China to Uluru flight on its way

The first charter flight from China to the Northern Territory will land on the red soil of Yulara tomorrow, following intensive efforts by the Territory Government to tap into the Chinese tourism market.

Acting Tourism Minister Gerry McCarthy today said more than 300 Chinese tourists would travel on two flights from Hong Kong, one arriving via Darwin and other returning via Darwin.

“As part of Territory 2030, Government is working to expand the tourism industry and increase the number of aviation passengers to the Territory,” he said.

“Last year, we mounted a major 10 week campaign to promote the Northern Territory in Guangzhou, Shenzen, Shanghai and Beijing.

“On top of that Territory Government representatives also met with key tourism industry stakeholders in Guangzhou, Shanghai and Hong Kong including the Managing Director of Yueqiao Travel, and Qantas regional managers.

“As a result, the Government has partnered with well known Chinese travel industry leaders, Yueqiao Travel, who now offer various itineraries that have stops at Uluru, Watarrka/Kings Canyon, Alice Springs or Darwin.”

When the visitors arrive in Yulara, they will be welcomed by Tourism NT representatives and senior executives from Voyages. A welcome to country will also be given by the land’s traditional owners.

During their holiday, the visitors will enjoy a special ‘Sounds of Silence’ dinner under the stars to celebrate Chinese New Year. They will see the sunrise at Uluru, and go on a guided walk around the base.

They will also enjoy a panoramic view of Kata-Tjuta and follow the walking trail into Walpa Gorge. Some passengers will also visit the spectacular Kings Canyon and climb to the rim for marvellous views of Watarrka National Park.

Mr McCarthy said improving air links between China and the Territory were critical in obtaining growth in the tourism market, and encouraged the tourism industry to actively find ways to grow traffic and prove the business case for more regular scheduled flights.

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