

# 1 IN CIRCULATION & READERSHIP

MIDDLE EAST'S LEADING TRAVEL TRADE MONTHLY

# TRAVTALK

20 years of inspiring travel

SINCE 2005

ddppl.com

TravTalkMiddleEast.com

THE NEWSPAPER OF THE TRAVEL INDUSTRY

Published from : ★ India ★ Middle East

Scan & Share

ATA ties up with Conrad Dubai.....05

Assured commissions for partners .....06

GCC hotels to grow @7-11% by '28 .....12

Chatbots & data to rule travel future.....13

Sun Siyam Resorts gears up for summer.....14

Enabling agents end-to-end tech services .....15



# Staycations gain momentum in UAE

With the summer coming early this year, staycations seem to be a massive hit among locals and expats in the United Arab Emirates. Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Ras Al Khaimah, and Fujairah, offering beachfront resorts, desert retreats, and luxury urban hotels, are some of the hot destinations finding favour with the travellers. Leaders in the industry share first-hand information with **TRAVTALK**.



**Meerah Ketait**  
Head of Retail and Leisure – UAE,  
dnata Travel

“Trending for UAE staycations with dnata Travel across the summer months of 2024 includes a mix of stays across Dubai and Ras Al Khaimah’s new and established resorts by the beach, or close to popular attractions. We are seeing a mix of traveller demographics on staycation this year, predominantly families, followed by couples, and groups of friends. More families are staying in the UAE for Eid al-Adha and travelling internationally later for the extended summer break. Stays close to the UAE’s attractions are popular.”



**Prem Sagar**  
Group General Manager, Al Rais  
Travel & Shipping Agency LLC

“Main areas for staycations: Travellers in the UAE prefer staycations in Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Ras Al Khaimah, and Fujairah, focusing on beachfront resorts, desert retreats, and luxury urban hotels. Travel companions and demographics: They often travel with family, friends, or as couples. Most are UAE residents, including locals and expatriates. Main interests and activities: Their main interests include relaxation, luxury spa experiences, fine dining, outdoor adventures, beach activities, and cultural excursions.”

Contd. on page 10 ►

## Tourism bounty for KSA

Travel and tourism sector contributed SAR 444.3 billion to the GDP of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 2023. The Kingdom also exceeded the target of 100 million tourists during the year.

TT Bureau

According to the World Travel & Tourism Council’s 2024 Economic Impact Research (EIR), Kingdom of Saudi Arabia’s Travel & Tourism sector is now soaring past all previous records, which is a testament to the country’s commitment to becoming a global tourism hot spot. Last year, the KSA’s Travel & Tourism sector grew by more than 32 per cent to contribute a re-

**The growth exceeded the previous record by almost 30 per cent and underscored the sector’s pivotal role in the nation’s economic framework**

cord-breaking SAR 444.3 billion to the country’s GDP, representing 11.5 per cent of the entire economy. The growth exceeded the previous record by almost 30 per cent and underscored

the sector’s pivotal role in the nation’s economic framework. Jobs supported by the sector grew by 436,000 to reach

Contd. on page 18 ►

## AI’s travel takeover

The impact of Artificial Intelligence and technology can be seen on the travel sector all over the world. Experts voice their opinion on the topic that seems to have revolutionised the industry today.



**Jamal Abdulnasar**  
CEO  
Cozmo Travel

“AI and technology have transformed the travel, tourism, and hospitality industry by enhancing booking processes, personalising experiences, and improving operational efficiency, leading to greater convenience and satisfaction for travellers. AI and technology empower agents with data-driven insights, automation tools, and personalised recommendations, enabling them to offer tailored services, optimise revenue streams, and enhance customer engagement for sustainable growth. Advanced technology and AI facilitate constant connectivity, real-time assistance, and personalised services, ensuring travellers have increased access to agents and resources, thereby enhancing their overall travel journey with seamless support and guidance.”

Contd. on page 13 ►

GET YOUR **FREE COPY**

If you want to receive TravTalk Middle East monthly please email [uae@ddppl.com](mailto:uae@ddppl.com)

Name | Designation | Company | Email | Mobile Number | Full Postal Address

[crisna@ddppl.com](mailto:crisna@ddppl.com), +971 55 4704 200

Slow travel: New way to explore

Indispensable travel agents

Unified visa to boost GCC biz

China to bring MICE into prominence

39mn tourist footfall in Abu Dhabi by 2030



# holidayme

## Supercharge your travel agency with Holidayme's next-gen travel solutions

- ✓ **World of hotels at wholesale rates**  
1M+ hotels, 100K+ sightseeing tours, and transfers across 175+ countries.
- ✓ **Dynamic packaging made easy**  
Build custom itineraries in minutes as per traveler needs and budgets.
- ✓ **Launch your own travel website**  
Establish your online presence to win customers and stand out.



Join the best-in-class loyalty program that rewards you for every travel booking and enjoy member-benefits like travel, lifestyle, gift vouchers, and more.



**Sign up for free today** by scanning the QR code or visiting

[www.holidayme.com](http://www.holidayme.com)

[info@holidayme.com](mailto:info@holidayme.com)

+971 4 2457300



# ME expects 1mn Chinese in 2024

ITB China, a three-day networking event organised recently in Dubai with **TRAVTALK** as the media partner, witnessed 600 exhibitors from over 80 countries and 1,000 buyers, apart from 15,000 visitors. More than 27,500 business meetings were conducted at the event. A cross section of the trade express their views on the China market.



**Lydia Li**  
Deputy General Manager  
ITB China

“Over the past few months, outbound travel from China has been witnessing an uptrend with Chinese travellers opting for MICE and business travel to the Middle East. According to the recent report by Trip.com, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Turkey, and the Maldives experienced high order growth rates from China.”



**Amr Elkady**  
CEO  
Egypt Tourism Authority

“2023 was a good year for Egypt as we received 230,000 visitors and we are looking at closing 2024 with 300,000 visitors from China. The Chinese leisure market has grown exponentially over the past few years and the increase of air connectivity is one of the main reasons for this.”



**Amr Adawy**  
Vice President Commercial  
EgyptAir

“We will be increasing flights from Cairo to China, as it is an important market for us. Currently, we fly four times a week to Shanghai, and we are hoping to increase it to daily flights and go a step beyond and add destinations such as Hong Kong as well. We operate to four cities in China; will be adding two more.”



**Abdelkhalek Mostafa**  
Regional e-commerce Director  
Pickalbatros Hotels and Resorts

“Chinese travellers have become one of the main source markets for us. The main attraction for the Chinese is our world famous theme park ‘Neverland City’ in Hurghada. Ensuring that the source markets are provided all facilities is a key factor. Hence, we too have introduced many facilities.”



**Xiong Xing**  
COO  
Trip.com Group

“As of now, China’s cross-border flight capacity has recovered to 71 per cent in 2024 compared to the same period in 2019, while the outbound travel search index for 2024 has risen by 63 per cent compared to 2019, with travellers experiencing high demand for travel, which is a good sign.”



**Astrid Kastberg**  
General Manager  
Yalago

“China represents one of our fastest-growing source markets for international travel. With the luxury segment prominent, we are finding Chinese travellers booking a more extensive range of five-star hotels, including across the UAE’s cityscapes, islands, and beaches.”

Compiled by Dr Shehara Rizly

## Fly with RwandAir

Partner with RwandAir for your travel and cargo needs, and let us take you and your shipments to new heights across Africa and beyond.

Whether you're traveling for business or leisure, our modern fleet, attentive crew, and range of amenities will make your journey memorable, and with our efficient logistics and dedicated team, we ensure timely delivery and safe handling of your cargo, providing peace of mind throughout the shipping process.



(+971) 43555013 /  
(+971) 561 886 615  
sales.dubai@rwandair.com



**RwandAir**  
Fly the dream of Africa

|  |                                      |  |  |  |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|--|--|
| <b>TICKETING</b>   | <b>CARGO</b>                         | <b>DAFZA OFFICE</b>                    | <b>SHARJAH OFFICE</b>                    | <b>GSA (UAE)</b><br><b>وكالات الريس للسفرات والبواخر</b><br><b>AL RAIS TRAVEL &amp; SHIPPING AGENCIES L.L.C.</b> |
| <b>DUBAI (+971)</b><br>4 393 4444, 4 352 0200, 4 351 1111,<br>4 330 6011, 4 396 0988, 4 508 6777   | <b>WB CONTACT</b><br>+971 4 221 9999 | <b>DAFZA OFFICE</b><br>+971 4 282 2000 | <b>SHARJAH OFFICE</b><br>+971 6 527 9203 |  |
| gsa@alrais.ae   gsagen@alraiscargo.ae   info@alraiscargo.ae   www.alraiscargo.com   www.alrais.com |                                      |  |  |  |

# Bleisure raking in money via agents

A significant portion of business to hotels in the Middle East region is contributed by agents due to the rise in bleisure travel over the past few years, which enables the traveller to explore more options than just the business meeting. In an interview with **TRAU TALK**, **Sushanth Nambiar**, Cluster GM, Pullman Dubai JLT & Novotel and Ibis Abu Dhabi Gate, shares more on the trend.

**TT Bureau**

**Do share with us the inventory and the performance over the past year?**

The combined inventory of Novotel Abu Dhabi Gate, Ibis Abu Dhabi Gate, and Pullman Dubai JLT totals an impressive 872 rooms—294 for Ibis, 224 for Novotel, and 354 for Pullman Dubai JLT. All three hotels have demonstrated a strong growth in best in class occupancies and a robust ADR, thanks to the brand strength, distribution, loyalty programmes and not to forget the support of the Abu Dhabi and Dubai Tourism in their visionary approach for the destinations.

**What is the contribution from travel agents?**

We work closely with various travel agents and corporate entities and a significant portion of our business is driven by these partners and segments.



**Sushanth Nambiar**  
Cluster GM, Pullman Dubai JLT & Novotel  
and Ibis Abu Dhabi Gate

We have strong relationships in place with the partners, both regionally and globally, and most of the key partners are connected with our systems to enjoy the best partnership rates and offers.

**How do you commit to sustainability in all three properties?**

Sustainability is at the core of operations at Novotel, Ibis Abu Dhabi Gate, and Pullman Dubai

JLT, reflecting a commitment to environmental stewardship that aligns with the UAE's national sustainability goals. Notably, Pullman Dubai JLT holds Green Globe Certification, while Novotel and Ibis are certified by Green Key. These certifications recognise our commitment to sustainable practices and responsible management within the travel and tourism industry.

One of the standout initiatives is the installation of a water bottling plant. This significant investment allows the hotels to drastically reduce their plastic waste by providing guests with reusable



glass bottles instead of single-use plastics. This move is a testament to the hotels' dedication to reducing plastic pollution and supporting a greener future.

**Installation of a water bottling plant allows the (group's) hotels to drastically reduce their plastic waste by providing guests with reusable glass bottles**

All of the three hotels have completely eliminated the use of single use plastic. This transition to sustainable alternatives not only helps in reducing plastic waste but also sets a benchmark for the industry, proving that luxury and sustainability can coexist seamlessly. We can confidently say almost all of our guests show appreciation for our efforts.

In an innovative approach to dining sustainability, the hotels

have introduced CO2 emissions information on their menus. This transparency empowers guests to make environmentally conscious dining choices, promoting greater awareness and responsibility regarding the environmental impact of their food consumption.

More than 25 per cent of the menu offerings are now vegan and vegetarian, promoting healthier and more sustainable eating habits. Additionally, the sustainability menus feature dishes made with locally sourced and farm-produced ingredients. This not only supports local farmers but also reduces the carbon footprint associated with transportation. As part of Ne'ma's and ReLoop's 5 Million Saved Meals Campaign, Novotel and Ibis Abu Dhabi Gate participated in the Zero Food Waste to Landfill campaign during the Holy month of Ramadan.

# Readiness of AI & VR for travel experiences

The World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTTC) predicted that 2024 will be a record-breaking year for the travel and tourism sector, with its global economic contribution expected to reach an all-time high of US \$11.1 trillion. The continuous advancements in AI and VR, coupled with increasing consumer acceptance, indicate that these technologies will continue to be embedded into the travel experience.

The travel industry is being transformed through new technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Virtual Reality (VR), which promise to redefine travel experiences. Such technologies will not only enhance accessibility but also support more immersive, personalised, and efficient experiences for tourists. AI has become a transformative force, not only reshaping businesses globally but also closer to home, where the Middle East, Türkiye, and Africa (META) region are leading in this technological revolution. According to the latest forecast from the International Data Corporation (IDC), AI spending in the META region is expected to surge at a five-year compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 37 per cent, reaching up to a projected US \$7.2 billion by 2026. The rapid development of AI and VR technologies represents new opportunities for the travel industry. However, the extent to



which it will permanently disrupt how we travel is debated.

AI has thus far significantly impacted the travel sector, with applications such as chatbots, virtual assistants, personalised recommendations, and predictive analytics transforming the way people plan and experience their journeys for several years. In many ways, travellers have been interacting with AI for some time.

According to Statista's report, VR headset sales are projected to reach 35 million units annually, with the VR market valued at US \$44.7 billion in 2024. This marks a crucial moment for the travel and tourism industry. As VR adoption increases globally, travel and tourism companies can integrate VR into their marketing and sales strategies to boost engagement and conversions. Implementing technologies like VR and

AR will allow the travel industry to create unique and rewarding experiences for guests, and to develop long-lasting relationships with them. By embracing these emerging technologies, travel companies can better meet customer needs and remain relevant in a rapidly evolving market.

**As AI and VR revolutionise the hospitality industry, adopting these technologies can boost operational efficiency and the overall experience**

AI-powered systems offer personalised travel suggestions, real-time customer service, and operational efficiency by forecasting demand and optimising pricing. AI also improves travel security with facial recognition systems and enhances the passenger experience. Additionally, AI algorithms can recognise and respond to objects in a virtual

setting. For instance, during a virtual museum tour, AI can bring artefacts to life, providing information and a curated audio guide. This technology enables tailored and engaging experiences for different tourists. Advanced AI algorithms can provide real-time, personalised

360-degree tours of landmarks, museums, and cities worldwide. This technology allows potential travellers to experience a destination before deciding to visit, providing a realistic sense of place, and helping them make informed travel decisions.

As AI and VR technologies revolutionise the hospitality industry, adopting these technologies can boost operational efficiency and the overall experience.



**Dr Ross Curran**  
Associate Professor, Edinburgh Business  
School at Heriot-Watt University Dubai  
(The views expressed  
are solely of the author.)



# ATA ties up with Conrad Dubai

The Arabian Travel Awards, now in its seventh year, has announced Conrad Dubai as its official hospitality partner. Known for recognising excellence in the travel and tourism industry, the event attracts top leaders in the industry. This year's Arabian Travel Awards will take place at the Conrad Dubai on November 12.

TT Bureau

**M**ichael Schmitt, General Manager, Conrad Dubai, expressed his enthusiasm, saying, "I'm thrilled to partner with the Arabian Travel Awards. This event attracts the top leaders in the travel industry; it's a perfect platform to showcase our unwavering commitment to providing exceptional experiences that reflect Dubai's dynamic spirit."



Michael Schmitt  
General Manager  
Conrad Dubai

**It offers a unique opportunity to connect with key industry players, forge new partnerships, and solidify existing relationships**

Schmitt highlighted the strategic importance of the partnership noting that it offers a unique opportunity to connect with

key industry players, forge new partnerships, and solidify existing relationships. "By being a part of this event, Conrad Dubai

contributes to promoting Dubai and the wider Arabian region as a premier travel destination. Bringing industry leaders together fosters collaboration and knowledge sharing. This aligns perfectly with Conrad Dubai's



mission of redefining what luxury hospitality means in this ever-evolving region and aligns perfectly with Conrad Hilton's founding philosophy 'to fill the earth with the light and warmth of hospitality,' he added.

**SanJeet**, Director, DDP Group, also shared his excitement about the collaboration, stating, "We are very happy to welcome onboard our hospitality partner



SanJeet  
Director  
DDP Group

Conrad Dubai for the seventh edition of the Arabian Travel Awards. Our awards have been evolving over the years to recognise the untiring efforts of the industry experts. In today's travel, tourism, and hospitality landscape, there are many changes and new trends that have emerged. Applications are now open to vote for those in the industry who have been at the forefront of promoting and work-

ing to go above and beyond the general norms of the industry."

The Arabian Travel Awards continues to be an invitation-only event, gathering top leaders from the travel industry to celebrate and acknowledge outstanding

**Our awards have been evolving over the years to recognise the untiring efforts of the industry experts**

achievements and contributions. This partnership with Conrad Dubai underscores the hotel's commitment to excellence and its role in driving the region's hospitality sector forward. ➔





✈ Flights   🏨 Hotels   🚗 Cabs   🌴 Holidays   🚢 Cruises   🎡 Activities

# BUCKLE UP WITH NEWLY LAUNCHED CAR RENTALS



EASY | EFFORTLESS | ECONOMICAL

 [holidays@travelwings.com](mailto:holidays@travelwings.com)    [www.travelwings.com](http://www.travelwings.com)    +97145561003

Scan, Explore, Book!



\*T & C Apply



# Assured commissions for partners

DAMAC Hotels & Resorts and Paramount Hotels have benefitted from the continuous growth of tourism in the Gulf Cooperation Council region. The rising travel demand brings in a steady economy and the expansion of new source markets. **Dean Rossilli**, Senior Vice President, DAMAC Hospitality shared with **TRAVELTALK** some key trends and insights.

 TT Bureau

**C**ould you share details about the performance over the past year?

Over the past year, our performance has demonstrated significant growth. This trend is particularly notable in the realm of travel demand, where we have observed a marked uptick, accompanied by the emergence of new opportunities within burgeoning markets. Notably, we have reinforced our efforts to drive brand awareness and the reputation of DAMAC Hotels and Resorts and Paramount Hotels in the GCC and beyond. We



**Dean Rossilli**  
Senior Vice President  
DAMAC Hospitality

find ourselves positioned within a landscape of burgeoning opportunities, poised to capitalise on this resurgence and contrib-

ute to Dubai's continued ascent towards its glory days.

**What are the expectations for this year?**

This year signifies a transformative juncture for our presence in Dubai's dynamic tourism sector. Anchored in the city's resurgence in travel demand and economic vitality, alongside an expanding array of source markets, we aim to continue elevating our occupancy and revenue streams. Key to our strategic agenda is the reinforcement of our brand identity and narrative, spotlighting our portfolio of seven properties in Dubai, including the iconic Paramount Hotel Dubai, Paramount Hotel Midtown, DAMAC Maison Mall Street, DAMAC Maison Creek View, DAMAC Maison Cour Jardin, DAMAC Maison Distinction and DAMAC Maison Aykon City. This emphasis on

brand nurturing serves as a cornerstone for our sustained growth as a brand, leveraging the cinematic allure of the Paramount brand, which carries a legacy of entertainment spanning 112 years.

**Do you work with travel agents and corporate bookers? What is the percentage of business they bring? How do you incentivise them?**

Yes, we collaborate closely with travel agents and corporate bookers to facilitate bookings and drive business to our properties. These partnerships play a significant role in our overall sales strategy. To incentivise our partners, we offer competitive commission structures and exclusive promotions. Additionally, we prioritise building strong relationships through personalised service and tailored solutions to meet the unique needs of our partners.




**Which are the main source markets that occupy your properties?**

Our properties attract guests from a diverse range of source markets, reflecting Dubai's status as a global hub for business and leisure travel. While traditional markets such as Europe, the Middle East, and Asia continue to contribute significantly to our occupancy rates, we have also observed growing interest from emerging markets such as

China, India, CIS, and Africa. Our strategic marketing efforts target these key source markets.

**Have you seen a difference in terms of bookings or stays?**

In recent months, we have seen a noticeable shift in booking patterns, with an increasing proportion of leisure travellers compared to pre-pandemic levels. This trend reflects evolving consumer preferences and pent-up demand for travel. 

**We collaborate closely with travel agents and corporate bookers to facilitate bookings and drive business to our properties**



## Exclusive Duplex In Down Town

New room type to be launched soon, Centrally located amidst Sheikh Zayed Road with short distance to the city's key business hubs and world famous tourist attractions

For bookings, visit [www.thetowerplazahotel.com](http://www.thetowerplazahotel.com)







## SHOP, SHINE & STAY

Located in the heart of Dubai Taj Dubai is just 5 minutes from Dubai's iconic landmarks such as: Dubai Mall, Burj Khalifa, Dubai Opera and The Dubai Fountain. Whether you're planning a family getaway or a romantic retreat, Taj Dubai promises an unforgettable holiday filled with luxury, delicious cuisine, and exceptional service.

Rooms and rates are subject to availability.

For bookings and more information,

call +971 4 438 3100 or email [reservations.tthdxb@tajhotels.com](mailto:reservations.tthdxb@tajhotels.com)

Terms and conditions apply.



# Marhaba France Spain impresses GCC

France and Spain are the most popular destinations among the GCC market as they have diverse offerings catering to the requirements of the region with rich culture and heritage. Marhaba France Spain - the special three-day event with agents across the Middle East recently celebrated and shared their latest insights with new partners from both countries.





# DISCOVER BRUNEI WITH MALAYSIA & SINGAPORE



1N Brunei  
4N Malaysia

**5<sup>6</sup>**  
Starting From  
**AED 4750\***  
Per Person



**INCLUSION**

Flight
 Hotel
 Breakfast
 Transfers
 Tour Guide
 Sightseeing

Departure:  
Aug 26-27 Brunei  
Aug 27-31 Kuala Lumpur



1N Brunei  
4N Singapore

**5<sup>6</sup>**  
Starting From  
**AED 5820\***  
Per Person

Excludes: Visa, Insurance.

Departure:  
July 18-19 Brunei  
July 19-23 Singapore

\*T&C Apply

[www.satgurutravel.ae](http://www.satgurutravel.ae)

📍 Dubai

☎ +971 4 556 1050 ✉ [tripsaver@satgurutravel.com](mailto:tripsaver@satgurutravel.com)

📍 Abu Dhabi

☎ +971 2 639 4277 ✉ [infoauh@satgurutravel.com](mailto:infoauh@satgurutravel.com)

**Resorts World Cruises**

## LUXURY CRUISE EXPERIENCE



**3**  
NIGHTS

### SUNDAY SAILINGS

20 OCT 2024-  
06 APR 2025

Dubai (UAE)-Khasab  
(Oman)-Muscat  
(Oman)-Dubai (UAE)

**2**  
NIGHTS

### WEDNESDAY SAILINGS

23 OCT 2024-  
07 APR 2025

Dubai (UAE)-Doha  
(Qatar)-Dubai (UAE)

**2**  
NIGHTS

### FRIDAY SAILINGS

18 OCT 2024-  
11 APR 2025

Dubai (UAE)-Sir Bani  
Yas Island (AbuDhabi)-  
Dubai (UAE)

**ITVAR** | PREFERRED  
SALES AGENT

✉ [siraj.hussain@itvar.com](mailto:siraj.hussain@itvar.com) | [res.cruise@itvar.com](mailto:res.cruise@itvar.com)

☎ +971 521 716 582 🌐 [www.itvar.com](http://www.itvar.com) | [f](#) [in](#) [e](#)



# Dubai, Abu Dhabi & RAK top for staycation

► Contd. from page 1



**Dinkar Dasaur**  
General Manager – UAE  
Satguru Travel

“ UAE has evolved to perfection in terms of meeting the tastebuds of local and international travellers. Dubai, Abu Dhabi, and Ras Al Khaimah offer exclusivity on hotels, parks and service levels. Specific places like Dubai Parks & Resorts, Yas Island, Hotels & Resorts are absolute gems for staycation getaway. There is something for everyone. Families and friends enjoy waterparks, explore city scenes, gastronomy and shopping. ”

“ In UAE, popular areas for staycations connect well with individual preferences and needs. Dubai with its ultra luxury resorts, beaches, and iconic landmarks stands at number one spot to un-



**Yasser Moussa**  
General Manager  
Al Bustan Centre and Residence

“ Hotel staycations in Dubai cater to diverse travel preferences, whether you are with family, friends, as a couple, or solo. Families love the luxurious amenities and kid-friendly activities, ensuring fun for all ages. Friends find excitement in the vibrant nightlife, world-class dining, and adventure sports. Couples indulge in romantic getaways. Solo travellers relish the city's rich heritage, enjoying the best shopping destinations and serene spots. ”

“ The Middle East offers diverse staycation destinations. Dubai stands out with its blend of modern culture, history, and adventure. Visitors can explore the iconic Burj Khalifa, indulge in shopping,



**Ayman Al Qudwa**  
General Manager  
Falcon Travel

“ The hottest debate in travel suddenly became whether the term 'staycation' referred exclusively to a holiday where to spent? Home, or outside your country. However, still Europe destinations and Turkey are the most preferred for locals in Qatar. Unlike travellers in other regions, who travel in groups, in Qatar are linked by family ties or friends. They visit tourist attractions that they may not have visited before, even though they are close to them. ”

“ Great deals of all-inclusive packages is what travellers are always looking for in family staycations. Fun activities/ interactive workshops organised for the kids is something that most parents



**Sumit Gupta**  
Hotel Manager  
Novotel & ibis Deira Creekside

seek. For couples, services such as exclusive dining and spa offer is a great attraction. In UAE, it is seen that both local and residents enjoy doing staycations. There are so many hotels and resorts catering to all discerning guests. ”



**Reji Kurup**  
Head of Leisure  
ATS Travels LLC

wind. Abu Dhabi ranks second offering cultural experiences blended with modern facilities and destination attractions. Ras Al Khaimah ranks third for its stunning mountains and landscapes. Fujairah & Sharjah rank fourth. ”



**Nuran Kilani**  
Corporate Director of Commercial  
Time Hotels

and enjoy desert thrills like hot air ballooning or skydiving over the Palm Jumeirah. Saudi Arabia, with its historic landmarks and gleaming architecture, is another fascinating choice. The pace here is set by prayer times. ”



**Elmira Heshmati**  
CEO  
Elaxiom Travel & Tourism

“ We are about to dive into the wild world of UAE staycations in nature! From desert oases to mountain retreats, we have rounded up the best spots to leave the travellers feeling refreshed, rejuvenated to Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Ras Al Khaimah, Ajman, Fujairah and Sharjah. As it is a travel experience, the demands are with friends or family depending on the time and the length of holiday. Staycation as a vacation spent at home or nearby would make every day feel like a getaway. ”

“ UAE residents are embracing staycations in 2024. Instead of long vacations, many are opting for frequent, shorter breaks to recharge. Convenience, affordability, and exciting activities are top



**Sapna Aidasani**  
Director Marketing  
Pluto Travels

“ People prefer sleepcations at the luxury resorts or glamping in luxury tents. The camps with all the luxury in wadi areas are trending as well, especially in Ras al Khaimah. Majority of staycations are as family where kids can enjoy a theme park nearby or where the entire family with people of all ages travel for a long weekend as a reunion. Right now, due to Abu Dhabi temple I see a trend where people stay in a resort for staycation, followed by a temple visit next day. ”

“ Abu Dhabi's staycation hotspots this year—Yas, Saadiyat, Al Maryah, Downtown, and Al Ain—are favoured by locals and residents alike, who typically travel with family or as couples. Their interests span



**Ramaii Nanda**  
Head of Operations  
The Travel Makers, Dubai

“ This year, UAE tourists prefer staycations in Dubai's luxury beachside resorts, Yas Island hotels with access to amusement parks, and Ras Al Khaimah's mountain getaways, as well as beach resorts, seeking a variety of experiences within the nation. Staycationers usually travel with family or friends, although many couples and solitary explorers also take part. They are primarily UAE residents looking for convenient and enriching vacations. ”

“ Travellers mainly come from Dubai, Ajman, Ras Al Khaimah, Fujairah, and Abu Dhabi. They appreciate Shangri-La Dubai's central location, just five minutes from the metro station, and the shuttle service to



**Mariyam Kapasi**  
Founder  
Beyond Bliss Travels

priorities when choosing a staycation destination. Dubai remains the king of staycations. While luxury beachfront resorts cater to those seeking indulgence, family-friendly hotels with water parks make others happy. ”



**Elias Saad**  
Hotel Manager  
Royal M Hotel by Gewan, Abu Dhabi

beachside relaxation, theme park adventures, shopping, dining out, and exploring cultural heritage. Staycations in Abu Dhabi are spent in hotels and resorts, averaging two-three nights per stay, with peak seasons from October to April. ”



**Tarek Medhat**  
Director, Sales and Marketing  
Shangri-la Dubai

Dubai's attractions. The hotel offers unparalleled and unobtrusive views of Burj Khalifa and the city lights. Dining and restaurant experiences are also a significant draw. Guests enjoy exploring the attractions in Dubai. ”

Compiled by Dr Shehara Rizvi



# ‘We ferried 4.5mn ME travellers in 2023’

More than 4.5 million passengers travelled onboard Turkish Airlines from the Middle East to Türkiye last year. Prof Ahmet Bolat, Chairman of the Board and Executive Committee, Turkish Airlines, says the task for this year is to increase the number of visitors, especially from the Middle East region, as they aim to target 90 million overall passengers by end of the year.

Dr Shehara Rizly

Prof Ahmet Bolat, Chairman of the Board and Executive Committee, Turkish Airlines, in an exclusive interview with **TRAVEL**, shared that most exciting news was the launch of a new destination in USA, Denver.

Having started its operations to the Americas in 1988 with flights to New York, Turkish Airlines has expanded its flight network to include Denver as the 14<sup>th</sup> destination in the USA.

Prof Bolat said that beginning June, there will be three flights a week to Denver, which will be their 347<sup>th</sup> destination in 130 countries. “From July 9, 2024, the frequency will increase to four flights a week, thereby contributing to the tourism and trade volumes between the two countries by transporting



Prof Ahmet Bolat, Chairman of the Board and Executive Committee, Turkish Airlines, flanked by senior officers at the press meet

**Having started its operations to the Americas in 1988, Turkish Airlines has expanded network to include Denver as the 14<sup>th</sup> destination in the USA**

thousands of passengers annually on the Istanbul-Denver route. Denver, the capital and largest city of the state of Colorado, attracts many domestic and international travellers

with its cultural attractions and as a host for various sports events,” he said. Turkish Airlines served 83 million passengers in 2023, and

keeping in view the momentum, it expects to welcome 90 million passengers by the end of the year. There was an increase in passenger numbers from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia last year and the airline expects the rest of the year to be the same.

Prof Bolat mentioned that there had been an increase of business class passengers over the last year as well in comparison to before and this trend seems to be continuing over the year. In terms

of new routes, he shared that they added the sixth continent of Australia in 2023, with three flights per week and by end of this year they will increase to more cities in Australia. They increased operations in the US as well by adding their 13<sup>th</sup> destination – Detroit – and they will start flights to Denver by next week. He further shared

also because of the common culture. Prof Bolat shared that 4.5 million passengers travelled onboard Turkish Airlines from the Middle East to Türkiye last year. “This year, we hope to increase this number by working with the travel trade in a special programme that we are planning and showcasing some of the



that within the next 10 years, Turkish Airlines will double its fleet from 450 at present to 800 plus. Turkish Airlines seeks more travellers from the Middle Eastern region, not only due to its proximity in terms of flying but

new attractions that are culturally and historically significant,” he said. Another important fact that Prof Bolat mentioned was that there were more bookings on business class seats, which shows the rise of luxury travellers from the region. **D**



Top Travel Trip  
Trust • Transparency • Together

# EXCLUSIVE AIRLINE DEALS & RATES





















THIS IS APPLICABLE FOR OUR REGISTERED BUSINESS PARTNERS ONLY

TO REGISTER, CONTACT US NOW.

+971 4 556 1010   support@toptraveltrip.com   www.toptraveltrip.com





# GCC hotels to grow @7-11% by 2028

Projections for GCC hospitality sector by a group of experts conveyed that Saudi Arabia and the UAE will rise exponentially over the next four years. Saudi Arabia is projected to grow in line with the GCC average of 7.5% , whereas the UAE is expected to grow at a CAGR of 6.9%. Smaller markets such as Qatar and Kuwait are expected to witness high growth rates during the forecast period.

TT Bureau

The GCC is solidifying its global tourism footprint through successful hosting of major MICE, cultural and sporting events. Anticipated to attract millions of tourists, these events are poised to bolster the growth of the hospitality industry.

Moreover, the region has implemented several liberalised measures to further boost tourist inflow, including initiatives such as unified GCC visas, Dubai's five-year multiple-entry visa and Saudi Arabia's instant e-visa

options. Regional and religious tourism are pivotal to the GCC's economic diversification strategy, prompting implementation of unique models of engagement to enhance activity in these areas. Concurrently, the GCC continues to invest in its transport infrastructure by expanding airport capacity, constructing new airports, and building a rail network for better regional and international connectivity. These efforts are expected to support tourism activity and increase the demand for hospitality related services.

According to Alpen Capital, the

GCC hospitality sector revenue is expected to grow at a CAGR of 7.5 per cent from 2023 to 2028, reaching approximately US \$48.1 billion by 2028. This robust growth is fuelled by the unified efforts of the GCC countries in prioritising hospitality as a key element of their long-term diversification strategies. The growth in the hospitality sector revenue of individual GCC countries is expected to range from a CAGR of 6.9 per cent to

**The region has implemented several liberalised measures to further boost tourist inflow**

### GCC hospitality sector on a roll

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>7.5% CAGR</b>   | <b>US \$48.1 billion</b>  |
| GCC hospitality sector revenue is expected to grow from 2023 to 2028                   | GCC hospitality sector revenue is expected to grow by 2028                |
| <b>6.9%-11%</b>  | <b>69.3%</b>  |
| expected range of growth in the hospitality sector revenue of individual GCC countries | expected occupancy rate rise in the GCC region by 2028 from 64.6% in 2023 |

Source: Alpen Capital

11 per cent between 2023 and 2028. Saudi Arabia is projected to grow in line with the GCC average of 7.5 per cent, supported by numerous government-led initiatives as part of its Vision 2030, whereas the UAE is expected to grow at a CAGR of 6.9 per cent, backed by the government's focus on modernising infrastructure and easing tourist visa rules. Smaller markets are expected to witness high growth rates during the forecast period, with Qatar at 11 per cent, Kuwait at 10.5 per cent, and Oman and Bahrain at 9 per cent CAGR.

Given the projected growth of the GCC's hospitality sector, its three key operating metrics - Occupancy Rate, ADR and RevPAR - are expected to improve over the next five years. The occupancy rate in the GCC is estimated to rise consistently due to increasing tourist arrivals. It is forecasted to grow from 64.6 per cent in 2023 to 69.3 per cent in 2028. ADR is expected to increase at a CAGR of 1.9 per cent during the same period, from US \$166.4 to US \$182.7, whereas RevPAR is forecasted to grow at a CAGR of 3.3 per cent from US \$107.5 in 2023 to US \$126.6 in 2028.



## HARD ROCK HOTEL SETS THE RHYTHM OF MARBELLA.

Turn up the volume and get ready for Hard Rock Hotel Marbella. The best spot in the glamorous Puerto Banús with 365 days of perfect weather to enjoy a vibrant atmosphere.

Enjoy a legendary stay with iconic live music, Rock Spa to disconnect and Body Rock's exclusive training systems.

Are you ready to rock?

Urbanización Nueva Andalucía, s/n, 29660 Marbella, Málaga

HARDROCKHOTELS.COM/MARBELLA



# Chatbots & data to rule travel future

► Contd. from page 1



**Sawan Kumar**  
Head of Products  
ATS Travel LLC

“AI and technology have significantly disrupted the travel industry, leveraging machine learning algorithms for predictive analytics, natural language processing for personalised recommendations, blockchain for secure transactions, and IoT devices for real-time monitoring, ultimately reshaping the way travellers plan, book, and experience travel.”



**Manoj Bhatia**  
Head - S&BD and AA, Al Rais  
Travel & Shipping Agencies LLC

“Technology has revolutionised the travel, tourism, and hospitality industry by enhancing personalised experiences, streamlining bookings, improving customer service, and optimising operations through data analytics and automation. AI can help agents increase their revenue through personalised marketing, automated bookings and pricing strategies.”



**Puneet Tripathi**  
Chief Technology Officer  
Travelwings

“AI and technology, including Large Language Models (LLMs), have transformed travel, tourism, and hospitality by delivering personalised experiences, streamlining operations, enhancing booking efficiency, and improving customer service with chatbots. Real-time data insights drive informed decisions and targeted marketing, boosting profitability.”



**Aga Pytlík**  
General Manager  
Panworld Travel

“AI and technology have transformed travel, tourism, and hospitality by personalising experiences, streamlining bookings, improving customer service, and optimising operations through data analytics and automation. AI can help agents derive more revenue by offering personalised recommendations and dynamic pricing to target high-value clients.”



**Juana Muro**  
COO  
TourReview

“Technology and digital developments are constantly impacting the world, nevertheless, AI has come into the tourism industry to revolutionise customer service. TourReview offers tools for tour operators developed with AI to improve customer satisfaction, experience quality and online reputation. AI can help tour operators write answers for online reviews.”



**Divya Nanda**  
Travel Counsellor  
Travel Counsellors

“Technology has the ability to improve service providing customers with personalised services, which could, make satisfaction of travellers easier and improve efficiency within the system while making operation easier in travel, tourism, and hospitality industry. The revenue is driven by targeted marketing, automated bookings and data analytics.”

Compiled by Dr Shehara Rizly

COOL OFF  
THIS SUMMER

Travel Made Simple  
with COZMO TRAVEL

Our Services

Flight Tickets

Hotel Bookings

Cruise Packages

Car Rentals Worldwide

MICE

UAE & Global Visa Assistance

Travel Insurance

B2B Services

BOOK NOW [gocoemo.com](https://gocoemo.com)

CALL US 600 52 4444

Our Network

United Arab Emirates • Qatar • Saudi Arabia • Bahrain • Kuwait • India • Jordan • Oman • Egypt

www.traveltalkmiddleeast.com

JULY 2024

13



# Sun Siyam Resorts gears up for summer

Over the past few years, Middle East has been a key source market to Maldives, mainly due to the privacy in resorts, personalisation and luxury experiences. Some of the key trends that one can witness is that family vacations are back and so are small group trips. Sun Siyam Resorts has been at the forefront catering to the ME market ensuring that their guests receive unique experiences during stay.

TT Bureau

Sun Siyam Resorts has been making waves over the past few years, especially in the Middle East. Some of the key trends that one can witness is that family vacations are back and so are small group trips.

**Deepak Booneady**, CEO, Sun Siyam Resorts, says, "A key aspect of our resort culture is secluded privacy with pristine beaches. Food and beverage are included in the package that we offer to our guests. There has been an increase of adventurers from the Middle East and GenZ travellers are keen to experience the lives and lifestyle of the local community. We organise special visits so that the guests can have a first-hand experience and participate in their special activities, such as tree planting, saving the coral reefs, and protecting the environment, to show how Maldives is managing sustainability. We can see that there are lots of travellers interested in sustainability. We don't just sell rooms at Sun Siyam Resorts, instead, we provide our clients with unique experiences coupled with our 24/7 all-inclusive packages. From a simple horse-riding experience on the pristine beaches to plenty of water sports, we ensure that we provide our guests with bespoke experiences right throughout their stay."

**New ventures**

Siyam World recently launched their state-of-the-art go-kart



**Deepak Booneady**  
CEO  
Sun Siyam

**A key aspect of our resort culture is secluded privacy with pristine beaches and the F&B are included in the package**

track, the Speed Racers Circuit, that comes fully equipped with 18 sleek electric go-karts and a rugged off-road course. Spanning 205 sq mt of heart-pounding twists and turns, the track is designed to ignite your inner racer and unleash the adrenaline junkie within. But that is not all, with speeds of up to 35km/ h, racers feel the rush of the wind in their hair as they zoom around the exhilarating course. And when the race is over, the party's just getting started! There is a fully stocked bar, the perfect pit stop to refuel and celebrate



**Sara Siyam**  
Director of Marketing  
Sun Siyam

**We are not just offering a Maldivian holiday; we are committed to delivering unforgettable adventures**

a victory with friends and fellow racers. After all, every great race deserves an epic after-party!

**Sara Siyam**, Director of Marketing, Sun Siyam Resorts, says, "Siyam World is all about redefining what it means to holiday in the Maldives. We are not just offering relaxation and the traditional means of a Maldivian holiday; we are committed to delivering unforgettable adventures. Our new go-kart track is just the beginning of a series of exciting, fun-filled activities that set Siyam World apart from the rest."

**Kids stay free!**

Among Sun Siyam Resorts' latest to the guests in the Middle East are that children under 15 stay free at their resorts. "Another incentive to our customers is that they can avail a 50 per cent discount on transfers, such as the sea plane and speed boat. Maldives is just a four-and-a-half-

nounced the launch of CarePhant Project, an initiative to foster the well-being of a young elephant named Kalo at the Elephant Transit Home (ETH) in Udawalawe, Sri Lanka. The CarePhant project, supported by Sun Siyam Pasikudah, and in collaboration with the Department of Wildlife Conservation, Sun Siyam Pasikudah's participation in the CarePhant project

forest area. He was about eight-month-old when he was brought to the Elephant Transit Home on March 23, 2024, where he is now receiving expert care under the supervision of wildlife veterinarians from the Department of Wildlife Conservation. Sun Siyam Pasikudah's participation in the CarePhant project



hour journey from the Middle East with over 70 flights ensuring that connectivity is at its highest level. Our all-inclusive concept, value for money and bespoke experiences have made it an essential bucket list place to visit. Hence, there are many new travellers that we welcome year on year in our resorts," informs Sara.

**CarePhant Project**

Sun Siyam Pasikudah, part of the Sun Siyam Resorts group, an-



bodies a profound commitment to biodiversity conservation and responsible tourism practices. By partnering with the Elephant Transit Home (ETH), Sun Siyam Pasikudah provides essential care for Kalo, who was rescued from Galenbidunuwewa in the Anuradhapura district after falling into an abandoned well near a

reflects the company's broader sustainability efforts under the Sun Siyam Cares programme. This programme focuses on reducing environmental impact, supporting community development, and preserving local heritage across Sun Siyam Resorts' properties in the Maldives and Sri Lanka. 🐘



(Advertisement)



# Enabling agents end-to-end tech services

Traveazy recently launched its B2B travel solutions that combine state-of-the-art technology with over a decade of experience in designing travel itineraries and packages to help travel agents. The launch will leverage the company's robust infrastructure and extensive market presence to offer unparalleled service and value, claims **Geet Bhalla**, Founder & Group CEO, Traveazy.

TT Bureau

**What are the latest products that you are working on at Traveazy?**

During the Arabian Travel Market (ATM) 2024, we proudly unveiled our latest B2B travel solutions under the Holidayme brand. These solutions combine state-of-the-art technology with over a decade of experience in designing travel itineraries and packages. Guided by the three Cs—Content, Customization, and Creation—we enable travel agents to access global content, build and customize packages with real-time availability and pricing, and create their own branded online experience for customer acquisition. We are now partnering with travel companies and holiday startups to provide end-to-end Holiday-as-a-Service. As part of this offering, we collaborate with travel companies to develop, manage, and scale their holiday business through product creation, curation, and dynamic packaging. With access to over one million global hotels, 700,000 global attrac-

products and packages are now available through our B2B portal. Umrah agents can access these products and have completely customized and branded websites.

**Are you also leveraging your Umrah pilgrimage experience in Holidayme?**

Absolutely. Umrahme has served over one million pilgrims in the last six years. Our dynamic packaging capability allows users to customize packages to suit various preferences and budgets. We realised that there are lots of gaps in the B2B segment, where a big chunk of business still happens offline with inconsistent customer experience. We have now enabled our Umrah packages in Holidayme.com. Our B2B travel agents can now leverage on our strong online product and local ground presence to offer a delightful experience to their clients.

**How do you help your B2B partners to increase business?**

Our objective is to ensure that, by using our platform, travel agents



Geet Bhalla, Founder & Group CEO, Traveazy (right)

utilise our platform and maximise their revenue potential.

**Could you share details about Holidayme's MeRewards?**

MeRewards is the latest from our stable, it is a loyalty program that is designed to reward our B2B travel agents. Our travel partners can now earn MeRewards on every reservation that they make on the Holidayme platform. The points can be redeemed against an array of lifestyle, travel, shopping and dining vouchers. All our travel partners will be enrolled automatically in MeRewards when they enrol in Holidayme.com.

**How do you see the growth in this region when it comes to travel, tourism, and hospitality?**

The travel, tourism, and hospitality sector in this region is experiencing robust growth. Post-COVID, the UAE has established itself as one of the world's most popular

touristic destinations, attracting visitors year-round. Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 has generated significant interest in the Kingdom as a tourism and business hub. Factors such as increasing disposable incomes and enhanced travel infrastructure are driving demand for travel services.

Saudi Arabia leads the region's fastest-growing travel market, achieving a remarkable 107 per cent increase in gross bookings in 2022 compared to the previous year. The Vision 2030 initiative, with an approximate US \$800 billion investment in the tourism sector, the Red Sea Project, NEOM developments, and infrastructure improvements, are expected to attract millions of tourists. Eased visa requirements have further contributed to the influx of leisure tourists, making Saudi Arabia a promising destination.

The UAE also emerges as one of the most robust travel markets in the Middle East, with a 101 per cent year-on-year increase in travel and tourism activities in 2022. This growth is set to continue, with a forecasted 10 per cent increase in 2023. Government initiatives like the UAE Tourism Strategy and the well-developed airline sector further enhance its position as a travel hub.

Additionally, the hospitality sector is rapidly expanding, aiming to

reach over 200,000 hotel rooms by 2030 to cater to the growing demand for luxury hotels.

Qatar experienced a notable recovery in its tourism sector in 2022, driven by the FIFA World Cup event, infrastructure expansion, and the popularity of Qatar as a leisure destination. The Qatar National Tourism Council is investing heavily in new hotels,

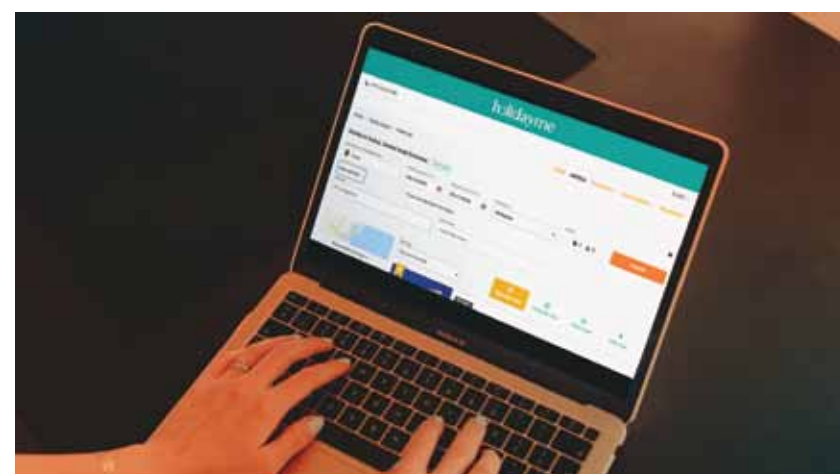
tourism in the region, attracting a diverse range of visitors.

Digital transformation has played a crucial role in the Middle East's travel and tourism industry. In 2022, the region experienced a 103 per cent increase in online booking values compared to the previous year. This growth is driven by tech-savvy travellers increasingly relying on digital

**We offer competitive pricing models, wholesale rates, loyalty programs, and exclusive access to premium travel deals**

tions and sightseeing options, and airport transfers in over 150 countries—all on a single platform—we serve as the platform of choice for various organisations, including holiday startups, traditional TMCs, and destination management companies. We are also pleased to announce that our Umrah

can access unique and innovative products that can help them to build and grow their business and revenues. We offer competitive pricing models, wholesale rates, loyalty programs, and exclusive access to premium travel deals. Additionally, we provide marketing support and training to help our partners effectively



**MeRewards is the latest from Traveazy's stable, it is a loyalty program that is designed to reward our B2B travel agents**

attractions, and cultural experiences. Qatar Airways is expanding its global footprint to support tourism growth, aligning with the country's vision of welcoming six to seven million visitors annually by 2030.

Egypt has shown improvement in its tourism sector since 2020. The depreciation of the Egyptian pound has made the country more affordable for travellers. Government efforts to promote Egypt as a safe and attractive destination have played a crucial role in this revival. Domestic tourism is on the rise, indicating a growing interest among locals to explore their own country. Egypt's natural attractions cater to the growing trend of adventure

platforms for their travel needs. The adoption of customer-facing tech solutions like AI chatbots and mobile apps has enhanced the overall user experience. Advanced online back-end systems by travel suppliers have streamlined operations and improved efficiency. By 2026, online bookings are expected to account for 50 per cent of total bookings in the UAE and KSA, reflecting the growing influence of digital technology on the industry.

At Traveazy Group, we are committed to leveraging these opportunities by offering cutting-edge solutions that cater to the dynamic needs of the market, thereby driving growth and success for our partners. 



# Aviation heads in Dubai for IATA AGM

Global aviation leaders gathered in Dubai for the 80<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting (AGM) of International Air Transport Association (IATA) and World Air Transport Summit. During the meeting, hosted by Emirates Airline, 73 airline Chief Executive Officers committing to safety and achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050. The meeting also provided an opportunity for the participants to discuss aviation issues.





# RECOGNISING

## the Best of the Best in Travel

Submit Your **Nominations** **TODAY!**

ARABIAN  
TRAVEL  
AWARDS

12 November 2024

[sonia.butalia@arabiantravelawards.ae](mailto:sonia.butalia@arabiantravelawards.ae), [devika@ddppl.com](mailto:devika@ddppl.com)

[www.arabiantravelawards.ae](http://www.arabiantravelawards.ae)

Media Partners



Hospitality Partner

CONRAD  
DUBAI



# Luxury travel marked by bespoke services

The Middle East region has been rapidly expanding its luxury offerings over the past few years in terms of hospitality. The region has the most affluent travellers who seek premium services. In an interview with **TRAVELTALK**, **Marloes Knippenberg**, CEO, Kerten Hospitality, shares her views on the rise of demand for luxury hospitality and the way forward.

**TT Bureau**

## Do you see a rise in luxury hospitality in the region?

Absolutely, the luxury segment in Middle East hospitality is expanding rapidly, fuelled by economic growth and an increasing number of affluent travellers seeking exclusivity and premium services. This region is becoming synonymous with opulence, from state-of-the-art hotels to sumptuous resorts. Luxury here is more than grandeur; it reflects cherished cultural values of generous hospitality and high esteem for guests. The economic landscape of the region is thriving, with substantial growth leading to an increase in wealth and disposable income. This economic prosperity is attracting high-net-worth individuals who seek out the exclusive and bespoke experiences that luxury hospitality offers. The demand for luxury hospitality is bolstered



**Marloes Knippenberg**  
CEO  
Kerten Hospitality

by the region's strategic efforts to position itself as a premier global destination for tourism and business. Events like international conferences, exhibitions, and cultural festivals further drive the need for high-quality accommodations. These activities not only boost the luxury hospitality market but also showcase the region's capability to host world-class events, thus attracting more international visitors.

In addition to physical luxury, there is a growing emphasis on personalised services; from bespoke travel itineraries to personalised dining experiences. This personalised approach not only enhances the guest experience but also sets a new standard in luxury hospitality, ensuring that every aspect of a stay is meticulously tailored to the guest's desires.

## How important is it to have women leaders in hospitality?

It's crucial to have women at the helm in hospitality. Diverse

**Women bring empathy, teamwork, and resilience—key to work culture. I look forward to a time when we no longer speak of 'male' or 'female' leaders**

leadership means fresh perspectives that spark innovation and drive progress. Women



bring empathy, teamwork, and resilience—essential traits for fostering strong, inclusive workplace cultures. I look forward to a time when we no longer speak

seat at the table but are heard as equals. Promoting women into leadership roles is not just about filling quotas or being politically correct; it's about leveraging the full spectrum of human talent to create more dynamic, responsive, and successful businesses. It's about moving beyond the need to assert women's capabilities through slogans to a time when gender parity is reflected naturally in the composition of leadership teams.

The goal is to reach a point where leadership is synonymous with capability and influ-

ence, devoid of gender prefixes, and where every individual has the opportunity to aspire to and achieve their fullest potential.

## In keeping with Vision 2030, how does Saudi attract younger generation to step into hospitality?

Vision 2030 is a game-changer for attracting young talent to hospitality in Saudi Arabia. It emphasises economic diversification and opens up dynamic prospects in hospitality. By promoting the sector's potential for career growth and entrepreneurship, we can captivate young Saudis. Programmes such as internships and mentorships complement this, tapping into their aspirations and aligning with the vision's focus on cultural exchange and tourism enhancement. We also spotlight sustainability and social responsibility, resonating with the values of the young, environmentally conscious Saudis eager for meaningful careers.

# \$118,339 mn tourism share in KSA's GDP

Contd. from page 1

more than 2.5 mn, representing almost one in five jobs in the country. Although the jobs lost during the pandemic were fully recovered in 2022, the record shows sector employment in Travel & Tourism has increased almost 24 per cent since the previous peak.

International visitor spending surged by almost 57 per cent to reach SAR 227.4 bn, breaking the previous record by SAR 93.6 bn, while domestic visitor

spending grew by 21.5 per cent to reach SAR 142.5 bn. Seven years ahead of its target, KSA welcomed 100 million tourists in 2023. Today, the country is surging toward even greater heights and has set a more ambitious aim of attracting 150 mn tourists by 2030.

**Julia Simpson**, President & Chief Executive Officer, WTTC, said; "Saudi Arabia's Travel & Tourism sector's extraordinary achievements last year mark a pivotal moment in its journey

towards becoming a global tourism leader. This success is a direct result of the Kingdom's visionary commitment to the sector, showcasing an impressive fusion of cultural heritage and innovative tourism initiatives. As the sector continues to expand, it promises to play a crucial role in the nation's diversified economic future, while contributing significantly to global Travel & Tourism development."

**His Excellency Ahmed Al-Khateeb**, Minister of Tourism, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Chairman, Executive Council, UN Tourism, said "The latest data from WTTC provides further evidence of the rapid success we have achieved in transforming Saudi Arabia's tourism industry. Tourism is a key pillar of the Kingdom's Vision 2030 economic diversification plans and we have made great strides promoting investment in the sector - with more than \$800 billion earmarked by 2030 - as well as creating new jobs and growing the contribution of tourism to GDP."

## What does this year look like?

**SAR 498 bn**

likely contribution of Travel & Tourism sector to KSA's GDP in 2024

**158,000**

jobs will increase in the Kingdom to reach nearly 2.7 million during the year

**SAR 256 bn**

international visitor spending is projected to reach in 2024, almost double the previous high point

## What does the next decade look like?

**SAR 836.1 bn**

Travel & Tourism sector will grow its annual GDP contribution by 2034, almost 16% of KSA's economy

## What does the region look like?

**25%**

growth of the Middle Eastern Travel & Tourism sector in 2023, touches \$460 bn

**7.75 mn**

number of jobs were created in the region

WTTC is forecasting that the Middle Eastern Travel & Tourism sector will continue to grow throughout 2024 with the GDP contribution set to reach **\$507 bn**. Jobs have been forecasted to reach **8.3 mn**, international visitor spending is expected to reach **\$198 bn** and domestic visitor spending is likely to reach more than **\$224 bn**.





# SAF production to triple in 2024

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) announced that its projections for a tripling of Sustainable Aviation Fuels (SAF) production in 2024 to 1.9 billion litre over the previous year are on track. This would account for 0.53 per cent of aviation's fuel need for the year. SAF fuel comes in with an expense which will be passed on to the consumer, hence sustainability will definitely come in with an additional price tag.

TT Bureau

**Willie Walsh**, Director General, IATA, said, "SAF will provide about 65 per cent of the mitigation needed for airlines to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050. So, the expected tripling of SAF production in 2024 from 2023 is encouraging. We still have a long way to go, but the direction of exponential increases is starting to come into focus."

### Renewable fuel production and SAF

Renewable fuel production is shared by many industries and SAF is a part of renewable fuel production. That is why increasing the production of renewable fuel is key to increasing the potential of SAF. Some 140 renewable fuel projects with the capability to produce SAF have been announced to be in production by 2030. If all of these proceed



Willie Walsh  
Director General  
IATA

to production as announced, total renewable fuel production capacity could reach 51 million tonnes by 2030, with production capacity spread across almost all regions.

Through the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), governments set an ambition to achieve a 5 per cent CO<sub>2</sub> emissions reduction for international

aviation from SAF by 2030. To achieve that ambition, around 27 per cent of all expected renewable fuel production capacity available in 2030 would need to be SAF. Currently, SAF accounts for just 3 per cent of all renewable fuel production. "The interest in SAF is growing and there is plenty of potential. But the concrete plans that we have seen so far are far from sufficient. Governments have set clear expectations for aviation to achieve a 5 per cent CO<sub>2</sub> emissions reduction through SAF by 2030 and to be net zero carbon emissions by 2050. They now need to implement policies to ensure that airlines can actually purchase SAF in the required quantities," said Walsh.

### Potential Policy Measures to Boost SAF Production

There are several potential solutions to accelerate aviation's access to critical SAF quantities:

**Diversify feedstocks:** About 80 per cent of SAF expected to be produced over the next five years is likely to come from hydrogenated fatty acids (HEFA) - used cooking oils and animal fats. Accelerat-

**SAF will provide about 65 per cent of the mitigation needed for airlines to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050**

ing the use of other certified pathways and feedstocks (including agricultural and forestry residues and municipal waste) will greatly expand the potential for SAF production.

**Co-processing:** Existing refineries can be used to co-process up to 5 per cent of approved renewable feedstocks alongside the crude oil streams. This solution can be implemented quickly and materially expand SAF production.

**Incentives to improve the output mix at renewable fuel facilities:** The current renewable fuel facilities are designed to maximise diesel production and often benefit from incentives in addition to the long-standing demand from road transportation. As road transport transitions to electrification, policies should be established to shift production toward the long-term need of air transport for SAF. Incentives aimed at SAF can help facilitate the renewable diesel-SAF switch, which requires minimal modifications at existing standalone renewable fuel facilities.

**Incentives to boost investments in renewable fuel production:** The production of all renewable fuels will need to scale up rapidly, and among them, the need for a growing share of SAF production will necessitate strong policy support. One such clearly articulated policy is the US Grand Challenge and the \$3 billion of investments it supports. Stable, long-term tax credits would further maximise SAF production capability in both existing and new facilities.

### Passenger support

A recent IATA survey revealed significant public support for SAF. Around 86 per cent of travellers agreed that governments should provide incentives for airlines to use SAF. In addition, the vast majority of air passengers agree (86 per cent) that leading oil corporations should prioritise the production of SAF.

## ME airlines' traffic up 14% in Apr

Middle Eastern airlines saw a 14.2% YoY rise in demand in April with capacity increasing 9.9% and load factor increasing 3 percentage point to 79.3% compared to 2023, finds IATA.

TT Bureau

During the month of April, total demand, measured in Revenue Passenger Kilometres (RPKs), was up 11 per cent compared to the same month in 2023. Total capacity, measured in Available Seat Kilometres (ASK), was up 9.6 per cent. The load factor was 82.4 per cent (+1 ppt). International demand rose 15.8 per cent; capacity was up 14.8 per cent and the load factor improved to 82.2 per cent (+0.7 ppt). Domestic demand rose 4 per



cent; capacity was up 2.1 per cent and the load factor was 82.6 per cent (+1.5 ppt).

"Passenger demand has been growing for 36 consecutive months. As we enter the peak northern summer travel season, there is every reason to feel optimistic for a strong summer with airlines offering a wide range of travel options. 97 per cent of passengers asked in our recent survey said they were satisfied with their last flight. Every part of the travel value chain needs to be focused on maintaining that," said **Willie Walsh**, Director General, IATA.

**There is every reason to feel optimistic for a strong summer ahead with airlines offering a wide range of travel options**

The IATA Passenger Survey also revealed 88 per cent agreement that "air travel makes my life better". "That is an important motivation as our members gather for the IATA Annual General Meeting and World Air Transport Summit in Dubai next week. This strong endorsement of the power of air connectivity to transform lives and boost economies brings with it a challenge that will also be on the minds of all attending. It is critically important that we achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050 so that people can continue to rely on all the benefits of air travel," said Walsh.

## Fly with your pooches onboard

BARK Air, the world's first airline dedicated to dogs, could be an ideal carrier for ME travellers, as they have been seeking a more convenient way to travel with their pooches onboard.

Dr Shehara Rizly

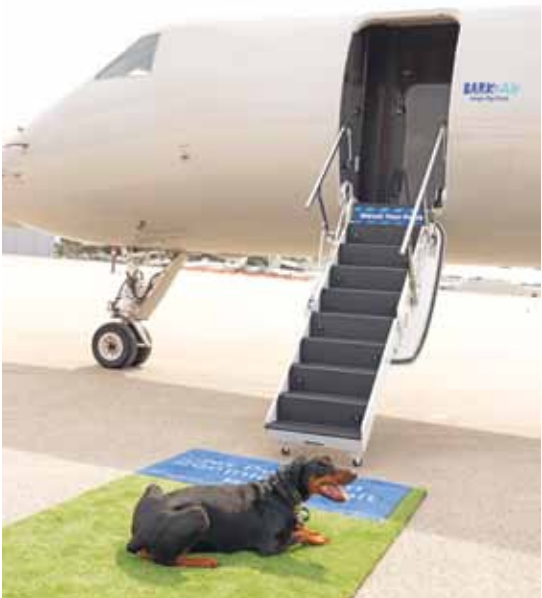
BARK Air first took flight in May between New York and Los Angeles and New York and London, with first of its kind travel experience, where the airline's main theme is "dogs fly first". The entire idea is to help dogs fly with their humans comfortably and conveniently.

Hence, the airline has been adding multiple destinations in the US and now slowly moving into the European sectors as well. Currently, they operate to seven destinations and judging by the way in which there is necessity, they will keep expanding their network.

It's the white glove experience or typical first-class experience

which is provided for the dogs at BARK Air, where the pampering and personalisation puts "dogs first". **Matt Meeker**, Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer, BARK Air, says, "The inter-

**It's the white glove experience which is provided for the dogs at BARK Air, where the pampering and personalisation puts 'dogs first'**



est and enthusiasm around Bark Air to date have been overwhelming. We are excited to expand BARK Air's service to new cities and through new routes, accommodating customer demand and bringing our unique, stress-free dog-centric travel experience to even more families." The one-way fare for the airline will be in the range of \$3k to \$8k.



# Dubai receives 140k Chinese a month

A special seminar focused on the Chinese outbound market and attended by leading hoteliers was held in Dubai recently. **Alexander Glos**, CEO, China i2i Group, said that China is one of the biggest markets in the world and Dubai was one of the key nations to receive them. There are 13 to 17 daily direct flights from China with 4,000 plus seats a day, bringing around 140,000 passengers to Dubai every month.





# Summer cruising: a profitable option?

Cruising has been a more mature market pleasure than usually imagined. In the Middle East, more and more young affluent travellers are opting for cruise trips, making it one of the most lucrative businesses. **TRAVTALK** spoke to some experts in the field to know about the new trends in cruising, revenue generated by agents, and where the industry is headed for.



**Mohamed Al Rais**  
Executive Director, Al Rais Travel  
and Shipping Agencies LLC

“ Among the preferred destinations for cruises by UAE travellers are Mediterranean, Caribbean, and Southeast Asian cruises. Popular destinations are Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Greece, Italy, and Singapore, with luxury liners and themed cruises in high demand. There is an increasing trend of younger travellers booking cruises.”



**Rochell Saleem**  
Sales Manager  
Travco

“ Talking about travel agents, apart from commission, they can earn on ancillary services such as flights, pre and post cruise hotel stays, transfers, travel insurance and even visa support services. A cruise is also a great option for MICE groups and family reunions. It becomes a useful product for client retention and referrals too.”



**Rashida Ginwala**  
Director of Holidays  
Bin Ham Travel Abu Dhabi

“ The most popular destination for travellers from the UAE are the Mediterranean cruises. However, in the recent years, the demand for cruises to Northern Europe, European river cruises and the Gulf sailings have seen growth. There has been a noticeable shift with younger travellers increasingly booking cruises.”



**Basel Atassi**  
Travel Counsellor  
Travel Counsellors

“ Travellers from the UAE often prefer high-end luxury cruises, seeking to explore scenic destinations, such as the Norwegian fjords, the British Isles, and the Baltic region, all appreciated for their natural beauty and pleasant cool weather. Cruises that provide activities for children and families are attractive to this market.”



**Sushant Pilankar**  
Manager Leisure  
Uranus Travel

“ Cruise industry is witnessing a wave of cruise ships designed to attract a younger demographic. These ships often feature contemporary designs and luxury amenities, with a focus on experiential travel. This evolution is crucial for the industry's long-term resilience, as it aims to attract the next generation of tourists.”



**Varsha Pherwani**  
Travel Counsellor Associate,  
Travel Counsellors

“ For many new to cruising, the Arabian Gulf sailings have sparked a desire to explore more. The all-time most popular cruises from our region are the 9-night Mediterranean sailings with Norwegian Cruise Line and Royal Caribbean sailing out of Barcelona and Rome during summer months.”

Compiled by Dr. Shehara Rizly

# UN stresses on tourism investment

Regional and religious tourism are pivotal to the GCC's economic diversification strategy, prompting implementation of unique models of engagement to enhance activity in the region. GCC continues to invest in its transport infrastructure by expanding airport capacity, constructing new airports, and building a rail network for better regional and international connectivity.

**TT Bureau**

The report, 'Tourism Doing Business: Investment Guidelines', prepared in collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities of Jordan, provides for a comprehensive overview of the socio-economic reality of the Kingdom, its tourism performance, and investment opportunities. During the conference, attended by high-level officials, investors, and experts from across the region, UN Tourism highlighted the appealing value proposal of Jordan, which has globally recognised UNESCO World Heritage sites, a new wonder of the world, Petra, and unique natural attractions with celebrated therapeutic benefits.

**His Excellency Makram Queisi**, Minister of Tourism and Antiquities of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, said: "One of Jordan's driving forces of



recovery is the active and solid partnership we have with the private sector. The government

of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has embarked on legislative reforms targeting invest-

ment as a whole by introducing a new investment law and also significant reforms in the tourism law. These reforms are the result of direct and continuous dialogue with the private sector. We are taking solid steps into transforming Jordan into a haven for investors, and with the help of our formidable partnership with UN Tourism and the introduction of the UN Tourism

investment guide of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan we are on the right track."

**Natalia Bayona**, Executive Director, UN Tourism, who presented the report at the conference, stated: "Jordan offers a one-of-a-kind tourism proposition with a rich umbrella of options that include seven subsectors, such as medical and wellness tourism, film tourism, business or agritourism. This diverse offer is paired with

institutional stability, strategic policymaking, and a robust recovery of post-pandemic tourism figures." **Basmah Al-Mayman**, Regional Director ME, UN Tourism, said: "Supported by sizeable investments, diverse tourism products and Jordan's natural beauty, tourism can be an engine of job creation and growth in the country. Tourism investment offers opportunities for economic diversification and market-creation when effectively managed."

**Jordan has globally recognised UNESCO World Heritage sites, a new wonder of the world, Petra, and unique natural attractions**

**Jordan's remarkable post-pandemic growth**

Jordan is a global destination that has shown its tourism resilience through its outstanding performance during 2023. Some key insights in the 'Tourism Doing Business – Investing in Jordan' report include:

- ❖ By 2023, Jordan fully recovered from the pandemic with 6.3 million international visitors, an 18.5% increase over the 2019 record.
- ❖ Between January and September 2023, trade, restaurants, and hotels have increased their weight in the economy, reaching 12.5% of GDP compared to 11.4% in 2019.
- ❖ Tourism employed 54,856 people in 2023, a slight increase from 2019 and representing 4 to 5% of Jordan's total employed population.



# MOVEMENTS

## OMAN AIR Oman

H.E. Eng. Saeed Al Mawali, Minister of Transport, Communications and Information & Chairman, Oman Air, alongside the company's Board of Directors, has appointed **CON KORFIATIS** as the Chief Executive Officer of Oman Air. A highly accomplished leader with over 30 years of experience in the aviation industry, Korfiatis is set to steer the airline's ongoing transformation and improve revenue. Korfiatis' three-decade-long career includes numerous appointments as Chief Executive Officer across Asia-Pacific and the Middle East, with notable accomplishments. He has also held a string of other executive management roles in finance, strategy, commercial, alliances, operations, network, branding and marketing, across some of the world's most successful airlines.



## GEWAN HOTELS & RESORTS Abu Dhabi

Gewan Hotels & Resorts has appointed **ELIAS SAAD** as Hotel Manager of Royal M Hotel by Gewan, Abu Dhabi. With his extensive experience, innovation, and strategic vision, Saad's arrival aligns perfectly with Gewan's mission of redefining excellence in hospitality. With a distinguished 25-year career in hospitality, his accolades include the prestigious Gold Winner F&B Director/ Leader of the Year 2024, and recognition as one of the Best 30 F&B Leaders in the Middle East 2023; his accomplishments further underscoring his experience, leadership, and achievements in the industry. Saad began his career journey as assistant manager at Hilton Abu Dhabi and has also held leadership roles at prestigious establishments such as Bab Al Qasr Hotel and Fairmont Bab Al Bahr.



## SABRE Saudi Arabia

Sabre Corporation has appointed **HASAN QANNATI** as the Head of Business Development and Strategic Sales for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). This strategic appointment underscores Sabre's commitment to the region, specifically KSA, and its ongoing efforts to enable the travel industry through innovative technology solutions. Qannati's appointment is part of Sabre's broader strategy to expand its footprint in the Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA) region and provide travel agencies with the tools they need to thrive in a dynamic and competitive landscape. In his new role, Qannati will be based in Riyadh and tasked with promoting Sabre's comprehensive suite of solutions and ensuring the delivery of advanced, personalised services that cater to the evolving needs of today's travellers.



## SUNSET HOSPITALITY GROUP Singapore

Sunset Hospitality Group appoints **PHILIPP KNUEPFER** as the Chief Operating Officer of Sunset Hotels & Resorts. Kneuper joins SHG with over 20 years of international experience in the luxury hospitality sector and will support the growth of Sunset Hotels & Resorts, whilst overseeing global operations, solidifying the group's reputation as a leader in hospitality. The strategic hire follows SHG's recent announcement of the new Sunset Hotels & Resorts, along with an expansion plan of developing, opening, and operating 20 new hotels by the end of 2025. A German national, Kneuper attained his Hotel Management degree at the International School for Hotel Business in Germany and holds an MBA from RMIT University in Melbourne, Australia. He is a graduate of the Cornell Hotel School in Ithaca, New York.



## GRAND MERCURE DUBAI CITY & IBIS STYLES DUBAI AIRPORT Dubai

Grand Mercure Dubai City appoints **AHMED ABDRABO** as the Cluster Director of Sales and Marketing. With 12-year experience in the hospitality industry, Abrabo brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to his new role. His professional journey began in 2011 in Egypt with Hilton, and the same year, he moved to the UAE with Kempinski Hotels, then to Rixos Hotels. He has since made significant contributions to renowned establishments in the UAE, including Fairmont Abu Dhabi, Fairmont Ajman, and Fairmont Dubai. Over his tenure, the hotel achieved several great accomplishments, including being ranked one of the top three in RGI since 2018. He is tasked with creating sales and marketing strategies, directing, and establishing sales activities to reinforce the cluster's position.



## UN TOURISM Middle East

The Jordan Tourism Board (JTB) announced that **DR ABDELRAZZAK ARRABIYAT**, Managing Director, JTB, has been elected as the Chair of the Affiliate Member Executive Council of the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UN Tourism) Affiliate Member Committee (on Matters Related to Affiliate Membership). This prestigious appointment underscores Dr Arrabiyat's dedication to fostering global tourism and his commitment to promoting sustainable and inclusive tourism practices. His election is a testament to his visionary approach and the trust placed in him by the international tourism community. As the new Chair, Dr Abdelrazzak has pledged to expand the affiliate membership and strengthen collaboration among members.



## ROTANA – CORPORATE Abu Dhabi

Rotana appoints **SAHITI GADDAM** as the Corporate Vice President of Sales. As the group pursues its ambitious expansion plans to add 30 new properties to its portfolio by 2026, Gaddam will oversee sales development activities across Rotana's existing and growing pipeline of properties in the region and beyond. In her new role, Gaddam will be responsible for enhancing Rotana's market position and profitability by driving sales growth and portfolio performance for hotel owners through strategic initiatives and strengthening partnerships with key stakeholders. With over two decades of experience in the Middle East's hospitality sector, Gaddam brings a wealth of insight and expertise to her new position.



## HAHN AIR Germany

To underscore its commitment to the distribution landscape of the future and to strengthen and expand its product portfolio, Hahn Air appoints **RACHEL PASCALL** as Vice President New Distribution. In her new role, Pascall spearheads an international team of developers, IT specialists and account managers. Her responsibilities encompass steering the development of Hahn Air's new distribution channels, from both a commercial and technical perspective, and fostering seamless collaboration between the Hahn Air teams and the connected partners. In addition, she supports the acquisition of new partners and oversees their implementation.



## TAJ Dubai

**SAURABH TIWARI** has been appointed as the Area Director, Operations, Middle East and CIS. Having worked for brands across Middle East, Asia and Europe, Tiwari has a comprehensive mindset and key understanding of consumer behaviours and their developing needs and wants. He is a strong believer in 'keeping your employees happy will lead to happy customers'. Beyond his remarkable international experience in Spain and the UK, he has always been a champion of the teams at Taj Dubai, Taj Exotica Resort & Spa and Taj JLT and lead the hotel to new heights. He stands for and deeply believes in the company's core values. He has demonstrated exceptional leadership, strategic vision, dedication to delivering supreme guest experiences.



Taj Dubai has appointed **FARAH BOOTWALA** as the Marketing Manager. Bootwala overseas the hotel and its five esteemed dining destinations, bringing her innovative approach and dynamic leadership to the forefront. Her strategic vision and keen understanding of the market trends have propelled the Taj Dubai brand to unprecedented levels. Through her talent for crafting compelling campaigns, creativity and engaging audience, she has driven measurable growth and heightened brand visibility. Under her guidance, Taj Dubai has seen significant improvements in brand recognition and customer engagement, solidifying Taj Dubai's position as a leading luxury destination.



## INTERTOUCH Dubai

interTouch has appointed **RUPINDER JUTTIA** as the Head of Operations, EMEA and India. In the new role, Juttia will be responsible for operations and programme management, as well as project delivery in the region. With a career spanning 20 years in operations and project delivery across the hospitality and civil engineering sectors, Juttia is well versed in the challenges and requirements associated with hotel openings and conversions. He has worked the past 12 years delivering solutions to the hospitality industry at GuestTek and Airangel (now Eleven Software). Juttia has extensive experience in leading multi-disciplinary and culturally diverse teams having worked in the United Kingdom and the United Arab Emirates.



## PRIME TRAVEL SERVICE (BEDSOPIA) Dubai

Prime Travel Service (Bedsopia) has appointed **KSENIYA ZHUCHENKO** as the Business Development Assistant. Zhuchenko brings with her a wealth of experience and a strong track record in client management and operational efficiency, honed over her two-year tenure as Head of Operations at a prominent wholesale company. Zhuchenko has joined the dynamic team at Prime Travel Service, working closely with Ayse Yasar, the Vice President of Sales, to drive business growth and develop strategic partnerships. She will play a critical role in attending various trade shows, nurturing existing client relationships, and forging connections with new partners. Prime Travel Service continues to strengthen its position in the B2B accommodation market.





# China Comes to You Your Exclusive China Roadshow WITHOUT "the Road"



## Connect with Over 130 Chinese Travel Experts:

Wholesalers

OTA's

Corporate Travel  
Planners

Specialty Agents for Adventure,  
Sports Travel, and More

MICE Managers

Luxury Agents

Tour Operators

Engage with Media  
Representatives and KOL's

### Exclusive B2B Meetings with Chinese Buyers:

Customize your agenda by selecting preferred buyers for face-to-face meetings. Schedule up to 54 meetings over 2 days for maximum efficiency.

### China-Ready Education:

Gear up for the summit with China Training Day, sponsored by Zoom. Enhance your China business acumen and delve into travel business development and supplier insights. Get ahead of the curve!

### Networking Galore:

Connect with Chinese buyers over breakfast, lunch, dinner, receptions, refreshment breaks, or at your convenience.



### Invite Chinese Buyers to Your Doorstep - Hosted Site Inspections:

Showcase your offerings with complimentary site inspections for all registered CVS suppliers. Limited slots available - reserve early to spotlight your hotel, attractions, museums, shopping malls, and more.

### About China Visitors Summit

Since 2008, CVS has been uniting global travel suppliers with esteemed Chinese travel buyers worldwide. This year marks our milestone 30<sup>th</sup>, 31<sup>st</sup>, and 32<sup>nd</sup> CVS summits.



### Seal the Deal Here!

- Dubai, UAE**  
September 5-6, 2024
- Doha, Qatar**  
September 9-10, 2024
- Madrid, Spain**  
November 12-13, 2024
- Barcelona, Spain**  
November 14-15, 2024

<https://cvs.i2i-china.com/>

## CONTACT

Alexander Glos  
aglos@i2imedia.net

Min Xu  
xumin@i2imedia.net

Amine Oumlik  
amine.oumlik@i2imedia.net

Adria Vila Urriza  
adria@i2imedia.net

Hunter Cheung  
hcheung@i2imedia.net





# Enter a new world of possibilities

With Air India's frequent flyer program -  
Flying Returns

Enrol now on [www.airindia.com](http://www.airindia.com)  
and get **1000+ bonus points\***



\*T&C Apply