 81 trillion dollars), a preliminary increase of 15.1%. The overall contribution of the tourism industry to GDP for the year was 9.13 trillion Yuan (1, 37 trillion dollars), accounting for 11.04% of the total GDP. 28, 25 million people were directly employed in tourism. Tourism directly and indirectly generated 79.9 million people, accounting for 10.28% of the country's total employment population.

When Beijing’s inbound tourists’ growth rate decreased in the year 2017, China’s total foreign arrival growth rate was increasing. For the whole year of 2017, the number of inbound tourists reached 139.48 million, an increase of 0.8% over the same period of the previous year. Among them: foreigners 29.71 million, an increase of 3.6%; Hong Kong tourists reached 79.8 million, a decrease of 1.6%; Macao visitors reached 24.65 million, an increase of 4.9%; Taiwan visitors reached 5.87 million, an increase of 2.5%.



Figure 4. China Inbound Tourist Arrivals

Source: tradingeconomics.com/ National Bureau of Statistics of China

III. CONCLUSIONS

Embracing a variety of cultural heritages and authentic traditions, Beijing has a big potential to deeply develop its cultural tourism market on the base of the increasing total tourist arrivals year by year. Although the inbound tourist’s arrivals decreased in the year 2017 compared with the previous years, the total tourists’ number is continuously growing. Beijing’s domestic tourist market is developing bigger and bigger, despite the decrease of foreign visitors’ number.

Through the analysis of the market mix, especially the products and promotion components, we can notice that Beijing’s cultural tourism provide tourists with cultural attractions, events, big quantity of accommodation choices and quite well-built infrastructures with different means of promotion, such as social media, large-scale event (mostly for overseas promotion), online websites and mobile, collaborating with other institutions and organizations, etc. The USP of Beijing cultural tourism is suggested to be the cultural heritages and “Peking” elements, which represent the unique identity of Beijing and differentiate it from other destinations.

Facing all the challenges, Beijing should integrate its cultural tourism resources on the basis of the diverse folk customs, revolutionary relics and long-lasting leisure and architectural traditions, and create a favorable tourism atmosphere by exploring more participatory projects such as cultural festivals and designing culture-themed tourism lines. In addition, all regions and scenic areas in Beijing should design more unique cultural tourism commodities according to its own cultural features and characteristics of visitors from home and abroad.

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