

Much deserved recognition

Malaysia received honours in two international awards for tourism.

MALAYSIA recently won two categories at this year's PATA Gold Awards, namely for the country's print tourism marketing campaign and unique heritage. The event was held virtually.

Tourism Malaysia was honoured in the Print Marketing Campaign category while the Langkawi Development Authority (LADA) won in the Heritage category.

The former award was for Tourism Malaysia's 2021 Desk Calendar with its *Dive Into Your Dream - Malaysia 365 Days* theme that depicted Malaysia's picturesque natural beauty.

"The idea is to inspire users of their next holiday in the country, away from the bustling city and into the secret world of Malaysia's off-the-beaten-track destinations," Tourism Malaysia said in a statement.

A notable highlight of the award-winning calendar is the integration of technology and digitalisation.

By scanning QR codes paired with every picture, users will be able to access dedicated articles on the locations along with travel recommendations.

The Heritage award, meanwhile, was for LADA's Langkawi Unesco Global Geopark: The Diverse Heritage of Kubang Badak Biogeotrail project.

The project highlighted the geological, biological, and cultural wonders of Kubang Badak Village which is located on the south-west part of Langkawi in Kedah.

"LADA has successfully brought to light the importance of biodiversity and how the local community responsibly rely on natural resources as their source of income, alongside their rich Malay-Thai culture that can be traced back to the 18th century," said the



LADA was awarded for its geotourism project at the Kubang Badak Biogeotrail. — Tourism Malaysia

statement from Tourism Malaysia.

The agency added that both the authorities and the community have worked together in conserving the environment and educating the public while practising responsible geotourism.

The award for the geotourism project came at an apt time as Langkawi has finally reopened for tourism.

In a separate development, Malaysia was also recognised for being a top international filming and golfing location.

Tourism Malaysia took home the International Film Location & Golf Tourism

Destination at the 7th International Tourism Conclave & Travel Awards, which was held in New Delhi, India.

The one-day conclave and B2B expo also discussed the revitalisation of the global tourism industry amid the ongoing pandemic.

Tourism Malaysia director (New Delhi) Sulaiman Suip said it is important for stakeholders to continue to find a way to ride out these challenging times.

"It is vital to have a continuous discourse among the industry players, tourism boards, and state governments on how to tackle the obstacles faced by the tourism

industry worldwide.

"The new normal is here to stay for a longer time than we have expected, hence it is time for a new approach: to live with the virus rather than to combat it," he said.

Sports and beyond

Elsewhere, sports tourism is definitely on the rise and Turkey is not missing out on this trend.

The country is said to be one of the biggest sports tourism destinations. Locations such as Antalya, Erzurum, Trabzon, Istanbul, Bolu, Burdur, Isparta, and Kocaeli often attract sports tourists with their accommodation facilities, high-technology, training fields, and stadiums.

"Turkey also offers golf resorts designed by world-renowned designers, giving golf enthusiasts PGA-standard courses with nature and beaches as beautiful backdrops as well as all-inclusive five-star accommodation," said Turkey Tourism Promotion and Development Agency in a statement.

The agency added that basketball schools and facilities in Turkey continue to surprise and attract the attention of basketball fans in terms of quality and knowledge while Olympic water sports facilities provide the best conditions for aspiring swimmers.

"The climate in Turkey allows visitors to plan their training sessions according to their sport of choice. Turkey is an athlete's paradise where teams can easily find competitors, train in international training grounds, world-class stadiums and stay at the most affordable and even luxurious accommodations," the agency said. — **Chester Chin**