



GREATER BOSTON CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU AND MASSACHUSETTS OFFICE OF TRAVEL & TOURISM LEAD SALES MISSION TO CHINA

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The Greater Boston Convention & Visitors Bureau (GBCVB) and the Massachusetts Office of Travel & Tourism (MOTT) are spearheading a sales mission to China, March 12-18, 2017. The GBCVB will be joined by ten of its member companies. The delegation will visit Guangzhou, Shanghai and Beijing to promote Boston, Cambridge and Massachusetts, conduct interviews with Chinese media, and meet with China's largest tour operators to generate new business for Boston and Massachusetts' hotels, attractions, retailers and restaurants.

For the past three years, the GBCVB has led a coordinated campaign to sell Boston and Cambridge to the Chinese visitor market. In 2013 the GBCVB formed a China-Friendly Marketing Committee so its members could benefit from the GBCVB's China sales and marketing initiatives and focus on best practices to serve the needs of Chinese visitors coming to Boston and Cambridge. Chinese visitors to Boston have doubled since 2013, and in 2016 overtook UK visitors as the top overseas source market for visitors to Boston and Cambridge.

In December, 2016 the GBCVB hosted a China-Friendly workshop that was attended by over 200 of its member companies. At the workshop, GBCVB President & CEO Patrick Moscaritolo unveiled a five-year plan: "The Bureau has set our sights on attracting 500,000 Chinese visitors to Boston by 2021," said Moscaritolo. He also outlined the GBCVB sales and marketing initiatives for the next five years including the first GBCVB sales mission to China.

The sales mission is a joint marketing initiative with the Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism. For the past year, the GBCVB and MOTT have pursued integrated marketing campaigns, in concert with Brand USA, to produce materials and videos in Mandarin, host media and trade familiarization trips from China, and exhibit at tradeshow to generate business for GBCVB members. MOTT Executive Director Francois-Laurent Nivaud will travel with the delegation to China to represent the Massachusetts visitor industry.

“This mission represents a strong private-public partnership, and a good business opportunity for local companies,” said Nivaud. “It also represents a chance for our tourism industry to strengthen the brand of the entire Commonwealth, especially in Beijing and Shanghai, which have direct flights to and from Logan International Airport.”

Leading the GBCVB delegation to China will be Angela Vento, General Manager of the Sheraton Boston Hotel, Vice Chair of the GBCVB Board of Directors, and Chair of the GBCVB China-Friendly Marketing Committee. With almost three decades of hospitality experience, including 20 years in Hawaii developing marketing programs aimed at Chinese visitors, Vento sees this mission as a critical opportunity to grow Boston’s market share of Chinese visitors. “This first China Sales Mission demonstrates our commitment to the market,” said Vento. “China’s rising middle class, access to 10 year Visas as well as resources, time and interest in traveling abroad put Boston in a great position to develop industry partnerships and grow visitor arrivals.”

In addition to the Sheraton Boston, other properties participating in the mission include the Forbes Four-Star InterContinental Boston and the Godfrey Hotel Boston, a new boutique property in Downtown Crossing. For tours and attractions, the Bureau is excited to have delegates from Boston Duck Tours, Boston Harbor Cruises, Trademark Tours and the New England Aquarium. The iconic Boston Symphony Orchestra will also join the mission, as will the AsiaUS Business Connection, a Boston-based company specializing in cultural exchange programs and educational tourism.

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