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Dubai cheers for sustainable tourism

DTCM has announced 19 sustainability requirements in line with the Dubai Sustainable Tourism (DST) initiative for the hospitality sector.

Shehara Rizly

To enable positive change within the hospitality industry through sustainable requirements, Dubai's hotel establishments shall comply with the Dubai Tourism hotel classification system, with the long-term objective of advancing sustainability performance across the sector. The 19 sustainability requirements have been developed to map out regulations for hotel establishments. Through improvements to internal operations, hotel establishments will in turn advance the overall sustainability performance of the sector, further enhancing the competitiveness of Dubai's tourism linked economy. **Yousuf Lootah**, Executive Director – Tourism Development &

Contd. on page 2 ▶



Yousuf Lootah
 Executive Director – Tourism Development & Investments, Dubai Tourism

What's trending in the Middle East?

Summer brings the scope of travelling to new outbound destinations for the Middle Eastern travellers. We speak to some tourism boards and agents to know more.



Pichaya Saisaengchan
 Director of Tourism Authority Thailand (TAT)
 Dubai and Middle East office

“We welcomed over 38.2 million visitors last year, bringing in 63 billion USD, of these, 550,000 visitors were from the Middle East, generating an income of more than 1.4 billion USD. Currently, our top three markets in the Middle East are the UAE, Oman and Kuwait. Medical tourism has created a surge in families visiting Thailand.”



Salih Ozer
 Attaché of Culture and Information
 Turkey to the UAE

“We expect tourist spending in Turkey to continue undeterred through to the end of this year as the number of visitors bound for Turkish cities is rising. A significant spike has been reported in the number of international tourists from neighbouring Arab countries, travelling into Turkey to shop, especially for high-end designer and luxury brands.”

Contd. on page 2 ▶

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Go green is the motto

► Contd. from page 1

Investments, Dubai Tourism, said, "The regulated guidelines will help promote energy conservation and efficiency, as well as encourage environmentally sustainable

tunity to grow as green leaders within the community. Following the grace period, these guidelines will be enforced through a structured monitoring process and reporting mechanism to ascertain

ployee training initiatives, the presence of sustainability committees within hotel establishments and corporate social responsibility programmes for local communities. To regulate compliance, Dubai Tourism will begin auditing the performance of the hotels after an 18-month progressive implementation period, which will allow hotels to finalise their operations, with the exception of the Carbon Calculator Tool, which came into effect as mandatory from January 2017.

“The regulated guidelines will help promote energy conservation and efficiency, as well as encourage environmentally sustainable practices across the local tourism inventory”

Yousuf Lootah

Executive Director – Tourism Development & Investments, Dubai Tourism

practices across the local tourism inventory. Dubai Tourism has already hosted a number of sessions to train the industry on the newly launched sustainability requirements, supporting hotel establishments in improving their internal operations and giving them the oppor-

the outcome of the existing efforts and to quantify what more is required to reach the agreed targets." The requirements cover a variety of areas including sustainable management approaches, performance metrics, energy, food and water management plans, guest education, em-

The DST team conducted a series of training sessions to increase awareness of the implementation of the sustainability requirements, successfully training 45 per cent of the industry to date, with further sessions planned throughout Q2. 📌

Summer destinations for ME

Contd. from page 1 ►



Nasir Jamal Khan
CEO, Al Naboodha Travel

“Some of the new outbound destinations favoured by locals are Ireland, South Korea and Japan. They would prefer mostly to discover a new culture in the respective countries, while exploring nature, family relaxation and shopping. The Middle Eastern travellers spend an average 7 to 10 days at one destination.”



Jamal Abdunnasser
CEO, Cozmo Travel

“Locals and expats prefer destinations like Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia. The locals prefer short-haul destinations for about a week, but in summer, for long-haul destinations, the stay is for approximately one to two months. The duration of stay for expats is not more than a week.”



Pramod Thomas
Manager - Holidays, SNITA

“Baku, UK, Turkey and Poland are some popular destination for the Middle Eastern traveller. The tourists look for safety and Halal food, along with the option of activities for children in preferred places of their stay. For locals, the minimum stay is one week, which involves shopping and sightseeing, but, during summers it exceeds to two or three weeks. Expats prefer visa-free destinations like Armenia, Georgia, Baku and look out for value for money in their choices.”

Inputs by Shehara Rizvi



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Unveiling a futuristic pavilion

With just under 18 months away for Expo 2020 Dubai, Emirates, the premier partner and official airline of the event, has unveiled its design and visitor-experience pavilion.

 TT Bureau

The advent of technological evolution has arrived. Focusing on the future of commercial aviation, Emirates Pavilion's design and visitor experience will utilise interactive technologies and design. Emirates has already broken ground on the pavilion, the construction for which began in March 2019.

His Highness Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, Chairman and Chief Executive, Emirates Airline & Group, said, "Emirates and the wider transportation ecosystem in the UAE will play a key role in providing connectivity for a successful Expo 2020. The

economic impact of the transport, hospitality and tourism sector will contribute AED 16.4 billion to the UAE economy." Scheduled to take place from October 20, 2020 to April 10, 2021, Expo 2020 Dubai is a must-attend event for visitors with an array of unique experiences at 190 country pavilions.

Her Excellency Reem Al Hashimy, UAE Minister of State for International Cooperation and Director General of Bureau, Expo Dubai 2020, said, "Air travel has transformed the ability of people to experience everything that the world has to offer."

Sneak peek

Guided by the three themes of Expo 2020 Dubai — mobility, opportunity and sustainability, the Emirates Pavilion was designed to reflect the dynamic lines of aircraft wings ready to take flight. The 26 slanted architectural fins that cover the entirety of the pavilion will hold over 800 metres of LED lights to create multi-sensory ef-



fects and movement across the structure, showcased by lightshows during every night of the Expo. The 3,300 sqm three-storey multi-function structure will be located in close proximity to the UAE pavilion. The pavilion will have the capacity to welcome more than 56,000 visitors per month during Expo 2020 Dubai.

reducing energy consumption. Experiential content will take centre stage, encouraging interactions. The second floor of the Emirates Pavilion will house an auditorium for speaker sessions and industry events, and the third storey will have a dedicated sky-garden for visitors to enjoy green, open spaces. The pavilion will help tell the story of what commercial aviation might look like in the future – through topics that include the science of flight, new aerospace materials, etc. 

Expo2020

192 countries to participate

173 days: Exhibition for 6 months from October 2020

25 million+ guests expected

Visitor experience

The interior of the Emirates Pavilion includes an enclosed floor plan, which allows natural daylight to enter the space,



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TRAVTALK

EDITORIAL

Summer sojourn

The onset of summer brings with it a loud cheer for the Middle East, with school vacations setting in. To escape the sweltering heat, most families in the GCC are on the lookout for the coolest destinations to relax and unwind with their families and loved ones. There are certain outbound destinations which have been stable choices for the Middle Eastern traveller, but, some new ones too, are gaining prominent traction from the GCC. The criteria for travel for the tourists remains destinations which are hassle-free, visa-free and have provisions to accommodate larger families. Travellers repeat the destinations as well based on its popularity. The duration of the vacation or escapade for the Middle Eastern traveller, along with the families, is over three to four weeks, which is planned mostly last minute.

The millennials in the GCC have a different outlook in the way they travel, they seek experiential travel. GCC countries, such as the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, have a larger proportion of locals: 70 per cent locals and 30 per cent expats. There have been findings through various research, which show that they prefer to experience authentic local culture, food, etc. among other activities like indulging in adventure sports etc, to make sure that their trip remains a memorable one.

The expatriates mainly rely on cost-effective and short-haul destinations, which can provide them value for money. Airbnb offers great deals for short-haul vacations for the expats who live and work in the GCC.

Most often, the vacation period is taken in three stages, from their regular 30-day holiday period. This is conducive and acts like a necessary de-stress mechanism for them for a long period. Spending considerable amount of time with loved ones is indeed rewarding for the Middle Eastern traveller and being a resident in the GCC or an expatriate they gain to enjoy numerous benefits, like obtaining a hassle-free visa. Many destinations offer visa-free or visa-on-arrival to these travellers. Little wonder then that the tourists are spoilt for choice when it comes to planning a vacation.

Tourism in ME shines bright

Travel and tourism saw about 11.1% of the total economy in ME in 2018 as per World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) findings. Nigel David, Executive Director-APAC & MEA, WTTC, shares more.

The Middle East travel and tourism sector has been significantly outgrowing the overall economy with around 5 per cent growth rate. The past year, though, has witnessed a slow pace with the growth rate dropping to about 2.4 per cent. The factors associated with slow growth include political uncertainty and perceptions of consumers.

Considering travel and tourism as a key pillar of future economic strategy, Dubai has established a clear vision in terms of economic growth. It was envisioned and executed through a clear strategy optimally. UAE, as a region, has marked exemplary footprints in the sector through its top three destinations, Dubai followed by Abu Dhabi and Ras Al Khaimah. The destinations gained the positions due to some prominent factors. Firstly, the unique location. Travellers can reach the region within a four-hour flight, also, the region has a third of the world's population which it has used to their advantage. They have incredible connectivity to 260 destinations from Dubai alone. Great connectivity with investment in infrastructure, especially airport infrastructure, roads, ports etc. have made a big impact. The region

“Being a key driver of job creation, the Middle East region has accounted for 390 million jobs in the global travel and tourism sector”

has worked on enhancing its product well. Right from building the product, developing and differentiating it in terms of tourism. For example, Ras Al Khaimah focuses more on adventure tourism. All of this has enabled Middle East to gain a strong hold on the global map. Other countries in the region like Oman and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia have recognised the opportunity that travel and tourism brings. Looking back at the growth over the last two years, travel and tourism at a global level has outgrown the overall economy significantly. It is now on the road to become one of the major economic sectors in the world. Being a key driver of job creation, the region has accounted for 390 million jobs in the global travel and tourism sector.

I think the government now appreciates the role that the travel and tourism segment can play in terms of a power house for economic development, social development, regional development and job creation. Through this, Middle East is garnering

business through huge key projects that are happening, especially in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, where one can witness a scale of opportunity. Lastly, the region is still at the early stages, but, a lot more growth is expected in the future.

(The views expressed are solely of the author. The publication may or may not subscribe to the same.)

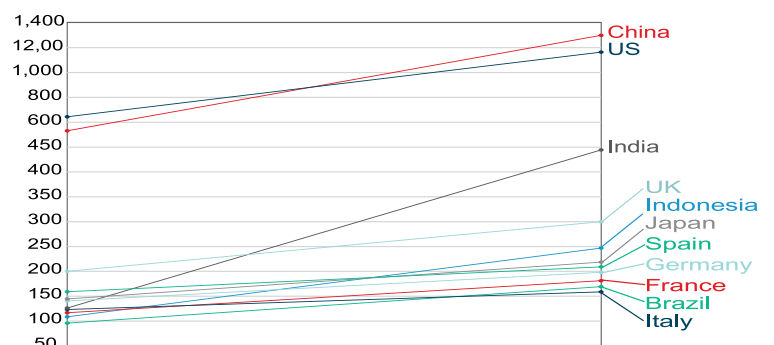


Nigel David
Executive Director—APAC & MEA, WTTC

Globetrotting to surge: Sabre

A Sabre study has noted that as per International Air Transport Association (IATA), the number of air passengers will increase manifold.

❖ The number of air passengers will balloon from 4B to 7.8B by 2036



IATA's passenger projections. Image courtesy: IATA

SriLankan to bolster capacity

SriLankan Airlines is once again on its path to achieve its goals, despite recent setbacks. **Vipula Gunatilleke**, Chief Executive Officer, SriLankan Airlines, shares how the airline is armed to regain the route to profitability.

 TT Bureau

How important is the Middle East market for SriLankan Airlines?

The Middle East traffic contributes about 28 per cent of our revenue.

At the ATM this year, there was a special stand for SriLankan Airlines, could you enumerate your business strategy?

In terms of our business plans, we need to revisit some of the strategies finalised some months ago. Middle East is important so we have identified and are adding new capacity with the expansion of the fleet and strategies to attract the Middle Eastern traveller.

In terms of tourist arrivals, the Middle East market has contributed about 4 to 5 per cent of the tourist arrivals, excluding other expatriates. To focus on the upper middle market, especially the high spending travellers, is vital.

Could you elaborate on additional capacity in ME?

As far as adding additional capacity and frequency is

NumberGame

40 flights a week to and from Middle East

28% revenue for SriLankan is generated through Middle East traffic

“In terms of tourist arrivals, the Middle East market has contributed about 4 to 5 per cent, excluding other expatriates”

concerned, we are increasing the capacity to Abu Dhabi.

At the moment, we are doing over 40 flights a week. With the right business plan, fleet and additional aircraft is expected to go up from 27 to 34. So definitely there will be more capacity in the future. Due to the recent unprecedented attacks in the country, we had to revisit all the strategies and observe how to deploy the capacity. Also, since we would expect a reduction in traffic from some

of the European destinations, there would be induction of additional capacity, if there are opportunities.

What about the performance of the Indian market?


Indian sectors contribute more than 20 per cent of revenue, that is vital. Also, we operate over 100 flights a week to India, and are now looking at increasing it to 135 or 140 flights. Our focus for the Indian market is on short stays and



Vipula Gunatilleke
Chief Executive Officer
SriLankan Airlines

transits. Overall, there are numerous aspects we are focusing on.

Will Sri Lankan introduce something new for the Indian market over 2019?

We are revamping our holidays arm and will focus more on working with the operators, MICE market, etc. 

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Personality of the month

Redefining technology

An unstinted passion to meet new people and explore different cultures, led **Manoj Tulsani**, Chief Executive Officer, Rayna Tours and Travels, and his partner Kamlesh Ramchandani to venture into the travel and tour business. Tulsani's approach to be innovative, while keeping abreast of industry trends and needs of travellers has earned him accolades in the sector.

 Shehara Rizly

Focusing on varied investments such as construction, transport and real estate, apart from day-to-day management of the travel business, Tulsani shares how the two friends ventured into the industry, "When we first started in 2006, it was discovered that people would book hotel rooms in Dubai, but weren't aware of the importance of making tour reservations. We perceived this as a gap, and organised low cost quality tours to the guests of Flora Grand Hotel." The concept was an out-of-the-box idea.

"An innovative approach of the time, our strategy quickly gained prominence and we opened seven

outlets before starting Rayna. Tulsani shares, "After about seven years, I hunkered to try something new. People spend so much energy and time in booking the cheapest flights and hotels weeks in advance, but then don't think about what to do when they get to their destination. My career has been about gratifying the traveller with superb, worry-free travel experience with professional help on-hand for every travel need."

Millennials, the new disruptors

Over the past few years there has been a rapid rise in millennials. Tulsani shares his views about this



Manoj Tulsani
Chief Executive Officer
Rayna Tours and Travels

“An innovative approach of the time, our strategy quickly gained prominence and we opened seven more outlets within two years in Dubai's significant 4 and 5-Star hotels”



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more outlets within two years in Dubai's significant 4 and 5-Star hotels. By 2009, Rayna Tours and Travels became a renowned name," he says. In the last 12+ years, the company has established itself as a leader in B2C and B2B travels and currently operates in about 10 countries. "Rayna Tours is ISO certified, with over 70 outlets in Dubai," informs Tulsani.

A journey of a lifetime

Tulsani came to Dubai to work after completing his graduation, in the 90s. He worked at different compa-

nies before starting Rayna. Tulsani shares, "After about seven years, I hunkered to try something new. People spend so much energy and time in booking the cheapest flights and hotels weeks in advance, but then don't think about what to do when they get to their destination. My career has been about gratifying the traveller with superb, worry-free travel experience with professional help on-hand for every travel need."

Achievements that define the venture

Embarking on their growth journey, Tulsani shares, "Rayna Tours is worth an incredible AED 150 million in annual revenue. The

global travel industry is growing year-on-year at 40 per cent CAGR. It's an \$80 billion industry, with a predicted growth of \$150 billion by 2024."

Fulfilling Travel Needs

- ❖ The global travel industry is growing year-on-year at 40 per cent CAGR. It's an \$80 billion industry, with a predicted growth of \$150 billion by 2024. Rayna is all set to secure a big chunk of this value for itself by 2024 due to the relentless efforts of Manoj Tulsani

Weekend escape to Barracuda

'Staycations' is the buzzword in the UAE. Come every weekend, and city dwellers rush out to rejuvenate themselves. A 45-minute drive from Dubai, Barracuda Beach Resort serves as the perfect weekend getaway for those who seek that much-needed break.



TT Bureau

Barracuda Beach Resort at Umm Al Quwain is only a 45 minutes' drive from Dubai and is popular for its beaches catering to tourists and residents. Established in 1994, Barracuda has grown to cover an area of 4,500 square metres, stocking over 4,000 products and serving more than 20,000 customers of 192 nationalities every month.

Many corporate companies book the resort for their special 'family day' outings as it offers a wide range of accommodation ideal for small and even large families. Some of the expats who live in Dubai celebrate their special occasions such as birthdays and anniversaries as the place is also next to



the famous Dreamland Aqua Park. **Hari Krishnan**, General Manager, Barracuda Beach Resort, said, "We are delighted to have over 190 nationalities coming over right around the year. Many expats take leave during the holy month and have their extended families staying in the resort which becomes a very family-oriented stay.

We also get many corporates booking their family outings or team-building weekends when they conduct various activities. The place boasts of lush greenery, lagoon breeze and a calm sense of relaxation. We are looking forward to a good season this year as well. Having said that, I must mention that we are an all-year round stayca-

tion destination as we have many travellers coming from various parts of the world."

The property houses a total of 51 keys which include three to four different categories to select from a superior studio which is almost about 450 plus square feet with a king size bed and a comfortable couch.



Hari Krishnan
General Manager
Barracuda Beach Resort

A great setting for a family with small children will be on the lagoon front with a balcony that can be enjoyed.

For those who require a bigger space the one-bedroom suite will be ideal as it's almost 600 plus square feet with a living room, bedroom complete with a balcony and other essential amenities in the room. The two bedroom-suite with a living room and two separate bedrooms is perfect for the larger families as it's over 700-plus in square feet area. 📍

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Ras Al Khaimah
Tourism Development Authority

soars as adventure hub

Ras Al Khaimah has established itself as the hub for adventure tourism and destination weddings in the United Arab Emirates. From the creation of the longest zip line to mountainous hikes, the emirate is on a rapid scale growth trajectory in attracting various adventure seekers.

 Shehara Rizly

Further expanding its venture for adventure tourism, the recent partnership with Bear Grylls Academy places Ras Al Khaimah as a contender in the

seen a substantial increase from mostly Middle Eastern countries such as Egypt, Jordan and the number one market with an overall of 38

tourists continues to be strong, accounting for 62 per cent of overall visitors in 2018 - attributable to its 7,000 years of fascinating history, authentic Arabian culture and heritage, high-profile adventure attractions, magnificent natural landscapes, and exclusive luxury and wellness experiences. As per figures of last year, Germany, Russia and the UK continue to be the leading international source markets for Ras Al Khaimah, driven by a strong appetite for the destination's year-round offering.

actors weddings. Mattar shared, "We have risen from zero weddings in 2017 to 16 weddings in 2018, out of which two were Bollywood actors weddings."

He reiterated the importance of the Indian source market to the emirate, "With a representation office in Delhi and Mumbai, we are going to reinforce these offices by conducting more B2C campaigns. We want to ensure that we lure more Indians towards the destination. We are signing weddings with key wedding planners in India, some of who have a portfolio of over 65 million dollars."

Connectivity is also an important aspect in attracting potential markets. Commencing from October 28, 2019, Pegasus Airlines will operate scheduled flights between Istanbul Sabiha Gökçen International Airport and Ras Al Khaimah International Airport. A leading low-cost carrier in Turkey, Pegasus Airlines will operate the direct route twice a week every Saturday and Wednesday.

The new flight operation will provide outbound and transit travellers from Istanbul a seamless access to Ras Al Khaimah. The carrier's new route will further connect Ras Al Khaimah with 26 European destinations

including the UK, Germany, Switzerland, Netherlands, the Nordics and Russia via Istanbul. Ras Al Khaimah International Airport now welcomes direct connectivity from various global destinations including Cairo, Islamabad, Jeddah, Lahore, Peshawar, Calicut, Katowice, Poznan, Warsaw, Luxembourg, Prague, Moscow and Wrocław.

Mattar explained, "Our strategic partnership with Pegasus Airlines will help us introduce Ras Al Khaimah to the Turkish market and most importantly, allow us to leverage Istanbul's proximity and hub connectivity with our key feeder markets within Europe and Russia. This new addition is an important step in our continuous drive to increase accessibility and visibility, attract more high-yield visitors, and ultimately boost both first-time and repeat visitation from our source markets."

“Ras Al Khaimah's attractiveness amongst international tourists continues to be strong, accounting for 62 per cent of overall visitors in 2018 - attributable to its 7,000 years of fascinating history, authentic Arabian culture and heritage”

Middle East with all facilities necessary to strengthen its foray into the exciting outdoors. Haitham Mattar, Chief Executive Officer, Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Development Authority, stated, "Signing with Bear Grylls Academy further resonates our strategy as an adventure tourism hub in the Middle East. We have

per cent is UAE, the strongest market for us. Countries like Saudi, Oman and Kuwait show great potential and substantial growth. India is our fourth largest market with 22 per cent YOY growth."

Ras Al Khaimah's attractiveness amongst international

Destination weddings are slowly but surely gliding its way to Ras Al Khaimah with India being the fourth largest source market to the emirate. The market has been a key driver towards attracting not only any destination wedding but also notable Bollywood



Haitham Mattar
Chief Executive Officer
Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Development Authority

Facts&Figures

65 million dollars worth deals signed with Indian wedding planners

62% international tourists visited RAK in 2018

Connectivity-wise, commencing from October 28, 2019, Pegasus Airlines will operate scheduled flights between Istanbul Sabiha Gökçen International Airport and Ras Al Khaimah International Airport

Expo 2020: 25 mn visitors

Dubai is geared up for the upcoming Expo 2020. **Sanjive Khosla**, Deputy Chief Visitor Experience Officer, Expo 2020 Dubai, shares an update on the mega event, which is expected to bring around 25 million visitors to the country.

TT Bureau

What is the latest update from the Expo ground?

The work for the Expo 2020 is going on in full swing. We have completed close to 60 to 70 per cent of the overall work and by October 2019, we would be able to hand over the site to the countries to start building their respective pavilions.

How many countries have pledged support?

We have extended our invitation to 192 countries with three Thematic Districts, which explore the Expo's sub-themes of Opportunity, Mobility and Sustainability, there will be 192 country pavilions

What impact will Expo have in this region?

We aim to be a world Expo that is accessible to all and believe the ticket prices and concessions will help us achieve that. We await millions of visitors from around the globe, to experience our rich Arabic tradition of hospitality. For Expo 2020, we are targeting 25 million visitors in Dubai. World Expo is much

larger in terms of impact as it is a celebration of what the world has to offer through culture, entertainment, trade, future, not only for trade and industry but also for the consumer. Everyday there will be more than 60 live events, including parades, performances, global music shows, hands-on workshops and other diverse entertainment for everyone to enjoy. There will be site-wide celebrations on special days such as *Diwali*, UAE National Day, Christmas, New Year's Eve, Chinese New Year and International Women's Day.

What entails a ticket at Expo?

A single-day adult (18 and over)

ticket will cost AED 120 (USD 33), while a three-day pass, which can be used on any three days during the 173 days of Expo, will be priced at AED 260 (USD 71). A ticket will give its holder access to once-in-a-lifetime experience, including 60 live shows a day, future-shaping technologies, performances from world-famous artists, daily parades, and more than 200 F&B outlets. Single-day and three-day tickets will be offered to international travellers in bundled packages to be sold by authorised ticket resellers.

These tickets will go on sale to the general public in April 2020, although visitors will be able to buy monthly and



Sanjive Khosla
Deputy Chief Visitor Experience Officer
Expo 2020 Dubai

season passes directly from the Expo from Q4 2019. Expo 2020 will offer free access for children aged five and below and seniors aged 65 and above. Children aged six to 17 and students will receive 50 per cent discount. The Expo School Programme will offer specially curated journeys for school students to educate them about the Expo sub-themes.

Expo2020

70% completed and will be handed over by October 2019

A single-day adult (18 and over) ticket will cost AED 120 (USD 33)

3-day pass can be used on any three days and will be priced at AED 260 (USD 71)

What's the safer way to travel?

With a surge in travel to and from the Middle East region, ensuring a safe travel must not be overlooked. **Jamal Abdulnazar**, CEO, Cozmo Travel, recommends some key steps for travellers to remember when experiencing a glitch in their travel.

Explain the importance of Tune Protect Travel Safe.

There are close to 20 different types of travellers such as The Photographer, The Social Butterfly, The Planner, The Nomad, Thrill Seeker and many more. The travellers always have two basic but important concerns regarding their travel – 'Will my bags reach the destination?' or 'Will my flight depart or arrive on time?' These two thoughts often become the reason for choosing a destination or even the mode of transportation. Surely, the traveller would want to ensure that he or she is protected from the two situations, that is where Tune Protect Travel Safe comes in.

“Travel Safe is like a solid back-up plan for travellers who are comforted in the knowledge that in case of an eventuality, they can claim for losses and delays”

What are the crisis situations which a traveller encounters?

All travel-related protection products have for long been offering only medical protection, especially for Schengen countries. However, if you are into travel, you will observe that there are other moments of crisis that travellers have been going through for years now, these are the delays in baggage arrivals, loss of baggage and trip delays.

Can you imagine what travellers must go through when they are without their luggage and must wait for several days or weeks for it to arrive? They are left with only what they are wearing and what they have on their person. This means a holiday or a business traveller will have to continue his or her journey without the baggage as well as spend money on new clothes and essentials. It can be frustrating and overwhelming. For a corporate traveller, it can

also mean an additional cost to the company.

For what kind of travellers should Tune Protect Travel Safe be recommended?

As stated earlier, Tune Protect Travel Safe is recommended for every kind of traveller. Tune Protect Travel Safe takes care of what one can call as the occupational hazard of frequent travel and most common issues faced by a traveller regarding baggage losses, baggage delays and trip delays.

Tune Protect Travel Safe is said to change the comfort zone of frequent travellers. What do you think?

Frequent or not, all travellers have experienced flight delays, baggage delays and baggage



losses at some point. Travel Safe is a product that came in when it was most needed. Travellers have started feeling the need of protecting themselves from delays and losses. Traveling can be quite exhausting and when you see that your baggage has not arrived with you, it can create a near-crisis situation. Travel Safe is like a solid back-up plan for travellers who are comforted in the knowledge that in case of an eventuality, they can claim for losses and delays.

TRAVEL Safe Assurance

Perfect for frequent travellers.
Covers baggage (delays, damage and loss)*

*Tune Protect Winter Assurance is underwritten by local insurance partners in various countries. *Terms and Conditions apply



ATM 2019: Meeting potential players

The most influential platform in the travel and tourism industry, the Arabian Travel Market, attracted over 40,000 visitors this year. The number is growing positively year-on-year. Some of the leading professionals met with key business partners this year.



Jumeirah greets Abu Dhabi with MiCE

Jumeirah Group has unveiled its MiCE offering in Abu Dhabi through its new hotel portfolio, namely, Jumeirah at Saadiyat Island Resort and Jumeirah Al Wathba Desert Resort & Spa.

TT Bureau

The new MiCE offering by the Jumeriah Group is in tandem with Abu Dhabi's Economic Vision 2030 and looks to capitalise on the 7 per cent annual growth forecasted for MiCE in the capital. With desert adventure team-building at Jumeirah Al Wathba, luxury ocean views at Jumeirah at Saadiyat Island and state-of-the-art facilities at Jumeirah at Etihad Towers in the heart of the capital, the unique offer is expected to attract the MiCE industry, both locally and internationally.

Jose Silva, CEO of Jumeirah Group, said, "Abu Dhabi is now seen as a leading MiCE destination in the region and



Jose Silva
CEO
Jumeirah Group

with its burgeoning reputation as a cultural hub and success in hosting many major global sporting events, we expect to see this growth continue. At Jumeirah Group, we recognise



Mubarak Al Shamisi
Abu Dhabi Convention & Exhibition
Bureau Director at the Department of
Culture and Tourism – Abu Dhabi

the importance of this segment and have developed a MiCE offer across our newly established portfolio to meet the needs of local and international businesses and organisations."



"Working hand-in-hand with the Jumeirah Group's outstanding facilities, these new offers will no doubt increase interest in Abu Dhabi as a go-to MiCE destination," said Mubarak Al Shamisi, Abu Dhabi Convention & Exhibition Bureau Director at the Department of Culture and Tourism – Abu Dhabi. "The Jumeirah Group's cutting-edge infrastructure and initiatives will help the UAE capital host important international conferences, business events and exhibitions in the world today, helping us to connect with crucial global sectors such as healthcare, oil and

gas, aviation and aerospace, education and more."

Jumeirah at Saadiyat Island Resort, has the capacity to host weddings, banquets, exhibitions, product launches and parties.

JumeirahFacts

983 rooms, suites, villas and serviced residences by Jumeirah in Abu Dhabi

1,470 guests can be accommodated in meeting spaces in all properties in Abu Dhabi

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NEW HOTELS

This month we look at some of the new properties as well as the upcoming hotels in the UAE.

★ Address Sky View

Rooms/Suites inventory: 169 rooms

Opening Date: Q2 2019

Located in the heart of Downtown Dubai, Address Sky View has two resplendent towers linked by a masterly designed Sky Bridge. Situated on level 54, it offers awe-inspiring views of the city. The Spa at Address Sky View provides an inimitable wellness experience. The Fitness Centre has cutting-edge exercise equipment and motivating views. The culinary experiences here include The Restaurant, an all-day destination as well as themed dining destinations. From the grandeur of the ballroom to the sleekly designed meeting rooms, the hotel also meets the demand for events.



★ Vida Harbour Point

Rooms/Suites inventory: 275 rooms

Opening Date: Q2 2019

Vida Harbour Point is a new haven in Dubai Creek Harbour, the six sq km mega-development is just 10 minutes from the Dubai International Airport. At this waterfront lifestyle hub, guests can explore the vibrant attractions of Creek Marina and admire the awe-inspiring Dubai Creek Tower as well as the retail metropolis of the future, Dubai Square. Vida Harbour Point has rich amenities including a fitness centre that covers 177 sq m and houses a gym and studio. Two-themed restaurants and five state-of-the-art meeting rooms alongside the Club add to the appeal of the hotel.

★ Vida Emirates Hills

Rooms/Suites inventory: 157 rooms

Opening Date: Opened



An elegant, 157-room upscale lifestyle hotel, Vida Emirates Hills is just 10 minutes walking distance away from two of the city's leading golf courses — Emirates Golf Club and Address Montgomerie. Featuring some rooms and suites with lush golf views that offer a resort like ambience, this lifestyle hub has themed restaurants, a pool and an ultra-modern gym. Guests can discover the attractions of Dubai Marina just five kms away as well as the sandy beaches of Jumeirah. The hotel also offers distinct dining concepts, deriving inspiration from the Middle East and international culture, and 10 state-of-the-art meeting rooms.



★ Rove At The Park

Rooms/Suites inventory: 579 rooms

Opening Date: Opened

Rove At The Park is located within Dubai's most thrilling family destination, Dubai Parks and Resorts, home to three world-class theme parks, as well as a water park. The family theme park hotel features comfortable rooms of which many are interconnecting, perfect for families. Comfort is the watchword with all rooms equipped with free Wi-Fi access, designer mattresses, pull-out beds for extra guests, a mini fridge, a large safe and a modern bathroom with power rain showers. The Daily is an all-day hangout where you can eat or grab and go, with quality coffee and healthy globally inspired food served till late.

Dubai welcomes high-tech cruise ship

Dubai has welcomed 'Spectrum of the Seas' into Port Rashid recently bringing almost 4,000 tourists to the emirate in a single day.



TT Bureau

Weighing 168,666 gross tonnes, Royal Caribbean's new 'Spectrum of the Seas' will be the largest and most advanced cruise ship to port in Dubai. The cruise brand revealed several new innovations and features on board, displaying 'first-at-sea' activities such as the Sky Pad, a virtual reality bungee trampoline, RipCord by iFly sky diving simulator and North Star observation pod that offers guests panoramic views more than 300 feet above sea level.

In addition, the ship's interiors offer world-class facilities including a variety of cuisines from around the world, a music hall and SeaPlex; the largest indoor sports and entertainment complex with bumper cars, roller skating and basketball.

Mohamed Abdul Aziz Al Mannai, CEO, P&O Marina and Port Rashid at DP World, said, "The cruise ship terminal at Port Rashid has recorded significant achievements over the past few years, including the development of marine, commercial and tourism infrastructure. This strengthens the emirate's global position as a hub for trade and cruise tourism and supports the tourism sector in Dubai and its efforts to establish the emirate among the best cities in the world."

Al Mannai also outlined that the shipyard at Port Rashid welcomes close to half a million visitors annually and expects 725,000 visitors during the 2018-19 cruise season, as a result of Dubai's ongoing efforts to attract tourists and investors to the emirate.

Jamal Alfalasi, Director, Dubai Cruise Tourism, said, "Over the past few years, we have seen an increasing number of reputable cruise liners visiting the emirate and our ongoing partnership with key stakeholders is testament to delivering top-class cruise facilities and providing distinctive services to enhance the tourists' experience, marking Dubai as a significant destination for cruise tourists."

QuickFact

725,000 visitors are expected during the 2018-19 cruise season, as a result of Dubai's ongoing efforts to attract tourists and investors to the emirate



Visit Nepal 2020 unveiled in the UAE

The embassy of Nepal in Abu Dhabi together with Nepal Tourism Board and Nepal Airlines organised a networking event for the travel agents in the UAE. **Mani Raj Lamichhane**, Director and Gandaki Province Office Chief of Nepal Tourism Board, revealed the new campaign for 2020 declaring it as "Visit Nepal 2020".



Nominations are now open



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Danat Al Ain Resort

► Al Ain

Danat Hotels and Resorts, a division of National Corporation for Tourism & Hotels, has appointed **Kevin Lawless** as the General Manager of Danat Al Ain Resort. Lawless joined the Danat Hotels & Resorts Group in 2010 as Assistant Director of Sales & Marketing at Al Raha Beach Hotel working his way up to General Manager of Danat Jebel Dhanna Resort and Dhafra Beach Hotel prior to this new role. Bringing his more than two decades of experience in the hospitality industry, Lawless will lead Danat Al Ain Resort, the five-star with 216-key property overseeing its entire operations and strategies. Before joining the group, Lawless worked at Ramada Hotel and Dubai World Trade Center.



Palace Downtown

► Dubai

Emaar Hospitality Group appointed **Marianne Fitzgerald** as the General Manager of Palace Downtown, a premium luxury hotel under Address Hotels + Resorts, and ideally positioned by the Burj Lake, near the iconic Burj Khalifa in Downtown Dubai. An Austrian national, Fitzgerald has a wealth of knowledge and experience spanning over 25 years in the luxury hospitality industry. She will be responsible for driving the day-to-day operations of Palace Downtown, as well as further elevating the unique positioning of the exquisite Arabesque hotel. She has previously held managerial positions in F&B as well as operations at renowned hotels across Europe and the Middle East.



Hilton Hotels

► Ras Al Khaimah

Hilton Al Hamra Hotels announced the appointment of **Christine Khachatryan** to the position of Cluster Commercial Director. Khachatryan will be responsible for three prestigious hotels; Hilton Al Hamra Beach and Golf Resort, Al Hamra Residence and Village and the award-winning Waldorf Astoria Ras Al Khaimah. She has over 19 years' experience in commercial and business development in hospitality. Khachatryan possesses a strong understanding of the industry. As Market Director of Corporate Sales Khachatryan oversaw the corporate segment of eight Marriott properties.



Six Senses Ziggy Bay

► Oman

Six Senses Ziggy Bay has appointed a new Director of Sales & Marketing, **Katja Graf**, who brings over 15 years of international luxury hospitality experience to this role, along with a diverse range of outstanding skills including strategy planning, revenue management, marketing and public relations, all supported by her strong connections with key international clients. By joining Six Senses Ziggy Bay, she will bring her expertise and leadership to the role, merged with a unique vision to foster a strong relationship with key business partners and drive overall success for the company.



MOVEMENTS

DoubleTree by Hilton

► Ras Al Khaimah

DoubleTree by Hilton Ras Al Khaimah Corniche Hotel & Residences has appointed **Sebastien Scheeg** as its new General Manager. Scheeg most recently served as the Commercial Director of DoubleTree by Hilton Dubai, Business Bay. A 20-years hospitality veteran, Scheeg began his career with InterContinental Paris, and from there Scheeg held management positions in Geneva, Bora Bora, Abu Dhabi, and Muscat followed by Hilton Kuala Lumpur. Recently, Scheeg successfully operated as Cluster Commercial Director for DoubleTree by Hilton Resort & Spa Marjan Island and lately as Commercial Director for DoubleTree by Hilton Dubai, Business Bay.



Millennium Hotels and Resorts

► Dubai

Millennium Hotels and Resorts announced the promotion of **Alexander Suski** to Associate Vice President Sales & Marketing for the MEA region effective immediately. Suski joined Millennium Hotels and Resorts in 2016 as a Regional Director of Sales and Marketing for the Middle East and Africa region. The promotion comes in line with the company's rapid expansion and its vision to further open 14 hotels in the region in 2019. As an Associate Vice President of Sales & Marketing, Suski will develop revenue generation strategies & commercial productivity encompassing the business to drive overall growth.



Hawthorn Suites by Wyndham Dubai

► Dubai

Hawthorn Suites by Wyndham JBR has appointed **Carlo Kazan** as its new Assistant Director of Sales. Kazan has more than 15 years of hospitality experience gained from various countries including UAE, Oman, Qatar, USA, and his home country, Lebanon. Prior to joining the property, Kazan was Senior Sales Manager at Habtoor Grand Resort, Autograph Collection by Marriott. He also worked as Business Development Manager at Salalah Rotana Resort, and was part of the sales team of The Torch in Doha and Le Gray Hotel in Beirut. He holds a master's degree in Global Finance and Hospitality from Johnson and Wales University in Rhode Island, USA.



M Hotel Makkah

► Makkah

M Hotel Makkah by Millennium announced the promotion of **Khaled Nabil** to Executive Assistant Manager i/c Sales and Marketing. Nabil joined the multi-storey hotel as Director of Sales and Marketing in 2017. Bringing onboard more than 20 years of experience to Millennium Hotels and Resorts MEA, Nabil began his career in Sales and Marketing with renowned international hotel chains including IHG, Starwood, Radisson Group, Ramada International and Concorde Hotels and Residences. He is a well-oriented sales and marketing person with a proven record of success and a substantial experience in all market segments.



UAE strengthens as MiCE hub at IMEX

Several emirates from the UAE recently participated at the largest MiCE event IMEX Frankfurt with their partners from the industry. This key networking event for MiCE agents around the world, brought together a conglomeration of over 14,000 senior industry professionals under one roof.



Thank you for believing in us

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