Tourism Linking Cultures on the Silk Road

CROSSROADS OF EUROPE
Cultural and Religious Routes
Pavia, 6-10 June, 2012

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Today’s presentation

1) Who are we
2) Why travel & tourism
3) Tourism & the Silk Road
4) Supply & demand
5) Events and projects 2012
...who are we...?
United Nations agency & leading international organization in travel & tourism since 1946:
• global forum for tourism policy issues
• practical source of tourism know-how
OUR MEMBERS

• 161 countries and territories
• 400+ Affiliate Members from over 80 countries
OUR MISSION:
To contribute to the UN Millennium Development Goals

...by promoting the development of responsible, sustainable and universally accessible tourism
...why
tourism &
travel...?
TOURISM is...

one of the world’s top job creators
...providing 235 million jobs globally
....a lead export sector

• 30% of the world’s exports of services (US$ 1 trillion a year)
• up to 45% of the total export of services in developing countries
...a vehicle for fostering peace & cultural understanding
‘...the most important route in the history of mankind...’
THE BRIDGE BETWEEN THE EAST & WEST

- Network of routes - both overland & maritime - dating back to 200 BC
- Channel of trade between ancient empires of China, India, Persia & Rome
- Exchange of dialogue, art, ideas & technology
- Silk, spices, glass, furs, perfume, livestock…
- Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, Christianity…

The Silk Road then…
The Silk Road now…

- Economies growing stronger in Asia & Middle East and increased outbound travel
- New destinations emerging and opening up
- Improved connectivity via transnational rail links and new air routes
- Internet accessibility & role of social media
- Gaining political momentum: “Let's work together to create a new Silk Road” - Hillary Clinton, US Secretary of State, 2011
…tourism & the Silk Road…
19 countries called for: ‘...A peaceful and fruitful rebirth of these legendary routes as one of the world’s richest cultural tourism destinations...’
Creating new possibilities from an ancient concept

BUILDING THE SILK ROAD BRAND

As a vehicle for driving:
- Sustainable development
- International cooperation
- Foreign direct investment
- Cultural understanding and exchange
- Safeguarding World Heritage Sites
- Travel facilitation
- Poverty alleviation
UNWTO SILK ROAD ACTION PLAN 2012/2013

A framework for sustainable development, focusing on 3 key areas:

- Marketing and promotion
- Destination management and capacity building
- Travel facilitation
UNWTO SILK ROAD ACTION PLAN 2012/2013

- Partner UN agencies
- Localised networks
- NGOs and other entities
- UNWTO Affiliate Members & private sector stakeholders
- SR Task Force
- SR Member States

Silk Road Action Plan
COMMITTED MEMBER STATES TO DATE

SUPPLY & DEMAND

**SUPPLY**
- 254 UNESCO World Heritage Sites
- Diverse cultural experiences
- Natural attractions, ecotourism, religious tourism, adventure
- Endless possible itineraries

**DEMAND**
- Growth in consumer demand: adventure, religious tourism, ecotourism, voluntourism
- Increasing interest from travel trade
- 27% of online discussions relating to travel routes
- 37% of discussions focussing on food
MAJOR PROJECTS & EVENTS 2012

PROJECTS
• Silk Road brand toolkit development
• EHL/UNWTO Silk Road Strategy Initiative
• Globe Trekker ‘Around the World’ Silk Road special
• Silk Road sustainable travel website in partnership with TripAdvisor

EVENTS
• Silk Road Gymkhana at Fitur Madrid
• Ministers’ Meeting at ITB Berlin
• Flavours of the Silk Road International Conference on Food, Culture and Tourism (6-7 September - Baku)
• Bloggers Challenge and Seminar at WTM London
Flavours of the Silk Road
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON FOOD, CULTURE & TOURISM

BAKU, Azerbaijan | 6–7 September 2012
Thank you!

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