

CHINESE HARBIN WELCOMED 90 MILLION VISITORS IN THE WINTER SEASON



The winter sports craze has significantly boosted snow tourism in Harbin, often referred to as China's ice city. During the 2024-2025 winter season, tourist arrivals grew 9.7 percent year-on-year, reaching over 90 million.

As one of China's premier winter tourist destinations, Harbin, the capital of Heilongjiang Province, recorded revenue from its tourism sector of 137.22 billion yuan (approximately 19 billion U.S. dollars) between November 8, 2024, and February 28, 2025. **According to the Harbin Culture and Tourism Bureau, this represents a 16.6 percent increase from the previous year.**

Notably, the bureau reported that international visitors to Harbin surged by 94.2 percent compared to last winter season, driven by an influx of tourists from Russia, Japan, South Korea, and ASEAN countries.

Harbin has sparked a surge of interest in ice and snow tourism on Chinese social media this winter following the opening of the 41st Harbin's International Ice and Snow Festival in January.

Popular tourism attractions in the region include the Harbin Ice and Snow Museum, the Sun Island International Snow Sculpture Art Exhibition, Central Avenue, St. Sophia Cathedral, and the Siberian Tiger Park, in addition to the festival itself. Notably, the Harbin Ice and Snow Museum recorded a remarkable 3.56 million visitors during its 68 days of operation.

The city also hosted the ninth Asian Winter Games and several test events, further boosting snow tourism. Harbin has developed more than 500 ice and snow sports facilities, and 15 local ski resorts have upgraded their amenities, providing entertainment for both spectators and athletes from around the globe.

Visitors to cultural venues such as the Harbin Museum and the Exhibition Hall of Crimes Committed by Imperial Japanese Army Unit 731 have also increased.

China has announced an ambitious plan to develop its ice and snow economy as a new economic driver. According to the State Council, the country aims for a total market size of 1.5 trillion yuan by 2030.

To take advantage of this opportunity, Harbin is implementing a series of market regulation and tourism-targeting measures to enhance the tourist experience further, thereby generating additional economic momentum from its ice and snow resources.

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