

# Annual Report

# 2021

Developed vision for sustainable tourism

حكومة الشارقة  
Government of Sharjah  
هيئة الإنماء التجاري  
والسياحي بالشارقة  
Sharjah Commerce & Tourism  
Development Authority



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# 2021

# Annual Report



**Issued in Sharjah**

**by the Sharjah Commerce & Tourism Development Authority:**

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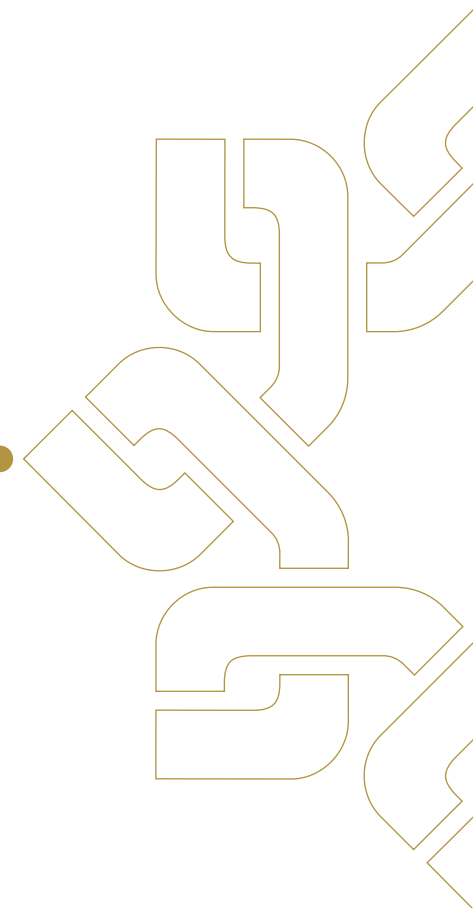
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H.H. SHEIKH  
**DR. SULTAN BIN MUHAMMAD AL QASIMI**  
Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Sharjah



**H.H. SHEIKH**  
**SULTAN BIN MOHAMMAD BIN SULTAN AL QASIMI**

Crown Prince and Deputy Ruler of Sharjah  
Chairman of Executive Council



## Chairman's Message

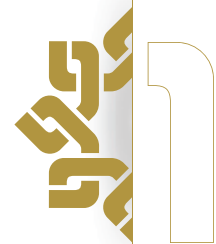
Success has its standards, tools and indicators; and what the UAE achieved in the past two years in terms of managing the COVID-19 crisis is a translation of the wise vision of the country's leadership, where the guidance from His Highness Dr. Sheikh Sultan bin Muhammad Al Qasimi, Member of the UAE Supreme Council and Ruler of Sharjah, and His Highness Sheikh Sultan Bin Mohammad Al Qasimi, Crown Prince, Deputy Ruler of Sharjah and Chairman of the Sharjah Executive Council immensely impacted and supported the significant achievements in promoting the tourism sector's potential and achieving its goals. Since its establishment, the UAE has been distinguished by its resilience and ability to address many challenges, setting it as a role model on regional and international levels; and here we are today, reaping the fruits of the country's efforts to maintain its leadership, potential and resources. For instance, in 2021, many countries around the world witnessed widespread recession in their tourism sectors, which form a cornerstone of modern economy and a vital source of income for some countries. Nevertheless, the UAE was one of the first countries to open its borders for tourists and achieve significant improvement in the numbers of tourist groups. The UAE offered a safe travel destination when most countries closed their airports and stayed in complete isolation from the rest of the world. Indeed, the UAE succeeded in overcoming the crisis, with the number of travelers passing through the country's airports growing by 15.8% in 2021. Furthermore, Sharjah, Abu Dhabi, and Dubai airports witnessed improved performance in terms of the number of travelers, which exceeded 41,370,000 passengers, at an increase of 15.8% compared to 2020, which registered around 35,370,000 travelers.

These statistics prove the country's ability to address challenges facing travelers around the world due to the COVID-19 crisis and recovering to its numbers prior to the crisis. In its turn, the tourism sector in Sharjah witnessed a YTY growth in the number of visitors by 16% in 2021. Furthermore, Sharjah ranked second in the world in the health and safety indicator of the Euromonitor International "Top 100 City Destinations" of 2021. It also ranked fourth in the 2021 list of Top 10 Tourism Cities in the Middle East and Africa. To stimulate the tourism sector and build its potential, SCTDA intensified its promotional efforts by participating in exhibitions and promotional tours in main tourism markets, most notably its participation in the World Travel Market London; the Russian Promotional Exhibit from 4-10, October 2021 in Moscow and Petersburg; in addition to the November 2021 sales mission which included: Ukraine - Kiev, Georgia - Tbilisi, and Armenia - Yerevan; and the promotional campaign of December 2021, which included Kazakhstan - Astana and Almaty and Uzbekistan - Tashkent. Finally, I extend my gratitude to the Government of Sharjah for its continuous efforts in supporting the Emirate's tourism sector, by developing new tourism destinations in record time, especially in Khorfakkan and Kalba on the east coast, and Al Dhaid and Mleiha in the central region. Furthermore, there are other projects under development which, once completed, are expected to enrich Sharjah's tourism products' high quality and diversified options. With that, we are confident that the tourism sector will soon recover its status prior to the crisis.



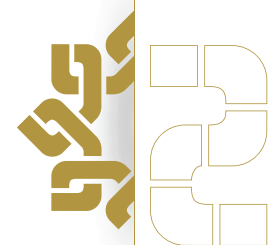
**Khalid Jasim Al Midfa**  
Chairman Sharjah Commerce and  
Tourism Development Authority (SCTDA)

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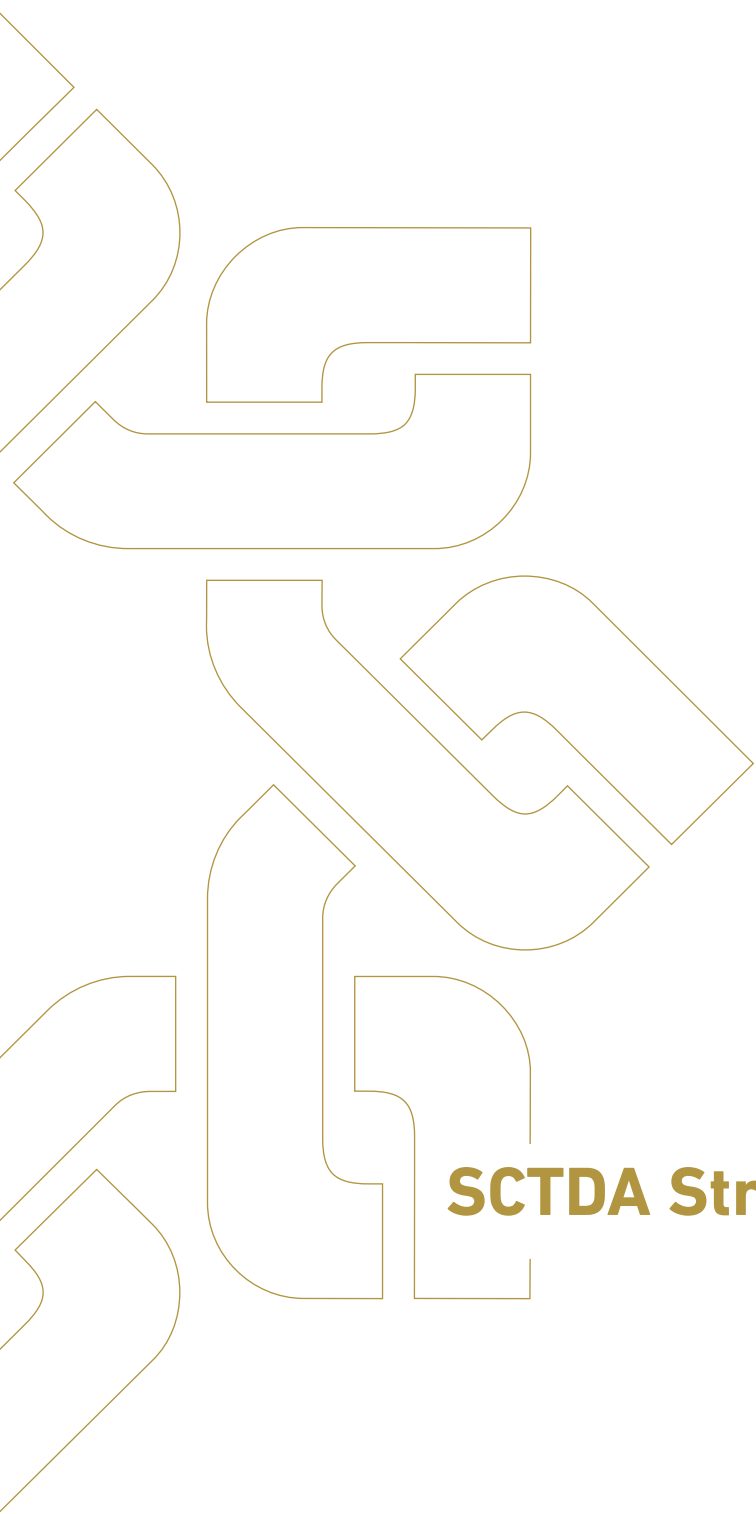
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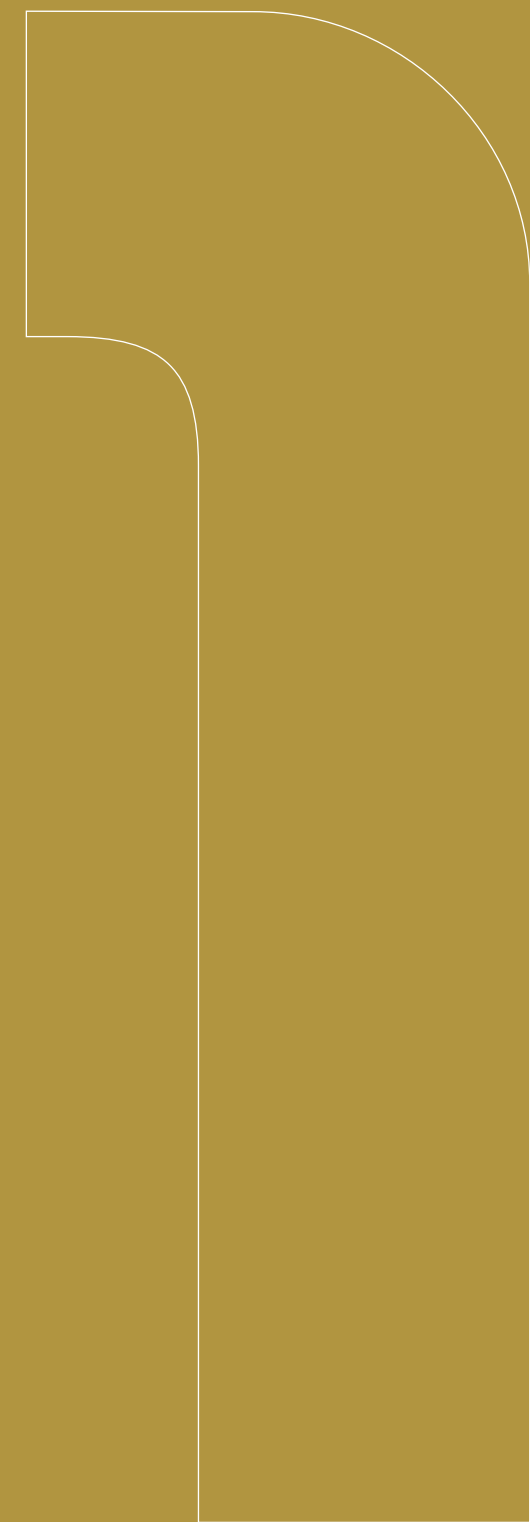


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**SCTDA Strategies... New Horizons**





## About the Report

The SCTDA Annual Report explores the main achievements of the tourism sector in 2021; most importantly its recovery from the COVID-19 Pandemic thanks to the role played by various government entities in coordinating and monitoring efforts of all stakeholders across various levels and sectors to increase tourist influx to Sharjah. The report then moves on to present a detailed view of statistics regarding the number of international tourists, night stays in Sharjah, occupation rates in Sharjah's hospitality establishments in 2021, the contribution of the tourism sector to the GDP, and Sharjah's main tourism indicators. Furthermore, the Report discusses SCTDA's strategy for local promotion through its organized events, and overseas promotion through international visits and agreements. Finally, the Report explores SCTDA's digital and non-digital services in addition to the distinguished role played by the media and other integrated initiatives to improve tourism performance and ensure its excellence as an economic sector in Sharjah.



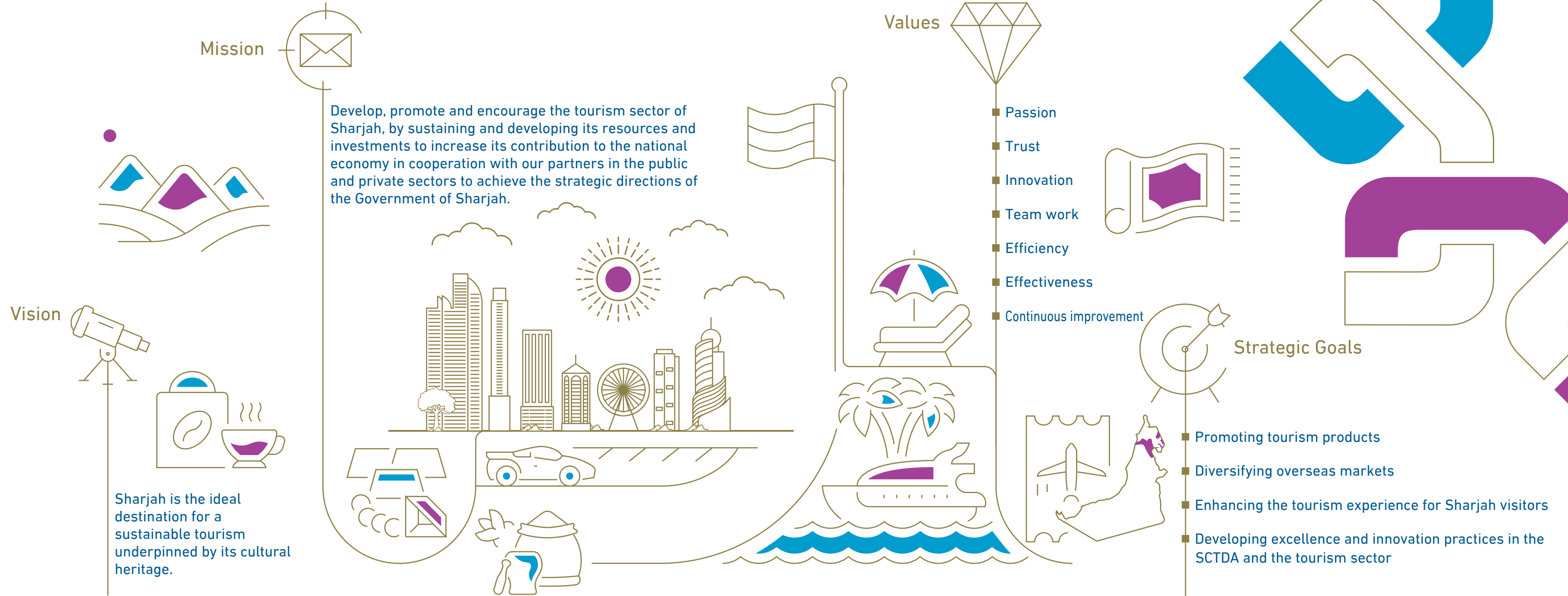
## About SCTDA

SCTDA was established in 1996 in pursuance of the Amiri Decree No. 5 of His Highness Dr Sheikh Sultan Bin Muhammad Al Qasimi, Member of the UAE Supreme Council and Ruler of Sharjah, to promote Sharjah as a unique and leading tourist destination at the local, regional and international levels, by developing commercial and tourism events and activities.

SCTDA employed a comprehensive variety of means to introduce the public to the unique features of Sharjah and establish the emirate among major tourist destinations at the local, regional, and international levels. SCTDA also participates in numerous international events and activities to put Sharjah on the international commercial and tourism map.

Furthermore, in coordination with other government departments and the private sector, SCTDA makes all possible efforts to achieve development in Sharjah, which is considered one of the best and most distinguished and prestigious destinations around the world.

# The Strategic Framework





## SCTDA Mandates and Services

SCTDA supports the tourism and commercial sectors in Sharjah through innovative and effective marketing locally and internationally; organizing various attractive events and activities; managing and providing its services in a way that exceeds the expectations of customers by designing, developing and implementing an integrated management system in accordance with the requirements of international standards; and raising awareness among the local, regional and international circles on the Emirate's status as a

prominent tourist and commercial destination. SCTDA is committed to utilizing existing and new channels to promote Sharjah. This includes participating in international exhibitions, conferences, and other related events.

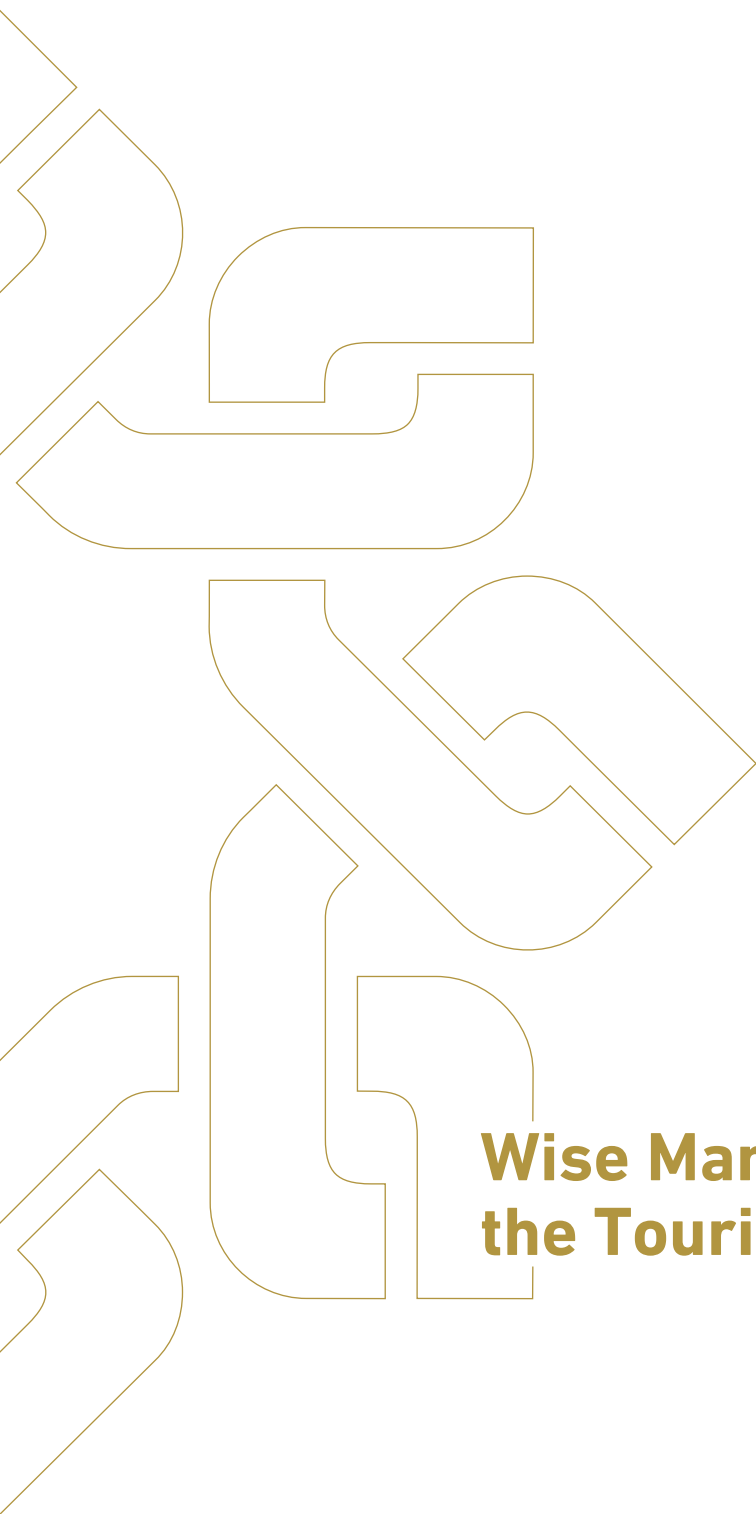
### **Mandates and services of the SCTDA include the following:**

- Promoting tourist and cultural destinations in Sharjah in cooperation with concerned authorities.
- Organizing and supporting events that attract tourists and visitors.

- Promoting the position of Sharjah as a distinguished family friendly, heritage, and cultural tourist destination.
- Providing tourism pamphlets and organizing tours.
- Achieving sustainable commercial development in the tourism sector to attract foreign investments, attract more tourists, and increase hotels and occupancy rates.
- Providing initial approvals to license the management and operation of hotel facilities and vacation homes.
- Providing initial approvals to license the management and

operation of tourist trips.

- Classifying hotels, hotel apartments, spas and vacation homes.
- Inspecting hotel facilities, resorts and vacation homes; and controlling quality to ensure all establishments adhere to SCTDA classification criteria and regulations.
- Issuing permits for desert tourist vehicles and ensuring adherence to rules and procedures of entering wild areas in Sharjah.
- Tourism training and guidance.



**Wise Management to Revive  
the Tourism Sector**



### A Leading Experience in Managing Crises

In overcoming the COVID-19 pandemic, the UAE proved its significant ability to manage crises thanks to the efforts taken by various sectors in the country and high levels of coordination between the public and private sectors, health care sector, and daily emergency services.

The country was dynamic in its response, allowing speedy development and expansion of its systems as soon as the pandemic broke out. In addition, response protocols were expanded to allow running wide-scale screening tests while monitoring and developing clinical trials alongside international cooperation to control the pandemic and distribute vaccines.

The decisive and rapid responses which the UAE government implemented from the early stages of the pandemic through testing centers and national sterilization and cleaning protocols have contributed to the early reduction of the pandemic's burden on the country including closing schools and suspending flights.

In early 2020, the National Emergency Crisis and Disaster Management Authority launched Al Hosn UAE application to

monitor COVID-19 testing results at the national level. The government was also transparent with its residents regarding Covid-19 developments, by publishing daily statistics, including the total number of new cases, recovered patients, deaths, and number of conducted tests, in addition to updated health regulations. The main goal at that stage was to control the pandemic and put an end to it through effective vaccination campaigns conducted in centers throughout the country free of charge for all.

As a result of these measures, the UAE was among ten countries praised internationally for their leadership and proactive approach in containing the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic according to the GRID Index. It also succeeded in reaching one of the highest rates of Covid-19 screening tests in the world. The UAE's tremendous ability to attract global talent to its workforce in addition to its capacities in research and development represented an important opportunity to build a strong ecosystem of knowledge and capabilities, as well as promote the establishment of centers of excellence in the region.



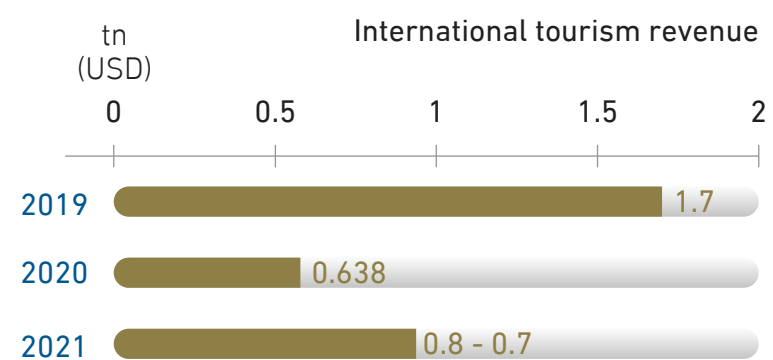
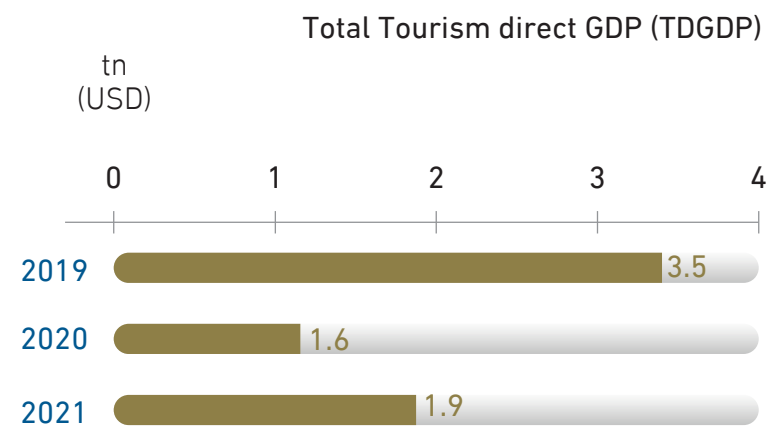
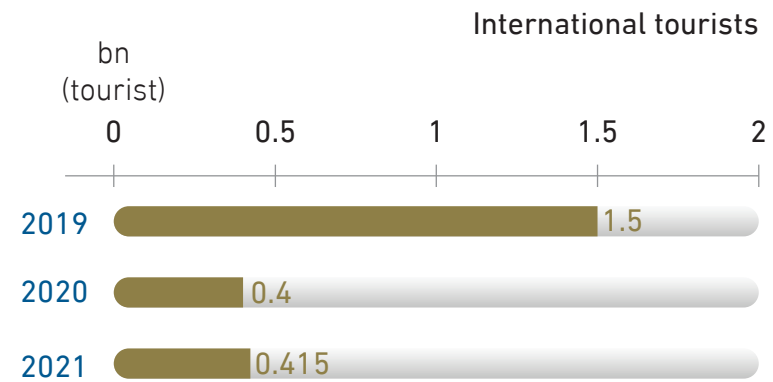
### Gradual Recovery of International Tourism

The country's tourism sector has witnessed a gradual recovery, supported by the preventive measures that keep pace with developing needs. Such measures, implemented

by the government internally and at all border crossings, encouraged tourists from different countries of the world to flock to the UAE at a time when most of the world's airports were closed to visitors and tourists.

### Increasing Number of Tourists in 2021

The economic contribution of tourism in 2021 globally (as measured by direct tourism GDP) is estimated at \$1.9 trillion, compared to \$1.6 trillion in 2020. However, it is still well below pre-pandemic values of \$3.5 trillion.<sup>(1)</sup>



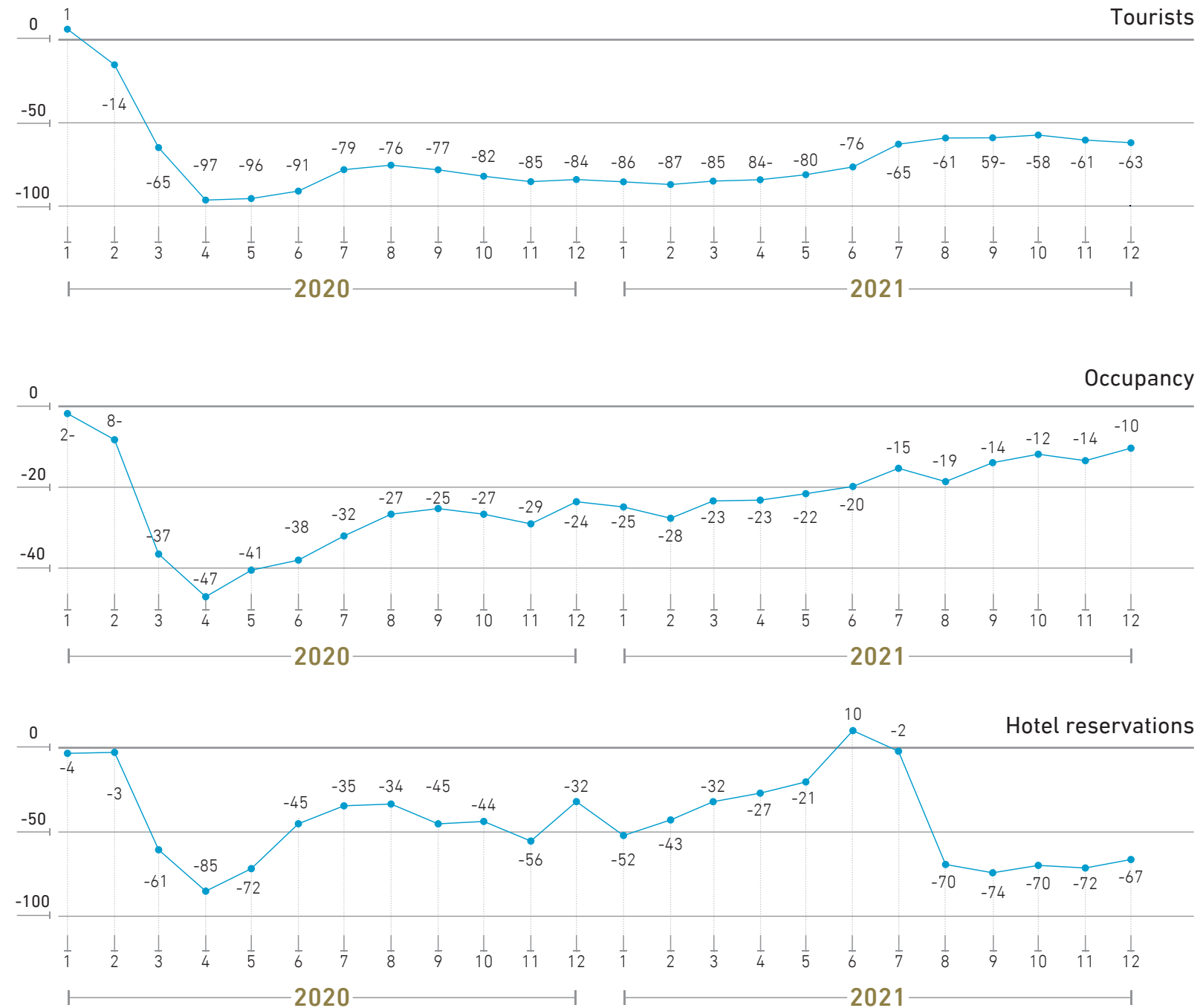
Indicators show that Africa experienced a 12% increase in tourist numbers in 2021 compared to 2020, although this number is still 74% lower than in 2019. The number of tourists in the Middle East decreased by 24%

compared to 2020 and 79% compared to 2019. In the Asia-Pacific, the number of tourists fell 65% below 2020 levels; as many destinations remained closed to non-essential travel.

Globally				
+ 4% compared to 2020		-72% compared to 2019		
Europe	Asia-Pacific	Middle East	Americas	Africa
+19% compared to 2020 -63% compared to 2019	-65% compared to 2020 -94% compared to 2019	-24% compared to 2020 -79% compared to 2019	+17% compared to 2020 -63% compared to 2019	+12% compared to 2020 -74% compared to 2019

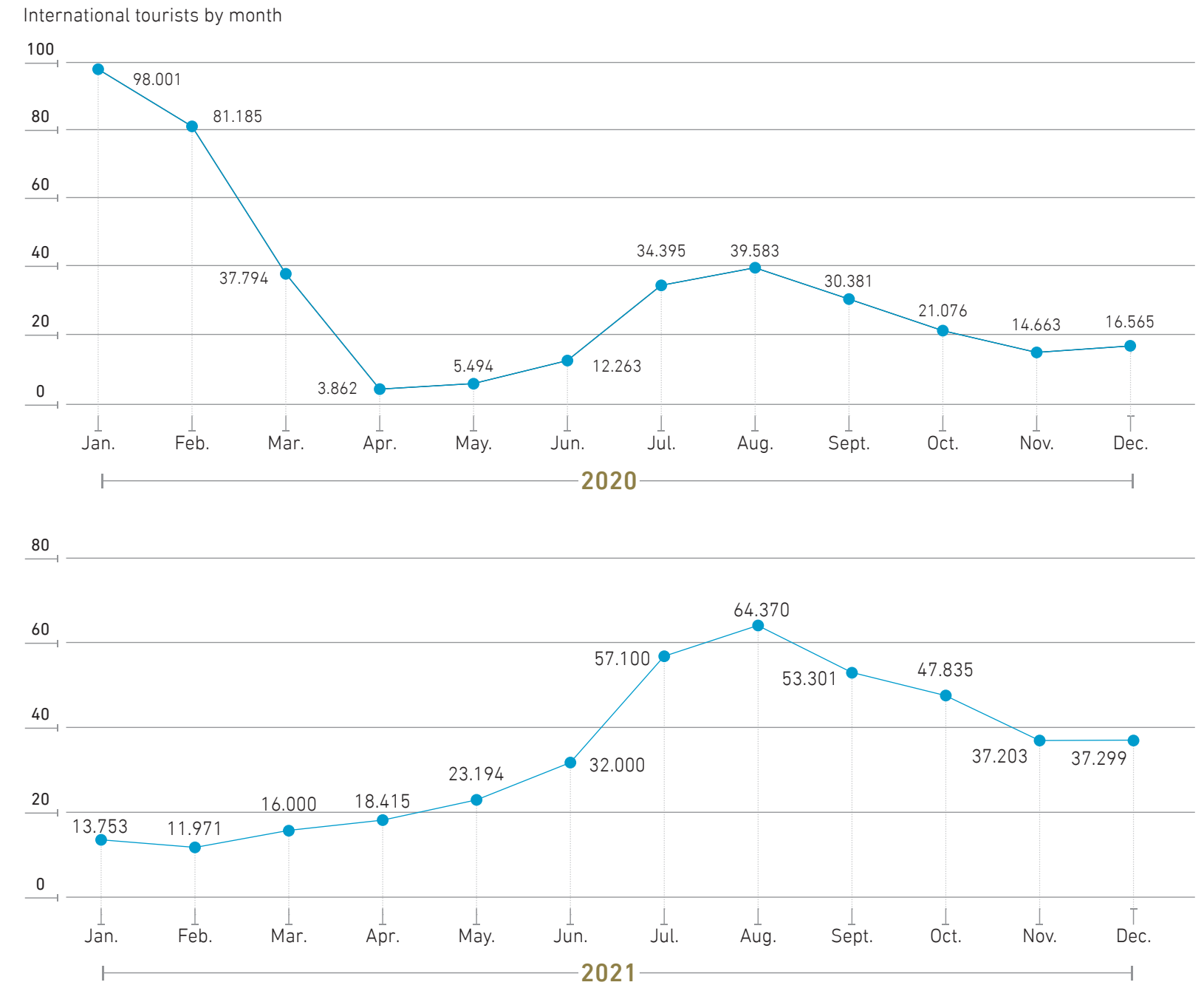
(1) Source: <https://www.unwto.org/news/tourism-grows-4-in-2021-but-remains-far-below-pre-pandemic-levels>

The rate of change in the number of tourists, hotel reservations and occupancy around the world in the years 2020-2021<sup>(2)</sup>, Compared to 2019



(2) Source: <https://www.unwto.org/tourism-data/unwto-tourism-recovery-tracker>

No. of international tourists in 2021 compared to 2020 monthly<sup>(3)</sup>



(3) Source: UNWTO2022, <https://www.unwto.org/country-profile-inbound-tourism>  
Compiled data on inbound tourism by country, including data on international tourist arrivals.

## UAE in the List of the Most Popular tourist destinations in 2021



Thanks to the UAE's effective handling of vaccines and tests, the country became an attractive destination in the post-Corona era, as evidenced by the recovery in the tourism and hospitality sectors in Q4 of 2021. The UAE ranked 26 in the list of Most Popular Countries; as nearly 16 million visitors headed to it during 2021<sup>(4)</sup> supported by the success of the global event Expo 2020.

### Growth in the Number of Travelers

The number of passengers traveling through UAE airports in 2021 witnessed a growth of 15.8%, registering more than should we write "over 41 million and 370 thousand passengers". Statistics also show that Sharjah Airport is one of the three main airports in the country that succeeded in 2021 in addressing the challenges facing travelers around the world due to the COVID-19 crisis and moving towards recovering its

pre-crisis rates.

In 2021, Sharjah International Airport continued its consistent strides towards full recovery from COVID-19 effects, receiving more than 7 million travelers on more than 57,000 trips.

Sharjah International Airport statistics for the year 2021 also indicate that passenger and air cargo flights were in operation to 152 destinations in 57 countries through 26 air passenger lines operating at the Airport, in addition to the nine air cargo lines.

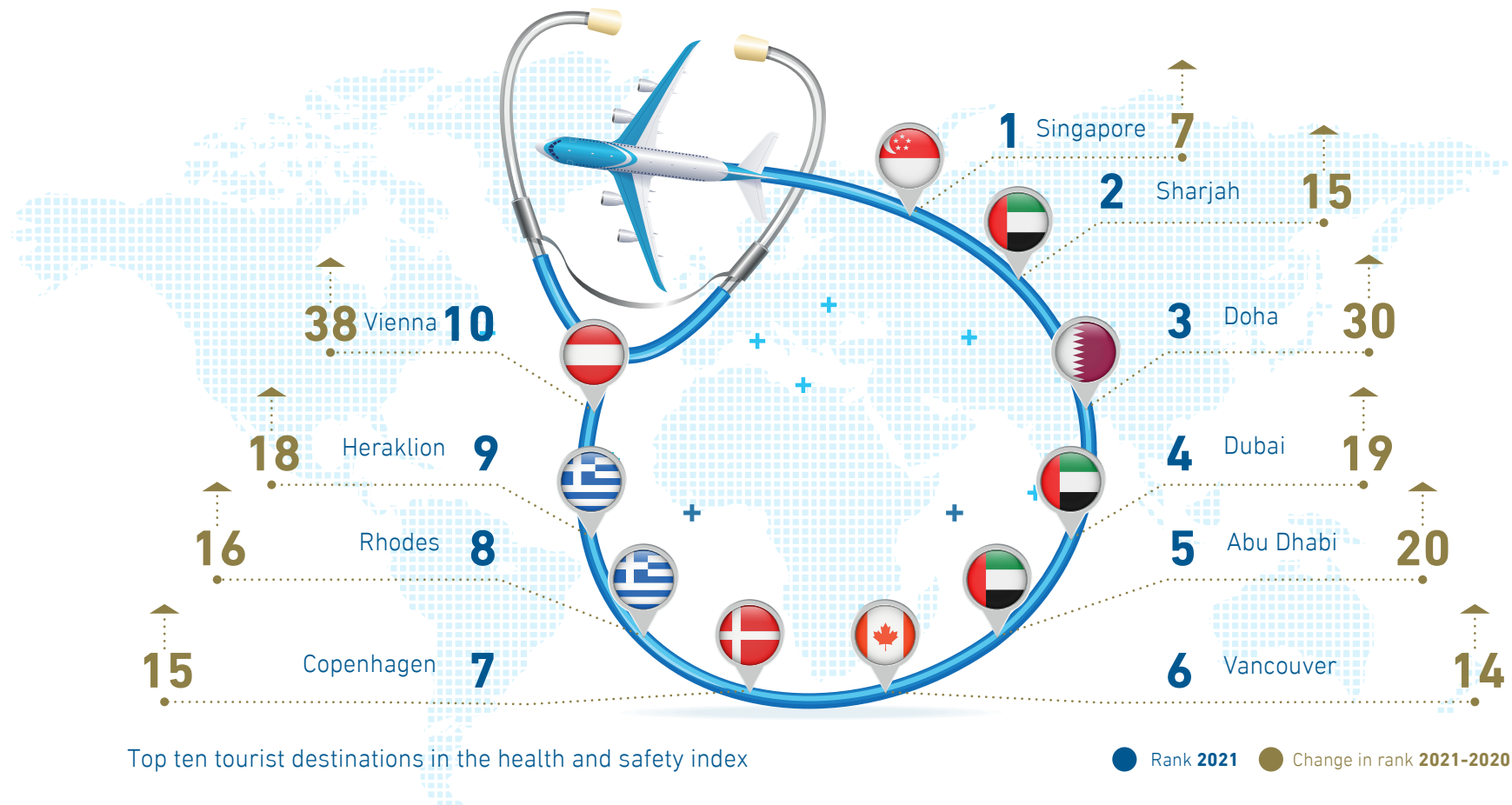
The tourism sector in Sharjah witnessed a growth of 16% in the number of visitors compared to same period last year. Furthermore, the sector witnessed the opening of new hotels and organizing vacation home rentals for the first time in the Emirate to promote its reputation as a leading tourism destination providing quality hospitality services.

(4) Source: <https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/most-visited-countries>

### Key Tourism Indicators in Sharjah

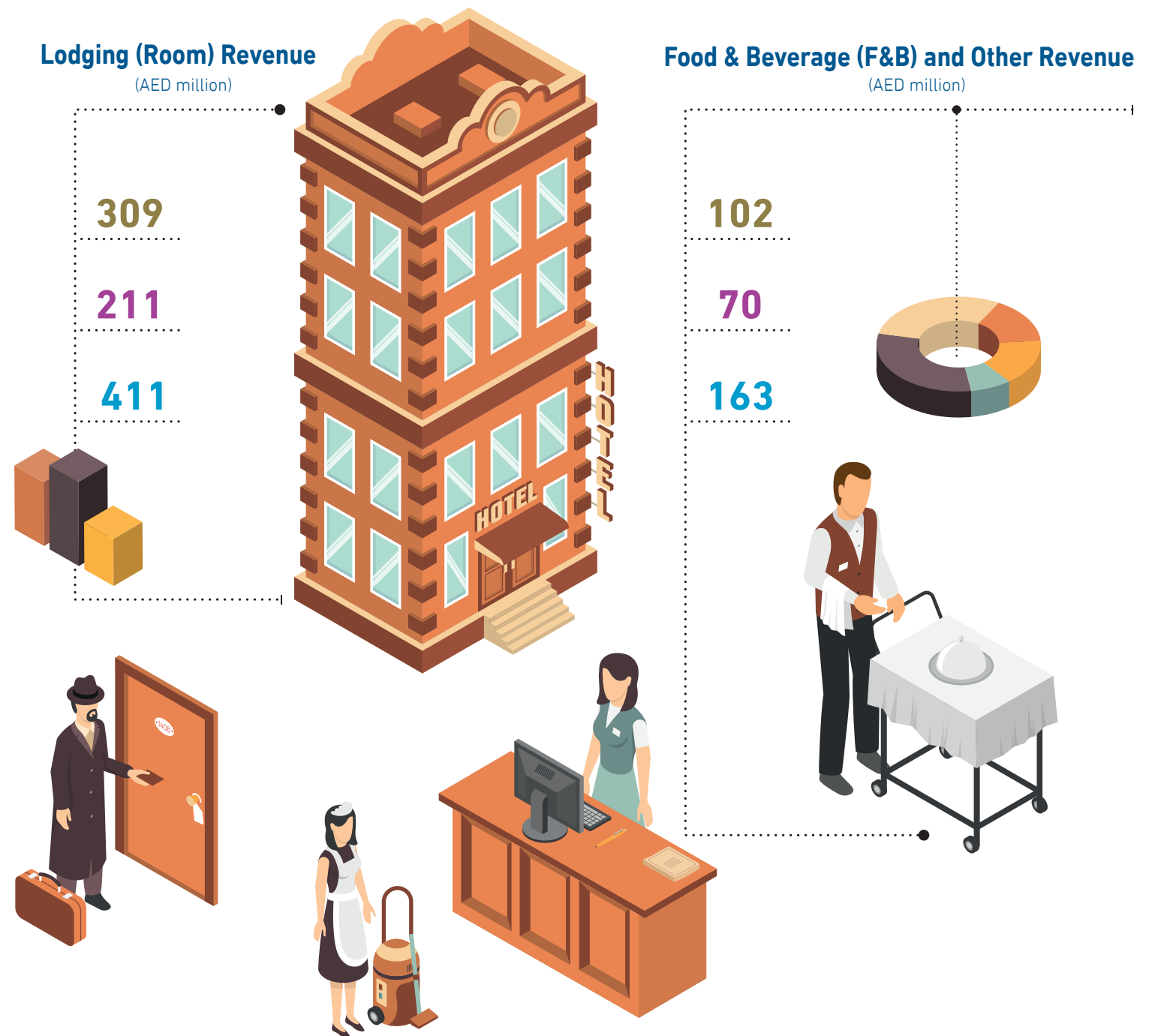
According to the Euromonitor International Top 100 Tourist Destination list, Sharjah ranked 2nd in the world

in the health and safety indicator for 2021. It was also the fourth tourist destination in the 2021 List of Top 10 Tourist Cities in the Middle East and Africa.



Top ten tourist destinations in the health and safety index

### Main indicators



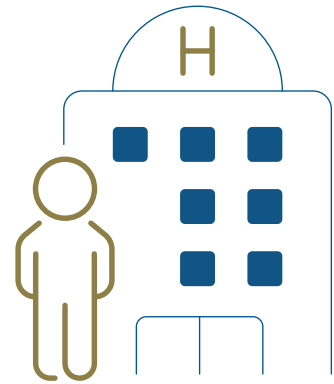
Hotel establishments revenue by type (2021 - 2019)

● 2019 ● 2020 ● 2021

### Hotels statistics

Guests

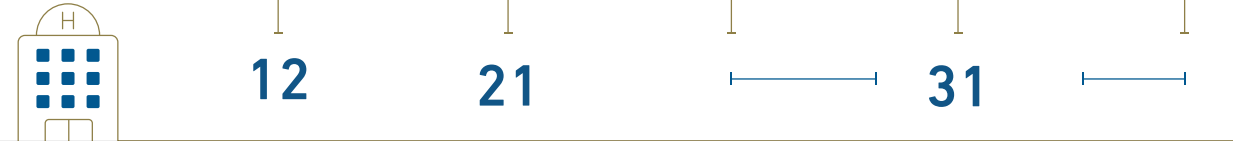
863,000



Establishment classification



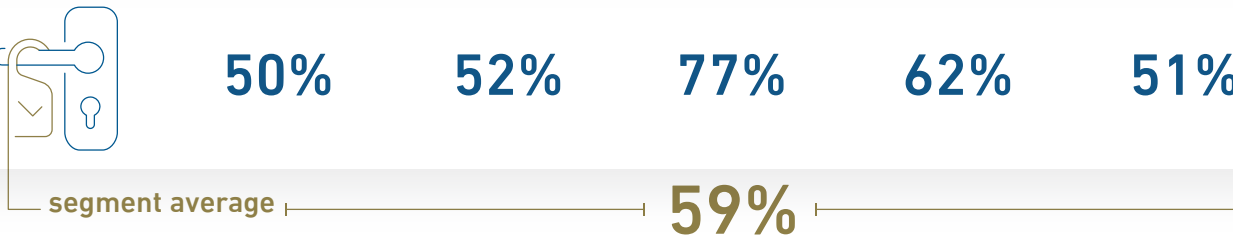
No. of establishments



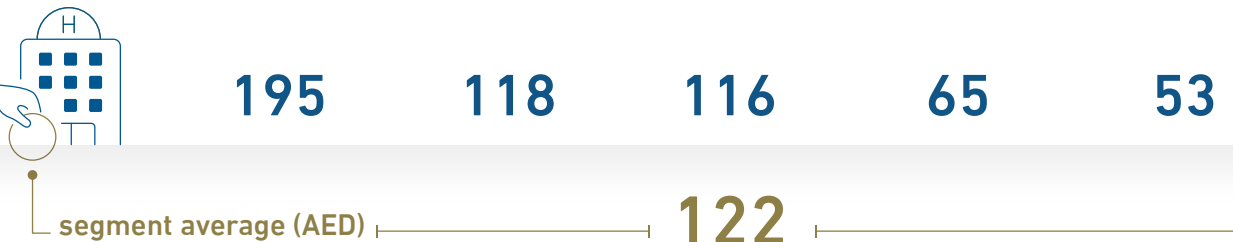
Available rooms



Hotel occupancy rates



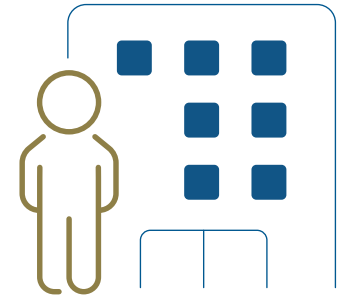
Hotel Revenue Per Available Room (AED)



### Hotel apartments statistics

Guests

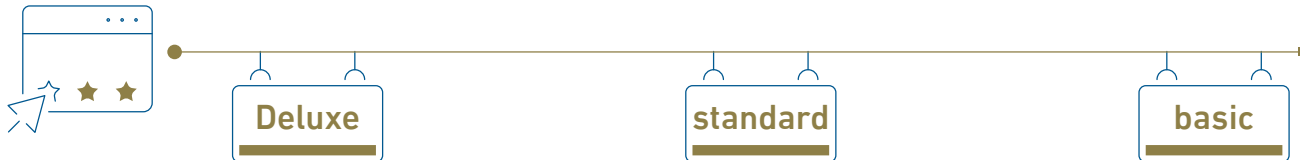
317,000



No. of establishments



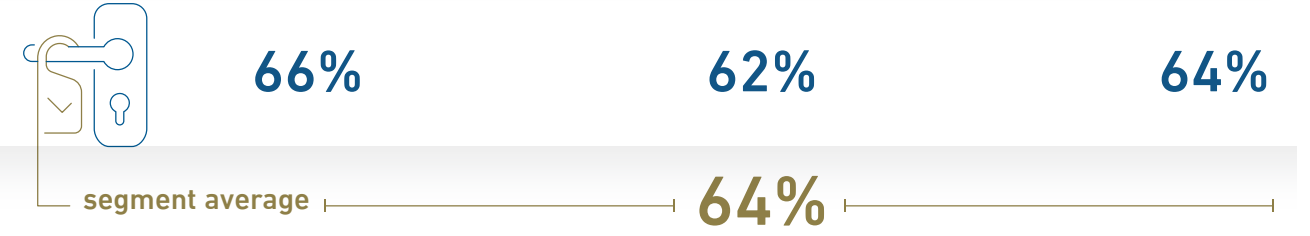
Establishment classification



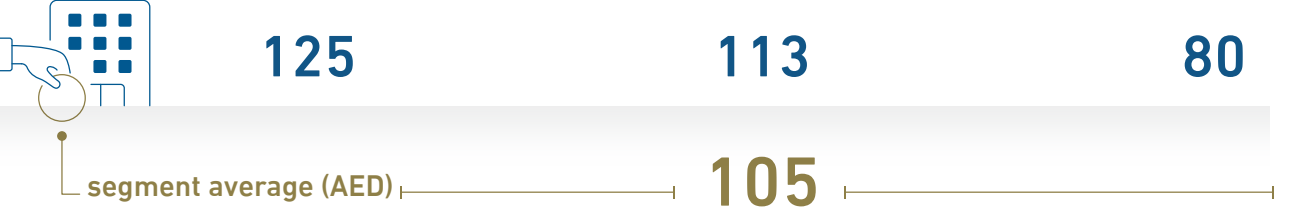
Available rooms



Hotel apartment occupancy rates



Hotel Apart. Revenue Per Available Room (AED)



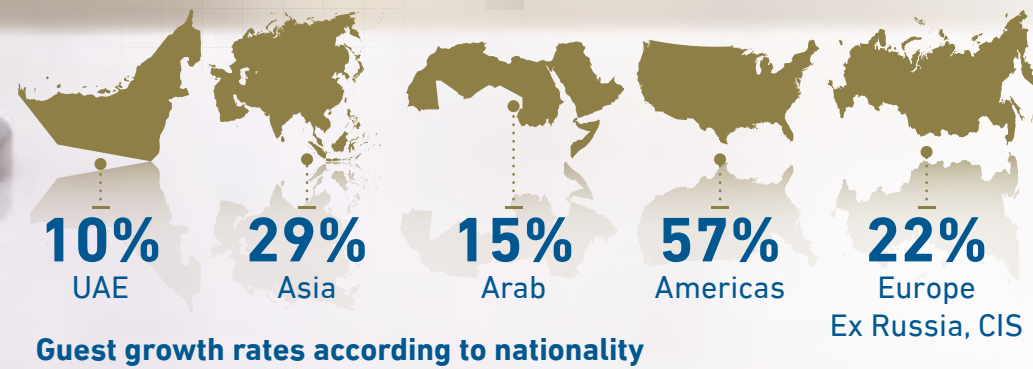
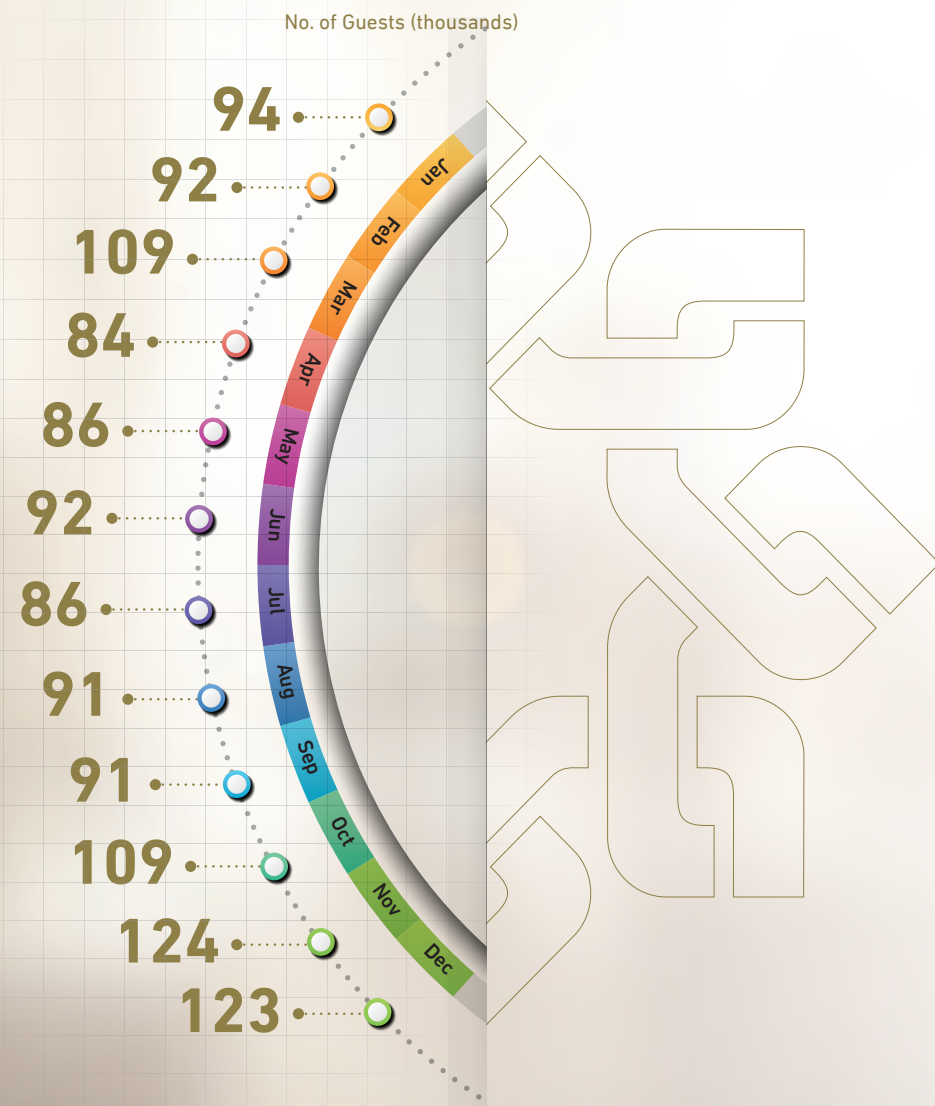
<b>Total no. of rooms in Hotel Establishments in Sharjah 2021</b>	<b>Total no. of available in Hotel Establishments in Sharjah 2021</b>
10,678 Rooms	7,347 Rooms

# Hotel establishments statistics

## Top 5 source markets in Sharjah



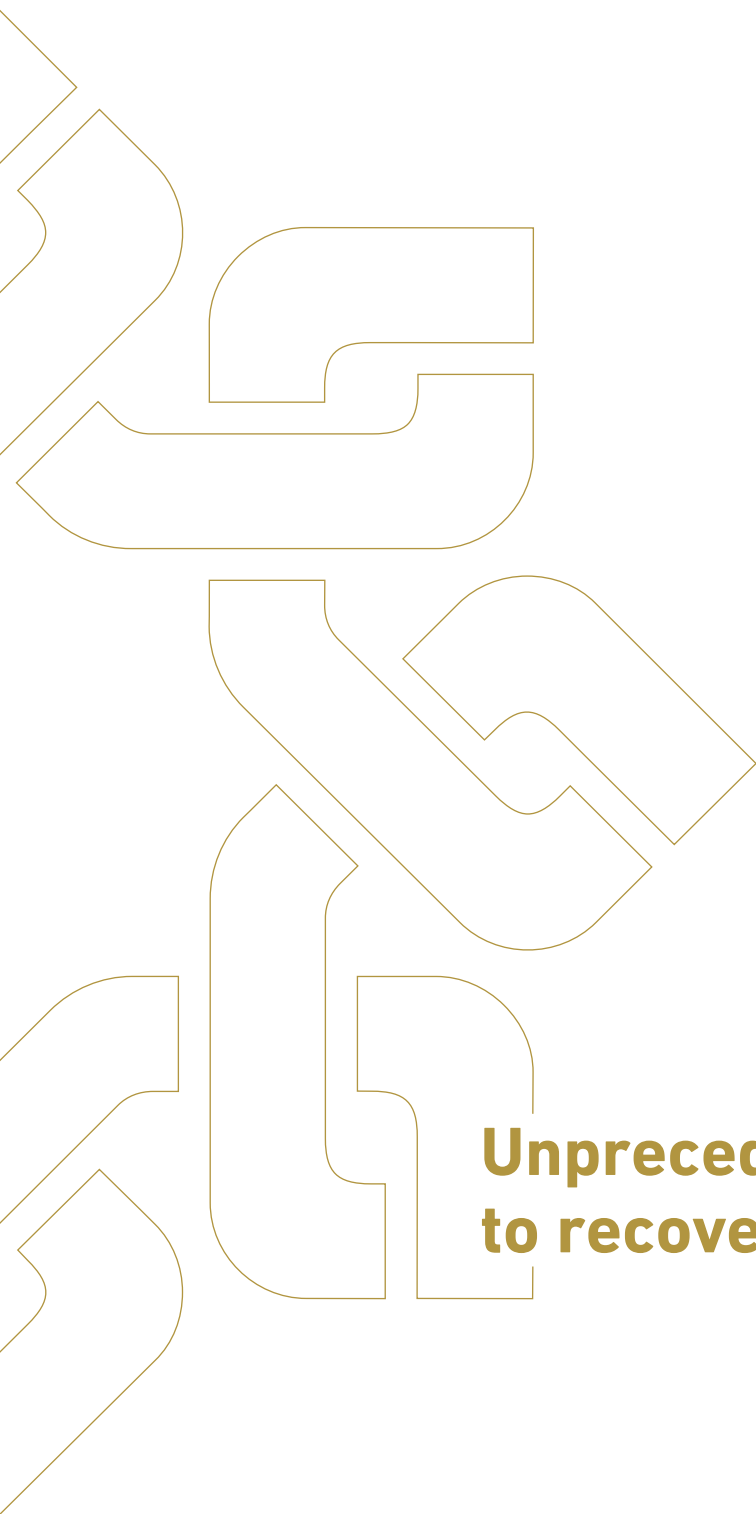
## Seasonal guest trends in Sharjah



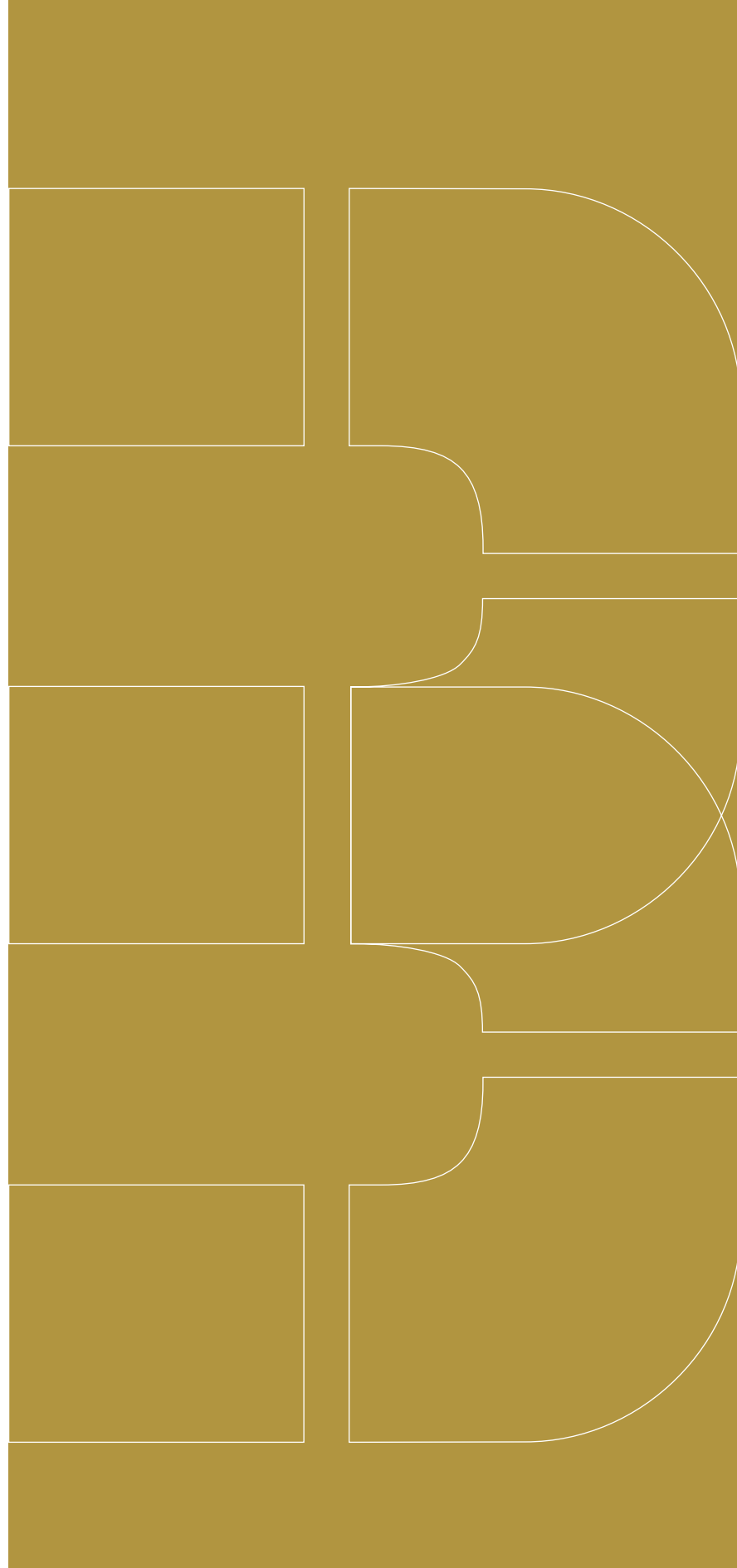
## Top 20 main tourism source market in Sharjah

	Country	Average length of stay (in days)	Guest Nights	change in no. of guests %
1	India	2.90	462,668	30%
2	Russia	2.84	315,127	-6%
3	UAE	1.33	285,267	10%
4	Egypt	3.17	239,800	9%
5	Iraq	4.34	138,223	11%
6	Pakistan	2.23	123,978	19%
7	Philippines	2.05	82,427	69%
8	Jordan	2.27	76,102	17%
9	Syria	2.43	73,453	25%
10	Saudi Arabia	1.68	57,992	-5%
11	Kazakhstan	2.90	55,721	174%
12	Sudan	2.81	46,778	48%
13	Oman	1.53	45,729	-11%
14	Ukraine	2.61	35,224	44%
15	Bangladesh	1.95	28,606	18%
16	United Kingdom	2.00	27,472	25%
17	America	1.82	27,153	69%
18	Lebanon	2.40	23,643	1%
19	France	1.99	18,695	81%
20	China	1.61	18,524	-8%

list is by number of guests nights in descending order



**Unprecedented Actions  
to recover the Tourism Sector**



## Local Promotion

The UAE is a distinguished tourist destination with all the tourism features that attract tourists and visitors from all over the world. Thanks to the diversity of tourism products provided by each emirate, and different events, recreational centers, natural campsites and cultural and entertainment destinations, many residents in the UAE enjoy their time

visiting various luxurious facilities and destinations in each emirate.

Therefore, SCTDA organizes tourism events and supports all other activities that attract tourists and visitors locally and abroad. Some of the main events organized annually by SCTDA include:



### Sharjah Light Festival

Sharjah Light Festival provides its visitors with enchanting light shows accompanied by the most beautiful symphonies created by talented local and international artists. The festival attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors annually, who enjoy creativity, music, artistic skill, and stunning art illustrated on the facades of beautiful architectural structures in Sharjah. The festival combines folklore with architectural beauty and advanced technology to create fascinating shows that attract visitors locally and abroad. The last edition of the festival sparked widespread interaction over social media platforms with over 1 million views worldwide.



**UAE**

**950000**  
Tourist  
**Billion AED**  
within one month

Over **500** million views  
from around the world

الإمارات  
The Emirates

World's  
coolest  
winter

### The World's Coolest Winter Campaign

The UAE government pays special interest to internal tourism, launching a strategy in 2020 aimed at establishing an integrated national tourism system in cooperation with various local and national institutions concerned with the tourism, entertainment, and community heritage sectors. One of the most important activities held by the government to encourage internal tourism was the World's Coolest Winter Campaign, where tourists worldwide look forward to the beginning of the winter season in the UAE with its moderate weather to enjoy a special tourism experience with numerous adventures. The World's Coolest Winter Campaign was launched to promote the UAE as a distinguished tourist destination

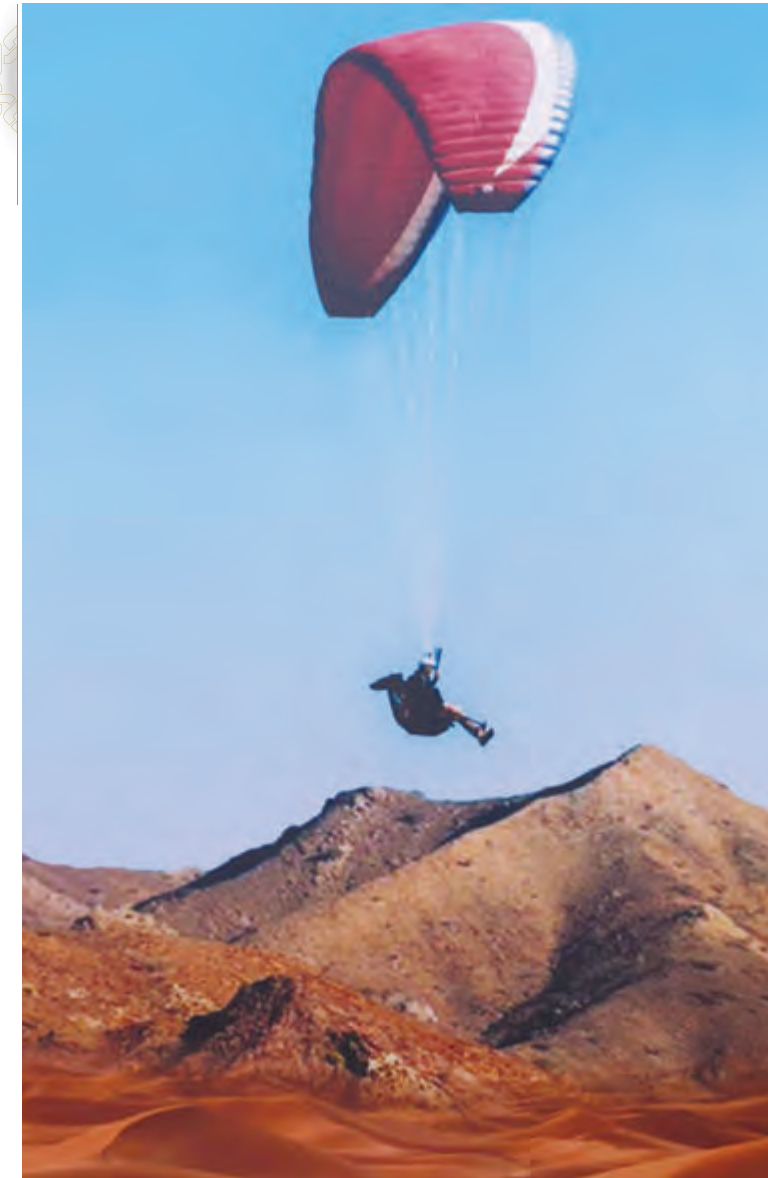
regionally and internationally. The Campaign attracted around 950,000 tourists within one month only, with revenues of 1 billion Dirhams. The Campaign employed celebrities and influencers to share their experiences with the public during the Campaign. The Campaign highlights main tourism attractions and available entertainment activities in the UAE, while maintaining the uniqueness of tourism experiences in each of the country's seven emirates, with special focus on important historical sites and popular modern monuments to be found all over the country. The Campaign witnessed huge interaction on social media, with more than 500 million views worldwide.



## Events and Festivals

Sharjah is considered the city of festivals that attracts worldwide attention. The emirate's annual events encompass several festivals and exhibitions, including: Sharjah Light Festival, F1H20 Sharjah World Championship, Sharjah International Book Fair, Sharjah Heritage Days, the Sharjah Biennial, and many more. The Emirate also hosts a multitude of year-round events attracting tourists, families, businessmen, and students. Wherever you go in Sharjah, you will find endless treasures waiting to be discovered.

Many tourists choose Sharjah to enjoy recreational activities in festivals and events that celebrate UAE's culture and traditions. Tourists can roam art exhibitions, streets lined with skyscrapers, and festivals especially designed for families, including many summer activities for children. Through its Events and Projects Department, SCTDA proposed organizing new events or participating in others after recovering from COVID-19. These events include:



## Championship "HIKE & FLY"

SCTDA participated in the third phase of the Hike and Fly Championship in Jebel Feya competitions. This is the first time in the world that the championship is held outside the Alps by the Emirates Aero Sports Federation



in cooperation with the Dubai Sports Council, where 24 world champions competed in 4 races: running, walking, climbing, and flying in a game that requires high fitness in addition to takeoff, flight and landing skills.



### Sir Bu Nair Festival

Sir Bu Nair island is a nature reserve that holds international significance. It was enlisted in the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance to conserve its biodiverse ecological components. It was also added to UNESCO Preliminary List of World Heritage Sites.

Sir Bu Nair Festival is an important ecological event that aims to promote marine biodiversity in the Emirate within an awareness campaign to preserve marine and coastal areas. The Festival is organized alongside the annual Al Gaffal Dhow Sailing Race.

The Festival was held in 2021 for two days on the island with its clear sandy beaches, pristine waters, and rich coral and marine life. It included a group of environmental, heritage and cultural activities which were held in cooperation between SCTDA, Sharjah Police General Headquarters, Sharjah Municipality, Sharjah Media Corporation, Dubai Marine Sports Club, and Emirates Marine Environmental Group.



### Sharjah Summer Festival 2021



The Sharjah Summer Festival 2021 was organized in-line with SCTDA's commitment to launch quality initiatives and promotional campaigns that would achieve the goals of tourism sector growth. The Festival featured an exceptional group of exclusive tourist offers, including packages especially designed for families, hotel reservations, and desert tours - all providing a distinguished experience to Sharjah's visitors for discounted prices. The festival boosted local tourism and highlighted new projects in the Emirate.

In an effort to stimulate tourism and promote the position of tourism products at the national level, a series of media coverages were organized in 2021 in cooperation with several celebrities and social media influencers to highlight Sharjah's touristic features, destinations, new projects and each of the offered activities.

### Festival Activities

- A contest for followers Instagram

On account **visit shj@**

- A promotional campaign in cooperation with social media celebrities



### Promotional campaigns

In accordance with SCTDA's recovery strategy, two main local campaigns were launched in 2021: a winter campaign (Sharjah Bayn Yadayk), which was launched in conjunction with the World's Coolest Winter Campaign, and the Sharjah Summer Festival.

The two campaigns aimed to promote and support local tourism and day visits and bookings with SCTDA's strategic partners.

Statistics demonstrate the summer campaign's success and positive impact on tourism, with participating hotels achieving 56% growth in hotel bookings and 16% growth in average revenue.

The design team accomplished 2,838 works of art in both campaigns, while the editors team edited more than 585,000 words in addition to editing promotional materials in the English language.

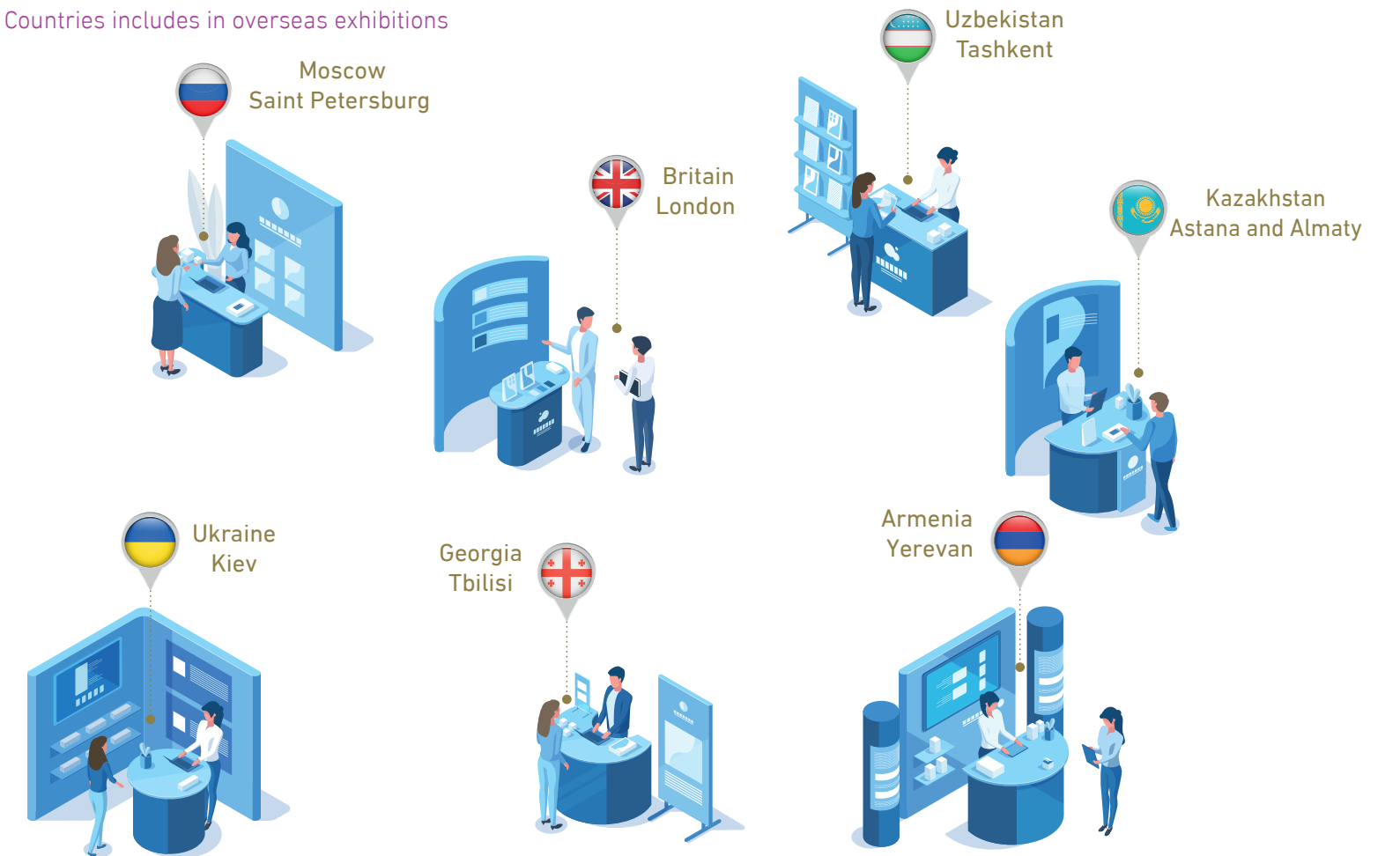


The SCTDA and its local promotion team organized around 12 family trips for 316 guests, including tours for high profile guests such as ambassadors and their families and VIPs. The team also organized four media trips with journalists and

bloggers to cover main tourist attractions, in addition to a tour of the east coast with social media influencers to cover the main features of Khorfakkan. Furthermore, SCTDA hosted the first cruise to enter Khorfakkan Port.

### Overseas Promotion

Countries includes in overseas exhibitions



SCTDA expanded its participation in numerous specialized international tourism exhibitions. Furthermore, its missions implemented promotional tours around the world to introduce

Sharjah as a special tourist destination for families and seekers of distinguished services. Exhibitions that SCTDA participated in included:



 **Promotion Tours in Russia (4-10 October 2021): Moscow and Saint Petersburg**

To introduce Sharjah as a versatile tourist destination with an advanced tourism infrastructure and family friendly attractions that adhere to health and safety standards and procedures, SCTDA participated in the Russian Promotional Exhibition where it activated relations with the travel industry and major partners.



 **November 2021 Sales Mission: Ukraine - Kiev, Georgia - Tbilisi, Armenia - Yerevan.**

Rekindling relations with the travel industry after the COVID-19 Pandemic was the goal of the November sales mission, which explored the latest updates and safety procedures, and supported joint marketing and promotional activities in one of the CIS source markets in Ukraine and the growing market of Armenia in addition to potential markets in Georgia.

In this mission, Sharjah was promoted as a tourist destination through commercial events held with major partners in the industry, including an event for tour operators and travel agencies.





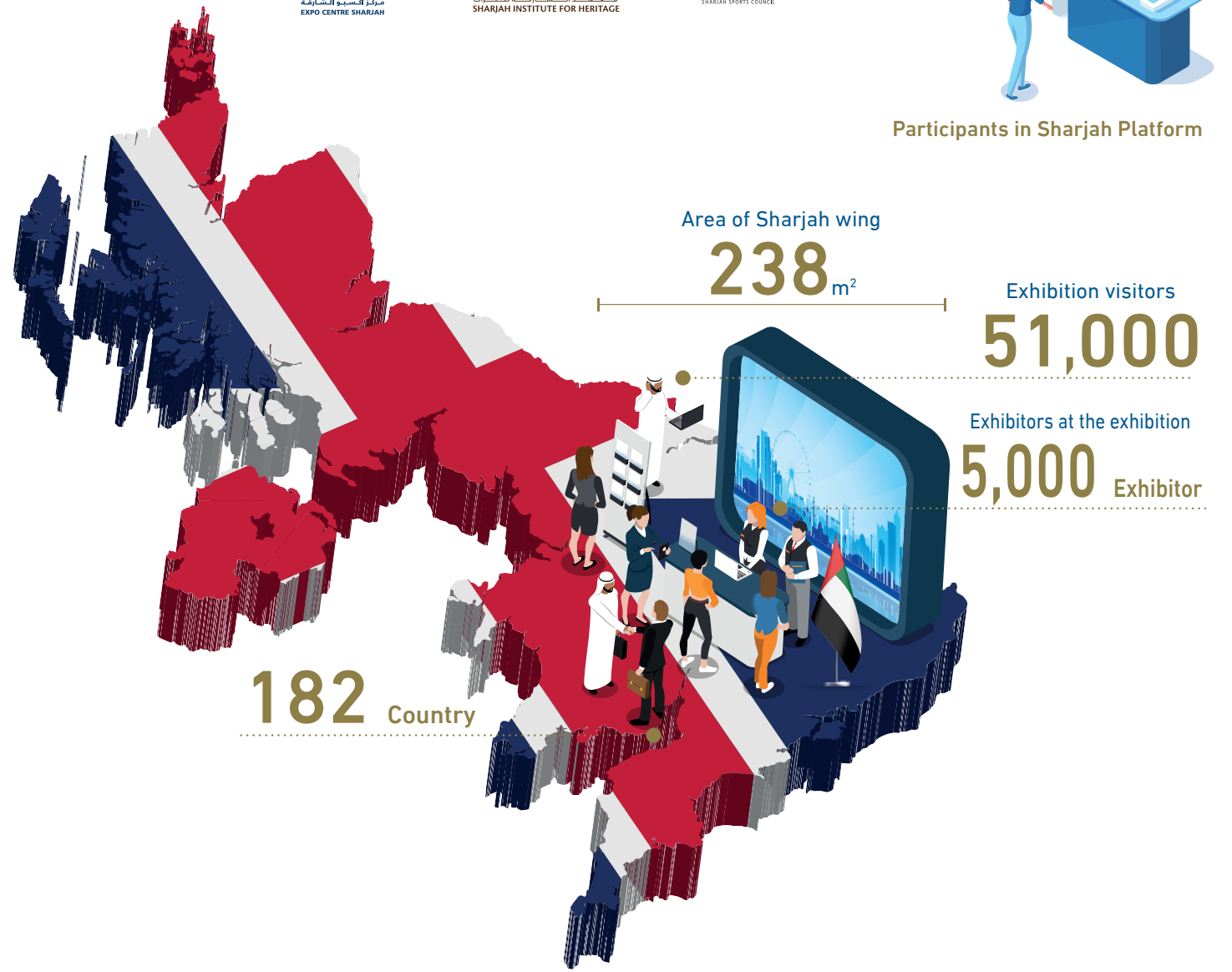
Participation in the World Travel Market London



Participants in Sharjah Platform

December 2021 Promotional Campaign: Kazakhstan - Astana and Almaty; Uzbekistan - Tashkent.

The campaign was held to stimulate sales in the CIS sustainable markets of Kazakhstan and the growing market of Uzbekistan, where Sharjah was promoted as a safe family-friendly tourist destination.





The World Travel Market London introduces a variety of destinations to travel professionals in the UK. It also represents a unique opportunity for players in the global travel industry to meet, communicate, negotiate and do business.

SCTDA participated in the event to introduce Sharjah as a well-known center of cultural and natural heritage. It also aimed to establish new cooperative relationships, while asserting Sharjah's persistence on progressing safely and successfully after COVID-19. SCTDA also highlighted many new projects and tourism attractions in Sharjah, not to mention its ecotourism, beautiful beaches, museums, wildlife reserves and other diverse recreational destinations.

During the event, SCTDA held a press conference to announce the cooperation between Shurooq and the world leader in hotel establishments, Lux Collective Company of Singapore, to manage two hospitality projects developed by Shurooq in the central region and east coast of Sharjah: Lux Al Jabal Resort in Khorfakkan and Lux Al Bridi Resort in Al Dhaid.



## Interactive Digital Platforms

Despite the repercussions of COVID-19 pandemic, and SCTDA's decision to forego the services of media companies, its media team maintained all routine media activities in 2021 and

SCTDA continued its communication with the public through its various media platforms.



### New Website with Interactive Services

SCTDA's New Website

[www.sharjahtourism.ae](http://www.sharjahtourism.ae)

An integrated interactive platform for all SCTDA services, with detailed information on all services, processes, fees, e-payment channels; in addition to an abundance of information and services, most notably, electronic licensing of hotels and tour operators.

In addition, the website offers licensing services of desert tourism (safari) vehicles, a statistical system services, and licensing services for hotels and licensing of tour guides. The website also includes vital data and guidelines that enrich the knowledge base of trainees, tour guides, and tourism companies, not to mention annual reports and legislations.

### SCTDA on Social Media

SCTDA pays significant attention to social media. It has accounts on Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube to

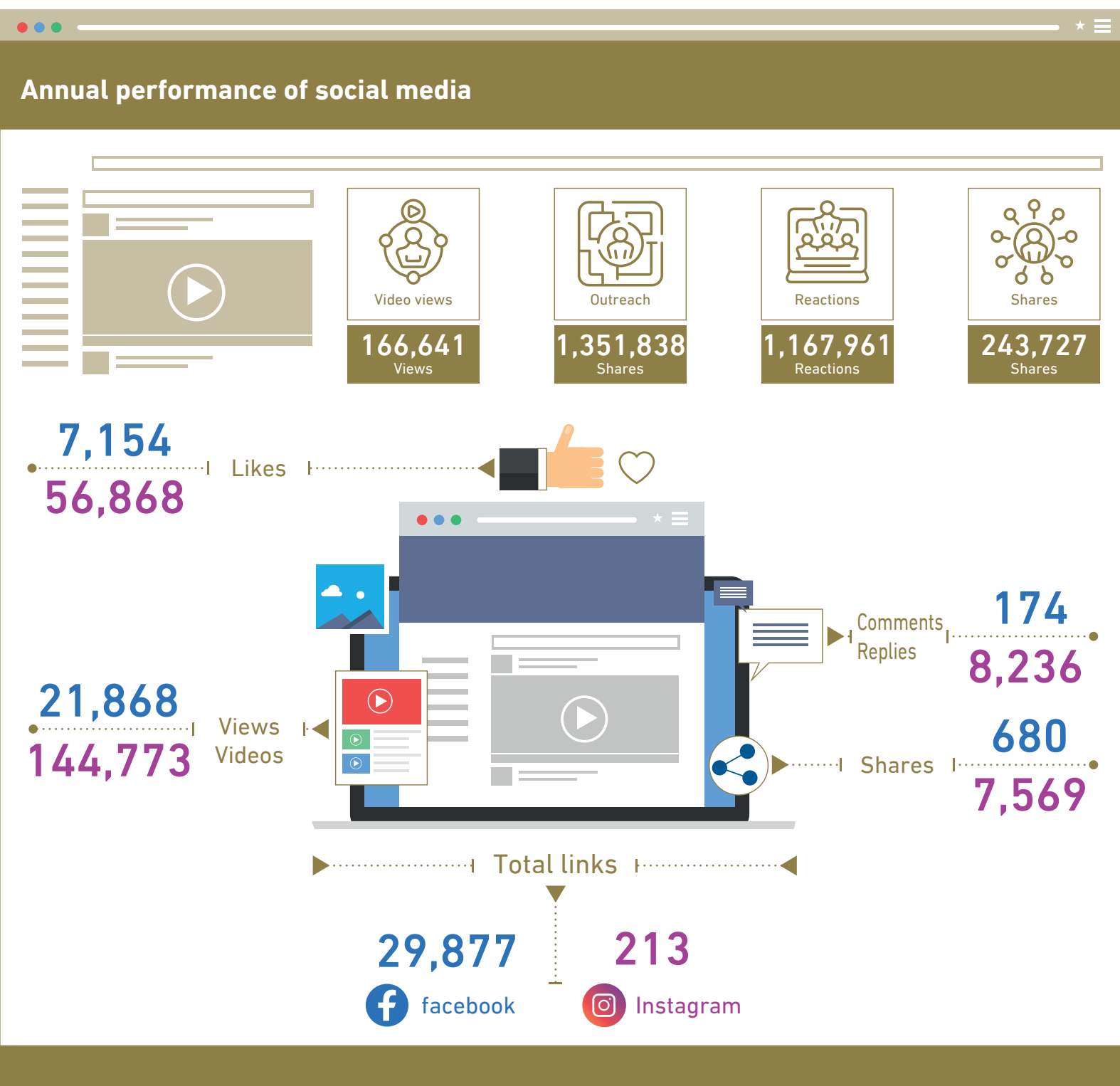


Furthermore, it includes detailed lists of all tour guide training programs and training initiatives, with details of the requirements and procedures of each program. It also presents tour guide incentive initiatives, including all exclusive offers for tour guides licensed by SCTDA and a guide with the names of all licensed tour guides in Sharjah along with their contact details. Additionally, the website provides access to the lists of tour operators, legislations, guidelines, annual reports, various performance reports, key indicators, and main tourism markets. SCTDA's various campaigns and activities increased the number of the website visitors by 155%.

promote Sharjah as a tourist destination using photos and videos which gained widespread following and interaction.

### Total Annual Results of 2021





## Developing Standards of Quality

The SCTDA appreciates the importance of the successful implementation of the occupational health and safety system, quality management and customer satisfaction system, environmental management system, and sustainable events management system. It is also committed to continuous improvement of its processes and

procedures to ensure their alignment with international standards.

- ISO 9001:2015 (Quality)
- ISO 10001:2018 (Customer Satisfaction)
- ISO 14001:2015 (Environment)
- ISO 45001:2018 (Occupational Health and Safety)

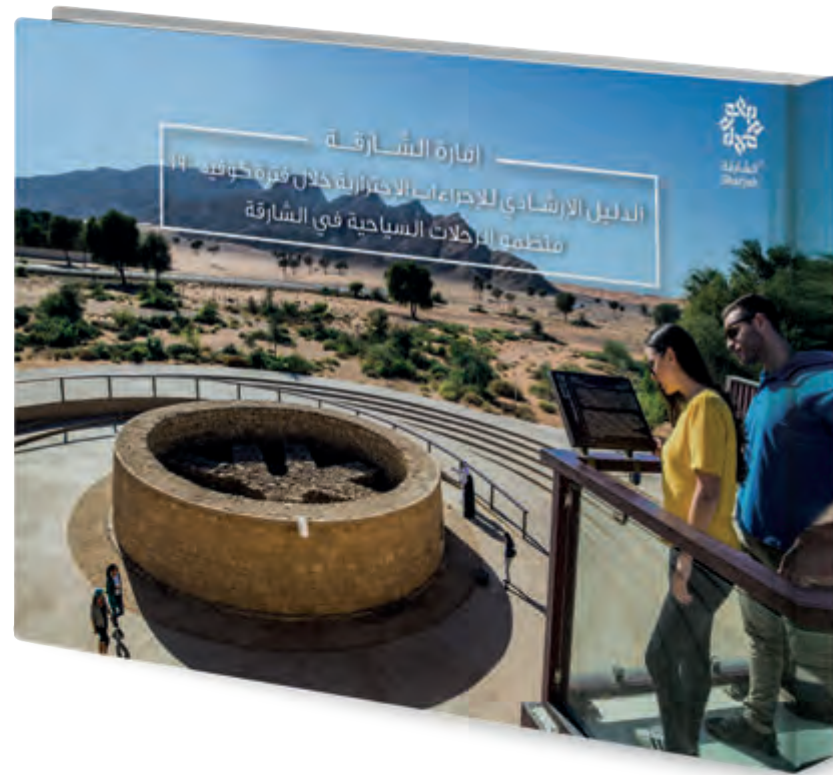
According to its quality standards, SCTDA is committed to a group of procedures including continuous inspection processes,

inspection and field visits, measuring guest experiences, and preventive measures in wedding halls and hotel establishments.

Activity	No.
No. of completed guides	3
No. of circulars	11
Inspection processes (classification)	148
Inspection visits to hotel facilities (precautionary measures)	273
Reports on guest experiences	12
Field visits to inspect desert tour vehicles	243
Desert tour vehicle permits	25
Initial approvals for licensing a new hotel facility	6
Initial approvals for renewing the license of a hotel facility	86
Initial approvals for licensing a tourism company	58
Other initial approvals	32

**Completed guides**

**Guidelines for precautionary measures during the COVID-19 pandemic  
Tourist desert tours (safari)**



**Guidelines for precautionary measures during the COVID-19 pandemic  
Tour operators In Sharjah**



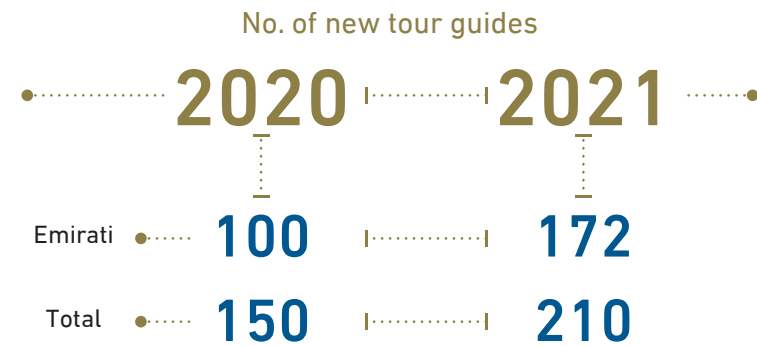
## Training and Capacity Building

SCTDA works to build the capacities of individuals and increase knowledge in the tourism sector, by providing trainees with more information about Sharjah and its tourist destinations,

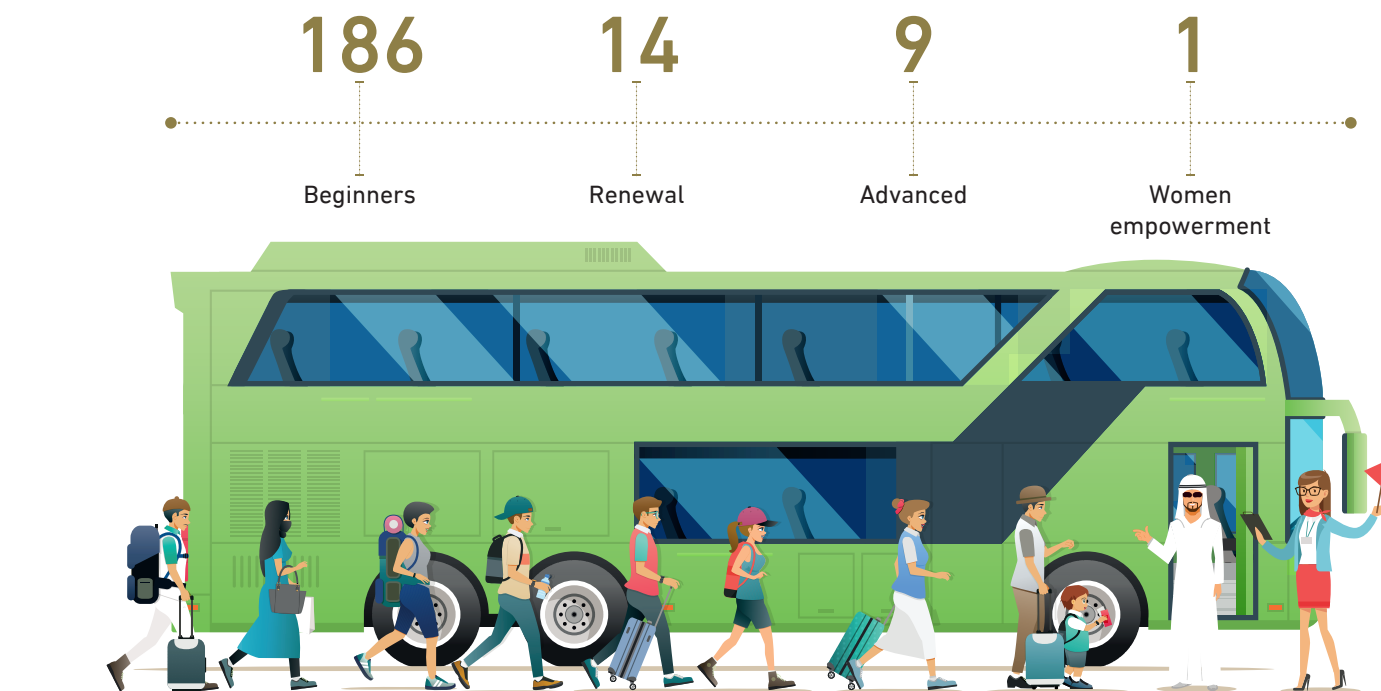
developments in the hospitality sector, excellence in serving clients, and work etiquette.

### Tour Guides

Based on the training and capacity building program organized by SCTDA, tourism enthusiasts learned new skills that enabled them to engage in the tour guiding field. The number of new Emirati tour guides reached 172 guides while the total number of new tour guides reached 210 in 2021.



### Training programs for tour guides



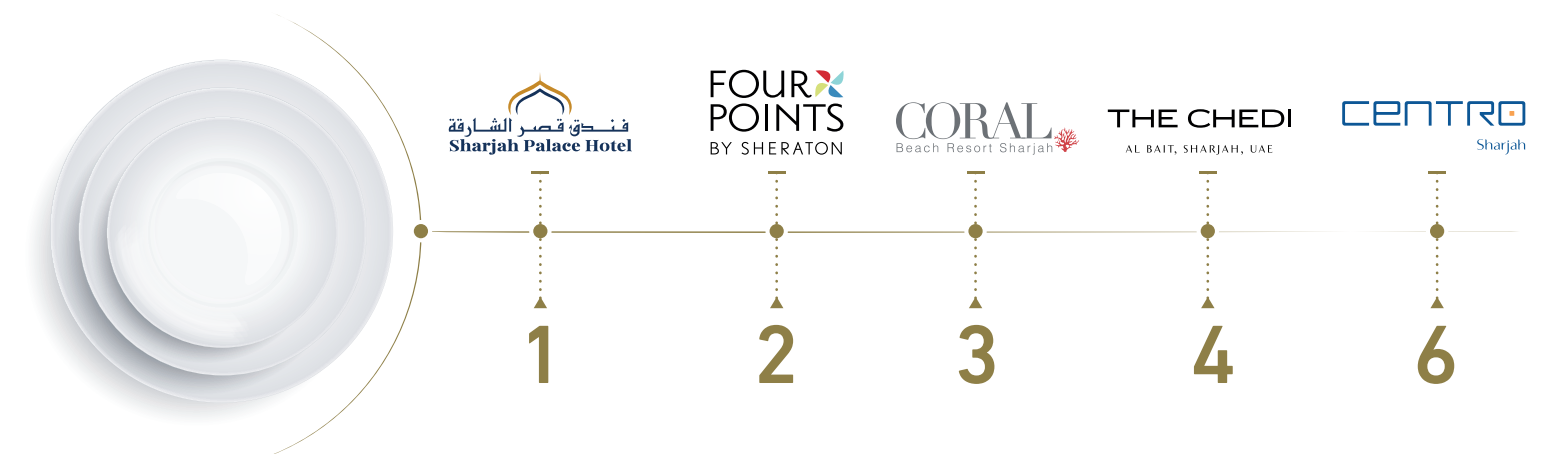
### Vocational Programs

Children had their share of community initiatives launched by SCTDA, where they were encouraged to interpret their understanding of tourism through art workshops and tours. The result was adding a new targeted group of SCTDA trainees.

SCTDA provided a training program for chefs in the hospitality sector, where chefs in Sharjah hotels received specialty training on Emirati cuisine and its history to improve their skills in cooking Emirati dishes.

Program name	No. of trainees
You're @Sharjah, the Emirati Cuisine	20 Trainee
You're @Sharjah, Introductory Level	16 Trainee
Shine in Sharjah	Trainee one
Total number of the vocational training program trainees	37 Trainee

### No. of Chefs Trained in hotels within the You're @Sharjah Program



## Targeted Tourism and Social Initiatives

### Hadaf Initiative

The SCTDA launched the “Hadaf” initiative, which targets its licensed tour guides, and aims to open more prospects for those interested in the tour guiding license in Sharjah, support plans to empower young nationals, and enhance their presence in this vital sector.

Hadaf initiative was divided into 3 main branches. The first branch consisted of virtual workshops on developing tour guiding skills. The workshops reviewed a set of tools and practices to enhance the skills of professionals in this field and keep them abreast with the latest global trends in the sector. They also raised awareness on the importance of providing accurate and comprehensive



information to tourists about the sites, destinations and the cultural heritage of Sharjah and the UAE in general. The second branch is “Hadaf Rewards,” which is an e-card that provides a set of exclusive benefits, discounts, offers and rewards for tour guides holding the card and accredited by SCTDA in appreciation of their efforts in serving the tourism sector and visitors in Sharjah.

The third branch consists of training tours supervised by specialists to monitor and evaluate the performance of tour guides on the ground while interacting with tourists and providing information.



### Rehlati Initiative

“Rehlati” is a community initiative that aims to introduce tourist groups to destinations in Sharjah and provide them with experiences that promote tourism in the

Emirate. Under this initiative, SCTDA organized a tour for students of the American University of Sharjah at the Sharjah Art Foundation, a tour of Khorfakkan, and a cleaning trip in Kalba.

Organization name	No.
American University of Sharjah	60
530 RUN	50
AFT Adventures	140
No. of attendees	250

### Smile Initiative

A series of workshops and tours in Sharjah destinations targeting Emirati children aged 4 to 17 to introduce them to the tourism industry in Sharjah.

Organization name	No. of workshops	No. of attendees
Sharjah Ladies Club	2	38



### Virtual Tours for the Elderly

As part of the "Sharjah Age Friendly City" program, SCTDA organized virtual tours for the elderly in tourist destinations with some visual and cognitive attractions.

58

No. of attendees

9

No. of attendees

649

Total number of trainees

### Emirati Youth Tourist Guidance Program

The program aims to develop tourism knowledge among Emirati youth in Sharjah to promote the Emirate as a tourist destination. It targets young people aged 11 - 16 years, and is dedicated to teaching the basic principles of tourism guidance with the aim of developing young people's skills and enhancing their ability to work with different cultures while promoting Sharjah as a tourist destination.

### Advanced Emirati Youth Tourist Guidance Program

The advanced level allows trainees who successfully completed the Emirati Youth Tourist Guidance Program to receive a two week training in hotels and tourist destinations in Sharjah.

### Partners of the Tour Guide Training Program





## Sharjah International Forum for Travel and Tourism

The Sharjah International Travel and Tourism Forum was an opportunity to exchange experiences, information, and visions on the future of the tourism sector in the region. It hosted a number of experts and specialists in this sector, and

addressed several main factors that affect tourism globally, locally and regionally, as well as highlighting key innovations in the field.

The Forum included several sessions:



Session One

### The Impact of Smart Tourist Destinations on the Economy

The session presented various statistics and data that illustrate the impact of the growth of technology-focused tourist destinations in the next five years, and

how smart tourism can be a major driver in the recovery and competitiveness of the tourism sector and the labor market.

#### Portugal's Experience

Forum visitors learned about Portugal's experience as a smart tourism destination; the different ways Portugal collects, uses, and develops data (including big data) in the tourism sector; as well as how Portugal monitors all web searches and activities related to the country and collects data from many sources to understand and forecast patterns of travel, movement, and spending.

#### Smart Tourist Destinations

Elite local and international experts provided in-depth visions about the present and future of smart tourism.

The focus was on the effective use of technology, sustainability, influence, local engagement, unique human experience, and optimal use of destination resources as pillars of smart tourism.

Session Two



2

## Entrepreneurship Opportunities in a Changing World

The session opened with a symposium entitled Entrepreneurship Opportunities in a Changing World, in which information was presented about the spillover effect of the pandemic on SMEs and entrepreneurs in the travel and tourism sector.

### Entrepreneurship Development

Local and international entrepreneurs participated in the second panel discussion of the forum, during which they discussed a range of topics, opportunities, and concerns related to the status of entrepreneurship in the region and the world.

Session Three



3

## Tourism Leadership, Change, and Innovation

The third session, entitled Tourism Leadership, Change and Innovation, opened with a review of the factors that made the UAE succeed as a leading regional and international tourist destination, and the steps taken to attract public and private investments in the tourism sector.

### Ukraine's Experience

The audience enjoyed exploring the "Ukraine Experience" through a promotional video and an interesting fact list about the country and Cherkasy region.

Session Four



4

### Malaga - A Smart Entrepreneurship Destination

In this session, the audience was introduced to Malaga as a smart destination for entrepreneurship in Europe; with its outstanding infrastructure, tourism landscape and innovative tourism ecosystem that has positioned Malaga.

### The Impact of Influencers on the Development of Tourist Destinations

The forum concluded with an in-depth discussion of "The Influence and Power of Influencers on Destination Development", where speakers touched on what makes a destination attractive to a tourist, and how people are drawn to social media accounts and influencers who share their passions and interests.



### Recommendations for a Smart and Sustainable Future Tourism

- Improving smart tourism initiatives and using smart tourism tools to assist tourists in the decision-making process.
- Monitoring web searches and destination-related activities and collecting data from numerous sources to understand and predict travel patterns.
- Building a strong tourism ecosystem in partnership between the public and private sectors.
- Targeting social media platforms and consumers to achieve optimal results.
- Paying attention to content creators in the Arab world to create innovative content.
- Keeping abreast with the ever-changing demands of travel enthusiasts and fostering innovation and openness to new styles and ideas.
- Taking advantage of the attractiveness of the travel and tourism sector for young people by small and medium-sized

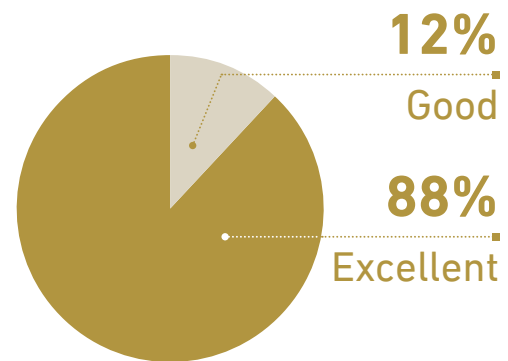
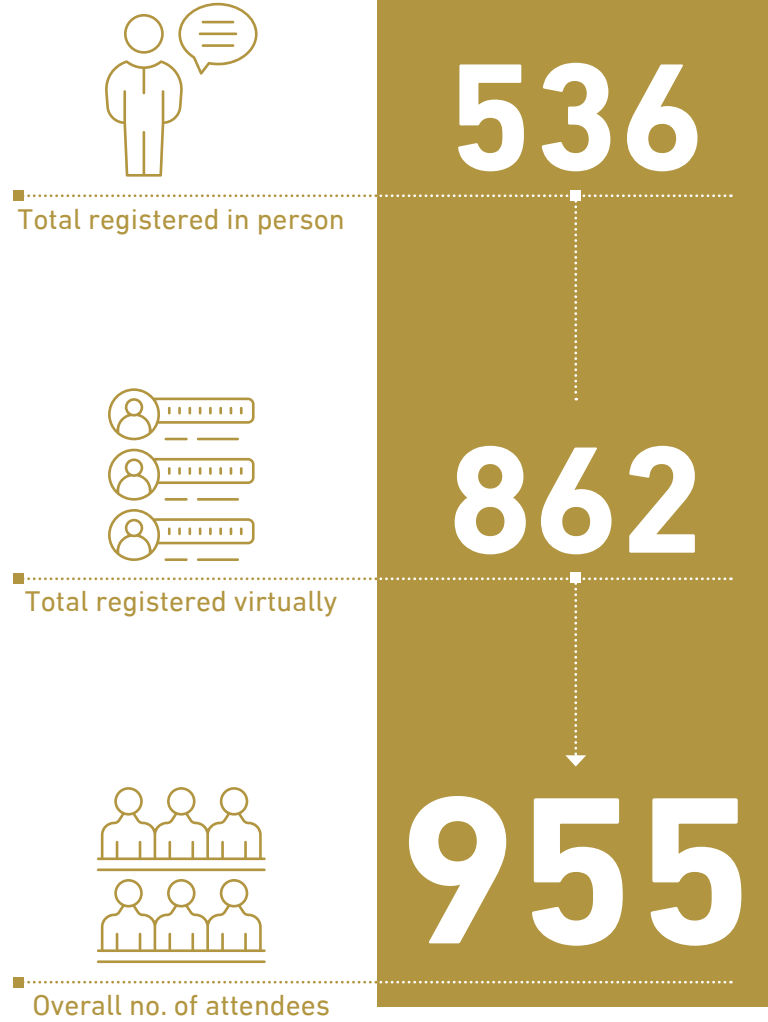
companies and entrepreneurs.

- Establishing strategic partnerships between government agencies and the private sector to develop tourism.
- Focusing on technology and innovative services in the travel and tourism sector.
- Extending the duration of the forum to two or three days with the inclusion of new events such as tourism entrepreneurship awards and a contest for tourism-related creative ideas.
- Changing the forum's location to the Sharjah Expo headquarters.
- Carefully studying Malaga's experience as a smart tourist destination.
- Strengthening tourism relations with Ukraine and the Cherkassy region.
- Holding a large-scale exhibition with networking sessions and workshops to engage stakeholders, visitors and exhibitors and enrich stakeholder participation in the event.

The Forum statistics

**23**  
Attending countries

Top ten attending countries



Evaluation of the Forum on the website



Satisfaction rate for actual attendance



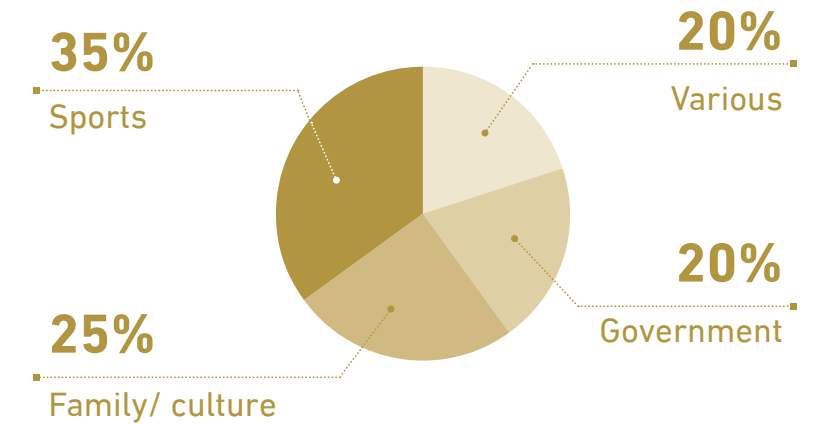
Continuous Innovation for New Sustainable Services

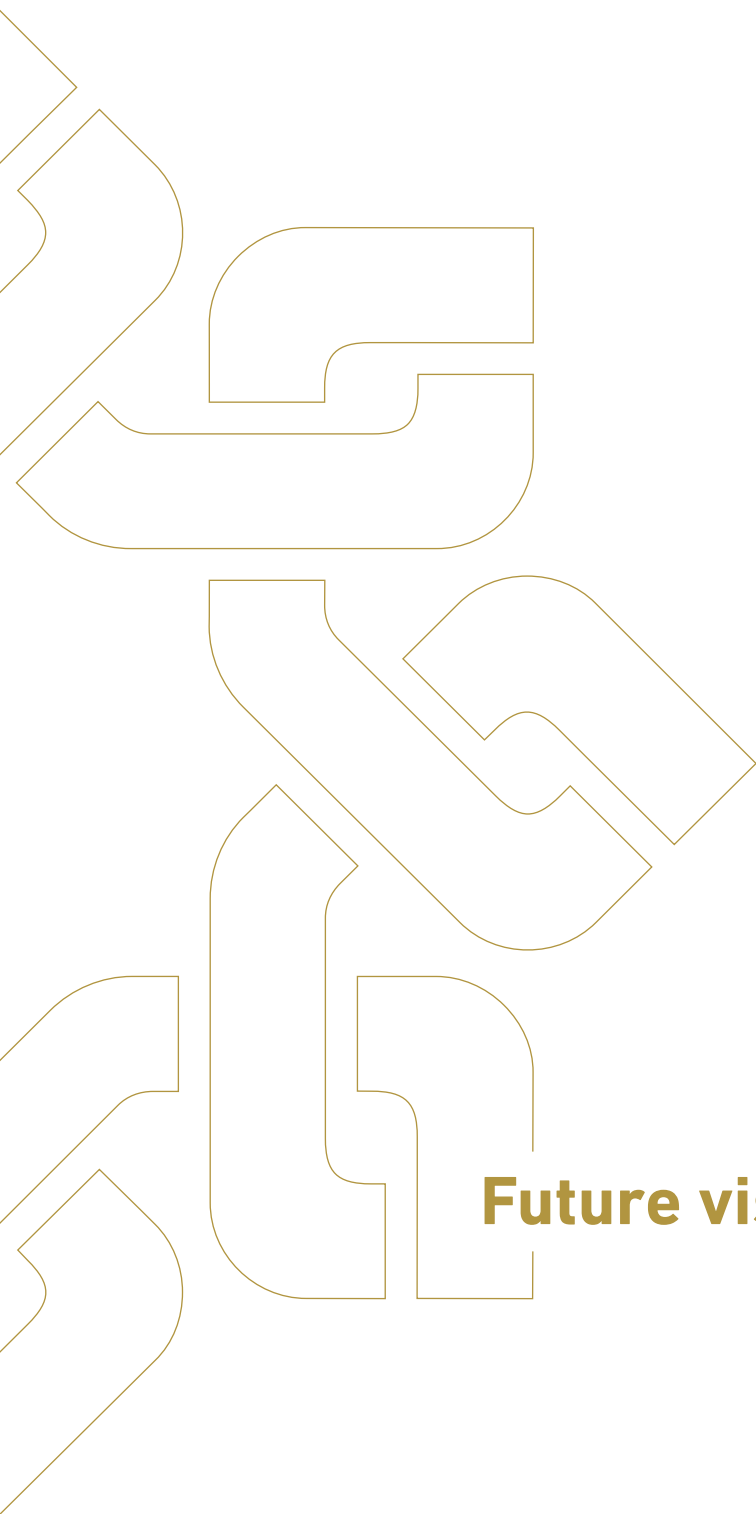
SCTDA attaches great importance to the innovative services it provides through its official website in coordination with other government departments and private sector partners to support the rapid development of the Emirate. Such services are considered a valuable tool for the public, and further promote the Emirate as a global center for trade and tourism. These services include:

- Workflow automation and digital signature, which led to paperless transformation by 80%.
- Working remotely.
- Connecting with numerous specialized government departments to collect fees and provide services.
- Implementing the enterprise resource planning system for finance, procurement, and administration; and increasing the efficiency and accuracy of employees.
- Enhancing IT efficiency.

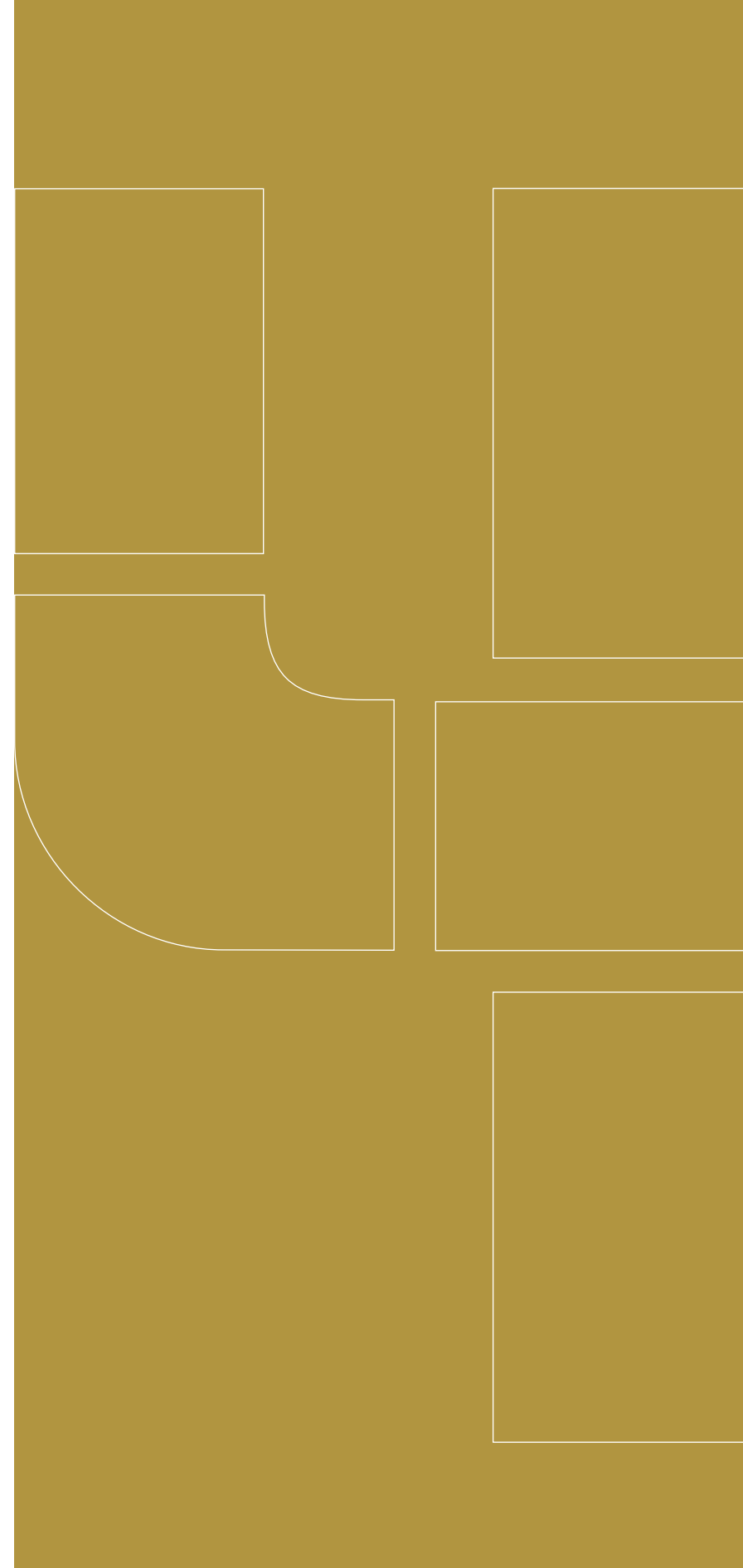
Social Responsibility

SCTDA enhances its relationship with the community through its commitment to work with its employees and the local community to improve quality of life by implementing sports, cultural, governmental, and various other initiatives in partnership with government agencies and institutions.





## **Future vision for sustainable tourism**



## Innovative Entertainment Projects

At a time when the world was suffering from stagnation in the aftermath of the Corona pandemic, Sharjah was intensifying its efforts to prepare for the next stage by

working on new projects and completing projects that fulfill the expectations of anyone looking for comfort and recreation, especially:



### Sharjah Safari

Sharjah Safari is a rare opportunity for tourists and visitors to see wildlife and African animals in a fenceless environment similar to their natural habitat. The place hosts more than 120 species of animals from Africa and up to 50,000 animals, including birds, reptiles and mammals, such as lions, elephants, giraffes, black and white rhinoceros, crocodiles, deer, bulls and many other endangered species.

Sharjah Safari includes 12 different habitats inspired from and representing various African landscapes and corresponding animals and birds.



More than **120** species



**50,000**  
Animals



**12**  
Various habitats





## Museum Projects

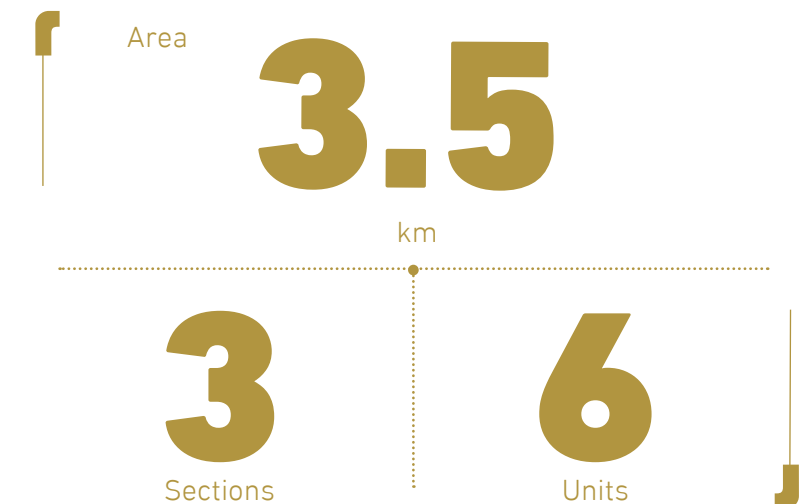
Sharjah Museums Authority launched an audio and visual guide project using the QR Code in 5 museums in Sharjah: Sharjah Museum of Islamic Civilization, Sharjah Classic Cars Museum, Sharjah Heritage Museum, Sharjah Fort, and Sharjah Archeology Museum.

The System can be used through smart phone browsers or personal tablets without the need to download special programs. Furthermore, it comes in Arabic and English languages and the user can easily switch between languages.



## Al Hira Beach

This project is the largest project in Shurooq's tourism and entertainment portfolio. It covers 3.5 km of a vital location overlooking the Arab Gulf in Al Fisht, Sharjah, which is one of the most populated areas in the Emirate. The location is greatly demanded throughout the year by families and tourists and is developed by Shurooq as an entertainment destination - opening new opportunities of investment in the area. The project consists of 3 parts, each consisting of 6 units that harmoniously blend in with the surrounding area, including a walking trail, dock, and spaces with restaurants and cafes to promote socializing between visitors of the project.





### Mysk Moon Retreat

Located in the middle of sandy desert dunes and overlooking the rocks of the Faya Mountains, Mysk Moon Retreat boasts 10 rooms with domed roofs and a private pool, in addition to 6 tents and a barbeque area for each room and tent. It also offers a lobby and a shared area for visitors' activities.

10

Rooms

6

Tents





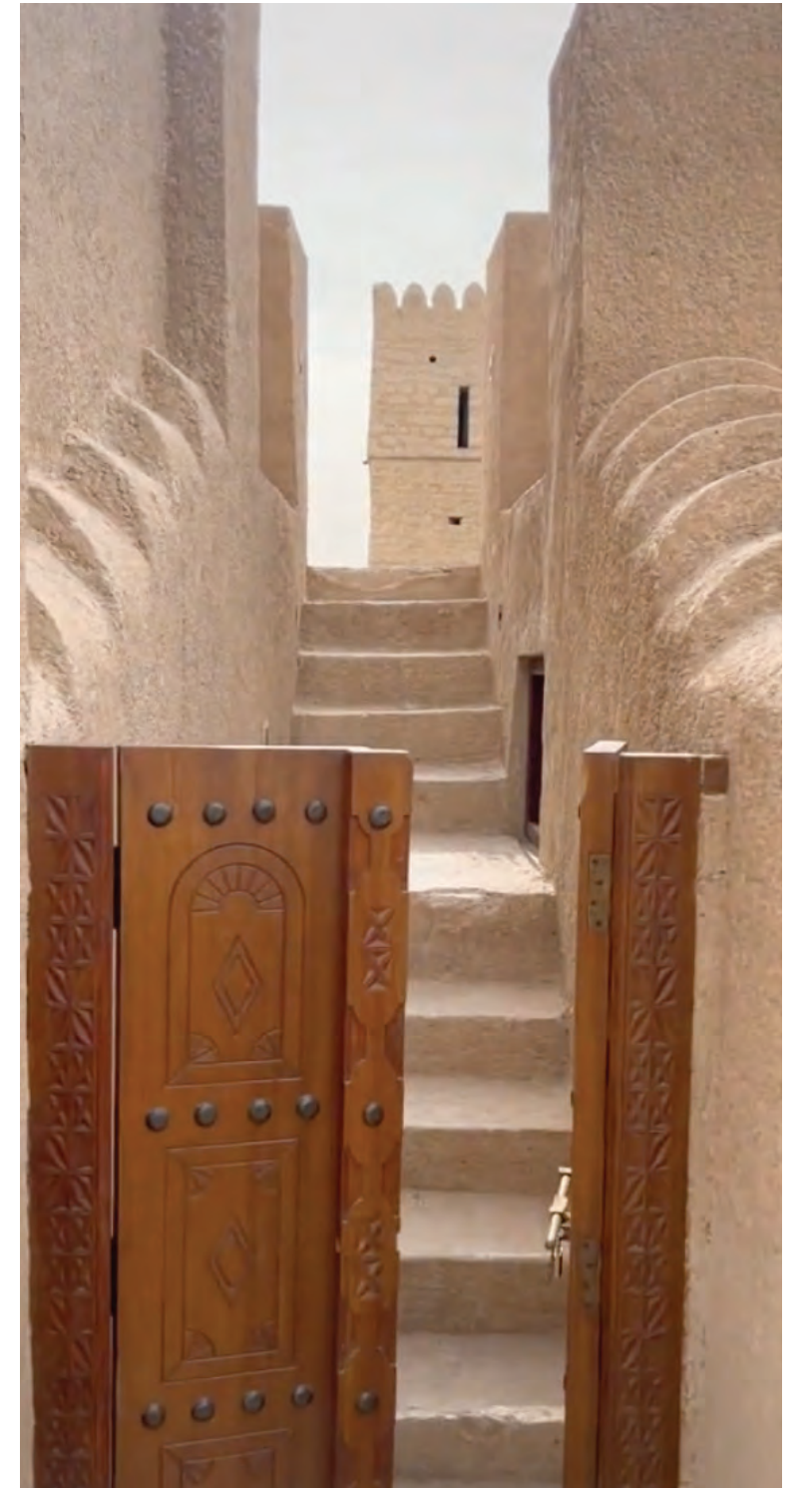
### Al Dhaid Fort:

The historic Al Dhaid Fort consists of a square-shaped building, 32 meters long and 26 meters wide, includes a number of rooms that have been converted into exhibition halls, containing a group of historical exhibits of Al Dhaid city and its historic heritage.

These halls include the Archives Hall, which is dedicated for displaying documents concerning the district, which belong to the ancient archives, while the Weapons Hall displays several types of weapons that were used in Al Dhaid town in the past. The Fort includes Liwan, which is the shaded hallway that was the place of family gathering for the Fort people, in addition to the Caravan Trading and Map Locations Hall, which includes a

number of murals describing the caravan routes to and from the Al Dhaid town, while the kitchen entrance hall contains models of all of the tools that were used in the past in the cooking and types of spices, grains, and vegetables, and the granary and zakat resemble the security of the Fort, where farmers used to put their provisions of fruits, sorted and allotting a part of it for zakat.

The Fort also includes a market that contains dozens of shops that vary between restaurants, bakeries and cafes. Next to the market, a mini-camel track was specially designated for camels to pass through, as a portrayal of the old caravans that considered Al Dhaid as their station.





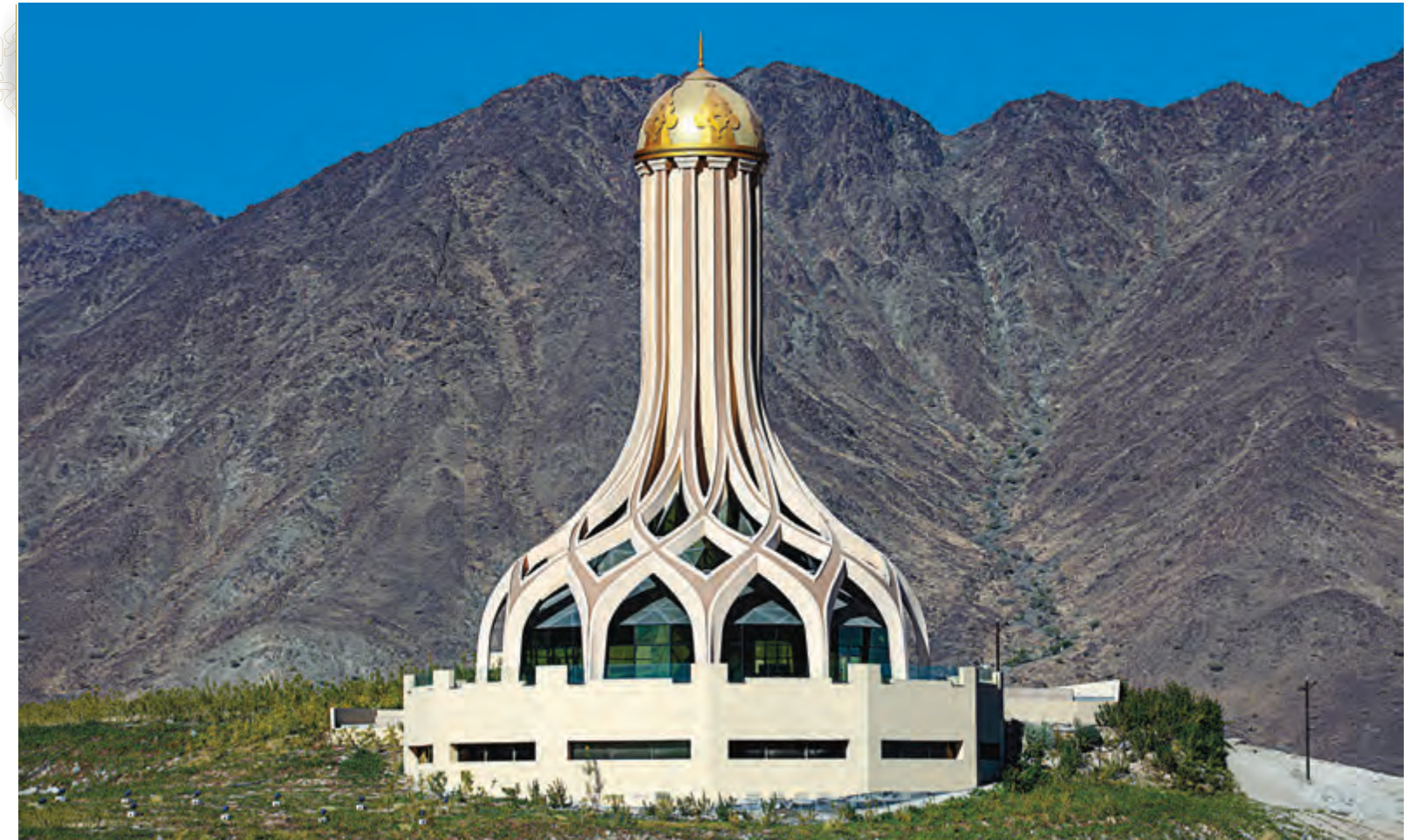
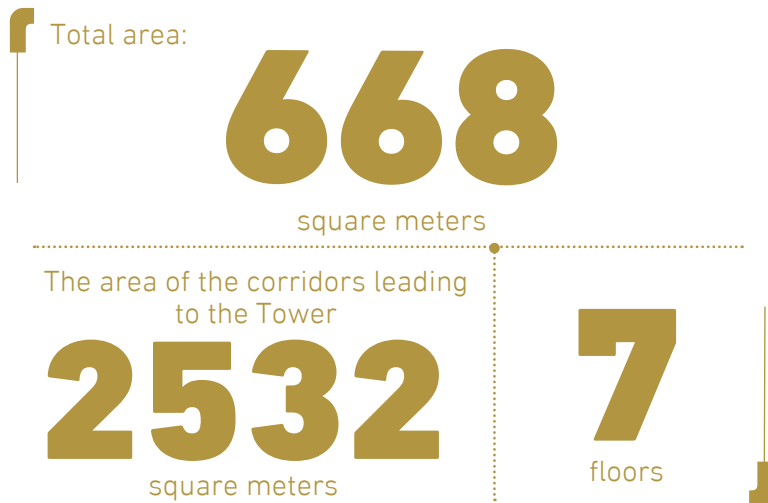
### Clock Tower:

The Clock Tower consists of 7 floors, with a total area of 668 square meters and an area of 2532 square meters for the corridors leading to the Tower, topped by a huge clock with a diameter of 5 meters, that can be seen from all over the town.

The Clock Tower is surrounded by a group of creative water fountains surrounding the Tower that operate on a clock system, which includes 12 main fountains, representing the number of hours and 60 sub-fountains, representing the number of minutes, water pour from its nozzles in a sequential system that reflects the timing, in addition to 4 other nozzles.

The Clock Tower also includes two terraces for sightseeing. The first terrace is located on the fifth floor at a height of 33 meters, and contains a restaurant for the visitors, the second terrace is located on the seventh floor, at a height of 46 meters above sea level, and provides a wonderful view of the town and its surroundings, such as Kalba Lake, Sharjah University, Kalba Commercial Center, Qurum Natural Reserve and the surrounding mountains.

The architectural heritage of the Tower is characterized by its modern Islamic decorations that cover all its sides, with a spacious dome covered with gilded mosaic, in addition to the various Islamic decorations on the four facades of the building.



### Resistance Monument:

The Resistance Monument rises on one of the mountain peaks opposite to Khor Fakkan Square, and extends over an area of 393 meters. With its distinctive shape that features a helmet, it tells everyone the stories of the sacrifices and the epic heroism of the town people during the Portuguese invasion in 1507 AD.

The corridors surrounding the monument provide a panoramic view of the city, where visitors can ramble inside the building's 898-meter, that branch into two halls, one of them is dedicated to film screenings, and the other is dedicated to displaying the historical collections, dating back to the 14th century that the people of Khorfakkan used in their struggle against the Portuguese.

Khorfakkan was an important commercial center in 1507 AD, and ships traveling in the district had often stopped in its port. The shops were located close to the coast for easy access. Khorfakkan people used the materials available in the construction of the buildings, and for this you will find that some of the buildings were built of palm fronds and branches, and others were built of coral and mountain stones.

Khorfakkan was surrounded by a defensive wall 1.5 meters thick, located parallel to the mountains, and extending eastward towards the sea. In order for the people to provide more protection for the borders of their town, they had built towers on the tops of hills and mountain peaks, and established forts along the coast.

## Projects in Progress



### Ar-Rahhal Project

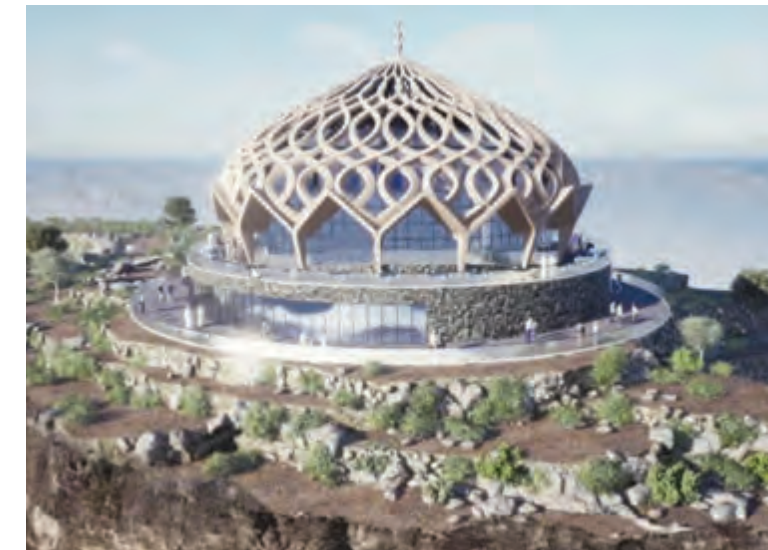
From Sharjah's wing in the World Travel Market 2021, Shurooq announced the launch of its first of a kind tourism project; "Ar-Rahhal".

The soon to be completed project provides caravans that allow tourists and internal traveling enthusiasts to experience the unique nature of Sharjah's various landscapes; from beaches to mountains and deserts.

The caravans feature all contemporary comfort amenities with environmentally friendly specifications that reflect Shurooq's commitment to environmental sustainability in all of its projects. The caravans also adhere to Sharjah's vision of responsible investment that contributes to the sustainable development of its social, economic and environmental sectors.

### The Book Lounge (Kalba)

The project is located 950m above sea level in the city of Kalba and is connected to the city through Wadi Al Helou Tunnel and Sharjah - Kalba Expressway. It is part of a continuing project that aims to develop Sharjah's tourism infrastructure.





### Kalba Waterfront

Kalba Waterfront features an exquisite view of a serene lake surrounded by mangroves and some of the most beautiful landscapes in the UAE. The project also offers an outdoor

shopping experience, with shops dotting the sides of the road along with numerous indoor and outdoor restaurants, a children's play area, and an extensive park surrounding the lake and allowing visitors to enjoy the relaxing vibes.



### Jubail Khorfakkan Resort

The project is located in Sweifeh Beach, Khorfakkan and Luluyah Beach on the east coast of the UAE. It is surrounded by natural landscapes and consists of 45 hotel units, a royal suite with a private garden and pool, a restaurant, gym, spa, children's play area, and a reception hall overlooking the hills.





### Kalba Project

Located in a secluded bay on the east coast of Sharjah and the south coast of the country, next to Kalba Waterfront and opposite Kalba Lake and the Flag Square. The project covers 12,000m<sup>2</sup>, and consists of 80 hotel units, two restaurants, a cafe, gym, spa, pool, and meeting hall.

**12**  
(1000) m<sup>2</sup>

**80**  
Hotel units



### Luluyah Beach

Located on the east coast of Khorfakkan and covering 1,6 km, the estimated cost of the project, which will be completed by November 2022, is around 110 million Dirhams. It consists of children's playgrounds, a swimming pool, a safe beach open for everyone and another for women only, restaurants with panoramic views, cafes, beach huts, a water walk, an outdoor cinema, and an outdoor hall for celebrations and conventions.

**1.6**  
km

**110**  
AED Million



### LUX Al Jabal Resort, Khorfakkan

The Resort, which is planned for opening in March 2023, boasts countless facilities, including a private swimming pool with beach access, children's play areas, and a club with a variety of superb activities. The project consists of 45 hotel

units with an environmentally friendly design that ensures a high level of privacy and seclusion. The rooms are built with special Finnish pine wood grown under the Forest Certification Program.



### Lux Al Bridi Resort, Al Dhaid

Lux Al Bridi Resort is located next to the Sharjah Safari project in Al Dhaid. It has 35 luxury tents and the "Lux Me Spa", offering guests a variety of activities that allow them to interact directly with over 50,000 animals, including lions

and tigers, in coordination between Shurooq and Sharjah Environment and Protected Areas Authority according to the highest standards of safety. The project should be completed in 2023.



### Tital Mall Project

Considered the largest shopping mall in Sharjah, the Mall's cost is estimated at 1 billion Dirhams. The Mall covers around 2 million square feet, including a large variety of international restaurants, a hypermarket, a health clinic, and a theme park covering 65 hectares.



### Village Najd Al Miqsar

The village of Najd Al Miqsar, located at the top of a mountain in Wadi Shi, is one of the most important monuments and effects of the history and the historical heritage of Khorfakkan town. It includes a number of old houses, which are primitive houses, similar to huts, which are called "the cranes", built of mud, gravels and plaster stone, and were roofed with "d'an", which are known as palm fronds and branches.

Thirteen houses in the 100-year-old Najd Al Miqsar village have been converted into luxury homes and hotels in the Emirati Heritage Style. The upper fortress of the village, which was built 300 years ago and offers a view of the historical valley, from a height of 220 meters, has also been restored, in addition to a reception hall, a cafe, barbecue areas, outdoor areas and a mosque. Nine villas will be developed with private pools, villas with private farms, climbing paths, tracks for horse riding, and other facilities.



### The new brand identity of Al Rafisah Dam:

Al Rafisah Dam Hangout includes many tourist services and places for children to play and enjoy their time in the wonderful view of the lake. The Hangout includes parking lots, a cafeteria, a supermarket, a mosque, a 55-meter artificial waterfall that flows into the lake, and a 730-meter long walkway, on the edge of the mountains, from the rootage of the dam, through farms, to the Fort, which is surrounded by palm trees, a group of local plants, and covered with the green hellebore. To enjoy

the beauty of the scenery around the dam's waters, visitors can sail the excursion boats, rowing inside the dam, and feed the ducks in the water. Sharjah Commerce and Tourism Development Authority is working on developing a new brand identity for the dam, in order to provide distinguished experiences for the visitors, and enhance the dam's position as one of the most beautiful and most important tourist destinations in Khorfakkan and the district as whole.



### Future Outlook

SCTDA continues to implement its vision which aims to increase tourist attractions and add thousands of hotel rooms by providing an optimal environment for local and foreign investment.

SCTDA aims to achieve Sharjah's Tourism Vision 2022, by joining efforts of all concerned government departments and institutions with private sector companies in the airline, travel, tourism, and hospitality sectors.

To ensure a sustainable tourism sector, SCTDA is also implementing several promotional plans to attract more tourists, by establishing strong awareness of its tourism services and projects and highlighting the latest developments of the Emirate's tourism activities and experiences.

In its promotional plans, SCTDA focuses on highlighting Sharjah's unique and various tourism products offered to all family members from all age groups with different interests. Thanks to its distinguished tourist destinations, Sharjah can meet the needs of tourism, adventure, and outdoor activity

lovers. It also keeps abreast with the interests of entertainment seekers to enrich its event-packed year-round schedule.

SCTDA is continuously improving and developing while innovating and expanding exhibition and convention tourism and marine tourism, with excellent tourist spots and infrastructure. SCTDA remains committed to providing tourists with an exceptional experience, focusing on the finest details - from the minute of their arrival until their departure. SCTDA seeks to expand its utilization of the latest technology and innovative applications to develop its business and relations with the targeted guests and support its plans for smart tourism.

In addition to traditional tourism, SCTDA encourages and promotes alternative forms of tourism, such as green tourism and cultural tourism, to support Sharjah's continuous efforts to establish the principles and practices of the optimal, long term, positive use of national natural, cultural and social resources.





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