

Coast Asian invasion

GOLD COAST BULLETIN

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A NEW commercial showing the Gold Coast as 'very diverse and very accessible' will feature in an explosion of advertising campaigns set to hit local and international markets.

The 32-second commercial is set to make an international splash when it is shown to 26 million households and in 650,000 hotel rooms across the Asia Pacific region.

The colourful commercial, which is now showing on YouTube, is the latest attempt to lure back the lucrative Asian market following a decade-long lull.

The commercial, which is a joint venture between Gold Coast Tourism and AirAsia X, will be beamed to Asia and Australasia on the BBC World network in two bursts, from April 15 until June 8 and again from September 1 until October 5.

Very GC interstate and regional marketing campaigns are set to follow suit, but it is believed the Surfers Paradise Alliance is still planning to launch its own TV commercial which will be aimed at Australia's small screens.

Gold Coast Tourism Chairman Paul Donovan said the international TV strategy was designed with the market in mind and provided an enticing reminder of the Gold Coast's many attractions.

"This is more than just a nice destination commercial. It is a targeted advertisement with a clear message to convert interest in our most significant group of international markets," he said.

"The Gold Coast campaign supports our strategic alliance with AirAsia X, and our joint marketing efforts also include online advertising, electronic direct mail and media families, all of which are timed to stimulate travel during the middle and end of year South East Asian and north Asian holiday periods."

The commercial has reinforced Gold Coast Tourism's decision to push ahead with its own international marketing without the collaboration of Tourism Australia.

The decision comes despite a round table meeting in March between the groups to strengthen their relationship.

The uneasiness began when the Gold Coast was left out of Tourism Australia's ill-fated 'Where The Bloody Hell Are You?' marketing campaign, a move that sparked Gold Coast Tourism's decision to go it alone and secure \$10 million a year from the Gold Coast City Council to market the Coast as a destination in its own right.

Unlike the TA campaign, the Gold Coast Tourism advertisement has shunned a key catchphrase, banking instead on the city's 'diverse' attractions and the VeryGC label.

The commercial features Gold Coast attractions from the beaches and theme parks to the Hinterland and the region's day spas.

AirAsia X now flies direct to the Gold Coast four times a week.

AirAsia X CEO Azran Osman-Rani said the commercial could open up new travel markets which could make the most of direct flights and cheaper air fares.

"This collaboration underscores our strategy of creating new travel markets by serving direct routes to the Gold Coast with the most affordable fares ever seen, and leveraging on AirAsia's extensive low-cost network that connects all major points in South East Asia and China to the Gold Coast, via our Kuala Lumpur hub," he said.

AirAsia X's direct flights from Kuala Lumpur to the Gold Coast began in November last year and from Kuala Lumpur to Hangzhou in February this year, with connections to South East Asia, China and India