

TravelTrendz

International

July / August 2021

a travel lifestyle publication

Innsbruck
Experience The Freedom

Azerbaijan
Sustainable Tourism

Japan
The Jewels

San Marino
Explore



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Image : J A Hatta Fort Hotel

Fujairah

The perfect
holiday
destination



Fujairah is situated on the east coast of the United Arab Emirates. Nestled between the Hajar Mountains and the Indian Ocean, this picturesque town is the perfect holiday destination.



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The pandemic is still there with no end in sight. The entire industry is in trouble and travelling is not coming to the desired level with travel restriction. Corona Virus is not in control and no complete solution till now. The vaccines are being used but still huge global population is not vaccinated. The industry is still facing a huge challenge even bigger than ever. Individual countries are looking for ways and means to kick start the economies but the travel and tourism is the key to revival and with easing of travel restrictions innovative ways and means are being sought to revive the business cycle.

In this issue as always, we offer new and exciting options to our readers as destinations are gradually opening. The top destinations and Hotels are being introduced as never before. Do miss the article on Innsbruck, Austria with its alpine urban diversity. Learn more about the amazing heritage of Pakistan its mesmerizing north. We have featured the amazing Montenegro and San Remo Italy plus the amazing San Marino. Do not miss the articles about Baden-Baden. Do not miss our article on Azerbaijan, offering sustainable tourism. Do not miss interviews with the top representatives from Israel, Hungary and Japan.

We have covered the top notch hotels in this issue such as the Evian Resort at Lake Geneva. Learn more about Shaza Hotels. We have featured The Retreat Palm Dubai and the story about the alluring Elounda Bay Palace in Greece is not to be missed.

As always, read about the news and views relating to the hospitality industry plus learn about what is happening in the Airlines and Aviation Industry.

So, have a good time reading...

Ken Chapman
Editor



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INNS' BRUCK



© Innsbruck Tourismus/Christian Vorhofer

THE INNSBRUCK REGION

EXPERIENCE THE FREEDOM OF ITS ALPINE-URBAN DIVERSITY

One holiday and one thousand possibilities! That can only mean one thing: an “alpine-urban” holiday experience. In the Innsbruck region, the combination of nature and culture, enjoyment and challenge, city and countryside make for a really attractive complete package. Relaxation or activities? Pleasure or something more demanding? Everything’s possible in and around Innsbruck and in a completely natural way. This one location is the perfect starting point, giving you the freedom to make a new choice each day and experience tailor-made activities.

Summer is arriving at the Innsbruck region. The perfect period to escape from daily life and to discover the capital of the Alps from different angles. Now it is the time to make your way from the heart of the city straight into the great outdoors, or climb up to a

dizzy height and look down on the urban hustle and bustle from the Nordkette mountains. Or experience a leap in time between modern architecture and historical buildings. Or treat yourself to a gourmet meal and enjoy some retail therapy in the quaint alleys or against the backdrop of the majestic mountains. The Innsbruck region offers countless opportunities for recreation and relaxation at all sorts of altitudes. Which is just as it should be in a genuine major city surrounded by mountains. And that's a good thing, because everyone has their own way of enjoying a bit of time-out. For some, it's the feeling of freedom that they feel when they reach the summit and the reward of a hearty refreshment stop in a charming mountain hut. For others, it's the feeling of relaxation in the hotel's own organic sauna and then a refreshing dip in the natural pond, all the while marvelling at the awesome mountain



© Innsbruck Tourismus/Christof Lackner



© Innsbruck Tourismus/Christian Vorhofer



views. Some, on the other hand, feel at one with the world when they immerse themselves in the city's cultural offerings or discover the wide range of regional specialities. Whatever your heart's desire, whatever your definition of rest and relaxation, everyone will find their own personal freedom in the Innsbruck region: from pleasure to something more demanding.

Our recommendation: how to explore the region of Innsbruck as its best.

A)The Innsbruck Card: Innsbruck's all inclusive guest card

The Innsbruck Card is your perfect companion to discover Innsbruck by yourself within 24, 48 or 72 hours. It is valid from the time the first service is used and can be purchased directly in Innsbruck or online. It includes a visit to 21 museums and sights in the Innsbruck region as well as admission to Hasegg Castle Mint Hall and Swarovski Crystal Worlds in Wattens, including the Crystal World shuttle. Furthermore, the Innsbruck Card gives you access to experience the TOP mountains close to

Innsbruck: one return trip with the Nordkettenbahnen and the Patscherkofelbahn is included.

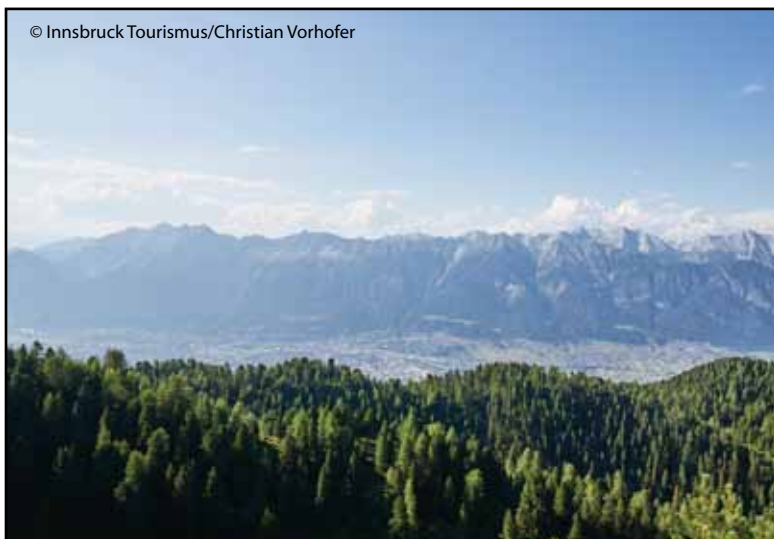
More information: <https://www.innsbruck.info/en/sightseeing/innsbruck-card>

B)The Welcome Card visitors' card: your ticket to holiday happiness

With the visitors' free Welcome Card, the Innsbruck region offers a wide range of options for stays of 2 nights or more so that you can enjoy even greater personal freedom. All public transport in the region is available free of charge. The card also includes use of selected lifts and cable cars, numerous discounts and lots of free offers for the family programme, swimming pools and bathing lakes.

What will stay with you after your holiday? Countless images you won't be able to stop thinking about. And profound gratitude for having experienced your own little bit of freedom.

More information: www.innsbruck.info/en



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THE JEWELS OF JAPAN

by: Hazel Saldanha

Japan, the fourth largest island country in the world can trace its roots across tens of thousands of years through which it has developed a unique, exciting and world famous culture that flows through the juxtaposition of its traditional-modern atmosphere. It consists of 7,000 islands and is blessed with a nature centric geography – with over two thirds of its landmass covered by forests. Opulent in history, art and beauty, it truly invokes a sense of amazement and fascination. At the Arabian Travel Mart 2021, we met with Takao Yamamoto & Tomoko Kikuchi from the Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO) who guided us through the Japan's splendid offerings.

Spring is celebrated throughout the country with the arrival of the "sakura" or cherry blossoms. Cool and breezy with generally sunny skies the country is blanketed in a warm pink glow, an unforgettable aroma and thousands of tiny petals floating through the air. They have been source of inspiration for millennia; and is the quintessential experience for visitors to the country. There are thousands of sakura hotspots dotted around the country with Kyoto and nearby Yashino, offering breathtaking views set against mountainous backdrops .

The country is home to the largest number of UNESCO World Heritage sites on an island nation. They include vibrant castles, intricate temple complexes, expansive National Parks and ancient villages. Located within an hour from Osaka, the "Ancient monuments of Nara" are known for their immaculate period architecture and shrines that encase the former imperial palace – the first permanent capital. Further south, off the coast of Hiroshima is Japan's second most famous landmark, the Itsukushima Shinto Shrine. In an almost surreal fashion the collection of sacred buildings and the iconic floating gate seem to appear from the sea itself. Cut-off with water during high tide it offers a prime example of Shinto architecture harmoniously balanced with nature.





Japanese cuisine is an art form onto-itself and reflection of the progressive yet traditional nature of the people. Each region showcases a different culinary theme, with the utmost prominence given to fresh seafood and sustainable local produce. The capital boasts more Michelin star restaurants than Paris & New York whilst

simultaneously offering an abundance of rustic sushi and noodle bars. For a vegan feast, a trip to the south of the country at the foot of the luscious Mino Mountain is world famous Le Restaurant du Haze. The chef develops his own bespoke delicacies brimming with probiotics to nourish & delight even the most discerning patron.

As winter approaches the coastal regions of the country stay mild, however as a densely mountainous country nearly all of its peaks are blanketed with snow allowing for a rich winter sports experience in several "onsen" ski-resorts where, after a day in the snow one can dip into warm open air pools whilst taking in the blissfully white landscape.

Japan offers welcoming, accessible and diverse experiences for one and all.

www.jnto.go.jp
#visitjapanjp



Montenegro

Make your own path
in the wild nature



Montenegro is made for all kinds of adventures. In winter, in summer – it doesn't matter – you can choose from among so many things. You can explore mysterious depths of the coastal area or strength of the sea waves in the furthest south. While making your next move, experience hospitality of the people in the arms of nature. Make your own path in the wild nature.

There are three colours present in the Montenegrin landscape: blue, emerald green and iron grey, amazingly combined and interwoven, because of its priceless natural beauty, Montenegro was proclaimed an ecological state through a special declaration.

The fabulously jagged coastline of the Adriatic Sea offers you the variety of beaches, coves, bays and islets that you have

been dreaming of. The reality is even more exotic than the promises found in tourist brochures. The world's southernmost and probably the most celebrated fjord in verse, beautiful Mediterranean Kotor Bay, as well as the whole seacoast, is sheltered and shielded by the karstic mountains. The high mountains can offer you an unforgettable experience with their hidden lakes, numerous pastures, forests, pointed peaks, diverse flora and fauna, fast mountain rivers and imposing canyons.

The Capital of Montenegro is Podgorica which has to offer something for each taste and profile of visitors. Diverse offer is characterized by a rich cultural heritage, natural and architectural attractions, rich aquatic resources (five rivers and three lakes),



which justifies the name of "City on the Water." CentreVille Hotel & Experiences, the preferred choice of stay in Montenegro is placed here.

In 1991 Montenegro was proclaimed ecological state. Generous and miserly, cruel and graceful, fascinating nature of this country has always aroused excitement and inspiration.

"The most beautiful meeting of land and sea at the time of the birth of our planet" (J. G. Byron) has created many small bays and a large Bay of Kotor, hidden wild beaches and a thirteen kilometers long Velika plaža with healing powers. White and grey waste land of limestone area rises above the

coastline. "Sea of rocks" is only one segment of the sumptuous mosaic. In the central region there are the fertile Zetska and Bjelopavlicka plains and a bird paradise - Skadar Lake. Then there is a wreath of mountain ranges over 2,000 meters high. Apart from the peaks, they are adorned by woods, spacious pastures, forty lakes, impetuous and clean rivers, deep and mysterious canyons. The worlds of beauty are under water and underground - in many caves whose exploration has only begun.

Montenegro has five national parks. Durmitor with the Tara River Canyon is part of the world natural heritage. The Tara River Canyon is on the list of international biosphere reserves. As a rare wetland habitat Skadar Lake is included on the Ramsar List.

HUNGARY

THE WELLSPRING OF WONDERS

At the first ever hybrid Arabian Travel Mart 2021 hosted in Dubai, where the biggest names from all over the globe showcased their brand and unique travel opportunities. Ms. Zsuzsanna Sarmon, Regional Head of Business Development, Hungarian Tourism Agency shared an exciting proposition for Hungary's role in this pseudo pandemic travel era. With a keen emphasis on safe travel, the country boasts the highest vaccination percentage in Europe along with exceptional measures to ensure the well-being of residents and visitors alike. Located centrally within Europe its historical capital Budapest is less than a 5.5 hour trip from the MEA region it prides itself in being accessible and affordable for visitors from all walks of life.

Budapest, once the second capital of the Austria-Hungarian Empire today glides fluently out of its past and into the present, yet holds firm to both – indeed a symbolic representation of its position along the banks of the River Danube. A countless degree of UNESCO world Heritage sites lines the city such as the Buda

by: Hazel Saldanha





Castle showcasing breathtaking architecture and an unforgettable river scenery. The eastern side of the city "Pest" is home to the Hungarian National Parliament, the largest in Europe crafted in the Gothic Revival style is symmetrical featuring vibrant frescoes, and the Hungarian Crown Jewels which have had a lively history having been stolen, lost, hidden, broken and finally buried.

Hungary is abundantly rich in healing waters, often dubbed as the "Land of thermal water" with thermal spas and hot springs encompassing nearly 80% of the entire region, a testament to nearly a two-thousand-year old spa culture. For visitors, experiencing the spa culture that dates back 1500 years is not to be missed. Not only do they offer a place for medical treatment, recreation, and rejuvenation, but most are located in magnificent buildings that are more than a hundred years old. In Budapest, where spa tourism has been a significant attraction since the 1800s, design styles such as Art Nouveau produced lavish landmarks. Most major spas have an outdoor element, allowing them to double up as lidos in summer, imbuing the complex with a holiday atmosphere

The county is a voracious proponent of simultaneously preserving the visual and acoustic elements of classical & contemporary arts. The Hungarian State Opera is one such embodiment of this; its spectacular visuals, Neo-Renaissance decor and acoustic qualities have been deemed amongst the best in Europe. Equally poised though is the focus on Urban art especially in Budapest, where massive murals and pop-up sculptures brighten the city, serving

as a reminder of the harmonious balance between the nouveau and classic. As an extension to the arts, Hungarian cuisine is at the forefront of global gastronomic experiences, home to several Michelin star restaurants as well as bistro's in tiny enclaves the hearty and colourful cuisine is the perfect way to end one's evening leaving all your senses absolutely fulfilled.

Explore visithungary.com and [#wowhungary](https://twitter.com/wowhungary) for more!

THE RETREAT PALM DUBAI

A NEW RANGE OF HEALTHY MEALS FROM RAYYA NUTRI

Delivered right at your doorstep, Rayya Nutri offers an extensive menu including acai bowls, healthy main courses, refreshing salads, and more

The Retreat Palm Dubai MGallery by Sofitel, the region's first family-friendly wellness resort, unveils a new and extensive range of healthy meals from Rayya Nutri.

Offered exclusively via delivery service, all the dishes on the menu have been meticulously developed by the Rayya Nutri team by means of a certified calorie counter. The meals have been created from mostly locally-sourced ingredients. All orders will come with the list of ingredients, alongside the nutritional facts of each dish including the calorie, protein, carbs, net carbs, and fat content.

Rayya Nutri's latest collection includes assorted acai cravings mix namely tropical acai bowl, protein acai bowl, peanut butter acai bowl, and more. The healthy main courses include options like vegan quinoa vegetable biryani, vegan cashew curry, 50-hour paleo short ribs, and paleo lava stone grilled Atlantic salmon, to name a few. There are also refreshing salads to choose from including vegan grilled chickpea salad, vegan papaya salad, paleo chicken salad, and paleo crab-avo salad and other salad varieties. The other categories in Rayya Nutri's menu are nourishing breakfast meals, hearty soups, breads and rolls with paleo and vegan selections, and guilt-free sweet delights.

For those looking to sustain a healthy diet, Rayya Nutri is also offering customized week-long and month-long meal plans, which will be designed after one-to-one consultation with the chef and nutritionist.

As an introductory promo, Rayya Nutri is offering 20% discount on all orders until 31st May. Rayya Nutri offers free delivery to select areas for orders worth AED200/ and above.
www.rayyanutri.com





AZERBAIJAN

Sustainable tourism development for the post-pandemic era



The tourism industry in Azerbaijan has taken off over the last decade, making a substantial contribution to the country's economy. In 2019, Azerbaijan achieved its highest-ever number of international visitors, reaching 3.2 million visitors. As the global COVID-19 pandemic prompted the closure of borders and enforcement of international travel restrictions, it had a significant negative impact on the global tourism industry – and Azerbaijan was deeply affected as well. However, thanks to proactive government measures and coordinated efforts across the tourism industry stakeholders, the country has been able to minimise the negative effect and re-strategise to develop sustainable tourism activities for the post-pandemic period.

The pandemic has had an influence on the preferences of travelers – today, there is an increasing demand for authentic, eco-friendly, sustainable tourism. Azerbaijan offers numerous

opportunities to visitors in the post-pandemic era seeking to discover off-the-beaten-path adventures, pristine nature and retreat away from the crowds.

Home to 9 out of 11 distinct climatic zones, the landscape of Azerbaijan offers diverse scenery with everything from forests and steppes to beaches, and lush and snowy mountains. The abundance of natural resources and great tourism potential creates favorable conditions for the development of eco- and agrotourism in the country.

In close cooperation with international birding experts and Azerbaijan Ornithological Society, certified birdwatching destinations like Khinalig and Laza in Guba and Gusar regions in the north, Beshbarmag mountain just an hour's drive from Baku, as well as the Talish Mountains in the south have been



established. With around 400 species of birds, Azerbaijan is a perfect destination for birdwatchers from around the world.

In 2020, evaluation and marking of hiking routes in Azerbaijan started with 15 routes in the north, north-west and west regions assessed and signposted. Trail marking allows visitors to hike between remote villages, camp in magnificent scenery and enjoy outdoor activities. For the future, it is planned to develop hiking and trekking routes across the Caucasus.

More recently, the foundation of the Mud Volcanoes Tourism Complex in Gobustan just 40 minutes' drive from Baku was laid – soon, this will be a perfect destination for glamping and star gazing in the unique moonlike landscape of the mud volcanoes, providing visitors with an immersive experience.

Azerbaijan is well-known for its unmatched cuisine and variety of fresh produce. To experience the amazing tastes, culture, nature and traditions, and get first-hand experience in farming and cultivation, Azerbaijan has introduced the Slow Food Travel concept – an idea to enhance the value chain in rural areas, preserve agricultural and food biodiversity and emphasize the importance of local gastronomy and economic regeneration in those areas. Regional accommodation facilities and guesthouse infrastructure are also being assessed and improved to cater to the needs of travelers and contribute to the social development of local communities.

The liberation of the Karabakh region has created new opportunities for the country's tourism. With its great tourism potential, improved regional connectivity and investments in its infrastructure, Karabakh will develop into a globally competitive, sustainable and attractive tourism destination.

With more than 4.3 mln vaccine doses administered and an improvement of epidemiological situation, Azerbaijan is now accepting citizens and residents of the UAE, Qatar, Bahrain, Russia, Turkey, Israel, US, UK and Hungary under special conditions. This first step towards returning to a "new normal" means that with the gradual recovery process, Azerbaijan will emerge as a tourism destination on the international arena stronger than ever before.

Israel

The Tiny Giant

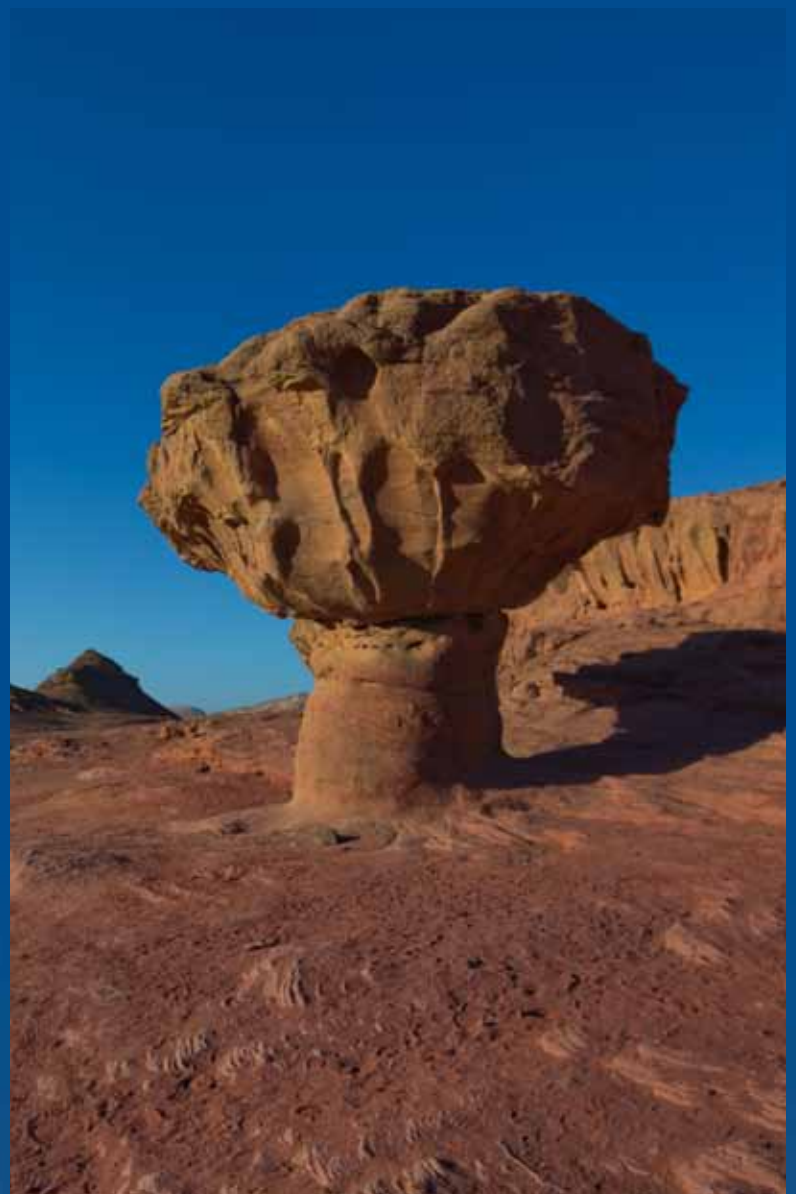
by: Hazel Saldanha



The Arabian Travel Mart 2021 marked a momentous and historic occasion for Israel, as it proudly showcased itself as a multi-faceted destination of gargantuan offerings. Accessible in less than 4 hours from the GCC, it is perfect for short getaway or an extended vacation. Trendz International caught up with Ms. Ksenia Kobiakov, Israel Ministry of Tourism who shared the fascinating position of Israel as a premier tourism destination for visitors from the region, with all safety health measures in place.

Israel's Mediterranean coast runs for 240 km, and visitors can choose from a variety of beaches, from the buzzy shores of Tel Aviv to quieter stretches outside the city. Tel Aviv has a six-mile beach popular with young and laid-back locals. Sunbathers and surfers rule the beach, giving Israel's second city a certain Californian feel. At sunset, the city appropriately dubbed "The Big Orange" gives way to outstanding nightlife and an exciting gastronomic scene sure to tick all the boxes. The cuisine in the region is a nuanced fusion of the geography and its peoples that have made the country its home for thousands of years. One is sure to find a unique take of staple favourites along with creative interpolations of dishes from the Mediterranean, Caucasus & Europe. For those looking for a different aesthetic, the beaches along the Red Sea city of Eilat offer magical coral reefs and the opportunity to swing alongside dolphins. The city is also a bird watcher's paradise as one of the most important stop over sites for migratory birds.

Ancient history aficionados are spoilt for choice in Jerusalem, the capital city and arguably one of the most archeologically dense locales in the world. The city is home to 3 monotheistic faiths, with 2000 historical/archaeological sites that are guaranteed to leave a lasting spiritual impression. The Old City is home to many of Jerusalem's most sought-after attractions, including the Western Wall, and Temple Mount. Originally built by King David in 1004 B.C., it comprises four distinct areas: the Jewish, Muslim, Christian & Armenian Quarter. Each quarter exudes its own



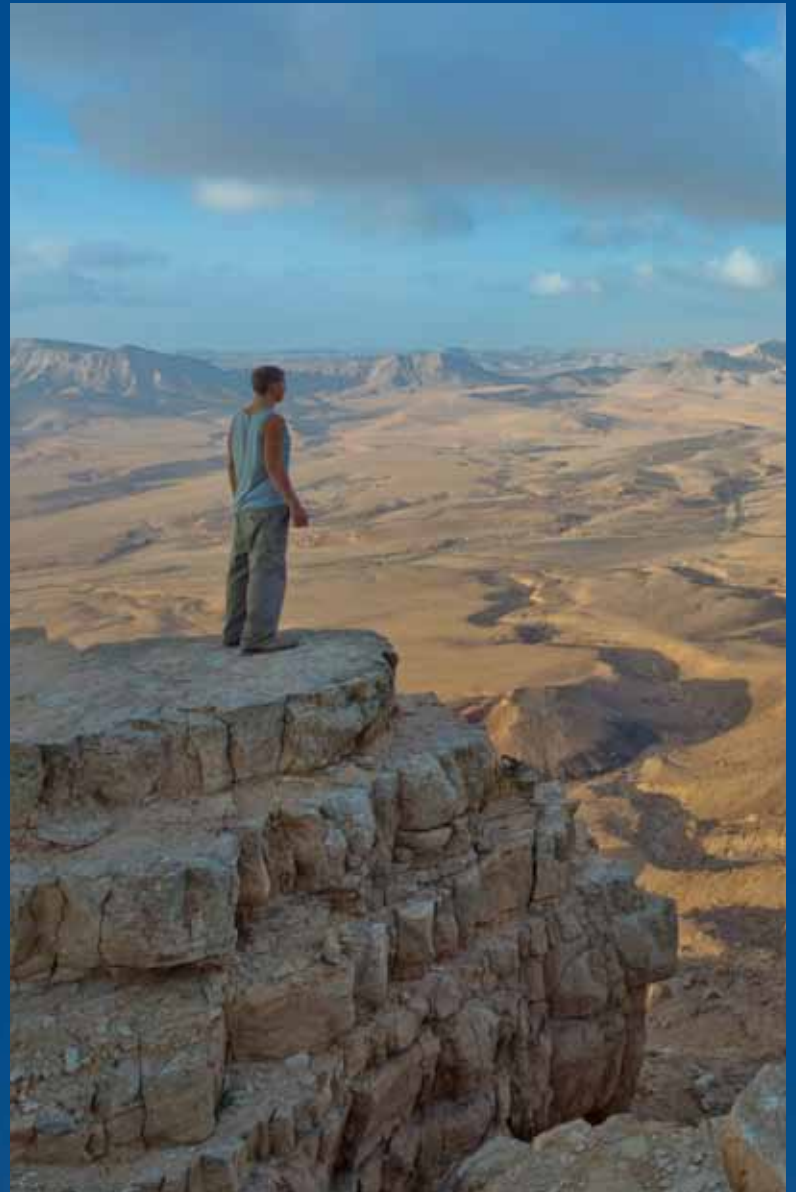


unique atmosphere, with religious sites, shops, and food offerings reflecting its respective heritage. Yet the Old City's winding alleyways and ancient stone plazas allow mixing and mingling among these cultures, making a very eclectic environment.

Beyond golden beaches and historic hotspots, the regions up North are reminiscent of Tuscany and is one of the country's best kept secret. Famous for its vast green landscapes, quaint small towns and boutique vineyards the area is awash with beauty, adventure and hidden gems waiting to be discovered. A short trip from Tel-Aviv is the colourful northern city of Haifa and the beautiful sprawling vistas of the Golan Heights. Visit in winter to take advantage of the ski resort at Mount Hermon or experience adrenalin packed activities in warmer months such as white water rafting, extreme hiking and mountain climbing.

Israel is a sure-fire experience of a life time appealing young and old, the adventurous and laid-back. It is more than you've ever dreamed possible.

goisrael.com
#VisitIsrael



Baden-Baden

The elegant spa & culture town in the Black Forest

In Baden-Baden, the city's rich history blends seamlessly with a highly contemporary lifestyle. Over the centuries, Baden-Baden has evolved into an enchanting destination, offering a spectacularly diverse range of opportunities for relaxation and excitement. Located in the Black Forest, Baden-Baden is an oasis for spa and wellness, but also a great destination for culture lovers, art enthusiasts and foodies.

Baden-Baden is well known as a health and spa destination thanks to its curative thermal water that bubbles upwards from twelve springs. For guests and locals who are seeking wellbeing, the city's two thermal baths offer soothing recreation in the warm thermal waters as well as high quality wellness and beauty treatments. Baden-Baden is also home to a variety of spa- and wellness hotels including the Villa Stéphanie, part of the five-star superior Brenners Park-Hotel & Spa. This luxury health resort is a mansion solely devoted to the individual's spa experience. A holistic approach focusing on beauty, detox & nutrition, emotional balance and medical care make the Villa Stéphanie special.



In Baden-Baden, being “properly treated” has a long tradition. Whether it is preventative or rehabilitation medicine or a medical check-up, the well-being of the whole person is at the forefront of every treatment. The clinics and medical spas of Baden-Baden are equipped with all the latest technology.

It has been known for thousands of years that sea salt has a healing effect, especially on the respiratory tract. The newly renovated Salina salt cave in Baden-Baden, which celebrates its reopening in April, offers exactly this effect of Dead Sea and Himalayan salt.

Apart from wellness seekers, also shopping enthusiasts will love their time in Baden-Baden and enjoy the plenty high-class shopping opportunities. Numerous exquisite boutiques invite visitors to luxurious shopping in the picturesque streets and shopping boulevards in the neo-baroque old town. Guests looking for luxury-brand products, international labels and individual antiques, jewelry and presents will adore roaming through Baden-Baden.

For families, couples or friends, for younger or older guests: there is no boredom in Baden-Baden. Throughout the whole year there is a variety of events in and around the town. From international horse races to vintage car meetings, food and music festivals, summer concerts, operas and many more.

Nature lovers find numerous well-maintained parks and gardens in the “green city of short distances,” where exotic varieties of flowering plants and trees are growing. The car-free city center as well as the “Lichtentaler Allee,” a 2 km long green parkway, invite for relaxing walks or romantic horse carriage rides. And as the home to Germany’s largest municipal forest, Baden-Baden is the ideal starting point to explore the surrounding mountains and enjoy outdoor activities such as hiking, mountain biking and paragliding. Baden-Baden is the gateway to the Black Forest Panoramic Route which impresses with a beautiful nature and breath-taking views over the mountains and the Rhine Valley. Furthermore, Baden-Baden is the perfect starting point for many different day trips. For example, to the castle in Heidelberg or Germany’s biggest theme park, the Europa-Park. It offers more than 120 attractions and shows and is fun for the entire family. The theme park can be reached in less than an hour from Baden-Baden.

Baden-Baden, the elegant spa- and culture town, offers a variety of wellness, cultural and culinary highlights in a spectacular natural setting on the foothills of the Black Forest. Best of all, almost everything is within walking distance and no car is needed while being in Baden-Baden.

For more information:
Baden-Baden Tourism Board
info@baden-baden.com
www.baden-baden.de/en



Sanremo

Riviera of Flowers



Sanremo is the most famous resort of the “Riviera of Flowers”, with an extremely mild climate, just 45 minutes from Nice International airport and 30 minutes from Monte-Carlo.

The town is well-known for its highly developed floriculture, its numerous social, cultural and sports events (Italian Song Festival, bicycle race Milano-Sanremo, “Old-Timer” Car Rally, World-Championship Car Rally,) and for the illustrious personalities who lived here, such as Monet, Ciajkovskij, Alfred Nobel, founder of the homonymous prize, the most famous European Royal Families, as well as the present international jet set.



It is widely appreciated for its artistic and architectural heritage, but most of all for its wonderful and typical Mediterranean landscape in the surroundings, made up of deep blue sea and steep cliffs behind it.

Places of interest: the Medieval old town centre known locally as “Pigna”, the Russian Orthodox Church, the Cathedral of San Siro with its Romanesque-gothic style, the Casino, the town symbol dating back to 1905, the Borea d’Olmo Ducal Palace, Villa Nobel, Villa Ormond with its luxuriant botanical garden.

Sanremo is also a gateway for excursions to the fascinating medieval villages of the hinterland or to the nearby glamorous French Riviera.

Finally, a must is the shopping in the elegant boutiques of the centre, the antique workshops and at the picturesque open-air market which is held in the morning on Tuesdays and Saturdays, further to a Luxury Outlet opening soon.

The perfect place for a relaxing holiday or as destination for conferences and meetings, since Sanremo offers all the services of a big city, but without its stress. A unique Italian jewel to be discovered with many faces always able to surprise you.

Explore San Marino

by: Shereen Shabnam

With the Dubai Expo on the horizon, we are excited to find out more about San Marino, the oldest Republic and the fifth smallest country in the world. For the first time ever, San Marino showcased the country's unique attractions and heritage at the Arabian Travel Market (ATM) and will offer insights about the country's participation at the upcoming Dubai Expo later this year where visitors can see a piece of San Marino in the UAE as a unique Fibula - a brooch in form of an eagle currently exhibited at the Louvre Abu Dhabi is the inspiration for the country's pavilion.

The Republic of San Marino clings to Mount Titano, in the heart of the Italian peninsula and its liberty and independence has been recognised over centuries by Popes, potentates and even the emperor Napoleon. In 2008 Mount Titano, the historic centres of San Marino and Borgo Maggiore were designated a UNESCO World Heritage site.

The Republic of San Marino is a must-see tourist destination nestled within Italy and easily accessible via key airports such as Rome and Bologna. San Marino is located in Northern Italy and is an independent country founded more than 1700 years ago with a territory of 24 sq miles and 33,000 inhabitants. It offers tourists cultural sites, natural areas, retail and wholesome cuisine.

The Ambassador to the UAE and Commissioner General Expo 2020, Mauro Maiani recently unveiled the main theme and title of the San Marino Pavilion at the Expo located in the Opportunity area. The Pavilion will be dedicated to the replica of the "Treasure of Domagnano" found in San Marino in late 1800. The most important piece of the treasure, the fibula is now at Louvre Abu Dhabi. The pavilion will also tell the History and tradition of the country as well as its modern economic system based on tourism but also in innovative companies. The national day of San Marino at Expo 2020 will be on 10 December 2021.

San Marino is a destination for different types of travellers where Tourists can enjoy the classical Italian tourism tour, attend cultural and festival events in summer time and it caters to the wedding tourism industry as well. San Marino is also a shopping destination with its old town full of stores and the brand-new San Marino Outlet Experience, one of the biggest Italian fashion outlet malls in Northern Italy is opening later this month.

Mount Titano

The highlight of San Marino is Mount Titano which offers a wide-angle view of the surrounding area: from the Upper Marecchia Valley and Montefeltro to the Adriatic Coast and on to the coastline of Croatia, visible on clear days. Evocative sunsets from Mount Titano is a spectacular sight.

Mountain Walks

Walking is the best way to experience the sights and sounds of San



Marino. The best are the views of the Romagna coastline when walking along the ridge of the mountain, surrounded by greenery.

The Old Town

The original settlement of San Marino is located on the top of Mount Titano, 750 m above sea level enclosed by imposing medieval walls, narrow streets for walking and lined with buildings and monuments built entirely of local stone. The three Fortresses on the top of Mount Titano give San Marino a majestic feel.

Other notable buildings include the Basilica del Santo, Church of San Pietro, Church of San Francesco dating back to the 14th century, Church of the Cappuccini and the State Museum housed in the recently-restored Palazzo Pergami. The Piazza della Libertà is the heart of the country's institutional life with the Public Palace (1894), where the Parliament sits. The building was restored for the 1994.

Art Museum

The San Marino National Gallery exhibits a selection of works of art from the Contemporary Art Collection of San Marino, and has over a thousand pieces. Some of them were created by the most renowned Italian artists of the 20th century: Renato Guttuso, Emilio Vedova, Sandro Chia, Enzo Cucchi, Corrado Cagli, Giuseppe Spagnolo, Enzo Mari, Luigi Ontani and others, together with the most distinguished local painters and sculptors.

Crafts and shopping

San Marino's old town is a dream-like setting, with hundreds of stores and restaurants for tasting local food and wine. This is the perfect place to discover truly unique products: typical artistic craftwork, rare stamps, precious coins of the Republic of San Marino and traditional pottery. It is the best place for ancient old objects to be coveted, bought and preserved. Ten kilometers from the historic centre, the San Marino Outlet Experience offers an exclusive shopping experience among international luxury brands.

The flavours of San Marino

The culinary traditions of San Marino are those of Romagna, with some influx from the Marche region, as close ties have always



existed with Montefeltro. On San Marino tables, piadina and homemade pasta are never missing, nor are vegetables prepared in various ways.

San Marino products include extra-virgin olive oil, cheeses, meats, milk, wines and honey. All the products are guaranteed by a quality seal which identifies San Marino manufacturers through a single food certification mark called "Consorzio Terra di San Marino."

How to get there

There are no border formalities. Anyone visiting Italy with a visa can enter San Marino. Located in central Italy, San Marino is easily reached through its road links to Italy. The nearest airports are Federico Fellini International Airport, Rimini, 27 km from San Marino and "Guglielmo Marconi" International Airport, Bologna 132 km from San Marino.

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PAKISTAN

THE AMAZING NORTH



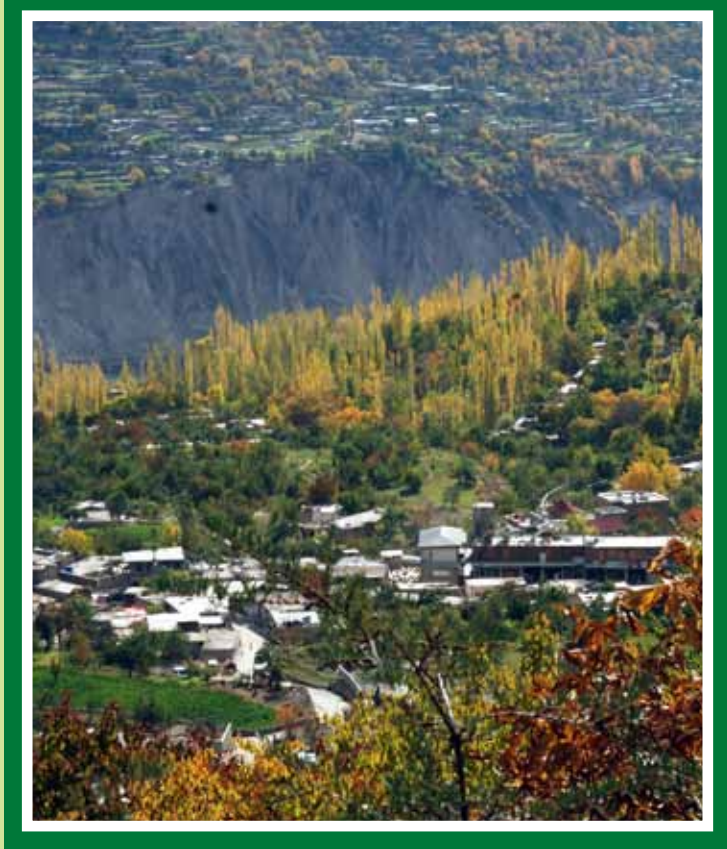
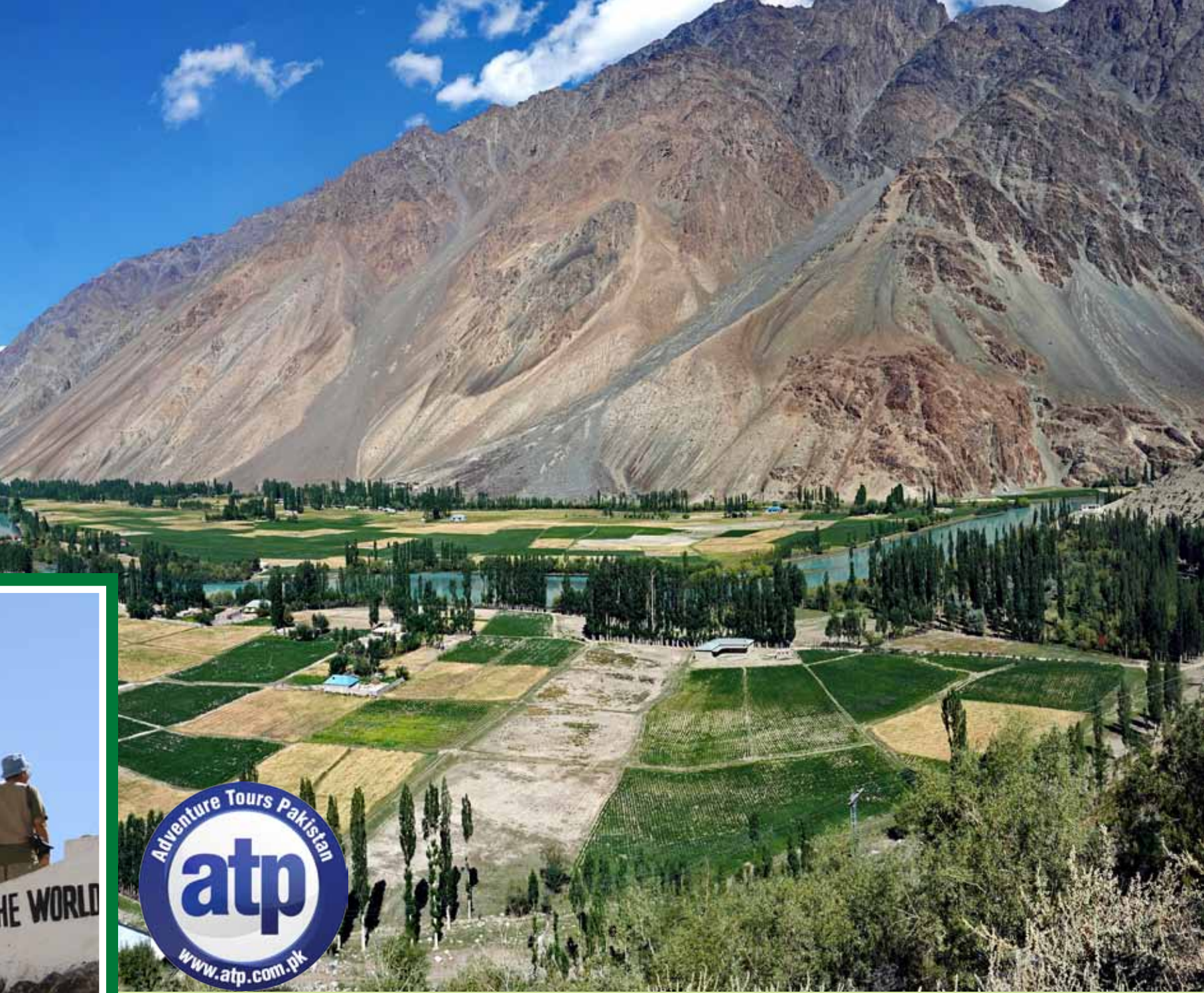
The northern areas of Pakistan are blessed with sky touching mountains, breathtaking valleys blanketing the landscape, diverse cultures, and warm-hearted people welcoming everyone with smiling faces. Combined with mesmerizing mountain scenery, jaw dropping adventurous road rides and indulging in local indigenous cultures, the magical road journey to north Pakistan has been designed in a way, such that it is later remembered with nostalgia. The highlights of this region are Gilgit, Karimabad, Hunza, Phander, Chitral, and Bumburet offering natural untapped scenic views, indigenous cultures, remnants of history in the form of museums, sculptures of Buddha and medieval forts.

After your arrival in Islamabad, Pakistan, start off your journey to Gilgit city, that has served an important crossroad for the ancient Silk Road trade, and now connects China, Skardu, Chitral and Islamabad by road. From Gilgit, make a visit to Hunza where you will be heartily welcomed by the local inhabitants, making you feel at home. It is here in Hunza, where the important medieval forts are located. 750 years old Baltit Fort has been on the UNESCO World Heritage Tentative list since 2004. Standing atop Karimabad, the former capital of Hunza Valley, the fort offers a picturesque view of central Hunza. This can be followed by a visit to neighboring Altit Fort which is older than Baltit fort. Both of these forts have served as important residential places for the rulers of Hunza. Another important destination on our list is the Attabad Lake with its enchanting blue color, dramatic mountain backdrop and recently introduced water sports. If you have time and would love to explore more, then head further north to the iconic Khunjerab Pass via Gulmit, which is at 4700m and is reputedly the highest metaled border crossing in the world. Next, a visit to the Phander valley is a must, provided its magnificent view and sumptuous trout fish.

This adventurous route can be rotated eastwards passing Shandur Pass and Mastuj and entering into Chitral at an elevation of 1500m. The principal attractions are the bazaar, royal fort, the Shahi Mosque, Chitral Museum, polo matches and the Chitral Gol National Park. A visit to district Chitral in KPK is incomplete without a visit to the unique Kalash Valley, with approximately 3000 people, belonging to an indigenous community, living in three isolated but beautiful valleys of Bumburet, Rambur, and Birir.

Best time to visit: May to October
Trip duration: 7 – 21 days





Shaza Hotels

Global expansion plan reflects the growing demand for halal-friendly hotels & retreats globally

The luxury hotel and resorts operator runs several properties in the Middle East under Shaza and Mysk brands and is a pioneer in the halal-friendly hospitality industry

Shaza Hotels, the luxury hotel and retreats chain with properties operational in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, UAE and Oman, has continued to prove that luxury hotel businesses do not need to clash with culture and local traditions.

The Shaza brand is known for its unmistakable offerings that represent true Arabian hospitality. The brand draws its inspiration from the traditions and cultures of the various countries along the Silk Route. Reflected by the supremely elegant Arabian style décor and serene ambience, it is appreciated by the most discerning travelers for its uniqueness and cultural resonance.

All of the brand's properties are dry hotels, or what is commonly known as "Halal-friendly hotels." In other words, these operations don't serve alcohol and their food and entertainment offerings all follow the halal lifestyle. Being a global hospitality leader in this niche segment, Shaza hotels knows that "Halal" tourism is clearly a growing market segment, with Muslim tourists seeking destinations that meet their needs, in terms of diet, dress or rituals.

Shaza hotels are known for being proactive in providing what suits their guests to redefine luxury, with a vision that connects the past to the future. From their glamorous rooms and personal Morafik service, which helps guests throughout their stay in Shaza's KSA hotels, to the lavish glamping Mysk resorts in the desert of Sharjah, people will find what they need and more to make their stay memorable at any of the brand's properties.





Shaji Abu Salih, Corporate Director - Business Development at Shaza Hotels said, "Shaza Hotels was the first mover and the only player as a global chain in the Halal spectrum. Many of the hotels position themselves as 'dry hotels,' while we stand and advocate for the halal-friendly offering to all customers. In the past couple of years, we have started seeing a growing trend in Halal tourism and the need to find hotels that cater to the travelers' needs."

Shaza's growing portfolio reflects the growing demand in this segment from investors and guests. Currently, Shaza has projects under development in Kuwait, Jeddah, Salalah, Doha and The Palm Dubai. The brand also plans to expand within KSA and to enter key destinations like London, Turkey, Indonesia, Malaysia, Egypt, USA and Pakistan. The brand aims to operate 25 hotels & retreats under its portfolio in the coming 5 years.

Shaza operates Mysk by Shaza Al Mouj Muscat, overlooking the vibrant marina of Al Mouj in Muscat. It also runs the four Sharjah Collection by Mysk retreats, including Mysk Al Faya Retreat, Mysk Kingfisher Retreat, Mysk Al Badayer Retreat, and the soon to be opened Mysk Moon Retreat in Sharjah.

These retreats are hallmarks of Sharjah's cultural identity, each with its own distinctive allure. Each landmark offers a unique perspective of glamping atmospheres, service rituals, and guest experiences that are unheard of in the region, making them serene, luxurious, unique, contemporary, and bespoke retreats.

In KSA, Shaza is already a household name in the hospitality sector, operating Shaza Makkah that is one of the first in line hotels in Jabal Al Ka'abah overlooking Al Masjid Al Haram, and Shaza Madinah, right next to Al Masjid Al Nabawi, that combines sophistication and location with effortless style. It also operates Shaza Riyadh in the buzzing heart of the capital next to Al Rajhi grand mosque that transports travellers to light-filled spaces replete with intricate patterns and rich textures spaces.



Shaji Abu Salih, Corporate Director

Elounda Bay Palace Hotel

Undeniably alluring



A member of 'The Leading Hotels of the World, there is something undeniably alluring about the Elounda Bay Palace Hotel. Set amidst 20 lush acres of landscaped gardens and overlooking the sparkling blue ocean of the Mediterranean Sea, it offers one of the world's most exceptional locations. This 5* luxurious hotel boasts two private beaches, four restaurants, three bars, three conference rooms, three syndicate rooms, five floodlit tennis courts, Water-Sports Centre and PADI-Scuba Diving School, providing a perfect retreat for those wishing to unwind and relax in pampering luxury.

The Elounda Bay Palace is a picturesque resort, with Cretan architecture set in lush, colorful gardens combining natural beauty with all the advantages of contemporary living. Ideal for those seeking a relaxing holiday, it offers 262 rooms in total and features first-class service and unique accommodation. All rooms and bungalows are designed and decorated in a prevailing traditional style with a subtle touch of luxury and are fitted with air-conditioning, marble lined bathroom, TV with satellite and 50 channels, music programs, direct dial telephone, safe deposit box, mini-bar, bath robes, slippers and hair dryers, private balcony or terrace.

The deluxe resort hotels Elounda Bay Palace and the adjoining

Elounda Beach have it all for today's businessperson. Flawlessly designed conference areas and business facilities suitable for professional gatherings of varying sizes and styles, are set in a magnificent and serene location, with quality recreational and leisure amenities, top quality restaurants and of course, the impressive natural beauty of sprawling gardens and Mirabello Bay, which the hotels overlook. We welcome you to discover a superior-quality business travel experience and assign ourselves the vital mission of advancing your agenda by offering exceptional activity programs, cutting edge technology and comprehensive business-oriented services.

Recreational facilities at Elounda Bay Palace Hotel offer the newly constructed contemporary, up to the minute Hammam/Sauna area with an expansive outdoor relaxation area, a spacious Fitness centre overlooking the captivating crystal blue waters of the Mediterranean ocean, offering a wide range of Yoga, Pilates and Aerobic classes, suitable for all levels, whether your aim is to get fit, tone up or increase flexibility. Our highly experienced instructors are on hand to promote a more active lifestyle and will help you achieve your goal.

www.eloundabay.gr




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