

UAE tourism industry booms in first half

Hotels in Abu Dhabi welcomed 2.25 million guests, up 7% from January to June 2016. Dubai saw over 8 million visitors, up 10.6% year-on-year.

From the Newsroom*

Abu Dhabi – The emirates of Abu Dhabi and Dubai saw tourism numbers surge in the first half of the year. *Emirates News Agency (WAM)* reported this Monday (31) that Abu Dhabi hotels welcomed 2.25 million guests in H1 2017, up 7% from H1 2016.

In June alone, arrivals in the emirate’s 165 hotel and hotel apartments increased by 30% year-on-year. *WAM* said the performance was driven by an “exceptional Eid Al Fitr period.” Eid Al Fitr is the holiday that marks the end of Ramadan on the Islamic calendar, which is Moon-based, and therefore dates fall on different Gregorian-calendar days each year.

“Eid Al Fitr has been a springboard for these figures as Abu Dhabi welcomed record-breaking numbers of visitors, with many of our leading hotels achieving near full occupancy with tourists from across the world choosing Abu Dhabi as the place to spend their holiday,” said the director-general of the Abu Dhabi Tourism and Culture Authority, Saif Saeed Gobash, according to *WAM*.

Gobash also said the summer season is well underway, and tourist inflows are expected to remain strong in August, with attractions including theater, music concerts, and retail and hospitality promotions. Last year, Abu Dhabi had a record-high 4.4 million hotel guests, and is expecting to exceed – or at least match – that number this year.

Dubai welcomed 8.06 million tourists in H1, up 10.6% from H1 2016, *WAM* reported on Sunday (30), quoting the emirate’s Department of Tourism and Commerce

Press Release



Eid Al Fitr fueled tourist numbers in June

WAM



Free visas had a positive impact

Marketing.

WAM also said the free visas issued on arrival to Chinese and Russian travelers led to a significant increase in numbers from those countries. Brazil recently entered into a visa exemption agreement with the UAE, but the deal is not effective as it pends approval from Congress.

By 2020, when it will host Expo 2020, Dubai is expecting to see 20 million tourists.

***Translated by Gabriel Pomerancblum**

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