

Imagine your Korea! A message from Korea Tourism Organization President Jung Chang-soo

SEOUL, KOREA, February 8, 2017 /EINPresswire.com/ -- "There is a lot of untapped potential for our incoming travel and tourism industry." These are the words shared today by Mr. Jung Chang-soo, President of the Korea Tourism Organization, also known as the organization's marketing slogan and website, "Imagine your Korea."

Jung, together with Ms. Choo Hee Jin, today talked with eTN publisher Juergen T. Steinmetz at the Lotte Hotel in Seoul.



"Worldwide, according to UNWTO reports, about 9.5% of the GNP is from travel and tourism. In Korea, only 5.1% of our GNP can account for travel and tourism," continued Jung.

It's not because of a lack of options for tourism. South Korea enjoys an excellent infrastructure of hotels, transportation, and connectivity. Shopping is one of the best, and culinary tourism is one of the most desired in the world. The country has 56 top Michelin restaurants, 36 in Seoul alone.

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Imagine your Korea. You and your clients won't be disappointed.”

*Mr. Jung Chang-soo,
President, Korea Tourism
Organization*

“There is some excellent news, however,” Jung told eTN. “In 2012, we had 10 million foreign visitors; in 2016, 19 million.”

Korea has 4 seasons, and Jung insists and references his professor from when he was a student: “Our beaches are nicer than Waikiki. Can you imagine enjoying a warm summer night on a white sandy beach with pinewood or fir trees? You

will find this on our east shores,” adding, “Korea has mountains, lakes, the sea, and rivers.”

Korea is putting a good emphasis on business travel, as well as the Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions (MICE) industry, when it comes to inbound tourism. Choo Hee Jin, Director of the MICE Planning & Coordination team, confirmed that the country has excellent facilities not only in Seoul, but everywhere – Busan and Jeju Island, just to name a couple.

Korea is sophisticated. Everything seems to be working in this country. And people are hard workers, and they are fast and efficient.

Incheon International Airport, the primary airport serving the capital of Seoul, has been in operation

now for 16 years, and it has developed into to a duty-free shopping paradise. According to Jung, airline travelers select Seoul as a changing point in their journeys in order to enjoy some shopping hours at the airport. For those passengers staying in Korea more than 4 hours, the Korea Tourism Organization gives travelers a sneak preview of the capital city by organizing a sightseeing tour.

When asked by eTN about having a stop-over program in place also for multi-day stays, similar to Singapore or Dubai, Jung said: “We are not that far yet, but we are working on it. Ask me again later this year, and you may be surprised.”

There are three pillars that support Korea’s leisure tourism: surroundings; a 5,000-year-history with palaces and castles, and the food. Korean food has gained great popularity around the globe and is one of the most popular cuisines in the world today.

The most important support for Korea’s tourism, however, is its fourth pillar: the people of this country. Koreans are known to be warm-hearted, friendly, and helpful, and it shows. Home stays and traditional accommodation are increasing, besides world-class and name-branded hotels.

Korea is also about festivals, the music, movie stars, and famous singers. Sending Korean pop stars to Europe, China, or Japan has been a great success in attracting visitors to the country.

Jung wants travelers to “Imagine your Korea” and is convinced, “You and your clients won’t be disappointed.”

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