

**EXHIBITIONS**

# Horeca Asia has sights on Mice sector

**NANAT SUCHIVA**

Asia Horeca Co is collaborating with the Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB) and the Thai Hotel & Hospitality Management Association to hold Horeca Asia 2017 to promote the hotel, restaurant and catering business next year.

Horeca Asia 2017 is planned for July 12-14 at Queen Sirikit National Convention Center to help boost the meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions (Mice) industry in Thailand as well.

Ladda Mongkolkeha, managing director of Asia Horeca, said the segment has expanded around 10-20% a year since 2014 thanks to the strong growth of foreign tourist arrivals.

The expansion of restaurants, bakeries and coffee shops is serving rising demand and Thai consumers shifting from eating at home to dining out.

According to a recent Asia Horeca

survey, some 70% of urban people dine out 3-6 times a week while the remaining 30% eat out less frequently.

The annual market value of the Horeca business is estimated at 1 trillion baht, said the survey.

Of the total, the hotel sector contributes 527 billion baht, followed by the restaurant sector at 385 billion baht with coffee, bakery, ice cream and catering businesses accounting for the remainder.

A long-term benefit of the international trade event is the creation of more trade opportunities and potential in the domestic and international markets while improving business operations to international level, said Ms Ladda.

Jaruwan Suwannasat, director for the exhibition and event department at the TCEB, said the agency was delighted to support Horeca Asia 2017.

She said the coordination between stakeholders will provide outstanding innovation, know-how, techniques and product development for the Horeca segment while creating marketing opportunities for Mice entrepreneurs.

"I believe this event will help drive the Thai Mice industry to be a hub in Asean in the future," she said.

Horeca SMEs and startups as well as non-chain restaurants will have a chance to meet buyers at the fair, which is expected to draw 900,000 visitors and generate 100 million baht.

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