

Visitors to Qatar increase in August

Second half of 2016 shows early signs of recovery from tourism slowdown

DOHA, QATAR, September 6, 2016 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Visits of GCC nationals to Qatar continued to increase in August, with year-to-date arrivals growing by 7% compared to the same period in 2015, a Qatar Tourism Authority report has shown. Overall, total visitor arrivals in the month of August increased by 2% compared to August 2015.

The growth in year-to-date (January to end of August) visitor arrivals from the GCC was dominated by visits from nationals of Saudi Arabia and the United

Arab Emirates, which increased by 9% and 11% respectively, compared to 2015. Visits from Bahrain nationals were up as well by 2%; while visits from nationals of Oman and Kuwait were down by -6% and -1% respectively.

Meanwhile, visitors entering the country on the Qatar-Oman tourist visa increased by 2% year-to-date in comparison to the same period in 2015. Visitors who are nationals of the Americas also increased by 6% between January and August 2016 compared to the same period in 2015.

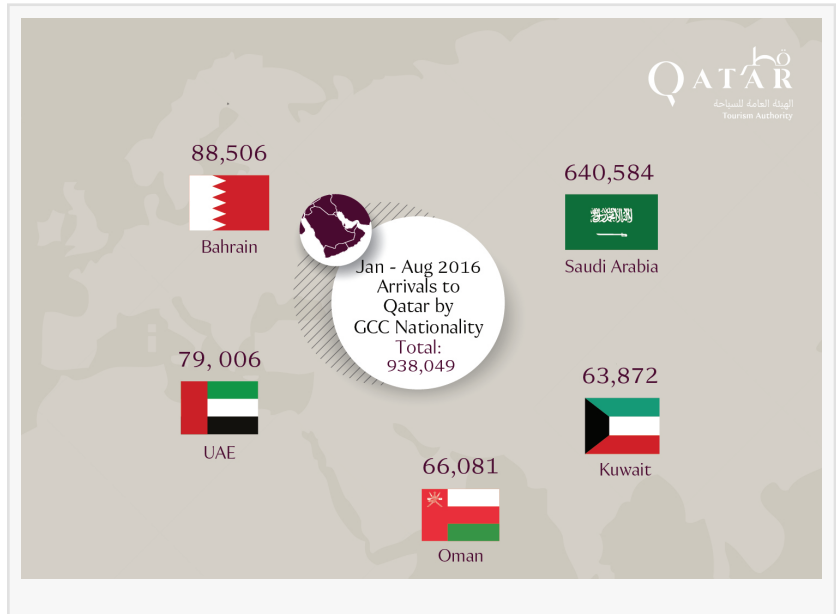
August is typically an off-peak month with declines in visitor arrivals compared to the rest of the year. The increase in arrivals this August, compared to August of last year, comes after efforts to incentivize travel to Qatar through Qatar Summer Festival promotions and entertainment activities. These included special packages from 56 hotel establishments, shopping promotions in malls across Qatar, and entertainment events throughout the month, including the Doha Comedy Festival.

QTA projections point to further modest increases in visitor arrivals in the coming months, supported by September's Eid Celebrations in Qatar and the docking of the first cruise ship of the season in October.

About Qatar Tourism Authority (QTA)

Long-recognized by the country's leadership as an avenue to further Qatar's development, tourism has been designated a priority sector by the government. Qatar Tourism Authority's mission is to firmly establish Qatar on the global map as a world-class tourism destination with deep cultural roots. In 2014, QTA launched the Qatar National Tourism Sector Strategy (QNTSS), which seeks to diversify the country's tourism offering and increase the sector's contribution to Qatar's economy by 2030.

QTA works in partnership with public and private stakeholders to achieve this mission by planning,



regulating and promoting a sustainable and diverse tourism industry.

As part of its planning efforts, QTA identifies types of tourism products and services that will contribute to the Qatar tourism experience, and works to attract investment for their development.

Regulation efforts involve ensuring tourism sector establishments operate at the highest standards while perpetuating Qatar's culture.

QTA promotes Qatar as a destination around the world, through its destination branding, international representation and participation at trade shows, and by developing a rich calendar of festivals and events. With a growing international presence, QTA's representative offices in London, Paris, Berlin, Milan, Singapore, and Riyadh support QTA's promotion efforts.

Since launching QNTSS, Qatar has welcomed over 7 million visitors, and achieved an average annual growth in arrivals of 11.5% between 2010-2015. The economic impact of the tourism sector in Qatar is becoming increasingly visible with 2014 estimates showing a total impact on Qatar's total GDP of 4.1%.

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QTA Press Office
Qatar Tourism Authority
974 44997248
email us here

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