

Fiscal year 2011

Fukuoka Asian Urban Research Center (URC) RESEARCH PAPER

SURVEY CONDUCTED ON TOURISM TRENDS OF CHINESE PASSENGERS ON BOARD OF CRUISE SHIP CALLED AT HAKATA HARBOR

ABSTRACT

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I. INTRODUCTION

The principal travel route for South Korean visitors across the sea has also become distinct feature of inbound tourism to Kyushu using ocean vessels. Specifically, the task of laying groundwork to promote targeted inbound Chinese visitors is a paramount issue at this time, where the frequency of foreign flag cruise ships set sail from China and calling at various ports in Kyushu are growing in numbers and Hakata harbor (Fukuoka City) had already gave access to 61 such vessels in 2010 (last year) - a figure stands as the highest in the country. Meanwhile, this report will attempt to shed lights on current status of tourism trend of Chinese sightseers opted for the largest served inbound market in our country, based on the findings of the survey implemented in October 2010 by targeting Chinese visitors aboard cruise ships while making a port call at Hakata harbor. It will also explore incentives to promote visitors inbound from China to Fukuoka and Kyushu in our country.

II. SUMMARY OF THE SURVEY

The survey was focused on Chinese passengers aboard on two foreign flag cruise ships originated from China and calling at Hakata harbor in October 2010. The ships are named as *Legend of the Seas* (set sailed from *Tianjin*, 7 nights and 8 days stay, passengers capacity about 2,000, made a port call on Feb 04) and *Costa Classica* (set sailed from *Shanghai*, 4 nights and 5 days stay, passengers capacity about 1700, made port call on Feb 13).

III. ATTRIBUTES OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Attributes of respondents are categorized as shown hereafter. "Gender" [50.5% male, 49.5% female], "age group" [40's (31.7% - the highest), 30's (23.6%), 50's (18.6%), 20's (11.5%), 60's (7.8%), 70's (4.1%) and teens (2.8%)], "place of residence" [Jiangsu near Shanghai – about half of total respondents (53.1%), Beijing City (28.3%), Shanghai City (4.9%), Tianjin City (2.0%) and from other parts of China (10.6%)] and "occupation" [company employees – the highest (37.3%), managerial levels (17.2%), professional or technical (8.7%), business executives (6.9%), housewives (5.1%) and public servants (4.6%)].

IV. FINDINGS OF THE SURVEY WITH RESPECT TO TOURISM CONSUMPTION IN FUKUOKA

According to respondents, the average amount of money spent by one visitor in Fukuoka was about 43,000 Japanese Yen while the maximum amount spent stands at one million Yen. Tourism consumption categorized by the type of cruise ship was found as; the average amount of money spent by visitors aboard *Costa Classica* set sailed from Shanghai was a little over 52,000 Yen whereas visitors aboard *Legend of the Seas* set sailed from Tianjin spent a little over 34,000 Yen and from Shanghai 16,000 Yen. Although "cash" and "Ginrei credit card" accounted for 40% of transaction as payment methods, the amount of money spent by "Ginrei credit card" users was twice the payment made by visitors using "cash". Furthermore, looking into the ratio of items purchased; "foodstuffs and beverages" - highest (56.5%), "cosmetics" (38.5%), "electrical appliances" (31.9%), "western dresses, bags, and footwear" (20.8%) and "watches" (20.8%). The average amount of money spent for "electrical appliances", "watches", "western dresses, bags, and footwear", "drugs" and "cosmetics" amounted to 20,000 to 30,000 yen.

V. TOURISM IN FUKUOKA, EVALUATION RELEVANT TO THE CITY

With respect to customer satisfactions, [reception of workers at commercial facilities] and [Volunteers guidance in Fukuoka] enjoyed high rate of well-pleased respondents who took part in Fukuoka tour. Conversely, [shopping time] and [foreign language guidance signs in town] received low rate of approval. The findings of the survey revealed that shorter shopping time, lack of Chinese guide signs around the city, and unsatisfactory handling of Chinese language by commercial facilities are the prevalent issues hampering Fukuoka to receive Chinese visitors arriving on board of cruise ships. In order to resolve such issue, Fukuoka city received proposed draft of [comprehensive special zone system] from the national government, shore up the CIQ system and speed up immigration clearances of Hakata harbor (including foreign naval ships), language support to shoppers and setting up proposal to strengthen tourist guidance system by involving foreign students in Fukuoka. Currently, it is expecting support from the national government and easing of regulations to address these challenges. According to the results of the survey vis-à-vis the impression of customers in Fukuoka, [city] and [natural landscapes and scenery] enjoyed high rate of approval, while [places of historic interest] as a tourism resource are unsatisfactory.

VI. SIGHT-SEEING TREND OF CHINESE VISITORS IN JAPAN AND CHALLENGES TO PROMOTE INBOUND TOURISM

As to the preferred areas to pay a visit next time in Japan appears to be [Tokyo] and [Hokkaido] with response rate about 70%, followed by [Osaka], [Nagoya] and [Kyoto]. [Fukuoka] and [Kyushu] received low rate of response 6.9% and 3.9% respectively. Meanwhile, [natural landscape and scenic places], [hot springs] and [Japanese cuisine] scored higher response rate than [shopping] as a preferred hands-on experience when visiting next time around. Owing to geographic proximity, though the numbers of cruise ships set sail from China to Kyushu are steadily growing, tourism exchange activities proved to be inadequate with just one day sojourn at each port of call and the fact that options for subsequent visits are unsatisfactory. Therefore, the findings of the survey sheds light on the difficult state of condition to conclude the prerogative conferred by geographic proximity can be effectively utilized. Henceforth, as to cruise ships coming ashore carrying Chinese visitors, it is expected to take steps with a view to mitigate the issuance of independents travel visa for Chinese visitors and promoting incentives to entice repeaters while cultivating attraction incorporating the picture and awareness of Fukuoka and Kyushu. According to respondents, Japan stands at third place as preferred place or country in Asia to pay visit this time onwards. Though Japan is on par with Hong Kong, Thailand and Russia, it appears to be much lower than Singapore and Taiwan. As fierce competition is underway among neighboring countries to lure Chinese inbound tourism, how Japan will make a difference by laying groundwork and overhauling the system to effectively draw Chinese tourists remains an issue to ponder.

VII. SUMMARY

Though the strong appetite of tourism consumption triggered by recent trend of Chinese visitors in Japan raises expectations of ripple effect on local economy, we can not simply ignore the role of international tourism from the perspective of complementing diplomatic relation by way of tourism and people-to-people grass root cultural exchange as a means to foster cultural security assurances. Considering the relations between Japan and China, unresolved issues over territorial claims and historical awareness are still lingering. Results of public opinion from both nation showed that declining relationship is a common concern. Though our nation (Japan) is promoting to vitalize inbound tourism from China, I am hopeful by initiatives of various localities to conveying the wealth of attraction to Chinese visitors, expand exchanges between people of both nations and work out on a plan to deepen and improve Japan – China relations.



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Survey conducted on tourism trends of Chinese passengers
on board of cruise ship and calling at Hakata harbor

Abstract

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Survey/ analysis and Author: Arai Naoki (Chief Researcher)

〒810-0001 Fukuoka City, Chuou-ku, Tenjin 1 -10-1

T E L : 092-733-5686

E-mail : info@urc.or.jp

URL: <http://www.urc.or.jp>
