

Leading Hotels of the World Partners with Thai Airways



Vertigo Grill & Moon Bar atop Leading Hotel Banyan Tree Bangkok

A partnership between prestigious luxury hospitality organisation The Leading Hotels of the World Ltd. and Thai Airways International kicked off in September this year, connecting a top portfolio of more than 450 luxury hotels and resorts in 80 countries with the airline's 2.4 million Royal Orchid Plus members.

Under the scheme, by booking online at www.lhw.com/royalorchidplus, Royal Orchid Plus members can accumulate miles with qualifying stays at a number of participating Leading Hotels throughout Asia and the world.

A Travel Guide with a Difference

Navigating Hong Kong might seem like a challenge at the best of times, but for wheelchair-bound travellers it can be too daunting to even contemplate.

Enter Wheel Away Disabled Travel, a comprehensive full-colour city guide designed especially for people with a disability.



The detailed research, personal tone and hands-on approach of the author, Sarah Fuller, come across in this carefully thought through guide. Containing practical information about getting around the city, it is not only for people with disability, but also for seniors and families with children in prams who struggle to get about easily.

In addition to covering over 100 hotels, more than 360 restaurants and countless sightseeing and shopping tips, this 250-page book provides information vital to disabled travellers such as the widths of hotel room doors, the presence of bathtub rails in rooms, and the accessibility of hotel facilities – or lack thereof.

www.wheelawaydisabledtravel.com

For Make Benefit Glorious Nation of Kazakhstan!

If the hilarious "reportage" of a certain fictitious journalist is the extent of your knowledge of this former Soviet republic, then check out the latest route to be added to Air Astana's network in October 2009. The flag carrier of Kazakhstan will be adding Kuala Lumpur to its list of Asian hubs that have flights to its largest city, Almaty.

The weekly Saturday flight to and from KL builds on existing services operating between Almaty and Bangkok (three times a week), Beijing (five times a week), Delhi (three times a week), Dubai (nine times a week), Seoul (twice a week), and Urumqi in China's northwest (twice a week).

You'll be pleased to know that Air Astana (which is partly owned by the UK's defence and aerospace company BAE Systems) is a full member of the International

Air Transport Association (IATA) and the only airline in the country with European Aviation Safety Agency maintenance certification. www.airastana.com

New Routes Fire Up Singapore's Travellers

The two-year-old, wholly-owned subsidiary of Malaysian Airlines, Firefly, is continuing to open up interesting possibilities for travellers with its recent inaugural direct flights from Singapore to Kuantan (continuing four times a week), Ipoh (four times a week) and Kuala Terengganu (three times a week), respective capitals of the states of Pahang, Perak and Terengganu. The new routes add to the now daily flights between Singapore and Subang, a nice alternative to Kuala Lumpur.



The new routes promise easy access to both peninsular Malaysia's renowned and lesser-known tourist spots. These include the laidback Pangkor Island, a short ferry ride from the coast of Perak; the strawberry farms, vegetable gardens and temples of the Cameron Highlands in Pahang; the beautiful Kenyir Lake with its surrounding jungle; and the highly popular Taman Negara National Park, which encompasses all three states.

The best part about these flights? Despite its using Singapore's Budget Terminal, Firefly isn't at all your typical low-cost carrier: you get a 20-kg baggage allowance, assigned seating, and complimentary in-flight nibbles and drinks. www.fireflyz.com.my