

# QATAR'S TOURISM RESISTS THE BOYCOTT OF GCC COUNTRIES



In recent years, Qatar's tourism sector has been suffering greatly from the boycott of GCC countries. The tourism inflow decreased from 1.5 million in 2017 to not more than a million (945 thousand) in 2018. As a result, Qatar has decided to focus on tourism as one of its five priority sectors in order to introduce a diversified economy in the coming years.

So far, this strategy is bearing fruit. Qatar achieved great results in the Guest Experience Report which analyzed **more than 12 million online guest reviews which confirmed Qatar as one of the top Middle East tourism products.** Moreover, during the first quarter of this year, the country was visited by 10% more tourists than during the same period last year.

The country is introducing many measures to grow even further and focusing on some of their top destinations. Recently, the National Tourism Council of Qatar announced price cuts for the best five-star hotels and resorts across the country by up to 40% to attract tourists during the hot summer season.

Reduced prices will be valid from June 4 to August 16. Hotel owners are ready to offer discounts not only on rooms but also on visiting restaurants, spas, sports clubs located in hotels.

Qatar's tourism has a lot to offer not only in terms of luxury but also in the field of cultural heritage and art. The UNESCO World Heritage sites in the country include the Barzan Towers, the Al Koot and Al Wajbah forts or Al Zubarah. Some of the most prominent museums or galleries within the country are the Mathaf Arab Museum of Modern Art, the Al Markhiya Gallery or The Museum of Islamic Art.

And, not to forget, **Qatar is also preparing to host the next FIFA World Cup in 2022.** This event usually attracts numerous fans and tourists from all over the world and last year's tournament in Russia was a prime example of this.

The country is planning to build many modern stadiums for the event, looking to attract football enthusiasts with architecturally interesting structures. Several days ago, Qatar opened its first stadium out of the eight planned for the event - the Al Wakrah Stadium.

Thus, it seems Qatar have bounced back well from the boycott from countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council and do not intend to stop here, with improvements and more attractions planned for the future.

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