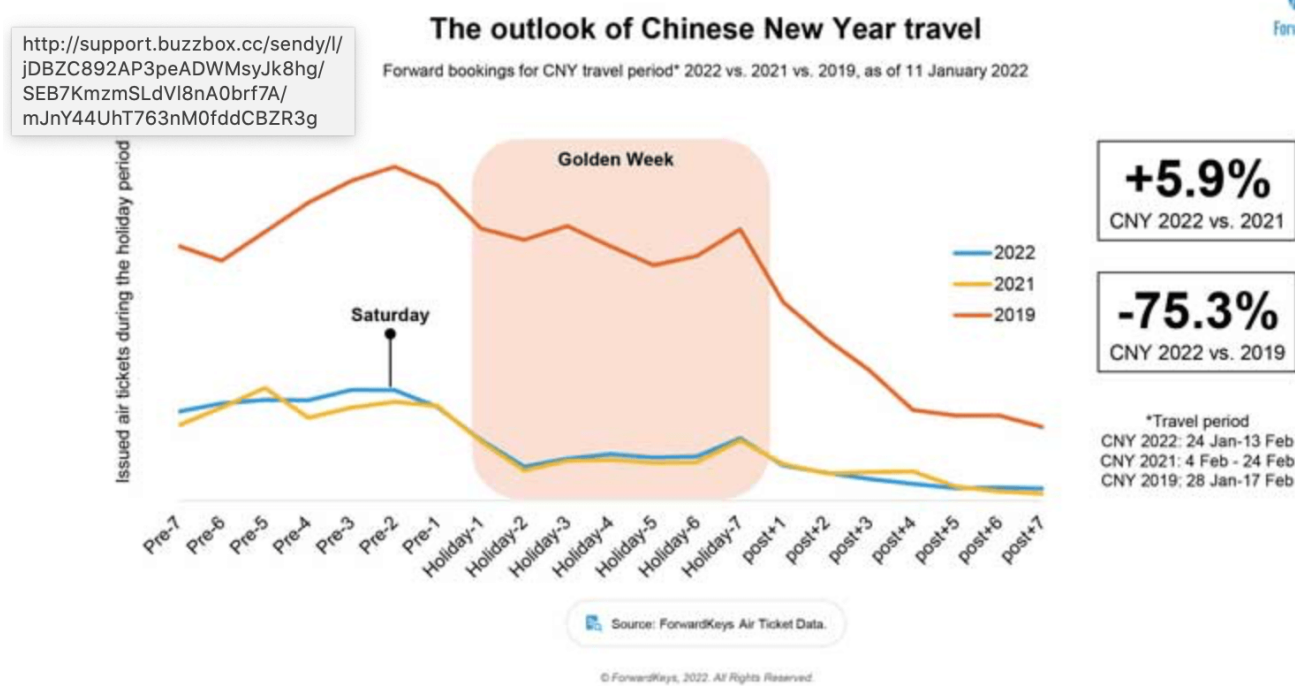


# ForwardKeys reveals Omicron casts shadow over CNY travel

ForwardKeys, which monitors air ticketing information globally, reports that recent lockdowns in China imposed due to the Omicron variant, have impacted New Year travel plans for the upcoming holiday period of January 24 through February 13. Bookings are currently 75.3% below those of pre-pandemic times, although up 5.9% vs 2021.



Among the top 15 destinations for domestic travel in China, the most resilient destinations are Changchun, reaching 39% of pre-pandemic levels; Sanya, 34%; Shenyang, 32%; Chengdu, 30%; Haikou, 30%; Chongqing, 29%; Shanghai, 26%; Wuhan, 24%; Harbin 24% and Nanjing, 20%. This shows that leisure travel is the most resilient.

Sanya and Haikou have become increasingly popular destinations throughout the pandemic, fueled by the ban on international travel and the duty free agreement between Hainan and the government. According to Hainan’s commerce department, the number of duty-free shoppers grew by 73% in 2021 and sales increased by 83%.

Bing Han Kee, VP Sales – APAC, at ForwardKeys, said: “I am not yet ready to give up hope of a last-minute recovery. The reason: throughout 2021, travel has bounced back strongly as soon as restrictions are lifted, with ever shorter lead times. I am also impressed by the strongly growing enthusiasm for winter sports, which I am sure has been encouraged by publicity surrounding the upcoming Winter Olympics in Beijing.”