



Department of Tourism

Park View Thiruvananthapuram 695 033

Kerala India Fax: +91-471-2322279

Tel: +91-471-2326579 2321132

Email: info@keralatourism.org

marketing@keralatourism.org

www.keralatourism.org

PRESS RELEASE

Kerala Tourism Minister receives three PATA Gold Awards



- **Awards presented at Nur-Sultan in Kazakhstan**

Thiruvananthapuram, Sept 20: Kerala Tourism was bestowed three prestigious Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) Gold awards, including the one for an ethnic food restaurant run by women at Kumarakom under its Responsible Tourism Mission, at a glittering function at Nur-Sultan (Astana) in Kazakhstan last evening.

The awards were received by Tourism Minister Shri Kadakampally Surendran and Tourism Director Shri P Bala Kiran from Ms Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes, Director, Macau Government Tourism office and Dr Mario Hardy, CEO, PATA, during the PATA Travel Mart 2019.

The two other gold awards were for an advertisement campaign of Kerala Tourism — Come Out and Play — and for its website (www.keralatourism.org), respectively. While the ad campaign was run by the Stark Communication, the Kerala Tourism website has been designed and maintained by Invis Multimedia.



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“It is a big honour for Kerala Tourism and also a strong validation of the state’s image as an alluring tourist destination. I am sure these awards will give a huge traction in showcasing the touristy charms of the state to a wider international audience,” Shri Surendran said.

“I am particularly happy for receiving the gold award for the women-run ethnic food restaurant at Kumarakom under the Responsible Tourism Mission (RTM), which has become the mainstay of our tourism policy and initiatives. Out of the 15,500 RTM initiatives, 13,500 units are led by women,” the minister added.

Shri Bala Kiran said that over the years PATA awards have emerged as a prestigious recognition of achievements in the travel and tourism sector. “Kerala Tourism has won the highest number of PATA awards in South Asia this year. India Tourism has won one award. The three gold awards are yet another acknowledgement of our commendable success. It will give a fillip to the destination pull of Kerala and elevate the state into a coveted destination for the inbound tourism market,” he noted.

The ‘Come Out and Play’ campaign is an invitation to India to come out of the routine ‘everydayness’ of urban spaces - and the isolation that gadgets induce - to connect with each other and nature. It offers tourists a wide array of options to rediscover nature by activities such as trekking, Ayurvedic massage, river rafting, yoga lessons, visiting a spice plantation, learning the basics of Kerala cuisine, climbing a coconut tree, and sailing on a houseboat.

The website www.keralatourism.org has been conceived, designed and developed to provide Kerala Tourism an online edge, befitting a premier travel destination in India. The website had 10 million visits during FY2018-19 and is one among the top 10 tourism websites in Asia. It also hosts almost one lakh web pages and major sections of the site are available in 23 languages. The portal now competes with the tourism websites of countries like Hong Kong, New Zealand, South Korea, and Australia for higher ranking.

The highly-contested awards, selected by an eminent international jury, were announced in Bangkok in July. This year’s awards attracted 197 entries from 78 organisations and individuals worldwide.

Last year, Kerala Tourism bagged two PATA gold awards for its Yalla Kerala print media campaign in the Gulf countries and for an innovative poster it had made for the third edition of the Kochi-Muziris Biennale (KMB), the biggest contemporary art show in South Asia. The poster showed a colourful boat and fishermen.



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Founded in 1951, PATA is a not-for-profit membership association that acts as a catalyst for the responsible development of travel and tourism to, from and within the Asia Pacific region.

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