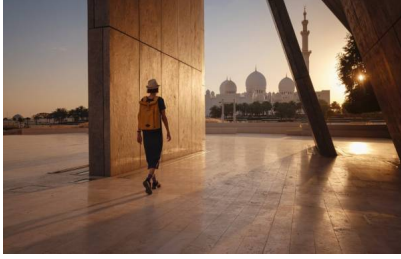


UAE TO LEAD THE GLOBAL TOURISM SCENE IN THE FIRST HALF OF 2023



During the first half of 2023, the UAE led the international tourism scene. It maintained its regional and global leadership as a destination and preferred place to visit, live and work.

The tourism industry in the country had a remarkable performance in the first half of this year. The results and figures showed the success of the UAE's plans and strategies to improve this crucial sector and achieve the objectives of the "National Tourism Strategy 2031." These goals include attracting tourism investments worth AED 100 billion and welcoming 40 million hotel guests to the country.

According to the Department of Culture and Tourism in Abu Dhabi, the emirate's hotels had 2.4 million guests during the first half of this year. This is a 34% increase over last year. Hotel revenues in the emirate exceeded AED 3 billion during the same period, a 26% increase from last year. The average hotel occupancy rate was 70%, and guests stayed 2.7 nights.

Abu Dhabi Airports reported a significant rise in passenger traffic at Abu Dhabi International Airport. Between January 1 and June 30, 2023, 10,258,653 passengers traveled through the airport, a 67% increase compared to the same period in 2022, when 6,158,376 passengers were recorded. The airport also received 67,835 flights during this time, an increase of 36% from the first half of 2022, when 49,919 flights were recorded.

According to Dubai Economy and Tourism, there has been a significant increase in international visitors to Dubai during the first half of 2023. The latest data shows there were 8.55 million international visitors, which is a 20% increase compared to last year. This number also surpasses the pre-pandemic number of 8.36 million international visitors in the first half of 2019. This impressive growth solidifies Dubai's position as a top destination and one of the most visited places in the world.

In the first half of 2023, many Dubai visitors came from Western Europe, making up 20% of the total international visitors. The GCC and MENA regions accounted for 28%, highlighting Dubai's popularity among visitors from neighboring markets. South Asia contributed 17% of total visitors, while Russia, the CIS, and Eastern Europe comprised 14%. North and South-East Asia contributed 8%, and the Americas, Africa, and Australia accounted for 7%, 4%, and 2%, respectively.

In the first half of 2023, Dubai's hospitality industry experienced significant growth across all indicators. Hotel room occupancy rates averaged 78%, among the highest globally, and increased by 2.2% compared to the same period in 2019. This growth was due to local and international investments in the sector, increasing the number of hotels in the emirate. As of the end of the year's first half, Dubai had 810 hotel establishments and 148,689 hotel rooms, a 13% increase in hotels, and a 26% increase in rooms compared to the same period in 2019, when there were 714 hotel establishments and 118,345 rooms.

The Emirate of Sharjah continues solidifying its status as a top choice for travel and business. In the

first half of 2023, Sharjah Airport saw over 7 million passengers, a rise of 24.4% compared to the previous year. Additionally, the airport managed more than 70,000 tons of cargo, and the volume of sea-air freight surpassed 6,000 tons.

In the first half of this year, over 46.9 thousand flights were recorded at Sharjah Airport, which is a 14 percent increase compared to the same period in 2022. This growth reflects the Sharjah Airport Authority's commitment to achieving its ambitious vision to become the region's preferred travel and air cargo destination. The airport is dedicated to providing passengers and cargo companies with an advanced and innovative environment, top-notch facilities, and the latest digital services.

The Sharjah Airport Authority has added six new flight destinations and three air cargo destinations to accommodate the increasing demand and improve the airport's operational capacity. The latest destinations include Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia, Ufa and Samara in Russia, Lar in Iran, Indore in India, and Bangkok in Thailand.

The Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Development Authority (RAKTDA) has reported impressive results for the first half of this year. The emirate recorded its highest number of visitors for the first six months, with 600,000 people coming to the region between January and June 2023. This represents a significant increase of 14.8% compared to the same period in 2022 and generated record tourism-related revenues. These figures reflect the success of RAKTDA's strategic investments, partnerships, and initiatives to boost tourism and set the stage for further growth in the coming years.

The demand for hotel rooms in the emirate has significantly risen, experiencing year-on-year growth of 33.6%. The emirate plans to double the number of rooms in the future.

It's important to mention that the airports in the country welcomed a total of 62.79 million passengers in the first half of this year, which shows a 46% growth compared to 43.02 million passengers in the same period last year, as per the recent data released by the General Authority of Civil Aviation. Moreover, there has been an increase in air traffic during the first half of this year, with 446704 flights, compared to 359.9 thousand flights in the first half of 2022.

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