

Tourism Breaking News



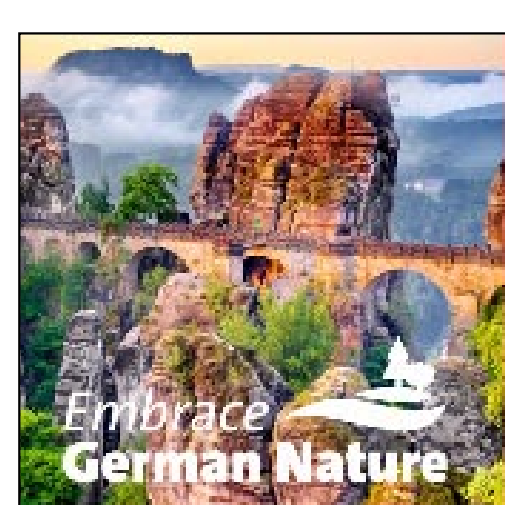
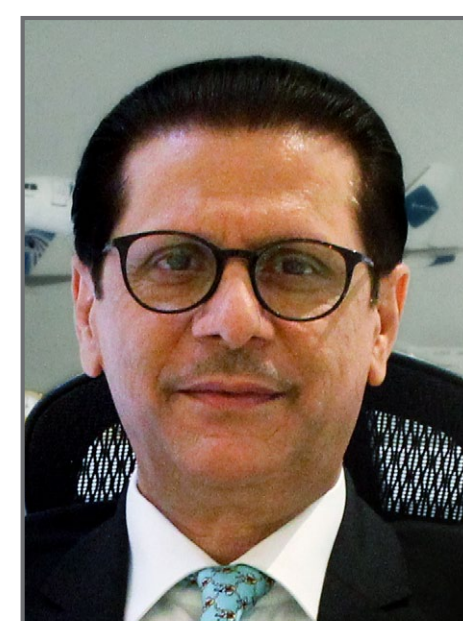
Qasr Al Watan, Abu Dhabi

Spike in global travel on Eid al-Adha

With countries opening borders after two years of hiatus, travellers across the globe are keen to explore new destinations. Festival season has added to the pent-up demand, with the past few days witnessing an increase in travel bookings for the upcoming Eid break. Our GCC line up of industry professionals share their thoughts.

Ireland, Turkey enjoy good market share from GCC

Nasir Jamal Khan – CEO – Al Naboodah Travel: This Eid everybody is enthusiastic and has plans to travel. Although air fares are high, yet airlines are doing well, hotels around the world are doing really good business as well. Speaking from UAE's perspective, there is a lot of business to hotel chains around the world. Visa free destinations have become more popular, whereas European destinations offering visa on arrival or visa free entry also find favour with GCC travellers. Ireland has picked up quite a lot from the European sector, whereas countries such as Rwanda, Georgia, Thailand and Kenya have also picked up. Turkey has become one of the most popular destinations for all.



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Turkey most popular destination for Qatar travellers

Ayman Al Qudwa, Manager–Falcon Travel: It is the first time after two years of lockdown, we are witnessing a huge demand for international travel, but for Qatar market we found that Turkey is number one destination. I used to say for outbound travel from Qatar, if you don't know where to go, visit Turkey. It is a destination that is diversified for leisure, culture, shopping, education and adventure, and I think the biggest challenge in selecting a destination for a traveller today is the visa arrangements and Turkey is one of the unique destinations where visa regulations allow travellers to select the destination easily, even if they are planning last minute trips.

Demand for air travel increases on Eid

Mamoun Hmedan, Chief Commercial Officer and MD, MENA and India, Wego: The demand for travel continues to see significant growth. With summer approaching, travellers began planning and booking their holidays, and we are witnessing an increase in bookings and demand for flights to and from the UAE. Travellers are also looking for new experiences and exploring places they have not visited before to make up for lost travel in the past two years. And they are ready to spend more on leisure trips than before. Flight and hotel searches from the UAE during the month of June reached about 3 million, an increase of 77% over the same period last year.



Screen tourism, a new trend for GCC travellers

Siobhán Naughton - Marketing & Trade Executive, Middle East & Asia - Tourism, Ireland: We expect to see a lot of GCC nationals travelling to Ireland this Eid in order to escape to a more temperate climate. Fresh air, stunning scenery and friendly locals will await them on their visit to Ireland. Tax free shopping will also be a big draw for locals from this market. Screen tourism also continues to be a big attraction for people from the GCC. The newly opened Game of Thrones studio tour in Northern Ireland is proving to be extremely popular with enthusiasts, who will get to experience the actual sets that were used during filming of the award winning series and even the Iron Throne!

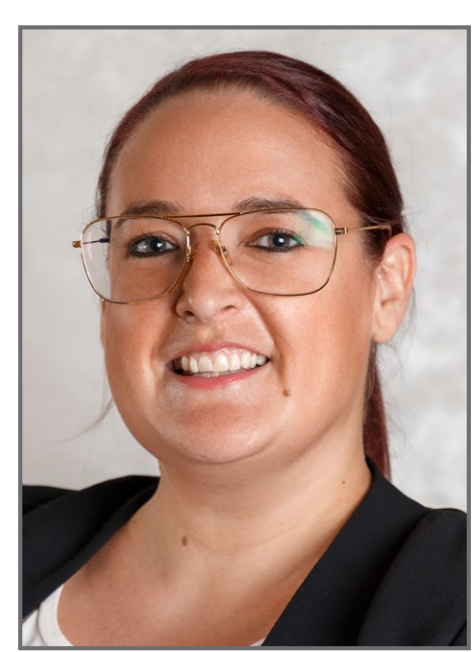
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Nature, culture prominent drivers to Germany

Yamina Sofo – Director Marketing – German National Tourist Office GCC: The GCC is a hugely important market for inbound travel to Germany, so taking notice of what residents are searching for is key. Having nature and culture as two of the prominent drivers is exciting given the abundance of relevant offerings that we have to offer, especially during this Eid holiday. From meandering lakes and breath-taking mountains, to traditional craftsmanship and Bavarian fare – Germany is the ideal place for explorers searching for an easily accessible destination with plenty to see and do.



Last minute bookings in hotels across the region

Caroline Thissen, Area Senior Director Sales & Revenue Optimization, ME & Africa, Radisson Hotel Group: At Radisson Hotel Group, we expect to see a surge in last-minute bookings to our hotels throughout the Middle East; both from domestic and regional travel. With Covid restrictions eased or removed in most destinations, there should not be many barriers to enter countries. The resorts, in particular, will attract locals and expats alike to take advantage of the extended weekend and school vacation. The average length of stay we are seeing is four days and guests are looking for great dining options and even half board or all-inclusive offers.

Longer lead times combining Eid, summer break

Chris Gregory-Pasha, Senior Sales Director, MEA, Sojern: This Eid al-Adha it is heartening to see that travellers are regaining travel confidence in the region. This is demonstrated by 31% of travel bookings and 27% of hotel searches being made up to 60 days ahead of the upcoming long weekend, a shift to a longer lead time versus 2021. With Egypt (36.04%) remaining the most popular destination for travellers searching for flights in 2022, followed by Saudi Arabia (10.04%), Turkey (9.63%), India (9.35%) and Jordan (4.27%), and the UAE (26%) coming out on top for hotel searches, we see that travellers are generally choosing regional trips over far flung destinations.

