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Winner of the "Most Influential Tourism Newspaper in the Arab World 2026" Award by AFUSU

Guggenheim Abu Dhabi to Welcome Visitors on December 11, with Admission Priced at AED 70

Pickalbatros Hotels to Participate in Antalya Tourism Fair to Attract More Turkish Travellers

$122 Billion in Tourism Projects Announced Worldwide Over Five Years as Doha Hosts Sustainable Investment Talks

Rose Rayhaan by Rotana Wins Best City Hotel and Best Hotel View at 2026 Haute Grandeur Global Awards



Pickalbatros Hotels to Participate in Antalya Tourism Fair to Attract More Turkish Travellers



Pickalbatros Laguna Vista Hotel - Sharm El Sheikh



Chairman Kamel Abou Ali highlights the importance of the Turkish market for Sharm El Sheikh and Hurghada resorts as the group seeks to expand partnerships with travel agencies and tour operators.

Antalya – Türkiye | Al Rehla

Pickalbatros Hotels & Resorts, owned by Egyptian businessman Kamel Abou Ali, has announced its participation in the Antalya International Tourism Fair 2026, taking place from October 26 to 28 in Türkiye.

The participation aims to strengthen the group's presence in the Turkish market and expand cooperation with travel agencies and tour operators.

The initiative forms part of the group's strategy to diversify its source markets for its resorts in Egypt and Morocco, with particular emphasis on Sharm El Sheikh and Hurghada, two of Egypt's major destinations attracting Turkish visitors.

Turkish Market a Key Priority

Kamel Abou Ali, Chairman of Pickalbatros Hotels & Resorts, emphasised the importance of the Turkish market to Egypt's tourism industry throughout the year, highlighting growing travel interest in Sharm El Sheikh and expanding air connectivity between Türkiye and Egypt.

He explained that participation in international tourism exhibitions provides an opportunity to engage with commercial partners and showcase the group's portfolio of resorts and hospitality services.

First Participation to Strengthen Tourism Partnerships

Mohamed Eid Soliman, Regional Marketing

Participation in international exhibitions is one of the Group's key tools for engaging with its business partners and showcasing its portfolio of resorts and hospitality services.

Kamel Abu Ali
Chairman of Pickalbatros Group



Pickalbatros Palace Resort - Sharm El Sheikh

Director of Pickalbatros Hotels & Resorts, said the group's first participation in the Antalya fair aims to strengthen relationships with Turkish tourism companies and explore new business opportunities.

He noted that travel facilitation measures for Turkish visitors and expanding airline services, including those operated by Pegasus Airlines and AJet, have contributed to the group's growing interest in the Turkish market.

Sharm El Sheikh Resorts Take Centre Stage

The group is focusing its promotional activities on its Sharm El Sheikh properties, including Laguna Vista in Nabq Bay, Royal Grand in the Hadaba area, and Pickalbatros Palace in the Montazah area.

These resorts offer all-inclusive accommodation and a range of recreational facilities, including water parks, catering particularly to families and travellers seeking beach holidays.

Industry Platform for Business Development

The Antalya International Tourism Fair brings together hotel companies, travel agencies, tour operators and tourism service providers, alongside a programme of professional discussions and business meetings.

The 2026 programme includes a dedicated session titled "Pickalbatros: A Hospitality Growth Story", highlighting the group's experience in developing and operating hotels and resorts.

The group has not yet announced any new commercial agreements resulting from its participation, with potential partnerships and business outcomes dependent on discussions during the event.



Participating in the Antalya exhibition for the first time aims to strengthen relations with Turkish tourism companies and explore opportunities for cooperation in the market.

Mohamed Eid Soliman
Regional Marketing Director of the Group

$122 Billion in Tourism Projects Announced Worldwide Over Five Years as Doha Hosts Sustainable Investment Talks



World Investment Forum brings together tourism leaders and global investors in Qatar, with 2,242 announced projects and dedicated discussions on hospitality, culture, and smart destinations

Doha – Qatar | Al Rehla

The ninth edition of the World Investment Forum opened in Doha on Sunday, October 25, 2026, bringing together government officials, investors, international institutions, and business leaders to discuss investment opportunities across key economic sectors, including tourism, hospitality, and cultural industries.

Organized by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in cooperation with the State of Qatar, the forum runs until October 27 at the Sheraton Grand Doha Resort & Convention Hotel under the theme "Investing in the Future."

2,242 Tourism Projects Announced Over Five Years

Tourism investment is a key focus of the forum, supported by figures published in its official programme showing that 2,242 greenfield foreign direct investment projects were announced in the global tourism sector over the past five years, representing a combined announced investment value of $122.1 billion.

These projects were associated with estimates of more than 295,000 potential jobs.

The figures represent investment announcements made over the five-year period, rather than new deals concluded at the Doha forum. They do not indicate that all projects have been implemented or that the projected jobs have already been created.



Sheikha Al-Nuwais
Secretary-General of the United Nations Tourism Organization

Global Leaders Discuss Sustainable Tourism Investment

The forum features a high-level session titled "Sustainable Investment in Tourism" on Sunday, October 25, organized in collaboration with UN Tourism.









The announced speakers include Shaikha Al Nowais, Secretary-General of UN Tourism, and Sherif Fathy, Egypt's Minister of Tourism and Antiquities, alongside senior officials, international experts, and private-sector representatives.

Discussions focus on mobilizing financing for tourism projects, strengthening connections between major investments and local businesses, and developing investment models that benefit destinations and host communities.

The programme also highlights emerging areas of tourism investment, including digital travel services, smart destinations, cultural and creative tourism, gastronomy, wellness, and nature-based experiences.

Culture and Hospitality Take Centre Stage

The forum continues on Monday, October 26, with sessions examining investment in the future of tourism and culture, including the economic role of heritage assets, hotels, and creative industries.

The discussions explore how tourism investment can contribute to local economic activity through partnerships with suppliers, small businesses, and cultural enterprises.

The forum also provides opportunities for dialogue between investment promotion agencies, government representatives, and international companies, although no specific commercial outcomes from these meetings have been confirmed.

Doha Hosts a Global Investment Dialogue

By hosting the World Investment Forum, Qatar brings together international organizations, investors, and policymakers for discussions on investment policies, financing mechanisms, and cross-border partnerships.

For the Arab tourism industry, the forum offers an opportunity to examine financing approaches for hotels, cultural destinations, and sustainable tourism projects, while exchanging expertise on integrating tourism development with local economies.



Sherif Fathy
Egyptian Minister of Tourism and Antiquities

At the time of publication, official information had not established the value of any new tourism investment agreements or financing contracts concluded during the current edition of the forum.



THROUGH THE TRAVEL LENS

Egypt... Its People Make the Difference

By:

Duaa Alajmi

Tourism Media Professional and Volunteer Work Ambassador

During my recent visit to Cairo, a simple experience reminded me of one of the reasons so many people feel connected to Egypt: the unique energy Egyptians bring to a place, even when it is somewhere familiar that you may have visited in other countries.

I visited an international café that I have been to in several countries, known for its lively atmosphere and entertaining performances. I knew the concept well and was familiar with the shows, but the experience in Cairo felt completely different. It wasn't the décor or the menu that made the difference. It was the people.

The staff joined in the performances with genuine enthusiasm, while the customers laughed, cheered, and shared in the excitement. Everyone seemed to be part of the experience rather than simply watching it. What I loved most was how natural and spontaneous it all felt. In fact, I enjoyed the atmosphere in Cairo even more than I had in the café's country of origin.

To me, this highlights one of Egypt's greatest strengths as a tourism destination, something that cannot easily be recreated elsewhere. Tourism is not just about historical landmarks, luxury hotels, beautiful beaches, or restaurants. It is also about how visitors are treated and how a place makes them feel.

Having visited Egypt many times, I have experienced this same spirit in different settings, from restaurants and cafés to local markets and tourist attractions. The quality of service may vary from one place to another, but the Egyptian sense of humor, warm hospitality, and natural ability to connect with people remain among the things I appreciate most about the country.

In tourism, international brands and experiences may look similar wherever you go, but it is the people who give each place its own personality.

That evening in Cairo reminded me of exactly that. The same café, the same familiar performances, yet the people made the entire experience feel different.

Sometimes, we return to a country not simply because we love its places, but because we love the way its people make us feel.



Rose Rayhaan by Rotana Wins Best City Hotel and Best Hotel View at 2026 Haute Grandeur Global Awards



Dubai - UAE | Al Rehla

Rose Rayhaan by Rotana, one of Dubai's most iconic hospitality landmarks, has been named Best City Hotel on a Global Level and Best Hotel View in the Middle East at the 2026 Haute Grandeur Global Awards. This is the hotel's strongest showing to date on the international stage.

International Recognition for Hospitality Excellence

"It is an incredible honour to see our hotel recognised on an international platform by Haute Grandeur," said Mamdouh Ali, General Manager of Rose Rayhaan by Rotana. "These awards reflect the tireless dedication of our entire team. I am privileged to work alongside passionate professionals who consistently deliver exceptional experiences to our guests and raise the standard of hospitality in the UAE. Together, we remain committed to innovation, sustainability and service excellence."

New Restaurant Opening and Upcoming Renovations

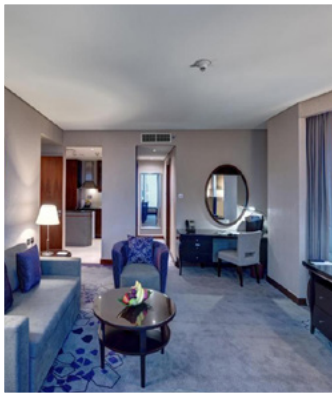
Looking ahead, Mamdouh Ali said the hotel expects occupancy to grow by 20% over the festive season compared with last year. "As we step into a promising new year, we will be announcing the opening of Kaia, our new specialty restaurant, along with a renovation of our meeting rooms and guest

These awards reflect the tireless dedication of our entire team. I am privileged to work alongside passionate professionals who consistently deliver exceptional experiences to our guests and raise the standard of hospitality in the UAE. Together, we remain committed to innovation, sustainability and service excellence.

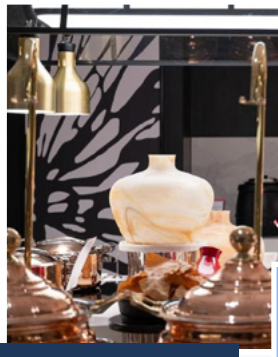
Mamdouh Ali, General Manager of Rose Rayhaan by Rotana











rooms," he said. "The refreshed spaces will offer a new experience to staycation guests and international travellers alike, all seeking Rotana's signature hospitality in Dubai. Guests can also look forward to a calendar of activations, offers and promotions across all our restaurants."

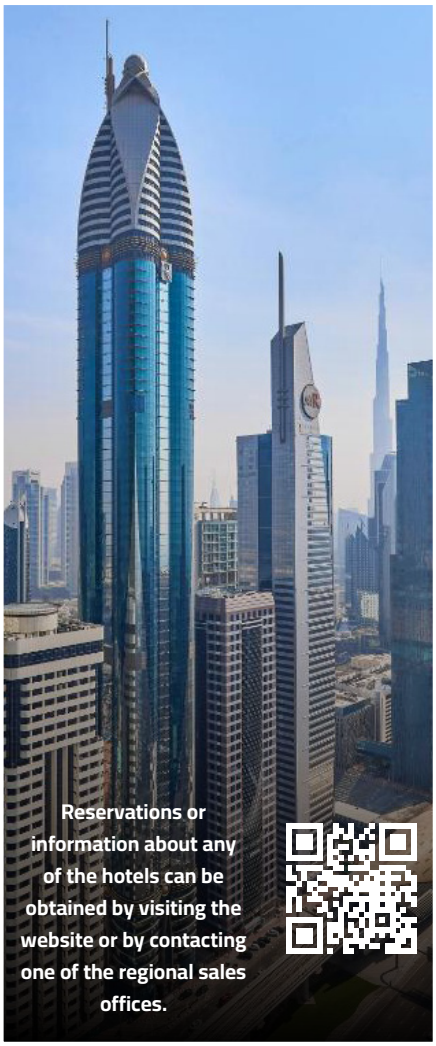
From the World's Tallest Hotel to Global Award Recognition

Having held the title of tallest hotel in the world from 2009 to 2012, Rose Rayhaan by Rotana remains a symbol of elevated living, architectural elegance and guest-centric luxury. These latest achievements reinforce its position as an industry benchmark and a beacon of excellence in the region.

About Rotana

Rotana currently manages a portfolio of over 100 properties throughout the Middle East, Africa and Turkey, with an aggressive expansion plan in place. Rotana has chosen to acknowledge how precious time is by making all time spent in their range of hotels 'Treasured Time'. This means Rotana has pledged to understand and meet the individual needs of all guests.

In so doing, Rotana has evolved its product brands to include, Rotana Hotels & Resorts, Centro Hotels by Rotana, Rayhaan Hotels & Resorts by Rotana, Edge by Rotana, Arjaan Hotel Apartments by Rotana and The Residences by Rotana. Treasured Time. The Rotana promise to you.



Reservations or information about any of the hotels can be obtained by visiting the website or by contacting one of the regional sales offices.

Before You Travel to Djerba: Your Guide to Visas, Airports, Accommodation and Getting Around the Tunisian Island

From entry requirements to choosing accommodation in Houmt Souk or Midoun, essential travel information for exploring the UNESCO World Heritage-listed island.

Djerba, Tunisia | Al Rehla

Tunisia's island of Djerba combines Mediterranean beaches, historic villages and traditional markets. Unlike destinations that can be explored entirely on foot, however, its attractions are spread across several areas, making accommodation location and transportation arrangements important considerations before traveling.

Since UNESCO inscribed the island's historic settlement pattern on its World Heritage List in 2023, Djerba has gained additional cultural significance alongside its established reputation as a Mediterranean beach destination.

Visa Requirements: Check Your Nationality First

Entry requirements for Tunisia vary depending on the traveler's nationality, passport type and intended length of stay.

According to Tunisia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, travelers who require a visa must contact the Tunisian consulate responsible for their place of residence.

Visa application documents include a passport valid for at least six months, proof of residence, and a hotel reservation or invitation.

Applications should be submitted well in advance, as the ministry indicates that processing requires at least 20 days. However, this does not mean that all nationalities require a visa.

Getting to the Island

Djerba–Zarzis International Airport, identified by the airport code DJE, is the island's main air gateway. It is located approximately nine kilometers from Houmt Souk.

The drive to the town center takes around 15 minutes, while reaching tourist areas near Midoun generally takes longer.

Taxis and pre-booked transfer services are available. Travelers are advised to confirm how fares will be calculated before beginning their journey.

Where to Stay

Houmt Souk is particularly suitable for visitors who want to be close to traditional markets, restaurants and everyday island life.

The tourist areas surrounding Midoun and Sidi Mahrez offer a wider selection of beachfront accommodation.

Erriadh village, meanwhile, appeals to travelers interested in cultural heritage, traditional architecture and smaller guesthouses.

Visitors should check their hotel's exact location on a map rather than relying solely on a Djerba address, as distances between different parts of the island can affect travel time and transportation costs.

Currency and Weather

Tunisia's official currency is the Tunisian dinar (TND).
Customs regulations prohibit bringing Tunisian dinar banknotes into or taking them out of the country. Travelers are therefore advised to exchange foreign currency through authorized providers within Tunisia and retain their exchange receipts.

Customs authorities also require travelers to declare foreign currency when its value reaches the equivalent of TND 20,000 or more.

October generally brings relatively mild weather, with average daytime highs of approximately 26°C and some possibility of rainfall.

These figures represent historical climate averages rather than forecasts for specific travel dates.

AlRehla Travel Tip
A visit to Djerba should extend beyond its beachfront resorts.
Set aside time to explore Houmt Souk, Erriadh village and the traditional pottery workshops of Guellala.
Before visiting religious and historical landmarks, check their opening hours and any applicable visitor requirements.






GALERIE FATMA



After 41 Years, Hail Opens Tay Hotel Under Radisson's Management



The 152-room, suite, and villa property expands hospitality capacity in northern Saudi Arabia, marking the completion of a long-delayed project launched in 1985

Hail – Saudi Arabia | Al Rehla

After a journey spanning more than four decades, Saudi Arabia's Hail region has officially welcomed the opening of Tay Hotel, operated and managed by the international Radisson Hotel Group, bringing a long-delayed hospitality development into operation and adding new accommodation capacity to a destination celebrated for its cultural heritage and natural landscapes.

Prince Abdulaziz bin Saad bin Abdulaziz, Governor of Hail Region, inaugurated the hotel on Saturday, October 24, 2026, in the presence of Deputy Governor's Office representative Ali bin Salem Al Amer, Hotel Chairman Waleed bin Ali Al Jumai'ah, and several officials and business leaders.

A Project Dating Back to 1985

The hotel's development began in 1985 but subsequently encountered prolonged delays, with various efforts undertaken over the years to address outstanding issues and complete the property.

In 2004, the Higher Authority for the Development of Hail Region was instructed to examine the circumstances surrounding Tay Company and its stalled project, with the aim of safeguarding the rights of founders and shareholders while identifying ways to bring the development into productive use.

Radisson Hotel Group announced an agreement to operate a hotel in Hail in May 2024, as part of its expansion into Saudi cities beyond the Kingdom's primary tourism destinations.

The October 2026 inauguration marks the project's transition from decades of delays to its official opening.

152 Accommodation Units and Integrated Facilities

The hotel comprises 152 rooms, suites, and villas, alongside restaurants, a swimming pool, a wellness centre, and facilities for meetings and special occasions.

During the inauguration ceremony, the Governor of Hail unveiled a commemorative plaque and toured the











hotel to review its facilities and services.

Waleed Al Jumai'ah, Chairman of the hotel, highlighted the support provided to development sectors across Saudi Arabia, while Prince Abdulaziz emphasized the continued implementation of major projects that build on Hail's economic and human resources.

Strengthening Hospitality in a Heritage Destination

The property is particularly relevant to Hail's tourism landscape, which includes the UNESCO-listed rock art sites of Jubbah and Shuwaymis, as well as the Aja and Salma mountains and numerous locations associated with the region's history and cultural identity.

The opening introduces an additional option for accommodation, meetings, and events, combining local ownership involvement with the operational expertise of an international hospitality group.

However, the hotel's measurable contribution to visitor activity and tourism expenditure will depend on operational data, including occupancy levels and revenues following its opening.

Neither the project's total investment value nor its commercial performance figures were disclosed during the inauguration ceremony.

Omani Shuwa: A Traditional Dish Cooked Underground for Two Days, Preserving the Culinary Heritage of Eid

From marinating meat in local spices to slow-cooking it in traditional underground ovens, a culinary experience that reflects Oman's social heritage and distinctive food culture.



Muscat, Sultanate of Oman | Al Rehla

In Omani cuisine, food preparation goes far beyond flavor. It is deeply connected to social traditions that bring families and neighbors together. Among the dishes that best embody this connection is Omani Shuwa, a traditional specialty that requires hours of preparation and slow cooking in underground ovens.

Shuwa is one of Oman's most celebrated heritage dishes, particularly associated with Eid celebrations and family gatherings, when its preparation becomes a communal activity involving different generations.

From Local Spices to the Underground Oven

Preparation begins by marinating pieces of lamb or goat meat, and occasionally other types of meat, in a blend of traditional spices.

Recipes vary between regions and families, but the seasoning may include pepper, cumin, coriander, garlic and other ingredients that give the dish its distinctive flavor.

Once marinated, the meat is wrapped in banana leaves or palm fronds, then placed in specially prepared cooking bags before being lowered into an underground oven known locally as a tannour.

The oven is tightly sealed to retain heat, allowing the meat to cook slowly. Depending on the traditional method and the size of the meat portions, the process can take up to 48 hours.



A Meal That Brings Families Together

The Shuwa experience does not end when the meat is removed from the underground oven.

It is typically served with seasoned rice or saffron rice, sometimes accompanied by local salads and sauces.

What makes the dish particularly distinctive is its communal preparation. In some communities, families share traditional underground ovens, with each household preparing and seasoning its own meat before cooking.

This collective tradition gives Shuwa a significance that extends beyond a festive meal, making it part of the social memory associated with Eid celebrations.

From Family Kitchens to Hospitality Experiences

Shuwa is no longer enjoyed exclusively during family celebrations. Some restaurants and hotels now feature it on their menus as part of their traditional Omani culinary offerings.

In Jebel Akhdar, the Oman Observer documented a resort dining experience featuring Shuwa prepared using modern cooking techniques while preserving elements of the original recipe, including traditional seasoning and wrapping the meat in banana leaves.

Although these adaptations differ from communal cooking in underground ovens, they allow visitors to discover the dish's distinctive flavors beyond family gatherings.

Taste of the Destination

Omani Shuwa represents a form of culinary heritage that brings together traditional craftsmanship, social customs and hospitality.

Its tourism value lies not simply in serving a traditional dish at a restaurant, but in the stories, customs and community traditions behind its preparation.

Its introduction into selected hospitality establishments also demonstrates how local cuisine can become an integral part of the visitor experience, while highlighting the importance of preserving traditional cooking knowledge and techniques within local communities.



Guggenheim Abu Dhabi to Welcome Visitors on December 11, with Admission Priced at AED 70

The world's largest Guggenheim museum will bring together contemporary art and extraordinary architecture on Saadiyat Island, with an inaugural exhibition celebrating Frank Gehry's creative vision.

Abu Dhabi- UAE | Al Rehla

Abu Dhabi is preparing to open Guggenheim Abu Dhabi to the public on December 11, 2026, adding one of the world's most significant modern and contemporary art institutions to the Saadiyat Cultural District. The museum will offer visitors a cultural experience that brings together art, architecture and design.

The Department of Culture and Tourism – Abu Dhabi announced the opening date in July, before revealing further details in October about the museum's architectural design and an inaugural programme featuring an exhibition dedicated to the late world-renowned architect Frank Gehry.

An Architectural Landmark Featuring Ten Towering Cones

Designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architect Frank Gehry, the museum features ten distinctive cone-shaped structures reaching heights of up to 88 metres. These architectural elements are designed to provide shade and support natural ventilation, responding to Abu Dhabi's climate.

The building includes 11,600 square metres of indoor exhibition galleries and 23,000 square metres of outdoor exhibition spaces.



The museum's design draws inspiration from Abu Dhabi's natural landscape, climate, coastline and traditions, creating a space that brings together artists and audiences from the UAE, the region and around the world.

Mohamed Khalifa Al Mubarak
Chairman of the Department of Culture and Tourism – Abu Dhabi



Beyond its galleries, the design incorporates shaded courtyards, terraced outdoor areas and gathering spaces, making the movement between the museum's different sections and Saadiyat Island's coastal surroundings an integral part of the visitor experience.

Inaugural Exhibition Explores Frank Gehry's Vision

The opening programme will feature an exhibition dedicated to Frank Gehry, tracing the development of his architectural vision for the museum through original drawings, handmade preliminary models and archival materials documenting the design process.

The exhibition will offer visitors insight into the relationship between architecture and the local environment, highlighting how Gehry drew inspiration from the museum's coastal setting and Abu Dhabi's climate to shape its interior and exterior spaces.

Modern and Contemporary Art from Around the World

The museum will present a collection of modern and contemporary artworks dating from the 1960s to the present day, encompassing painting, sculpture, photography, installations, moving images and digital media.

Particular attention will be given to artistic practices from West Asia, North Africa and South Asia, alongside works from other continents, reflecting the museum's commitment to presenting diverse perspectives on the history of modern and contemporary art.

Culture at the Heart of Abu Dhabi's Identity

Mohamed Khalifa Al Mubarak, Chairman of the Department of Culture and Tourism – Abu Dhabi, emphasised that culture plays a fundamental role in shaping the emirate's identity and strengthening its connections with the wider world.

In an official statement issued in October, he explained that the museum's design draws inspiration from Abu Dhabi's natural environment, climate, coastline and traditions, creating a space that brings together artists and audiences from the UAE, the region and around the world.

Saadiyat Island: A Journey Through World-Class Museums

Guggenheim Abu Dhabi is located within the Saadiyat Cultural District, alongside major cultural institutions including Louvre Abu Dhabi, Zayed National Museum and the Natural History Museum Abu Dhabi.

This concentration of cultural landmarks allows visitors to plan an immersive journey through modern and contemporary art, history, heritage and natural history, all within a single destination featuring a diverse collection of museums and cultural attractions.



Oman's North Al Sharqiyah Welcomes Winter Season with 111 Tourism Establishments and New Development Projects

A total of 1,363 rooms available for visitors, more than 40 tourist signs installed, and ongoing projects to develop wadis, historic forts and adventure tourism facilities.

Ibra – Sultanate of Oman | Al Rehla

Oman's North Al Sharqiyah Governorate has stepped up preparations for the 2026–2027 winter tourism season, with the number of tourism accommodation establishments reaching 111, offering approximately 1,363 rooms.

According to figures released by the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism on October 25, 2026, preparations include improved visitor facilities, new signage and ongoing projects to develop natural and heritage attractions.

Sumayyah bint Hamad Al Busaidiyah, Director of the Heritage and Tourism Department in the governorate, said the preparations involve cooperation between government authorities and the private sector to improve tourism infrastructure and accommodation services.

11 Additional Tourism Establishments
The latest figures show that the number of accommodation establishments has increased from 100 during the previous season to 111, while room capacity has risen from 1,298 to 1,363.

Accommodation options range from hotels and resorts to guesthouses, heritage lodges and desert camps, particularly in Bidiyah and Al Qabil, which attract camping and adventure enthusiasts.

From Bidiyah's Golden Dunes to Wadi Bani Khalid

North Al Sharqiyah combines diverse natural landscapes with cultural attractions, including the golden dunes of Sharqiyah Sands, where visitors can experience desert camping and stargazing.

Wadi Bani Khalid is known for its natural pools, Muqal Cave and Hawer waterfalls, while Ibra preserves historical landmarks such as its traditional Wednesday Market and the heritage villages of Al Minzafah and Al Qanatir.

Together, these destinations offer experiences that combine nature, traditional markets and historic Omani architecture.









Tourism Projects at Different Stages of Completion

The Ministry of Heritage and Tourism has completed the installation of more than 40 directional and tourist information signs across the governorate.

The Aamid Al Dhaher development project in Bidiyah has reached 100% completion, while the Aamid Azz project in Al Qabil is 80% complete. Construction of a visitor facility in Al Qaryah has reached 50%.

Restoration work continues at Al Muntarib and Al Wasil forts, alongside projects to develop natural pools with facilities including a restaurant, bridges and a zipline.

Improvements to Wadi Hawer also include new visitor services and upgraded walking trails.

These projects remain at different stages of implementation, and not all planned facilities are operational.

Al Rehla Perspective | A Journey Through Desert, Oases and Heritage

North Al Sharqiyah allows travellers to combine overnight stays at desert camps in Bidiyah with visits to Wadi Bani Khalid's natural pools and the historic landmarks of Ibra.

Visitors are advised to check road conditions and the availability of facilities before travelling, seek experienced guides for desert activities and wadi exploration, and avoid entering watercourses during heavy rainfall or flash-flood conditions.

Preparations include enhancing tourist destinations, improving accommodation services, and developing facilities in cooperation with the private sector and .government entities

Sumaya bint Hamad Al Busaidi
Director of the Heritage and Tourism Department in the Governorate



Hyatt Debuts Unscripted Brand in Thailand with 62-Room Bangkok Riverside Hotel

Formerly operating as The StandardX, the property has been repositioned under a new brand, expanding Hyatt's presence in Thailand to 16 hotels.

Bangkok – Thailand | Al Rehla

Hyatt Hotels Corporation announced the opening of QURO Bangkok Riverside under its Unscripted by Hyatt brand on October 20, 2026, marking the brand's debut in Thailand through the repositioning of an existing 62-room hotel in Bangkok's historic Bang Lamphu district.

The property previously operated as The StandardX, Bangkok Phra Arthit, before transitioning to the new brand, which focuses on independently styled hotels and experiences connected to local culture.

A Stay Inspired by Art and Local Culture

Located on Phra Arthit Road along the Chao Phraya River, near the pier of the same name, the hotel provides convenient access to Bangkok's historic neighbourhoods.

Its 62 rooms feature private balconies and designs inspired by the surrounding district, with selected rooms offering views of the river and nearby areas.

Facilities include art exhibition spaces, a curated retail store, a coffee roastery, a rooftop swimming pool and QURO Point of View, a riverside rooftop bar.

The hotel's Silpa Riverside restaurant serves dishes inspired by Thai cuisine.

Close to the Grand Palace and Historic Temples

The hotel's location provides access to several of Bangkok's major attractions, including Khao San Road, the National Museum, the Grand Palace, Wat Pho and Wat Arun.

Sunshine Jimjirarot, the hotel's General Manager, explained that the QURO concept draws inspiration from the word "curate", combining art, local experiences and understated service within a hospitality identity connected to Bangkok's character.

Al Rehla Perspective | A New Brand for an Existing Hotel

The project illustrates how existing hotels can be repositioned under international brands without requiring entirely new developments.

With its transition to Unscripted by Hyatt, the property joins Hyatt's portfolio of 16 hotels in Thailand, while eligible guests can access World of Hyatt loyalty benefits under the programme's terms.

The opening does not represent a confirmed increase in Bangkok's hotel room supply, as the property was already operating under a different brand.



Two Scottish Museums Conceal Egyptian Mummies, Sparking Debate Over Human Remains

Hunterian covers a mummy displayed for over 200 years, while Kelvingrove removes the remains of an Egyptian priest amid debate over respect for the dead and museums' educational role.

Glasgow – United Kingdom | Al Rehla

Decisions by two museums in Glasgow, Scotland, concerning the display of ancient Egyptian mummies have sparked debate over the balance between respecting human remains and preserving museums' educational role.

The controversy resurfaced following the removal of Egyptian remains from public display at Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, alongside renewed attention to an earlier decision by the Hunterian Museum.

A Mummy Concealed After Two Centuries

In August 2025, the Hunterian Museum at the University of Glasgow covered the mummy of the Egyptian woman Shep-en-Hor with Tyvek, a specialised preservation material, after more than 200 years on public display.

The decision followed consultations with Egyptology specialists as part of an ethical review of human remains exhibitions. The coffin and accompanying archaeological information remain accessible to visitors.

Kelvingrove Removes Egyptian Priest's Remains

In a development reported in October 2026, Kelvingrove removed the remains of an Egyptian priest named Nakht, along with several mummified body parts, including a hand discovered in Egypt's Valley of the Kings, a head and a foot.

Museum officials said the decision reflected respect for the dignity of the deceased and formed part of a review of policies governing the display of human remains.

Ethics Versus Education

The decisions have drawn criticism from historians who argue that concealing mummies limits opportunities for visitors to learn directly from authentic archaeological remains.

Supporters, however, believe displaying human remains raises ethical questions about the privacy and dignity of the dead and the circumstances under which artefacts entered European museums.

The debate follows the International Council of Museums' (ICOM) adoption of a revised Code of Ethics in June 2026, emphasising respect for human remains without imposing a blanket ban on their public display.

What Does This Mean for Visitors?

Shep-en-Hor's mummy remains inside its coffin at the Hunterian Museum but is no longer visible, while selected Egyptian remains have been removed from Kelvingrove's galleries.

Visitors interested in Egyptian archaeology are advised to check museums' current exhibition information before visiting, as policies on displaying human remains vary across British institutions.



Air Algérie Expands Network with Five Destinations Across Africa and Asia, Adding Shanghai as Third Chinese City

New flight schedule begins on October 25, connecting Algiers with Conakry, Brazzaville, Lagos and Shanghai, alongside the resumption of services to Tripoli.

Algiers – Algeria | Al Rehla

Air Algérie Group announced on October 24, 2026, the launch schedule for five international routes connecting Algeria with four African cities and Shanghai, China. Operations are scheduled to begin on October 25 and continue through October 28, expanding the airline's international network and offering additional travel options between Algeria, Africa and Asia.

Five Destinations in Four Days

The airline scheduled the Algiers–Conakry route to begin on October 25, followed by services to Brazzaville, Lagos and Shanghai on October 26. Flights to Tripoli, Libya's capital, are set to resume on October 28.

The expansion coincides with the start of the 2026–2027 winter aviation season and forms part of the carrier's strategy to diversify its destinations and strengthen its international presence.

Shanghai Becomes Third Chinese Destination

Shanghai joins Beijing and Guangzhou as Air Algérie's third destination in China.

The airline previously announced plans to operate the new route using Airbus A330-900neo aircraft, providing travellers with an additional connection to one of Asia's leading commercial and economic centres.

Stronger African Connectivity and Return to Libya

The expansion includes three African destinations—Conakry, Brazzaville and Lagos—alongside the resumption of air services to Tripoli.

These routes serve business travel, trade and personal visits, while adding new connections to Algiers International Airport's network.

Al Rehla Perspective | Could Algeria Become a Connecting Hub Between Africa and Asia?

The new routes create opportunities to develop transit traffic through Algeria, particularly for passengers travelling between African cities and China. However, realising this potential depends on coordinated flight schedules, shorter connection times, competitive fares and convenient transit services. Launching new destinations alone does not establish Algeria as a regional aviation hub. Such a position would need to be supported by actual transit passenger figures and reliable operational performance.

For travellers, checking flight schedules, possible stopovers and connection times remains essential before booking, particularly during the initial phase of the new services.



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Jordan Launches Winter Aviation Season with Operating Permits for 34 Airlines

The 2026–2027 winter schedule is expected to include around 960 passenger flights and 20 cargo flights per week, connecting Jordan with markets across the Gulf, Europe, Asia and North America.

Amman – Jordan | Al Rehla

Jordan launched its 2026–2027 winter aviation season on Sunday, October 25, 2026, after granting scheduled operating permits to 34 domestic and international airlines. The Civil Aviation Regulatory Commission (CARC) expects the winter schedule to include approximately 960 passenger flights and 20 cargo flights per week.

According to the commission, operating permits were issued to 32 foreign airlines and two national carriers, authorising scheduled services to and from the Kingdom as part of efforts to regulate air transport operations and maintain connectivity with regional and international markets.

The announced flight figures represent projected weekly operations for the winter season rather than the number of flights already operated.

Gulf and European Markets Lead International Connectivity

Jordan's winter aviation network covers all six Gulf Cooperation Council countries: Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain and Oman.

Other destinations include Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Yemen, Syria and Türkiye, alongside several European markets, including the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Greece, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Austria and Sweden.

The network also extends to the United States, Canada, India, Thailand, Russia, Uzbekistan and several African markets.

The official announcement did not specify the number of flights allocated to each destination, the airlines operating individual routes or whether particular services represent additions compared with the previous winter season.

73 Airlines Granted Overflight Permits

In addition to scheduled passenger operations, CARC granted 73 airlines permits for regular overflights through Jordanian airspace during the winter season.

Overflight permits differ from operating permits for services to and from Jordanian airports, as they authorise airlines to use the Kingdom's airspace without necessarily landing at its airports.

Meanwhile, the announced cargo network includes Egypt, Türkiye, the Netherlands, the UAE, Pakistan, Libya and Lebanon, supporting international air freight and logistics connections.



Riyadh Airport Resumes Operations at Two Terminals After Two Weeks of Disruptions

Terminal 1 designated for domestic flights and Terminal 2 for international services operated by Saudi carriers from October 25, as passengers are urged to verify bookings before travelling

Riyadh – Saudi Arabia | Al Rehla

King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh has announced the resumption of operations at Terminals 1 and 2 from Sunday, October 25, 2026, marking a significant step towards restoring flight services following approximately two weeks of disruptions affecting air travel to and from the Saudi capital.

The announcement was made in a statement issued by the airport management on Saturday evening, October 24, outlining revised terminal arrangements and emphasizing the importance of passengers checking their flight status directly with their airlines before heading to the airport.

New Terminal Arrangements for Domestic and International Flights

Under the announced arrangements, Terminal 1 has been designated for domestic flights, while Terminal 2 will handle international flights operated by Saudi national airlines.

The revised allocation establishes the operating arrangements for the two terminals but does not necessarily indicate that all international flights have resumed or that foreign airlines have returned to their normal schedules.

The airport's announcement did not include a comprehensive list of resumed services or a confirmed timetable for the full restoration of operations.

Resumption Follows Operational Disruptions

The decision follows the suspension of airport operations earlier in October after attacks targeting the Saudi capital and its aviation facilities disrupted air transport services.

Some domestic services had resumed on a limited basis before the latest announcement, while several airlines continued adjusting their schedules and suspending selected flights in response to security developments.

The reopening of the two terminals also comes amid continuing security warnings, making official airport announcements and airline updates particularly important for travellers.

What Should Passengers Do?

King Khalid International Airport has urged passengers holding confirmed reservations to contact their airlines before travelling to verify their booking status, flight details, and designated departure terminal.

This advice is particularly important for international travellers, given the different arrangements affecting Saudi carriers and foreign airlines.

Passengers should not assume that the reopening of Terminals 1 and 2 means every airline has resumed its regular operations.



Air Astana Launches Direct Flights to Salalah, with Both Inaugural Services Fully Booked

New weekly routes from Almaty and Astana connect Kazakhstan with Oman's Dhofar region, with 140 passengers aboard the inaugural flight from the capital

Salalah – Sultanate of Oman | Al Rehla

Oman's Dhofar Governorate has strengthened its air connectivity with Central Asia following the launch of direct Air Astana flights to Salalah International Airport from the Kazakh cities of Almaty and Astana on October 23 and 24, 2026.

The new services recorded a strong start, with Kazakhstan's Ministry of Transport confirming that both inaugural flights operated at full passenger capacity.

According to the ministry, the inaugural service from Astana carried 140 passengers, while the first flight from Almaty, which arrived a day earlier, also recorded full occupancy.

Two Weekly Flights to Dhofar

Air Astana operates one weekly flight from Almaty on Fridays and another from Astana on Saturdays, using Airbus A320 aircraft.

Oman's Civil Aviation Authority approved the services under a flight programme scheduled to continue until the end of December 2026.

The new routes establish direct connections between the two Kazakh cities and Salalah, complementing the existing Almaty–Muscat service operated by SalamAir.

Strengthening Aviation Cooperation

The launch follows the signing of an air services agreement between Oman and Kazakhstan on October 6, 2026, establishing a regulatory framework for expanding air connectivity between the two countries.

The inaugural flight reception in Salalah was attended by Dr. Salim bin Abdullah Al Shanfari, Honorary Consul and Chairman of the Oman–Kazakhstan Business Council, alongside representatives of relevant authorities and tourism companies.

A New Market for Dhofar's Hospitality Industry

The introduction of direct flights represents a commercial development for Dhofar's tourism and hospitality sector, providing travellers from two major Kazakh cities with direct access to an Omani destination known for its beaches, mountains, natural landscapes, and cultural heritage.

The new connectivity also allows hotels, resorts, and tour operators to market accommodation packages and tourism experiences to Kazakh travellers without requiring a connecting flight through another city.

Although both inaugural services achieved full passenger loads, assessing their wider economic impact will require subsequent data on bookings, visitor arrivals, overnight stays, and tourism expenditure.

These operational and financial indicators have not yet been disclosed.



Royal Air Maroc Renews Partnership with Senegal's Touba to Facilitate Travel for Grand Magal Pilgrims

Renewed agreement supports international travel for Senegalese communities abroad and strengthens air connectivity with one of West Africa's largest religious gatherings

Touba – Senegal | Al Rehla

Royal Air Maroc has renewed its partnership agreement with the Senegalese city of Touba, aiming to facilitate travel for members of the Mouride brotherhood, particularly those living abroad, to attend major religious gatherings, most notably the Grand Magal of Touba, one of West Africa's most significant annual religious events.

The agreement was signed in Touba on Thursday, October 22, 2026, in the presence of Mayor Abdou Lahad Ka, Royal Air Maroc's Chief Commercial Officer Ilham Kazzini, Africa Sales Director Nora Daoudi, and the airline's Regional Director in Senegal, Mounaim El Kebbaj.

Representatives of the Mouride religious leadership, including Serigne Kosso Mbacké and Serigne Khadim Mbacké, also attended the ceremony.

Connecting the Senegalese Diaspora with Religious Traditions

The agreement continues cooperation between Royal Air Maroc and Touba to support travel associated with major religious gatherings, drawing on the airline's international route network.

Ilham Kazzini emphasized that renewing the partnership reflects the long-standing relationship Royal Air Maroc has developed with the Mouride brotherhood, its religious leaders, and followers in Senegal and abroad.

She also highlighted the role of the airline's international network in helping members of the Senegalese diaspora return home and participate in important religious occasions.

Building on an Established Partnership

The October agreement extends earlier cooperation, including an agreement signed in May 2024 to provide dedicated travel services and arrangements for members of the Mouride community.

The previous agreement included flight-related arrangements, preferential offers, and additional services.

However, the latest renewal announcement did not specify new fares, additional flights, or dedicated seat allocations.

Touba: A Spiritual Centre Attracting Religious Visitors

Touba is the spiritual centre of the Mouride brotherhood, founded by Sheikh Ahmadou Bamba in the late nineteenth century.

The city hosts the annual Grand Magal, commemorating the exile of the brotherhood's founder during the colonial period.

The gathering attracts large numbers of participants from across Senegal and Senegalese communities living abroad, making it a major occasion for religious travel in West Africa.

The tourism and economic significance of the renewed agreement lies in continued cooperation between an international airline and a religious destination that experiences substantial seasonal travel demand.

The partnership supports connectivity between overseas communities and their cultural and religious heritage while reinforcing the role of air transport in facilitating religious tourism.

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