

Golf promotion

First Minister Alex Salmond and VisitScotland Chairman Mike Cantlay were in Shanghai to help leading tour operator China Holidays launch their first ever dedicated Scottish golf brochure, which will make booking a holiday in Scotland easier than ever for Chinese golfers, business people and their families.

China has been identified as one of Scotland's most important emerging tourism markets, with an increase in visitors from 7,000 in 2005 to approximately 11,000 a year over the past three years – worth on average £7 million a year to the Scottish economy.

The new brochure features suggested golf packages to Scotland, provides information on a number of Scottish clubs, and offers a Scottish Prestige Golf Club trip, providing golfers with a year's membership of historic Musselburgh Old Course in East Lothian, one of the world's oldest courses.

The brochure also highlights key visitor attractions across Scotland aimed at encouraging visiting groups to extend their stay and explore Scotland beyond the confines of the golf course.

On Scottish Golf Day at Shanghai Expo, the FM said:

“Golf is one of Scotland's great tourist draws, and that's particularly true in China, where the game is one of the country's fastest growing sports with more than one million registered golfers, 200 courses in place and another 100 under construction.

“Chinese golfers are well aware of Scotland's status as the 'Home of Golf', not least due to the fact that 90 per-cent of China's green-keepers are trained by Fife's Elmwood College.

“I am therefore delighted that China Holidays, who in more than 10 years have already helped thousands of Chinese golfers fulfil their ambitions of playing golf in Scotland, have decided to launch their first dedicated Scottish golf brochure.

“VisitScotland, and the trade mission they are leading to China this week, are determined to do all they can to increase Chinese visitor numbers, ensuring Scotland is well placed to benefit from the increase in outbound travel from China which has grown significantly in recent years – now the 5th largest market in the world in terms of spend on international travel. “And we’ve made sure that a warm welcome awaits the thousands of visitors each year to Scotland with the recent launch of VisitScotland’s China Toolkit for Scottish businesses, providing useful tips and advice to help make sure Chinese visitors have as comfortable and memorable a stay as possible.”

VisitScotland Chairman Mike Cantlay said:

“Working together with partners and businesses internationally, we sell Scotland to the world bringing millions of visitors and billions of pounds to the economy, and golf has a crucial role to play in our marketing activity. “Scotland delivers the most authentic and diverse golfing experience in the world, and with that comes huge opportunities to market the country as a visitor destination. It’s encouraging to see this level of investment from China Holidays – their dedicated golf brochure, plus the opportunity to experience one year’s membership with Scottish clubs, will enhance Scotland’s reputation as the home of golf, particularly to the business markets.”

Jun Li, Director China Holidays, said:

“It gives me great honour to launch our new brochure to Scotland, The Home of Golf, offering golfers from China the opportunity to travel to Scotland and become a member at Musselburgh Old Course as part of the Scottish Prestige Golf Club trips.”