



Travel & Tourism | Cities

COVID-19: pandemic impacts on Asia Pacific city tourism

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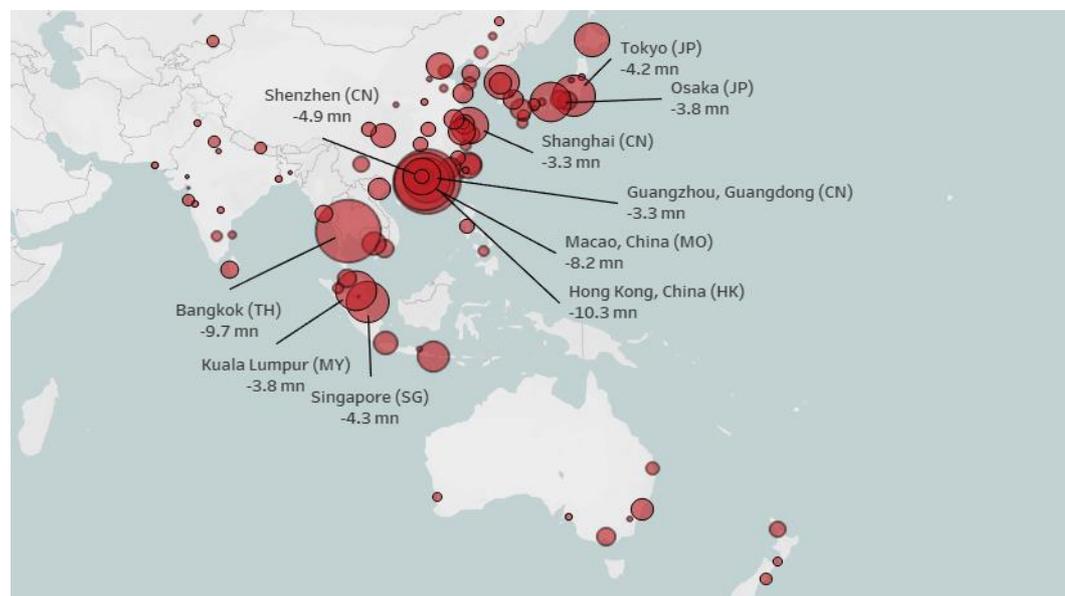
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An estimated 331 million fewer domestic visitors and 103mn fewer international visitors will travel in and to Asia Pacific cities in 2020.

Key points

- The COVID-19 global pandemic has led to one of the largest global crises since the second world war. The spread of the virus spans 185 countries, many of which have implemented a range of measures to slow the spread, at a cost of major disruption to the global economy and to global travel.
- Asia Pacific inbound arrivals are expected to decline 42% in 2020, with a loss of 148mn visitors compared to 2019.
- Collectively, Asia Pacific city visitor arrivals are forecast to decline 41% in 2020 compared to 2019, equating to a loss of 103mn visitors for the 92 cities included in our GCT service.
- On average, 26% of inbound arrivals to Asia Pacific cities are attributable to long-haul markets, making these cities less vulnerable than many others as travel from short and medium haul origins is expected to return sooner. The declines in the 15 largest Asia Pacific city destinations for international visitor arrivals represent a decline of more than 67mn visitors compared to 2019, with the largest declines in Hong Kong (10.3mn), Bangkok (9.7mn) and Macao (8.2mn).
- Domestic city visitor arrivals are forecast to decline 28% in 2020, a loss of 331 million visitors. On average, domestic tourism accounts for almost 80% of total visitor arrivals to cities in Asia Pacific, which will help facilitate the recovery of city tourism as restrictions are likely to be lifted for domestic travel earlier than for international travel

Decline in international Asia Pacific city tourist arrivals (mn), 2019-2020



To access the full report, please follow this [link](#).

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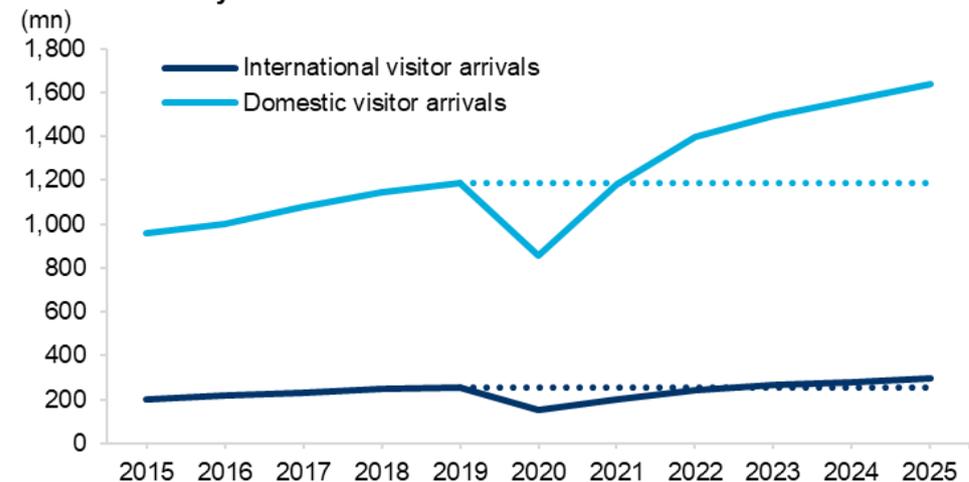
Impact on city inbound travel

The global pandemic originated in the Asia Pacific region, and while the spread of the virus has been better contained in the region than elsewhere, the spread to other global regions has resulted in the largest decline in global outbound travel on record. This will devastate travel to Asia Pacific, with Hong Kong forecast to suffer the largest decline in international visitor arrivals at 10.3mn in 2020. Bangkok and Macao are expected to see significant declines in visitor arrivals at 9.7mn and 8.2mn. A large drop in Chinese outbound travel in 2020 will weigh on performance due to a high reliance on Chinese travel demand: over 20% of international arrivals in the region in 2019 were from China.

Recovery of city travel

Asia Pacific's tourism industry faces a difficult path to recovery. Travel restrictions are likely to be eased gradually across H2 2020, however the economic ramifications of the current crisis, alongside negative sentiment towards international travel, point to a prolonged recovery period. International visitor arrivals are expected to return to 2019 peak levels by 2023. Domestic travel will enjoy a quicker recovery, as travellers substitute international travel for staycations in the near term. Domestic visitors will return to 2019 levels by 2021.

Asia Pacific city international vs domestic visitor arrivals



Source: Tourism Economics

On average, long-haul visitor arrivals account for 26% of international visitor arrivals to cities in Asia Pacific, while 79% of total visitor arrivals come from domestic visits.

International visitor arrivals to Asia Pacific cities will not return to 2019 levels until 2023 while domestic visitor arrivals will exceed 2019 levels by 2021.