

### Appealing the Important Role of the Tourism Industry JATA Tourism Expo Japan Moves Forward in “Step Year”



The panoramic view of "JATA Tourism EXPO Japan 2014"

The Japan Travel and Tourism Association and the Japan Association of Travel Agents (JATA) will hold JATA Tourism Expo Japan, one of the world's largest travel events, at Tokyo Big Sight in Ariake, Tokyo, for the second year in a row. The event will last four days from September 24 through 27. Whereas last year's expo represented a small hop for the industry under the theme of "A New Journey Begins," this year the expo will take a larger step, aiming to leap forward as a venue for communicating the important role of the tourism industry domestically and overseas as 2020 approaches. The theme will be "Move. See. Feel."



The Registan, a famous example of Islamic architecture, in Samarkand

### Special Exhibit of Booths from 5 Central Asian Countries

In an exhibition that will gather tourism information from across Japan and from countries and regions around the world, one-of-a-kind displays of information and performances will be unfolded by over 1,100 exhibitors including local governments in Japan and tourism-related organizations and businesses as well as foreign tourism bureaus and suppliers such as airlines and hotels at about 1,500 booths with an elaborate variety of designs.

Among the outbound travel exhibits, there will be a special exhibit of booths from the five central Asian countries of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan. At these booths, the information necessary for creating travel products will be available, and it will be possible to network with representatives from each country.

From Kazakhstan, the Ministry of Investments and Development, which is responsible for that country's industrial development and innovation, will participate, and a representative from that ministry's tourism department is scheduled to give a detailed presentation on local tourism conditions. From Uzbekistan, Uzbek Tourism, a state-owned enterprise established in 1992, will participate and will introduce initiatives to attract travelers from Japan through its tourism development plan.

In April this year, the Japan-China-South Korea Ministerial Conference on Tourism was held in Tokyo and promoted initiatives for the expansion of private bilateral exchanges. Thus, China and South Korea, which are newly appreciated as important destinations, have increased the floor space of their exhibits with 20 booths and 50 booths, respectively.

This year's new exhibitor countries and regions include the Regional Tourism Organization of Southern Africa (RETOSA) (8 booths), Kazakhstan (5 booths), Azerbaijan (5 booths), Moldova (1 booth), Luxembourg (1 booth), and Tahiti (1 booth). In addition, Brand USA will be the largest exhibitor from overseas with 60 booths, and so will be strongly selling the US as a destination.

JATA's Team Europe Tourism Promotion Council which announced 30 Beautiful Villages in Europe in June this year will stage a photo exhibit of the 30 Beautiful Villages in an area at the venue called Europe booth, and at the same time, a seminar is planned for both persons in the industry and consumers with the aim of boosting name recognition and promoting PR among industry-related persons and ordinary consumers concerning travel materials and infrastructure, particularly regarding the 30 Beautiful Villages.

### Aggressive Expansion of Domestic Exhibits Is Attracting Attention

Among the exhibits on domestic and inbound travel, all 47 prefectures from Hokkaido to Okinawa will participate individually and/or in regional promotions. Initiatives that are attracting attention include an exhibit by the Association for the Promotion of Traditional Craft Industries which aims at regional stimulation in combination with tourism by featuring demonstrations and introductions to crafts nurtured in the cultural climates of various regions of Japan, and it includes promotion related to the opening of the Hokkaido Shinkansen. Another initiative attracting attention is an exhibit with an inbound theme organized by the Japan Shopping Tourism Organization that will inform people about shopping tourism to stimulate inbound tourism. On

## JATA Tourism Expo Japan

the theme of food, there are plans to hold a gourmet event that will feature various kinds of local donburi (bowls of rice with different toppings) from around Japan.

Atsushi Takahashi, general manager for the Marketing Department of the East Japan Railway Company and chairperson of the Operations and Exhibits Subcommittee of JATA Tourism Expo Japan, said, “We are working to move beyond last year’s expo, the first expo that merged the Japan Travel and Tourism Association’s Tabi Fair and JATA Tabihaku. At that first expo, local Japanese governments and groups who took a wait-and-see attitude and employed more subdued activities such as pamphlet distribution witnessed the active booth deployment of suppliers from overseas who employed generous amounts of space for their exhibits and methods for vertical usage of space.” He said that he has expectations for this year’s expo, where the “effect of integration” will become clearly apparent.

Among domestic exhibitors, many prefectures are increasing the number of their booths, including the expansion of Okinawa Prefecture’s exhibit from 50 booths, which was the largest domestic exhibit last year, to 60 booths, Toyama Prefecture from 2 booths to 10 booths, Nara Prefecture from 1 booth to 10 booths, and Tochigi Prefecture from 1 booth to 9 booths. In addition, first-time exhibitors Gifu Prefecture and Aichi Prefecture will have 10 booths and 6 booths, respectively. Moreover, the Seibu Group is expanding from 4 booths to 8 booths in collaboration with Prince Hotels Group, and the Japan Shopping Tourism Organization which will be staging a theme exhibit will grow from 1 booth to 30 booths. Thus, there is a noticeable trend toward boosting the number of booths compared to last year.

### To Be The “World’s Largest” Event in 2016

At JATA Tourism Expo Japan 2015, the Japan Tourism Awards, a tourism industry award project, will be established as key respected awards in Japan in the tourism field and will cover the domains of domestic, outbound, and inbound travel.

In this award project, in addition to the domestic and inbound domains and outbound domain, United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) awards will also be bestowed. While boosting JATA Tourism Expo Japan’s brand value domestically and overseas with global development of the awards through strengthened collaboration with international bodies, we will aim to boost the position and value of the tourism industry through the award project overall.

In addition, as a new regional cooperation program by JATA Tourism Expo Japan starting this year, we have set up a new sponsorship category called Premium Destination Partners. Because this program aims at cultivating partnerships with the JATA Tourism Expo Japan operations in conjunction with promotional measures for overseas and domestic regions, we aim to maximize the promotional effects for partner countries and regions and their initiatives through utilizing the power of the event to attract attendees. A support program that enables private groups to be “Supporters” was also augmented and developed with a plan for integrated public-private support. We are planning a menu for sponsorship featuring cooperation in projects implemented by the organizers and in the public relations of JATA Tourism Expo Japan overall, centered around Japan Night.

This year for the first time, it was decided that Aomori Prefecture would be a Premium Destination Partner. The JR Group and the local area in Aomori Prefecture will hold a

destination campaign next summer ahead of the opening of the Hokkaido Shinkansen the following spring.

JATA Chairman Hiromi Tagawa, who is serving as chairman of JATA Tourism Expo Japan Executive Committee, emphasized, “One month after Tokyo is announced as the next Olympics site at the closing ceremony of the Rio de Janeiro Olympics, JATA Tourism Expo Japan 2016 will be held, and so we anticipate that the expo will attract attention from around the world. If the first expo last year was a hop forward, then we must make this year a step forward in preparation for a jump in 2016.” He displayed his ambition for the expo, saying, “JATA Tourism Expo Japan has been described as ‘one of the world’s largest,’ and this year I would like for us to actively attempt to remove the ‘one of’ to be ‘the world’s largest’ in 2016.”



Aomori Nebuta matsuri

### Japan Night to be Held in Marunouchi Area

In anticipation of the 2020 Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics, this year’s Japan Night will embody an urban-style MICE (meetings, incentives, conferences/conventions, exhibitions) event and utilize the urban space of Chiyoda Ward, which is also a national strategic special zone. Using the international city of Tokyo as a stage, the event will broadcast enticing local content about Japan.

Specifically, Japan Night will be held in “the public urban space of Gyoko-dori and Marunouchi Naka-dori Street,” “JP Tower,” Gyoko-dori is a plaza where participants will be welcomed to Japan. Marunouchi Naka-dori Street is situated as an experience avenue where visitors can have elaborate interactive experiences. These spaces will be prepared so that visitors can experience the power of Japan’s culture, including traditional festivals and “cool Japan,” etc. Utilizing a national strategic special zone which is selected from the viewpoint of strengthening the international competitiveness of industry and forming international activities bases, we aim to create an event that will appeal to the five senses through “unique experiences” at a gathering in a unique venue similar to the previously used venues of Zojoji Temple and the National Museum.

## Paving the Road to “Global Standard Tourism”

### Travel Contract with Terms and Conditions Have Been Relaxed

Japanese travel agents operate on the basis of the “General terms and conditions of travel contracts.” The Travel Agency Law postulates that to conduct travel business travel agencies have to prepare and submit for the approval of the Commissioner of the Japan Tourism Agency a travel contract with terms and conditions which ensure strict consumer protection. However, the general terms and conditions of travel contracts have also been criticized for preventing travel agents from responding to and acting in accordance with international business practices.

While engaging in consumer protection activities JATA holds a firm belief that aligning with global business practices will improve the overseas travel market in Japan and thus has stood for the relaxation of the requirements imposed on travel agencies applying for approval of their travel contracts.

The conditions described below have been relaxed as a result.

1. Order-made package tours for groups and individual travelers: revision of the guarantee of tour itinerary

When the “Hotel List” (a list of overseas hotels compiled by the travel agency) is published in the tour pamphlet and the travel agency upgrades the initially booked hotel, the agency will not have to pay compensation to the customer for the change. (This, however, will be the case only when both hotels are included in the “Hotel List.”) This change rescinds the “compensation payment for the change of hotel” and as a result improves hotel booking conditions.

2. Group package tours: revision of the terms and conditions regarding cancellation charges

Under the new terms and conditions it will be possible to charge customers with the airfare for tours starting from and ending in Japan (limited to APEX, PEX, and LCC fares) as cancellation fee for tour cancellations made by them. This revision will avert “multiple simultaneous reservations” and reservations made “just in case.” In addition to the change described in (1) above, the revision of the terms and conditions of cancellation charge is expected to result in making feasible hotel and air seat reservations only.

3. The above changes will be included in the general terms and conditions of travel contracts. Travel agents, however, have to obtain a supplementary approval from the Commissioner of the Japan Tourism Agency to become eligible to implement them.

- Applications will be accepted by local authorities in charge of travel business authorization (district transport bureaus) from August 1st, 2015.

- Travel agents that have obtained a supplementary approval can implement the relaxed terms and conditions from October 1st, 2015 onward.

## Japanese Overseas Travelers Decrease 6.7% in July

### Foreign Visitors Set a New Record of 51.0% increase

According to data released by the Japan National Tourism Agency (JNTO) on August 19th, the number of Japanese who traveled abroad in July was 1.32 million, a 6.7% drop

compared to the same month last year. From January to July this year, the number of overseas travelers decreased by 5.1%, falling to 8,944,500. The downward trend which set in in June last year, has continued for 14 months. Notwithstanding, the range of negative growth year-on-year from May (-1.5%) to June (-7.6%) shrank to -6.7% in July.

The foreign arrivals in Japan grew by 51.0% to 1.918 million in July and exceeded the year-on-year record of 1.27 million arrivals in June 2014. The number also outstripped the all-time high record of 1.765 million visitors in April this year, becoming the new highest monthly score on year-on-year basis. The number of foreign visitors from January to July this year has already exceeded the 10-million point as 11,058,300 foreigners visited Japan, a 46.9% increase from the same period of last year.

According to JNTO’s analysis, promotion of travel to Japan in the period up to the summer holiday season, expansion of flight networks, increase of cruise tours, the 23rd World Scout Jamboree in Kirara-hama, Yamaguchi, visa waivers and deregulations in recent years, a boost of shopping tour demand after the introduction of the tax exemption system in October last year, are seen as the main contributors to the growth.

In terms of source markets, China grew by 105.1% up to 577,000 compared to the same month last year. All source markets consolidated the upward trend, with Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Indonesia building up to the highest ever monthly numbers.

The other 15 markets – Korea, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, the Philippines, Vietnam, India, Australia, the USA, Canada, Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Spain – showed double digit increase scoring the best ever monthly records in July.

2015 Visitor Arrivals & Japanese Overseas Travelers (Unit: Persons)

Month	Visitor Arrivals			Japanese Overseas Travelers		
	2014	2015	Change %	2014	2015	Change %
1 Jan.	944,009 (730,519)	1,218,393	29.1 (33.9)	1,253,404	1,235,612	-1.4
2 Feb.	880,020 (688,902)	1,386,982	57.6 (75.2)	1,404,873	1,257,154	-10.5
3 Mar.	1,050,559 (802,434)	1,525,879	45.2 (54.1)	1,596,751	1,534,026	-3.9
4 Apr.	1,231,471 (1,020,474)	1,764,691	43.3	1,189,132	1,144,833	-3.7
5 May.	1,097,211 (892,577)	1,641,734	*49.6	1,280,765	1,262,103	*-1.5
6 Jun.	1,055,273 (866,883)	*1,602,200	*51.8	1,289,029	1,190,805	*-7.6
7 Jul.	1,270,048 (1,080,552)	*1,918,400	*51.0	1,414,912	*1,320,000	*-6.7
8 Aug.	1,109,569 (903,919)			1,783,127		
9 Sep.	1,099,102 (846,241)			1,520,863		
10 Oct.	1,271,705 (1,029,922)			1,417,766		
11 Nov.	1,168,427 (943,831)			1,355,246		
12 Dec.	1,236,073 (1,074,350)			1,397,520		
1~7 Jan.-Jul.	7,528,591 (5,001,789)	*11,058,300	*46.9	9,428,866	*8,944,500	*-5.1
1~12 Jan.-Dec.	13,413,467 (10,880,604)			16,903,388		

◆Note 1. The figures for Jan.-Nov.2014 are provisional, while \* stands for the preliminary figures estimated by JNTO.  
 ◆Note 2. Provisional and definitive figures for Visitor Arrivals are compiled by JNTO (source: Ministry of Justice), and provisional and definitive figures for Japanese Overseas Travelers are provided by the Ministry of Justice.  
 ◆Note 3. The figures in ( ) represent the number of tourists among the total.