

《旅游局数据显示游客喜好》

According to China's tourism bureau, the majority of holiday-makers chose short-distance getaways over long ones during the three-day New Year holiday. For those who went overseas, tropical islands in neighboring countries such as the Maldives, Bali, Phuket and Saipan were very popular.

Domestically, destinations in southern provinces such as Hainan, Fujian and Yunnan drew a large number of visitors. The spectacular natural scenery and the good quality air are the primary attractions really. In the country's northern regions, meanwhile, it is all about the hot springs and ski resorts.

Cities famous for winter activities, such as Yabuli in Heilongjiang province, Erdos in Inner Mongolia and Zhangjiakou in Hebei province, which will co-host the 2022 Winter Olympics with Beijing, attracted tourists in huge numbers.

Ski resorts, mostly in the northern parts of the country, were crowded out during the holiday.

Quality time with family members, a little bit of exercise, and most importantly a chance to visit China's winning bid to host the 2022 Winter Olympics, made this the perfect snowy getaway.

"It's so special this year because Beijing will host the 2022 Winter Games, and also the snowy conditions are great this year. It feels awesome to ski here," a holiday-maker said.

Skiing is still a new activity for many in China. But the resorts do arrange for instructors to offer tips to beginners. But falling down does not dampen anyone's enthusiasm. As interest in the sport snowballs, many resorts are upgrading their facilities to meet the increasing demand.

"We spent about 35 million yuan to upgrade the ski park this year. We want every skier to be satisfied here," said Yang Guanghu, ski resort manager.

China has just 10 million or so active skiers, but with a growing middle class, and a real incentive to increase and update ski facilities, that number is set to explode with some 300 million people expected to engage in winter sports in the run up to the 2022 Olympics.