Minister concludes trade mission

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Bardish Chagger, minister of small business and tourism, concluded a week-long and trade mission to China last weekend with plenty to show for the effort.  
Building on previous work by the Canadian government to help businesses thrive in the Chinese market, the mission took a delegation of provincial and territorial ministers and representatives from more than two dozen Canadian tourism businesses, including indigenous operators, to Beijing, Hangzhou and Shanghai to develop business.  
The mission concluded in Shanghai, where the minister and delegation met with key representatives from Ctrip, one of China's largest online travel agencies, and Fosun, a Chinese conglomerate that operates several multinational tourism operations.  
"This mission was an incredible opportunity to build on our two countries' strong people-to-people ties by developing long-lasting personal relationships with key stakeholders in the Chinese tourism industry," said Chagger.  
"I am confident that Canada's unique tourism experiences will help attract a record number of Chinese visitors this year, creating economic growth and good middle-class jobs in our communities from coast to coast. The relationships we build today will help continue this momentum for many years to come," she added.  
Throughout the mission, the delegation met with a diverse group of Chinese tourism operators, travel agents, business leaders and government officials to build relationships with key stakeholders in the Chinese tourism market and showcase Canada's unique tourism offerings.  
The delegation took part in three business-to-business networking and matchmaking events that provided the opportunity to connect with more than 120 Chinese tour operators and other key stakeholders in the Chinese tourism industry. More than 400 encounters took place between Canadian and Chinese businesses.  
Seven memoranda of understanding and partnership agreements were signed, including an agreement with CYTS Sparkle Tours, a dynamic Chinese tour company that will increase the marketing of authentic indigenous tourism experiences in Canada.  
This mission was the third trip to China for minister Chagger in less than a year. Last July, she was part of a mission with the former governor general, and in December she accompanied Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. During that mission, a single event at Sina Weibo helped raise awareness among Chinese consumers of the unique travel experiences available in Canada. This mission was the continuation of that focus.  
"There has never been a better time for Canada to draw on and expand our extensive people-to-people links in order to tap into the fast-growing Chinese market," said François-Philippe Champagne, minister of international trade.  
"China offers tremendous opportunities in many sectors for Canadian businesses of all sizes to diversify their trade and investment, creating good middle-class jobs for Canadians in the process," he said.

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