

# Some Recommendations to Attract Japanese Tourists to Vietnam

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## Abstract:

The tourism industry plays a role in promoting Vietnam's economic, social and cultural areas. In addition, the Vietnamese government will develop a policy called Vietnam tourism product development strategy aiming for 2030 over 2025, and will make efforts to focus on important Japanese tourists. It is important to develop right tourism promotion strategies for Japanese tourists. However, in order to attract Japanese tourists, not only Vietnam but also Asian countries are promoting intense competition. In this paper, we analyze this tourism market and consider the present situation and future prospects of tourism in Vietnam. Based on the actual survey results, the tourist attraction of Vietnam and the paper mentions some recommendations in order to improve the quality of the service.

**Keywords:** *Tourism, Challenges, Lessons, Development.*

## INTRODUCTION

Japanese tourists want to know the history and culture of the places they are visiting in order to acquire new history and cultural values by themselves. On the other hand, because most Japanese have high salaries, you can travel to scenic and famous places. Japanese tourists care for food safety and are interested in unique flavors from various regions [1].

Japanese people also buy souvenirs for their friends and family when traveling. Therefore, giving gifts, souvenirs to families, acquaintances and friends after traveling are generally recognized as Japanese manners. Therefore, souvenir shops always appeal to Japanese people. The evaluation of Japanese tourists abroad is very high in shopping habits. Women's travelers in Japan tend to choose souvenirs and things that are usually not found in Japan. Japanese tourists usually overlook low quality products. They do not like cheap products, but they like products with stable prices.

## FACTORS FOR JAPANESE TOURISTSTO CHOOSE A DESTINATION

### Safety

Safety is always the most important point for Japanese when choosing a travel location. Japanese

people have always lived in a very safe place, so from the first point of view, they will not be persuaded to move to a place that is not safe.

Next, cleanliness is always the most important for Japanese people since they usually use clean tissues, towels, food, dishes and futons in restaurants, hotels and public toilets.

Besides, facilities and service quality are what they think about. Japanese tourists mainly pay attention to the quality and convenience of customer service. For Japanese tourists, it is important that the accommodation is not only deluxe, clean, environmentally friendly but also close to the shopping center while staying during the trip. Elderly tourists usually like to stay in rooms with twin beds instead of single beds. Accommodations (and general destinations) are friendly and Japanese tourists always prefer Japanese-speaking staffs because most people cannot speak English [2].

Japanese tourists often choose to have a convenient flight and transportation system for convenient sightseeing. They are afraid to travel if they have to change many times. They tend to enjoy convenient public transport like Japan. Everything should be punctual since they may not really have the patience to be late for a long time, or they may not be completely satisfied. Besides, Japanese people want to save time when they have to travel for sightseeing.

## Shopping hobbies

Japanese tourists were evaluated as shopping lovers. Even so, according to a survey of Japan travel market research company-JTM, in 2006 Japanese tourists paid an average of 46,000 yen for shopping alone. It decreased by more than 50% compared to 109,000 yen in 1995. The cause is that the Japanese government recently changed the policy of import tax on tobacco and other branded products. Japanese people can buy this product at a cheaper price in Japan. However, people traveling for shopping purposes still occupy a large number due to the price gap between Japan and other countries. Besides, in addition to alcohol, tobacco and branded goods, Japanese like to buy traditional hand-made products [2].

## PROSPECTS FOR ATTRACTING JAPANESE TOURISTS

Vietnam-Japan relations are well developed. The Vietnamese government is committed to providing favorable conditions for Japanese companies investing in Vietnam. In addition, from the end of 2006, Japan's new investment tendency appears. With the evaluation of Japanese companies, Vietnam has many opportunities for foreign investors. If the amount of Japanese companies in Vietnam increases, the amount of Japanese customers also increases. Furthermore, the relationship between the two countries is expanded in all fields [1].

Vietnam is in the Asia-Pacific region and boasts the highest growth rate of tourism in the world. This region is the second largest tourist destination in the world after Europe. Tourism will continue to grow globally in the future, according to UNWTO. By 2030, the number of international tourists will reach 1.8 billion. Southeast Asia is expected to become a major tourist destination, attracting 187 million tourists. Japan is an important market in the Asia-Pacific region. As Vietnam is a Southeast Asian country, it has the opportunity to welcome more international tourists, including Japanese tourists.

The Japanese economy is showing signs of revival [2]. Economic growth will actively contribute to the increase in tourism demand in Japan. In addition to traveling on popular destinations, the trend towards seeking new destinations is gaining popularity in Japan. As Vietnam is a new destination for most people in Japan, opportunities to welcome Japanese tourists are increasing. Japanese tourists who went to Vietnam are mostly in the two major cities of Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. According to a survey by JTM, 50-60% of Japanese travelers go to Vietnam only in these two cities, and then visit other cities in Southeast Asia, and rarely visit other cities in Vietnam is. Therefore, Vietnam needs to concentrate on developing new tourist cities such as Hue, Hoi An, Da Nang, Nha Trang and Phu Quoc.

## CURRENT STATUS AND ISSUES OF VIETNAM TOURISM INDUSTRY

The "DoiMoi" (Renewal) Policy was adopted in 1986, and the Vietnamese economy shifted from a policy of economic isolation to a market economy. In 1986s, Vietnam tourism faced many problems such as old infrastructure and poor service, and inexperienced staff. However, the government and each region active carry out tourism development thank to tourism-related investment by domestic and foreign companies [3]. Vietnam General Administration of Tourism, the number of accommodation facilities for travelers such as hotels and guesthouses in Vietnam increased from 3267 in 2000 to 25600 in 2017, which is an eightfold increase. (Table 1).

**Table 1.** The number of accommodations and foreign tourists in Vietnam

Year	Number of tourists	Ratio (%)	Number of rooms
2010	12.352	7.7	237.111
2011	13.750	11.4	256.739
2012	15.381	11.8	277.661
2014	16.000	-	332.000
2015	19.000	18.7	370.000
2016	21.000	10.5	420.000

2017	25.600	21.9	508.000
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Compared with Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, etc. known as major tourism countries in Southeast Asia, Vietnam tourism has many challenges. However, table 1 shows the change in the number of foreign tourists in Vietnam from 2013 to 2017. Based on this table, the number of Vietnamese come to Vietnam seems to be steadily increasing. Specifically, the number of foreign tourists who visited Vietnam in 2016 was 10 million, an increase of 26% over the previous year, and increased by about 1.3 times compared to 2013. The average annual growth rate of Vietnam tourism is 7.8% over the next 10 years, and it is the sixth largest in the world (out of 176 countries surveyed), and Southeast Asia It is the highest. In addition, according to the Bureau of Statistics, the profits from tourism-related companies during the same period have also increased for five consecutive years from 2013, reaching 51 billion VND in 2017, more than 2.5 times that in 2013. With such economic effects, the tourism industry contributes a lot to Vietnam's economic development and plays a major industrial role [4].

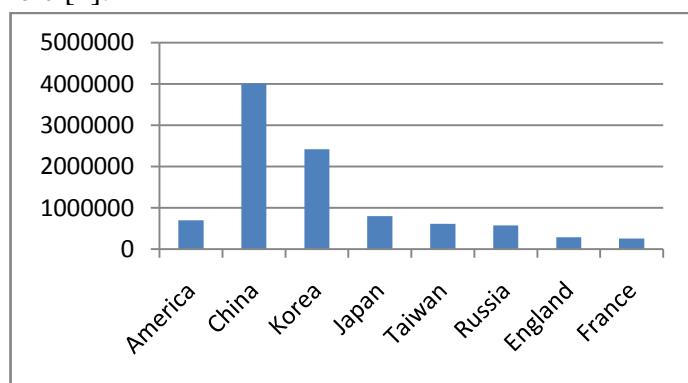


Figure 1. Overseas tourists who came to Vietnam in 2017 (Vietnam Tourism General Administration)

Then, where is the country with the largest number of foreign tourists visiting? Three figures reflect the country-by-country ratio of people who visited Vietnam in 2017. It indicated that the share of neighboring Asian countries is the highest here [5]. The first country to send Vietnamese visitors is China, which has long been tied to Vietnam in

political and economic terms, and in the latest 2017, the total number of visitors is 40.000 million, accounting for 40%. The Chinese tourist rate in Vietnam is extremely high, but relying solely on this customer market is a risk to Vietnamese tourism. If the relationship between the two countries is unfortunately deteriorated, it will have a negative impact on Vietnam tourism. In total in 2017, Korea ranked second (24% for approximately 2.24 million people), Japan (8%) and Taiwan (6%). The remaining shares are visitors from countries such as the United States (about 610,000), Russia (about 570,000), the United Kingdom (about 280,000), and France (about 250,000) (Figure 1).

### STRENGTHS OF VIETNAM TOURISM

The reason why travel in Vietnam has continued to grow continuously in recent years because it made use of strengths such as tourism resources, security and economic and social security, and policy claims [1]. The following strengths are considered. There are many tourist resources in Vietnam. The land extends from 1,650km north to south, 600km east to west, and forms an "S" shape along the 3,260km coastline of the South China Sea. The landscape is different depending on the area because it is an elongated country. As well as being blessed with 125 beaches, thousands of mountains, hills and islands, nature is rich in tourist spots and cultural heritage sites. Hanoi is a fascinating city of culture, history and traditional arts. Ho Chi Minh City has many modern buildings and is the largest economic city in Vietnam. Hoi An is a thriving town that has suspended the characteristics of Chinese and Islamic exchanges and maritime trade since the days of Champa Kingdom. In particular, some tourist sites where UNESCO is registered as a World Heritage Site are one of the great attractions, such as Halong Bay, Phong Nha Ke Bang National Park, buildings of Hue and My Son ruins (Figure 2).



Figure 2. Phong Nha cave of Vietnam

Despite being a small area, Vietnam is a multi-ethnic country in which 54 ethnic groups live together. Each of the 54 ethnic groups has its own culture, its own food and drink, and its own language. In addition, because it was influenced by various countries such as China and France, multi-cultural and multi-ethnic have become a feature of Vietnam [6].

The Vietnamese government and tourism-related private companies are both focusing on tourism development strategies. The tourism sector plans to develop tourism by taking advantage of the benefits of each region. Major tourist destinations are diversifying tourist products and services.

As Vietnam's economic growth rate is very high, the growth rate of tourism has grown so fast that it has surpassed Thailand, a major tourist country. Based on the statistics of the Vietnam Tourism Administration, the number of foreigners visiting Vietnam in 2017 is only one third of Thailand, but the growth rate is three times that of Thailand. In particular, areas with a very high rate of increase in the number of foreign tourists are Da Nang, Phu Quoc Island, Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi City.

#### SEVERAL CHALLENGES OF TOURISM IN VIETNAM

Although the number of foreign travelers has increased in recent years, according to the Vietnam Tourism Administration, the repeater rate in 2017 has not exceeded 10%. The ratio of repeaters in

other countries is 82% in Thailand and 89% in Singapore. Unfortunately, the main cause seems to be that quality improvement is not fully emphasized. Although Vietnam tourism is considered to have high potential, Vietnam may not be able to take advantage of the attraction of tourism resources. Furthermore, the competitiveness of tourism-related companies and cooperation among companies are both weak. Therefore, it is not promoting the improvement of tourism products [5].

There is a shortage of talented people in the labor market for tourism in Vietnam. There are a large number of tourism workers, but their English skills, negotiation skills, service manners, etc. generally do not meet the qualities required for the tourism industry. Moreover, at a tourist company, bad attitude is more problematic than lack of ability. It is pointed out that some employees of a travel companies in Vietnam are not good at handling customers. This is a challenge for human resource development.

#### IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF TOURISM SERVICES

Government insists on creating tourism products for Vietnamese tourism companies according to the demand and taste of Japanese tourists

In fact, according to the country of origin of foreign travelers, the attraction of tourism in Vietnam will be different. Although some tourist areas are common to Vietnamese, they are very appealing to foreign tourists. On the contrary, many opinions were pointed out that it is called pride of the Vietnamese, but there are also tourist attractions with less interest from foreign customers. Therefore, from the standpoint of tourists, we assess the potential of tourism resources and think that creating tourism products is paramount. With the aim of directing tourism, enterprises to create tourism products in line with the needs and preferences of Japanese tourists, the Vietnam Tourism General Administration need to conduct more tours and visit on the tourism field in a trusted enterprise representing Vietnam tourism. It would provide an



opportunity for small businesses, such as travel, hotels and transportation, to gain an advantageous recognition. In addition, there is also a need for seminars to gather the opinions of tourism companies about the potential of tourism products, and surveys that consider the degree of interest and satisfaction at each tourist destination for tourists [6].

#### Establishing rules for tourism business

One of the points of improvement in Vietnam tourism administration is to establish a proper and clear legal framework. The law relating to the Vietnamese tourism industry was first introduced on January 1, 2006. However, there are provisions in the Basic Tourism Act that do not meet international contracts. One of them is the management regulation of the tour guide. In Vietnam, it is stipulated that only people who acquire Vietnamese nationality will be. The Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism should pay attention to these issues to implement the treaty concluded in the international contract [7].

In recent years, the Vietnamese government has been exempted from obtaining entry visas for certain countries, but it is still less than ASEAN countries. The number of countries exempt from entry visas is 169 countries in Indonesia, 158 countries in Singapore, 157 countries in the Philippines, 155 countries in Malaysia, 66 countries in Thailand, and 22 countries in Vietnam until 2017.

#### Improvement of evaluation criteria and evaluation methods for tourism service quality

In order to control and improve the quality of tourism services, the top priority of Vietnam tourism industry is to create a unified national standard for evaluating the reality of tourism service quality. This goal is to obtain customer satisfaction, and is the basis for accurate and objective assessments for management departments [8]. Accordingly, it is important for the Vietnam Tourism Board to widely disseminate standards, technical regulations, and standards to travel companies, hotels, and tourism

companies, as far as the same standards and the Vietnam tourism industry are concerned, throughout the ASEAN.

#### Improving tourism infrastructure

Generally speaking, tourism infrastructure development is evaluated whether it is not inconvenient for foreign tourists such as Japanese as well as foreign tourists. It includes tourism town development, revitalization of public transport, development of complex resorts, theme parks, and upgrading of accommodation facilities [6].

#### Improving Tourism Environment

As Japanese tourists are known to be careful consumers, we should place great importance on hygiene and safety when traveling. First, in order to ensure food hygiene, it is necessary to conduct management, supervision and evaluation activities for restaurants. Next, in order to raise awareness of maintaining the beauty of the country, we need to promote advertisements and various activities through communication means and other activities [5].

#### Protection and utilization of natural resources, history and cultural heritage

For the purpose of tourism development, the risk of destruction of natural landscapes is increasing through the actions of tourists such as travel, recreation, eating and drinking, purchasing and lodging. So, one of the most important issues in Vietnam's tourism industry today is to conserve tourism resources. The government should strengthen rules and disciplines for tourism enterprises and tourists by the Tourism Act, the Cultural Heritage Protection Act, the Forest Protection Act, and the Water Resources Protection Act. Second, natural resources, history and cultural heritage are common assets of not only the nation but also the people, so it is necessary to actively

protect and nurture the people. The tourism industry should promote provision of programs such as agricultural tourism and cultural tourism [5].

#### Human resource development for tourism

In order to develop and maintain high-quality human resources who can serve Japanese tourists, tourism companies need to raise the standards for other working conditions such as wages, working hours, and rest. New graduates and talented employees tend to choose the company's reputation [8]. Therefore, it is a great advantage to be at the forefront of corporate business areas for human resource development and recruitment. It is also important to communicate company policies to employees in an easy-to-understand manner. Therefore, the relationship between the superiors and subordinates can become friends and associates, and motivate the employees.

#### Market Segmentation, Clarification of Potential Market, Clarification of Strategic Products

As the needs of customers vary, it becomes impossible for each tourist company and travel company to provide products that meet the needs of all customers. By dividing the market into several small groups according to the differences in tourist characteristics and desires, and by clarifying the target market and clarifying the strategic products, it is possible to meet customer groups that have homogeneous needs [9]. In addition to evaluating the potential of tourism in Vietnam, domestic tourism companies should aim for the following targeting markets based on examining the preferences, interests and characteristics of Japanese tourists.

#### Price Strategy

The peak seasons of Japanese tourists visiting Vietnam and international tourists are different. Sometimes, many Japanese visit Vietnam during non

peak season. Japanese students usually visit Vietnam in March, July and August. Japanese university students usually visit Vietnam in June. Meanwhile, international passengers usually visit Vietnam during summer vacation. Tourism should propose marketing strategies and advertising campaigns to attract Japanese tourists to Vietnam in these months [9].

#### Promotion Strategy

Promotional strategies are very important in conveying business information and tourism products to tourists. Tourism needs to cooperate with each other in promoting development activities for the Japanese market. It is also important to take action such as welcoming Japanese reporters by participating in the Japanese tourism market. It is important for tourist companies to create brochures in Japanese and distribute them to Japanese tourists [10].

### CONCLUSION

Japanese Vietnamese visitors are steadily increasing, but this is a very sensitive market for policies on natural disasters, infectious diseases and tourism development. With the simultaneous introduction of macro and micro solutions, Vietnam has continuously strengthened and developed the Japanese tourism market in the past few years. Along with the analysis of the current situation of Japanese visitors in Vietnam, this paper presents a concrete solution, and develops tourism, quality control services, business promotion, human resources, and appropriate products. In conclusion, the paper has achieved all the basic research objectives proposed. It is hoped that this paper will help related tourism and management to better understand tourism and to organize appropriate activities to develop Japan's tourism market. In addition, using this information, we can attract international tourists to Vietnam, increase exports, promote job creation, and come up with positive measures to develop country's tourism

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