

# TRAVTALK

THE NEWSPAPER OF THE TRAVEL INDUSTRY

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## WTM: Vantage point for trade

World Travel Market (WTM), the leading global event in the travel industry, has attracted 250 new exhibitors this year from every travel sector, including airlines, tourist boards, luxury resorts and technology specialists from new emerging markets around the world from small business entrepreneurs to large corporates. It is estimated that there will be deals worth more than £2.5 billion during the show at ExCel London from November 2-5, 2015.



SHEHARA RIZLY

The Middle East has 10 new major players from Dubai, Kuwait and the Kingdom of Bahrain added on to the regular list of exhibitors. Ajman Tourism Development Department (ATDD) had a very fruitful experience during the past two years at the exhibition as they were able to promote Ajman's tourist attractions and meet partners that intensified their campaign in the development of tourism sector of the emirate.

As a result, they have seen an increase in the number of tourists visiting Ajman. During the second quarter, the hotel industry showed an increase of 40 per cent on the number of guest nights for the hotel facilities, indicating that more guests are finding the emirate a good destination when visiting the UAE.



**H.E. Khalid Jasim Al Midfa**  
Chairman, Sharjah Commerce and Tourism Development Authority

**Sharjah will showcase itself as a world class tourist destination for the entire family. Family tourism is a major pillar in the Sharjah Tourism Vision 2021**

"Sharjah will showcase itself as a world class tourist



**Faisal Al Nuaimi**  
General Manager  
Ajman Tourism Development Department

**We are aiming that visitors will discover more about the projects of ATDD and what we offer in terms of attractions in Ajman**

destination for the entire family. In fact, family tourism



**Wael Soueid**  
Area Manager  
Anantara Hotels Resorts and Spas

**Attending WTM is something we look forward to as it gives us the chance to be in the same room as some of the best travel and tourism professionals**

is a major pillar in the Sharjah Tourism Vision

2021, under which distinct packages and offers will be specially designed for families," says **H.E. Khalid Jasim Al Midfa**, Chairman, Sharjah Commerce and Tourism Development Authority (SCTDA).

Sharjah's tourism sector has received a new direction this year with the launch of the Sharjah Tourism Vision 2021, a strategic roadmap launched by the Sharjah Commerce and Tourism Development Authority (SCTDA) to attract more than 10 million tourists to the emirate by year 2021. One of the major launches this year is Al Noor Island in Sharjah's Khalid Lagoon. The AED 80 million (US\$22 million) project is set to become an iconic destination in the emirate. The island consists of a uniquely designed streamlined structure inspired by the natural environment of butterflies. Sharjah also made

its mark as a key MICE destination, experiencing a surge in traffic.

Sharjah will also highlight at the WTM major hospitality and tourism launches this year, including the new Sheraton Sharjah Beach Resort and Spa that features 343 oceanfront rooms, including 48 suites. The emirate will also draw attention to its Kalba eco-tourism project on the east coast of Sharjah, which added this year a turtle rehabilitation centre and a birds of prey facility.

"We are aiming that visitors and exhibitors will discover more about the latest projects of ATDD and what we offer in terms of tourist attractions in Ajman. We want them to experience the rich culture and traditions of the Emirate and learn about its humble beginning. We are  
Contd. on page 3 ►



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# Rubbing shoulders with the best @WTM

► Contd. from page 1

also in search for future tourism partners to be able to reach the target of 5 million visitors by 2021," says **Faisal Al Nuaimi**, General Manager, Ajman Tourism Development Department (ATDD).

The real focus of ATDD is to present Ajman to other cities as the new getaway destination. They have been eyeing a number of cities outside the emirates such as other GCC regions, Asian countries such as People's Republic of China and other European countries. Nuaimi further adds, "We are working to attract new markets in support of our goal to receive 1.1 million visitors by the end of 2015." The past two years this global trade exhibition allowed Ajman Tourism to promote their latest campaigns especially in introducing the Emirates a tourist destination internationally. The partners they met, provided a lot of significant insights on how to further strengthen their cam-

paigns and activities in order to enhance the number of visitors to Ajman.

Anantara Hotels Resorts and Spas in Abu Dhabi will be taking part in WTM this year, in conjunction with the Abu Dhabi Tourism Authority (TCA Abu Dhabi). "Attending this event is something we look forward to every year as it gives us the chance to be in the same room as some of the best travel and tourism professionals across the world. With conferences, seminars and a plethora of networking opportunities, this is a fantastic platform to discover the latest industry research, insight and trends on a global scale," opines **Wael Soueid**, Area Manager, Anantara Hotels, Resorts and Spas. He further added that the performance for their properties in 2015 has so far exceeded their expectations with strong occupancy levels and interest in all their properties in Abu Dhabi. Things are very positive for the industry in Abu Dhabi itself, with a 17



**Mohamed Jassim**  
Managing Director  
Al Rais Travels

**Exhibiting at any major exhibitions is no longer only for business generating participation, it is mainly for increasing our networking**

per cent Year-On-Year increase in hotel guests in the first half of the year, with a prediction of 3.9 million visitors to the capital by the end of the year.



**Naeem Darkazally**  
Vice President Sales and Marketing,  
Middle East and Africa Millennium  
hotel group

**WTM maintains a very high quality of visitors. Millennium Group participation grabs this opportunity to showcase our portfolio**

As Dubai is proclaiming to be a "Capital of Islamic Economy" and one of the seven pillars of the Islamic Economy is "Family Tourism," Al Rais travels will mainly



**Guy Hutchison**  
COO  
Rotana Hotel Management  
Company

**We hope that our overall brand awareness is as strong, if not stronger than ever at this year's exhibition**

focus to capture the Family market and be part of "Dubai's Vision."

"We believe in today's times, exhibiting at WTM or

any such major exhibitions taking place around the globe, is no longer only for business generating participation, it is mainly for increasing our networking with new suppliers on board and moreover enhancing our relationships with our old partners worldwide and lastly for our company existence in the market," says **Mohamed Jassim**, Managing Director, Al Rais Travels.

"Millennium group goes to WTM with a handful of headline news that addresses our latest company strategic initiatives. Whether it is the opening of our 5 Star Millennium Hotel and conventions centre Kuwait, or the new Ballroom and Meetings rooms added to our hotel facilities at Millennium Airport Dubai; this is in addition to our iconic Bab Al Qasr Hotel Abu Dhabi, and the Grand Millennium Hotel Muscat opening end of this year. Corporate MICE

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### Unrivalled global reach

World Travel Market (WTM) is undoubtedly the leading global event for the travel and tourism industry for networking and conducting business deals. Business worth more than £2.5 billion is transacted at WTM annually. It facilitates more than 1.1 million on-stand business meetings, wherein the Middle East section conducts almost 87,000 meetings.

Wellness is one of the strongest growing sectors in tourism and the Middle East is leading the way towards this growth. Also, some of the world's leading sport tourism destinations and professionals will discuss the need for the future of sport tourism destinations. This year WTM leader's lunch will be opened by David Gill, former Chief Executive of one of the world's most valuable and well known football clubs Manchester United.

With the growing demand for 'experiences' across the tourism sector, Dubai will be presenting two unique products: Ski Dubai and "ifly" Dubai. The first an indoor ski center at the Mall of the Emirates with resident king penguins and a 3000 metre interactive snow park and zip wire – a winter wonderland in the desert. "ifly" Dubai at the Mirdif City Center is an indoor sky diving centre which allows you to experience flying without a parachute; especially designed for thrill seekers and with the world's first ever double and vertical wind tunnel which suspends you four metres above the ground.

The travel tech show will attract most of the specialists in the industry as they discuss the way forward, especially with digital media, most importantly – blogging and social media. Responsible tourism will definitely attract attention as they debate if the travel and tourism industry is making enough efforts to address climate change issues.

From the Middle East, Yas Island Abu Dhabi will be among the biggest exhibitors driving the destination to the forefront with many activities available to promote the destination. This year at WTM there will be a focus on the emerging trends and markets with high dividends and the potential to flourish over the next few years.

# Mixing business with leisure

A welcoming warmth of hospitality catering to all kinds of travellers has been our trademark in this competitive hospitality field.

Grand Millennium Dubai caters to both business and leisure travellers with their superior service standards which ensure that our guests return. The hotel enjoys an outstanding location in the heart of new Dubai with close proximity to the city's beaches, shopping malls, touristic destinations and leisure attractions making it an ideal venue for holiday seekers.

The 340-room hotel features contemporary interiors within a welcoming and inviting setting and is regularly met with the warmth of hospitality offered by the Grand Millennium Dubai. We are aware of the competition in the market and we strive to offer a level of service which motivates our guests to keep coming back and choosing us as their hotel destination whenever they visit Dubai.

Grand Millennium Dubai caters to business travellers looking for a comprehensive venue to fulfil all their meeting and business trips requirements. The seven superior meeting rooms and a magnificent ballroom all complemented with state-of-the-art facilities are some of the key



our outstanding spa facilities will definitely rejuvenate their senses. They can indulge in

your mood every time. Enjoy a spectacular dining experience at Toshi, the hotel's sig-

screens featuring live sports makes this venue an ideal lunch or after work gathering spot.

**Grand Millennium Dubai caters to business travellers looking for a comprehensive venue to fulfil all their meeting and business trips requirements**

special treatments in any of our nine treatment rooms with our renowned therapists who will make sure that they are

nature pan-Asian restaurant which was recently refurbished with beautifully decorated glamorous Asian interiors and a modern ambience whilst keeping the same invigorating and tempting flavours intact. They can experience a culinary journey to the wonderful world of Asia, explore the richness of flavours from five different Asian cuisines under one roof with an open show kitchen and numerous theme nights magically transforming them to different parts of the continent.

The recently created Belgian Beer Café located on the roof top terrace is a beautiful outdoor venue during the pleasant weather months. It is valued by many UAE residents and visitors alike. Its Art-Nouveau interiors along with its extensive menu selection inspired by authentic Belgian dishes as well as massive



features that attract business travellers. The in-house banquets and events team are dedicated towards tailor making each event to exceed your expectations.

Whether your client is a business or leisure traveller,

relaxed and revived from their journey. Our invigorating Moroccan Hamam is one of the most popular treatments in the region.

We believe in staying ahead of the game and our many dining options cater to



**Oussama Chalak**  
Resident Manager  
Grand Millennium Dubai

# Different products on show @WTM

► Contd. from page 3

business travellers have been heavily targeted by many local governments and indeed M&C growth comes in line as we provide the latest state of the art hotels' conferencing facilities that is unparalleled," says **Naeem Darkazally**, Vice President Sales and Marketing, Middle East

and Africa, Millennium Hotel Group.

He further added, "WTM is one of the most important and interactive travel shows in the world. As an international, well established event, WTM maintains a very high quality of visitors, specialised in this vivid industry, and Millennium Group

participation grabs this opportunity to showcase our portfolio and link with our existing and new clients from around the world. Keep in mind Millennium brand is well represented and established in the UK & Europe, which gives us the edge to solicit business and tap new markets. 2020 Dubai and the 2022 World Cup Doha are

both examples of key global events that require remarkable improvements in the infrastructures particularly hotels. We presently have a clear gap in the budget and 4 star hotels inventories and I believe this is where the potential is laying."

**Guy Hutchison**, COO, Rotana Hotel Management

Company, says, "We hope that our overall brand awareness is as strong, if not stronger than ever at this year's exhibition. Moreover, we have many new properties in the pipeline for this year as part of our 2015-2017 outlook and ongoing expansion plan, which we hope to help promote. Our expansion

plan, which will oversee the extension of the Rotana brand into new markets such as Turkey and Africa, while reinforcing our presence in the fast-growing Gulf markets where we have already built up an enviable market share, brings us closer to realising our ambitious vision of operating 100 hotels by 2020." 🌟

## Dubai hotels get more than 11.6m guests in 2014

■ Figures show a 5.6 per cent year-on-year increase in hotel establishment guests. Hotel and hotel apartment room revenues rise 12 per cent to AED 15.2 billion. Dubai's hotel establishments welcomed 11,629,578 guests in 2014, registering a 5.6 per cent increase on 2013's total. Figures released today by Dubai's Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing (DTCM) show steady year-on-year growth and significant increases across key indicators including hotel establishment revenues and guest nights. The fig-



**H.E. Helal Saeed Almarri**  
Director General  
DTCM

ures for 2014 indicate that Dubai is continuing to maintain growth at a sustainable level, while also growing its portfolio of hotels and hotel apartment establishments, thus taking another step closer to achieving its Tourism Vision for 2020, which aims to welcome 20 million visitors a year by 2020.

Dubai's top 10 hotel guest source markets in 2014 remained almost entirely unchanged from 2013, with only slight shifts in positioning. For January to December 2014, Saudi Arabia was once again the top source market, followed by India, UK, USA, Iran, Oman, China, Kuwait, Russia and Germany.

**His Excellency Helal Saeed Almarri**, Director General, DTCM, commented: "The 2014 figures demonstrate healthy year-on-year growth for hotel guest numbers with significant increases from Asia, Africa and Western Europe. Our hosting of the Fam trip from India in December 2014 and steps taken to leverage the exemption of pre-entry visas for all EU member states are crucial to further strengthen ties with key markets."

**Yas Island Rotana**  
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[rotana.com](http://rotana.com)

## CSR label for TIME hotels

■ The UAE based TIME Hotels has been operating in Dubai since 2012 and positioning itself as a forward-thinking hotel chain that offers home away from home services. As part of its long-term and innovative planning, the chain already has significant number of initiatives in place to encourage sustainability and social responsibility. The company



has won several awards including the Green Globe Certification which is an indication of its commitment to the environment and other areas of sustainability.

In 2015, TIME Hotels applied for the Dubai Chamber CSR Label as a step towards strengthening its commitment to sustainability and CSR and also to benefit from what the tool offers in terms of identifying gaps in its performance and relative to other companies operating in Dubai.

## Zaap Asian Restaurant opens at Dubai Marine Beach Resort & Spa

■ Formerly known as the award-winning Thai Bistro restaurant, Zaap officially opened doors on October 8 in the presence of high ranking guest from the Thai Consulate in the UAE.

Zaap delivers a fusion of the mystical Asian cuisines, blending the strong aromatic and bold flavors of the Far East, using traditional techniques that are truly unique to the region. Zaap takes you on a tantalising culinary journey, delivering a combination of flavors and



textures that reflect the blending of Asia's rich history and cultures. With the experienced Thai Chef Somphot Photosalee at the helm and one of the most romantic settings in town, Zaap is the place to be for the best in Asian cuisine.

# R Hotels focus on key feeder markets

R Hotels' latest property, ibis Styles Jumeirah, will have its debut participation at WTM 2015. The recently opened property aims to officially introduce ibis Styles to the UK market and target outbound and wholesale agents in the UK.

 SHEHARA RIZLY

**Sumair Tariq**, Managing Director, R Hotels, comments: "R Hotels is proud to have taken a step further in tapping this growing segment by not only exhibiting, but also by being a hotel sponsor of World Halal travel summit 2015 (WHTS15), as this is a great platform to promote our properties. The demand for Muslim-friendly travel options is set to increase in the coming years, and with our current hotel portfolio and two more properties in the pipeline, we are positive on establishing R Hotels as a key player in this market and cementing new partnerships locally and globally."

**Muhammad Haider**, Hotel Manager, ibis Styles Jumeirah notes, "There is an increased demand in the UAE, especially in Dubai, for more affordable accommodation. There is a growing market for mid-scale properties as travellers are looking for more cost-effective options." With regards to the strategies, the Ajman properties, Ramada Hotel & Suites Ajman and Ramada Beach Hotel Ajman will boost its presence in Turkey, Eastern Europe and CIS markets, and tap tourist arrivals from Central Asia, China and India. Both properties will be part of Ajman Tourism Development Department (ATDD) stand at the WTM.

Ramada Downtown Dubai seeks to boost its relationship with existing partners and seek new feeder markets including East Europe, USA, Australia and New Zealand. The hotel will maximise Wyndham Hotel Group's huge presence in the exhibition to tap new markets. Ramada Downtown Dubai will also continue to focus on its key feeder market, which is the GCC region as it comprises 70 per cent of its total nationality mix. The UK market is currently Hawthorn Suites by Wyndham's second source market and through WTM, the hotel aims to identify new leads within this market, especially during the onset of the winter season. Hawthorn Suites by Wyndham is also



**Sumair Tariq**  
Managing Director  
R Hotels

**With our current portfolio and two more properties in the pipeline, we are positive on establishing R Hotels as a key player in halal market**

eyeing new emerging markets such as East Europe, Far East Asia, Australia and South America, specifically Argentina and Brazil.

**Wael El Behi**, General Manager, Hawthorn Suites by Wyndham, states, "Last year, our attendance at WTM was very beneficial, as we were able to generate some good leads and converted them into business." He stressed the necessity to attend WTM as it is the second largest travel and tourism exhibition in the world after ITB Berlin, and currently, the UK is their second source market.

**Iftikhar Hamdani**, Cluster General Manager, Ramada Hotel & Suites Ajman / Ramada Beach Hotel Ajman, says, "We have been attending WTM for the past six years and the response particularly from sports groups like cricket and football teams from the UK for the winter season had been really good, also in terms of the venue to personally connect with our partners in West Europe." As this is the largest B2B exhibition after ITB; which they attend as well, the WTM Technology Innovation is very informative and helpful as they learn a lot and get new ideas by attending this event annually.



**Iftikhar Hamdani**  
Cluster General Manager, Ramada Hotel & Suites Ajman / Ramada Beach Hotel Ajman,

**We have been attending WTM for the past six years and the response from sports groups from the UK for the winter season had been really good**

**Samir Arora**, General Manager, Ramada Downtown Dubai, adds, "WTM has been fruitful for us for the past years as we were able to meet with our partners and tap new business under one roof. We



**Samir Arora**  
General Manager  
Ramada Downtown Dubai

**WTM has been fruitful for us for the past years as we were able to meet with our partners and tap new business under one roof**

attend forums on the latest trends and innovation in the hospitality field, which is an added advantage."

R Hotels was part of the inaugural World Halal Travel Summit and Exhibition

(WHTS15) as hotel sponsor and it aims to strengthen its status as one of the leading hospitality groups in the UAE. They are a Sharia-compliant company but their halal and family-friendly properties in the UAE cater to all types of travellers. Through their participation, R Hotels seeks to maximise opportunities with global travel and tourism professionals. The demand for Muslim-friendly travel options is set to increase in the coming years, and with their current hotel portfolio and two more properties in the pipeline, they are positive on establishing R Hotels as a key player in this market and cementing new partnerships locally and globally.

Ramada Hotel and Suites Ajman, through the leadership of GM Iftikhar Hamdani, has been active in various green activities, and the most prominent initiatives that it pioneered are the zero landfill project and the urban farm. The success of Ramada Ajman's projects started with the mindset to create change

across the UAE had installed the compost machine, which converts organic waste into fertilizers. The hotel aims to continue to spread awareness on the impact of sustainable initiatives by speaking in various conferences and forums and calling out hoteliers to step up and make a change.

The two properties in Ajman continue to lead in the Northern Emirates in terms of occupancy, especially during the summer season, with an average occupancy of 90 per cent. For the Dubai hotels, Ramada Downtown Dubai and Hawthorn Suites by Wyndham both observed that the competition has been tighter due to the added room inventory in the emirate. However, the opening of new attractions and theme parks in Dubai is poised to attract more tourists in the emirate, and the growth is mainly seen from price-sensitive markets.

They are constructing a new 182-key hotel beside Ramada Beach Hotel Ajman with a total investment of



**Wael El Behi**  
General Manager  
Hawthorn Suites by Wyndham

**Last year, our attendance at WTM was very beneficial, as we were able to generate some good leads and converted them into business**

by raising awareness and sharing the importance of waste management and sustainability in the hospitality industry. The hotel attracted the attention of different hospitality groups and establishments in the UAE and GCC and to date, 25 hotels



**Muhammad Haider**  
Hotel Manager  
ibis Styles Jumeirah

**There is a growing market for mid-scale properties as travellers are looking for more cost-effective options**

AED150 million (\$40.9 million). It is expected to open in FQ 2017 and will feature rooms with sea view, restaurant, spa and fitness centre and indoor swimming pool. This will be R Hotel's seventh property in the UAE. 🌟

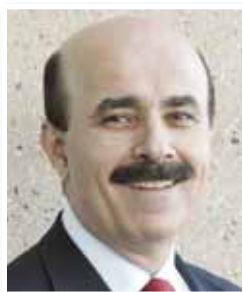
# Trade shows enhance ties Geared for WTM

Participation in key trade shows helps professionals network and drive their businesses, says Hussein Hachem, Cluster General Manager, Al Bustan and Al Murooj Rotana.



Cluster General Manager for both Al Bustan and Al Murooj Rotana, **Hussein Hachem**, says, "We participate under the umbrella of the Rotana group at the WTM, ATM, ITB etc. These are important in terms of deriving new business to our hotels and establishing strong relationships with various travel and tourism experts from different parts of the globe. This provides for us an ideal opportunity to tap into new markets, be informed about the emerging market trends and pursue our efforts further on a positive note."

Al Bustan and Al Murooj are both important as they have their own individual characters. Al Murooj Rotana, located in close proximity to Burj Khalifa and Dubai mall, is an oasis in the city. It is a large



**Hussein Hachem**  
General Manager  
Al Bustan and Al Murooj Rotana

**These are important for deriving new business and establishing strong ties with travel and tourism experts**

complex with all amenities with a resplendent view of the whole property especially from the executive lounge which certainly looks as if it is "an

oasis in the city." This property caters to both business and leisure travellers with the finest amenities offered at five star class luxury. They have won many awards and accolades as the best city and convention center as well due to the meeting and convention facilities in both premises. Al Bustan can easily do a sit down dinner set up for 1000 whilst Al Murooj can accommodate 500 for a sit down dinner party.

The two properties have the most exclusive restaurants catering to the vast needs of the clientele ranging from authentic Japanese, Thai and Indian cuisines to fine dining options, lounge bar, pub and discotheque. Among the regular clientele who enjoy the facilities of the two properties are mainly from GCC countries, Europe, the UK and from the east India and China take pride of place. 🌟



Golden Tulip is part of the international hotel chain- Louvre hotels, which was purchased by the Chinese group Jin Jang International in February 2015, and now operates a network between Asia, Europe and the Middle East with over 3000 hotels worldwide.

According to **Tarek Lotfy**, General Manager, Golden Tulip, they will focus on the changing economies and recognise key emerging markets and trends that will bring them new dividends in terms of business. He is of the view that when the new attractions come into place in the UAE, which will consist of the Channel under Sheik Zayed Road, Marvel and Lego Land, they will draw numbers from some new emerging



**Tarek Lotfy**  
General Manager  
Golden Tulip Al Barsha

markets. He is also of the view that another positive factor for the market to grow will be the new list of 45 countries who could travel to the UAE and purchase on arrival visa, which includes some new untapped markets with great potential. Driving for more business in the new market segments whilst following up with the existing markets will be the way forward to the hotel at the WTM this year.

Another important area been researched is the EXPO 2020 as the property is in close proximity to the projects that may develop between 2016-2017 and currently monitoring the trends of the market. The product offerings at Golden Tulip for the travel agents and tour operators are quite lucrative as they have timely promotions that focus attention on the business and leisure traveller. Due to the demand from some of their agents the promotion where the clients receive a free helicopter ride when booking their suites for three nights has been extended. Aimed at the agents and the business traveller seeking relaxation and a sporting environment Golden Tulip Al Barsha hosts the largest sports bar where many corporate companies gather to view great sporting events on their signature large screens. 🌟



## A COMFORTABLE STAY

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## Turkish Airlines launch flights to Miami



■ Miami became the eighth US destination to be added on to the regular flight schedule of Turkish Airlines. A special introductory round trip offer of 3055 AED is available to the UAE residents flying to the destination until February 2016, however, the booking should be made with travel agents by December 2, 2015. This will encourage Dubai travellers to visit Miami, a city renowned for its Art Decor buildings, beaches and numerous entertainment options. While the Florida destination is known for being a hit with the young, it is also well-loved by middle-aged adults for its art scene and culinary legacy, evocative of Cuba's gastronomic delights.

Turkish Airlines special offer to Miami is the perfect opportunity to travel in the cooler months, to one of the world's most well-loved shopping destinations.

According to research, GCC Nationals usually take one holiday each summer to a long-haul destination. The recent establishment of a US Customs and Border Protection facility at Abu Dhabi International Airport allows passengers to complete all immigration, customs and agriculture inspections prior to their departure, from the UAE, and has increased outbound tourism from the UAE to the US. The discounted air fares are available across Business, Comfort and Economy cabins.

# Qatar-Morocco 10 times weekly

Qatar Airways welcomed the flagship carrier of Morocco, Royal Air Maroc's first direct flight to Doha, as part of the two airlines' joint business agreement which they signed at the Arabian Travel Market Dubai in May 2015.



TT BUREAU

Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive, His Excellency **Akbar Al Baker** joined the Kingdom of Morocco's Minister of Infrastructure, Transport and Logistics, His Excellency **Aziz Rabbah**, and the Chairman and CEO of Royal Air Maroc, **Driss Benhima** to celebrate the commencement of the next phase of the joint business between Qatar Airways and Royal Air Maroc – paving the way for the next stage of cooperation between the two airlines.

As part of this new partnership, Royal Air Maroc will operate three flights a week to Doha in conjunction with Qatar Airways. Flights between



H.E. Akbar Al Baker  
Group Chief Executive  
Qatar Airways

Qatar and Morocco have now increased from seven to 10 times weekly, operated jointly by Qatar Airways seven times-a-week and by Royal Air Maroc three times-a-week.

Qatar Airways and Royal Air Maroc will be offering a product with an all Boeing 787 Dreamliner operation between Doha and Casablanca.

Al Baker says, "Qatar Airways is delighted and proud to welcome its partner, Royal Air Maroc, to our hub and home, Hamad International Airport in Doha. Our new partnership will strengthen both airlines and provide greater options and a seamless network for our passengers between the Middle East and Africa, and beyond. Royal Air Maroc's thrice-weekly service between Casablanca and Doha combines with our own daily flights between the two cities to provide an enhanced operation, while the frequency increase not only supports inbound tourism and trade, but is also an important new link for onward travel in both destinations."

Benhima, says the partnership with Qatar Airways is crucial in the history of Royal Air Maroc. "This joint business allows us to create a bridge between Asia and Africa that will facilitate the movement of passengers in a seamless fashion on the extensive network of Qatar Airways in Asia and the comprehensive network of Royal Air Maroc in Africa," he said.

This partnership allows both airlines to compete more effectively and share revenue on routes within the joint business, connecting more than 40 African destinations in Royal Air Maroc's network to more than 70 Qatar Airways destinations in the Middle East and Asia Pacific region. 🇦🇪

## SQ's Premium Economy

Dubai will take pride in being the first country in the Gulf/South Asian region to experience Singapore Airline's new Premium Economy Class.



SHEHARA RIZLY

### Kindly explain the target audience?

We have been receiving many requests over the past from the corporate traveller of a need to have a special cabin and after much continued research, we have been able to address this segment of important travellers by introducing this special class with many additional features to look forward to.

### Additional rewards for the corporate traveller?

They can also look forward to priority check-in and baggage handling with a

baggage allowance of 35kg and the members of the krisflyer programme will receive an additional 10 per cent more miles when they fly in Premium Economy class.

### What are the features in this new cabin?

The seats have full leather finishing, individual in-seat power supply, two USB ports, personal in-seat reading light, cocktail table, more storage space for personal items and a special book the cook service



Erwin Widjaja  
General Manager, Singapore Airlines

(which is currently only available for business and first class passengers).

### What is the new fleet introduced at Singapore Airlines?

We are looking forward to the arrival of the new A350s which will be fitted with our newest-generation cabin products, providing more comfort to our customers. This includes new Business Class, Premium Economy Class and Economy Class seats. 🇸🇬

## Emirates brings together Green Hospitality experts

■ A seminar was held recently to address the challenges faced in the hospitality sector with regard to environmental sustainability. Emirates Green Building Council (Emirates GBC) an independent forum brought together experts from the hospitality sector to make presentations and held panel discussions to identify key areas which would lead the way to more environmental sustainability in the industry.

The Emirates GBC Hospitality Programme Seminar addressed some of the current challenges hotels face with implementing green initiatives such as eco-labels and CSR strategies. The seminar brought together experts from the hospitality industry to identify best practices that can help bring positive outcomes.

Amelie Zegmout, Board Member of Emirates GBC, moderated the panel discussion with **Nadine O'Connor**, Housekeeping Manager at Jumeirah Creekside Hotel; **Basant Kumar Kushwaha**, Director of Engineering at Kempinski Hotel Ajman; and **Bob Busman**, Regional Responsible Business Coordinator Middle East at Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group shared their experiences in their journey towards sustainability, including the challenges they faced and their success stories.



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# WHTS hosts 200 delegates

Over 200 exhibitors and sponsors with national pavilions from many of the leading Muslim countries participated in the World Halal Travel Summit and Exhibition (WHTS15). The event took place at the Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Center (ADNEC) and delegates from over 52 countries registered to attend the summit.










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# Amusement park at Al Shaab

An exceptional destination for the entire family under one premise, making sure that each family member is able to enjoy the little interesting things Sharjah has to offer to its guests.



TT BUREAU

A shopping mall with 240 kiosks, dining and entertainment services are fit for a

family. Their target is all visitors and residents in Sharjah to indulge in the offerings which are quite enthralling to the visitor. It has the largest

ice rink in Sharjah and the first and only 7D screen which also includes a pearl suite. Their amusement park will deliver an unforgettable experience.

It will be a novel theme to participate at the WTM in London under the aegis of the Sharjah Commerce and Tourism authority to create

maximum awareness about not only the emirate of Sharjah but about Al Shaab Village which is a destination to be enjoyed by



**Abdulla Al Dah**  
CEO  
Al Shaab Village

ease. Among other facilities in the property include a vast



**We are here to provide a safe, healthy and interactive environment for our visitors. We have state of the art and modern facilities here at Al Shaab Village and we are participating [at WTM] with the Government of Sharjah and National Council of Antiques to promote Tourism in the emirate of Sharjah and UAE**

the whole family from grandparents to little toddlers.

Al Shaab Village represents the heritage of Arabic culture with modern state of the art facilities on board to serve the many guests to be more comfortable and at

exhibition hall, outdoor amusement park, stores, supermarket, indoor gaming, billiard center and the cinema. It is guaranteed that their amusement park will deliver an unmatched experience with maximum safety environment. 🎡

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# Loy Krathong festival in Bangkok

One of the most picturesque festivals in Bangkok is the evening of Loy Krathong, when people gather around lakes, rivers and canals to pay respects to the water goddess.



TT BUREAU

Every year, Loy Krathong falls on the night of the 12<sup>th</sup> lunar month (usually in November), at the end of the rainy season when the full-moon lights up the sky. The sight of thousands of Krathongs, their flickering candles sending a thousand pinpoints of light far into the horizon is a truly magical site, and there are plenty of places in Bangkok where one can get involved with the festivities.

## Why Loy Krathong?

The history behind the festival is complex, and Thais celebrate for many reasons. The main rice harvest season has ended and it's time to thank the water goddess for a year's worth of her abundant supply, as well as an apology for polluting the waters. Some believe that this is the time to symbolically 'float away' all the anger and grudges one has been holding onto, and including a fingernail or a lock of hair is seen as a way of letting go of the dark side of yourself, to start anew free of negative feelings.

## What is a Krathong?

There is no equivalent word in English for 'Krathong'. One may hear people referring to it as a small boat, vessel, receptacle or container. In the run-up to the festival, many shops and market stalls will display ready-made 'Krathongs', or in parts so one can assemble and decorate. In the past, krathongs were made from natural materials – usually a section from a banana tree trunk, crafted into a lotus shape by using folded banana leaves, and these can still be found for sale around the main festival sites. More recently, Thais have become more creative in their craft and design the krathongs from coconut shells, flowers, baked bread, potato slices, some breaking with the conventional lotus leaf shape in favour of turtles and other sea creatures.

## Loy Krathong Festival at Asiatique

If one is ready to experience Loy Krathong the way the locals do, head to Asiatique, the riverfront night market, which is where the biggest crowds gather and some impressive shows happen. Be warned that traffic in the area will be very bad and there will be long queues to take the boat from SaphanTaksin.

The action kicks off around sunset, and there are plenty of krathongs to buy around the river,

one can even watch the traditional banana leaf folding method. The large boardwalk area in front of Asiatique will host the main events, including the retelling of the Loy Krathong story via music and dance, a launch site

for all krathongs, an illuminated float procession and a firework display. If the crowds here sound too much, there are plenty of other spots along the Chao Phraya river to watch the festivities from.



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# Ghaya Grand gears up for EXPO 2020

With a master vision of being the most elegant and well-positioned five star property ready for EXPO 2020, Ghaya Grand is the new hospitality venture located close to the Sheik Mohamed highway just 10 minutes from the mall of emirates. The hotel concentrates on luxury and a healthy lifestyle.



TT BUREAU

This unique property consist of 765 rooms with 420 apartments and 345 hotel rooms which has 60 executive suites, 6 royal suites (130 square metres in size with their own Jacuzzi), 119 twin beds and 119 king beds catering to different market needs; European, Asian or Chinese. Currently the occupancy level

is 70 per cent leisure and 30 per cent corporate, however, this changes all the time. However, the apartments are 90 per cent occupied by corporate sector. The majority of the market hails from Germany and various mixed nationalities from the UK, GCC countries and quite a good market segment from the European countries. Their current market strategy is aimed at the Indonesia and its roadshow to be held this month and will focus their attention on gaining some new business from this very lucrative market segment which according to the general manager has never been explored.

It is a family friendly, no smoking, no alcohol hotel for those who need luxury coupled with a healthy lifestyle.



**Olwin de Souza**  
General Manager  
Ghaya Grand

There are top ranking tennis coaches who train children from the age of 3 to adults and a very comprehensive play area for kids, separate spa facilities for men and women.

The new Me'aisem City Center is just a stone throw away. It is located in close prox-

rooms which can accommodate from 10 to 20 in each. There are five different cuisines served in their restaurants which consist of Japanese, Arabic, Indian, Italian and Asian and a 24 hour room service for both hotel and apartment guests. Added on to this the apartment guests also get a 20 per cent discount for dining in the restaurants.

Being a veteran hotelier with over 25 years experience, **Olwin de Souza**, General Manager, opined that although there are many challenges in the current market it is up to the sales team to venture new ideas and marketing strategies to find the best possible emerging markets. He stated as sales pro-

**There are five different cuisines served in their restaurants which consist of Japanese, Arabic, Indian, Italian and Asian and a 24 hour room service for both hotel and apartment guests**

imity to the cricket stadium, two main golf clubs, Studio City, Jebel Ali Free Zone and Sports City. In terms of conference facilities they have a ballroom which can accommodate 250 people and 10 other meeting

professionals there are two important things to bear in mind, "the early bird catches the worm and you must know where to get the honey from." He further stressed that there are many markets that are untapped where new business could be brought in.

They are very optimistic about the nearing winter season and the EXPO 2020. Although the hotel is still new as it opened just last December the business had been regular and it soared in numbers as of August this year making them increase their revenues. 📈

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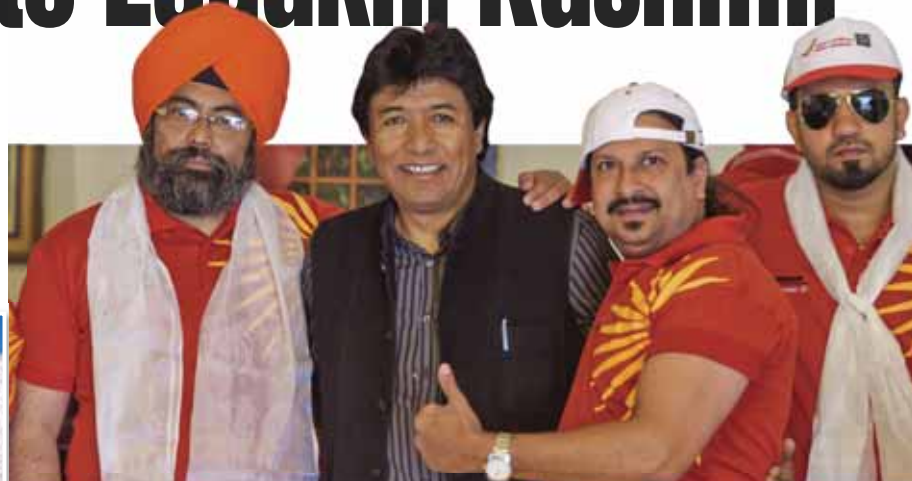
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# ME agents' Fam to Ladakh, Kashmir

Air India, along with leading hotels, organised a Fam trip to Ladakh, Gulmarg and Srinagar in Jammu & Kashmir, India, for leading tour operators of the UAE. Air India also showcased its elite flight called the Dreamliner on the Dubai-Delhi route.

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**Mahmoud Hamza** – Owner & CEO, Tierra Mar, is a professional with over 26 years of experience working with some of the leading international brands in the hospitality industry. “My years of experience and expertise will make a difference in the hospitality management services in the UAE,” he says.

Tierra Mar is a complete solution provider for B2B companies seeking human resource expertise, profitability, vertically integrated marketing platforms, hospitality consultancy and advisory among many others on their portfolio. Their ability to undertake hotel management, risk management, hotel turn-key solutions, hotel auditing, conducting feasibility

studies, procurement, business transition, branding, financing facilities, network and outreach are just a few notable services offered from the plethora of expertise offered to make your business more lucrative in every aspect, making sure the dividends are much greater than your investment.

The affiliation services and operational strategy to maintain a sustained growth without compromising quality and standard of service to enhance the performance of any property alongside providing building renovation, interior design and furnishing with their highly efficient team of specialised designers for both constructions and renovations with a highly competitive pricing will assure great value for your business.



**Mahmoud Hamza**  
Owner & CEO  
Tierra Mar

Their years of experience have made them the most qualified in providing advisory and consultancy services in the hospitality industry. As a leading hospitality management company they are fully proficient in providing services in the fields of marketing, human resources, equipping hotels, management structuring, branding, financial models, conducting feasibility studies, building designs for hotel pur-

poses, resources of hotel business and maximising revenues. They have established a vertically integrate marketing platform for delivering revenues to their businesses which include local leisure and corporate sales agents, hotel based reservation department and experienced regional sales directors. They have also set up an efficient network of investors across the world. The source of their reasonable capital enables them to manage resources needed for specific investments.

One of the key components of their success is the ability to build a brand that is strong enough to read market visibility and flexible enough to evaluate the market of local business. Another noteworthy aspect in their portfolio is the relationship based on specific affiliations where the achieved

results add value to the client. Staffing and labour supply is another key feature in their profile. As one of the best hospitality management companies in the UAE, they are committed to providing a suitable working environment so that every employee associated with their

depending on the needs and requirements of their clients and the professionals they arrange are fully trained and have become seasoned in the hospitality industry and willing to serve with their full esteem.

They have developed efficient and quality management principles for each purpose that will always satisfy the client. In order to provide the best services in the industry they employ all the relevant quality management applications that enhance the investment and keep resources for most productive ones. The characteristics include decentralised opera-

**My years of experience and expertise in the industry will make a difference in the hospitality management services in the UAE**

business can derive job satisfaction and a genuine sense of pride. They consider it their prime responsibility to create a congenial working atmosphere so that everyone within their organisation can achieve his or her maximum potential. They provide skilled workforce

tions authority, regular performance review and maintenance and asset protection. They will provide solutions and the best possible methods to deal with crisis situations, which is a big challenge for some of the owners or managers.


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# Tapping niche segments in the UAE

Al Naboodah Travel and Tourism Agencies is a dynamic travel and tourism company with a reputation for quality and excellence, in all aspects of the travel industry. Founded in 1973, it is a part of the renowned Al Naboodah Group which consists of diversified businesses.



SHEHARA RIZLY

**Nasir Jamal Khan**, Chief Executive Officer, Al Naboodah Travel & Tourism Agencies, shared his expertise and new plans for the upcoming years. "We are a company with a trustworthy name in the market; representing some of the world's most renowned Airlines – Air France/KLM, Cathay Pacific, Turkish Airlines, Air Canada, Austrian Airlines, United Airways (BD) Ltd, and Air Zimbabwe. The company has many divisions handling various requirements of the clientele. Our Corporate division is handled by a dedicated team with a range of services which include airline ticketing to charter flights, travel insurance, rent-a-car services etc. Our retail divisions located in various parts of the UAE from

Abu Dhabi to Dubai, Ajman to Ras Al Khaimah offer the clients a quick and efficient service. Currently our Leisure division specialises in outbound travel. From next year we will introduce inbound travel with a whole new experience," he says.

A versatile, strong and successful travel company has now planned a different

**Currently our Leisure division specialises in outbound travel. From next year we will introduce inbound travel with a whole new experience**

approach in keeping with the current market trends. "Our continued research to find out the needs of the traveller and the cutting-edge technology

has made it possible for us to come up with a well-developed web portal where the customer will definitely be awed to select from a wide variety of air and non-air products from the site which is of great importance. We are working on a web portal which will be one 100 per cent active – first targeting the B2C market and thereafter B2B market."

There are two other areas they hope to improve next year: Medical Tourism and Halal Tourism. UAE is centrally situated, equipped



**Nasir Jamal Khan**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Al Naboodah Travel & Tourism Agencies

with the latest technology and expertise in healthcare. We have been undertaking medical tourism in the past, this time we hope to implement further by promoting the packages in an active manner. We are promoting UAE as one of the best medical tourist destinations mainly because of its geographical presence where people can

travel either from the GCC or even other countries.

Khan identifies Halal tourism as another emerging market with very good potential. "Conferences and trade shows being held in the recent months which have proved its success. As there is a certification necessary for this kind of tourism, we are considering promoting next year as well," he adds.

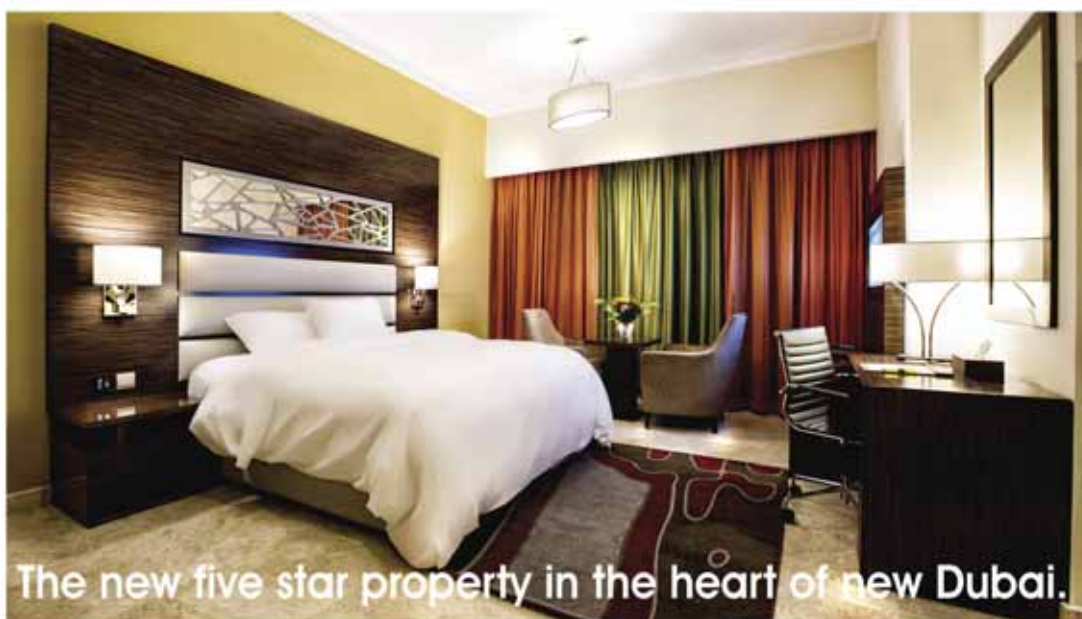
Business wise we have seen different trends emerging, especially the tough competition among various travel and tourism agencies. In the UAE, there are over several nationalities working and each person will travel to their home country either once, twice or thrice a year. This is one of the market segments which bring in higher revenue for the travel

industry. There has been an increase of inbound travel from India and Saudi Arabia as well as the outbound emerging clientele to Serbia, Croatia, Brazil, Georgia etc., as the airlines increase their operating sectors.

"We are very hopeful about 2016 and are looking forward to implementing some of the plans we have been actively involved in during the past few months," Khan concludes.

## Emerging Markets

- ♦ Halal tourism is an emerging market with very good potential
- ♦ An increase in inbound travel from India, Saudi Arabia and the outbound to Serbia, Croatia, Brazil, Georgia etc.



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Most travellers visit the Middle East for various reasons but in most cases they would prefer to see the authentic Arab world in its best form.

## Oasis of Arabia@Tlal Liwa



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There are a few hotels who have achieved to present the traveller the exact vacation necessary. Tlal Liwa is an elegant traditional retreat for discerning travellers who would indulge in true Arabic culture. The property is built amidst the sands of Liwa in an unspoiled desert landscape. The 111 rooms and suites is the perfect opportunity for the adventurous minds to

indulge in the many activities at the premises.

Among convention facilities are the special traditional Arabic seating "majlis" and a fully functional ballroom that can be used either as one unit or divided into two separate units. In terms of well-being they provide a well-equipped gymnasium, temperature controlled swimming pool, aerobics, steam bath, sauna, massages, therapeutic treatments, etc., to revitalise the

guests. An array of cuisine is served at the signature restaurants whilst other facilities like Wi-Fi, 24 hour room service, TV with satellite channel and many other amenities.

If one seeks adventure and wants to indulge in the desert, then the tours will be arranged by the hotel, so decide what you want to do next; either go dune driving, quad biking, camel trekking, horseback riding, darts, etc. 🏏

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# Executive Club for biz travellers

Al Raha Beach Hotel launched an executive club to benefit the business travellers who wish to indulge in the epitome of exclusivity and personalised service.



TT BUREAU

The guest experience will be enhanced with a bundle of exclusive benefits such as full day lounge access with culinary delicacies and beverages throughout the day, happy hour in the evening, VIP treatment, free use of meeting rooms, complimentary room upgrade and many more.

To add to the existing collection of facilities offered, Al Raha Beach Hotel features a relaunched marina along its shores. The marina consists of berths ranging from 7 meters up to 19 meters, a modern slipway for launching and retrieval of power and sailing boats. In addition to the current watersports offered such as kayaking, paddle boarding, doughnut rides and

banana boat, the new Watersports center offers a thrilling addition of wind surfing, power boating and a sailing academy.

Featuring outstanding restaurants and an arsenal of 278 rooms, suites and villas, Al Raha Beach Hotel aims to provide the highest standards of quality service and to become the first choice of all



travellers coming to Abu Dhabi. A stunning

beachfront property, guests can indulge in some of the finest cuisines prepared by talented chefs in their seven food and beverage outlets or simply relax on the pristine stretch of 900 meter private beach.

Guests can pamper themselves at the Body and Soul Spa and Recreation Club with a diverse range of treatments and fully equipped health and fitness facilities. Six swimming pools, water sports, steam room, sauna, Jacuzzi,



**Kamal Zayati**  
General Manager  
Al Raha Beach Hotel

the Hydro Massage Pool and many more add to a truly memorable experience.

The event caterers at Al Raha Beach Hotel are a team that is dedicated to exceeding your expectations with your event or occasion. Customers are offered more choice with seven meeting rooms, three ballrooms and several outdoor venues. From opulent weddings to birthday parties, increased flexibility and tailor made packages ensures the perfect event.

According to **Kamal Zayati**, General Manager, Al Raha Beach Hotel, "the hotel is dedicated to enhancing guest experience and provides excellent service and facilities that guests can look forward to during their stay."



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# AJMAN

## UAE's best kept secret

A reflection of combining the wonders of history and archaeology with recreational, ecological and religious attractions, the smallest among the seven emirates, the Emirate of Ajman stands as UAE's best kept secret blessed with a perennial sunshine and golden shore.



A modern city that embraces rich Arabian heritage and timeless cultural traditions, Ajman's modest size and relaxed rate of development is the emirate's greatest appeal. A melting pot of old and new, Ajman is a laid back, sun-drenched destination with a world of adventure, wildlife and tradition to explore.

## CULTURAL HERITAGE

Discover the true glory of Ajman through its rich culture and tradition.

Ajman museum, housed in an 18<sup>th</sup> century fortress, delivers a slice of culture and history with its preserved collection of artifact and archeological finds such as centuries-old manuscripts, weaponry and pottery. The remote enclaves of Manama and Masfout enjoy the stunning backdrop of Hajar Mountains, and provide and escape from the bustle of the city and the summer heat.

Fishing and pearling were for centuries the main industries in the Gulf region. Ajman was the region's largest boat building centre, with the many of thousand dhows that sailed through the Arabian Gulf constructed in its shipyards, using skills passed down through generations.

## VISITING AJMAN

Visiting Ajman will take you to a whole unique adventure all in one. Its beautiful 16 km stretch of shoreline is best enjoyed with a stroll along the delightful Corniche, and its sandy beaches are heavenly for those who want to lie down under the sun or take a dip in the warm Gulf waters.

The emirate's lush green parks are perfect for family bonding and relaxing strolls. The Al Hamidiyah Park features basketball courts, football area and outdoor gym while Al Rashidiya Park have one green spaces, café's and plenty of seating areas exclusive for women.

The city boasts with a variety of activities, shops, luxury spas, wonderful restaurants and increasing number of high-end beachfront hotels. Whether visiting for leisure or business, Ajman houses a rimmed of hotels, from budget ones to 5-star luxury experience. The newest addition is the Ajman Saray and Fairmont Ajman which are situated in prime position in Ajman's shoreline.



## THE FUTURE OF AJMAN TOURISM

Ajman is expected to be a getaway destination when visiting the UAE. The emirate is attracting major developers who are keen to tap into its fantastic natural draws, including the varied wildlife of its mangrove creek and prime location on the Arabian Gulf coast.

One of the best natural features is Al Zorah Nature Reserve. Stretching along 7 km length of waterfront in northern Ajman, this spectacular resort is a promising tourist attraction which features pristine beachfront, serene tidal, mangrove creek and breathtaking

diverse wildlife. Expected to become the city's central attraction, it includes creekside residences, fine dining restaurants.

Ajman Marina, the emirate's newest attraction is currently under development. The impressive waterfront will include residential towers, hotels, a yacht club, restaurants, shops, and promenade for walkers, joggers, and cyclists.



## ACTIVITIES

### CAMEL RACING

This is a popular pastime for the members of the Royal family and the locals alike. Visitors can try modern version of this where a remote-controlled robotic mannequin sits in the saddle, controlled by drivers in SUV's riding along a separate track during the race

### AL TALLAH CAMEL RACECOURSE

People visiting Ajman can have the opportunity to witness camels racing in action.

### EQUESTRIAN SPORT

Ajman Arabian Horse Stud Farm and Ajman Equestrian Club offer a chance to witness ageless Arabian pastimes, horse-riding.

### CAMPING /HIKING

Take your feet of the rugged landscape of Hajar Mountains and camp to the tiny community of Masfout which offers cooler climes and fresh breeze, an escape to the scorching during summer.



## Etihad Airways

## Abu Dhabi

**Hareb Al Muhairy** moves from the position of Vice President Sales UAE to his new Senior Vice President role – overseeing Corporate Affairs and International and Public Affairs. Prior to joining the Commercial division, Al Muhairy had served as Vice President Corporate Communications between 2009 and 2010. He joined Etihad Airways in 2004 having studied political science and management at the UAE University in Al Ain.



**Mohammed Al Bulooki** joins Etihad Airways from Abu Dhabi Airports Company to become Vice President UAE Commercial. Within the new role, he will be responsible for UAE Sales, Hala Travel Management (HTM), the destination management company Hala Abu Dhabi, Etihad's retail operations, Etihad Holidays as well as the airline's Tourism Research and Partnerships function. During his career, Al Bulooki has held a number of key Abu Dhabi Airports Company posts.



**Haitham Al Subaihi** moves from the role of Head of UAE Sales to become Vice President UAE Sales. Al Subaihi began his career with Etihad Airways in 2007 as a Graduate Management trainee. In 2009, he served as Business Development Manager for North America, based in New York, before returning to the UAE to take the role of Manager Sales – Government. Al Subaihi went on to be Vice President Sales Central USA, based in the airline's Washington, DC office.



## Hospitality Management Holdings

## Amman

Hospitality Management Holdings has appointed **Nizam Bou Antoun** as the new General Manager of Corp Amman Hotel. With over 18 years' experience in the hospitality industry, Antoun brings an in-depth knowledge of rooms division, revenue management and, sales and marketing. A Lebanese national, Antoun holds an MBA degree in Hospitality Management from Baytown University in Texas, USA. His last posting was as the General Manager at Park Inn by Radisson in Al Khobar, KSA.



## The Cove Rotana Resort

## Ras Al Khaimah

**Erik Guluta** has been appointed as the new Executive Assistant Manager at The Cove Rotana Resort- Ras Al Khaimah. Guluta began his career in Food & Beverage department at leading establishments across the United Kingdom, France and Switzerland. Prior to this appointment, Guluta was the Food & Beverage Manager of Hilton Thailand, where he managed all the hotel outlets as well as banqueting and outside catering.



## Yas Island Rotana &amp; Centro Yas Island

## Abu Dhabi

Yas Island Rotana & Centro Yas Island, Abu Dhabi, has announced the appointment of **Ina Boneva** as the new Director of Human Resources. Boneva brings over 5 years of hospitality experience, significantly handling key roles in human resources from other hotel companies in Abu Dhabi.



## Etihad Airways key investor

Italy's national airline Alitalia was restructured by Etihad Airways with an investment of ≈ 560 million and became the largest single shareholder with a 49 per cent stake.



It was stated by **James Hogan**, President and Chief Executive Officer, Etihad Airways that Alitalia is a great brand, a great network, but a poor business in need of a new direction with fantastic potential to grow; speaking in Milan to the International Forum of Sovereign Wealth Funds.



**James Hogan**  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
Etihad Airways

This new partnership will enable both airlines to grow efficient by working together lowering the risks and bringing greater rewards and faster outcomes. It also offers much greater benefits for customers

product and service, expansion of both carriers' frequent flier programs, and synergy benefits including joint procurement and resource sharing.

Recently, Etihad Airways and six equity partners, including Alitalia, participated in an

innovative capital raising, through which US\$700 million was collectively sourced from global financial markets. Both Etihad and Alitalia has complementary route network combined with approximately 200 destinations. Alitalia gained significant new flight connectivity by connecting with Etihad Airways at its hub in Abu Dhabi, providing extensive access to destinations across Asia, and in Australia and Africa – destinations not served by Alitalia.

## Growth Potential

◆ The partnership will enable both the airlines to grow efficient by working together lowering risks and bringing greater rewards



## Access Gloria Hotels online

Realising the importance of digital presence in today's market, the team at Gloria Hotels has launched their new responsive website which has been designed and developed to provide an optimal viewing experience with easy reading, navigation and booking

bines all seven Gloria hotels group properties under one domain capturing all their specifics to provide a more engaging online experience.

This easy to use website provides all the important information and functionalities to either book a room, dinner,



**Freddy Farid**  
Area General Manager  
Gloria Hotels

**We are very excited to launch our new-look website. This is a step we are taking to provide our guests with rich content for smooth research process and easy booking from any device**

across the widest range of devices from desktop computers to mobile phones.

The new website com-

a celebration party or even a wedding ceremony in five different languages including English, Arabic, Russian,

German and Chinese. **Freddy Farid**, Area General Manager, Gloria Hotels, says, "We are very excited to launch our new-look website. This is an important step we are taking to provide our guests with enhanced rich content to ensure smooth research process and easy booking from any device."

## Cat café at Cove Rotana

The Cove Rotana Resort in collaboration with RAK Animal Welfare Centre recently launched its first cat café. In order to ensure guest comfort and safety, The Cove Rotana has implemented this cat feeding scheme. This will ensure Resort cats find additional food and water in a pre-determined location, thus preventing cats to enter guest areas such as Cinnamon terrace. The Cat café is located under the Cinnamon terrace where cats will get accustomed to food on a daily basis provided by Ras Al Khaimah Animal Welfare Centre.





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