

# MORE VARIATION IS THE KEY TO GULF TOURISM SUCCESS



The need for more variation in the area of Gulf tourism hasn't gone unnoticed, and efforts are underway. This is why in 2015 a Louvre branch will be opened in Abu Dhabi. A bid for the Expo 2020 is also in place by Dubai. Saudi Arabia tries to attract more private investments in Mecca and Qatar is going to host the 2022 FIFA World Cup.

Still, the Persian Gulf region needs more help to boost the tourism according to the consulting company Booz & Co. They stated that there aren't enough ongoing tourism options in these 6 nations that form the GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) area. **The company also reported that the marketing efforts are inadequate regarding what is offered for tourists.**

Expanding the overall capacity at various airports is in place in Abu Dhabi, Doha, and Dubai. This will allow the influx of additional passengers from Asia and Europe and other areas to stop along the way. This is the top priority for the 6 nation GCC. The consultants though still feel that there isn't enough being done. According to their report, the offer to tourists on a regular basis is insufficient and marketing isn't reaching the target audience - these are serious problems.

Booz & Co also believe that the lack of serious investors in the tourism niche means that it is hard to make positive changes that are going to successfully help the economy in these 6 nations. By implementing positive changes, tourists that do visit the areas will love what they see. They will be encouraged to come back and they will also tell others about their visit. If they are disappointed though they will never return and they won't be encouraging anyone else to visit either.

One issue that the consultants brought to light is that it is tough for travelers from many countries to successfully get visa into Saudi Arabia. Developing more products that can be offered to tourists as a package is also an area to concentrate on. In Saudi Arabia, many people come to see the various religious elements. Oman draws in tourists due to the beaches. There isn't much to offer though for tourists to see around Bahrain and Qatar.

**The positive side of it though is that many tourists see the areas as a safe haven** compared to other locations such as Egypt and the Middle East where there is plenty of insecurities right now.

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