

IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON TOURISM ACTIVITIES IN DA NANG CITY

Dr. Dinh Van Trong

trongdv@due.edu.vn

Faculty of Political Theory, Danang University of Economics, Da Nang, Vietnam

Abstract

With the goal of developing tourism to become a spearhead economic sector of the locality, over the years, the Party Committees and authorities of Da Nang city have paid much attention to investment and development and obtained many promising results. The number of tourists coming to Da Nang is increasing which leads to the tourism revenue is increasing as well, significantly contributing to increasing state budget revenue, creating jobs, and improving people's lives. In 2020, the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic halted tourism service activities in the locality, causing heavy losses and damage to the tourism industry. Within the framework of this article, the author focuses on clarifying: Potentials and advantages of tourism development in Da Nang city; Impact of the Covid-19 epidemic on tourism activities in Da Nang city. From there, propose some solutions to restore and develop tourism activities in Da Nang City in the coming time.

Keywords: *Tourism, Covid-19 pandemic, impact, Da Nang city.*

1. Introduction

The complicated developments of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 and early 2021 have strongly affected tourism activities in the world, Vietnam in general, and Da Nang city in particular. Flight bans, travel restrictions, and tourist apprehensions about the effects of the pandemic have left many hotels, restaurants and retail chains in tourist attractions in the city deserted. The whole Da Nang tourism industry was almost exhausted, tourists and tourism revenue dropped seriously. In this article, the author focuses on clarifying the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on tourism activities in Da Nang city.

2. Methods

To clarify the content: Impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on tourism activities in Da Nang city, in this article, the author collects many sources, such as Statistical Yearbook of 2017, 2019, Report of the General Statistics Office of Da Nang City on the socio-economic situation of the locality over the years from 2000 to 2020, reports on the situation of tourists as well as tourism revenue of the Department of Culture - Sports - Tourism, the Implementation plan of action program No. 28-Ctr/TU dated February 18, 2019, of the City Party Committee on sustainable development of marine economy in Da Nang city to 2030, vision to 2020. 2045 of the People's Committee of Da Nang City, History of the Party Committee of Da Nang City, ...

thereby using historical, statistical, analytical, and comparative methods to clarify the potentials and advantages of position. Geographic location, natural resources, and population characteristics affect tourism development in Da Nang city. Current status of tourists as well as tourism revenue in Da Nang from 2000 to 2020.

3. Results

3.1. Potential and advantages of tourism development in Da Nang city

Da Nang city has an area of 1,255.53 km² (of which the mainland is 950.53 km²; the Hoang Sa island district is 305 km²), including 06 districts (Lien Chieu, Thanh Khe, Hai Chau, Cam Le, Ngu). Hanh Son and Son Tra) and 02 districts (Hoa Vang and Hoang Sa island district) [6; p.29].

Da Nang is one of the great urban centers of the country, where it has converged with many potentials and advantages to become the economic, political, cultural and social center of both the Central region and the Central Highlands. The advantages of geographical location, natural resources, and people are essential factors to make Da Nang an attractive tourist destination for domestic and international tourists.

3.1.1. The geographical location

Da Nang is located at 15°55' to 16°14' North latitude, 107°18' to 108°20' East longitude, bordered by Thua Thien - Hue province to the north, Quang Nam province to the west and south, and bordered by Quang Nam province to the East Sea. Thanks to such a geographical position, Da Nang has a temperate climate, not too cold in winter, but not too hot in summer, so it is quite suitable for tourism and resort activities.

Due to the geographical characteristics of being in the middle of the country, on the North-South transport axis in terms of road, railway, sea, and air, it is 764km from Hanoi to the North, and far from Ho Chi Minh City about 964 km to the south. In addition, Da Nang is also the center of three famous world cultural heritages of Vietnam: Hue ancient capital, Hoi An ancient town, and My Son Sanctuary. With this location, Da Nang soon became the center of the country in transit, welcoming tourists of the country.

3.1.2. Natural resources

Da Nang city is one of the important gateways to the sea from the Central Highlands and Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, and Myanmar to the Northeast Asian countries through the East-West economic corridor, with the ending point being Tien Sa Seaport [6; p.23-24]. Da Nang city is endowed with rich, diverse, and abundant natural resources.

To the northeast of Da Nang city is Son Tra peninsula with an area of 400 hectares of primeval forest, diverse in flora and fauna. There are 12 impressive tourist destinations here such as Linh Ung pagoda, Ban Co peak, thousand-year-old banyan tree, radar station 29 (Indochina God's eye), Tien Sa port, Tien Sa beach, Da Den beach, Nghe cape, Bai Nam

beach, Bai But beach, Bai Bac Beach, InterContinental Danang Sun Peninsula Resort. The West is Ba Na Hills tourist area located at an altitude of over 1000m with a cable car system reaching 4 world disciplines: the largest disparity, the longest total length of the cable, and the heaviest cable combined with the area. Fantasy Park is the largest indoor amusement park in Southeast Asia. To the southeast of the city is the famous Marble Mountains with a system of communal houses, pagodas, and shrines in Asian architecture, a system of churches in Western architecture, museums, notably the sculpture art museum. Cham carving attracts a large number of tourists to visit. And the North is Hai Van Pass - where there are many ideal stops to see the dreamy Da Nang city.

Da Nang has a coastline of about 30 km, sloping, smooth sand with many beautiful beaches, such as:

* **Non Nuoc beach** stretches 5km and is located about 10km from the city center to the Southeast, in Hoa Hai ward, Ngu Hanh Son district. Non Nuoc Beach stretches like an arc, fine white sand, gentle slope, clear blue water, sunny and windy. Fresh environment, ideal temperature, less affected by the northeast monsoon. This is a favorable condition for tourists to swim and relax all year round.

* **Bac My An beach** is located in Bac My An ward, Ngu Hanh Son district, Da Nang city, about 7km southeast of the city center. Bac My An beach has 5 beautiful beaches, including T18 beach, My Da Dong 2, My Da Dong 3, Bac My An, and Furama hotel area.

Before 1975, this was just a natural beach, after Da Nang was liberated, the state built here a motel and a sanatorium to serve the convalescence needs of cadres, workers, and officials in Quang Nam - Da Nang province. Recently, with the appearance of resorts, Bac My An has become famous, known by domestic and foreign tourists as an international resort.

* **My Khe beach** has a length of approximately 900m, belongs to the busiest type of beaches in Da Nang, is located 3km from the city center, so it is very familiar to residents. The American magazine Forbes voted My Khe beach as one of the six most attractive beaches on the planet. It can be said that My Khe beach has fully met the basic voting criteria of Forbes, such as My Khe beach is convenient in terms of traffic; the beach is open to all visitors free of charge; the beach has long and flat sand, sunshine and wave coverage suitable for playing sports; capable of ensuring the safety of visitors; There are luxury resorts, international standard villas...

* Nam O Beach is about 17 km northwest of Da Nang city center, Nam O dawn is said to be an ideal picnic place for people who like going "backpacking". Starting from the city center, along Nguyen Luong Bang Street, passing Xuan Thieu beach at the entrance to the winding fishing village, people will see the white sand stretching along the coast appearing before your eyes. From the sand about a few hundred meters, we will encounter a fairly wide rock at the foot of the mountain with thousands of pebbles mixed with coral rocks.

* ***Xuan Thieu Beach*** which is about 3 km south of Nam O Reef - a place associated with history. Before 1975, this beach was reserved only for American soldiers (U.S. soldiers called Xuan Thieu beach “Red Beach” (i.e. Red Sea)). Currently, Xuan Thieu beach is invested with many high-end beach resorts and a variety of sports and entertainment services at sea, such as: surfing, flying parachutes, jet skis.

Xuan Thieu Beach is steeper than other beaches, but the water here is more clean and quiet because there is partly water from the Han River pouring out, the water taste is not as salty as other places. Since 1992, Xuan Thieu tourist area has been established with a relatively continuous and complete service system such as hotels, restaurants, some entertainment services, beach services.

* The beaches of Son Tra Peninsula are a privilege that nature has generously bestowed on Da Nang city. In the figure reaching out to the sea, Son Tra is a giant screen shielding the city. Located about 10 km northeast of the city center, Son Tra Peninsula with an altitude of 693m above sea level. It is also a diverse and abundant nature reserve, protected under the national prohibition forest regime. Son Tra Peninsula is surrounded by a beautiful coastline arc with beaches, such as: Tien Sa Beach, Black Rock expanse, Rang Beach, But, Da, South, North, Con, Trem expanses. Son Tra Peninsula is a convergence of all elements for visitors to visit, resort, have fun and discover the adventure of unspoiled mountains and forests. With its own characteristics, Son Tra Peninsula has created interesting attractions and unique experiences that tourists coming to Da Nang can hardly forget.

In addition, Da Nang has Han River, which contains many potentials and advantages to exploit tourism development.

The Han River is made up of a tributary of the Thu Bon River that is integrated with the Cam Le River. Han River is 1,200m wide, water flow is about 3m/sec, with an average depth of 4 to 5m, the vessel can enter the river to dock easily. The last section of the river connects to Da Nang Bay. The bay has an average depth of 10 to 15m of water, the mouth of the bay is up to 20m of water.

Han River has long been the pride of the people of Da Nang. This river has poetic beauty, bringing many benefits, especially exploiting to develop night tourism. Starting at the pier, visitors will be able to visit the city center at night on the Han River, visitors can admire the unique bridges in Vietnam, such as the Han River (the only cable-stayed bridge in Vietnam, the symbol of the intense vitality of Da Nang city), Thuan Phuoc Bridge (the longest hammock bridge in Vietnam), dragon bridge (the largest steel dragon in the world) and the new tran Thi Ly bridge (the bridge with a tower tilted 117m high, the 3-side cable-stayed system radiating like a sail winding into the South China Sea).

3.1.3. Population characteristics

Da Nang city has a large population compared to the whole country. According to

statistics, in 2019, the population here reached 1,134,310 people, ranking 39th in the country. The structure of labor working in the predominantly service sector, accounting for 68.20%; industry - construction accounted for 28.48% of the labor structure; the agriculture, forestry and fishery sector accounted for only 3.32%.

In the city, there are about 37 ethnic groups and foreigners living together. In particular, the most ethnic group is the Kinh with more than 1 million people, the second largest is Chinese with 2,974 people, the Cha Tu ethnic group has more than 1000 people, along with other ethnic minorities such as Tay, Ede, Muong, Gia Rai, etc. With a large population and diverse cultural identity as above, it has created a unique cultural identity for the people here. In the folk beliefs of the sea, the sea gods are worshipped very diverse and rich, reflecting the aspirations and dreams of fishermen who go to sea. Since then, it has created many customs and festivals that attract a large number of visitors near and far to visit and experience.

3.2. Impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on tourism activities in Da Nang city

3.2.1. Tourism activities in Da Nang city before the Covid-19 pandemic

In order to facilitate the socio-economic in general and tourism activities of Da Nang city in particular with conditions for development, on October 16 2003, the Ministry of The Political Ministry introduced Resolution 33-NQ/TW on the construction and development of Da Nang city in the period of industrialization, to modernize the country. On January 24, 2019, the Politburo continued to issue Resolution No. 43-NQ/TW on the construction and development of Da Nang city to 2030, with a vision to 2045.

Implementing the Resolution of the Politburo, over the years, the Party committees and the Government of Da Nang city have set out many guidelines and policies to concretize the Resolutions of the Politburo with the goal of "Developing tourism to become a key economic sector" in the local economic development. As a result, a number of major tourism projects of domestic and foreign strategic investors have been put into operation for tourism development such as Sun Group, DHC, BRG, AHT, Vin group, Along with that, many activities to promote and promote the image of tourism through festivals, cultural events, sports, tourism are also directed to organize, such as: International Marathon, IRONMAN 70.3, show "Charming Da Nang", Soul Viet ... and especially Danang International Fireworks Festival, Clipper Race 2016, ABG5-2016 Asian Beach Games, Danang International Tourism Fair 2016, Da Nang Paragliding Open "Flying over Tien Sa 2017", Asia Golf Tourism Festival 2017, APEC Premium Week 2017, Danang International Hot Air Balloon Festival was held from April 27th to May 1st 2019 at Hoa Trung High-Tech Park and Ho Chi Minh City, Hoa Vang district and support festivals in Bach Dang street area, so on. Through the above special festivals, it has attracted tens of thousands of domestic and foreign tourists to visit and travel, contributing to promoting and enhancing the local tourism

image to domestic and international tourists.

Accommodation facilities serving tourists are interested in construction investment. On average, there are nearly 100 new accommodation facilities built each year in Da Nang with about 6,000 rooms. In particular, the number of hotels from 1 to 3 stars is more than that. According to statistics of the Danang Tourism Promotion Center, as of the beginning of June 2019, out of 800 accommodation establishments in Da Nang city, there are nearly 650 1-3-star hotels and equivalent. While the hotel is 4-5 stars and equivalent to just over 80 establishments, the rest are luxury resort villas, villas - standard apartments, campsites - motels with standard rooms for rent. Along with the increase in the number of hotels, high-quality hotels also increased, but this number is still quite modest in the total number of hotels throughout the city. The business activities of hotels keep a fairly stable growth rate with an average room use capacity of 75%, coastal hotels and 3-5-star hotels with room capacity in summer can be up to 90-100%.

With the efforts of party committees and local authorities, the past time tourism activities in Da Nang have achieved very remarkable results.. The number of tourists coming to Da Nang increases every year with a fairly high growth rate. The total number of visitors to Da Nang in 2000 was only 393 thousand, in 2007 it exceeded the threshold of 1 million visitors. In 2009, during the global financial crisis, tourists to the City still increased by nearly 15% compared to 2008, reaching more than 1.1 million visitors, the total revenue of the Tourism industry in 2009 reached more than VND 1 trillion, up 12.8% compared to 2008.

Inthe period of 2009 - 2013, along with the development of Vietnam's tourism industry, the number of tourists coming to Da Nang continued to increase, with an average annual growth rate of 26.9%, of which international visitors increased by 39.7% and domestic visitors by 24.5%.

Table 1. Tourist to Da Nang in the period of 2009-2013

(Unit: tourists)

	2009	2010	2011	2021	2013
Total number of visitors	1.131.104	1.499.210	2.227.909	2.570.957	2.938.563
International visitors	155.912	290.933	402.752	409.551	595.095
Domestic visitors	975.192	1.208.277	1.825.157	2.161.406	2.343.468

(Source: Da Nang General Statistics Office in the period of 2009 – 2013)

Entering the period 2014 - 2019, the number of visitors to Da Nang increased rapidly and steadily, with an average growth rate of 17.9%, of which international visitors increased by 29.8% and domestic visitors by 13.0%.

Table 2. Tourist to Da Nang in the period of 2014-2019

(Unit: tourists)

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Total number of visitors	3.800.000	4.600.000	5.510.000	6.600.000	7.600.000	8.692.421
International visitors	955.000	125.000	1.660.000	2.300.000	2.875.000	3.522.928
Domestic visitors	2.800.000	3.350.000	3.840.000	4.300.000	4.700.000	5.169.493

(Source: Summary of Report of the Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism of Da Nang City)

Along with that, total tourism revenue in the period 2014 - 2019 also increased rapidly with an average growth rate of 16.7% in wet year. Total tourism revenue over the years also increased sharply. In 2014, the total tourism revenue was estimated at 987.1 billion VND, by 2017 it was reached 1597.2 billion VND, an increase of 61.1% compared to 2014. By 2019, total tourism revenue reached 2138.0 billion VND, increasing 12.2% compared to 2018.

Table 3. Tourist to Da Nang in the period of 2014-2019

(Unit: Billion VND)

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Total number of visitors	987,1	1.166,4	1.461,6	1.597,2	1.905,6	2.138,0

(Source: Statistical Yearbook 2017 and 2019)

The continuous increase in total tourism revenue over the past years as above is a clear demonstration of the logic with the increase in the number of visitors to Da Nang city. This not only creates conditions for Da Nang to continue affirming its tourism brand with domestic and international tourists but also significantly contributes to the economic restructuring, creating more jobs and improve people's lives.

3.2.2. Impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on tourism activities in Da Nang city

In early 2020, after the outbreak of the Covid-19 epidemic, implementing the social distancing policy of the Prime Minister, in Da Nang city, all activities in the fields of hotels, motels, restaurants and transportation were suspended. Along with that, the aviation industry in Da Nang was also severely affected when a series of domestic and international flights to and from Da Nang were cancelled. This leads to a decrease in the number of international visitors to Da Nang. Domestic tourists also dropped sharply due to the complicated development of the epidemic and Vietnam implemented social distancing. Tourism

businesses face difficulties, causing many employees of the tourism industry to lose their jobs, even without income, ...

After the Prime Minister began easing social distancing measures, allowing tourism services to resume operations, with the direction of Party Committees at all levels, the Department of Tourism promptly mobilized many resources. and actively coordinate with local departments, agencies and sectors to deploy many solutions to stimulate demand and restore tourism activities in the area such as: strongly implementing communication activities about safe - attractive Da Nang destinations. Guided through news articles, tourism images in the press, major domestic and international TV channels, the highlight is a video clip promoting Da Nang tourism on BBC World News; promoting the title of the top 10 destinations in 2020 voted by Google, introducing check-in points, other perspectives on Da Nang on the online channel with high traffic Youtube, Tiktok, Twitter, Instagram, page Fanpage and city tourism portal... Thanks to that, tourism activities in the city are gradually restored.

At the end of July 2020, the Covid-19 epidemic broke out again, following the social distancing policy of the 2nd Prime Minister, Da Nang city had to suspend activities such as festivals and religious ceremonies. , sports activities, events; operations of non-essential businesses and services; amusement parks, entertainment, beauty facilities, karaoke, massage, bars, discos, video games, theaters, cinemas, stadiums, training grounds,... So, the Da Nang's tourism businesses have not had time to recover from the 1st outbreak, but have to face and suffer the 2nd wave of Covid-19 epidemic, which makes many businesses located in the city already difficult. difficult even more difficult. The tourism stimulus packages were almost frozen due to the sudden increase in the number of tourists canceling the tour.

Entering 2021, the Da Nang city government has been making efforts to recover the tourism industry after the heavy losses caused by the Covid-19 epidemic in 2020 with many new experience tourism products, organizing many tourism events, and many more. exciting activities and events. Along with that, many large units and businesses in the area such as: Ba Na Hills tourist area also organize the program of the magical winter festival, the program to welcome the new year "New Year's Eve Party" with many activities. experience high-class, novel and attractive cuisine to serve tourists; Art performance program Co Tu Dance "Tung Tung Da Da" is free for visitors of Nui Than Tai Hot Springs Park Tourist Area. However, due to the general context of the whole country, the Covid-19 pandemic broke out again in many provinces and cities across the country, the number of tourists to Vietnam in general and Da Nang city in particular did not achieve the expected results.

According to the report of Da Nang city, in 2020, tourists to Da Nang decreased sharply, the total number of visitors served by accommodation establishments was estimated at 2.67 million, down more than 64% compared to 2019, of which tourists international arrivals is estimated at 703 thousand arrivals, equal to only 24.5% of 2019. Visitors served

by travel agencies are also at a record low, especially foreign tours have decreased deeply, Da Nang tourists traveling abroad also For example, international visitors to Da Nang only focus on the first 3 months of the year. Due to travel restrictions, the average number of days of stay of tourists increased higher than in previous years, estimated at 2.47 days/time, of which international visitors are 2.33 days/time and domestic tourists are 2.54 days/time (In 2019, this indicator is 2.12, 2.13 and 2.10 days/time, respectively) [3, p. 6-7]. Notably, in the first 3 months of 2021, tourism activities continued to be affected by the COVID-19 epidemic. The number of visitors to accommodation establishments serving the first quarter was estimated at only 610.6 thousand arrivals, down 52.5% over the same period in 2020, of which international visitors were estimated at 48.6 thousand arrivals, down 91.7% and domestic visitors estimated at 562 thousand arrivals, down 19.3% [4, p. 11].

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The Covid-19 pandemic has caused heavy damage to the tourism economy of the country in general and Da Nang city in particular. In 2020 and early 2021, the number of visitors to Da Nang decreased sharply compared to the same period last year. Along with that, revenue from accommodation, food and travel services also did not reach the plan. Units and businesses operating in the tourism sector were the hardest hit, leading to a halt in other fields.

However, Da Nang city is considered as a place with many potentials and advantages for tourism development. The strategic goal of Da Nang tourism development to 2030 with a vision to 2045 is to build and develop a world-class Da Nang tourism brand, connecting with tourist routes in the region and the region above. biodiversity conservation facilities, promoting the city's natural, cultural and historical heritage values. At the same time, promote the potential and advantages of the sea in tourism and service development; effectively exploiting the potential of sea tourism, creating unique and highly specific marine tourism products and building Da Nang tourism brand to reach the international level [5, p.5]. Therefore, in the near future for Da Nang tourism to recover and develop in the context of the complicated development of the Covid - 19 pandemic, in my opinion, it is necessary to focus on implementing some of the following solutions:

Firstly, in the face of the complicated situation of the Covid-19 pandemic, Da Nang city, on the one hand, need to update and promptly implement the Government's instructions on the prevention of COVID-19 epidemic. 19 to business tourism and people; strengthen the inspection and prevention of epidemics at enterprises and tourist establishments; promote epidemic prevention and control propaganda and well implement the 5K message of the Ministry of Health, on the other hand, must proactively come up with synchronous and powerful solutions to recover and develop post-Covid-19 tourism, such as: Tax exemption and reduction for businesses in the tourism industry or organizing many activities to stimulate demand, build new attractions to attract tourists or promote communication and

promotion of Da Nang destinations. Along with that, Da Nang city needs to have a plan to improve the quality of tourism business activities, develop tourism human resources by continuously organizing training classes, fostering skills and professionalism.

Secondly, tourism businesses need to have a plan to adjust their operations, study market needs to have suitable quality tourism products; strengthen alignment to increase resistance and grow strong; linking with airlines, transportation, hotels, restaurants... to build tourism stimulus packages, helping tourism recover quickly after Covid - 19. Coordinate with functional units of Da Nang city step up promotion, publicity and development of new tourism products to attract international tourists, especially tourists from regions not affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Third, travel businesses, hotels, restaurants and Da Nang people when participating in tourism activities should pay attention to strengthening safety measures to prevent and control the Covid-19 epidemic according to regulations. government to both ensure the safety of passengers and at the same time protect their own safety.

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