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Heets Euheniia
manager in travel company «Arabian Adventures»
Dubai, UAE

DUBAI'S RESURGENT TOURISM INDUSTRY

Dubai's inbound tourism sector is expected to surpass pre-pandemic growth levels in 2023 after government authorities reported that the city received 10,12 million overnight visitors in the first nine months of 2022, representing 85% of the pre-pandemic equivalent in 2019.

Dubai's resurgent tourism industry is celebrating a successful first half of 2023, welcoming a record 8,55 million overnight international visitors, up from 8,36 million in the first half of 2019 [1].

The latest figures released by Dubai's Department of Economy and Tourism (DET) show the industry's best ever performance for the first half of the year, surpassing pre-pandemic levels and increasing the city's chances of becoming the world's most visited destination.

The 20% year-on-year increase in visitor arrivals is in line with the Dubai Economic Vision 2033, launched by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, to strengthen the emirate's status as one of the top three cities in the world.

The record performance for H1 reflects a successful and diverse citywide effort to market destinations with the unwavering support of stakeholders and partners, and under the guidance of Dubai's visionary leadership.

It also confirms Dubai's position as the world's fastest recovering destination, and is well ahead of the forecast made by the UN World Trade Organisation that international arrivals could reach 80 – 95% of pre-pandemic levels this year [2].

The impressive result was driven by significant increases in visitor arrivals from key source markets, with some even exceeding 2019 figures, including Dubai's second largest source market Oman (+35% compared to 2019), russia (+5%) and Iran (+14%) and the Netherlands (+11%).

The improved performance was also evident in the city's hotel occupancy rates, with the average rate reaching 74%, up from 62% in 2021 and only 2% lower than the same period in 2019.

The hotel industry's key performance indicators are also significantly ahead of 2019: the number of occupied rooms and average length of stay increased by 17% compared to 2019, the average daily rate increased by 26%, and revenue per available room increased by 21%. Thus, 2023 has become a benchmark year for the city's tourism and hospitality sectors [3].

The positive outlook for 2023 is also supported by Dubai International Airport's (DXB) forecast that international passenger traffic will return to pre-pandemic levels by the end of 2023.

The Dubai Airports operator recently raised its 2023 forecast to 77,8 million passengers from its previous forecast of 75,5 million. The result would represent a 25% increase on the projected passenger volumes for 2022, a year that saw volumes for the first half of the year double compared to the same period last year [3].

Literature:

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