

Dubai's successful tourism recovery sees city welcoming 6.17 million international visitors from January to May 2022

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Dubai's successful tourism rebound continues to inspire global tourism recovery with the city welcoming 6.17 million international overnight visitors from January to May 2022, a 197 per cent year-on-year (YoY) increase from the same five-month period in 2021, which saw the destination attracting just over two million international travellers.

The latest tourism data was revealed by Dubai's Department of Economy and Tourism (DET) at its first 'City Briefing' for 2022, a bi-annual event that provides an in-depth industry outlook to stakeholders and partners, and discusses future strategies to further reinforce the city's position as a global hub for business, investment, talent and tourism. The event was attended by more than 1,200 key executives from across the tourism ecosystem including aviation, travel, hospitality and retail sectors.

His Excellency Helal Saeed Almarri, Director General, Dubai's Department of Economy and Tourism (DET) commented: "The remarkable vision and leadership of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, have always been an inspiration to us all, and this is reflected in the city's continued success, as we focus on enhancing its position as a global hub for economy and tourism. We are building on the massive momentum generated by the hugely successful Expo 2020 to drive growth across all our tourism pillars from cultural to culinary experiences, while working towards achieving the ambitious goal of making Dubai the most visited destination and the city of the future that will be the best place in the world to live and work.

"As we look ahead to the remainder of 2022 and beyond, we will harness the key elements that have ensured the industry's steady growth year after year since we reopened to international visitors in 2020 – providing an unparalleled diverse destination offering that offers unique value and memorable experiences for our guests. This can only happen with the support of our stakeholders, and we are counting on them to continue playing a pivotal role in facilitating growth, as well as restoring confidence and trust among travellers in Dubai as a safe destination," HE Helal Almarri added.

The new tourism figures from DET show that overall, Dubai hotels maintained an average occupancy level of 76 per cent from January to May 2022 compared to 62 per cent during the corresponding period in 2021. According to data from hotel management analytics firm STR, Dubai ranked No.1 globally in hotel occupancy, ahead of other international destinations including New York (61 per cent), London (60 per cent) and Paris (57 per cent), for the January-April 2022 period.

Issam Kazim, CEO, Dubai Corporation for Tourism and Commerce Marketing (DCTCM), opened the day's programme by providing an overview of the industry with a detailed presentation that featured valuable visitor and marketing insights, in addition to an update on the communications activities that are underway across key international markets that include a novel campaign designed to encourage more families and global travellers to select the city for their summer vacation. The 'Stay More, Pay Less' campaign is a citywide initiative supported by over 60 hotels and resorts, providing outstanding value to international travellers this summer. The promotion provides guests an amazing offer - stay for seven nights at participating hotels and resorts and pay for only five nights or stay for five nights and pay for only three nights stay.

Issam Kazim, CEO of DCTCM, commented: "Our constant dialogue with stakeholders and partners is crucial in ensuring that we are all aligned with the collective efforts being made under the guidance of our visionary leadership to ensure the city stays at the forefront of the world's leading travel destinations. Our collaboration with stakeholders also provides them an opportunity to take advantage of our diverse campaigns and activities that are designed to sustain Dubai's global appeal and keep the city top-of-mind as a must-visit destination. Dubai's positive performance is also testament to the city's resilience and the success of our recovery strategy. As we strive to leverage a robust domestic market and the growing international visitation, we are confident that the summer season will serve as an ideal launchpad to further accelerate momentum across the industry."

He also briefed participants on the global campaigns, which have captivated audiences all over the world and shone a light on the city and all of Dubai's attractions- from Dubai Presents, the thrilling campaign, which highlights 'must visit' attractions across the city through trailers featuring Hollywood and Bollywood stars, to Dubai being selected as the No.1 Global Destination in Tripadvisor Travellers Choice Awards 2022. The event also highlighted the drive to position Dubai as a global gastronomy hub that has received a strong boost with the launch of MICHELIN Guide Dubai and the arrival of renowned fine-dining food critique brand Gault&Millau, both important additions to the city's fast evolving gastronomy scene.

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With its multifaceted offering, Dubai remains a popular destination, further validating the successful global campaigns run by DET throughout the year. Since Q4 2021, there have been over 200 million searches for travel to Dubai, and in May 2022 searches and bookings for the destination reached almost pre-pandemic levels.

Ahmed Al Khaja, CEO of Dubai Festivals and Retail Establishment (DFRE) presented key highlights of Dubai's Retail Calendar 2022, packed with iconic citywide festivals, events, activations and experiences including the much-awaited Dubai Summer Surprises, the region's biggest summer festival which is celebrating its 25th edition this year, from 1 July to 4 September, 2022, as well as next month's Eid in Dubai – Eid Al Adha celebrations and the Dubai Fitness Challenge, which kicks off in October.

"With our unbeatable summer proposition, Dubai offers more value than any comparable destination with its world class infrastructure, the vast scope of its events and entertainment centres and hassle-free entry process, making it the summer destination of choice for families. Besides, our continuous collaboration with stakeholders and partners has paved the way for Dubai to offer a unique holiday

package, allowing families, residents and visitors to avail themselves of innovative promotions, incentives and diverse deals this summer in Dubai,” Ahmed Al Khaja, CEO of DFRE, said.

