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India remains top source market for Dubai

Dubai, currently securing a place among the first five destinations, is en route to become the world's top spot for travellers from around the world.

TT Bureau

Tourism as a sector continues to be one of the most interconnected and highly diversified pillars of Dubai's GDP, believes **H E Helal Al Marri**, Director General, Dubai Tourism. "Our Vision 2022-25, as set out by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, is backed by several targeted strategic programmes for delivery by 2020-22, of which over 70 per cent are well underway already. We recognise the need for accelerated delivery to ensure that Dubai becomes the most visited, preferred and revisited global city for both leisure and business travellers. Equally in this age of disruptive yet progressive technological



H E Helal Al Marri
Director General, Dubai Tourism

Contd. on page 2 ▶

Staycations boost domestic tourism

The new staycation packages, assuring unbeatable value for UAE residents, are thoughtfully designed with their requirements in mind.



Ross Park
Director of Sales & Marketing, The Ritz-Carlton Ras Al Khaimah, Al Wadi Desert & The Ritz-Carlton Ras Al Khaimah, Al Hamra Beach

“The concept of staycations is a reciprocal agreement between parties such as travel agents, bookers, event planners, trade partners, etc. to make the most of in not just partaking in the programme but also to extent to the greater good of the industry. We have a number of schemes and special rates at our properties for extended stays.”



Werner Anzinger
General Manager, Mandarin Oriental Jumeira, Dubai

“As one of the new properties in the area, this will be the first time we will witness staycations at our hotels. Designed by acclaimed international designer Jeffrey Wilkes, the hotel welcomes guests with its stunningly designed lobby and stylishly appointed rooms. Whether vacationing solo or with loved ones discover the perfect holiday here.”

Contd. on page 2 ▶

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Dubai as tourist magnet

► *Contd. from page 1*
pervasiveness impacting every sector and most dramatically, the likes of travel and hospitality, we seek to assure even greater relevance and 'top of mind' consideration

innovative, efficient and impactful destination promotion aided by credible global partnerships and deep-rooted stakeholder networks across the emirate's markets. Al Marri further said, "Our first

programming and most importantly, in-city 'guest promise' delivery."

The continued success of Dubai as a global tourism magnet relies on collaborative delivery between government and private sector, and the enablement of equitable scale-agnostic participation of players across the tourism ecosystem. "Our mandate is to become the most preferred destination – beyond other quantitative visitation targets, which means that together with our partners, we strive to improve the quality of the Dubai experience to all our guests. As we set our sights on 2025, we recognise the need to embrace technological disruptions as these will be our levers to become the future pioneers for tourism," he concluded. 📶

“Setting sights on 2025, we recognise a need to embrace technological disruptions as these will be pioneers for tourism”

H E Helal Al Marri
Director General, Dubai Tourism

of our modern traveller, through agility, dynamic evolution and multifaceted experience delivery," he explained.

These fundamentals have in essence guided all of Dubai's initiatives, investments and outreach campaigns over the past 12-15 months as it remains focused on

quarter is an encouraging reflection of the success of our various ongoing initiatives and the efforts of all our industry partners – not just in our attraction of visitation through successful implementation of Dubai Tourism's planned calendar of regional and global campaigns, but also through customised itinerary

Exclusive privileges & offers

Contd. from page 1 ►



Ashraf Nabih
General Manager, Hilton Sharjah

“Our tailor-made packages include weekend getaways and SPA package. We are offering attractive rates along with 'Kids Go Free' promo for industry partners. Hilton Sharjah participates in Hilton global marketing campaign with up to 30 per cent off on room rates. Guests can also enjoy temperature-controlled swimming pools.”



Rabih Zein
General Manager, Fairmont Fujairah Beach Resort

“Our Ultimate Resort Experience includes a package validity for stays for a minimum of two nights with a guaranteed room upgrade, dedicated check-in area, special in-room welcome amenity, 30-minute massage per person per stay at Willow Stream Spa along with unlimited service of select alcoholic beverages and soft drinks.”



Marwan Fadel
*General Manager
The St Regis Saadiyat Island Resort, Abu Dhabi*

“We guarantee a 20 per cent discount on the best available rates and complimentary breakfast for two adults and up to two kids. Making this a truly tempting deal for families is the promise of a 50 per cent discount on the second room as well as the chance for an upgrade to the next category room (subject to availability). Adults can also enjoy a 60-minute complimentary massage per room at Iridium Spa, while the kids are given free access to the popular Sandcastle Kids Club.”

Inputs by Shehara Rizly



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2.9mn Chinese visitors in GCC by '22

Expert panelists at Arabian Travel Market explored how Gulf states can boost Chinese visitation further and cater to younger travellers from the Far East. GCC must deliver unique and tech-enabled experiences designed for free independent travellers if they want a market share of Chinese outbound tourists.

TT Bureau

According to research conducted by Colliers, the overall number of outbound tourists from China is projected to hit 224 million by 2022. United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) figures show that the GCC is on course to attract 2.9 million of these visitors. Panelists speaking at Arabia China Tourism Forum shared their opinions on this growing segment. Unique

experiences represent a key component when it comes to convincing younger Chinese travellers to visit the GCC.

Terry von Bibra, General Manager—Europe, Alibaba Group, said, "Smaller groups (of Chinese travellers) are going to new places to discover and have unique experiences that they can share with friends on social media. You cannot

underestimate the importance of the ideas of discovery. Customers

want to understand why things are unique and special. The more you can help them understand this, the better job you are doing."

In addition to unique experiences, **Xiuhuan Gao**, Head of Asian Market – Overseas Promotions Department, Sharjah Commerce and Tourism Development Authority (SCTDA), believes small, per-

sonal touches are also helping the GCC's hospitality sector to boost arrivals from China, such as Chinese condiments and in-room snacks. "Gulf countries are already taking steps to strengthen ties with China. Chinese passport holders can obtain 30-day visas on arrival in Oman, Bahrain and Kuwait, and the launch of Saudi's tourist visa is expected to lead to further increases," he shared.

Numbers Don't Lie

224 million outbound tourists from China by 2022

\$258 billion shelled out by Chinese travellers in 2017

1% of China's outbound tourist market travel to the Gulf

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EDITORIAL

Summer holidays

As Ramadan draws to a close, summer kicks in the Middle East and marks a new phase for tourism in the region. Staycations or domestic tourism caters to the residents and visitors in the Middle East. The ultimate escapes during summer always mean the adventurous Ras Al Khaimah, Sharjah beachfront, Dubai, Fujairah and Ajman following equally over the past few years.

The shorter working hours, school holidays and company vacation dates play a pivotal role in increasing the revenue of properties during this month as more people are at the liberty to select exactly what is required. Travel agents however, have the most important task as they need to organise as well as make a new destination available for their valued clients. Notable trends witnessed in the Middle East include the increase of mobile penetration especially in travel, tourism and hospitality sector. The numbers are estimated to triple over the next few years. However, this still does not rule out the traditional travel agent whose main task would be to ensure that every aspect is looked at before confirmation. The level of trust with the current issue is a sigh of relief!

Over the next few weeks more agents, tour operators and corporate bookers will have their hands full with many bookings to contribute to the industry, thereby adding on to the economy of the country. The support provided by the government of the United Arab Emirates to improve standards and services is another aspect to drive more revenue and provide ample opportunities.

The most important aspect is the way in which Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Ras Al Khaimah and Sharjah work towards attracting more tourists. The new visa regulations, transit packages where one gets a 48 to 72 hour visa to visit the emirates, is another strategy with a whole positive impact towards tourism.

Tech to transform booking

Ahmed (Joe) Youssef, EVP—Corporate Development & Marketing Hospitality, Amadeus refers to an Amadeus-IHG report, that argues how technology will change our experience of hospitality.

The current era of personalisation is, and will continue to be, aided by technology, to provide deeper insights into guests, leading to unprecedented levels of customisation. Hotel services will improve as a result, whilst the all-important human touch will be maintained with the added benefit of unique experiences. This is the hotel of the future — one that uses technology to deepen and enrich human interactions, rather than replacing them. Technology is set to revolutionise hospitality to drive deeper connections, make guests feel more valued and afford greater ease in the following three ways:

assist hotels to anticipate and adapt to guests' needs and savvy hoteliers should know exactly when to automate and when to allow human interactions to take over.

Beginning of the end for room types

Given that 65 per cent of consumers said that room facilities were a top priority when they last booked hotel accommodation at a hotel, the report predicts the way we book hotels will be totally revolutionised over the coming years. Whereas currently, guests simply book an identikit room for a flat price

connections with guests, forging a kind of 'cult status' as a result. 73 per cent of global travellers seek a 'unique experience' when they go on holiday. However, the report predicts that technology will allow bigger hotel brands to achieve those relationships with guests once reserved for boutique hotels alone. Driven by greater data-sharing and improved analytic technology, cultivating a loyal fanbase will be achievable 'at scale'.

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

“The most successful boutique hotels can create deep and lasting emotional connections with guests, forging a kind of 'cult status' as a result”

Rise of tech-augmented hospitality

The technologies underpinning hospitality automation could hold the key to unlocking a smarter guest service. 75 per cent expressed an interest in staying in a room where smart devices were present. However, on average surveyed consumers were 30 per cent more likely to prefer to interact with hotel staff for activities such as making a complaint or asking for recommendations. AI will

without any further options, guests could soon adapt their room of choice to suit their precise needs. For business travellers, this might mean booking a room during the day to recover from jet lag or for those in need of some 'me-time', perhaps preferring a desk to a yoga mat.

Achieving cult-status at scale

The most successful boutique hotels can create deep and lasting emotional



Ahmed (Joe) Youssef
EVP—Corporate Development & Marketing Hospitality, Amadeus

Sabre announces milestone migration



Sabre Corporation recently announced that it has successfully completed the migration of La Quinta by Wyndham properties to Sabre Hospitality Solutions' SynXis Platform. This unprecedented migration involved the simultaneous transition of La Quinta's reservations software and property management system for more than 900 hotels, resulting in

one of the largest same-day systems migrations in the history of hospitality.

"Delivering new technology at scale for a renowned brand like La Quinta by Wyndham is a big milestone for Sabre, Wyndham Hotels & Resorts and the hotel industry," said Clinton Anderson, President of Sabre Hospitality Solutions. "Through our close collaboration, Sabre and

Wyndham have demonstrated that hotel/technology partnerships can create efficiency. We're proud to be the technology partner to the world's largest hotel franchising company," he said.

La Quinta hotels join the more than 40,000 hotels, resorts, and chains spanning 160 countries that are currently leveraging Sabre Hospitality Solutions' technology.

Emirates to add six A380s to fleet

Ruling the Middle Eastern skies, Emirates is on a growth trajectory with new destinations and fleet this year. **Sheikh Majid Al Mualla**, Divisional Senior VP – Commercial Operations, Emirates, talks about key markets and collaborations.

TT Bureau



What is in store for this year at Emirates?
We continue to strive to bring new products and services every year to our customers as our customer is part of our DNA; so we not only provide them inflight services but also ground ser-

vices. Currently, all our aircraft are Wi-Fi enabled, and we have also increased the channels to 4000 in each aircraft on air and on the ground. We introduced the delivery of baggage and we plan to introduce biometric bag at the airport for a seamless

travel experience from the time passengers reach the airport till the time they end the journey. We are looking at each touch point to make their journey a better one. In terms of aircraft, we will add six A380s to our fleet. We have 271 aircraft out of which 109 are 380s.

Could you share the importance of the Indian market to Emirates?
India is a core network right from the day we started. We fly to nine destinations. My team and I are always looking at strategic expansion plans so that we can tap those unexplored areas, especially in India. The recent codeshare with SpiceJet provides us an

ideal opportunity to penetrate to hitherto unknown areas in the large subcontinent state of India. It will provide a reciprocal relationship between the two nations strengthening it even further.

China seems to be an emerging market. What are your views?
Flying to three key destinations in China, we still feel that it is an untouched market with huge potential and opportunity. When I recently attended the belt and road conference, I heard the speech delivered by the Chinese President; this was a very positive sign as he said that belt and road will open free trade.



Sheikh Majid Al Mualla
Divisional Senior Vice President –
Commercial Operations, Emirates

Emirates' Edge

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- 3.3mn passengers carried in a year
- 86 new routes with flydubai
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Strategist at work

Personality of the month



Currently responsible for 39 hotels in his portfolio and a further 42 on the cards, **Alexander Suski**, Area Vice President—Sales and Marketing, Millennium Hotels and Resorts, has created a formidable long-term strategy for the MENA region.

 Shehara Rizly

Positioning, partnerships and public relations are what drive **Alexander Suski**, Area Vice President—Sales and Marketing, Millennium Hotels and Resorts. Suski creates and implements sales and marketing strategies, drives market share and profit growth and ensures the brand equity of the property in the MENA region. Looking back, Suski aspired to be a professional basketball player but had to settle for a different professional career in insurance due to injuries. He excelled in the field and by the age of 22, he was leading a team of eight.

Stumbling upon hospitality

A Belgium national, Suski is fluent in Dutch, English and French and holds several industry qualifications. “My first corporate field work was that of an insurance broker where hardcore sales skills were tested and challenged every day. A friend of mine asked me if I could to help him with a commercial rebranding of a hotel. I agreed to support. After two years, I was appointed as Director of Sales and Marketing for Sofitel Brussels Le Louise, and that’s exactly from where the international journey started,” he recalls.

Honoured with achievements

Most notable achievements in Suski’s life started as early as 22 and 25. Today, managing a portfolio of over 30 properties with a further 42 on the cards for the next three years is no easy feat. His vast knowledge on the Middle East and Africa market has been instrumental in driving the group’s ambitious financial growth and expansion plans. With 15 years of marketing and sales experience, Suski joined Millennium Hotels and Resorts from Kempinski Hotels, where he held the role of Area Director of Sales and Marketing for their Egyptian and Bahrain properties before moving to the UAE as Director of Sales and Marketing at Kempinski Hotel Ajman and Kempinski Hotel Mall of the Emirates. Prior to this, he obtained 9 years of valuable experience in Europe with InterContinental Hotels & Resorts (IHG), Sofitel Luxury Hotels (Accor), Crowne Plaza (IHG) and De Dikke Van Dale (Fletcher Hotels).

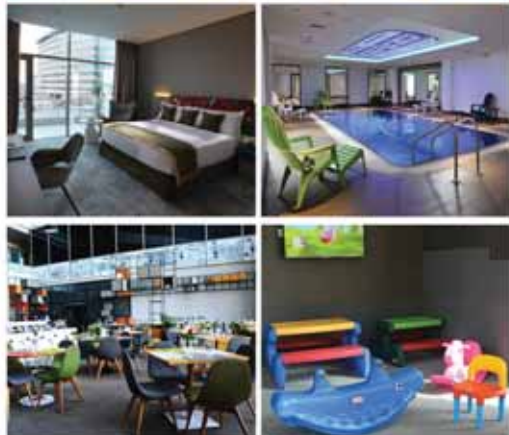
Fair share of business for all

With the rise of OTAs and enhanced options over the internet, more platforms now enjoy a piece of business. Suski agrees and mentions, “Studies show that while online travel agencies (OTAs) and Google dominate internet travel searches, travel agents are able to hold onto their booking market share and that they can limit the impact of OTAs by leveraging their strengths, especially the connections they create with their customers. As more on-line platforms are introduced, there will be an increase in the number of customers using online means and traditional agents should

focus also on having their own online platforms or tying up with leading ones.”

Personalisation & guest requirements

With changing guest expectations, hotels should be able to respond faster to remain relevant in the market. “Increased tech-savvy travellers using mobile apps and websites are expected to be on the rise. This puts more pressure on the hotel industry to ensure that their offerings are user-friendly and up-to-date. Business travellers have more expectations when it comes to high quality tech equipment and a knowledgeable support staff at business meetings and conferences. Wellness is playing an integral role today, where hospitality must amend its offerings to adapt to this trend. F&B concepts are to be revisited to meet the guests’ changing needs as well as spa and gym business approach to offer distinctive wellness programmes,” Suski explains.



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Leading from Front

- ❖ Alexander Suski’s commendable leadership skills and an impressive performance record, combined with a thorough understanding of the Middle East & Africa market, is instrumental in driving the Millennium group’s ambitious financial growth and expansion plans.

Family first at Beachcomber

As the summer holidays approach, families in the Middle East look out for unique destinations. Beachcomber's proactive approach to offer a range of special requisites to families will just be what travellers are looking for.

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Families come first in Mauritius with Beachcomber Hotels setting the standard in resort holidays to suit the interest of travellers of all ages. Featuring eight exquisite beachfront properties, each

environment. Families can be assured of a great experience when entrusting Beachcomber with their all-important family break. Special rates are available for children as well as teenagers.

Kids Club, for children aged between 3 and 11 years old, encourages kids to be creative while enjoying local and eco-friendly activities under the watchful eye of experienced entertainment teams

with an array of facilities ideal for families and a range of unique and special offers, Beachcomber has become the perfect choice for families seeking to reconnect with each other in a relaxing and fun

"Unlike many other Mauritian hotels offering a children's rate only up until the age of 12 years old, Beachcomber Hotels' rate applies for children up to the age of 17 years old. Some of our meal plans are offered at a

discounted rate for 12-17-year-olds, while children below 11 years of age eat for free. During the low season, children up to 17 years old enjoy complimentary meals and accommodation when sharing a room with their parents," says **Bruno Bosquet**, MICE and Market Sales Manager, Beachcomber Resorts & Hotels.

For parents of younger children and infants, there are a range of personalised child-friendly services and facilities, including babysitters (at an extra charge) and bottle sterilisers. Baby bathtubs and cots are available on request. For older children, entertainment is tailored to suit different age

groups, personalities and interests with complimentary kids' and teens' clubs. Kids Club, for children aged between 3 and 11 years old, encourages kids to be creative while enjoying local and eco-friendly activities under the watchful eye of experienced entertainment teams. The Teens Club, for teens aged between 12 and 17 years, is aimed at socialising and bonding while participating in a range of activities. There is also a Teens Club mobile app that connects teens in Beachcomber properties in northern Mauritius as well as at Paradis and Dinarobin. Teens can share experiences and find exciting activities in and around the hotels.



Bruno Bosquet
MICE and Market Sales Manager,
Beachcomber Resorts & Hotels

Just What's Needed

- ❖ In 2018, Mauritius welcomed **1,399,408** tourists and the UAE was among the main markets.
- ❖ Connectivity-wise, the MoU renewal between Emirates and Mauritius Tourism signifies a fruitful partnership with the island nation.



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Rapid visitor growth trajectory

The efforts of Sharjah Commerce and Tourism Development Authority (SCTDA) to attract more visitors to the emirate is on a steady growth plan. At the recently-concluded Arabian Travel Market, many numbers were shared by the authority in the emirate's race to achieve 10 million tourists by 2021.

TT Bureau

The Sharjah Commerce and Tourism Development Authority continues to remain on track to drive the emirate's tourism sector after its major 2018 accomplishments revealed a steady rise in the number of visitors and improved hotel revenues. During the event, SCTDA promoted its tourism projects and initiatives to raise global awareness of the emirate's distinctive, all-year-round tourist attractions.

Top global travellers

The total number of hotel guests

“The Sharjah government's vision is to attract 10 million visitors by 2021, in time for the UAE's 50th founding anniversary. Thanks to the unlimited efforts and the cooperation of all partners with us, we have already achieved at least 70 per cent of this vision, which is the equivalent of 7 million visitors who have come to Sharjah”

H E Khalid Jasim Al Midfa

Chairman, Sharjah Commerce and Tourism Development Authority

in 2018 reached 1,738,543, their combined revenue equaled AED 633 million. Hotels and hotel

apartments witnessed 65 per cent and 60 per cent occupancy rate, respectively. In 2018, guests from

Russia, the Commonwealth and the Baltics region posted a 41 per cent growth compared to the previous year, while tourists from Africa increased by 4 per cent. It is notable that Russian visitors continue to increase market share which achieved 23 per cent in 2018 from 15 per cent in 2017. Meanwhile, China has kept its market share to 7 per cent. The top five nationalities who travelled to the emirate in 2018 were Russians and they include the Russia, the Commonwealth and the Baltics region at 392,691; Omanis,





145,413; Chinese, 122,328; Saudis, 117,074; and Indians, 113,300 visitors.

New hotels & key projects

Apart from debuting Sharjah Summer Festival, new hotels were also unveiled during the previous period to accommodate the growing number of tourists visiting the emirate. The new world-class establishments include the recently opened Al Bait hotel, a five-star luxury destination which has 52 rooms; and Four Points by Sheraton Sharjah which embraces 225 modern hotel rooms equipped with the latest amenities and luxury, along with a number of hotels expected to open in the third quarter: Sharjah's Anantara Resort, a premier beachfront property; Novotel Expo Hotel Sharjah, a

business hotel; and Pullman Hotel Sharjah, which will offer 188 rooms and suites.

The government unveiled a host of environmental attractions as well. These are the eco-friendly Kalba Kingfisher Lodge and Al Faya Lodge, both of which seek to deliver exceptional experience in terms of luxury and sustainability. The tourism portal, VisitSharjah.com, was rolled out last year, featuring the emirate's beauty, uniqueness, and hospitality in the virtual world. It also provides key local offerings and innovative services.

Commenting on the achievements, **H E Khalid Jasim Al Midfa**, Chairman, SCTDA, said, "The Sharjah government's vision is

to attract 10 million visitors by 2021, in time for the UAE's 50th founding anniversary. Thanks to the unlimited efforts and the cooperation of all partners with us, we have already achieved at least 70 per cent of this vision, which is the equivalent of 7 million visitors who have come to Sharjah. This number is divided into leading exhibitions, events, museums visitors and tourists through the Sharjah International Airport—a quality focused achievement that we are proud of and has also inspired us to continue moving forward. The continuing efforts to improve and enhance the tourism sector plays a large and important role in helping achieve the objectives of this vision. Moreover, the positive performance of the local tourism

sector is an important addition to successful achievements of Sharjah, which has also been named World Book Capital 2019 by the Director-General of UNESCO. Our progress and successive achievements continue to inspire us further to double our efforts according to standards of excellence and leadership."

Numbers Speak

1,738,543 hotel guests in Sharjah in 2018

AED 633 million revenue generated by hotels

65% occupancy rate witnessed by hotels in Sharjah



Resplendent deals at ATM 2019

Arabian Travel Market once again awed the world by becoming one of the most lucrative business generation hubs attracting over 2,600 exhibitors and over 40,000 visitors. This year proved to be one which had the maximum number of announcements and signing of agreements for collaboration.



Spoilt for choice on Etihad

Etihad once again revolutionised the aviation industry by unveiling its fully customised Economy Class experience. **Linda Celestino**, Vice President—Guest Service and Delivery, Etihad, furnishes more details...

TT Bureau

Please tell us more about the 'Choose Well' campaign.

As part of the airline's overall 'Choose Well' brand platform, the campaign will drive greater awareness of Etihad's commitment to providing its guests with greater control, choice and value by personalising their travel experiences. We launched the evolution of our Economy Class product at Arabian Travel Market. Our 'Choose Well' campaign is about introducing more choice into the Economy Class. It is the nouveau Economy Class transformation. Our new narrow-body seats will be live streaming all our ISE content directly through the seats so that

our guests can watch it on their own devices. Also, we have re-invested back into the Economy Class culinary products; so it's a whole new range of fresh bistro styled dining. We have also launched Sweet or Salty, our inflight retail product. It's all about adding more choice to the Economy Class experience.

What are the new cabin features?

Etihad is progressively upgrading the Economy cabins of its narrow-body fleet of Airbus A320 and A321 aircraft. These are used mainly on short-haul regional services, and further afield to 38 Etihad getaways within five hours of flight from Abu Dhabi. The airline is install-

ing modern cabins featuring ergonomic Extra-spatial Design seats by UK-based Acro, an innovator in aircraft seat manufacturing. The next-generation seats are designed around the guest's digital devices with fast-charging USB points and an adjustable phone and tablet holder. The first stage of enhancements to the Economy experience began in 2017 with new seating options.

Quick Facts

- 300+ seats on narrowbody fleet of Airbus A320 & A321
- 38 getaways within five hours from Abu Dhabi

Could you elaborate on the new inflight entertainment system?

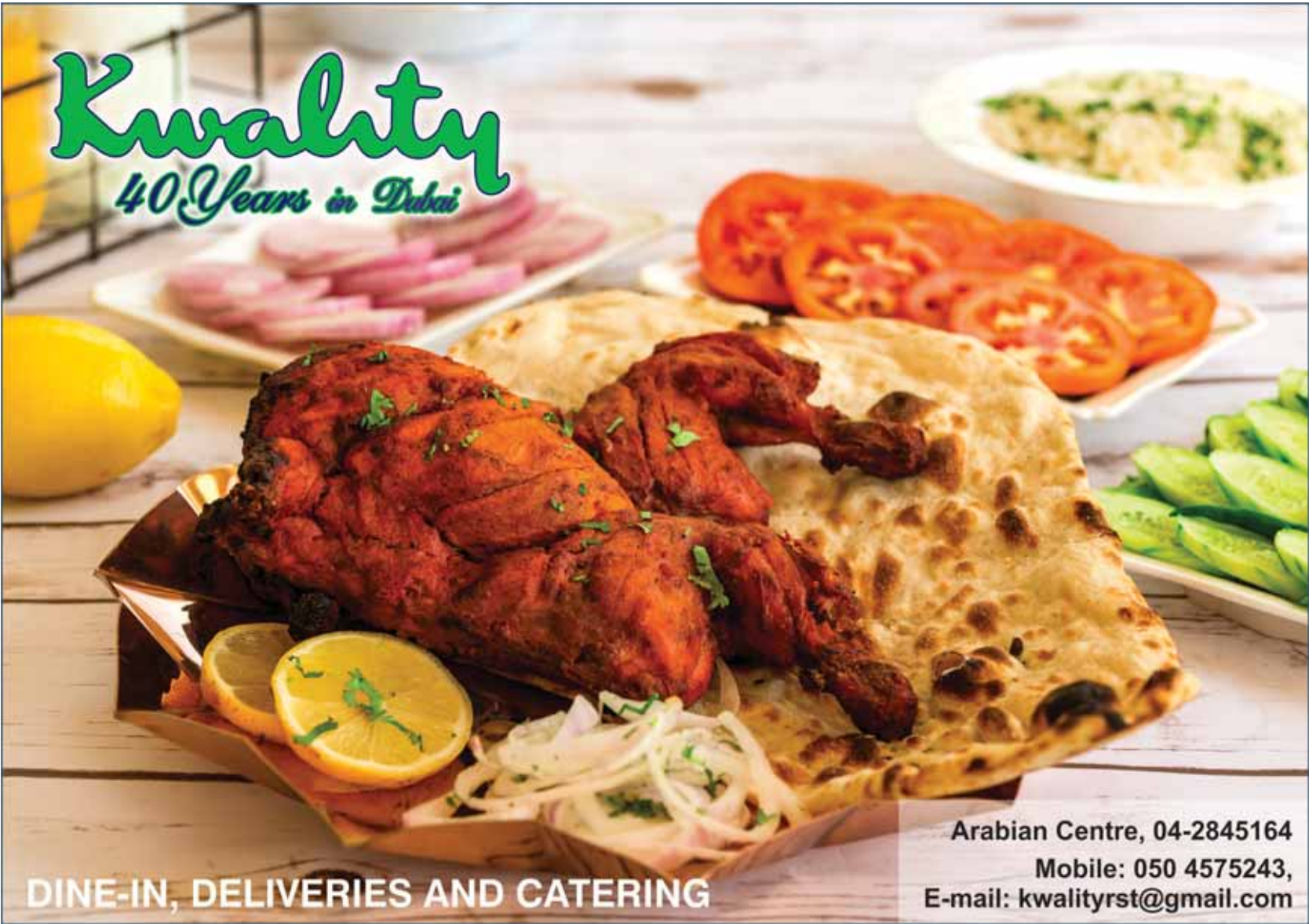
Guests on narrow-body aircraft will be able to simply log on and connect via browser to wirelessly stream more than 300 hours of free inflight entertainment through Etihad's onboard Panasonic eXW system directly to their own devices. To view a wider range of exciting entertainment and premium TV programming such as HBO and Universal shows, guests can simply download the new E-BOX stream app prior to travel.

Can you share the new dining experience onboard the Economy Class?
On journeys of over three



Linda Celestino
Vice President—Guest Service and Delivery
Etihad

hours, the main course of the core complimentary dining service is now a larger, contemporary bistro-style meal with a focus on fresh seasonal ingredients. A new curved triangular base plate design reflects the heritage of Abu Dhabi and is made using recycled materials. The new cutlery is 85 per cent lighter, reducing aircraft weight and fuel burn.



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NEW HOTELS

At the end of Q1 2019, a number of new property announcements were made in the UAE. Take a quick peek at the ones scheduled to open and the ones already opened.

★ **voco Dubai**

Rooms/Suites inventory:

471 rooms

Opening Date:

April 2019



Situated on Sheikh Zayed Road, voco Dubai is complete with modern décor and floor-to-ceiling panoramic windows. Guests can enjoy a delicious array of cuisines and experience the secret hideaway located on the 51st floor, Bar 51. Visitors can take advantage of the outdoor swimming pool and gymnasium or relax and unwind at the award-winning Spa Zen. For the corporate traveller, the hotel's 21 meeting rooms are designed to increase productivity, with the latest connectivity, while maintaining a comfortable and hassle-free atmosphere.

★ **C Central Beach Hotel The Palm**

Rooms/Suites inventory:

206 studios & suites

Opening Date:

Q2 2019

Featuring 206 luxe studios and suites overlooking the Arabian Gulf, C Central Beach Hotel The Palm is all set to welcome guests early this summer and will be the fourth hotel to open under Central Hotels' banner. The five-star contemporary resort in the emirate will offer a rich array of facilities including five exceptional restaurants and bars, a fully-equipped fitness centre, spa and swimming pool as well as fabulous conference and banqueting facilities.

★ **Paramount Hotel Dubai**

Rooms/Suites inventory:

823 rooms

Opening Date:

Q3 2019



Developed using the same bold imagination, inspiring talent and creative process that has been perfected over Paramount Pictures' 105-year history, Paramount Hotel Dubai, located in Business Bay, is synonymous with entertainment and creativity. Offering timeless Hollywood elegance and an innovative guest experience, the hotel brings to life the contemporary Californian magic with their studio-inspired entertainment, sophisticated design, gourmet dining experiences, luxury shopping options, spa and additional world-class amenities.

★ **Address Fountain Views**

Rooms/Suites inventory:

193 rooms

Opening Date:

Q4 2019

Address Fountain Views is a visually striking three-tower in Downtown Dubai offering mesmerising views of Burj Khalifa and The Dubai Fountain. Only 15 minutes from Dubai International Airport, the premium entertainment gateway offers a rich array of lifestyle amenities including The Spa for traditional and modern therapies with an emphasis on aromatherapy and hydrotherapy. There are several dining choices including The Restaurant, a unique interpretation of a luxury apartment presenting bespoke culinary experiences.

Marriott Executive Apartments debuts in Madinah

The 66-apartment property appeals to business, leisure and pilgrim travellers who seek a premium extended stay experience.



The re-branded property is the third Marriott Executive Apartments in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and appeals to the rapidly growing demand for extended stay both with business as well as leisure travellers. "Our growth and focus on Saudi Arabia is aligned with the Saudi Vision 2030 and the National Transformation Program 2020 to support the country's growing tourism and hospitality sectors. Religious tourism plays a key role as the government plans to attract 30 million pilgrims by 2030. Marriott Executive Apartments Madinah



Alex Kyriakidis,
President and Managing Director – Middle East & Africa
Marriott International

“Marriott Executive Apartments Madinah will address the growing demand for sophisticated style and tailored services within the extended stay environment for family, business & pilgrimage travellers”

will address the growing demand for sophisticated style and tailored services within the extended stay environment for family, business and pilgrimage travellers,” said Alex Kyriakidis, President and Managing Director – Middle East & Africa, Marriott International.



Shurooq launches 'Sharjah Sustainable City' project

'Sharjah Sustainable City', the first urban mixed-use project in the emirate, has been launched to meet the highest standards of green economy and environmental sustainability whilst aiming to reduce carbon footprint.





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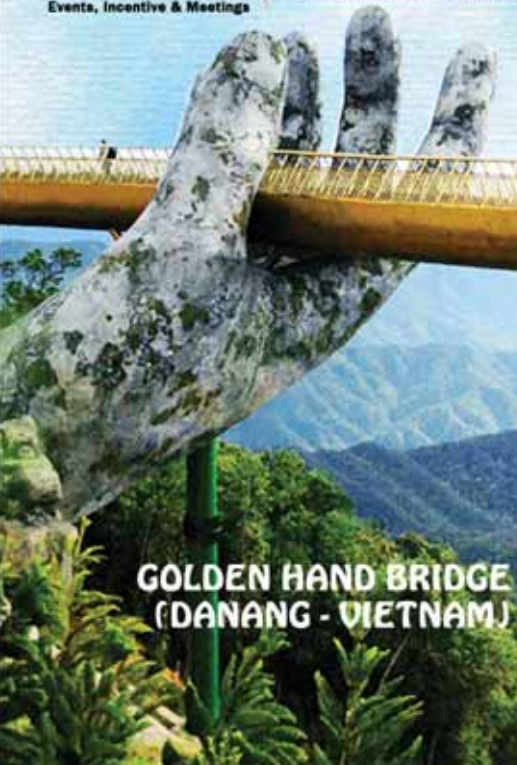
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GOLDEN HAND BRIDGE (DANANG - VIETNAM)

MOVEMENTS

Shurooq

► Sharjah

Sharjah Investment and Development Authority (Shurooq) announced the appointment of **Yousef AlMutawa** as the CEO of Sharjah Sustainable City project launched recently. It is the first urban mixed-use real estate and property project in the emirate that will meet the highest standards of green economy and environmental sustainability. AlMutawa is also Shurooq's Director of Operations. His appointment is a reinforcement of Shurooq's longstanding strategy to invest in human capital and nurture young professionals to take leadership positions.



Etihad

► Abu Dhabi

The UAE Commercial function of Etihad Airways will be headed by **Bader Ahmed Al Ali**. In his new role as Senior Manager — Commercial for the UAE home market, Ali will look after UAE key customer accounts, UAE government key accounts, Dubai and Northern Emirates sales, Abu Dhabi sales, imports and Etihad Cargo counter sales at Abu Dhabi Cargo Terminal, as well as specialised product sales in the UAE including perishables, live animals and luxury vehicles.



Mövenpick Hotel Ibn Battuta Gate

► Dubai

Mövenpick Hotel Ibn Battuta Gate Dubai appointed **Ian Rydin** as its new General Manager. Rydin will oversee the overall operations and strategic direction of the five-star property including its eight dining outlets. He has three decades of expertise in the hospitality industry where he recently served as the General Manager and District Director of four hotels in Nairobi and Kigali, Kenya including various key roles within the Radisson Hotel Group. Rydin holds an International Hospitality Management Diploma from Gothenburg International Hospitality College in Sweden.



Ascott

► Dubai

The Ascott Limited (Ascott) has appointed **Jaya Raj** as its Director of Revenue & Distribution for the Middle East, Africa and Turkey. Raj will oversee the group's regional revenue management and distribution strategy as well as manage day-to-day yield operations to maximise individual property revenues. A seasoned hospitality professional with an impressive track record, Raj has more than 15 years' experience of revenue management for leading hotel brands in the Middle East and India in addition to F&B and event management.



Hilton

► Sharjah

Ashraf Nabih has been appointed General Manager of Hilton Sharjah in Sharjah. He brings 28 years of hospitality industry experience with extensive background in hotel leadership and management. Most recently, and for the past five years, Nabih served as General Manager of Hilton Reading in the UK. He also chaired the Berkshire Hospitality Association in the VUK for the last five years. A 28-year hospitality veteran, Nabih began his career in 1991 with Hilton Hotels in London, UK. He also gained considerable experience in international chains.



Rixos Hotels

► Dubai

Cenk Ünverdi has been appointed as Regional General Manager for Rixos Hotels UAE. Following his promotion, Ünverdi will oversee all day-to-day operations of the properties, including Rixos The Palm Dubai Hotel & Suites, Rixos Premium Dubai, Rixos Saadiyat Island and Rixos Bab Al Bahr. The appointment comes shortly after Ünverdi's recent promotion to Cluster General Manager of Rixos The Palm Dubai Hotels & Suites and Rixos Premium Dubai in 2018, following a succession of key achievements since moving to the UAE with Rixos Hotels in 2012.



Amadeus

► Oman

Amadeus has appointed **Karim Eldeghedy** as Senior Manager — Pre-Sales & Solutions Adoption. With over 20 years of experience, Eldeghedy will oversee pre-sales activities and Amadeus' leading IT projects within the country, with a specific focus on GDS in the tourism sector. He also brings to Amadeus customers in Oman a compelling product and solutions background; thanks to his 15 years spent in solutions management. He is relocating to Oman from Amadeus' MENA regional office in Dubai, where he has had a strong track record of business growth and customer satisfaction for the past five years.



Sofitel The Palm Resort & Spa

► Dubai

Shamia Abdul Aziz has been appointed Assistant Director of Marketing, PR and Communications at Sofitel the Palm Dubai. Within the framework of her new role, Aziz will be responsible for developing all marketing and communications strategies, executing local and global marketing campaigns and continue to build a solid corporate brand. With over 18 years of experience in sales and marketing, Aziz gathered an extensive knowledge in destination marketing, tactical global consumer offers' crafting and generating millions of dollars in revenue.



Diverse experiences of IT'S MORE FUN IN THE PHILIPPINES

The Department of Tourism (DOT), Philippines hosted roadshows in Kuwait City and Riyadh. As a platform to promote the outbound destination amongst travel agents and tour operators, the event provided an opportunity to network with industry specialists.



Yas Experience of a lifetime

The rebranding of Yas Experience into Experience Hub has resulted in a positive outcome with India leading as the key source market. Take a look at some of the latest attractions set to increase domestic tourism.

 Shehara Rizly

The purpose-built island not only has theme parks and visitor attractions but is a full-fledged experience offered to guests of all ages. One could stay at the many hotels either within Yas Island or its neighbour Saadiyat Island but the best option is to stay in the island to have a richer experience.

West Yas Mosque

The beautifully constructed mosque is spacious with sepa-

rate prayer areas for men and women. The mosque is just a few minutes or less than 1 km from Warner Brothers.

Warner Brothers Theme Park

The world's first Warner Brothers branded indoor theme park in Abu Dhabi will transport you to lands of your favourite characters

with an immersive experience of a lifetime. As doors open in the morning, you walk into the plaza which is a purpose-built fully integrated theatre experience where they showcase an opening movie which portrays all the cartoons, movies, etc. from comic books of yesteryears to the motion pictures they were transformed to, from the basic looney tunes to comic book

favourites such as Batman, Superman and Green Lantern, etc as super heroes to a more contemporary Harry Potter.

Six uniquely themed areas which include Bedrock, Dynamite Gulch, Cartoon Junction, Gotham City and Metropolis. The 29 state-of-the-art rides and attractions are bound to

bring out the child in you. For example, the Green Lantern Galactic Odyssey is an incredible 4D flying theatre where you will be part of the action and the story itself.

Ferrari World

Apart from Formula Rossa, the fastest roller coaster in the world with a speed of 0 to 240 km/h in 4.9 seconds, this indoor and outdoor park offers a variety of activities for the whole family. One can get their first actual Ferrari ride or experience the tyre change of a Formula One Grand Prix and relax in a Ferrari.



Nominations

are now open



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