



第十三屆澳門國際旅遊（產業）博覽會
13.^o Expo Internacional de Turismo (Indústria) de Macau
13th Macao International Travel (Industry) Expo

MITE 13th MITE | April 25, 2025 Macao



Portuguese travel leaders forge closer ties with Macao

Years of close economic partnership between Portugal and Macao will intensify in 2025 with a major Portuguese travel congress in Macao this December

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By Karen Yue

The Portugal National Tourist Board and Portuguese Travel Agents Association (APAVT) are once again attending the Macao International Tourism (Industry) Expo (MITE) to promote destination Portugal to Macao and Mainland China as well as to raise the region's profile among Portuguese-speaking travellers.

According to a spokesperson for the Portugal National Tourist Board, both organisations have participated in MITE for the past three years, with the support

of the Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO) and Macau Travel Agents Association.

“With great support and extraordinary hospitality from Macao, we have hosted more than 30 Portuguese travel agents at each of the past editions. We follow closely MGTO’s strategy and some of their promotional actions; we can always learn a lot (from our Macao peers),” said the spokesperson.

The Portugal National Tourist Board expressed appreciation of its partnership

with MGTO: “Macao represents five centuries of friendship, business, and mutual understanding, and (diplomatic ties are) extremely important between the two countries. Travel and tourism are no exception. The importance of tourism for both economies is critical, and we can benefit from each other’s good practices, innovation, and development.”

MGTO’s director Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes said there are several areas of cooperation between Macao and Portugal as well as various Portuguese-speaking markets, and one of them lies in training where student interns visit Macao for two-week-long introduction to different aspects of tourism management.

“We intend to continue with this training programme while looking into other ways of working with these markets,” added de Senna Fernandes.

APAVT’s spokesperson told *TTG Show Daily* that Macao’s “historical proximity to Portugal” makes it a “fantastic gateway” to Mainland China, which is “currently one of the most important markets in the world”.

Portugal National Tourist Board believes that there is still more to be done, especially in improving understanding of Portugal in Mainland China. Efforts are underway to “boost the full potential

of Chinese outbound travel to our country”, including marketing campaigns with OTAs and tour operators, digital footprint on Chinese social media platforms and through key travel influencers, roadshows in China to showcase Portuguese companies, and fam trips for travel trade partners and media representatives.

Portugal’s presence at MITE is therefore a key step towards this goal.

The closeness of Portugal-Macao relations will be underscored this year with Macao’s hosting of the 50th National Congress of the APAVT in December. Between 800 and 1,000 delegates could be expected.

“It will be an extraordinary moment for the Portuguese and Chinese tourism communities,” said the APAVT spokesperson, adding that attendees will witness travel and tourism development undertaken by both Portugal and Macao, and grow demand for Greater China in the Portuguese market.

Altogether, congress activities will present new business opportunities for travel and tourism companies in both lands.

De Senna Fernandes expressed hopes that the congress would lead to even more collaborative opportunities between Macao and Portuguese-speaking countries to advance travel and tourism.

Michelin Bib Gourmand list expands in Macao

The Michelin Guide has awarded 11 food establishments across Macao Bib Gourmand status in its 2025 selection, of which one is a new entrant.

Bib Gourmand recognises restaurants and street food vendors that offer “delightful value-for-money gourmet experiences”, according to its press statement.

The celebrated new Bib Gourmand entrant in Macao is Justindia, a 20-seater restaurant with a bar counter, opened by Kerala-born chef Justin Paul, who has 16 years of experience running an iconic Indian restaurant in the destination.

Justindia’s lunch menu offers great-

value delicacies spanning northern to southern India, while dinner delivers a more formal experience featuring various à la carte options as well as a 10-course tasting menu that showcases the chef’s creativity.

Gwendal Poullennec, international director of the Michelin Guide, noted that Macao’s dining scene has once again demonstrated a unique diversity and vitality.

She added that the list of Bib Gourmand establishments in Macao emphasises the “diverse opportunities available for gourmets seeking exceptional culinary



Justindia is a new addition to The Michelin Guide’s Bib Gourmand list for Macao

experiences at affordable prices?”

The other Bib Gourmand title holders in Macao are O Castiço (Portuguese cuisine), Restaurant Litoral (Macanese cuisine), UTM Educational Restaurant (Macanese cuisine), Cheong Kei (noodles specialisation), Kapok (Cantonese

cuisine), Son Tak Kong (Shun Tak cuisine), Din Tai Fung at City of Dreams (Shanghainese cuisine), Chan Seng Kei (Cantonese cuisine), Lok Kei Noodles Patane (noodles and congee specialisation), and Lou Kei (Cantonese cuisine).

– Karen Yue

Macao is favourite destination at Malaysian travel fair



A year-long line-up of destination promotions and travel trade engagements has been drawn up to keep Macao in the hearts of Malaysian travellers

Macao was featured as the International Favourite Destination at the recently concluded MATTA Fair 2025, a well-regarded annual travel fair in Malaysia that is organised by the Malaysian Association of Tour and Travel Agents (MATTA).

MATTA Fair 2025 was conducted from April 18 to 20 in capital city Kuala Lumpur.

The designation highlights Macao's tourism appeal and enhances the effectiveness of destination promotions in Malaysia in conjunction with other initiatives to promote the city's tourism+ offerings throughout 2025. These efforts

MGTO maintains a yearly presence at the MATTA Fair in Malaysia

are led by the Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO) as part of its strategy to consolidate South-east Asian visitor source markets.

MGTO has been a familiar face at the annual travel fair over the past two years. It took up a booth this year and put up a programme of live performances, workshops, and interactive games to engage with fair visitors. It also rolled out special travel offers and distributed the new *Macao for Muslim Travelers – Halal Travel Guide*.

MGTO took the chance to also lead a one-day network event, MATTA Connect, for Malaysian tourism industry stakeholders.

As the International Favourite Destination, Macao gets additional support

from MATTA, such as advertisement placements in multiple formats at the event venue.

With an aim to further grow arrivals from Malaysia, one of Macao's top 10 visitor source markets, MGTO plans to also stage its annual mega roadshow to meet with consumers and travel operators in Kuala Lumpur. Other initiatives for 2025 include special travel packages and airfares for Malaysian travellers as well as fam trips for Malaysian travel agents, media, and key opinion leaders.

Preparations for a media campaign featuring Malaysian celebrities are underway.

MGTO has welcomed a delegation of travel professionals from Malaysia at MITE 2025 this week.

Social media, budget are top travel considerations for millennials and Gen Z

Travel is a form of escape and stress relief for millennial and Gen Z travellers but nine in 10 are unable to take their trips.

The finding comes from Klook's latest Travel Pulse research, conducted with consumer insights platform, GWI. It surveyed over 7,000 respondents across 14 markets including Singapore, Malaysia, Australia, and India.

Time constraints, work commitments and financial concerns were the top reasons for not being able to travel.

Millennials and Gen Z increasingly turn to travel as their ultimate form of therapy," said Eric Gnock Fah, president and co-founder, Klook.

"While life's stressful demands often leave many frustrated, the transformative power of travel is undeniable. With 92 per cent hit hard by post-travel blues, and nearly 40 per cent immediately planning

their next getaway, it's clear that travel offers more than just a break – it's a force for self-discovery, creativity, and renewal."

However, while they feel time-strapped, 84 per cent of travellers have already planned international trips for 2025, compared to 71 per cent in 2024.

Japan is the top destination, followed by Mainland China, which sees a seven-fold increase in yearly demand.

When choosing their next destination, 28 per cent of respondents seek out new places they have never visited.

Cost is also a factor in travel decisions. While these travellers are budget conscious, they are not willing to compromise on experiences, with 91 per cent allocating up to half their budget on experiences, instead of splurging on other areas like flights.

Unique and authentic experiences re-

main a top priority, with local cuisine and off-the-beaten-path destinations topping the list.

The survey finds that Gen Z travellers are more budget-conscious, preferring bundled travel packages to stretch their spending.

Social media is another determining factor in holiday planning, driving 79 per cent of travellers to book activities, accommodation, and dining experiences based on social media recommendations.

Travellers from Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam, and the Philippines tend to act on social recommendations, while those from Australia, Japan, and the US are less influenced.

Twenty-seven per cent of those surveyed are willing to pay up to 20 per cent more to visit trendy and social media-worthy spots.



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The event will take place this year at Galaxy International Convention Centre (pictured)

FIA picks Macao for 2025 general conference

The Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA) has announced that its 2025 Extraordinary General Assemblies and Conference will be held in Macao from June 10 to 13.

This marks the first time the prestigious event will be hosted in the region.

Over 500 senior FIA delegates from 147 countries will gather at the Galaxy International Convention Center to discuss the future of global motorsport and mobility. The conference will be hosted in partnership with the Automobile General

Association Macao-China and Galaxy Entertainment Group.

Macao, renowned for its Macao Grand Prix, provides a fitting backdrop for this landmark event. The city has a long-standing history in motorsport, having served as a crucial stage for top drivers, including many future Formula 1 stars.

The 2025 FIA Conference holds significant strategic importance as the Greater China region emerges as a leader in electric vehicle adoption and remains the world's largest automotive market.



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Macao's metamorphosis

Macao is reaping the benefits of its diversified tourism strategy, which has turned it into an attractive destination for event owners, business travellers and holidaymakers. Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO) director Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes reviews the destination with Prudence Lui

Macao has an ongoing diversified tourism strategy. Can you shed light on achievements and plans to further drive this in the next year or two?

We have a very clear picture of where we want this diversification strategy to lead us, and with a better understanding of our priority industries, we have fine-tuned our tourism+ strategy. Since the Covid pandemic, we have been employing sports, culture, gastronomy, and entertainment (to boost Macao's economy).

As a result, you now see many different and new events being held in Macao, such as the World Table Tennis Championships Macao in 2024 and 2025.

This year is very special because Macao has been selected as the Culture City of East Asia 2025 and the National Games (highest-level multi-sport event for Greater China) is going to be hosted in the Greater Bay Area (which Macao is part of).

Additionally, Macao will welcome two main business events – the European Travel Agents and Tour Operators Association Summit in June and the National Congress of the Portuguese Travel Agents Association in December.

We are continuing to build on our tourism+ strategy by way of intensified promotions. Besides North-east and South-east Asia, we are also focused on Europe and exploring the Middle East. To connect with the Muslim tourist markets, we have published our first halal tourism guide.

We continue to look for new elements that can be combined with tourism.

Meanwhile, our collaboration with Hengqin (in the Greater Bay Area) complements and supports our diversification. Our strategies are very much aligned. Last year, China allowed mainland Chinese visitors joining Hengqin-Macao tours to make multiple round trips between Hengqin and Macao via the Hengqin checkpoint within seven days on the same group travel permit.

The National Games is co-hosted by Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao. How will Macao benefit?

Macao will host four competition events and two paralympic events. We're thrilled, because it's the first time that the Greater Bay Area is hosting it together.

MGTO is looking after the professional promotion of the event. We've also come up with suggested itineraries in Macao for athletes when they aren't competing, and working with our travel agencies to bring out other products for spectators to enjoy so that they have good memories of Macao.

Let's talk more about the Greater Bay cooperation. Last year was the fifth anniversary of the Outline Development Plan for Guangdong-Hongkong-Macao Greater Bay Area. What has this plan done for MGTO and Macao?

It is a national strategy, and our task is to take full advantage of it. Guangdong, Hong Kong, and Macao, and especially the wider Greater Bay Area, are markets that support each other.

The whole area is very attractive to many overseas visitors, especially overseas Chinese. Many South-east Asians choose multi-destination tours in this area, and the same is seen among medium to long-haul visitors.

This November, we will host a meeting for overseas Chinese entrepreneurs, and 3,000 and 4,000 delegates are expected to attend. They will help to bring Greater Bay Area products to a wider audience back home.

MITE 2025 is another event that will bring Macao to the world. What can visitors look forward to this year?

We have several new features here at MITE 2025.

For the first time, we have created a coffee pavilion at MITE to showcase a wide range of coffee, coffee beans, and various coffee brewing equipment from Portuguese-speaking countries and Macao. There will be latte art workshops that visitors can join.

Also new is the halal products pavilion to help the tourism industry seize business opportunities in this emerging segment.

MITE 2025 also has a dedicated exhibition zone on education tourism.

Additionally, we are promoting areas that are part of the Belt and Road Initiative, and bringing participants to Hengqin.

As Macao evolves as a destination, are marketing approaches changing too?

We continue to work with traditional partners like travel agencies and airlines, as well as less traditional partners to promote destination Macao. One example is our Tokyo roadshow in mid-April, where we brought in interesting partners in creative industries.

There are various ways to promote Macao – a project with Pop Mart (a trendsetting toy company) will bear fruit in June.

The new ways of looking at tourism are aligned with the development of the market – right now, people are looking for different things to do, new places to go, and new reasons to visit. Therefore, the thinking behind tourism promotions has to differ from traditional approaches.

What is the projected tourism performance for 2025?

We expect between 38 and 39 million arrivals this year, after reaching almost 35 million last year.



Right now, people are looking for different things to do, new places to go, and new reasons to visit. Therefore, the thinking behind tourism promotions has to differ from traditional approaches.

Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes
Director, Macao Government Tourism Office

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UFC Fight Night Macau was held at Galaxy Macau's Galaxy Arena

Integrated power

Macao's six big tourism powers – the integrated resort operators – are backing the destination's diversified tourism strategy through their wide range of accommodation, entertainment, dining and events infrastructure. **By Prudence Lui**

Sands China

Sands China, one of the most prominent hospitality companies and operators in Macao, with business in hotels, event venues, high-speed ferry services, and malls, regards aligning with Macao's diversified tourism strategy as a move that benefits its brand reputation and revenue streams.

Sands China's senior vice president of hotel operations, Kris Kaminsky, said the company is known as a holistic entertainment provider, and this specialisation drives revenue through attractions, dining, and events.

In the past 12 months, the group has actively supported Macao's diversified tourism ambitions by introducing unique experiences spanning sports, culture, dining, wellness, and entertainment.

Some high profile events lined up for this year include the colourful maritime and cultural tourism art exhibition, Coastal Fantasia: The Lobster King's Vacation in Macao, which concluded in mid-March; the NBA China Games, which will see Brooklyn Nets and the Phoenix Suns playing two pre-season games later in October as well as NBA Cares community outreach initiatives and lifestyle events being held throughout the year; world-class concerts featuring acclaimed icons; four hands dining specials; and more.

The NBA collaboration is one of the many sports partnerships and endeavours that Sands China brings to its communities, and a key priority for the company's sports initiatives is creating unique events

and opportunities to inspire and develop young people.

Kaminsky said: "With curated culinary journeys, sports entertainment, cultural programming, and luxury lifestyle offerings, we can attract broader demographics and extend visitor stays. By integrating global brands with local heritage, we reinforce Macao's position as a multifaceted destination."

He noted that Sands China's initiatives align with Macao's destination marketing direction, which emphasises experiential offerings and targets families and international tourists seeking immersive travel experiences.

Besides attracting visitors with a plethora of events and activities, Sands China also dangles appealing accommodation options as lure. The new Londoner Grand, which opened in 4Q2024, welcomes guests into the world of British luxury living. It joins other high-end hotels in the Sands China cluster, which are also built to welcome meetings and events.

Another new addition to the integrated resort is Hampton Court at Londoner Grand, an exclusive residence club inspired by the iconic Hampton Court Palace in England. Guests are invited to experience a world of British lifestyle while indulging in an international buffet breakfast, afternoon tea, an exquisite dinner buffet at Henry's Kitchen, and evening cocktails at Bard's Bar.

Sands China also collaborates with retail brands to attract visitors through exclusive and personalised experiences.

Kaminsky said Sands China wants to grow non-gaming revenue to ensure "sustainable economic growth for the city" and deliver a "comprehensive and enjoyable experience for all guests".



The NBA Legends Celebrity Game Presented by Sands China

Galaxy Entertainment Group

The Galaxy Macau integrated resort, which comprises nine hotels including the soon-to-open Capella Galaxy Macau, has seen entertainment and events playing an important role in its efforts to support Macao's diversified tourism strategy and drive repeat visitors to the destination.

In 2024, Galaxy Entertainment Group, which operates the Galaxy Macau integrated resort, hosted approximately 460 shows and events, including numerous high profile ones like Andy Lau World Tour, Ultimate Fighting Championship Fight Night Macau, International Table Tennis Federation World Cup, and Women's Volleyball Nations League.

A spokesperson at Galaxy Entertainment Group told *TTG Show Daily*: "It was estimated that in 2023, destination Macao hosted a total of 240 concerts, which generated an estimated 1.1 billion patacas (US\$137.2 million) in ticket sales. The Galaxy International Convention Center and Galaxy Arena have an important role to play in (facilitating the continued growth of live events)."

Galaxy International Convention Center, which opened in 2023, features 40,000m² of exhibition space, including a 10,000m² pillarless exhibition hall, an auditorium for some 600 guests, a banquet hall for up to 2,400 guests, a 4,000m² conference hall comprising three dividable spaces, and a ballroom catering to more than 1,000 guests. Within this venue also stands the Galaxy Arena, which can seat 16,000 people.

Galaxy International Convention Center and Galaxy Arena both launched to great demand, and was the venue for concerts headlined by K-pop bands Treasure and Blackpink, USANA Baby-Care conference for 10,000 attendees, and more in their first year of operation.

Soon, Galaxy Macau will expand its luxury accommodation portfolio with Capella Galaxy Macau, a 17-storey property boasting some 100 ultra-luxury sky villas and suites.

Galaxy Entertainment Group is exhibiting at MITE 2025, and its spokesperson said the travel event has developed into one of the most important tourism gatherings in Macao, allowing local enterprises and integrated resorts to demonstrate their attractiveness and strengths to industry professionals in Greater China and beyond.

The spokesperson said: "Our booth at MITE 2025 will introduce the non-gaming elements of Galaxy Macau, such as the Grand Resorts Deck, Galaxy Kidz, our award-winning hotels and restaurants, MICE facilities and Galaxy Arena. We will showcase the one-stop service that Galaxy Macau can provide to our guests."

SJM Resorts

SJM Resorts, which has properties across Macao and whose brand is associated with various major events, is committed to spotlighting Macao's diverse points of appeal to captivate contemporary travelers in search of enriching experiences.

SJM Resorts' renowned properties include Grand Lisboa Palace Macau, The Karl Lagerfeld and Palazzo Versace Macau in the Cotai district as well as Grand Lisboa and Hotel Lisboa in Macau Peninsula.

It has a long-standing commitment to sports tourism and supports signature Macao events such as the SJM Macao Open golf tournament, CTA Tour SJM Professional Finals (Macao) tennis cham-



From above: House of Dancing Water prepares for its return; Kam Pek Market

ionships, and the Macau Grand Prix motorsport racing event.

SJM Resorts also makes headway on the gastronomy tourism front, having presented the SJM Asia Top Sommelier Summit 2024, held in partnership with the Asia Wine Institute, and Whisky Live Macau 2024.

To attract travellers keen on arts and entertainment, SJM Resorts pulls in star power – in the form of Korean popstar Rain – as well as prestigious platforms such as The Asia-Pacific Preselection of the Prix de Lausanne.

This year, SJM Resorts is deepening its cultural investments with the launch of a resident show at Grand Lisboa Palace Resort. Curated in collaboration with Hong Kong Ballet, *The Adventures of Alice @ Grand Lisboa Palace Resort Macau* debuts this month. It is said to have been inspired by Lewis Carroll's novel, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and is directed by Hong Kong Ballet artistic director, Septime Webre.

Along with a new permanent art gallery, Grand Lisboa Palace Resort will now offer a more diverse entertainment and cultural experience that will entice a broader audience.

The hospitality firm's continued support for Macao's tourism industry is also seen in its investment in revitalising the city's historic core. It supports the government by transforming Kam Pek Community Centre in San Ma Lo into a vibrant culinary and cultural hub now known as Kam Pek Market. Unveiled last December, Kam Pek Market is a premium dining destination for both locals and tourists, offering a blend of international casual dining, trendy shopping, entertainment, as well as art and cultural elements.

Melco Resort

Tourism diversity is a core part of Melco Resort's DNA, exemplified in the integrated resort's introduction of unique permanent attractions like *House of Dancing Water* performance and the photogenic figure-8 ferris wheel Golden Reel.

It has continued to innovate its offer-



ings to ensure Macao's economic and tourism diversification, with new additions being Studio City Water Park, an indoor water park, and its own-branded hotel, Epic Tower – all part of Studio City Phase 2 development. These were launched in 2023, followed by the opening of Studio City Cinema in 2024.

In Macao, Melco Resort operates the City of Dreams, Studio City, and Altira Macau.

In 2024, Studio City also brought in A-list artists such as Aaron Kwok, Joey Yung, and Leon Lai in concerts and hosted Macao's first water music festival, WaveFest, at Studio City Water Park.

To further support Macao's ambition of becoming a City of Sports, Melco Resort organised high-profile events such as the East Asia Super League Macau Classic and the 2024 Macau Lin Dan Cup Badminton Open.

Furthermore, its City of Dreams integrated resort partnered with Artelli to launch the first-ever Jean-Michel Basquiat exhibition in Macao.

A Melco Resort's spokesperson said: "Looking ahead to 2025, our marketing strategy will remain closely aligned with Macao's diversified tourism goals. We will continue to promote our offerings internationally while enhancing cross-selling

opportunities among our properties across different regions.

"Additionally, we will intensify our focus on innovation, launching unique events such as concerts, sports tournaments, art exhibitions, and exclusive products. These initiatives aim to attract diverse visitor segments and meet the evolving demands of the global tourism industry."

Melco Resort is at MITE 2025, where it is showcasing its award-winning culinary achievements, including 107 Stars in the 2025 Forbes Travel Guide and Michelin-starred restaurants across City of Dreams, Studio City, and Altira Macau.

Additionally, it will highlight its entertainment offerings, including the re-launch of *House of Dancing Water* this May.

It aims to inspire MITE visitors and demonstrate its role in enhancing Macao's appeal as a premier global destination.

MGM

MGM, which operates MGM Macau and MGM Cotai, adopts a holistic approach to tourism development and executes activities that leverage synergies in culture and arts, conventions and exhibitions,

sports, and community tourism. Its initiatives not only bring momentum to Macao's long-term tourism transformation, but also reinforces the destination's role as "One Center, One Platform, and One Base".

Examples of the group's efforts to diversify Macao's tourism draws include the launch of the 20,000m² Poly MGM Museum in November 2024, which is positioned as a lasting platform for the world to experience and appreciate Macao's rich cultural heritage. The attraction is created in collaboration with Poly Culture Group and integrates traditional Chinese craftsmanship with technology to provide a multi-sensory artistic and cultural experience for visitors.

In addition, last December, MGM Cotai debuted *Macau 2049*, a resident 80-minute show jointly produced by renowned Chinese filmmaker Zhang Yimou. Performed at MGM Theater, the show takes the audience on a virtual trip around China, immersing them in diverse customs and culture.

In support of Macao's tourism+ diversification policy, the MGM group also hosted a variety of high-profile sports events in Macao in 2024 to attract travelers from all over the world and highlight Macao's sports tourism potential. These events included the International Lion Dance Championship 2024 – MGM Cup, which drew a record 230 athletes from 13 countries and regions; the Hush! Beach Concert x Yo~ga Wellfest 2024, which featured live music performances and yoga activities led by more than 30 renowned fitness and sports instructors from across Asia; and the MGM Macau Tennis Masters.

Macao kicked off 2025 with the MGM Macau International Regatta in January. It debuted the World Match Racing Tour – Macao Match Cup, which was recognised by World Sailing as the

Below: Poly MGM Museum



Illuminarium at Wynn Palace

opening race of the 2025 season. The MGM Macau International Regatta also featured the Lotus Cup Regatta and the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Cup Regatta.

Wynn Macau

The operator of Wynn Macau and Wynn Palace contributes to Macao's economic diversification and tourism performance by offering high-end and varied experiences in the non-gaming sphere, covering gastronomy, sports, arts and culture, health and wellness, entertainment, and business events.

To entice guests of all ages, Illuminarium in Wynn Palace was launched,

inviting guests to a walk among the stars. The journey begins with ancestors who contemplated the mysteries of the universe and through the progress of China's aerospace industry.

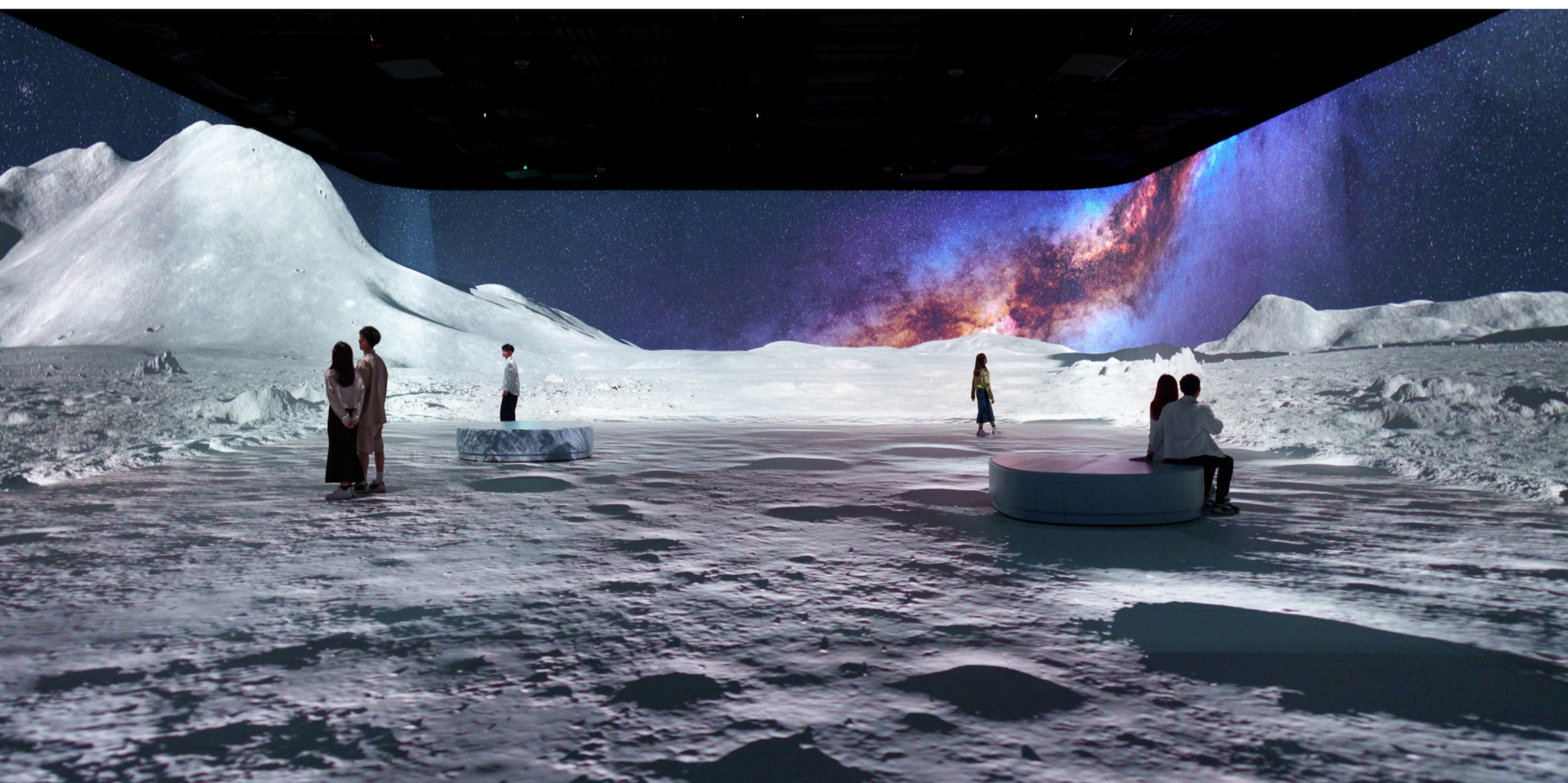
Wynn Macau and Wynn Cotai also led the 2024 Wynn Concert by the Sea music event as part of its lively line-up of events for Macao travellers. The concert in May 2024 was hosted at the Yacht Berthing Area in Coloane Macao, bringing a unique maritime and cultural experience to both locals and tourists.

Another event highlight last year was the first-ever International Series Macau golf tournament in March. The four-day event marked Macao's debut in The International Series, which toured 10 des-

tinations in Asia. The event continued in March 2025 at the Macau Golf & Country Club, presented by the Wynn group once more.

Other significant events last year included Wynn Presents – 3x3 Greater Bay Area Tour 2024, Wynn Signature – 2024 Hypercar Exhibition, and Wynn Presents - 2024 Macau Snooker Masters.

Wynn Macau and Wynn Cotai are highlighting their contributions to Macao's focus on gastronomy and educational tourism at MITE 2025. One of such initiatives is the Wynn Signature Chinese Wine Awards 2025, which will showcase distinctive food offerings and a host of exciting culinary events and experiences in destination Macao.



A heart for halal tourism



Macao strengthens its appeal as a halal-friendly tourist destination with various initiatives including a halal pavilion for the first time at the 13th Macao International Travel (Industry) Expo

Macao's tourism diversification strategy includes rolling out a warmer welcome for Muslim travellers, which is growing in numbers for the destination.

By **Caroline Boey** and **Audrey Ng**

Macao is deepening its focus on the Muslim traveller as part of its 1+4 development strategy to diversify and integrate tourism and other related industries, including culture and creativity, sports, business events, gastronomy, and health and wellness.

The goal is to be a centre for integrated tourism and leisure, while facilitating the development of four nascent industries – big health, modern financial services, high and new technology, as well as conventions and exhibitions.

Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO) director, Maria Helena de Sena Fernandes, said government and local tourism stakeholders attach great value to the potential of Muslim tourism (domestic and international), and steps have been taken to prepare and cater for an expected increase of Islamic visitors.

According to MGTO data, visitors from Indonesia and Malaysia to Macao increased by 57.1 per cent and 28.1 per cent year-on-year respectively.

Fernandes noted: "The perspective is for arrivals to continue to increase as direct flights and targeted promotional activities expand. At the same time, MGTO is conducting promotions targeting consumers and travel trade in these two markets, with the latest large-scale (promotion) in Jakarta, and another in Kuala Lumpur."

The director remarked that Muslim visitors are expected to continue to increase from other places as well, including from Macao's main visitor source market of China.

She elaborated: "Measures announced by the Central Government expanded the number of cities under the Individu-

al Visit Scheme to travel to Hong Kong and Macao, with the list now also including the provincial capitals of Ürümqi (Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region), Lanzhou (Gansu Province), Xining (Qinghai Province), as well as Yinchuan (Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region)."

To facilitate more opportunities for Macao's tourism industry in this fast-emerging market, this year's 13th Macao International Travel (Industry) Expo (MITE) features a pavilion dedicated to showcasing halal living for the first time.

International and local halal-related companies are invited to participate in the exhibition to promote halal food and products.

Visitors can sample halal cuisine and



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Simpson Hang
Exhibition manager, MITE

take home commemorative souvenirs. "We hope to enhance Macao's international image as a halal friendly tourist destination and strengthen industry exchange between Macao halal certified brands and domestic and foreign counterparts. Promoting the halal industry can facilitate trade and cultural exchanges in industries such as halal food, health products, and tourism," said Simpson Hang, exhibition manager, MITE.

Su Yilin, one of the exhibitors from Beijing-based hotpot company Donglaihun, said MITE was a great opportunity to increase brand awareness to a bigger crowd and get on the itineraries of travel groups bound for Macao.

She said: "Being able to communicate with tourists from different regions and industry professionals will help us understand the taste preferences and consumption habits of halal tourists, so as to optimise our dishes and services."

MITE 2025 also conducts informative sessions such as the Halal Certification Industry Promotion Conference that explains CrescentRating halal tourism certification and its scoring criteria.

The exhibition area features a simulated prayer room as another interactive way for visitors to understand Muslim culture and Muslim traveller needs.



Macao looks to Asia as it ramps up efforts to woo Muslim travellers

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