



**THE SECRET OF THE SECTOR: IT'S ABOUT
SO MUCH MORE THAN THE TOURISTS**

DATE : JANUARY 2015

It was a scene familiar to dining tables across the world.

Simple, social conversation progresses into gently informative dialogue for those listening in as one guest seeks to answer another's question of *"So, what do you do?"*.

As enlightening as it can be for others, it can in fact be mildly frustrating for the person having to explain him or herself. But it is always, always, worth the effort.

"But I thought you said you were in the hotel business?"

"I am. I manage a hotel on the island."

"But you just said that you are doing work with the government in national development."

"I did. And I am."

"But what has that got to do with the hotel business? I thought that was hospitality, taking care of hotel guests?"

"It is. It is about taking care of hotel guests. You are absolutely right."

"Okay...."

"But it is also about national development, because when the tourists come and stay in the hotel, they are creating jobs for locals in the hotel. And they are increasing the economic opportunity of the country, which, naturally, attracts the attention of other hotel developers. That creates more investment in tourism, which then creates more jobs. By implication, all of those jobs mean that people living where tourists are visiting have even greater opportunity. That is why the government is so keen to work with us. And we are happy to work with the government. It's good for our hotel operations, and it's good for the places where our hotels operate. Make sense?"

By this time all eyes around the table are on the two in conversation.

"Okay, okay, I hear what you are saying. That makes sense. One last question: can you pass the salt?"

SEEING BEYOND THE SUITCASES, SEAT NUMBERS AND SUNSCREEN

With 2015 now behind us, once again it was a busy year with global tourism continuing to grow in numbers of people across the globe coming closer to one another through air miles travelled, cultures shared, experiences enjoyed. Ultimately it was another year of billions of people coming closer to understanding how our global community is united by common values despite different languages, landscapes and lifestyles.

The remarkable force for global good that tourism represents continues to be a fuel for the hearts and minds of those working 24/7/365 for the success of the sector – a success that goes so far beyond the sector.

As a new year unfolds, it is the hope that tourism provides that is the reason so many in tourism, and outside its operations, work to make tourism work.

This is the great secret of tourism: tourism is about so much more than tourists. It's about jobs. Which means it is about creating opportunity for others to have hope in the future.

As recently expressed by Dr. Jim Yong Kim, President of the World Bank in an address focused on 'Building Sustainable Tourism to Promote a More Just and Prosperous World':

"All of (the World Bank's) resources – our global development knowledge, investment capital, financial expertise and country presence – are devoted to making the world a more just and prosperous place. As I will explain, tourism can play an integral role in helping us fulfill this mission."

How do tourists relaxing on beaches, dancing in night clubs, shopping in local markets and shopping centres, dining in city delis and streetside eateries, exploring historical sites, skiing down mountain slopes, and watching the Big 5 roam the vast plains of the African bush, make such an impact?

Dr Jim Yong Kim explains:

"In 2015, about 550 million people will travel to the developing world. This year will be the first time in modern history that middle- and low-income countries receive more visitors than the developed world."

In many developing countries, tourism promotes inclusive economic growth, creating jobs and attracting foreign investors. Tourism enables people to gain job skills and professional experience, and promotes social mobility. Tourism also drives the development of critical infrastructure, like air and seaports, roads and hotels, which connect economies to global value chains and increase trade. And, when done thoughtfully, tourism can help protect the environment and build buffers against climate change."

In the final analysis, looking at what it is going to take to create a world in which all people have the opportunity to dream, as the President of the World Bank says, tourism:

"is also a powerful job creator, providing livelihoods and pathways out of poverty for millions, across genders, ages and skill levels."

This is what creates hope for millions and millions for tomorrow.



COMPASS – Insights into Travel & Tourism Development

For those in the industry, it is the opportunity to go out and 'play tourist' that reboots understanding, and appreciation, across all of the industry's dedicated soldiers of sector growth and development.

In the holiday period just passed, days absent of work but rather filled with family, friends, play, may the real magic of tourism have brought one and all back to the business and busyness of tourism with a grateful, excited heart.

As 2016 now begins, safe, joyful travels to all, and to all a good flight.

- ENDS -