

GULF TIMES
FOCUS PUBLICATION

HOSPITALITY **TRAVEL &** **TOURISM**

December 30, 2024

TRAVELLING FOR
CULTURAL
IMMERSION

THE ART OF SLOW TRAVEL:
WHY LESS CAN
BE MORE

UNDERRATED TRAVEL
DESTINATIONS TO
EXPLORE IN 2025

HOW TO CHOOSE
THE PERFECT HOTEL



I Doha

Your home away from home in the heart of Msheireb Downtown Doha.



Be at the Center of Culture with Mandarin Oriental, Doha



Nestled in the heart of Msheireb Downtown Doha, Mandarin Oriental offers an intimate and stylish urban retreat that seamlessly blends contemporary luxury with touches of Qatari heritage. As the cultural and lifestyle heart of the city, Msheireb Downtown Doha provides the perfect backdrop for this five-star hotel, offering guests an elevated experience of Doha's vibrant history and modern-day allure.

Since its opening, Mandarin Oriental, Doha has garnered impressive accolades, including being awarded the prestigious Forbes Travel Guide Five-Star award for five consecutive years. In addition, the hotel's renowned spa has received a Five-Star recognition for the third year running, making it the only hotel in Qatar to achieve such a distinguished feat. The hotel's continued success is a testament to its commitment to delivering exceptional service, luxurious amenities, and a truly unique experience for every guest.



A prime location in the cultural heart of Doha

Mandarin Oriental, Doha enjoys a prime location with spectacular views over Barahat Msheireb, a creatively designed climate-controlled town square. The hotel's position in Msheireb Downtown places it in close proximity to some of Doha's top cultural landmarks. Guests can easily walk to the historic Souq Waqif, the Museum of Islamic Art, and explore the city's dynamic business district, West Bay, as well as other cultural and entertainment hotspots.

This central location makes it an ideal choice for both leisure and business travelers looking to experience the rich culture of Doha while enjoying easy access to the city's most exciting attractions.

Luxurious design and world-class dining

Designed by the acclaimed David Collins Studio, Mandarin Oriental, Doha boasts 117 rooms, 41 suites, and 91 serviced apartments, each showcasing a sophisticated blend of contemporary design and traditional Qatari influences. The design elements reflect Doha's cultural heritage, with rooms featuring decorative touches such as curved gilt ceiling reliefs inspired by desert sand dunes and mosaics reflecting the region's pearling legacy. The overall effect is one of understated



elegance, creating a sense of comfort and warmth that makes guests feel right at home.

The hotel's ten dining outlets offer a world-class culinary experience, bringing together flavours from around the globe while also celebrating classic local delicacies. IZU, led by renowned Chef Izu, offers Mediterranean-inspired cuisine with a menu bursting with vibrant flavours. Guests can enjoy stunning views of Barahat Msheireb from the restaurant's indoor seating, outdoor terrace, or mezzanine level.

Liang, another of the hotel's exceptional dining venues, serves authentic Chinese cuisine, providing guests with a culinary journey that combines craftsmanship with rich storytelling. For those seeking a more experimental dining experience, Mosaic offers a "Silk Route" dining concept, where flavours from Asia, the Middle East, and Europe come together at nine live cooking stations inspired by traditional street markets.

Other dining highlights include Aqua, a relaxed rooftop venue perfect for al fresco dining, and Gelato, a colourful spot serving unique gelato and sorbet flavours. The Mandarin Cake Shop offers indulgent treats such as celebration cakes and artisan chocolates, while Mandarin Lounge and Baraha Lounge provide a refined setting for enjoying afternoon tea. QAQAW celebrates the rich heritage and provenance of chocolate, with handcrafted Valrhona creations, indulgent desserts, and aromatic drinks.

Leadership under Thomas Kinsperger

In 2024, Mandarin Oriental, Doha welcomed a new General Manager, Thomas Kinsperger, who brings over 20 years of hospitality experience to his role. Having joined the hotel in 2019 as Hotel Manager, Thomas has played an instrumental role in the hotel's continued success, helping to secure its numerous accolades, including four consecutive years of Forbes Travel Guide Five-Star recognition. Under his leadership, the hotel has also achieved a third consecutive Green Key certification, demonstrating its commitment to sustainable practices, including the elimination of single-use plastics.

Thomas is passionate about continuing to deliver exceptional service and creating

memorable experiences for guests. "I am delighted to continue delivering the service excellence and standards that our guests at Mandarin Oriental, Doha have come to expect," he said. With his leadership, the hotel is poised to remain a leader in hospitality, both in Qatar and the wider region.

Events and meetings

Mandarin Oriental, Doha is also an ideal venue for hosting unforgettable events. With its stunning location and exceptional service, the hotel is perfect for both corporate and social gatherings.



The hotel features a ballroom that can accommodate up to 400 guests or 250 for banquet-style events, as well as seven additional meeting rooms, including a dedicated Bridal Room for weddings.

The hotel's culinary team specializes in creating bespoke menus tailored to each event, ensuring that every occasion is a gastronomic delight. From large-scale corporate conferences to intimate weddings, Mandarin Oriental, Doha's event venues provide the perfect setting for any occasion.



Rooms, suites, and serviced apartments

Mandarin Oriental, Doha offers a range of luxurious accommodations to suit the needs of every guest. The hotel's 117 rooms and 41 suites feature spacious layouts, sumptuous furnishings, and exceptional attention to detail. Each room is designed with a blend of contemporary elegance and local Qatari influences, creating a sense of understated luxury.

The hotel also offers 91 serviced apartments, making it the perfect choice for long-term stays or family visits. These apartments, available in one- to four-bedroom layouts, offer a chic urban living experience, with many featuring expansive terraces, spectacular views, and luxurious duplex layouts.

For those seeking the ultimate in luxury, the two-bedroom Royal Suite offers panoramic views of Doha and Barahat Msheireb, a private plunge pool, and an open-air courtyard with reflecting pools.

HOSPITALITY TRAVEL & TOURISM

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT | 30 DECEMBER, 2024

CONTENTS



Layout & Design
A.K. Vinay Kumar

Supplement team:

Marketing Manager Violette Fakhry

Business Promoter Dr. Sabu K.C.

Editor Amjad Vanimal

Circulation in-charge Sherif Samy

Printed by Raya Commercial Printing Press

Advertising Office: Gulf Times/Arrayah Building
C Ring Road, P.O. Box 533, Doha Qatar
Tel: (00974) 44466657 Fax: (00974) 44418811
email: advr@gulf-times.com



22

Travelling for cultural immersion



06

‘Surprise Yourself’: Visit Qatar launches new global campaign

Visit Qatar has unveiled its latest global campaign, ‘Surprise Yourself,’ marking a significant step in its mission to attract 6mn visitors annually and establish Qatar as a must-visit tourist destination by 2030.



16

The charm of motorbike taxis

Kigali’s motorbike taxis are more than just transport—they’re a thrilling gateway to the city’s vibrant life and stunning hills.



28

Hidden Gems: Underrated Travel Destinations to Explore in 2025

While popular tourist spots like Paris, Bali, and New York continue to draw massive crowds, many hidden gems around the globe offer equally stunning experiences.

14

The future of wellness therapy

As more people prioritize their health, long-stay wellness retreats are becoming a core lifestyle choice, fostering deeper commitments to holistic health.



18

The art of slow travel: Why less can be more

Rooted in the idea of quality over quantity, slow travel emphasizes connection—with places, people, and culture.



12

Capturing Memories
10 Brilliant Tips for
Travel Photography

WHERE ICONIC LEGACY MEETS LUXURIOUS ESCAPES

Located in the heart of the city, nestled in West Bay with the sparkling blue waters of the Arabian Gulf as its backdrop, Sheraton Grand Doha Resort & Convention Hotel has cemented its status as an iconic destination, fostering enduring relationships with generations of Qatar.

It is an ideal destination for a short break from the hustle and bustle of the city where the guest can relax and energize at the resort's private beach, outdoor swimming pool, infinity jacuzzi or enjoy stunning sea views straight from their luxurious rooms and suites.



Embark on a culinary journey that tantalizes your taste buds with Sheraton Grand Doha's diverse dining options, showcasing refined flavours from around the globe. Experience the essence of local and international cuisine, along with various themed nights at Al Hubara, or savor a bowl of Umm Ali - rated as the best in town and a must-try when in Doha at the Atrium Lounge. Immerse yourself



in Jamavar Doha's authentic Indian recipes from the Royal kitchens, or gather and celebrate at Irish Harp. Refresh yourself at the Pool Cafe by the resort while relishing the sea and sunset's gorgeous views. The famous Nusr-Et Steakhouse and Lucia's Doha are the cherries on top of the curated culinary journey.



Known as the 'Pyramid of the Gulf' for its unique architecture, the hotel has a prime position in the West Bay area of Doha. It attracts business and leisure travelers equally, as it is conveniently located near business centers, major government and corporate offices and many other Doha attractions. It offers 24 event venues to host business meetings, conferences, corporate events, conventions, weddings and social functions, making it the ideal venue for all.

Sheraton Grand Doha is not just a hotel - it is a milestone in Qatar's history and a famous landmark with its impressive style, opulent décor, and rich hospitality.



Where The World Comes Together



Experience a luxurious getaway at Qatar's iconic hotel. Enjoy breathtaking sea views and stunning sunsets at our beach resort.

With an outdoor pool, beachfront access, a 24-hour fitness center, and 8 dining options, everything you need is right here in the heart of the city.

For bookings or more information, please call +974 4485 4444

f @sheratongranddoha X sheratondoha
in sheratongranddoharesort&conventionhotel



Please scan to visit the website

**Sheraton Grand Doha
Resort & Convention Hotel**
Al Corniche Street,
West Bay, Doha, Qatar
T 974 4485 4444



‘Surprise Yourself’

Visit Qatar launches new global campaign

Visit Qatar has unveiled its latest global campaign, ‘Surprise Yourself,’ marking a significant step in its mission to attract 6mn visitors annually and establish Qatar as a must-visit tourist destination by 2030.

The campaign highlights the memorable experiences that Qatar offers for families, couples, and groups of friends. Designed to set Qatar apart, the campaign highlights the country’s unique attractions and tourism offerings.

From the lush charm of Banana Island to the vibrant atmosphere of Souq Waqif, and thrill of dune bashing, Qatar’s wide range of attractions are showcased, presenting numerous opportunities for relaxation and adventure in a warm, safe, and inclusive environment.

Through its theme and brand platform, “Moments That Stay With You,” the campaign also showcases the emotional connections and lasting memories forged during visits to Qatar.

Featuring a modern rendition of Bobby Hebb’s classic song “Sunny,” the campaign will be rolled out across 10 international markets using a variety of platforms, including television, social media, digital channels, press materials, and out-of-home advertising.

In a press statement, Visit Qatar CEO engineer Abdulaziz Ali al-Mawlawi said: “Situated at the crossroads of East and West, Qatar’s strategic location makes it exceptionally accessible.

With just a six to eight-hour flight from most major cities around the world, Qatar connects over 177 destinations, including the USA, Europe, Africa, and the Middle East.





“This makes Qatar an ideal choice for visitors seeking a stopover destination or a safe, family-friendly holiday filled with year-round sunshine, adventure, and fun for all. This campaign is designed to elevate Qatar’s global profile by showcasing its unique attractions and cultural richness, ultimately driving increased visitor numbers in line with our strategic tourism objectives.”

With its futuristic skyline, luxurious hotels, pristine beaches along the Arabian Gulf, and

plethora of unique experiences, Qatar offers everything from relaxing poolside retreats to thrilling adventures. As the ultimate family-friendly destination, Qatar presents a rich blend of activities, entertainment, and luxurious hospitality.

The country’s tourism landscape is bolstered by a high safety index ranking, state-of-the-art facilities, an award-winning national carrier and airport, seamless public transport, and open tourism visa policies.



Qatar is set for an exhilarating winter season filled with international sports and cultural festivities. Highlights include vibrant activities at Sealine Desert, and concerts featuring renowned regional and international artists.

Notable returning events such as the Doha Jewellery and Watches Exhibition and the Qatar International Food Festival are also set to captivate audiences.

As Qatar prepares for 2025 with events such as the Web Summit and the Arab Cup on the horizon, the nation is quickly becoming one of the world’s most exciting travel destinations.





Qatar records 26-percent surge in visitor arrivals

HE Chairman of Qatar Tourism and Chair of the Board of Directors of Visit Qatar, Saad Bin Ali Kharji, said that Qatar welcomed over 3.2 million visitors by the end of August this year, a 26% increase compared to the same period in 2023.

His Excellency added that: “As we commemorate World Tourism Day 2024 under the theme ‘Tourism and Peace,’ we recognize that tourism is more than just a means of exploration; it is a powerful catalyst for transformation.

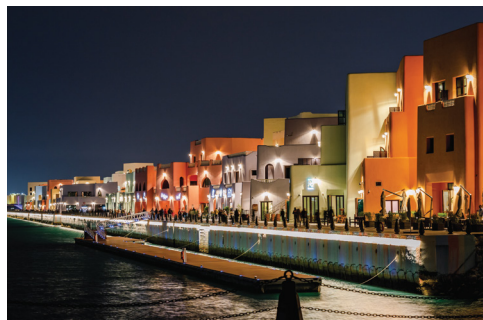
Under the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, the State of Qatar has always recognized the significant impact of the tourism industry, he added.

He added, “The recent unveiling of the Third National Development Strategy for 2024-2030 is a testament to this commitment, outlining the road-map for the next phase of Qatar’s development and aiming to achieve the Qatar National Vision 2030”.



“Among its key focus areas, the strategy highlights the tourism sector as a pivotal component in the country’s economic diversification efforts, crucial for driving sustainable economic growth”.

“By creating jobs, fostering inclusion, and strengthening our local economy, the tourism sector is paving the way for our country to continue to thrive,” he added.



He added that this strategy offers opportunities for cultural exchange and understanding, helping to bridge divides.

“When we value and preserve our cultural and natural heritage, we not only enhance the visitor experience but also nurture a sense of belonging and pride among the local community,” he added.

“At Qatar Tourism, we have been strategically enhancing Qatar’s position as a leading family tourism destination, renowned for its service excellence, to diversify our economic growth.

“Our mission is to advance and enhance Qatar’s tourism sector by leveraging our rich cultural heritage, developing innovative attractions, and delivering unique experiences for both residents and visitors. We have been strategically planning and establishing



a governance framework while attracting distinguished tourism professionals to shape the next stages of our journey,” he said.

“In doing so, we have established Visit Qatar as the main arm responsible for marketing and promoting Qatar Tourism. We remain committed to achieving our objectives through integrity, effective teamwork, and continuous innovation. Our success is rooted in our dedication to service excellence, transparency, and collaborative efforts,” he added.

His Excellency noted that this growth demonstrates progress toward achieving Qatar’s strategic goals: positioning Qatar as one of the fastest-growing tourism destinations in the region by 2030, reaching an

annual visitor count of six million, becoming the premier family-friendly destination, and increasing the sectors contribution to the GDP from 7% to 12%.

“Today, Qatar has firmly established itself as a major sports hub, having successfully hosted prestigious events such as the FIFA World Cup 2022 , the AFC Asian Cup 2023, and the Qatar Grand Prix,” he added.

“To further diversify our tourism offering, we are advancing our medical tourism sector, backed by a world-class public health system and leading specialized hospitals,” he said.

The Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions (MICE) sector also play a crucial





role in tourism growth, with 128 venues providing 70,000 square metres of exhibition space for major international events such as the Web Summit and the Geneva International Motor Show Qatar.

He also highlights Qatar Tourism's dedication to enhancing the country's global presence through active participation in international exhibitions and strategic partnerships, including collaborations with UEFA and Goodwood Racecourse.

"As we celebrate World Tourism Day under the theme "Tourism and Peace," the World Tourism Organization (UN Tourism) underscores tourism's vital role in fostering cultural exchange and contributing to a more peaceful and tolerant world. Qatar, home to over 100 nationalities, naturally encourages this cultural exchange," he added.



Recognized as one of the safest countries in the world and celebrated for its family-friendly environment, Qatar leverages its diverse population and welcoming spirit to promote global understanding, peace, and cultural connections.

He added that the Qatar International Food Festival (QIFF), now in its 13th year, exemplifies our commitment to showcasing diverse culinary traditions and fostering cross-cultural engagement.

His Excellency concluded his remarks by extending his deepest appreciation to all public and private sector partners for their efforts in promoting responsible and sustainable tourism.

"Your commitment to diversifying services, encouraging innovation, and maintaining high service helps to strategically place Qatar on the international tourism landscape as a leading world-class destination," His Excellency said.

Premier Inn Doha Education City Comfort you can count on



For travellers seeking comfort, convenience, and great value in Doha, Premier Inn Doha Education City stands out as an ideal choice. Whether visiting for business, studies, or leisure, the hotel offers a stress-free and enjoyable stay tailored to meet every need.

Premier Inn welcomes guests with cozy, well-appointed rooms designed for ultimate relaxation. Each room features super-comfy beds, a choice of pillows, and plush duvets that ensure a restful night's sleep. Guests can stay connected with free high-speed Wi-Fi and unwind with Smart TVs, perfect for catching up on entertainment after a long day.

Situated in the heart of Education City, the hotel's prime location provides easy access to major landmarks. With nearby tram and metro

connectivity, guests are just minutes away from Qatar Foundation, the Mall of Qatar, and the Qatar Science and Technology Park, making it a convenient base for both work and exploration.



Dining at Premier Inn is a treat in itself. Guests can enjoy a hearty, all-you-can-eat breakfast at Omnia Restaurant, featuring freshly cooked favourites like sausages, hash browns, and eggs made to order. The option to dine al fresco on the terrace adds to the experience, offering a relaxing spot to catch up with friends and family. For those looking to unwind, the hotel's swimming pool provides the perfect opportunity to take a refreshing dip and soak up the Arabian sun.

Recognized for its excellence, Premier Inn Doha Education City has been awarded the



prestigious Outstanding 3-Star Hotel title twice at the Qatar Tourism Awards. With friendly and attentive staff, free on-site parking, and budget-friendly pricing, the hotel ensures every guest feels welcomed and well-cared for.

Premier Inn Doha Education City promises a comfortable and convenient stay without compromising on value. For travellers planning their next visit to Qatar, booking directly with Premier Inn guarantees a hassle-free experience in one of Doha's most vibrant districts.



From booking to bed, we're here to help you **rest easy**



For the best rates, book at premierinn.qa



Scan to visit Premier Inn Doha Education City



A scenic view of a turquoise lake in a mountain valley. In the foreground, a wooden dock extends into the water, with several wooden rowing boats moored alongside it. A man in a plaid shirt and hat is crouching on the dock, taking a photo. A woman in a red dress and hat stands on the dock, looking out at the water. The background features steep, rocky mountains with patches of greenery and snow. The sky is overcast.

CAPTURING MEMORIES

10 BRILLIANT TIPS FOR TRAVEL PHOTOGRAPHY

Embarking on a journey is not just about the destinations; it's also about capturing the moments that make those places unforgettable. Travel photography is a powerful means of preserving memories and sharing experiences with others. Whether you are a novice or seasoned photographer, this comprehensive guide will provide you with valuable tips to enhance your travel photography skills and ensure you bring home stunning and meaningful images.



1. Pack smart

Before you even start clicking, make sure you have the right gear. Consider the type of trip and the shots you want to capture. A lightweight and versatile camera, extra batteries, memory cards, and a sturdy travel tripod are essential items.

2. Research your destination

Understanding the cultural and natural aspects of your destination can greatly enhance your photography. Research iconic landmarks, local customs, and the best times to capture certain scenes or events.

3. Master your camera settings

Take the time to learn the ins and outs of your camera. Experiment with aperture, shutter speed, and ISO settings to understand their effects on your photos. Being familiar with your equipment will help you capture the perfect shot in any situation.



4. Golden hours

The soft, warm light during the golden hours (early morning and late afternoon) can transform an ordinary scene into a magical one. Plan your shoots around these times for the best possible lighting.

5. Compose thoughtfully

Apply the rule of thirds to compose visually appealing images. Experiment with different perspectives, angles, and framing to add depth and interest to your shots. Don't be afraid to get creative with composition.

6. Tell a story

Your travel photos should convey a narrative. Capture not only landscapes but also the people, culture, and small details that define a place. Aim for a variety of shots that collectively tell the story of your journey.

7. Experiment with depth of field

Play with depth of field to create emphasis on your subject. Use a wide aperture (low f-stop) to achieve a shallow depth of field for portraits, or a smaller aperture for landscapes to keep more of the scene in focus.

8. Capture candid moments

Some of the most memorable travel photos are candid shots that capture the genuine emotions and interactions of people. Be patient, observant, and ready to click when the perfect moment unfolds.

9. Edit thoughtfully

Post-processing can enhance your photos, but it's essential to maintain a natural look. Experiment with editing software to adjust exposure, contrast, and color balance. Develop a consistent editing style that complements your photographic vision.

10. Backup your photos

Protect your memories by regularly backing up your photos. Consider carrying extra memory cards or an external hard drive. Cloud storage is also a secure option for storing your valuable travel photography.

Travel photography is a blend of art and storytelling. By incorporating these tips into your photographic journey, you'll not only capture beautiful images but also create a visual diary of your adventures. Remember, each destination has its own unique story to tell, and your camera is the tool that allows you to share that story with the world. So, pack your gear, embrace the unknown, and let your creativity unfold through the lens. Happy shooting!



THE FUTURE OF WELLNESS THERAPY

As more people prioritize their health, long-stay wellness retreats are becoming a core lifestyle choice, fostering deeper commitments to holistic health



By Dr Sreelal Sankar

Wellness therapy is transitioning from a luxury to an essential investment in well-being. Ananda, a leader in the industry, champions a holistic approach within a comprehensive wellness model. Increasingly, individuals seek customized sessions tailored to their health goals, recognizing these treatments as vital for their future health.

Ayurveda forms the foundation of Ananda's approach, emphasizing daily routines, personalized nutrition, and mental balance. At Ananda, detox therapies aid clients in regaining fitness and resilience, supported by tailored herbal supplements, dietary plans, and yoga sessions designed for both physical and mental harmony. Emotional healers assist clients in navigating challenges, while Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) and physiotherapy help manage daily stress. The spiritual essence of the Himalayas further inspires self-actualization and inner peace.

A growing number of individuals are turning to Ananda for curative treatments at various stages of their health journeys. Chronic ailments range from Obesity, Hypertension and Diabetes to Chronic Pain and Arthritis to Digestive issues, Sleep disorders and to stress, anxiety and burnout.

There is also a notable rise in informed clients focusing on hormonal balance and longevity.

These individuals are eager to engage in wellness programs, recognizing that health solutions must be dynamic and adapted to individual needs and life stages. Ananda stands out as a center offering transformative, personalized care, making wellness therapy an essential element of holistic well-being.

Women's health on the rise

The growing awareness of the mind-body connection, particularly in women's health, is driving demand for natural and holistic treatments. Wellness therapies such as aromatherapy, hydrotherapy, and reflexology help manage hormonal imbalances by reducing stress and stabilizing cortisol levels. Programs like Ananda's Menstrual Health and Fertility Enhancement combine Ayurveda, Yoga, and Oriental Medicine to address hormonal fluctuations, detoxify the body, and enhance reproductive health.

Mental and emotional well-being

With mental health challenges on the rise globally, emotional healing has become essential. Ananda's programs focus on stress management, sleep enhancement, and emotional restoration through tailored hypnotherapy and other transpersonal psychology therapies, mindfulness practices, and personal healing sessions. These approaches help guests reconnect with their authentic selves, address emotional blocks,

and achieve a deeper sense of peace and balance.

Long-stay wellness

In recent years, wellness retreats have shifted from quick fixes to immersive, long-term experiences. These extended programs, ranging from 1 to 4 weeks and longer at Ananda provide the time and focus needed for sustainable transformation, addressing physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being. As more people prioritize their health, long-stay wellness retreats are becoming a core lifestyle choice, fostering deeper commitments to holistic health.

Looking ahead, wellness therapy is set to play a pivotal role in promoting personalized, comprehensive well-being. Ananda's focus on bespoke treatments and holistic care ensures that it will continue to meet the evolving needs of its clientele, providing a transformative journey toward lasting health and vitality.



Dr Sreelal Sankar, Head of Ayurveda at Ananda in the Himalayas, brings over 20 years of experience to his role. He has been associated with major institutions and hospitals and has conducted significant research on Ayurveda, including the applications of bioinformatics in this field.

Golden Tulip Doha appoints Imad Khadem as General Manager



Golden Tulip Doha has announced the appointment of Imad Khadem as its new General Manager, effective October 2024. This milestone marks a significant chapter in Khadem's career and the hotel's journey as it sets its sights on elevating hospitality standards and enhancing its standing as a leading five-star destination in Qatar.

The appointment comes as a recognition of Khadem's outstanding contributions to Golden Tulip Doha since its inception. Reflecting on his promotion, Khaled Al Kheyami, Owner of Golden Tulip Doha, said: "Ever since this hotel was established, Imad has been an integral part of our team, consistently showing the commitment, professionalism and work ethic that make him well-suited for this role. We look forward to his continued contributions in his new capacity."

Please join us in making a him excel on this well-earned position."

Imad Khadem brings with him nearly two decades of expertise in the Qatari hospitality industry, having built a distinguished career since 2005. Known for his strategic insight and a guest-centric approach, Khadem is poised to spearhead Golden Tulip Doha's operations with a renewed focus on excellence and sustainability.

Commenting on his new role, he stated, "As the newly appointed General Manager of the Golden Tulip Doha Hotel, I am dedicated to elevating guest experiences and driving operational excellence while remaining committed to aligning our efforts with Qatar Tourism's vision for the hospitality market, ensuring sustainable growth and continued success for the hotel."

Golden Tulip Doha is a flagship property of the Louvre Hotels Group, one of the largest hospitality chains in the world. Headquartered in France, Louvre Hotels Group operates an extensive network of approximately 1,700 hotels spanning over 70 countries. The Golden Tulip brand embodies the group's hallmark of delivering exceptional quality, innovation, and personalized service.

As a five-star establishment in the heart of Doha, Golden Tulip Doha caters to a diverse clientele, offering world-class amenities, luxurious accommodations, and a premier location that makes it a preferred choice for business and leisure travelers alike. With access to the Louvre Hotels Group's vast resources and network, the property is well-positioned to maintain its reputation for high standards and guest satisfaction.



GOLDEN TULIP 
DOHA

Your 5-star city hotel in the heart of Doha

ENJOY THE COMFORT OF A LUXURY HOTEL

Al Safilya Street, Old Salata P.O. Box 47066, 490 Doha, Qatar
Tel: +974 44198888





Bike taxis lined up and ready. In Kigali, these eco-friendly rides await passengers, offering a convenient and affordable way to navigate the city's lively streets.

The charm of motorbike taxis

Kigali's motorbike taxis are more than just transport—they're a thrilling gateway to the city's vibrant life and stunning hills

By Amjad Vanimal

It was a crisp morning in Kigali when I decided to venture out and experience the city the way locals do — on a moto-taxi. These ubiquitous motorbike taxis, known simply as “motos,” are the lifeblood of Kigali's transportation network, weaving through the city's rolling hills with an efficiency that's unmatched by any car.

Standing at the corner of a bustling street, I watched as motos zipped past, their riders clad in bright vests and helmets. The hum of engines and the rhythm of life in Kigali created a symphony of movement. Summoning my courage, I waved to a rider who promptly pulled up with a wide smile and a nod.

“Muraho,” I greeted him, using the Kinyarwanda word for hello. His eyes lit up with approval at my attempt to speak the local language. After some quick negotiations about my destination—the vibrant Kimironko Market—I was handed a helmet. It fit snugly, and I could feel the weight of adventure settle on my head.

Climbing onto the bike, I took a moment to

appreciate the vantage point. Perched behind the rider, I could see the sprawling city unfold as we ascended Kigali's iconic hills. The ride began smoothly, with the moto weaving effortlessly through traffic. The wind rushed past my face, carrying with it a mix of earthy scents and the faint aroma of grilled corn from roadside vendors.

The city's charm revealed itself in flashes as we sped along. Children in neatly pressed uniforms walked hand in hand to school, street vendors displayed their colourful wares, and pedestrians navigated the sidewalks with purpose. Kigali is a city of contrasts: modern skyscrapers stand tall alongside traditional markets, and motos bridge the gap between these worlds.

As we climbed higher, the view became even more breathtaking. Kigali's nickname, “The Land of a Thousand Hills,” suddenly made perfect sense. The hills rolled endlessly, dotted with red-roofed houses and lush greenery. My rider expertly navigated the twists and turns, his skill evident in the way he leaned into each curve with confidence.

Halfway through the ride, we stopped briefly

at a scenic overlook. The rider gestured for me to take in the view, and I was struck by the sheer beauty of the city. Kigali's skyline, bathed in golden morning light, felt like a perfect blend of urban sophistication and natural serenity.

The final stretch to Kimironko Market was a descent, and the thrill of the ride intensified. I held onto the back of the bike, laughing as we zipped downhill, the city's vibrant life blurring into a tapestry of colours and sounds. Arriving at the market, I handed my rider the agreed fare, along with a small tip for the incredible journey.

Stepping off the bike, I felt a mix of exhilaration and gratitude. The ride had been more than just a mode of transportation; it had been an intimate encounter with Kigali's soul. The moto-taxi had allowed me to feel the city's pulse, to connect with its people, and to see its beauty from a unique perspective.

As I walked into the bustling Kimironko Market, I made a mental note: the next time someone asks about the best way to explore Kigali, my answer will be simple. Hop on a moto and let the city show you its magic.

Darwish Travel Company

Celebrating 75 Years of Transforming Qatar's Travel and Tourism Landscape

In 2025, Darwish Travel Company proudly celebrates 75 years of shaping Qatar's travel and tourism landscape. Established in 1950 as Qatar's first travel agency, Darwish Holidays has grown into a trusted name synonymous with reliability, exceptional service, and deep-rooted expertise.

A Proud Legacy

As Qatar's pioneering travel agency, Darwish Travel Company has set benchmarks in quality and customer service. Over decades, it has earned a reputation as an industry leader, fostering long-standing relationships and loyalty among its clientele. Known for its customer-centric approach, the company continues to deliver personalized services that prioritize the unique needs of every traveller.

Visionary Leadership

The success of Darwish Travel Company is a testament to its visionary leadership team. Mr. Hasan J. Darwish, President/CEO, has steered the company's growth through strategic foresight and an unwavering commitment to excellence. Mr. Nasser Abdul Rahman Darwish, VP - Finance & Administration, ensures operational stability and financial integrity,

while Mr. Nasser K. Darwish, VP - Marketing & Sales, drives strategic growth and fosters strong industry partnerships.

Celebrating 75 Years with Industry Partners

Darwish Travel Company owes much of its success to its enduring partnerships with leading global airlines. As General Sales Agents (GSAs) for 11 renowned carriers, including British Airways, Air France-KLM, Japan Airlines, Royal Jordanian, and Middle East Airlines, the company has built decades-long collaborations that reinforce its position as a preferred travel partner. These partnerships enable Darwish Travel Company to deliver premium services, competitive pricing, and exclusive travel options to its clients.

Comprehensive Travel Services

Darwish Travel Company offers an extensive range of travel solutions, making it a one-stop shop for all travel needs. From corporate travel management and customized holiday packages to seamless airline ticketing and reservations, the company ensures hassle-free experiences for every traveller. Additional services, such as visa assistance, travel

insurance, hotel bookings, and luxurious cruise vacations, reflect its commitment to providing end-to-end solutions.

A Legacy of Stability and Loyalty

Darwish Travel Company's success is built on enduring client relationships and a steadfast commitment to service. Many customers have trusted the company with their travel needs for decades, drawn by its personalized attention, transparency, and reliability. A dedicated team of professionals ensures that every journey is smooth, memorable, and stress-free.

Looking Ahead: 75th Anniversary in 2025

As Darwish Travel Company approaches this milestone, it plans a year-long celebration to honour its legacy. Special campaigns and events will mark 75 years of excellence, and the company will take the opportunity to thank its industry partners for their vital contributions to its success. Rededicating to excellence, Darwish Travel Company reaffirms its commitment to delivering unmatched travel solutions and exceptional service.

G.S.A FOR:

Pioneer in Qatar's Travel & Tourism industry since 1950

OUR SERVICES

- Flight Tickets
- Tour Packages
- Hotels
- Visa Processing Assistance
- Cruises
- International Driving License

+974 4036 0500
+974 5575 7910
websales@darwish.net.qa

The Art of Slow Travel

Why Less Can Be More

In today's fast-paced world, travel has often become a checklist of destinations, rushed itineraries, and fleeting experiences. However, a growing movement is advocating for a different approach: slow travel. Rooted in the idea of quality over quantity, slow travel emphasizes connection—with places, people, and culture—over the mere accumulation of passport stamps. Read on and find out the philosophy behind slow travel, its benefits, and how to embrace it.

What is slow travel?

Slow travel is less about the speed of movement and more about the mindset. It prioritizes depth over breadth, encouraging travelers to fully immerse themselves in a single destination rather than skimming the surface of many. The idea challenges the traditional "more is better" travel ethos, instead celebrating the joys of savoring a place's essence. Whether it's spending a week in a small Italian village or taking the scenic route on a road trip, slow travel invites us to pause and appreciate the journey as much as the destination.

The benefits of slow travel

1. Deeper cultural connection

By spending more time in one place, travelers can engage more meaningfully with the local culture. This might mean learning a few phrases of the local language, shopping at neighborhood markets, or attending community events. The slower pace fosters genuine interactions with locals, offering insights that go beyond guidebook recommendations.

2. Reduced stress and fatigue

Fast travel, with its packed schedules and constant movement, can leave travelers feeling drained rather than rejuvenated. Slow travel reduces the pressure to "see it all," allowing time for relaxation and spontaneous exploration. It's about experiencing travel as a joy, not a chore.

3. Environmental sustainability

By focusing on fewer destinations, slow travel often results in a smaller carbon footprint. Travelers are encouraged to use sustainable transportation like trains or bicycles and to support local businesses rather than global chains. This mindful approach aligns with the growing emphasis on eco-friendly tourism.

4. Personal growth and mindfulness

Slow travel encourages a reflective mindset. Travelers have the opportunity to step back, observe, and absorb their surroundings without distraction. This introspective element can lead to personal growth and a greater appreciation for life's simple pleasures.



How to embrace slow travel

1. Choose quality over quantity

Instead of cramming multiple cities into a single trip, select one or two destinations and plan to stay longer. This allows for a richer experience and reduces the logistical stress of constant travel.

2. Travel overland when possible

Trains, buses, and even bicycles offer a more immersive way to see the world than airplanes. Overland travel lets you experience the journey itself, offering a glimpse into the landscapes and lives between destinations.

3. Stay in one place

Opt for accommodations that encourage longer stays, such as vacation rentals or boutique guesthouses. Staying put for several days or weeks fosters a sense of familiarity and belonging.

4. Engage with the local community

Slow travel thrives on human connection. Participate in local workshops, dine at family-owned restaurants, and strike up conversations with residents. These interactions often become the most cherished memories of a trip.

5. Embrace unplanned moments

Rigid schedules leave little room for spontaneity. Slow travel invites serendipity—a chance encounter at a café, a hidden trail discovered during a leisurely walk, or an unexpected festival happening in the town square.





Destinations that encourage slow travel



Tuscany, Italy

The rolling hills of Tuscany, dotted with vineyards and medieval villages, are perfect for travelers looking to slow down. Spend days savouring local cuisines, exploring small towns like Montepulciano, and enjoying long, leisurely meals.

Kyoto, Japan

Known for its serene temples, traditional tea houses, and Zen gardens, Kyoto invites visitors to embrace stillness and mindfulness. Take time to walk its historic streets and participate in a tea ceremony.

Patagonia, South America

With its vast landscapes and remote beauty, Patagonia encourages travelers to unplug and connect with nature. Trekking its trails or simply sitting by a glacial lake offers a profound sense of peace.



Chiang Mai, Thailand

Chiang Mai's relaxed pace, vibrant markets, and focus on wellness make it an ideal slow travel destination. Visitors can practice yoga, learn Thai cooking, or explore the surrounding mountains.

The slow travel mindset

At its core, slow travel is a philosophy that values the richness of experience over the rush to consume. It's about seeing travel not as an escape from life but as a way to enhance it. In a world that often prioritizes speed and efficiency, slow travel offers a refreshing reminder to pause, savor, and connect. By embracing this approach, travelers can uncover deeper joys, not just in the destinations they visit but in the act of travel itself.

RAYAN

TRAVEL & TOURS (W.L.L)



ريان
للسفر والسياحة (ذ.م.م.)

Rayan Travel & Tours introduces stunning travel deals for 2025

Rayan Travel & Tours is gearing up to expand its reach with exclusive travel deals for 2025. To celebrate the launch of its B2C online travel services, the company has curated exceptional packages catering to both luxury and budget travelers.



These deals span an impressive array of destinations, including London, Paris, Rovaniemi, Prague, Phuket, Bangkok, Bali, Maldives, Istanbul, Moscow, Baku, Almaty, Chisinau, Dubai, and many others.

“We aim to provide unmatched travel experiences for every traveler, whether they seek luxury or budget-friendly options,” said Zaheer Yousuf, General Manager of Rayan Travel & Tours.

Aligned with Qatar National Vision 2030, Rayan Travel is also placing a strong emphasis on promoting inbound tourism to bolster Qatar’s growing appeal as a global destination. Visitors can explore a wide variety of attractions, including thrilling desert safaris, serene dhow cruises, luxurious yacht tours, and family-friendly experiences at Salwa Resort Water Park and Meryal Water Park. For those seeking indulgence, premium

accommodations at Rixos Premium Qetaifan North Island and Banana Island Resort by Anantara provide unmatched luxury.

Rayan Travel & Tours is a subsidiary of the prestigious Al Darwish United Company, established in 1935. A vital contributor to Qatar’s development, Al Darwish United employs over 12,000 people and operates on principles of integrity, quality, and innovation. Under the leadership of Chairman Yousuf Bin Jassim Al Darwish, the company continues its legacy of excellence, expanding across the Arab region through strategic partnerships and innovative ventures.



Amazing Offers for

2025

EXPLORE THE WORLD WITH US

RAYAN

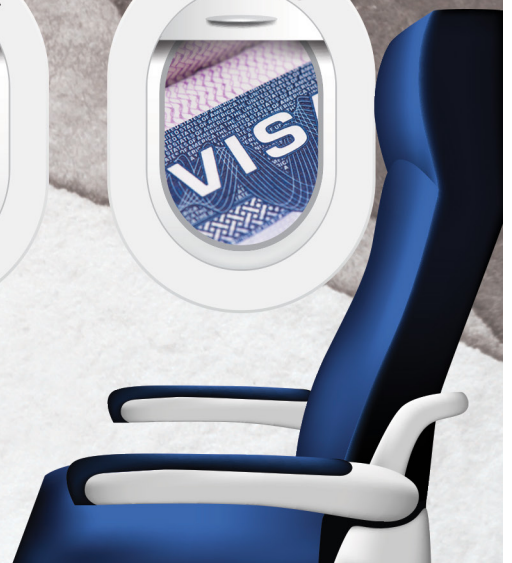
TRAVEL & TOURS (W.L.L)



ريان
للسفر والسياحة (ذ.م.م.)

Offices: Al Muntaza, C ring road, Al Azizia,
Opp Grand Express Hypermarket
and Yacht Club Tram station, Lusail

+974 55934881 / 50691925





Travelling for cultural immersion

In a world that is increasingly interconnected, traveling for cultural immersion has become a popular way to experience destinations beyond the usual tourist attractions. Rather than simply visiting well-known landmarks, cultural immersion allows travelers to engage with local traditions, customs, and lifestyles, fostering a deeper understanding and connection to the places they visit. Whether you're exploring remote villages or bustling

cities, cultural immersion offers enriching experiences that go beyond sightseeing.

The appeal of cultural immersion

Cultural immersion provides travelers with the opportunity to step into the lives of locals, experiencing the rhythm and pulse of their everyday existence. This approach allows for more authentic encounters, whether it's enjoying



a homemade meal with a family, participating in local festivals, or learning traditional crafts passed down through generations. Unlike the superficial experiences that often come with traditional tourism, cultural immersion encourages personal connections, offering a meaningful way to explore the world.

For many, the allure of cultural immersion lies in the opportunity to move beyond the tourist bubble. Rather than sticking to the common paths, travelers can embrace the unknown, getting a real taste of what life is like in a different culture. This deeper engagement often results in more lasting memories and meaningful stories to share, transforming a vacation into a life-changing experience.

Ways to experience cultural immersion



- **Stay with Locals:** One of the most immersive ways to experience a culture is by staying with local families. Platforms like Airbnb and Couchsurfing offer travelers the chance to live with locals, allowing them to observe their day-to-day lives. Home stays provide intimate access to the customs and routines that make each culture unique, whether it's waking up to the aroma of freshly brewed coffee or joining in the evening meal.

- **Learn Traditional Skills:** Many destinations offer workshops that allow travelers to learn age-old crafts, such as pottery, weaving, or cooking. Participating in these hands-on experiences not only allows travelers to acquire new skills but also provides insight into local traditions. For example, learning how to cook authentic Italian pasta from a Nonna or mastering the art of traditional Japanese tea ceremonies can be incredibly enriching experiences that connect you to a culture's heritage.



- **Attend Local Festivals and Events:** Festivals are the heartbeat of many cultures. Whether it's the vibrant Carnival in Brazil, the tranquil Lantern Festival in Taiwan, or the lively Songkran Festival in Thailand, attending a local celebration gives travelers a chance to experience the cultural expressions, music, dance, and rituals that define a community. Festivals often bring people together, providing a window into the values, beliefs, and history of a place.



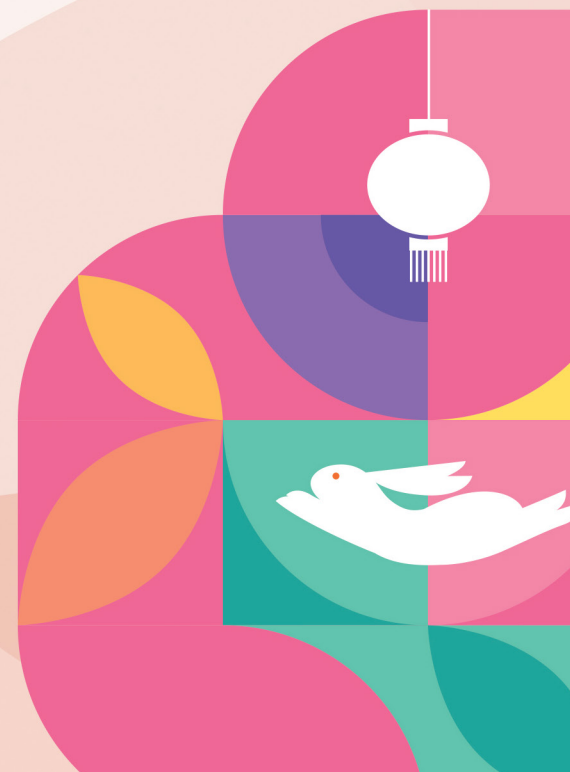
- **Volunteer or Work Abroad:** Immersing yourself in a culture can also mean giving back to the community. Volunteering offers an opportunity to learn about local issues while contributing to a cause you care about. Whether it's working with local children, helping with environmental conservation, or assisting in healthcare

initiatives, these experiences enable travelers to forge connections with the community and understand its challenges and triumphs on a deeper level.

- **Explore the Local Markets and Culinary Traditions:** Food is a vital component of cultural identity. Markets are often the best places to discover the flavors, ingredients, and cooking techniques that define a region's culinary traditions. Whether it's sampling street food in Southeast Asia, savoring a homemade Moroccan tagine, or indulging in traditional tapas in Spain, food provides a tangible connection to culture. Many destinations also offer culinary tours or cooking classes, allowing visitors to get hands-on with local cuisine.
- **Engage with Local History and Traditions:** Museums, historical sites, and sacred places can offer a deeper understanding of a culture's roots. Visiting temples in Southeast Asia, exploring ancient ruins in Greece, or learning about indigenous traditions in the Americas gives travelers a sense of the historical context that shapes contemporary society. By interacting with local guides and experts, you can gain a richer understanding of the customs and values that have shaped the present.

The benefits of cultural immersion

- **Broadened Perspectives:** Immersing yourself in a different culture allows you to see the world from another viewpoint, challenging preconceived notions and biases. It fosters empathy and understanding, helping to break down cultural barriers and promoting global awareness.
- **Authentic Experiences:** Traveling for cultural immersion opens the door to experiences that are often not available to traditional tourists. These experiences offer a unique glimpse into the lives of locals, providing a richer and more memorable journey.
- **Personal Growth:** Cultural immersion often pushes travelers out of their comfort zones, encouraging adaptability and resilience. By navigating unfamiliar situations and learning new customs, travelers develop greater self-awareness and confidence, making them more open to embracing new experiences.
- **Connection with People:** One of the most rewarding aspects of cultural immersion is the connections made with the people you meet along the way. By forming friendships with locals, you gain access to their stories, traditions, and ways of thinking, creating bonds that can last long after the trip is over.



8 Travel hacks for modern tourists

Travelling as a modern tourist requires a blend of preparation, adaptability, and resourcefulness. By mastering these travel hacks, you can optimize your experience, reduce stress, and make the most of every journey

Travelling in the modern age offers unprecedented convenience and access, thanks to technology, but it also comes with its unique set of challenges. For the savvy tourist, a few well-chosen hacks can turn a good trip into a great one, saving time, money, and unnecessary stress. Here's a guide to mastering your next journey with practical travel tips tailored to today's world.



1. Master the art of packing

Efficient packing is at the heart of stress-free travel. Start by investing in high-quality, lightweight luggage that fits the dimensions for carry-ons—avoiding checked baggage fees and the risk of lost luggage. Roll your clothes instead of folding them to save space and minimize wrinkles. Compression bags can further maximize space, allowing you to pack more in less room. To avoid forgetting essentials, maintain a pre-made packing checklist tailored to the type of trip.

Choose versatile clothing items that can be mixed and matched to create multiple outfits. Stick to a colour palette that works together—neutrals are always a safe bet. If you're traveling internationally, don't forget a universal adapter and a portable power bank to keep your devices charged.

2. Leverage technology for planning and booking

Technology has revolutionized travel planning. Use flight comparison websites like Skyscanner or Google Flights to find the best deals, and set price alerts to monitor fare drops. When booking accommodations, consider platforms like Airbnb for unique stays or last-minute hotel apps like HotelTonight for significant discounts.

Travel apps can simplify every stage of your journey. Use apps like TripIt to organize your itinerary, Google Translate to navigate language barriers, and Maps.me for

offline navigation. Additionally, download entertainment options—from e-books to Netflix shows—ahead of time for long flights or layovers.

3. Maximize your rewards and points

Travel rewards programs are a game-changer for frequent flyers. Sign up for airline and hotel loyalty programs to earn points on every booking. Credit cards designed for travel, such as those offering miles or cash back on travel expenses, can significantly reduce costs. Be strategic about redeeming your points by booking during off-peak seasons or taking advantage of promotions.

4. Stay healthy and safe

Prioritize your health by staying hydrated, especially during flights, where cabin air can be dehydrating. Bring a reusable water bottle with a filter to reduce plastic waste and ensure access to clean water. Pack a basic travel medical kit with essentials like pain relievers, band-aids, and any prescription medications.

Safety is paramount, particularly in unfamiliar destinations. Keep digital copies of important documents like your passport and travel insurance on your phone or cloud storage. Use anti-theft bags and keep valuables secure at all times. For added peace of mind, share your itinerary with a trusted friend or family member.



5. Navigate airports and security with ease

Arrive at airports prepared to breeze through security checks. Wear slip-on shoes and avoid wearing excessive jewelry to streamline the process. Store liquids in a clear, TSA-approved bag and keep electronics easily accessible for quick removal. Enrolling in expedited screening programs like TSA PreCheck or Global Entry can save time, especially for frequent travelers.



6. Embrace local experiences

One of the joys of travel is discovering new cultures and experiences. Research beyond the usual tourist spots to find hidden gems, local eateries, and authentic experiences. Social media, blogs, and local forums are excellent resources for insider tips. Don't shy away from public transportation—it's often the most economical and immersive way to explore a city.

Learning a few key phrases in the local language can go a long way in building connections. Locals appreciate the effort and may be more inclined to share their favorite spots with you.

7. Be flexible and spontaneous

While planning is essential, leaving room for spontaneity can lead to some of the most memorable experiences. Be open to changing plans if an intriguing opportunity arises. Flexibility is also key to scoring the best deals on flights and accommodations, as prices can vary significantly depending on the day and time.

8. Save money without sacrificing experiences

Travel smart by seeking out free or discounted attractions. Many museums and landmarks offer free entry on certain days or discounted tickets for students and seniors. Dining at local markets instead of restaurants can save money while providing an authentic taste of the region's cuisine. Consider traveling during the shoulder season—the time just before or after peak tourist months—to enjoy lower prices and fewer crowds.

A Luxury. Modern. Lifestyle

Elegance at Steigenberger Hotel & Residences

STEIGENBERGER
HOTEL & RESIDENCE

DOHA

As we look ahead to 2025, Steigenberger Hotel Doha is poised to elevate its offerings and solidify its status as a premier destination in Qatar. In this exclusive interview, Sherief Abouelmagd, Cluster General Manager, provides insights into the hotel's plans for the upcoming year, highlighting innovative services and unforgettable guest experiences.



Sherief Abouelmagd, Cluster General Manager

Q: Steigenberger Hotel Doha is gearing up for 2025. What can guests expect in the first quarter?

A: In the first quarter of 2025, we're excited to push our Outside Catering services, which will bring our luxury experiences beyond the hotel. We offer bespoke catering packages for corporate luncheons, special occasions, and private gatherings, allowing clients to enjoy our signature culinary experiences in their own venues.



Doha Heritage Ramadan Tent, 1st Floor, Steigenberger Hotel Doha, T. +974 40201720

I am excited to announce our happenings in Ramadan. We are transforming our ballroom with the Doha Heritage Ramadan Tent. This vibrant space will showcase Doha's historical landmarks and invite local vendors to display their brands. Guests will enjoy live entertainment, while our Iftar Buffets will feature both traditional and contemporary dishes. We are also inviting our B2B partners to explore exclusive sponsorship packages to showcase their brands during this festive season.

Q: Can you share more about Crust Restaurant in 2025?

A: Crust Restaurant is already known for its



Olea Restaurant & Terrace, 2nd Floor, Steigenberger Hotel Doha, T. +974 4020 1720

vibrant buffets and live cooking shows, and in 2025, we'll continue working to enhance the flavours and improve guest satisfaction. Popular offerings such as the Seafood Shovel, Seafood Night, Family Brunch, and Business Lunch will continue, ensuring there's something for everyone to enjoy.

Q: How will Olea Restaurant elevate its dining experience in 2025?

A: Olea Restaurant & Terrace, known for its World of Burgers and Rotisserie, will continue to offer its signature menu. We'll also host live sports screenings, creating an energetic atmosphere for guests, paired with exceptional food and premium shisha experience. We will continue to be a popular spot for both casual and sports dining.

Q: What's in store for the Ladies Majlis at Opal Spa in 2025?

A: In 2025, the Ladies Majlis at Opal Spa will host a variety of events, including wellness retreats, Ghabgha, and private celebrations like bridal showers and henna parties. This exclusive space by the pool will remain a sanctuary for private relaxation, offering a peaceful environment where ladies can unwind and enjoy personalized gatherings.

Q: How does Steigenberger Hotel Doha's ballroom cater to events in 2025?

A: Our ballroom is perfect for small and medium-scale events, and in 2025, we will continue offering personalized services for weddings, corporate gatherings, and other special occasions. Every event will be tailored to our clients' vision, ensuring a unique and unforgettable experience for all guests.

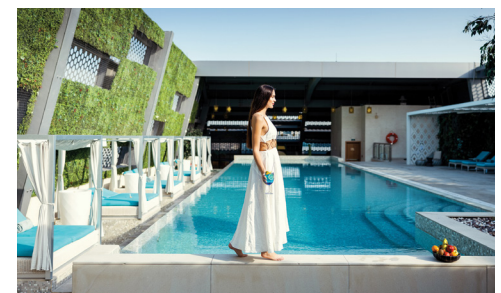
Q: What services does the hotel offer for business travellers in 2025?

A: We offer fully equipped Business Office rentals for business travellers, providing a professional and productive environment. In 2025, we plan to expand these services with

flexible membership options to make it easier for business clients to work seamlessly while staying with us.

Q: What can guests expect from Steigenberger Hotel Doha during the summer and festive seasons?

A: In the 3rd and 4th quarters of 2025, we will continue to create exclusive summer packages from Room Staycations to Special Treatment packages at The Opal Luxury Urban Spa. During the festive seasons, we will feature holiday-themed dinners and New Year's Eve celebrations, offering luxury, relaxation, and unforgettable experiences for all our guests.



Sundeck Pool Bar, Rooftop, Steigenberger Hotel Doha

Q: As a dry hotel, how does Steigenberger ensure a family-friendly atmosphere?

A: As a dry hotel, we pride ourselves on creating a family-friendly and healthy atmosphere. Our inclusive environment makes Steigenberger Hotel Doha an ideal destination for families, business travellers, and sports enthusiasts alike.

Q: Looking ahead, how does Steigenberger Hotel Doha continue to set the standard for luxury and hospitality in Qatar?

A: We remain committed to delivering exceptional service, innovative offerings, and unique experiences. Under my leadership, Steigenberger Hotel Doha will continue to set the standard for luxury hospitality, creating memorable moments for every guest in 2025 and beyond.

How to choose the perfect hotel

When planning a trip, selecting the right hotel can make or break your experience. While star ratings provide a general guideline for luxury and amenities, they don't tell the whole story. To ensure your accommodation suits your needs, it's essential to dig deeper. Here's a comprehensive guide to making an informed decision when booking your next hotel.

Define Your Priorities

Start by identifying what matters most to you for this particular trip. Consider the purpose of your travel. A business trip may require proximity to a conference center, while a family vacation might demand kid-friendly amenities. Budget is another key factor—set

a clear range but leave some flexibility for must-have features. The length of your stay also matters; for longer stays, amenities like a kitchenette or laundry facilities may be essential.

Location

The hotel's location is one of the most critical factors to consider. Research the surrounding area to ensure it aligns with your plans. Check how close the hotel is to key landmarks or activities you plan to explore. Read reviews or consult maps to understand the area's safety and walkability. Additionally, consider access to public transport, parking options, and how easily you can reach the airport or train station.

Read reviews with a critical eye

Online reviews can be invaluable, but they should be approached thoughtfully. Look for trends rather than focusing on extreme positive or negative reviews. Prioritize reviews from the past year to ensure the information is current. Guest-uploaded photos can provide a more realistic view of the property and its amenities.

Evaluate amenities beyond the basics

A hotel's amenities can significantly enhance your stay. Technology is an important consideration; check for fast Wi-Fi, smart TVs, and adequate charging ports. Wellness facilities like gyms, spas, or pools can elevate the experience. Dining options, such as on-site



restaurants or room service, are especially convenient for late arrivals. If you're traveling with pets, ensure the hotel caters to them with appropriate services.

Compare prices across platforms
Don't settle for the first price you see. Take advantage of online tools to find the best deal. Use popular booking websites to

The hotel's location is one of the most critical factors to consider. Research the surrounding area to ensure it aligns with your plans

Trust your instincts

After considering all the practical aspects, trust your gut. If something feels off or too good to be true, it's worth reconsidering. Your intuition, combined with thorough research, can guide you to the best choice.

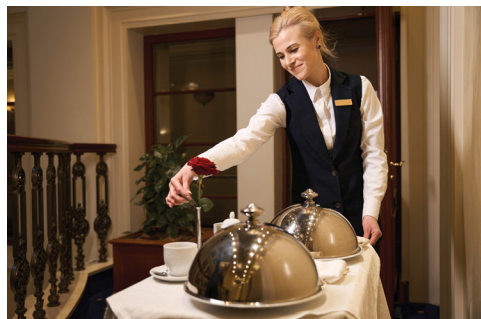
A perfect stay awaits

By looking beyond the stars and digging into the details, you're more likely to find a hotel that matches your expectations. Whether you prioritize location, amenities, or sustainability, the right choice will set the tone for a memorable trip. Take your time, do your research, and happy travels.



Consider room features

The room you stay in should offer comfort and convenience. For families or groups, larger rooms or suites are often worth the upgrade. Decide if a scenic view is worth the extra cost. In-room amenities such as coffee makers, minibars, and quality bedding can add to your comfort. Additionally, check if the room includes a shower, bathtub, or both, depending on your preference.



Assess customer service

Good customer service can turn an average stay into a memorable one. Pay attention to how quickly the hotel responds to inquiries and whether they offer flexibility in terms of early check-in, late check-out, and cancellations. Reviews often mention the staff's friendliness and attentiveness, which can be a key indicator of service quality.

Look into sustainability practices

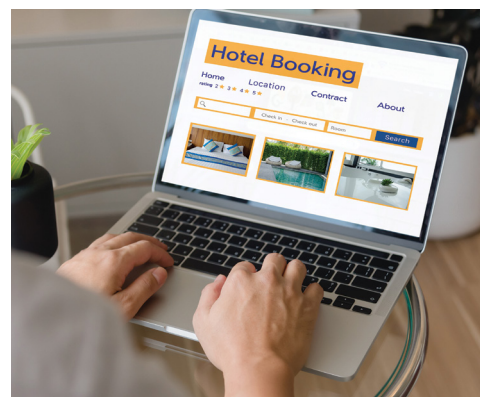
Eco-conscious travelers might prefer hotels with sustainable initiatives. Look for properties with recognized eco-certifications and green features such as energy-efficient lighting, water-saving fixtures, and recycling programs. Choose hotels that support local businesses and employ local staff to ensure your stay has a positive local impact.



compare rates but also consider booking directly through the hotel's website, which can sometimes yield better deals or perks. Leverage memberships like AAA, loyalty programs, or credit card benefits to secure additional discounts.

Check policies and fine print

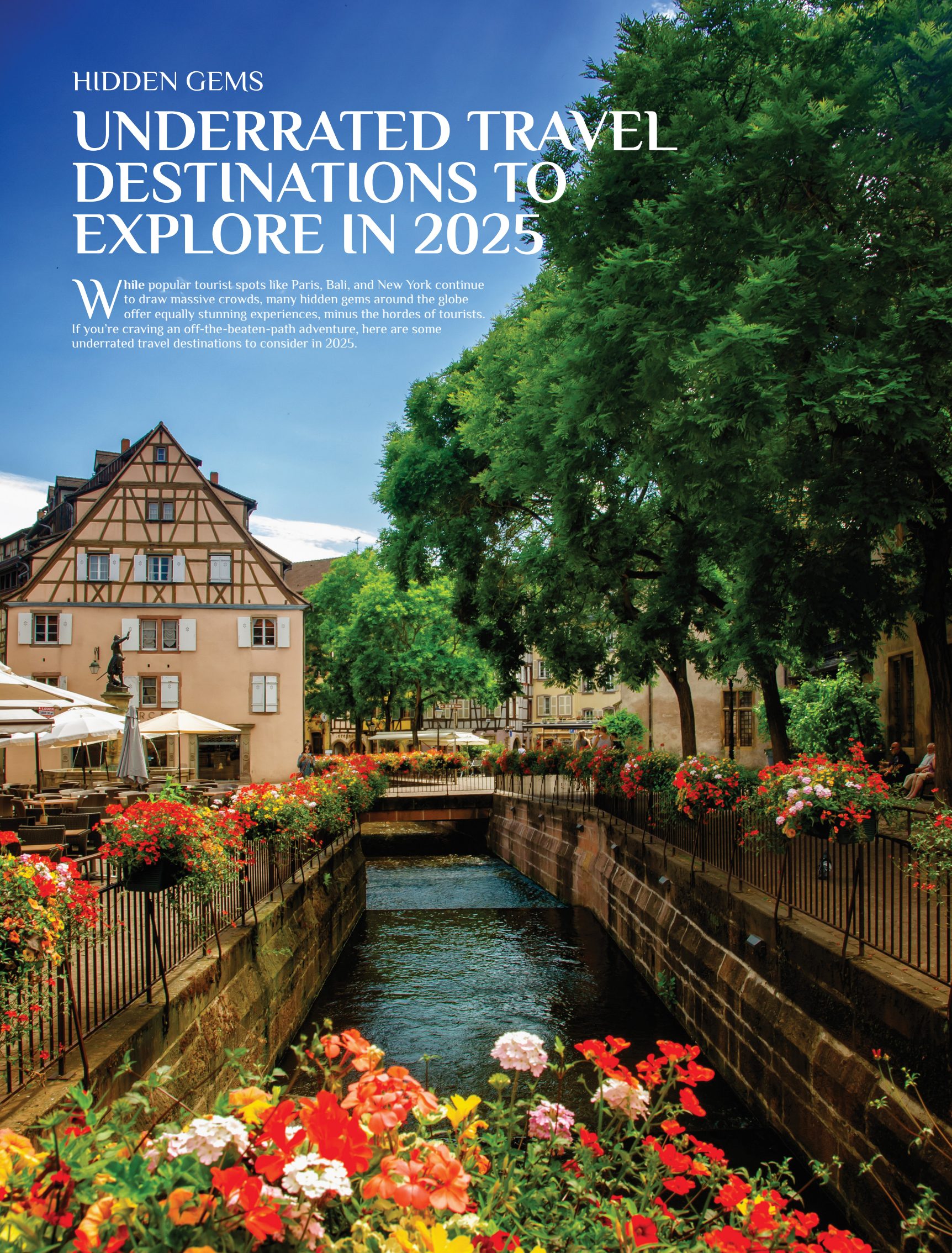
Before booking, ensure you understand the hotel's terms. Look for flexibility in the cancellation policy, especially if your plans are uncertain. Be aware of additional fees such as resort charges, parking costs, or pet fees. Confirm check-in and check-out times to plan your arrival and departure effectively.



HIDDEN GEMS

UNDERRATED TRAVEL DESTINATIONS TO EXPLORE IN 2025

While popular tourist spots like Paris, Bali, and New York continue to draw massive crowds, many hidden gems around the globe offer equally stunning experiences, minus the hordes of tourists. If you're craving an off-the-beaten-path adventure, here are some underrated travel destinations to consider in 2025.



1. Colmar, France

Nestled in the Alsace region of northeastern France, Colmar is a fairy-tale town straight out of a storybook. Known for its cobblestone streets, half-timbered houses, and vibrant canals, Colmar feels like stepping into another era. Visit during spring or Christmas to see the town at its most magical.



2. Luang Prabang, Laos

Often overshadowed by Thailand and Vietnam, Laos offers a serene alternative for travelers seeking tranquility. Luang Prabang, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is a haven of golden temples, French colonial architecture, and lush waterfalls. Don't miss the morning alms-giving ceremony, where monks collect offerings from locals and tourists alike.

3. Raja Ampat, Indonesia

For diving and snorkeling enthusiasts, Raja Ampat is a dream destination. Located in Indonesia's West Papua province, this archipelago is home to some of the richest marine biodiversity on the planet. Explore crystal-clear waters, secluded beaches, and vibrant coral reefs. It's an ideal spot for eco-tourists looking for unspoiled beauty.



4. Puglia, Italy

Move over Tuscany; Puglia is Italy's next big thing. Located in the "heel" of Italy's boot, Puglia boasts stunning coastlines, ancient olive groves, and charming whitewashed villages like Alberobello, known for its trulli houses. The region is also a foodie's paradise, offering fresh seafood, handmade orecchiette pasta, and rich burrata cheese.

5. Salento, Colombia

While Cartagena and Medellín receive much of Colombia's tourism spotlight, Salento offers a quieter, more picturesque escape. This quaint town is the gateway to the Cocora Valley, home to the world's tallest palm trees. Pair your hikes with a visit to a local coffee farm to experience Colombia's coffee culture firsthand.



6. Faroe Islands, Denmark

Remote and rugged, the Faroe Islands are perfect for adventurers seeking dramatic landscapes. Located between Iceland and Norway, this Danish territory features towering cliffs, cascading waterfalls, and green pastures dotted with sheep. Hike to the iconic Múlafossur Waterfall or take a boat trip to see puffins and other seabirds.



7. Gjirokastrë, Albania

Known as the “City of Stone,” Gjirokastrë is a UNESCO World Heritage Site famous for its Ottoman-era architecture. Wander through its historic bazaar, visit the hilltop castle, and explore the Ethnographic Museum, housed in the former home of Albania’s communist dictator Enver Hoxha. The town also serves as a base for trips to the stunning Blue Eye spring.



8. Valle de Guadalupe, Mexico

Situated just two hours south of San Diego, this region in Baja California offers world-class wineries, farm-to-table dining, and boutique accommodations. The stunning desert-meets-vineyard landscapes make it a feast for the eyes as well.



9. Svaneti, Georgia

High in the Caucasus Mountains, Svaneti is a hidden gem for lovers of both culture and nature. This remote region is dotted with medieval watchtowers, ancient churches, and traditional Svan villages. Hikers will appreciate the scenic trails that wind through pristine alpine landscapes.



10. Kanazawa, Japan

While Kyoto often steals the limelight, Kanazawa offers a similarly rich cultural experience with fewer crowds. This city is home to one of Japan’s most beautiful gardens, Kenrokuen, and well-preserved samurai and geisha districts. The 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art adds a modern touch to this historic city.



11. Sur, Oman

For a Middle Eastern escape that’s less commercialized, Sur is an excellent choice. This coastal town boasts pristine beaches, traditional dhow shipbuilding yards, and the dramatic Wadi Shab canyon. It’s also a great base for exploring the nearby Ras Al Jinz Turtle Reserve, where you can witness sea turtles nesting.



12. Azores, Portugal

This archipelago in the Atlantic Ocean is a paradise for nature enthusiasts. Known for its volcanic landscapes, hot springs, and lush greenery, the Azores are an eco-tourism haven. Activities include whale watching, hiking, and relaxing in geothermal pools. Each island has its unique charm, making it worth exploring multiple spots.

13. Jaisalmer, India

Dubbed the “Golden City,” Jaisalmer is a jewel in the heart of the Thar Desert. Its sandstone architecture glows in the sunlight, and the Jaisalmer Fort is a living fortress with shops, temples, and residences. Opt for a camel safari to experience the mesmerizing dunes and starry desert skies.



14. Kotor, Montenegro

Located along the Adriatic coast, Kotor is a stunning medieval town surrounded by fjord-like mountains. Its walled old town features cobblestone streets, charming squares, and historic churches. A hike up to the fortress rewards you with panoramic views of the Bay of Kotor.

15. Huacachina, Peru

An oasis in the middle of Peru’s desert, Huacachina is a small village built around a natural lagoon. Known for its sandboarding and dune buggy rides, it’s a must-visit for thrill-seekers. Pair your adventure with a visit to nearby vineyards producing Peru’s famed pisco.



Travel Tips for Hidden Gems

- **Plan Ahead:** These destinations often have limited accommodations, so booking early is essential.
- **Embrace Local Culture:** Learn a few phrases in the local language and be respectful of customs.



- **Travel Sustainably:** Support local businesses and minimize your environmental footprint.
- **Stay Flexible:** Hidden gems might not have all the amenities of major tourist hubs, so go with an open mind.



The role of social media in shaping tourism trends

Social media has transformed the way people explore, experience, and share their travels, becoming a powerful force in shaping global tourism trends. Platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube have not only influenced individual travel choices but have also redefined how destinations market themselves. This digital shift has created a dynamic, interactive landscape where travelers and destinations connect in real-time, significantly impacting the tourism industry.

The visual nature of social media has made it a primary source of inspiration for travelers. Stunning photos, engaging videos, and authentic travel stories encourage users to dream about faraway places and add them to their travel wish lists. A single viral post of a hidden beach, an enchanting village, or a luxurious resort can catapult a relatively unknown destination into the global spotlight. Social media influencers and content creators play a pivotal role in this process. Their ability to present destinations in an aspirational and relatable way often drives significant interest and traffic to the locations they showcase.

For destinations, social media has become an indispensable tool for marketing. Traditional brochures and travel ads have been replaced by targeted campaigns that leverage hashtags, trending challenges, and user-generated content. National tourism boards and travel companies now collaborate with influencers to reach broader and more diverse audiences. These collaborations often involve influencers visiting destinations to create content that highlights unique experiences, cuisine, culture, and attractions, crafting a narrative that resonates with modern travelers.

The impact of social media extends beyond inspiration and marketing; it influences travelers' behavior in real time. Apps like Instagram and TikTok serve as travel guides, offering recommendations for restaurants, landmarks, and activities through geo-tagged posts and viral trends. Travelers frequently use these platforms

to discover lesser-known spots, creating a new wave of tourism focused on off-the-beaten-path locations. This shift has both positive and negative implications. While it diversifies tourism and reduces pressure on over-visited landmarks, it can also lead to overcrowding in previously untouched areas, raising concerns about sustainability.



Social media has also reshaped the concept of “status travel,” where individuals select destinations or activities based on their potential for online appeal. The rise of the “Instagrammable” moment has made visually striking locations and experiences a priority for many travelers. This phenomenon has driven the development of tourism infrastructure designed specifically for social media, such as art installations, themed cafes, and accommodations with unique aesthetic appeal. While this trend boosts local economies, it also raises questions about authenticity and the commodification of culture.

On the flip side, social media has empowered travelers to demand transparency and accountability from the tourism industry. Issues such as environmental degradation, unethical wildlife tourism, and cultural insensitivity are now brought to light more quickly and widely than ever before. Travelers use platforms to share their experiences, both positive and negative, influencing the choices of others and encouraging businesses to adopt more sustainable and ethical

practices. Reviews, ratings, and viral posts have become tools for advocacy, promoting responsible tourism and highlighting the importance of preserving natural and cultural heritage.

However, the role of social media in tourism is not without challenges. The pressure to create picture-perfect content can lead to a superficial understanding of destinations, where experiences are curated for likes rather than genuine engagement. The “fear of missing out” (FOMO) phenomenon, fueled by constant exposure to others’ travel adventures, can detract from the joy of personal exploration and contribute to a competitive rather than enriching travel culture.

Looking ahead, social media will continue to evolve and shape tourism trends in innovative ways. Virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) are emerging as tools

to offer immersive pre-travel experiences, allowing users to explore destinations digitally before making decisions. Live-streaming capabilities will make real-time interaction with destinations more accessible, providing a new layer of connection for prospective travelers. Additionally, the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) will enable more personalized travel recommendations, further blurring the line between inspiration and action.

Social media’s influence on tourism is undeniable. It has redefined how travelers discover destinations, how destinations promote themselves, and how the industry responds to global challenges. As we navigate this interconnected world, the key will be balancing the benefits of social media with mindful and responsible travel practices, ensuring that the digital age enhances rather than diminishes the richness of global exploration.





THE OUTPOST AL BARARI: A DESERT SANCTUARY LIKE NO OTHER

Tucked away in Qatar’s breathtaking Inland Sea nature reserve, The Outpost Al Barari offers a rare blend of luxury and nature. This unique resort immerses guests in the heart of the desert, where the rugged beauty of towering dunes meets the refinement of exceptional hospitality. Designed to celebrate Qatar’s natural heritage, every detail of The Outpost Al Barari reflects the spirit of the desert. Its earthy tones, serene ambiance, and exclusive experiences take guests on an unforgettable journey, far from the chaos of everyday life.

LUXURY IN THE HEART OF NATURE

The Outpost Al Barari’s 21 tented villas redefine desert luxury. Each villa is a private retreat offering a seamless connection to the natural surroundings.

For couples, the Explorer Tent and Explorer Tent with Private Pool provide intimate escapes with terrace swings overlooking the desert. Families can enjoy the spacious Al Barari Family Villa, complete with two bedrooms and an oversized pool, while the Emiri Villa offers an unmatched grandeur with three bedrooms, a vast terrace, and breathtaking views.



IMMERSIVE DESERT EXPERIENCES

At The Outpost Al Barari, the desert becomes a playground for adventure and relaxation. Guided nature walks and Inland Sea Safaris uncover the secrets of the wilderness, while activities like yoga on the dunes, fat-bike trails, and hot-air balloon rides invite

guests to connect with the landscape. As the day winds down, the desert transforms into a magical setting for outdoor cinema nights or a romantic dinner under the stars, a feast for the senses in every way.

A GASTRONOMIC OASIS

Dining at The Outpost Al Barari is a journey through flavors. The Al Barari Restaurant offers a world-class menu featuring Mediterranean, Middle Eastern, and Indian cuisines, all enjoyed against the backdrop of the stunning desert.



ESCAPE THE ORDINARY

“At The Outpost Al Barari, we’ve created a sanctuary where luxury seamlessly intertwines with the untouched beauty of nature. It’s more than just a destination; it’s a journey to reconnect with the natural world while indulging in refined comfort. Perfectly positioned to offer an escape from the demands of modern city life, The Outpost invites guests to disconnect, recharge, and immerse themselves in a truly unique experience.” – Andre Seltmann, Managing Director and Co-founder of The Outpost Al Barari



THE OUTPOST
AL BARARI
QATAR



THE OUTPOST

AL BARARI
QATAR

NATURE'S EMBRACE, LUXURY'S TOUCH

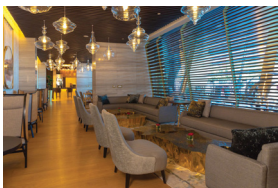
Discover the perfect harmony of desert serenity
and refined elegance at The Outpost Al Barari.



STEIGENBERGER

HOTEL & RESIDENCE

DOHA



Avenue Café

An elegant yet casual café offering a selection of bites, specialty teas, coffees, and fresh juices.

Enjoy freshly baked bread from the German Bakery for pick up daily.

A traditional English Afternoon Tea is served daily.



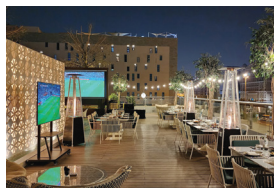
Crust Restaurant

Indulge in all-day dining with international buffets, open show kitchens, and live cooking stations.

International Breakfast
Business Lunch
Seafood Night
Family Brunch

Special Menu

Seafood Shovel



Olea Restaurant & Terrace

A specialty dining destination featuring a "World of Burgers" and Rotisserie menu. Travel through flavors with burgers inspired by Arabia, Australia, Mexico, Germany, Spain, Italy, America, and more – including vegetarian options. Enjoy indoor seating, an outdoor terrace, live football matches, and a premium shisha experience.



Sundeck

Relax at our urban rooftop oasis, surrounded by lush greenery.

Enjoy sunbeds, refreshing food and drinks, and a dedicated kids' pool and play area.

Restaurant Reservations:

T +974 4020 1720
E fb.573@steigenberger.com
WhatsApp +974 7773 6193



The Opal – Luxury Urban Spa

Your ultimate well-being destination in a luxurious urban setting. Cutting-edge innovation blends seamlessly with ancient healing traditions.

For Inquiries & Appointments

T +974 4020 1625
E The.Opal@steigenberger.com
WhatsApp +974 3089 2112