

MAURITIUS

Mauritius:
It's a pleasureCountry boosts image as
a top vacation destination

With breathtaking scenery, an array of precious wildlife and a diverse range of activities such as fishing, waterskiing, hiking, golf, and sailing, Mauritius is a major tourism destination and a growing magnet for Chinese tourists who prefer activity holidays to simply laying on a sandy beach.

The country is expected to attract up to 1 million international visitors in 2010 who are forecast to spend \$1.3 billion and remains on course to achieve its goal of two million tourists a year by 2015.

The tourism sector generates about 10 percent of GDP, with the Chinese share of the market seen as growing sharply as it benefits from targeted marketing campaigns and new airline routes from major cities in China and Asia.

Air Mauritius operates direct flights to Hong Kong and tourism chiefs predict the airline will launch a new route to Shanghai or Guangzhou in the not-too-distant future.

"Mauritius is a real country with many activities available and this is one of our main competitive advantages," said Nandcoomar Bodha, minister of Tourism and Leisure.

"Our new brand is 'Mauritius, it's a pleasure', because we think it's a pleasure to work, visit and invest here."

Underscoring the importance

that Mauritius attaches to Chinese tourists, MTPA recently appointed a special representative to help sell the country's unique character and beauty to travelers from China.

"The quality of our service is our strongest point as the people are genuine and their sense of hospitality is among the best in the world," the tourism chief added.

"Chinese tourists want to do more than just soak up the sun and in Mauritius they can enjoy adventure tours and experience our many different religions, cultures and festivals."

Investment opportunities

With tourism officials preparing to welcome the growing numbers of foreign travelers, golden investment opportunities exist throughout the country's hotel, leisure and hospitality industry as the sector gears up for a major construction program.

Poised to become one of the world's premier luxury resort destinations, Anahita World Class Sanctuary brings together the best of Mauritian lifestyle, culture and hospitality in one superb domain.

The stunning resort offers guests a wide variety of recreational, cultural and social facilities and activities that have been crafted to the highest international standards, while embracing sustainability principles.

Developed by industry experts and specialists of Ciel Properties Limited, Anahita features 325 luxury private residences comprised of 70 waterfront residences, 200 estate villas, 15 golf villas and 40 golf lodges.

The beautiful and tastefully designed resort features the luxury Four Seasons Resort Mauritius, along with an 18-hole signature golf course designed by South African professional golfing champion Ernie Els.

Integrated resorts scheme

The award-winning resort is a clear sign of the government's commitment to the securing of significant foreign direct investment. This is because Anahita is being developed under the Integrated Resorts Scheme.

This successful initiative was launched in 2002 by government officials in conjunction with the BOI in a bold move that aimed to facilitate investment and the acquisition of luxury residences by foreigners such as businessmen from Beijing, Shanghai and Hong Kong.

Considering the huge investment, the scale of the project and the quality of various partnerships, Anahita is clearly the most important Integrated Resorts Scheme project in Mauritius and setting the standard for future developments on the island.

Such initiatives have raised awareness and helped Mauritius secure a strong foothold in the competitive global tourism industry.

As A Karl Mootoosamy, director of the Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority explained: "We are working hard to attract more tourists from China. There is a rising middle class in China and Mauritius should be able to capture a small share of those outbound tourists. We need to establish more air links and would be very happy to invite any Chinese airline to fly direct from Beijing or Shanghai."

British American Investment makes
another healthy business decision

With strategic investments in some 60 companies across sectors as wide ranging as tourism, construction, transportation, trade and financial services, British American Investment (BAI) is proud to be one of the top business conglomerates in Mauritius.

From humble beginnings in 1969 as a branch office of British American Insurance, a life insurance company headquartered in the US, BAI grew, over two decades, to become a leading life insurance company in its own right.

In 1992, it was listed on the Mauritian Stock Exchange through an initial public offering and has just overseen the completion of one of its biggest projects to date, a joint venture with Asia's largest healthcare corporation, Apollo Hospitals Group, to build the 200-bed and multi-disciplinary Apollo Bramwell Hospital in Mauritius.

The Indian-based Apollo Group boasts more than 7,500 beds in 43 hospitals and a string of nursing and hospital management colleges, pharmacies and diagnostic clinics across the continent.

BAI's stellar performance in this and many of its other ventures have been largely down to the calculated risk-taking prowess of visionary BAI veteran Dawood A Rawat. Within his 40 years of service, Rawat has risen from country manager and worldwide CEO to the group's chairman and single-largest shareholder.

Gutsy and determined, Rawat hopes such partnerships will form a large part of Mauritius' future. "Apollo Bramwell Hospital was a big jump for us, and it is something we are very proud of," he said. "We want to take Mauritius to another level. The market here



The 200-bed, multi-disciplinary Apollo Bramwell Hospital



British American Investment Group Chairman Dawood A Rawat

is small, which is why we look to Africa and India. We can help them, and China, in turn can help us."

The idea of Mauritius as a springboard for the Chinese to access African markets is a poignant one

for Rawat.

"China could create a Mauritius that is an aircraft carrier and a free port. They could set up a trade center, where Africans can fly down and buy Chinese goods year round with no minimum container orders," he said. "But it is important they add value locally and participate in the Mauritian economy by forming partnerships with local entrepreneurs."

BAI diversified a long time ago, but not before realizing the value that could be found at home. "When we started, we sold

low-premium life insurance and penetrated the market for lower income customers," Rawat recalls. "People said our company couldn't survive on penny premiums. But those penny premiums accumulated, plus we gave people the discipline to save, we created jobs, and we helped realize capital in the country."

Now BAI has interests in Madagascar, South Africa, Kenya, Dubai, Malta and France, with an impressive network of sales and marketing operations supporting the diverse range of products under numerous local and international brands. It's an exciting time for Chinese involvement.

"We are opening up 'Courts' in Kenya, a Walmart-esque retailer where most of the goods will be imported from China. We are better positioned than most because of our foothold there," Rawat said. "I'd love to do more business with China because I see the fantastic potential. I know China will come to Mauritius with their eyes open and seriously consider us as a springboard for the region."

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FIJI
Regional telecoms hubWith modern infrastructure and a
favorable business climate, Fiji is a hub
for Chinese foreign direct investment

As the "Gateway to the South Pacific", Fiji is a small country that is thinking big as it bolsters its reputation by attracting major trade and investment from economic giants like China.

As an idyllic island paradise, Fiji has made huge strides in infrastructure development with the help of Chinese investors as Prime Minister Commodore Josaia Voreqe Bainimarama boosts Fijian-Sino links.

One of the first Pacific island countries to establish diplomatic relations with China 35 years ago, the country of 840,000 people opened its embassy in China in 2001 and has set itself a series of ambitious socioeconomic goals to become a regional business hub.

Blessed with many natural resources, including large agricultural, fisheries and forestry sectors, the nation boasts a wealth of investment opportunities across its diverse and growing economy.

Throughout the last decade, Fiji has enjoyed consistent export-led economic growth based on strong sales of sugar, gold and textiles.

Ministers in Suva, the capital city of Fiji, have identified China as a key trade partner for their new "Look North" approach — a policy that aims to focus efforts on countries to the north of the country.

The financial blueprint aims to double GDP by 2020, reduce poverty and unemployment, liberalize the financial services sector, boost the tourism industry and focus on renewable energies and the liberalized

telecoms sector.

In his 2010 budget address, Bainimarama outlined his strategic vision for Fiji for the next decade. "The 'Look North' plan requires discipline, vision, legal changes, modernization and collaboration between the government, employees, employers, the financial sector and civil society," said Bainimarama.

According to the Chinese Ambassador to Fiji, Han Zhiqiang, China sees a tightening of bilateral bonds and the further development of friendly cooperation between the two countries in economic, cultural and educational sectors.

“Telecom Fiji Limited has 150,000 customers, 75 percent of which are residential. We offer 100 percent coverage, thanks to our satellite connection.”

SAKEASI SERU
GROUP ACTING CEO,
TELECOM FIJI LIMITED

"As well as the economy, trade, culture, education, agriculture and investments, there is also a growing tourism market that is seeing more visitors from China and has enormous potential," Han said.

Fiji's telecoms sector is one of

its most successful industries, with Chinese expertise and technology playing a key role in the development and continued expansion of fixed and mobile phone networks, plus fast and reliable Internet access.

Telecom Fiji Limited (TFL) is the sole provider of local and national telephony services, and owns the country's only public switched telephone network.

Owned by parent firm Amalgamated Telecom Holdings, TFL has a network comprising 55 telephone exchanges.

As an industry pioneer, TFL has invested significantly in state-of-the-art networks and satellite technology that connects thousands of business and residential customers.

"Fiji has a very modern telecoms infrastructure and is fortunate to have the Southern Cross fiber-optic cable that comes from Australia and New Zealand and connects to North America via Hawaii," said TFL Group Acting CEO Sakeasi Seru. "TFL has 150,000 customers, 75 percent of which are residential."

"We offer 100 percent coverage, thanks to our satellite connection that serves the remote areas and can provide companies looking to invest in remote areas with excellent satellite services."

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TFL.
The communications
link between the two
hemispheres

A global connector with a pro-business attitude, Telecom Fiji delivers a world class telecommunications service for more than 100,000 business and private customers within South Pacific's strategically located hub.

We offer end to end telecommunication services, nationwide data communications networking, internet connectivity, telephony services, customised business solutions and regional connectivity through our satellite network.

At TFL, we truly do offer the world at your fingertips.

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