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Sustainability, innovation key @ITB Berlin

World will convene in Berlin Exhibition Grounds from 4 to 6 March for ITB Berlin 2025, which sets pace for sustainability and social responsibility in tourism. Featuring high-profile panels, forward-thinking initiatives from exhibitors across 26 nations in the Responsible Tourism segment and awards for groundbreaking projects, the event will showcase solutions for shaping sustainable future in travel.

Dr Shehara Fernando

This year, TB Berlin 2025 actively promotes social and environmental responsibility and serve as a hub for exchanging ideas and driving discussions on diversity, inclusion, and sustainable tourism across the value chain. For the first time, ITB Berlin is partnering with Menschen helfen Menschen (People Help People) project. Exhibitors can purchase and donate bags to support Berlin's socially disadvantaged communities.

A new collaboration with Berliner Verkehrsbetriebe allows trade visitors, students, and exhibitors to book an ABC fare zone public transport ticket as an add-on in the ticket shop—a move aimed at promoting eco-friendly travel.

Hall 4.1 will once again host the Responsible Tourism forum, where 80 exhibitors from 26 nations will present cutting-edge solutions in socially responsible tourism. Highlights include, Travelife, a certification programme for sustainable tourism, featuring 40 co-ex-

hibitors. European Centre for Eco and Agri Tourism (ECEAT), will expand its focus on sustainable certification.

New exhibitors: Thai Responsible Tourism Association and Blue Alliance Marine Protected Areas (France) highlight sustainable initiatives in Indonesia, Tanzania, and the Philippines. Pacific Island nations, Palau and Tonga, raise awareness about climate change impact. The mascontour Responsible Tourism Lounge will serve as a dynamic networking hub.



Excellency Khalid Jasim Al Midfa
Chairman, Sharjah Commerce and Tourism Development Authority

“Sharjah’s participation in ITB Berlin 2025 underscores our commitment to strengthening the emirate’s position as a leading tourism destination in the region. As we continue to drive innovation and sustainable growth in tourism, the travel trade show provides a platform to showcase Sharjah’s cultural heritage, diverse experiences, and world-class hospitality offerings to European audiences. Through strategic collaborations and new initiatives, we aim to highlight Sharjah’s role in shaping the future of sustainable and responsible tourism, while reinforcing our dedication to delivering authentic and enriching travel experiences. We look forward to engaging with industry leaders, forging new partnerships, and attracting more visitors to explore the beauty and diversity of Sharjah.”

Contd. on page 10 ▶

Safety, solidarity driving women travel



Yamina Soto
Director, Marketing & Sales Office,
GNT0 GCC

“This summer, GCC women travellers are seeking destinations combining cultural richness, wellness, and personalised experiences: Germany is emerging as the top choice. Known for its welcoming atmosphere, it offers an ideal environment for travellers to explore with confidence. From the historic charm of Berlin and Munich to the serene landscapes of the Black Forest, the country provides a backdrop for immersive journeys. Wellness tourism continues to gain traction, with travellers drawn to Baden-Baden or Wiesbaden, and their holistic retreats, which offer a blend of relaxation and rejuvenation.”



Mary Thomas
Managing Director
Bin Moosa Travel Abu Dhabi

“Women-only travel is taking centre stage, with holiday packages designed for comfort, adventure, and cultural immersion. Destinations such as Japan, Korea, Thailand, China, Sri Lanka, GCC nations and India are in high demand, offering everything from cherry blossoms and K-beauty experiences to vibrant markets, serene beaches, and heritage trails. Travellers seek curated experiences, wellness retreats, shopping getaways, etc., where safety and camaraderie come first. With interest in solo and group female travel, these journeys ensure relaxation and exploration.”

Contd. on page 6 ▶

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**FROM GULF EXCELLENCE TO KAZAKH INNOVATION –
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Rezlive unveils new B2B solutions

Convenience and choice are key to success in today's travel industry biz. Rezlive, a trusted name in global travel solutions, is enhancing its platform with exciting new offerings—car rental, cruise services and a mobile app. These additions provide seamless booking experiences, greater flexibility and more opportunities for travel leaders to serve their clients, says **Jaal Shah**, Group MD, Travel Designer Group.

 Dr Shehara Fernando

How does the new products enhance the company's existing offerings and brand positioning?

RezLive.com has always been committed to delivering seamless, tech-driven travel solutions for the B2B market. The addition of car rental, cruise services, and Mobile App have fortified our one-stop travel booking platform, allowing agents access to a comprehensive suite of services beyond hotels, sightseeing and car transfers.

By expanding into ground transportation and cruises, we enhance our partners' ability to provide complete travel solutions under a single interface, eliminating the hassle of working across multiple platforms. These new services reinforce our brand positioning as global leader in B2B business, providing travel pro-



Jaal Shah
Group Managing Director
Travel Designer Group

professionals with a range of products, competitive pricing, and a personalised approach.

What segments will benefit the most from these additions, and how do we tailor marketing strategies to them?

Our beneficiaries are travel agents, tour operators, online travel agencies, and corporate travel planners who seek a

streamlined booking experience for their clients. We are deploying personalised campaigns focusing on benefits of the new services, besides planning training webinars and video tutorials to educate agents on utilising these new offerings.

Could you share tech enhancements to ensure seamless integration with current services?

To ensure smooth integration, we have enhanced our API infrastructure, making it scalable, fast, and reliable for real-time data exchange.

The car rental and cruise services have been built on a modular framework, ensuring they function cohesively with our existing hotel, sightseeing, rail and car transfer booking systems.

On the operational front, we have strengthened our supplier partnerships for seamless inventory

management; upgraded back-end algorithms for faster search, better price comparisons, and improved filtering; and expanded our customer support with the teams handling car rental, cruise, and concierge services.

How do you measure customer adoption and satisfaction post-launch?

We closely track customer engagement, adoption rates, and feedback using key performance indicators (KPIs). Post-launch, we collect feedback via direct interactions, and performance

Campaigns will be held focusing on benefits of the new services, besides planning training webinars and video tutorials to educate travel agents

analytics to refine and enhance our offerings continuously.

What advantages do these products offer, and how will you convey them effectively?

To effectively communicate them, we leverage email and

social media campaigns to highlight product benefits, take part in industry events and organise webinars to showcase features and provide customised marketing toolkits for agents, enabling them to promote our services seamlessly.

Unique features

- Booking reconfirmation
- Maximum refundable inventory
- Pay now option
- Mapped inventory

Sustainability Initiatives

- Encouraging eco-friendly electric and hybrid vehicle rentals
- Partnering with cruise lines implementing green technology and reduced carbon emissions

Exclusive Benefits

- VIP desk (concierge services)—adding exclusivity
- Offline quote assistance for cruises, ensuring personalised recommendations for partners and clients



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Spain fortifies its position in GCC

The Middle East has become a key region for global tourism, and Spain is actively working to strengthen its presence in the GCC market. Events such as Fitur, one of the world's leading travel trade shows, provides a crucial platform for countries to showcase their tourism offerings. **Carlos Ruiz**, Director, Turespaña GCC, spoke to **TRAVEL** about their plans to tap into the market.

TT Bureau

Fitur plays a vital role in connecting global travel professionals, alongside exhibitions like World Travel Market (WTM) London and ITB Berlin. **Carlos Ruiz**, Director, Turespaña GCC, said, "For Spain, participation in such events is essential, offering destinations the opportunity to engage with buyers from Europe and the Middle East. With interest from GCC travellers, Spanish tourism is focusing on B2C and B2B to attract visitors."



Carlos Ruiz
Director
Turespaña



To enhance B2B engagements, Spain is organising joint events with Germany, Austria, and France. Spain is deepening its ties with the GCC, ensuring tourism continues to evolve in line with the expectations of Middle Eastern travellers. With events, partnerships, and promotional campaigns, Spain is positioning itself as a key European destination for GCC tourists.

Importance of GCC travellers
Ruiz further added, "Spain has seen a increase in tourism from

the GCC region. In 2024, Spain welcomed 94 million tourists globally, with visitors from the Gulf exceeding 550,000,

marking a 25 per cent growth from 2023. Travellers from the GCC nations spend more than their European counterparts, making them a valuable segment for Spanish tourism. This market is attractive not only in terms of visitor numbers but also expenditure. This is because of their preference for luxury accommodations, high-end shopping, and exclusive experi-

ences, such as private cultural tours, fine dining, and retreats."

highlighting new experiences, such as:

B2B partnerships

Spain is engaging with the travel agencies and tour operators in GCC nations in order to promote its lesser-known destinations. While Spanish cities such as Barcelona, Madrid, and Marbella remain very popular, the tourism authorities are focusing on

- ❖ Northern Spain's scenic landscapes and cultural heritage
- ❖ Interior regions rich in gastronomy and history
- ❖ Exclusive travel experiences like hot air ballooning and private workshops

COUNT OF TOURIST INFLUX

94 million
Global tourists Spain welcomed in 2024

550,000
Total visitors from Gulf countries

25%
growth of Gulf visitors over 2023

With growing interest from GCC travellers, Spanish tourism authorities are focusing on both B2C and B2B strategies to attract visitors

KSA key market for Jordan

Dr Abdelrazzak Arrabiyat, MD, Jordan Tourism Board, highlights the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a top market for Jordan, which welcomed 1.2 million visitors from the KSA last year.

TT Bureau

The GCC region continues to be a primary market for Jordan. In 2024, nearly 60 per cent of Jordan's tourists hailed from the region, with Saudi Arabia leading the way at over 1.2 million visitors. This popularity stems from Jordan's appeal as a family-friendly destination with pleasant summer weather and abundant outdoor activities.



Dr Abdelrazzak
Managing Director
Jordan Tourism Board

delrazzak Arrabiyat, MD, Jordan Tourism Board, said that more than 50 international chefs will collaborate with Jordanian chefs in August, offering a unique culinary experience.

Jordan's efforts to attract European tourists are also gaining momentum. At Fitur, a MoU was signed between the Camino de Santiago in Spain and the Egeria Trail in Jordan. The Spanish market remains a significant focus for Jordan's tourism efforts.

PERCENTAGE OF GCC TOURISTS

60%
travellers Jordan welcomed in 2024

1.2 million
visitors from Saudi Arabia, followed by 50,000 from Kuwait and 25,000 from the UAE

Kuwait follows as the second-largest GCC market for Jordan with more than 50,000 visitors, while the UAE contributed 25,000 visitors. Jordan's focus on the GCC market is bolstered by

over 60 planned events in 2025, including festivals, music concerts, and cultural experiences tailored for families. Highlighting the Jordan Food Festival, Dr Ab-

Jordan's focus on the GCC market is bolstered by 60 planned events in 2025, including festivals, concerts by artists, and cultural experiences tailored for families

Qatar gets 190k passengers

Qatar received 53 cruise ships carrying 191,944 visitors till 20 January 2025, says Qatar Tourism, sharing the mid-season data for 2024-2025, positioning it as a major tourism destination.

TT Bureau

Qatar Tourism recently announced the mid-season cruise data for 2024-2025. Qatar received 53 cruise ships carrying 191,944 visitors till 20 January 2025, it stated.

Highest (30.2 per cent) passengers were received from Germany, followed by Russia (10.8 per cent) and Italy (9.2 per cent). The top 10 nationalities collectively accounting for 69.2 per cent of the total number of passengers. Of the 191,944 visitors, 20,951 passengers used Doha as a starting point for their cruises.

The season saw the addition of four new cruise ships: Resorts World One, MSC Eurobia, Celestial Journey and Costa Esmeralda. In addition, Norwegian Sky is expected to arrive on 12 April 2025. The Costa Esmeralda, the eighth largest cruise ship in the world, will visit Doha Port



Omar Al Jaber
Head of Tourism Development
Qatar Tourism

10 times this season, carrying around 82,000 passengers.

Omar Al Jaber, Head, Tourism Development, Qatar Tourism, said: "The growth of Qatar's cruise sector is a testament to our vision within National Tourism Strategy 2030. Looking ahead to the remainder of the season, 30 cruise ships are likely to arrive by the end of the season in April 2025, carrying 185,000 visitors, reflecting Doha's position as a

major cruise destination, coupled with partnerships with global cruise operators. As we continue to invest in modern infrastructure and enhance visitor experience, we remain committed to positioning Qatar as a premier cruise destination." Since Qatar continues to expand its tourism offerings, cruises remain an important driver of the country's vision to become a world-class destination, he added

CRUISING NUMBERS

191,944
passengers Qatar received till 20 January 2025

53
Number of cruise ships

20,951
Visitors used Doha as point of entry

Setting a benchmark in sustainability

Millennium Place Mirdif, under the visionary leadership of **Shady Dawad**, General Manager, is pioneering eco-friendly initiatives that align with the UAE's Green Agenda 2030, setting a new benchmark in sustainable hospitality. Apart from decreasing its overall carbon footprint, the hotel has replaced artificial décor with natural plants, a move that improves indoor air quality and creates a soothing ambience.

TT Bureau

Sustainability is no longer a luxury—it is a necessity. At Millennium Place Mirdif. This philosophy drives every decision, ensuring luxury and environmental responsibility go hand in hand. Under **Shady Dawad**, General Manager, the hotel is pioneering eco-friendly initiatives. These initiatives align with the UAE's Green Agenda 2030 thereby setting a new benchmark in sustainable hospitality.



Shady Dawad
General Manager
Millennium Place Mirdif

Last year, the hotel rolled out a series of innovative projects designed to reduce its environmen-

tal footprint, while enhancing the guest experience. Recognising the importance of sustainable



transportation, Millennium Place Mirdif installed four EV charging stations, including a collaboration with Etisalat. They support eco-friendly travel and contribute to lowering emissions.

Introduction of Blue Showers—water-efficient shower systems—helps reduce water consumption and carbon emis-

sions, proving sustainability and guest comfort can coexist seamlessly. A new waste compacting system has revolutionised waste management, reducing the hotel's contribution to local landfills. Energy efficiency is enhanced through an ERP Energy Reduction Plan. By analysing energy usage patterns and implementing strategic

consumption reductions, the hotel has managed to decrease its overall carbon footprint. Also, the hotel has replaced artificial décor with natural plants, a move that improves indoor air quality and creates a soothing and nature-inspired ambience for the guests. Community involvement remains a key pillar of its sustainable strategy. By

collaborating with a local food bank, surplus food is donated to those in need. Looking ahead, an Organic Waste Decomposing System is on the horizon in the hotel. It is designed to change food waste into compost for sustainable disposal.

The hotel is reducing its environmental impact—it is leading the way in sustainable hospitality. With Dawad at the helm, it exemplifies how luxury, tech, and sustainability can converge to create a greener future.



By analysing energy usage patterns and implementing strategic consumption reductions, the hotel has managed to decrease its overall carbon footprint





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Women shifting for offbeat places in Europe

► Contd. from page 1



Aga Pytlík
General Manager
PanWorld Travels

“Outbound travel from the GCC nations is driven by a mixture of luxury escapes, family-friendly destinations, and experiential travel. Europe remains the top pick, with demand increasing for Schengen destinations, such as

“This summer, GCC travellers are likely to opt for longer stays in Austria, Germany, and Switzerland. Demand will shift toward private chalets, serviced hotel apartments, and countryside retreats that offer privacy and landscapes. The “home away from home” concept will define luxury travel, with women seeking personalised services, spacious accommodations, and immersive experiences.”



Ashiya Nizar
CEO
Akbar Travel

Switzerland, France, and Italy. Adventure travel to Southeast Asia, pristine beaches in the Maldives and Mauritius, and cultural tourism in India among others are trending.”



Varsha Pherwani
Travel Counsellor Associate
Travel Counsellors

“I see strong demand for safari adventures this summer, with East Africa leading the way. The Great Migration in Kenya and Tanzania during July–September is a major draw. The travellers are booking in the ‘shoulder months’ for a more intimate safari experience. South Africa remains a favourite for Big Five encounters, while Rwanda and Uganda attract adventurers for gorilla trekking.”

“Although preferences can vary; there are consistent trends every year, getaways that offer adventure and relaxation, destinations that combine comfortable and unique experiences and milder climates in summer, which could be successful



Elmira Heshmati
Founder and CEO
Elaxiom

summer selling points. The popular destinations are selling well from the GCC. A shift has been noticed towards big cities in Europe, cruises, and summer experiences.”



Jyoti Panchmatia
General Manager
Gulf Region, Travco

“Stability in the ME could boost Israel and the USA markets fueling growth in leisure, business travel, and conferences. Cruises are a major highlight, with ships such as MSC, Costa, and TUI extending seasons to 24 weeks. Short-stay cruises such as Celestial's 2 and 3-night itineraries, cater to regional travellers. Eastern European and Korean tourists are drawn by cultural experiences.”

“GCC women travellers are looking for immersive and hassle-free experiences this summer. The Maldives, Thailand, and Zanzibar are in high demand, while Italy, Spain, and Switzerland, remain top and popular choices.



Nada Mohamad
Marketing Manager
Cozmo Travel

Family-friendly resorts and cruise vacations are trending as the women travellers seek value-driven options. Solo travel is also gaining popularity among women.”



Kathryn Wallington
Head, MEA, UK&IE, Central & Eastern EU, Travelpart

“Summer travel trends in the ME this year is centered on luxury getaways, cultural exploration, and eco-conscious tourism. Desert wellness retreats and spa resorts are gaining popularity as the travellers seek relaxation and rejuvenation. In travel retail, AI is playing a role in streamlining booking experiences and personalising recommendations. The fusion of technology ensures a seamless journey for travellers. As AI enhances customer interaction, the balance between automation and personalised service will redefine how women plan their trips.”

“Predicting the summer travel preferences of UAE clients is challenging, as trends evolve daily. Based on the past travel patterns, we are focusing on South Africa, Australia, Russia, the UK, Poland, Thailand, Bali (Indonesia), France, Malaysia, Switzerland, and Munich (Germany). These locations appeal due to their diverse experiences.



Jenny Abdullah
Product Development Manager
Al Rais Travel

Post-Covid-19, there has been a noticeable surge in interest in global cruises along Mediterranean and Scandinavian routes. With travellers seeking relaxation demand for immersive travel experiences has increased.”



Sapna Aidasani
Director PR and Marketing
Pluto Travel

“The Northern Lights have captivated women travellers for years, but with the ongoing solar storm from last year, their visibility has increased, lasting for a longer period and spanning more months. As a result, Russia is promoting the Northern Lights experience. Another trend is cruising. It has surged in popularity over the past year, particularly in UAE. Cruises are becoming the go-to vacation for many due to their all-inclusive nature. Another trend is private celebrations, especially birthdays, where group travel with family takes centre stage.”

“Travel trends for GCC women highlights a mix of cultural exploration, luxury retreats, and nature escapes. Popular destinations include France, Italy, and Switzerland which offer history and culture packages among other. The Maldives and Seychelles are top choices for beach lovers. For those preferring closer destinations, Turkey, Egypt,



Nisha Sadhwani
Outbound Sales Manager
Onelife Tourism

and Jordan attract travellers with their history and proximity. Wellness retreats in Bali and Oman are gaining popularity, combining relaxation with rejuvenation, making them ideal for locals seeking escape and self-care.”



Rakhi Purohit
Head, Representation Services
dnata

“This summer, travellers are seeking luxury escapes, all-inclusive family resorts, and immersive cultural experiences, leading to extended stays. Our DMC clients in Sri Lanka and resort partners in Mauritius and Zanzibar are offering packages and curated itineraries. Europe, especially Turkey, is trending with options from family vacations to premium golf holidays. Offbeat destinations such as Barbados and Colombia are gaining popularity, with bespoke offerings. Shopping is the key focus for GCC travellers seeking luxury retail experiences, especially in Paris.”

“Lately, I have noticed more women in the UAE opting for budget airlines over luxury flights, choosing to splurge on wellness experiences instead. Rather than indulgent resorts, they are prioritising thermal spas in Georgia, Ayurvedic detox retreats in India or Sri Lanka, and hammam rituals in Morocco or Turkey. Travel is



Ipshita Sharma
Travel Tailor
SCN Travel & More

becoming less about lavish escapes and more about holistic well-being mentally as well as physically. It is inspiring to see people embracing trips that leave them truly refreshed and recharged.”

Inputs by: TT Bureau

Fitur 2025 concludes, draws 255k visitors

The three-day FITUR 2025, held by IFEMA MADRID, drew 255,000 visitors, including 155,000 professionals. These figures reflect the recovery of tourism, with global arrivals reaching 1.4 billion in 2024, as per UNWTO. The event hosted 156 nations, contributing €445 million to Madrid's economy. IFEMA MADRID announced FITUR 2026 to be organised on 21 to 25 January 2026.





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Emirates unveils A350 at ITB Berlin

ITB Berlin marks Emirates' vital trade fair presence outside its home market, reinforced its commitment to the European travel and tourism industry. Building on the event's momentum and in collaboration with regional tourism bodies, Emirates aims to enhance connectivity between Europe and the rest of the world, says **Thierry Aucoc**, Senior VP, Commercial Operations, West, Emirates, with .

 TT Bureau

What will you showcase at ITB Berlin this year?

Emirates will be unveiling our full A350 cabin experience at ITB Berlin, and we can't wait to welcome visitors who have not experienced the aircraft and get a taste of our next-gen products. We will also have our popular A380 products like the Onboard Lounge and Shower Spa, and our First Class suite. We will also be dedicating an area that will showcase our latest sustainability initiatives, including what we are doing to reduce emissions, consume respon-



Thierry Aucoc
Senior Vice President Commercial Operations - West, Emirates

sibly and protect diversity and habitats. This includes onboard items sourced from sustainable



materials, as well as our latest 'air-crafted by Emirates' items, which include a unique collection of luggage, bags and accessories made from upcycled materials from retrofitted aircraft.

How important is ITB Berlin?

ITB is one of the key events on the travel industry events calendar, and it represents our largest exhibition presence outside of Dubai. The events present plenty of opportunities for us to mean-

fully engage and network with trade and industry partners from across the travel ecosystem. It is also a time where we make significant announcements around partnerships and initiatives for the year.

Could you share the expectations from ITB Berlin?

We have been a part of European skies since 1987, and our expansive European network includes 42 destinations in 22 countries.

During our last year's presence at ITB Berlin, we conducted 260 meetings, signed several high-value partnership agreements, building on our already extensive list of partners, and welcomed close to 6,000 visitors to our stand. This year, we aim to further strengthen our existing partnerships and foster new ones, underscoring the vital role we play in supporting tourism, economic growth, and job creation across the continent.

Will you be looking at new destinations in Europe this year?

We constantly evaluate opportunities to expand our network and focus on destinations that align with customer demand and enhance connectivity for all our customers. Any new destinations for this year will be announced in due course.

EUROPEAN NETWORK

42

destinations in 22 countries of Europe Emirates covers with its flights

260

meetings the airline conducted at ITB Berlin 2024

6,000

visitors the airline welcomed at its stand

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5-point agenda for KSA's hospitality

The FHS Saudi Arabia Advisory Board comprising 47 senior hospitality leaders from various organisations in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia assembled in Riyadh to shape the vision for what would be an extraordinary conference to decide the future of hospitality from 11 to 13 May 2025 at the Mandarin Oriental Al Faisaliah in Riyadh.

 TT Bureau

The FHS Saudi Arabia Advisory Board, including 47 senior hospitality leaders from various organisations, unveiled the 'Where Vision Shapes Opportunity' the event's theme in May. Various organisations which attended the event included the Ministry of Tourism

Saudi Arabia, Taiba Investments, Al Rajhi Bank, Al Othaim Investment, Red Sea Global, Al Nahla Group, NEOM, Accor, Radisson and Rotana.

The hospitality leaders will unite to discuss hotel performance and development, the outlook for hospitality investment in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) and the market trends driving the hospitality sector, aiming for actionable outcomes that will transform the industry, which continues to witness growth.

Hospitality revolution

According to data shared by STR, a subsidiary of CoStar Group that provides market data on the hotel industry worldwide, shows the Kingdom's room revenue is up by a massive 26.3 per cent, with KSA capital, Riyadh, leading the pack, boasting 16 per cent rise in ADR. While Jeddah's market faces challenges,



Members of the The FHS Saudi Arabia Advisory Board

the Advisory Board states the city can unlock its potential by focusing on renovating existing hotels and attracting new ones.

Redefining luxury

The Board sparked a discussion on redefining luxury in the KSA. Forget conventional star ratings, the consensus is luxury lies in authenticity and heritage experiences among others. The event will also explore how the can create luxurious offerings that cap-

ture the essence of the KSA's hospitality. According to the Saudi Tourism Development Fund, the hospitality industry aims to create one million jobs by 2030.

Religious tourism

With religious tourism growing at an incredible pace, the conference will explore the sector's vast, untapped potential. The discussion will

encompasses investment, diversifying offerings and plans for cities like Jeddah to benefit visitors seeking cultural and religious experiences.

Sustainability

Glenn Mandziuk, CEO World Sustainable Hospitality Alliance, said, "Many people ally food waste with buffets, accounting for 5 per cent of the waste, a staggering 84 per cent actually originates from back-of-house food preparation." 🍴

Hospitality leaders and decision-makers will unite in Riyadh to discuss KSA hotel development, outlook for investment and key market trends driving the sector

IMPORTANT HIGHLIGHTS

26.3%

increase in KSA's room revenue

16%

Increase in Riyadh ADR

1 million

Jobs sector tourism sector will be created in KSA by 2030

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ITB Berlin a hub for exchanging ideas

▶ Contd. from page 1



Deborah Rothe
Director
ITB Berlin

“The Middle East’s presence at ITB Berlin 2025 highlights its role in global tourism. The KSA as the exhibitor in Hall 4.2, is joined by Diriyah, a city transforming into a world-class destination. Qatar features in this hall. Hall 2.2 showcases representations from Oman, Dubai, and the UAE. Emirates is taking part with a major stand, while Ethiad Airways, EgyptAir, Air Arabia, Riyadh Air, Gulf Air or FlyDubai will be present as co-exhibitors.”

“The event holds significance for us as a global gathering for tourism experts. Its strategic timing allows us to evaluate Q1 performance and explore avenues for the rest of the year. At ITB, we will showcase our resort, highlighting our unique offerings to attendees from Europe, the GCC, and the local market. Our aim



Bahar Ozkan Yildirim
Director, Sales & Marketing
Taj Exotica

includes networking with potential clients, fortifying partnerships, and gaining insights into the latest trends.”



Freddy Farid
Managing Director, Two Seasons
Hotel & Apartments

“It is an unprecedented platform to engage with larger audiences across the world. It is an opportunity to meet with our existing partners and renew our business dealings and set up new potential business partners from various feeder markets to Dubai. We are looking for new opportunities to showcase our newly renovated Ballroom, meeting rooms, and banquet foyer to foster new MICE biz and promote our summer packages.”

“The event is a vital event in our European sales calendar, providing a platform to meet partners from Germany, France, UK, Scandinavia, Switzerland, Italy, and other European nations. We are excited to present our booking tech innovations and launch the KSA as our newest destination,



Samir Mehta
Chief Operating Officer, Desert
Adventures Tourism

showcasing its cultural heritage and tourism potential. We aim to fortify our presence by engaging with tourism boards.”



Ahmed Hassib
CEO
Gewan Hotels & Resorts

“The event offers a platform for Gewan Hotels & Resorts with an opportunity to connect with industry leaders, interact and exchange ideas, and stay ahead of global trends. We are excited to display our diverse portfolio, highlighting our luxury hotels and resorts, bespoke services, and latest amenities. Our focus will be on our commitment to sustainability and innovation, ensuring an experience for guests. We hope ITB Berlin aids us to expand our network.”

“dnata Travel Group team will attend the world-class event to network and share latest insights at one of the largest global gatherings of existing and potential new partners. Our team at Yalago is displaying its hotel inventory and market-leading rates, with a presence in Hall 9, on stand 207. Repre-



John Bevan
CEO
dnata Travel Group

sentatives from Arabian Adventures will exhibit on Dubai and Oman stands. Our team continues to expand its offerings in both the locations.”



Mohamed Hassan
COO
Gewan Hotels and Resorts

“The event for the international travel industry, providing us with the chance to engage with potential partners, clients, and industry experts. We will showcase our distinctive offerings, including personalised services, luxurious amenities, and unique destinations, while focussing on wellness, sustainability, and cutting-edge technology. We hope to identify new innovations to enhance the guest experience and strengthen our position as a leading brand.”

“Ali Bin Ali Holidays is committed to delivering world-class travel experiences through innovation and excellence. This year, we will focus on our expertise in MICE highlighting Qatar’s modern infra, ease of movement, and seamless linkage. With world-class MICE hotels, convention facilities,



Nadeem Ulde
General Manager, Travel & Cargo
Ali Bin Ali Travel Qatar

top-tier team-building activities, and adventure experiences reflecting Qatar’s rich heritage, modern luxury, and cultural depth, we continue to set industry benchmarks.”



Amro Nagah
General Manager
Swissotel Al Murooj Dubai

“At ITB Berlin, we will showcase our latest hospitality offerings, innovative guest experiences, and premium services tailored to the evolving needs of travellers. This includes our world-class accommodations, exceptional dining concepts, and sustainability-driven initiatives for guests to enjoy during their stay. Our goal is to provide a unique experience that exceeds all expectations thereby leaving a lasting impression on the women travellers.”

“The Taj Hotels will showcase a seamless blend of heritage, luxury, sustainability, and innovation, reinforces our position at the event as a leader in global hospitality. Our presence will highlight the elegance and authenticity that defines our iconic properties, from palaces to urban sanctuar-



Saurabh Tiwari
Area Director, Middle East and CIS
Taj Hotels

ies and beach resorts. Each hotel offers a unique narrative, deeply rooted in rich culture and designed to provide an experience of personalised service and luxury.”



Mohamed El Aghoury
Multi-Property GM
Sheraton Jumeirah Beach Resort
& Aloft Palm Jumeirah

“It is vital platform for Sheraton JBR and Aloft Palm Jumeirah. They are popular choices for German tourists, and ITB provides a platform to link with agents, tour operators, and media outlets specialising in the German market. Our participation allows us to display our offerings, fortify partnerships, and cultivate new ones. Aloft Palm Jumeirah offers special facilities, including Aloha Beach and Mexican and Italian restaurants.”

“ITB Berlin is a key event for Millennium Place Mirdif & Copthorne Hotel Dubai to connect with our partners and strengthen our presence in global markets. It provides avenues for networking, partnerships, and staying updated on industry trends. At the event, Millennium Place Mirdif




Naushad Abdulrahim
Cluster Commercial Director
Millennium Place Mirdif
and Copthorne Hotel Dubai

& Copthorne Hotel Dubai will showcase blend of modern hospitality, personalised guest experiences, and commitment to sustainability.”

UN strengthens collaboration in ME

The 51st meeting of United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) Regional Committee for the Middle East, hosted by Qatar Tourism, concluded in Doha with the participation of tourism ministers, senior officials and experts from across the region. The event also welcomed the UNWTO leadership, reinforcing efforts to foster collaboration and sustainable tourism development in ME.

 TT Bureau

Qatar Tourism hosted the 51st session of the UNWTO Regional Committee for the Middle East on February 12, 2025, welcoming high-level delegations from 13 countries. The meeting provided a platform to assess achievements, analyze sector trends, and set key priorities to advance tourism growth in the region.

The UNWTO confirmed that the Middle East led the world in tourism recovery in 2024, bouncing back rapidly from the impact of the pandemic. Discussions underscored the significance of regional cooperation, culminating in key leadership appointments: Kuwait was named Chair of the Regional Committee for the 2025-2027 term, with Qatar as First Vice-Chair and Iraq as Second Vice-Chair. This recognition highlights Qatar's growing influ-



ence in the global tourism sector and its commitment to shaping the industry's future.

To sustain momentum, it was agreed that Kuwait City will host the next session—the fifty-second regional meeting—in 2026. This decision reflects a shared commitment to fostering regional tourism

cooperation and sustainable development.

Sports tourism in focus

On February 13, 2025, Qatar Tourism also hosted the conference Sports Tourism and the Tourism Industry after the World Cup. The event brought together experts and specialists to explore the long-term

impact of major sporting events on tourism. Discussions centered on leveraging the legacy of FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 to strengthen sports tourism across the Middle East.

By hosting these landmark events, Qatar Tourism reaffirms its commitment to positioning the country as a global tourism hub.

The discussions and strategies outlined aim to drive economic growth, enhance the role of tourism as a key sector, and promote sustainable tourism development. This meeting celebrated its 50th anniversary and was also held in conjunction with Qatar Tourism declaring open their international culinary exhibition. United Nations Tourism reviewed the reports on

the performance of the tourism sector during 2024-2025, in addition to discussing future policies and plans aimed at developing sustainable tourism and enhancing regional cooperation in this vital sector.

Key themes

- Qatar's achievements in sports tourism and the role of investments in international sports clubs and athletes in positioning the Middle East as a global sports hub.
- The use of technology to enhance the sports tourism experience.
- Collaboration between Qatar and neighboring countries to establish the Middle East as a premier destination for sports tourism.
- The role of sports in enhancing regional tourism branding, drawing from Qatar's experience and lessons learned.



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Women prefer local travel in Ramadan

Ramadan is a time of spiritual reflection, family bonding, and cultural immersion. While associated with gatherings and religious observances, the holy month is a period of increased domestic tourism. The growing trend of staycations and daycations within the country highlights a shift in travel behaviour, with residents choosing to explore the UAE's diverse hospitality offerings instead of travelling abroad.

A survey conducted in 2022 revealed 32 per cent of respondents in the UAE planned to travel domestically during Ramadan, highlighting a shift towards local exploration during the holy month. A key driver of this trend is domestic travel's blend of luxury, affordability and convenience. With shorter school and work hours during Ramadan, families and individuals have more time to unwind without the hassle of long-haul travel.

Focus on women-friendly destinations has played a significant role in shaping the industry's

offerings, catering to the preferences of women travellers seeking safe, comfortable, and culturally enriching experiences. Internationally, women are a major portion of travel decision-makers, with reports indicating 80 per cent of travel purchases are influenced by women. This trend is mirrored by a focus on women-centric hospitality offerings in the UAE, particularly during Ramadan.

Staycations, where residents book a short stay at local hotels and resorts, gained popularity during the festival. Its hospitality sector has adapted to meet



this growing demand by offering tailored packages, including special Iftar and Suhoor experiences, wellness retreats, and family-friendly activities.

Daycations, one-day getaways allowing individuals and families to enjoy resort amenities without an overnight stay—is another growing trend. These experiences offer a balance between relaxation and Ramadan commitments, allowing guests to return home for prayers and family

time. One of the primary reasons for the boom in domestic tourism is the UAE's diverse offerings, which range from luxury beach resorts to cultural retreats in the desert. With many families opting for shorter getaways, hotels and resorts have introduced Ramadan-themed promotions that cater to those looking for experiences during the holy month.

Domestic tourism to flourish: Domestic tourism flourishes by

eliminating the stress of global travel—visa, flight bookings, and long airport waits.

Residents can enjoy quick getaways within their city or a short drive away, making travel easier, especially for families with young children and elderly members. Hotels and resorts in the UAE curate Ramadan experiences, including exclusive Iftar buffets featuring traditional and global cuisines, serene Suhoor gatherings, and private dining options for families.

Many properties host spiritual and cultural activities, such as storytelling sessions, live Arabic music, and calligraphy workshops, adding depth to Ramadan experience.

Many properties provide women-specific wellness packages, recognising the demand for spaces catering for relaxation

and self-care. With airlines raising fares due to high global demand during peak holiday seasons, domestic travel presents an affordable alternative. Hotels across the United Arab Emirates (UAE) offer exclusive festival discounts and all-inclusive packages, making luxury travel more accessible. Families and groups can benefit from early bird deals.



Dr Jelena Janjusevic
Head, Accountancy, Economics & Finance
at Heriot-Watt University Dubai
(The views expressed
are solely of the author.)

Globally, women are the major portion of travel decision-makers, with reports indicating 80% of travel purchases in the UAE influenced by women

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Pact between Saudia, Akbar Travels

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's SAUDIA along with Akbar Travels, has launched its NDC integration. The partnership has set up a milestone in technological advancements in airline distribution.

TT Bureau

The SAUDIA-Akbar Travels' New Distribution Capability (NDC) integration enables agents to access a broader range of products and services, delivering flexibility and a rich booking experience. This milestone shows power of partnerships in driving tech advancements in the travel and aviation industry.

From inception of the airport distribution project, SAUDIA and Akbar Travels are working closely to build a strong foundation, developing the NDC integration from scratch. The journey highlighted their commitment to enhancing travel booking experiences for the ravel agents and customers. The collaboration has been strengthened by the technological expertise of Benzy Infotech, the technological arm of Akbar Travels. With its unwavering focus on efficiency, Benzy Infotech played



a significant role in ensuring the seamless execution of the NDC integration.

From Akbar Travels, the collaboration was met with enthusiasm and determination. The project aligns with their mission to leverage technology to enhance their services and strengthen their position as a leader in the travel industry.

Ashiya Nazar, Chief Executive Officer, Akbar Travels, said, "The launch of the NDC platform along with the airline represents a significant step forward for Ak-

bar Travels. The airline's support along with our team's dedication made this initiative a reality. Together, we are reshaping the way travel services are delivered, making them more dynamic and customer-centric."

Ahmed Kasim, General Manager, Akbar Travels Middle East, said, "This partnership with the airline has been a transformative experience for the Akbar Travels. This success not only enhances our offerings but also strengthens our bond with one of the region's most prestigious airlines." ▶

SNTTA collaborates with Emirates

This partnership renewal reaffirms SNTTA's role as Emirates' General Sales Agent in Sharjah, building on a relationship that has consistently delivered exceptional service and connectivity.

TT Bureau

SNTTA announced the renewal of its General Sales Agency (GSA) Agreement with Emirates Airline. The renewal marks a significant milestone in SNTTA and Emirates' longstanding collaboration, aimed at delivering innovative and customer-centric travel solutions across Sharjah. **Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdullah Al Thani**, Chairman of SNTTA and musafir.com, commented, "We are delighted to renew our partnership with Emirates, reinforcing our shared commitment to excellence in travel services. Together with



Emirates, we look forward to delivering superior travel experiences that meet the evolving needs of our customers."

This partnership renewal reaffirms SNTTA's exclusive role as Emirates' General Sales Agent in Sharjah, building on a relationship that has consistently delivered exceptional service and connectivity. Both organizations are committed to leveraging their combined expertise to offer innovative solutions that cater to the diverse needs of travellers in the region. ▶

This partnership renewal reaffirms SNTTA's role as Emirates' GSA in Sharjah, building on a relationship delivering exceptional service



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Turkish Airlines adds Ohrid to its network

Turkish Airlines has been expanding its international network. Also, the airline has introduced several exciting developments aimed at enhancing the experience of passengers. **Mahmut Yayla**, Director, Sales, Turkish Airlines, in an interview with **TRAVEL MIDDLE EAST**, shares the airlines plans, routes for the year, as well as the importance of the MENA region for their growth potential over the next few years.

TT Bureau

What are the latest routes launched by Turkish Airlines and what is in the pipeline?

Turkish Airlines continues to expand its global network and achieved a Guinness World Record as "the most countries flown by an airline". We have recently added exciting destinations such as Santiago in Chile, offering another gateway to South America. We also entered the Australian market with the opening of Melbourne and Sydney routes to connect our customers to the vibrant culture and landscapes Down Under to our network.

We have started Turkish Airlines flights to the cities of Tripoli and Benghazi in Libya thereby strengthening our presence in North Africa, Turin in Italy, providing access



Mahmut Yayla
Director - Sales
Turkish Airlines

Türkiye is the destinations most visited by tourists from MENA region. What destinations are popular?

Nearly 7.5 million tourists, the nationals from MENA region have travelled to Türkiye. Last year, the number of Saudi Arabian, Algerian and Iranian nationals visiting Türkiye have reached an all-time high level. We are proud to connect travellers to



exploring hidden gems such as Pamukkale-Denizli, with its stunning white terraces and ancient ruins, Dalaman, a gateway to the beautiful Lycian Coast, the lush tea plantations of Rize, the thermal springs and historical sites of Afyonkarahisar and the charming university town of Eskişehir.

As an airline flying to most countries, what benefits does Turkish Airlines offer travellers?

We strive to provide a seamless and enjoyable travel experience to our valuable guests. Our TourIstanbul programme offers transit passengers the opportunity to discover the wonders of Istanbul during their layover. Passengers with layovers between six and 24 hours can take advantage of Tour Istanbul, which offers complimentary guided tours of the historic city's highlights. For longer layovers of 20 hours or more, our Stopover Istanbul programme provides a complimentary hotel stay thereby allowing travellers to truly immerse themselves in various facets of the city.

What benefits does Turkish Airlines offer passengers travelling with pets?

Ours is one of the most pet-friendly airlines. We understand that pets are part of

had become a fundamental part of daily life in Taş Tepeler around 12,000 years ago. We have taken our sponsorship of the Taş Tepeler excavation site a step further—we are

subsidiary of Turkish Airlines) focusing on IFC service solution in a bid to enhance the inflight services to provide free of cost, unlimited in-flight Wi-Fi across our entire fleet in the future. We

In 2024, the number of Algerian, Iranian and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia citizens visiting Türkiye hit a record and reached an all-time high level

to another beautiful Italian city and Denver in the United States, expanding our network in the North America. Looking ahead in this year, we are thrilled to announce the launch of our new route to Ohrid in North Macedonia during this Spring season. This will be our second destination in North Macedonia, further enhancing connectivity in the Balkans.

53 destinations within Türkiye alone. Popular destinations such as Istanbul, a city bridging continents and cultures, the stunning coastal resorts of Bodrum and Antalya, the scenic Black Sea region of Trabzon, the otherworldly landscapes of Cappadocia and the dynamic city of İzmir continue to draw travellers.

For those seeking unique experiences, we recommend



the family keeping pets. We offer online pet booking for a streamlined experiences. We have launched a dedicated Pet Lounge at Istanbul Airport, ensuring a comfortable and stress-free environment for both pets as well as their owners. Turkish Airlines launched first pet passport in the industry. Hundreds of owners in UAE applied for the passport for their furry companions and the campaign will be launched once again in the UAE this year.

What are recent developments and services announced by the Turkish Airlines last year?

At Turkish Airlines, we have introduced several exciting developments aimed at enhancing experience of our passengers. One of our standout offerings is the Oldest Bread Project. Bread made from domesticated wheat

bringing the world's oldest bread to the skies. We brought bread made from Einkorn and Emmer wheats to our in-flight menu—honouring Anatolia's ancient culinary heritage. By serving the world's oldest bread, made from wheat grown in Anatolia's fertile lands, in the sky, we offer our passengers a culinary journey that dates back to over 12,000 years.

We have also announced the Crystal Business Class Suite, which sets a new benchmark in luxury travel with features such as adjustable privacy doors, wider seats, and elegant finishes. The new suite is designed according to the feedback of the passengers and created by the TCI, subsidiary of Turkish Airlines. Looking ahead, Turkish Airlines signed an agreement with TCI aircraft interiors (sub-

have partnered with Lanvin to create an a sustainable amenity kit collection for Business Class. We unveiled UNESCO Türkiye Series" amenity kits, and "My Travel Buddy" toy sets for children.

IMPORTANT HIGHLIGHTS

Ohrid

in North Macedonia is the new route Turkish Airlines during 2025 Spring

7.5 million

travellers from MENA countries travelled to Türkiye

Crystal Suites & Pawsport

are the new products launched by the airline



Dubai holds 437 biz events in 2024

In 2024, Dubai secured an opportunity to host record 437 events from a range of sectors and professions, emphasising the city's standing as a top choice for organising global MICE events. The achievement also cemented the role business events are playing in accomplishing the goal of Dubai Economic Agenda, D33, to consolidate Dubai's position as a hub for business and leisure events.

TT Bureau

Dubai consolidated its standing as a top choice for global conferences, congresses, corporate meetings and incentives in 2024, with the city securing the opportunity to host 437 events from a range of sectors and professions.

Driven by Dubai Business Events (DBE), which is part of the Dubai Department of Economy and Tourism, Dubai witnessed a 20

per cent year-on-year increase in the number of successful bids, elevating the city's status as a globally competitive events hub, powered by innovation, infrastructure development, and rising global economic influence.

The events captured in 2024 are set to attract 210,731 delegates to Dubai over the coming years, making an impact on the city's events, travel and tourism ecosystems, and bringing talent and expertise from around



Ahmed Al Khaja
CEO, Dubai Festivals and Retail Establishment

visitors, positioning Dubai in the global business events arena, and shedding light on its thriving knowledge economy. It cements the vital role business events

supporting its wider economic priorities. The healthy increase in successful bids in 2024 is proof of Dubai's rising prominence as a destination that delivers not only

are also engaging with all stakeholders, partners and service providers, to elevate Dubai's position as a leader in the competitive business events landscape," Ahmed Al Khaja, CEO, Dubai Festivals and Retail Establishment, said.

Dubai's draw as a go-to, accessible, safe and welcoming global MICE destination, in turn feeding into Dubai's economic growth by attracting more visitors



the world to enjoy the platform Dubai provides for knowledge sharing, professional development and networking. Dubai's success underlines the city's unrelenting draw as a go-to, accessible, safe and welcoming global MICE destination, in turn feeding into Dubai's wider economic growth by attracting more

are playing in achieving the goal of Dubai Economic Agenda, D33, to consolidate Dubai's position as a leading city for business and leisure.

"Guided by the vision of our city's leadership, business events continue to play a vital role in bolstering tourism to Dubai and

world-class business events infrastructure and capabilities, but also provides unrivalled, memorable experiences for all organisers and delegates. It highlights Dubai's status as a knowledge hub, with associations and businesses benefitting from expertise in the city, and also contributing to its continued development. We

BUSINESS EVENTS ENGAGEMENTS

210,000 delegates Dubai will welcome in upcoming corporate, association events and incentive groups

20% year-on-year growth of number of events secured ICCA, Cvent, PCMA, IAPCO – official event hosts

93% planners bullish on MICE

According to the Cvent's 2025 Planner Sourcing Report, 93% planners have a positive outlook on the events industry. About 71% of the planners anticipate more in-person onsite meetings, while 84% expect more offsite meetings, the report states. Digital communication is now the primary method for sourcing, selecting venues and event planning, the report highlighted.

TT Bureau

Cvent released the 2025 edition of its Cvent Planner Sourcing Report, Middle East and Africa region. The report aims to help hospitality experts attract corporate events by understanding planners' challenges, preferences and sourcing trends.

The report findings highlight positive momentum across the industry in the region despite challenges such as rising costs, budget constraints and time management, and suggest how the hotels and venues can

address these to secure more group business.

As per the report, 93 per cent of planners have a positive outlook on the events industry. Digital communication is the method for sourcing, selecting venues, and event planning. The planners leverage technology and expect their collaborating venues to do the same. About 43 per cent of the planners depend more on technology for unique Request for Proposals and 22 per cent use it to resend them.

Planners spend much time online using sourcing platforms, venue



Gokul Bajaj
Cvent AVP, Sales and General Manager, Dubai

websites, and hotel reviews. About 77 per cent use AI tools for venue sourcing but still need a

realistic view of the event space. For 49 per cent of them submitting an RFP depends on venues' images and videos, 48 per cent look for peer reviews, ratings, and testimonials; 46 per cent think of venue floor plans and diagrams, and 35 per cent value a 3D tour of the event space.

"It is incredible to witness the shift towards extensive use of technology by both planners and venues. The integration of AI is a game changer, simplifying the process and enabling planners to quickly identify suitable venues and focus on delivering exceptional attendee experiences,

which are crucial for event success. Cvent's planner sourcing report provides essential insights into regional challenges and opportunities, helping planners and venue suppliers stay ahead and collaborate more effectively," Gokul Bajaj, AVP, Sales and General Manager, Dubai, Cvent, said.

The report lists the top venue types this year, including convention centres (44 per cent), restaurants (44 per cent), colleges and varsities (36 per cent), art galleries (28 per cent), bars and nightclubs (28 per cent), and theatres (26 per cent). About 27 per cent say locations influence RFP

submission the most, while 22 per cent prioritise date availability.

About 25 per cent of planners prioritise sustainability for 2025, seeking venues with energy-efficient practices and sustainability education. They search for venues that support local initiatives on environmental and social causes (33 per cent), reduce and recycle waste (31 per cent), advertise industry recognition for eco-friendly practices (27 per cent), source food from local farmers (27 per cent), conserve water (25 per cent), utilise public transportation or electric vehicles (24 per cent). ▶

McArthurGlen designer outlets

McArthurGlen designer outlets hosted the second edition of its McArthurGlen Tourism Awards. The travel and trade partners were honoured with Certificates of Appreciation and McArthurGlen Tourism Award trophies for their efforts in promoting the brand across the region. Those from GCC countries, including Kuwait and the KSA, received their awards underscoring the brand's growing influence.



'celebrate' top trade partners



Sustainability non-negotiable for KSA

At the recent inaugural MICE summit, **His Excellency Fahd Abdulmohsen Al-Rasheed**, CEO, Royal Commission for Riyadh City, delivered an address for the future of the MICE ecosystem. His comprehensive speech celebrated the achievements of the KSA's MICE and outlined a transformative roadmap anchored in sustainable growth, strategic collaboration and a forward-thinking urban development agenda.

T Dr. Shehara Fernando

Drawing on his expertise in urban transformation, His Excellency Fahd, CEO, Royal Commission for Riyadh City, emphasised that the Kingdom has become "top ranked place in the world" for urban transformation today.

This success stems from visionary leadership. In my view, **His Highness Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman** is the quintessential urbanist, turned Vision 2030 into a tangible reality in our cities". His Excellency Fahd worked on projects such as King Abdullah Economic City and is leading the transformation of Riyadh. Central to his vision is a



His Excellency Fahd Abdulmohsen Al-Rasheed
CEO, Royal Commission for Riyadh City

framework integrating economic development with urban planning. The Crown Prince explained every new city or giga project in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is looked at

through a comprehensive lens. "Competitiveness is essential, and it is built on realism. Vision 2030 lays out a comprehensive roadmap for our country's development, beginning with the recognition of our inherent strengths—a strategic position at the crossroads of three continents, robust investment capabilities, and a far-reaching global influence. The important differentiator is our ability to execute. Vision without execution is mere hallucination, and execution is at the heart of everything we do," he added.

This framework ensures that every key element of a city—mobility, sustainability, infrastructure, governance, and financing, makes the citizens feel about a city.

Sustainability has emerged as a non-negotiable pillar in his strategy. His Excellency Fahd said, "Economic development is linked to sustainability. We have preserved one-third of Riyadh from



development to protect our natural heritage. Through the Saudi Green Initiative—committing to planting one billion trees—we are transforming our nation into a greener, more sustainable landscape. In our vision, sustainability is not an afterthought, it is built into every project from the start."

He underscored the role of PPP and technology, including AI, in transforming MICE. With events such as Expo 2030 and

the World Cup on the horizon, his call for ethical practices,



and infrastructure development resonated as a challenge and an opportunity for all the stakeholders. "Cultural diplomacy is at the heart of the MICE industry. For over 1,400 years, the KSA has welcomed people from all corners of the globe, fostering a rich legacy of cultural exchange. Today, we honour that tradition by collaborating with partners to drive innovation across industries, His Excellency Fahd said. **D**

His Highness Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the quintessential urbanist, turned Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 into a reality in the cities

Travel Tech exhibitors up 25% @ATM

With the global travel technology market currently valued at US\$ 10.7 billion, leaders and innovators from around the world are preparing to steer the future of the tourism industry at the 32nd edition of Arabian Travel Market (ATM), to be organised under 'Global Travel: Developing Tomorrow's Tourism Through Enhanced Connectivity' theme at Dubai World Trade Centre from 28 April to 1 May 2025.

T TT Bureau

With Travel Tech exhibitors experiencing year-on-year growth of 25 per cent and the segment's exhibition space expanding by 22 per cent, Arabian Travel Market 2025

IMPORTANT HIGHLIGHTS

\$10.7 billion
Value of global travel technology

25%
Travel technology exhibitors at ATM 2025

Increased by 22%
Exhibition space of travel technology at ATM



Danielle Curtis
Exhibition Director, ME ATM

(ATM 2025) will explore how technology is transforming the tourism sector, presenting new growth opportunities for enterprising start-ups and established multinationals alike.

The Future Stage at ATM 2025 will host a range of expert



speakers, who will explore how advances in fields such as analytics and ML, workplace collaboration, blockchain, next-gen mobility and augmented reality are driving our sector forward. This year's event represents an unparalleled opportunity for exhibitors to showcase their innovations in front of an international audience of

senior decision-makers and purchase influencers.

"ATM Travel Tech draws together the brightest from across our industry, creating an unrivalled forum for discovery, debate and deal-making. Now more than ever, opportunities related to linkage and integration are at the

forefront of our minds, and they will take centre stage at ATM 2025," **Danielle Curtis**, Exhibition Director, Middle East, ATM, said. According to IMARC Group, the global market for travel technology is on course to hit US\$ 18.6 billion in the next eight years, with a CAGR of 6.05 per cent for 2025-33.

ATM 2025's Future Stage will host many presentations to highlight opportunities within this exciting and lucrative space. This year's sessions will feature 'Generational Trends Influencing Hyper-personalisation in Luxury'; 'Travel Technology: Get Ahead or Get Left Behind'; 'AI: Everywhere All At Once'; and 'Data-Driven Travel: The Next Frontier of Destination Transformations'.

Tourism has been an early adopter of emerging tech, and digitalisation continues to drive seamless travel. The development of smart travel facilitation, smart destinations and new job avenues is set to contribute to economic, social and environmental sustainability in the sector. **D**

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Al Rafisah Dam

Discover the timeless charm of Sharjah's eastern coast

From ancient villages to modern developments, Sharjah's eastern coast offers a unique blend of tradition and innovation to visitors with a variety of experiences and attractions. Imagine luxurious resorts nestled within the towering mountains of Kalba, ancient rocks bearing the tales of over 2,000-year-old civilisation, and peaceful lakes providing tranquil getaways, the eastern coast of Sharjah enchants visitors with its timeless allure.

TT Bureau

Sharjah's eastern coast entices adventurers and leisure seekers, offering an immersive journey through its captivating beauty at every turn, be it historical forts that whisper intimate stories of the land and its people, or nature reserves rich with biodiversity.

Between Waterfalls and Mountain Trails

Shees Park, situated in the eastern coast, spans an area of 11,300 square metres, welcoming visitors with a magnificent 25-metre-high waterfall cascading into waters below. Surrounding it, mountain trails extend for 506 metres, bordered by graceful palm trees

and lush local plants, guiding you to a main viewing platform 30 metres above the park where families can unwind in 32 shaded seating areas.

Additionally, the park boasts an outdoor theatre for shows and events, comfortably seating up to 70 guests making every visit a memorable experience.



Najd Al Maqsar



Wadi Al Helo Nature Reserve

History and Natural Beauty Entwined

Nestled in Wadi Shees, Khorfakkan, lies the heritage village of Najd Al Maqsar. A portion of this historic site has been reimagined as a luxurious mountain hotel, offering seven meticulously restored units within the 100-year-old 'Ka-

reen House', as well as facilities and attractions such as a restaurant, reception area, and a trail that leads to the historic Al Meqsar Fortress. With breathtaking mountain views, the site also contains rich archaeological treasures, which have intricately carved rocks featuring images of horses

and camels, dating back to 2000 BC. Guests can also explore walking trails, enjoy panoramic views, and access the Al Rafisah Dam through a dedicated trail, experiencing a taste of traditional Emirati heritage and the historical spirit of the village. Al Rafisah Dam sits gracefully between the majestic

Hajar mountains, a picturesque destination that offers a tranquil escape and a major tourist attraction. This serene azure reservoir surrounded by lush greenery and towering sandstone peaks welcomes families to enjoy a variety of activities, including kayaking, hiking, and enjoy a memorable meal amid the views at the renowned restaurant. Visitors can also witness the stunning 55-metre-

A Monument of Triumph and Testament to Heritage
Khorfakkan Fort is a captivating blend of history and culture on the eastern coast. It houses ancient artefacts that narrate the rich historical, political, and social journey of Khorfakkan. Once a strategic defensive stronghold on the UAE's eastern coast, it served as the headquarters of Sharjah's government and the ruling family's residence. Fol-



Kalba Waterfront

Al Rafisah Dam sits gracefully between the majestic Hajar mountains, a picturesque destination that offers a tranquil escape and a major tourist attraction

long waterfall cascading into the lake and a 730-metre-long walkway along the mountains' edge. The picturesque path-

lowing its restoration in 2019, the fort has been transformed into a museum, providing a window to explore the region's herit-

in Kalba is a unique tourist destination combining nature and history beautifully. Visitors can explore a historical Islamic watchtower and take in its panoramic views of the surrounding area. The valley also caters to

and animals, making it an ideal destination for those seeking natural adventures.

Serenity and Shopping

Kalba Waterfront offers a unique shopping experience with the

taurants and a 1,600 square metre children's play area, the waterfront also features family-friendly facilities, such as indoor and outdoor restaurants, shops, and an entertainment centre, making it a perfect destination for family fun.

A Sanctuary for Nature and Wildlife Enthusiasts

Al Hefaiyah Mountain Conservation Centre is a sanctuary for nature and wildlife enthusiasts, offering a unique opportunity to get up close and personal with various local mountain animals. The centre is a treasure trove of rich biodiversity, featuring rare and endangered species in their natural habitat. With its well-maintained trails and viewing points, guests can easily explore the area and observe these animals, inspiring a deeper appreciation for our natural world.

With its natural beauty and unique destinations, the eastern coast complements the emirate's offerings, establishing it

Environmental Diversity at Its Finest

Al Qurm Protected Area invites visitors to explore its remarkable environmental diversity, featuring mangroves, marshes, and salt flats. This reserve is a sanctuary for rare bird species, making it a perfect destination for bird watchers and nature enthusiasts. Its innovative environmental design protects the coast and preserves the region's biodiversity. Globally

Sharjah's Al Qurm Protected Area invites visitors to explore its remarkable environmental diversity, featuring mangroves, marshes, and salt flats



Hisn Khorfakkan

way, stretching from the dam to the fort, is surrounded by palm trees, local plants, and lush green grass, offering unparalleled views for visitors.

age and deepen appreciation of its fascinating past.

Nature Embracing History

Wadi Al Helo Nature Reserve

hiking enthusiasts with its natural trails, scenic landscapes, and archaeological sites. Renowned for its distinctive biodiversity, the reserve hosts a variety of plants

charming view of a serene lake surrounded by mangrove trees. The walkway provides visitors with a peaceful and refreshing atmosphere. Alongside res-

significant, the reserve is a vital breeding ground for many rare bird species, including the Arabian collared kingfisher.

as one of the premier tourist spots in the region and the UAE. Overlooking the Gulf of Oman, this coastal area adds a distinctive element to the diverse options available to tourists in Sharjah, attracting visitors from within the emirate and around the world. Explore the eastern coast of Sharjah, where history, nature, and modernity blend seamlessly to offer an unforgettable experience.



Al Rafisah Dam



JTB hosts UAE agents for dinner

A dinner with key travel partners from the UAE was hosted by Jamaica Tourist Board and its GCC trade representative, Buzz Travel Marketing Middle East. **Torrance Lewis**, District Sales Manager, Jamaica Tourist Board engaged with the partners of the UAE travel trade. The evening enabled to reinforce Jamaica's dedication to the GCC market by fostering long-term relationships and showcasing its unique offerings.





Sheraton JBR Lobby

Sheraton JBR

returns with stunning transformation

Sheraton Jumeirah Beach Resort announced its relaunch following revitalisation, redefining guest experience at this iconic destination. As the first hotel built in Jumeirah Beach Residence area, Sheraton JBR has set the standard for excellence in hospitality for two decades. This change ushers in a new era, blending modern design, amenities, and cutting-edge technology, while preserving its rich history and cherished legacy.

TT Bureau

The reinvention of Sheraton Jumeirah Beach Resort is driven by the vision of bringing people together through shared moments and spaces. The newly reimagined rooms and suites offer a sophisticated fusion of modern design and natural textures, with a colour palette inspired by serene beachfront setting.

All rooms have been thoughtfully equipped to cater to the diverse needs of today's travellers with the latest technolo-

gies, providing guests with a seamless blend of comfort and innovation. The bathrooms too have been fully renovated, with bathtubs replaced by rain showers for better convenience and accessibility.

The Sheraton JBR's redesigned lobby showcases Sheraton's latest brand elements, creating a contemporary, inviting space that seamlessly blends work, leisure, and meaningful connections. Signature concepts such as The Booth, Studios, and & More by Sheraton transform the lobby into more than just

a functional area—it is a hub where guests and locals can come together in memorable ways. Complementing this, Gatherings by Sheraton plays

an all-day menu with a several beverages, freshly brewed coffee, and assortment of breakfast offerings, along with convenient grab-and-go options.

All rooms in Sheraton JBR have been thoughtfully equipped to cater to the diverse needs of today's travellers with the latest technologies

a significant role in fostering community engagement, offering curated events that unite diverse communities and create lasting connections, enhancing Sheraton Jumeirah Beach Resort's position as a place for shared experiences.

Apart from the revitalisation of its guest accommodations, the resort introduces two new dining outlets—Seafield Mediterranean Eatery and & More by Sheraton. Seafield offers range of Mediterranean flavours and a warm, inviting atmosphere embodying its vibrant spirit. Further & More by Sheraton features

The resort boasts a selection of food and beverage venues, including Black Goose Buns & Brews, a vibrant sports bar, Bliss Lounge, a beach lounge, Al Hadiqa, a Levantine restaurant, Peacock, a Chinese specialty restaurant, Azure, a pool bar and Tacolicious, a Mexican food truck, among others. Guests are invited to indulge in culinary delights, while enjoying stunning beachfront views.

Guests seeking relaxation and leisure will be delighted by the enhancement of the recreational facilities, including a private beach, an outdoor temperature-controlled pool, a



Sheraton JBR Seafiled Indoor

children's swimming pool, and a spa offering a variety of treatments. Visitors can also enjoy beach volleyball, water sports, and table tennis and access to the renovated Sheraton Fitness. After renovation, there are two indoor squash courts for those looking to stay active during their stay.

"We are excited to introduce the new chapter for Sheraton JBR," Mohamed El Aghoury, Multi-Property General Manager, said. "With our commitment to excellence at the core, we have reimagined the resort to offer not just offer comfort, but also a truly immersive atmosphere where every detail ensures that the visitors feel

welcomed and that they truly belong to this thoughtfully designed environment." Sheraton Jumeirah Beach Resort remains committed to providing guests with exceptional service and accommodations.

Located in the heart of Sheraton Jumeirah Beach Resort, the relaunched resort offers guests easy access to some of most iconic attractions of Dubai, including Ain Dubai, Palm Jumeirah, and Dubai Marina. This prime location, combined with the Sheraton JBR's newly upgraded amenities and unparalleled service, makes it the perfect destination for both leisure and business travellers. 



Sheraton JBR Deluxe Room Sea View

Saudi Travel Mart witnesses 15k visitors

The second edition of the three-day Saudi Travel Mart ended last month, strengthening the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's position in the tourism and travel sector. **TRAVTALK** was the media partner for the second consecutive year. The exhibition witnessed the participation of 185 exhibitors from 35 countries, attracting 14,653 visitors from industry leaders and decision-makers.



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Eyeing high-value markets

Under the partnership of HBX Group & Minor Hotels, the group will not only link 60,000 travel distributors across 190 source markets, but also have access to 560 minor properties across 58 nations.

TT Bureau

HBX Group and Minor Hotels announced the global expansion of their preferred distribution partnership. The expanded partnership builds on the success of Minor Hotels and HBX Group's existing collaboration in Europe and the Americas. Under the pact, Minor Hotels will add 181 properties from Asia, Australasia, Africa and the Middle East to its distribution partnership. The group will designate HBX Group as a preferred B2B distribution partner, enabling streamlined distribution, optimised operational costs, and control over rates and inventory.



Under the agreement, Minor Hotels will add 181 properties from Asia, Australasia, Africa and the Middle East to its distribution partnership

its intent to add 300 more properties to its portfolio over the next three years.

"This partnership represents a milestone in our collaboration with Minor Hotels. By consolidating distribution efforts and reducing operational complexity, we are enabling Minor Hotels to streamline its strategy and focus on reaching high-value markets

where we can add real value. HBX Group becomes an extension of Minor Hotel's commercial arm, bringing their brands to the markets that would otherwise be out of reach. Together, we are setting a new benchmark for what a true partnership between a hospitality group and a distribution tech platform should look like," **Carlos Muñoz**, CCO, HBX Group, commented. **D**

Bahi Ajman turns eco-friendly

Bahi Ajman Palace Hotel, in partnership with AirOWater Global, recently unveiled a 100 per cent sustainable water bottling plant, which generates drinkable water using moisture in the air. The project, first in the UAE's northern region, pioneers eco-friendly innovation with Atmospheric Water Generation (AWG) technology, aligning with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

TT Bureau

Bahi Ajman Palace Hotel's 100 per cent sustainable water bottling plant addressed critical environmental challenges while setting a new benchmark for water logistics, water security, plastic free environment and sustainable practices in the hospitality industry.

The launch programme was graced by **His Highness Sheikh Abdulaziz Bin Humaid Al Nuaimi**, Chairman, Ajman Department of Tourism Development and **His Excellency Mahmood Khaleel Ahmed Alsayed Alhashmi**, Director General, Ajman Department



not only reduces plastic waste in landfills but also leverages an

The plant serves 100% of the hotel's guests, supplying water across rooms, beach zones, and poolside lounges, ensuring an eco-friendly guest experience

of Tourism Development. **His Excellency Sheikh Salem Bin Faisal Al Qassimi**, Vice Chairman, Faisal Holding LLC and **His Excellency Sheikh Sultan Bin Faisal Al Qassimi**, Vice Chairman Faisal Holding LLC, were also present.

Iftikhar Hamdani, Area General Manager, Bahi Ajman Palace Hotel, expressed his pride in leading the transformative project. "We are proud to launch this sustainable initiative with this bottling plant, which promotes the concept of plastic-free reusable glass bottles. This initiative

untapped resource – water from air. We believe this solution is a game-changer and will inspire other hotels to adopt similar sustainable practices," he said.

Shubhojit Mahalanobis, Co-Founder and Partner, AirOWater Global, highlighted the significance of the partnership. "We are thrilled to collaborate with Bahi Ajman Palace Hotel and commend their unwavering commitment to sustainability. Our water-from-air technology and reusable glass bottle model have empowered the hotel to go plastic-free while



boosting their ESG credentials. We look forward to strengthening our partnership and exploring new opportunities in the Northern Emirates."

100% sustainable solution

The state-of-the-art bottling plant at Bahi Ajman Palace Hotel produces an impressive 365,000 litres of pure drinking water annually by harnessing



atmospheric moisture. This revolutionary "water-from-air" technology eliminates the need for plastic bottles, providing a plastic-free solution for the hotel's water requirements. The state-of-the-art bottling plant also serves 100 per cent of the guests of the hotel, supplying water across rooms, dining areas, beach zones, and poolside lounges, ensuring a seamless, eco-friendly guest experience.

Carbon footprint reduction

By producing 365,000 litres of drinking water from air and eliminating an equivalent number of plastic bottles, the hotel achieves an annual carbon footprint reduction of 33.58 metric tonnes of CO₂e. This initiative also eliminates the need for plastic production, long-haul transportation, and reduces landfill waste, reinforcing the hotel's commitment to

championing sustainability in the UAE sector. The move positions the hotel as a trailblazer in the industry of Northern Emirates, exemplifying how luxury and sustainability can coexist. By adopting innovative solutions that prioritise environmental stewardship, Bahi Ajman Palace Hotel is setting a new precedent for other establishments to follow in achieving the UAE's Net Zero Vision. 🌱



Redefining global hospitality training

AMSA Hospitality Academy, an initiative by AMSA Hospitality, is set to revolutionise the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's hospitality sector through its partnership with Luxury Hotelschool Paris. Aligned with Saudi Vision 2030, the hospitality academy blends world-class training with the Kingdom's rich Arabian traditions in a bid to create a skilled workforce capable of delivering exceptional guest experiences.

 TT Bureau

In a strategic step towards transforming the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's hospitality sector, AMSA Hospitality has announced a groundbreaking partnership with Luxury Hotelschool Paris to establish a state-of-the-art training academy in the Kingdom.

This collaboration, aligned with Saudi Vision 2030, aims to advance education, service quality, and professional development across the industry.

Bridging global excellence with local heritage

Luxury Hotelschool Paris, globally renowned for its expertise in hospitality education and endorsed by 300 leading corporate partners, will certify training materials, deliver "train the trainer" programmes, and extend its resources to the entire hospitality sector of the King-



dom. These programmes are designed to equip hotel employees with world-class customer service skills, while reflecting the rich cultural traditions of KSA. Elaborating on the partnership, **Mohammad Alathel**, CEO, AMSA Hospitality, said, "The rigorous training programmes provided by Luxury Hotelschool Paris enable us to elevate ser-

vice standards while maintaining our unique Arabian hospitality values. This collaboration ensures that even within the midscale segment, we deliver a luxury-level guest experience, redefining expectations across the hospitality industry."

Vision for transformation

The establishment of AMSA

Hospitality Academy is a pivotal element in AMSA Hospitality's commitment to Saudi Vision 2030. By fostering a skilled workforce, the academy aims to contribute to KSA's economic diversification and position it as a global leader in hospitality.

Goals for industry growth

The hospitality academy plans to impart training to 400 professionals by mid-2025, and an average of 500 annually thereafter. The initiative ensures a supply of skilled personnel, driving consistent improvements in service quality across the KSA's hospitality sector.

Elevating KSA's standing

Expressing enthusiasm over the collaboration, Olivier Deveaud, CEO, Luxury Hotelschool Paris, said, "It is an honour to enter into a partnership with AMSA Hospitality to bring our expertise to the Kingdom. Together, we aim to set a new benchmark for service excellence, com-



binning global standards along with KSA's unique identity."

Future-ready sector


By integrating global best practices with the Kingdom's heritage of Arabian generosity, the

Luxury Hotelschool Paris ensures that the Kingdom not only meets but exceeds global expectations, reinforcing its role as a premier destination for travellers worldwide. This partnership signifies an era of innovation,



AMSA Hospitality and Luxury Hotelschool Paris partnership aims to advance education, service quality, and professional development across the industry

AMSA Hospitality Academy represents more than a training initiative—it is a transformative force for the Kingdom's hospitality industry. The partnership with

professionalism, and cultural pride, marking a significant milestone in the Kingdom's journey toward becoming an international hospitality leader. 

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17-18	International Conference on Tourism and Hospitality - Tokyo 2025	Tokyo, Japan
19-20	IBTM Asia Pacific	Hong Kong, China
21	Deluxe Travel Market Poland 2025	Warsaw, Poland
21-23	DRT Show Shanghai 2025	Shanghai, China
25-27	Routes Asia 2025	Perth, Australia
30 Mar- 2 Apr	HOTELEX Shanghai 2025	Shanghai, China
31 Mar- 2 Apr	IHIF EMEA 2025	Berlin, Germany

Dubai to have world's tallest wellness resort

The facility spans 500,000 sq.ft. and will stand 100 metres tall. entertainment. It is likely to welcome 1.7 billion visitors annually.

TT Bureau

The Theme Dubai development, at an estimated Dirhams2 billion, spans 500,000 square feet and will stand 100 meters tall. The facility is likely to welcome up to 1.7 million visitors annually and will become the tallest of its kind in the world. It combines elements of relaxation, leisure, healthcare, and family entertainment. The resort's design features advanced sustainable engineering

principles, and it will recycle 90 per cent of the water used in its thermal pools, with 80 per cent of its air and cooling needs sourced from clean energy.

Officials presented His Highness Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum with a model of the project, Mattar Al Tayer, Chairman, Supreme Urban Planning Committee, said. "This project will transform Dubai into a hub for medical tourism by integrating wellness, healthcare, and recreational services," he added. Designed to integrate nature and water, the project emphasises holistic wellness, blending physical and mental health with leisure.

The design, led by architects Diller Scofidio + Renfro (DS+R), presents a fusion of nature and urban living. "Elevated high above the concerns of everyday urban life, Theme Dubai is an oasis in the sky. It emerges from the lake of a revitalised Zabeel Park as a series of botanical islands stacked into a tower. Each island is a platform for thermal pools, decks, and indoor and outdoor vegetation," Elizabeth Diller, Founding Partner, DS+R, said.

AT A GLANCE

Dhs2bn
Project cost

500,000 square feet
Total area

100 meters
Height

1.7 million
Annual visitors expected

2026
Construction

2028
Completion



Trendsetters of the month



Saudia Airlines

SAUDIA announced the airline's launch of 10 new destinations in 2025 through its latest video post, which was trending **26.9K** views and **23** reposts



Qatar Airways

Qatar Airways' latest video post of welcoming the tennis player Novak Djokovic as a partner in Doha, went viral **96K** views and **122** reposts



Visit Dubai

Visit Dubai reels video on top attractions in Dubai to visit in 2025, highlights the dream destination for your next adventure **243K** views and **15.6K** likes



Oman (MHT) Ministry of Heritage & Tourism

Oman MHT reel video on the fierce road bicycle race, 'Tour of Oman' happening on Green Mountain **7.9M** views and **8.1K** likes



flydubai

flydubai's post of Full-Flight Simulator inspection by H.H Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, Chairman and CEO, Emirates Airline, second VC, Executive Council of Dubai, President, DCAA and Chairman, flydubai **2.8K** likes and **91** reposts



dnata

dnata's recent post, celebrating their milestones of partnering with Western Sydney International Airport **1.7K** likes and **14** reposts



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Salesforce Travel CRM is tool manages your travel business but anticipates client needs, streamlines processes, and helps your team stay ahead. It is comprehensive solution designed to enhance productivity, improve customer relationships.

What makes Salesforce Travel CRM stand out?

Salesforce Travel CRM is more than just software; it's a game-changer. By combining cutting-edge technology with intuitive design, it empowers teams to deliver exceptional results. Here's what sets it apart:

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- ❖ **360-Degree Customer View:** Access complete pro-



files with client preferences, travel history, and real-time updates to provide personalised experiences.

❖ **AI-Powered Insights:** Leverage predictive analytics to anticipate trends, optimise

travel packages, and improve customer satisfaction.

❖ **Automated Workflows:** Automate routine tasks like sending reminders, updating itineraries, or following up on leads, allowing your

team to focus on building relationships.

❖ **Seamless Integrations:** Connect with tools like Slack, Outlook, and third-party booking systems for a unified workflow experience.

Whether you are a boutique travel agency offering curated experiences or a global enterprise managing thousands of clients, Salesforce Travel CRM adapts to your needs. Its scalable features support businesses at every stage, reducing manual tasks and improving operational clarity.



Explore a 4-star hotel and apartments, a lifestyle destination in Mirdif Hills featuring four dining and entertainment venues, just a few minutes away from Dubai International Airport, Mirdif City Center, and Dubai Safari Park.

Millennium Place Mirdif is a beautiful property overlooking Mushrif National Park's greenery. The home of more than 70,000 trees offers a fantastic range of family fun adventures from zip-lining, children's playground, horse riding, cycle track, BBQ areas, and much more.



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MOVEMENTS

INSIGHT OUT CONSULTANCY Dubai

Insight Out Consultancy has appointed **RAQUEL LOPEZ** as the Senior Manager. With over 30 years of global and regional expertise in the hospitality and entertainment industries, her appointment reaffirms the company's commitment to driving innovation, operational excellence, and strategic expansion. Lopez's career includes leadership roles with globally acclaimed hotel chains, theme parks, and integrated destination resorts. Her comprehensive expertise spans strategic planning, business development, marketing, sales, revenue management, and brand positioning, equipping Insight Out Consultancy to meet its growth objectives for 2025. In her new role, Lopez will spearhead bespoke advisory projects for leading hospitality and travel brands.



GOLDEN TULIP MEDIA HOTEL Dubai

Golden Tulip Media Hotel has appointed **HAMED AL KALBANI** as the General Manager. With a solid foundation in Real Estate and Finance Management and paired with valuable hospitality experience, Kalbani brings fresh energy and a forward-thinking approach to his new position. According to a company statement, as the General Manager of the hotel, Kalbani is committed to enhancing operational efficiency, elevating guest experiences, strengthening the brand presence of the hotel, and driving sustainable growth. Collaborative leadership style and innovative mindset of Kalbani promise to inspire the innovative team and deliver exceptional results.



OMAR BIN AZIZ has rejoined Golden Tulip Media Hotel as Assistant Director of Sales & Marketing, leading the sales strategies of the hotel. With more than a decade of experience in hotel sales, business development, and client relationship management, Aziz brings a valuable expertise to expand the hotel's sales portfolio. Having contributed to the hotel's growth previously, his return highlights his commitment to driving revenue, strengthening market presence, and fostering key partnerships. In his new role, he aims to further elevate the hotel's commercial success and expand its footprint in the region. Golden Tulip Media Hotel is excited to welcome Aziz back.



UNITED HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT Dubai

United Hospitality Management (UHM) has appointed **GUILLERMO SALVATORI** as the Cluster General Manager for Mövenpick Jumeirah Lakes Towers and voco Bonnington JLT. A seasoned hospitality executive with more than 26 years of leadership experience, Salvatori is recognised for his strategic vision, ability to cultivate high-performing teams, and expertise in driving commercial growth in competitive markets. In his new role, he will provide strategic direction and leadership, ensuring that both the properties continue to strengthen their market positioning, enhance commercial performance, and foster a culture of innovation. Through his vision, Salvatore will empower teams to set new benchmarks in guest experience.



PARK HYATT Dubai

Park Hyatt Dubai has promoted **TEEGAN DECK** to the position of Director of Sales and Marketing. Joining the hotel just last year as Resort Director of Marketing and Communications, Deck has made an extraordinary impact in a short time, demonstrating outstanding leadership, strategic vision, and a deep understanding of the luxury hospitality market in the region. In her new role, Deck will lead the sales and marketing teams, focusing on driving revenue, elevating brand positioning further, and building impactful partnerships to enhance the property's already global reputation. Her vision includes expanding the hotel's market appeal while staying true to Park Hyatt Dubai's legacy of elegance and sophistication.



PARK HYATT Dubai

Park Hyatt Dubai promotes **CYNTHIA PORTELLI** as Director, Operations. Portelli has been an instrumental force in the success of the hotel's F&B division, achieving remarkable results throughout 2024. In her new role, she will now oversee the Rooms Division in addition to continuing her leadership in Food & Beverage, reinforcing Park Hyatt Dubai's commitment to delivering unparalleled guest experiences. Since joining Park Hyatt Dubai in 2023 as Director of Food & Beverage, Portelli has demonstrated exceptional leadership, creativity, and strategic vision. She has led numerous initiatives, elevating the hotel's culinary offerings, guest experiences, and revenue performance. Originally from France, Portelli began her hospitality career in Paris.



SUN SIYAM OLUVELI Maldives

Sun Siyam Resorts has appointed **FLORANTE ABUTON JR** as Assistant PR and Communications Manager at Sun Siyam Olhuveli. With over 11 years of experience in hospitality marketing and PR, he has held key roles with Jumeirah Hotels and Resorts, Nissan Middle East, Marriott International, Hilton Hotels, Emaar Hospitality, and Lapita Dubai Parks and Resorts. After a brief tenure in Seychelles with an international hotel chain, Abuton returns to the Maldives as Assistant PR and Communications Manager at Sun Siyam Olhuveli, ready to amplify the resort's global presence. Initially, he joined Sun Siyam Resorts at Sun Siyam Iru Fushi in 2022. Abuton's efforts supported sustainability and marine conservation programmes.



INTERCONTINENTAL ABU DHABI AND INTERCONTINENTAL RESIDENCES ABU DHABI Abu Dhabi

InterContinental Abu Dhabi and InterContinental Residences Abu Dhabi appointed **NIZA MARTINEZ** as the Cluster Assistant Director, Marketing. She will lead innovative marketing initiatives, combining creativity and data to elevate brand visibility and strengthen guest engagement. She will maximise digital ads, drive content production, and utilise PR to tell stories about the properties' history, heritage, and culture. A force in marketing, Martinez brings expertise in brand strategy, digital engagement, content production, and revenue-driven marketing.



ST REGIS AL MOUJ MUSCAT RESORT Oman

The St Regis Al Mouj Muscat Resort welcomes **WASSIM DAAGEH** as the General Manager. Daageh joins the resort from his previous role as the General Manager in Doha, Qatar. With over two decades of experience in the luxury hospitality sector, he is dedicated to elevating the resort's operations within the region's luxury landscape. Owned by the renowned Alfordan Group, the resort is a luxurious coastal haven nestled in the heart of Al Mouj Muscat. This property seamlessly blends Omani heritage with contemporary design, offering guests an experience of refined elegance and exceptional service. Daageh's career spans leadership positions across some of the world's renowned properties. He has overseen high-profile events—including the FIFA World Cup and Formula 1.



dnata TRAVEL GROUP Dubai

dnata Travel Group has appointed **AMAL MOHAMMED AHMED** as the Divisional VP, Global Operations, to support plans for regional and international growth from its UAE HQ and to lead the vertical as a centre of excellence, including continued innovations in customer service. Ahmed manages a team of 2,000 travel experts across dnata's Global Contact Centres in the UAE, UK, Serbia, Philippines, and India. Its teams provide customer service support to millions of travellers worldwide, and third-party companies, including global airlines. An Emirati national and experienced in customer service, Ahmed has been part of the Emirates Group for 20 years. Recently, she served as VP for the dnata's Global Contact Centre solutions.



dnata Travel Group has appointed **SÉBASTIEN DOUSSIN** as Senior Vice President, Global Travel Services & Destination Management, to ensure that ground, air, and other products are easily available and consumable at the best prices. The objective of the company is to streamline integration, allow partners to trade products even faster across its platforms, and grow regional footprint for the brands, including Arabian Adventures, Yalago, Destination Asia, and dnata Representation Services. The new Senior Vice President joined dnata in 2015 as the Group Purchasing Director and was responsible for the process of centralising the purchasing function for the dnata Travel Group, for a more seamless distribution of content across its multiple travel brands. This included the launch of the Yalago brand in the year 2017, which saw a revenue-generating business formed from the Group's central purchasing division for the first time.



ANDRÉS URIBE has been appointed by dnata Travel Group to the position of Senior Manager Business Support. He will serve as an internal, independent strategic advisor, leading Group projects, strategic planning, product solutions, sustainability, and business intelligence. The Group also represents the travel division of dnata, one of the largest air and travel services providers of the world. A part of the Emirates Group, the dnata Travel Group's history is rooted in Dubai and the growth of its pioneering travel industry and evolving to comprise more than 15 leading international travel brands with coverage across the world. Its international businesses cover all aspects of the travel industry from the local travel agencies to international travel consolidators, corporate travel, sports travel, destination management and attractions, airline representation services, and more.



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UAE : Z1-02, P.O. Box 9348, Saif Zone, Sharjah, UAE
Ph.: +971 6 5528954, Fax: +971 6 5528956
E-mail: uae@dpp.com

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