



# **Meaningful Tourism**

## **A Tool for Sustainable Tourism Development in the Middle East**

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# Middle East Tourism Overview

- The Middle East is a **fast-growing tourism region**
- Rich in **cultural heritage, religious significance, natural beauty**
- Strategic location connects **Asia, Europe, and Africa**
- Strong government interest in **tourism diversification strategies**



# Middle East Tourism Statistics (2024)

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**95 million** international visitors

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**32% growth** above **2019** levels

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**\$460** billion **GDP** contribution

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**7.75** million **jobs** supported

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**\$179.8** billion in international visitor  
spending

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**\$205** billion in **domestic visitor spending**

# Middle East - Top Performing Countries

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**Saudi Arabia:** 29.7 million international arrivals; 86.2 million domestic trips; 148% increase in international tourism revenue since 2016 .

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**Egypt:** 15.7 million visitors; \$14.1 billion in tourism revenue.

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**United Arab Emirates:** \$12.3 billion in hotel revenue .

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**Qatar:** 147% increase in arrivals compared to 2019 .

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**Jordan:** 4.5 million visitors; facing challenges due to regional conflicts .

# Meaningful Tourism = Practical Sustainability

- Meaningful Tourism

- **is not just a conceptual ideal**, it **is a strategic necessity**.
- **aligns** economic, environmental, and social goals
- **enhances** competitiveness while preserving authenticity
- **is a strategic path forward to:**
  - Diversify economies
  - Empower communities
  - Conserve environments



# Why Meaningful Tourism Matters in the Middle East



# Adapting to Changing Demands

1

Shift from mass tourism to **value-based tourism**

2

Focus on **experiential and cultural tourism**

3

Promote **nature-based and community-led initiatives**

4

Engage new markets with responsible, tailored offerings

# Responding to Climate Change



Invest in **eco-friendly infrastructure** and green certifications



Promote **low-impact tourism** (e.g., hiking, heritage trails)



Encourage **carbon offset** and conservation projects



Reduce pressure on vulnerable environments



# Leveraging Digital Transformation



Develop **smart tourism solutions**



Use **digital storytelling and AR/VR** to enhance cultural education



Promote businesses **local through online platforms**



Use **data analytics for visitor management**

# Regional Cooperation and Governance



Create sustainable tourism frameworks across countries



Strengthen public-private-community partnerships



Promote joint initiatives for heritage conservation, training, and promotion



Align with UN SDGs and regional vision strategies

# Strengthening Identity & Cultural Resilience

01

Protect and  
promote  
**intangible**  
**cultural heritage**

02

Support **local**  
**voices** in tourism  
storytelling

03

Foster  
**intercultural**  
**dialogue** through  
meaningful  
encounters

04

Encourage pride  
and participation  
in cultural  
tourism

# Future Outlook

- Steady growth in arrivals and revenue
- Stronger emphasis on sustainability
- More tech-driven experiences and services
- Greater regional collaboration on marketing and policy



A scenic landscape featuring a river flowing through a rocky valley. The river is surrounded by dark, jagged rock formations and some green vegetation. In the background, there are large, rugged mountains under a blue sky with scattered white clouds. The text "Thank You!!" is centered over the image, underlined.

# Thank You!!