

ABU DHABI RECORDED 13% RISE IN VISITORS



In 2012, Abu Dhabi made room for almost 2.4 million hotel guests, staying at its 136 hotels for a total of nearly 7 million (6,996, 724) guest nights. This is not only a 13% increase over the total tourists who came to Abu Dhabi in 2011 but it exceeds the Abu Dhabi Tourism & Culture Authority target of 2.3 million visitors despite the global economic recession.

Sheikh Sultan Bin Tahnoun Al Nahyan, the head of Abu Dhabi Tourism & Culture Authority or TCA Abu Dhabi for short, has announced that his nation has a more ambitious goal of 2.5 million guests in 2013.

Abu Dhabi's business and tourism industries are bringing in more visitors from Africa and Asia. Abu Dhabi has increased its air access via Etihad and the official airlines of the Seychelles. The city is also receiving more visitors from its neighbors. Traffic from Qatar increased by 24%, 29% more Omani visitors arrived in 2011 and the number of Saudis increased by 16%.

More visitors from India, China and the Philippines accounts for most of the 28% increase in traffic from Asia. While more Asians and Africans are coming to Abu Dhabi, the UK is still the greatest source of visitors, with over 140,000 hotel guests coming from the United Kingdom. India is the second greatest source of visitors, with 138,768 visitors coming from India in 2011. Germany is a distant third place, sending 96,802 guests to Abu Dhabi. However, the number of German visitors is 42% greater than the number who came in 2010.

Alitalia started offering service to Abu Dhabi in 2010, leading to 22% more guests from Italy over the prior year. Alitalia's service between Russia and Abu Dhabi increased the number of Russians visiting the nation by 40%.

In a bid to bring in international visitors, Abu Dhabi has strengthened its airline connections, now offering service to Washington D.C. and Sao Paulo, Brazil. This should bring in more visitors from North America and South America in 2013. This should buoy hotel occupancy rates, since U.S. and Canadian citizens stay an average of five and a half nights longer than visitors from other nations.

Abu Dhabi is also enjoying an resurgence in domestic tourism. Domestic tourists accounted for 888,241 of the guests the city's hotels hosted. This is an 8% increase over the number of locals staying there in the previous year.

Abu Dhabi recorded hotel revenues of \$1.261 billion in 2012. Food and beverage sales increased by 12% and totaled 491 million dollars.

Abu Dhabi's hotel occupancy rate was 65% in 2012. Though the average room rate fell 8% to \$123.30 per night, revenue per hotel room rose by 1%. This is despite a 16% increase in the number of hotel rooms available in Abu Dhabi.

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