



Big spenders and long stayers

Saudi travelers are the next 'big-thing' for global tourism industry

Tourism boards across the globe are setting their sights on Middle Eastern travelers, especially those from UAE and Saudi Arabia. Profiled as liberal spenders and long stay tourists, middle-eastern travelers are sought after because they pump money into their respective host economies.

Emirates Business reports latest Q12010 as showing countries such as France, Seychelles, Thailand, and Singapore as already experiencing positive inflows of tourists from these regions. The World Tourism Organization (WTO) additionally forecasts sizeable outbound tourism from the Middle East, projecting as many as 35 million middle-eastern tourists flying out to international destinations by 2020.

This raises the region's market share in this category to 2.2 per cent compared to 1.5 per cent in 1995. WTO statistics also point to a spending of \$20 billion (Dh73.4bn) on outbound travel from the Middle East region by 2020. The GCC alone represents around 60% of this market. By 2020, the most important growth will come from the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Egypt and Lebanon. Hoping to profit from this trend, countries like Greece, along with Korea, Nepal, India, Sri Lanka and Nigeria, have already intensified their tourism initiatives in the region, including participation in events like the Arabian Travel Market and the Riyadh Travel Exhibition.

Local travel agents we spoke to confirm this trend, stating their mid to high income group Saudi clientele spend up to 40% more than other nationalities, ranging between Aed35,000/- to Aed45,000/- for average families on a 45 day vacation, to Aed100,000/- for the affluent high net-worth clients, while other nationalities' budgets stretch to a maximum of Aed25,000/-. Among singles, the disparity in vacation spend, Aed10,000/- to Aed15,000/- per trip is very comparable to that of other nationalities, underscoring the focus of international travel bureaus on 'family travelers' from Saudis.

To London with Love

Despite industry fears, the Saudi penchant for London is not abating. While there has been a decrease in numbers to other European and US destinations, the number of Saudis who visited Britain in 2009 exhibited a significant increase, according to the country's National Tourist Board. "In 2009, some 94,000 people from the Kingdom visited the United Kingdom, compared to 80,000 during the previous year," said Visit Britain's Chief Executive Sandie Dawe, as cited in Zawya.com.



the Saudi penchant for London is not abating

She also claimed that Saudis spent over £200 million last year, while overseas residents made 31.9 million visits to the UK in 2008. Speaking to our target audience, we found that a larger majority of Singles Climbers favored the London destination, not only for its liberalized way of life, but also for the cultural heritage it has to offer tourists. Many Climbers also cited it to be more cosmopolitan and Arab-friendly as compared to other European destinations with relatively lesser language barriers. Though the Homemakers also expressed a love for the city, there is a clear preference for the US when speaking of destinations in the West, citing wholesome 'family fun' opportunities available in the US along with ample 'affordable' shopping options, as reasons.

Hot Tip of the season:

Halal friendly travel to take the world by storm

At the Arabian Travel Market 2010 this past May, Crescentrating, a Singapore-based company and one of the world's first to focus on promoting Halal-friendly travel and tourism services, made its Middle East debut. The burgeoning Islamic travel sector, estimated to represent more than 10% of the total global travel market share, is eagerly seeking Shari'ah-compliant products and services for travel.

With more than 1.6 billion Muslims globally, an increasingly affluent Arab population under 21 years-of-age, and US\$7 billion worth of religious tourism directed towards Saudi Arabia annually, the company is hoping to capitalize on this needgap in the travel and tourism industry. "We are seeing massive growth within this market segment and it was something we needed to be part of. To cater for demand, we have developed our very own rating system and website for travel based on a set of Halal-friendly criteria," said Fazal Bahardeen, CEO and Member of the Board, Crescentrating.



Dangerous liaisons

While the majority of Saudi males travel for fun and enjoyment with friends or family, there also exists a segment of single and married males who indulge in 'deviant' (defined as unusual or not the norm) behaviors on their travels. Dissuaded from US and European travel by strict regulations, Cairo has replaced European destinations for Saudi men seeking those pleasures typically banned in their own conservative Kingdom.

The tour operators we spoke to affirmed this trend, citing 'partying' and 'prostitution' as the main attraction for the tourists. Rentals for flats in Cairo spiral out of control during summer months reaching record rentals of 500 Egyptian pounds (\$90) per day. This has prompted many affluent Saudis to purchase properties of their own in Cairo for their fun.

A recent report by the Egyptian tourism ministry said that some 600,000 Saudis have purchased flats in Egypt, with 60% concentrated in Cairo itself, and the more adventurous and elite 30% found in Alexandria and the resort districts on the northern coast. The urfi (temporary) marriages to rich Saudis, who pay hefty amounts to the girls' families as their 'summer-wives', is another manifestation of this trend. Other destinations popular with this segment of Saudi males are Morocco, Philippines or Thailand where they can safely indulge their 'desires' & 'fantasies'.

In the last four years, Aden, in Yemen, has been added to the list of 'illicit' destinations popular among young Saudi Climbers. The reason behind Aden's popularity is qat, a narcotic shrub widely chewed there, but considered a drug and banned in Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries. Aden sees a high influx of young affluent Saudis during the summer months, using their luxury cars and obvious wealth to lure the local Yemeni women into relations. Interestingly, this tourism revenue has become so valuable for Yemen that the Yemeni Tourism Minister Nabil al-Faqih says specific Tourist programs "now target chiefly Arab and Gulf nationals, particularly Saudis, and we seek to encourage family tourism from neighboring countries,"

pulse beats

- 8 out of 10 male homemakers prefer paying with cash when travelling while an equivalent number of female homemakers prefer using Credit Cards.
- Saudi vacations with families are typically 45 days long, with average spends of Aed35,000/- to Aed45,000/-
- 90% of female homemakers welcome the TLC (tender loving care) they receive from their 'transformed' husbands while traveling.
- 75% of single female climbers undergo dieting and fitness regimes in order to look good when on holiday, many of them 'confessing' to wearing swimming costumes or non-conservative Western attire when abroad.
- 83% of male respondents cite FREEDOM as the biggest benefit and attraction of leisure travel, terming the inability to travel akin to being imprisonment.
- Purchasing new clothes is a common travel preparatory habit among Saudi females, with 8 out of 10 married female homemakers dedicated to a ritual of purchasing 'sexy lingerie' before traveling with their husbands
- Single Saudi Climbers, both male and female, admit to taking frequent short vacations of up to a week, typically spending Aed10,000/- to Aed15,000/- per trip.
- 8 out of 10 Saudi travelers are more inclined towards short-haul or 'round the corner' trips to neighboring Middle Eastern countries.
- Some 600,000 Saudis have purchased flats in Egypt in the last few years, underscoring Egypt's popularity as a summer tourist destination for Saudis.
- AlMasria Universal Airlines, the first private Egyptian carrier to fly to Saudi Arabia, hopes to carry up to 450,000 travellers between the two countries in its first year of operation!
- Profiled as big spenders and long-stayers, Saudi travelers are being eagerly pursued by the global tourism industry and touted as the next 'big-thing' on the travel scene!
- 'Halal-friendly' travel is predicted to take the travel industry by storm, with many firms launching special initiatives and programs designed to suit the needs of this burgeoning Islamic travel sector.
- The Islamic travel sector is estimated to represent more than 10% of total global travel market share.
- Saudi's outbound travel expenditure exceeded \$5.9bn in 2008.
- Since June 1 of this year, Emirates have begun daily Jeddah flights of their super jumbo A380 in response to the high traffic of Saudi visitors.
- Nas Air & Sama, domestic low-cost carriers of Saudi, have been operating to full capacity since their launch in 2007. This is representative of the flourishing domestic travel scene in the Kingdom.
- Syria and Malaysia emerge as the Top travel destinations for Saudis among regional and international markets, with Dubai a popular second.
- 'e-tourism' is termed a necessity by most travel agents, claiming that about 50% of travelers try to arrange for their bookings online before they come to an agent.

Just like a good 'neighbour'...

Saudis favour 'round the corner' destinations for short holidays



According to the Abu Dhabi Tourism Authority, the 1st quarter of 2010 has seen a significant 23% rise in the number of Saudi visitors to Abu Dhabi compared with this same time last year. In expectation of a rise in family tourism during the summer months, Abu Dhabi is gearing up with various promotions, attractions, summer event and festivals.

"We have chalked out an elaborate summer program for our visitors from Saudi Arabia and other parts of the GCC," ADTA's Domestic Promotion Section Head Ati Al-Dhaheri told a press conference at the Westin Jeddah on Saturday. Majed Saud Kaki, assistant general manager of Elaf Group of Companies in Saudi Arabia, stated in Menafn that, while traditionally the most popular destinations for outbound Saudi nationals had included London and the US, in recent years there has been a surge in interest in nearby destinations such as Egypt, Lebanon, Turkey, Oman, Syria and the UAE—cheaper holiday spots and ideal for short-haul vacations.

Among Asian destinations, Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore also emerge at the top for outbound Saudi tourists. "The significant reduction in travel costs has further boosted outbound travel in the Kingdom as an increasing number of residents are now exploring new destinations to visit," said Mr. Kaki. Mr. Atiq of Ace Travel Al Khobar points out that outbound travel to destinations like Dubai has increased significantly post 9/11, with the stricter immigration and visa rules being big dampeners. Interestingly there has been a big boost in domestic & regional travel among the mid-income groups, who cite reasons of ample discounts & travel promotions born of the recession as big motivators, making short-haul vacations to neighboring countries an affordable reality for them.



Low-cost airlines take the Saudi Domestic and Regional Travel industry to new heights

Cheap fares on domestic routes offered by low-cost airlines are a major contributing factor to the currently flourishing domestic travel market in Saudi. Travel Agents dealing with the region note that a growing number of Saudis are becoming sensitized to prices and are seeking to compare costs before choosing their products.

As a result, these cost-conscious Saudis are likely to choose low cost carriers such as Nas Air and Sama for their travels. Underscoring this trend is the fact that both airlines have been operating to full capacity since their launch in 2007.

Our male homemakers cited this as a very important reason for increasing domestic travel, terming low cost airlines a boom for their travelling habits. Some even believe that the ability to undertake frequent short trips together as a family has contributed to an increase in family bonding due to the destressing effect of vacations on all family members.

In contrast, a small segment of female homemakers termed the low-cost airlines as a 'spoke-in-the-wheel' as far as their international travel options were concerned, as they felt husbands tend to opt for domestic or regional travel versus other international destinations due to the cost benefit of such airlines.



A travel boom during a gloom?

Religious, domestic & regional travel

Amidst the global economic downturn and the major setbacks afflicting the worldwide travel and tourism industry and its ancillary sectors, the unaffected state of tourism in Saudi Arabia stands glowingly as a representative of an optimistic economy and an upbeat market sentiment. Widely dominated by religious and domestic tourism and encouraged by government efforts to boost local markets, the Kingdom's travel industry has been very resilient to the economic crisis.

Religious tourism has always formed an important travel cornerstone of both domestic as well as inbound tourism for Saudi Arabia. Of the more than 30 million domestic trips made within the Kingdom, over 15 million are 'religious' in nature, while more than half of the tourism pouring into the Kingdom is likewise religiously motivated.

The Hajj, undertaken by hundreds of thousands of Muslims each year, is an 'obligatory' demonstration of faith and thus continues irrespective of economic downturns. Additionally, as the number of cost-conscious Saudi travelers rise in response to the global crisis, domestic & regional travel is ever more popular, with holiday options such as the UNESCO World Heritage Sites within Saudi, or international destinations like Cairo, Jordan, Cyprus and Kuwait becoming more viable.

Therefore, the outlook for domestic & regional tourism is positive, with healthy growth expected during the next five years. Inbound travel is also expected to grow, albeit moderately, with major government initiatives such as the largest eco-tourism park in the Middle East driving the growth. Outbound travel to USA and Europe continues to decline due to post 9/11 anti-Islamic sentiment & 'unwelcome' attitudes experienced by Saudis in the West. This cooled Western welcome has triggered among Saudis a deeper search for identity and an intense attachment to their own roots & origins.

Our Saudi Homemakers and Climbers mirror this sentiment, and appear more culturally driven and choosy over where and how and to spend their holiday budgets. Saudi travel agents quote nearly 30-40% increase in summer business, characterized by higher family travel. Among Eid holidays and other short breaks, they cite a 50% increase on outbound travel, with domestic/local travel rising by almost 70%. Travel by single males and even single females is quoted as being higher during the short holiday breaks, affirming the findings of our travel behavior study among single males and females.

Extreme makeover Saudi women welcome the change in their husbands when traveling



Married Saudi female homemakers we spoke to cited a transformation in their husbands when visiting European or American destinations. Some even expressed resentment with returning home because of the 'loss of closeness' they suffer in the convention-driven atmosphere of the Kingdom. For these wives, their husbands are a "different man" when holidaying abroad, openly expressing love and caring for wife and kids.

A Times Online article quotes one wife this way: "It's amazing how my husband becomes a different man when we go on holiday and can escape from this country — even to Bahrain. We start to do things as a couple. We go shopping together. We play together in the swimming pool. The children become closer to us. The whole family benefits." It appears travel is perceived as a key facilitator of 'genuine' bonding between all members of the family by both male and female homemakers, who are also united in dubbing it a catalyst for greater understanding and friendship between the couples.

The archetypical Saudi tourist in London is found either smoking shisha outside cafes on Edgware Road or buried under piles of Harrods shopping bags. Burqas and Asian maids in tote, rich female Saudi tourists are easily identified, but it is the ostentatious young male who attracts the most attention...and ire. A careless disrespect for traffic laws and a flamboyant display of wealth in the form of loud music blaring from red Ferraris and Yellow Hummers are the hallmarks of young Saudi male tourists in London. Female Saudi tourists in London, single or married, are marked by their love of shopping, with most Saudi women, readily choosing marathon shopping over touristy activities. While in London, Saudi men also strive to appear as Westernized in attire and demeanor as possible, while the women remain largely consigned to their customs from back home.

The Khaleej Times reports that beginning June 1st, Emirates will be offering daily flights to Jeddah on their super jumbo A380. EK is also increasing their services to Riyadh, as well as commencing a limited service to Al Medinah and al Munawarrah, from July 2 to September 24, 2010, during the peak travel season. "The popularity of the A380 into Jeddah has exceeded our initial expectations. Passenger loads across all three classes are performing extremely well and this is testament to the excellent quality product that we continue to offer our customers. Saudi Arabia is an incredibly important market for EK and we will continue to push forward with our development and expansion plans," says Ahmed Khor, Emirates Airline Senior Vice-President for Commercial Operations of the Gulf, Middle East and Iran.



PULSE™ is a proprietary MCN tool that is designed to stay in continuous touch with key target constituencies to generate 'no holds barred' insights cutting across every facet of Saudi life. The program is managed by www.market-i-research.com

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Medical tourism and plastic surgery: South East Asia claims a niche 'travel' space among Saudis

Rich Saudis seeking a new nose or a change in gender look towards the many lucrative clinics available in Southeast Asia. Pandering to both medical needs, as well as the rich tastes of wealthy 'medical' tourists, these luxurious clinics look more like five-star resorts than the medical facilities that they are—and Saudi medical tourists are increasingly attracted to these luxurious places! 'Bumrungrad International', the largest private hospital in Southeast Asia, is a case in point.

Here, in an atmosphere strikingly resembling a luxury hotel or a shopping centre, Saudi nobility recline in comfortable sofas, Starbucks coffee in hand, while nearby escalators lead pecuniarily upwards to the McDonald's, book shops, and a variety of fashion boutiques on the second floor.

Aimed at attracting rich medical tourists in Saudi Arabia, the hospital offers a detailed website, photos of surgeons, and an online appointment facility which allows for appointments to be made remotely from within the Kingdom itself, via email. Partnering with local clinics, travel agencies are also offering specialized inclusive packages, combining 'operation + hotel + beach' for their patients who, after all, are still tourists.

Bumrungrad has even partnered with Thai Airways allowing patients to exchange their air miles for medical check-ups at the hospital! A single female responding to how travel for cosmetic surgery classifies as a vacation put it rather aptly as "to have the fun of a vacation, with added advantage of returning back looking better than before is the best reward of a holiday"

The Gold Coast

A two day journey worth the escape from the grueling Arabian summer



With the Southeast Queensland mild winter coinciding with the burning summer months of Saudi Arabia, many Saudi families and couples look to the Gold Coast in Australia for an ideal holiday destination. Although cultural and religious inhibitions and restrictions prevent Saudi women from enjoying most water-related activities, on the Gold Coast fathers and husbands can indulge their female loved-ones with visits to popular tourist sites and family activity centers where everyone can enjoy. Walking along the Gold Coast's shores, visiting theme parks such as Sea World, shopping centers along the ocean shores, as well as tours on the Aqua Duck constitutes a well-spent holiday for family-oriented Saudi vacationers.

Marriages are made in Summer Holidays



Almesyaf or Summer Holiday Marriages, a modern phenomenon of the past several years, are increasing in frequency in the Kingdom. As part of the Summer Holiday Marriage arrangement, businessmen and businesswoman travel together during summer holidays as husband and wife, but end the marriage as soon as they return home.

Our respondents, both single climbers and married homemakers, affirm the existence of such 'convenience unions' and feel that their popularity is the result of the new-age 'liberalized and modern' Saudi woman. While our respondents did express some disapproval of individuals who seek such unions, the general reaction was one of resignation towards the behavior of men and surprise at the women who agree to these arrangements. "Saudi men have always been like that," insisted many of our respondents. "Earlier it was women from other countries.

But what is shocking now is the trend for Saudi women to agree to such marriages". However, the respondents are quick to point out that such deviant behavior is mostly popular among the spoiled rich and is not the norm for regular families. One reason for the popularity of Almesyaf among the rich is that the rich can afford to do it.

The compensation or Maher for contracting into a summer marriage falls in the range of 150,000 Saudi Riyal, plus a car and a luxurious villa. The businessmen hold to strict criteria when choosing their "travel wife", namely a good oral and written command of the English language, an attractive appearance, and a willingness to attend mixed parties when abroad. Delving deeper, our respondents confirm (in hushed tones) that such marriages are also initiated by Saudi businesswomen, a rising constituency in the current Saudi market.

These businesswomen look for a husband to be their "Mehrem" during their travels abroad, the condition being that the husband gives her the permit to travel, accompany her, and allow her the freedom to move about once they are outside Saudi Arabia. In return, he is 'allowed' to live with her or she buys him a car, etc. Sheikh Ahmed Abdulqader, an Islamic consultant and a legal marriage officer in Saudi Arabia justifies Summer Holiday Marriages as way to prevent Saudi men from pursuing prostitutes during their travel abroad.

In an attempt to woo big-spending GCC tourists, France recently initiated a program to increase awareness of its varied tourist attractions among high-end business travelers from GCC. In 2009, France attracted a little over 725,000 tourists from the Middle East and Near East. Speaking to Khaleej Times, Karim Mekachera, Director of Atout Franc, stated that in the past, mostly families, couples, and youth from Saudi Arabia and the UAE were targeted as key market constituents, with these groups accounting for the major share of the outbound tourists to France from the region. But now, while maintaining marketing efforts on leisure travel from these targeted constituencies, secondary inputs will also be directed at high-end business travelers. "Travelers from the region are high-end clientele for France's tourism and this realization will be the base for our onward strategy to woo the affluent bitten by the travel bug from the Middle and Near East," said Mekachera.

The 2010 Riyadh Travel Exhibition opened at Riyadh International Convention and Exhibition Centre in June, with participation from about 200 local and international exhibitors from 30 countries, including Turkey, Thailand, Indonesia, Morocco, Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon, Cyprus and Kuwait. A significant number of Arab and international airlines attended the expo, as well as renowned hotel companies, and tourism and travel services providers from inside and outside the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. A considerable number of governmental bodies, foreign missions and tourism activation agencies from all over the world also attended this event in a bid to opportune in on the growing Middle East travel market.

My financial travel companion

- Females cite 'credit cards' as their ideal financial travel companion, probably because of their marathon 'big ticket item' shopping expeditions.
- Males, on the other hand prefer cash, finding it easier and faster than cards. However, some males also cite the inability to track spending as another reason to use cash, in contrast to Credit Cards which leaves a trail of their activities.

Travel related behavior



- For Saudi males at all stages of life, vacations represent fun, comfort, relaxation, but most importantly, Freedom! The majority of our male respondents cited breaking free as the biggest benefit and attraction of leisure travel, even terming the inability to travel akin to being imprisoned.

- Married homemakers express a penchant for new environments, change of weather, green natural surroundings, as well as tourist attractions, while single Climbers lean towards festivals, nightlife and entertainment options. However, both groups seek a 'no disturbance' atmosphere when travelling
- Both single male climbers and married males admit to having more fun on holiday with friends rather than family, citing ease and less time needed for travel planning, as well as a 'hassle free and unconcerned' atmosphere.' Married men also cite freedom from their traditional role as the family head which requires that they attend to the comfort and safety of their wife and kids.
- Males across life stages tended to classify themselves as 'Relaxation travelers,' as well as 'Exploratory travelers,' and looked forward to new environments, new people, new cultures, as well as modes of entertainment unavailable in the Kingdom



- In preparing for a holiday, buying new clothes emerges as a common theme across all target constituencies and both genders. For the women, the emphasis is on 'modern, trendy & Westernized' clothes, while bearing in mind a need for conservative dressing. These women opt for long skirts, trousers and long sleeved shirts, while the men choose a more avantgarde look.

- Both genders express a need to travel more than once a year, and surprisingly, both admit to travelling with their friends, though only on short vacations. Short vacations with friends tend to last 2-3 days for women and about a week for men. Long holidays, 45 days or more, are typically reserved for family travel.
- While both genders are united in perceiving holidays with friends as greater fun, the female homemakers cite a small downside to these trips wherein they experience a loss of power in decision making when travelling with friends. "Sure planning is different. My family would follow my advice or my decision but my friends have different views and different choices. I will not be the leader when travelling with friends". This corroborates the claims of travel agents who say that the PRIMARY decisionmakers during family travel are the female homemakers, and kids to an extent, with the male in the family taking a backseat.
- Another common anxiety that emerges across demographics is the fear of contracting diseases due to eating outside food throughout the tenure of their travel, sometimes even from 'onthe-go' places, perceived as possibly unhygienic.



- For Saudi married homemakers a vacation represents psychological comfort driven by the exclusive time they get with their husbands. This is also coupled with 'happy family moments of togetherness with no restrictions'

- The homemakers also view vacations as a 'holiday' from their household chores and duties, and a comforting, recuperation time for their 'tired body and mind.'
- For single female climbers, freer than their married counterparts, vacations are a time for 'exploration' and escape from the routine of 'traditional KSA life.' They also serve to alleviate pressures and stress from work.
- Purchasing new clothes emerges as a common travel preparatory habit among females. Married female homemakers also admit to a dedicated ritual of purchasing 'sexy lingerie' before traveling with their husbands
- Single climbers admit to submitting to diet and fitness regimes in order to look good when on holiday, and many of them 'confess' to wearing swimming costumes or nonconservative attire when abroad.
- Some female homemakers admitted to taking language courses in English prior to traveling abroad, while enrolling their kids for some skiing lessons
- For married females, 'the Hotel' emerged as the 'most liked' component of their trip, followed by shopping. Almost all of them term the Hotel a non-negotiable aspect of travel. This was confirmed by local travel agents who state that a 4-Star Hotel is a minimum requirement for Saudi families.
- The single female climbers termed a 'lively locale with lots of entertainment options' as the key aspect of travel, and were willing to compromise on airlines, as well as hotels, as long as they could be near the 'fun'
- Among dislikes, homemakers were united in their anxiety over the exposure to the 'bad' influences such as alcohol and girls, exerted by Western liberalized societies on their children and husbands. Some female homemakers expressed feeling threatened by their 'husbands' eyes on the girls over there'
- Female homemakers also expressed feeling 'unsettled' while travelling, probably driven by the absence of a 'home' to define their identity.
- Female homemakers cite a Tourist Guide as an invaluable asset when visiting a new city. Some homemakers, however, also cited taxi drivers as the best tour guides, and were willing to pay a premium for drivers who knew the city inside and out, its most unique offerings and attractions.
- Single Climbers, however, were more disinclined to ask for assistance, and preferred instead exploring on their own via the internet, word-of-mouth, or sheer adventurous spirit.
- Female travelers largely classify themselves as 'Relaxation travelers,' preferring holiday pampering such as spas, shopping, a reasonably 'unlimited' budget, as well as entertainment.

A TYPICAL HOLIDAY 'DAY'



- Wake up early
- Heavy breakfast
- Leave hotel or furnished apartment latest by 10.00 a.m
- Enjoy the beach in the morning
- Shopping or cafes in the afternoon
- And nights are for the 'Nightlife', which could mean discovering the 'hidden pleasures' of a city for the males or enjoying a late night theatrical performance for the females.
- Sleeping very late or remaining 'awake until dawn'. The females across life stages cite this as the most appealing aspect of being on holiday, probably driven by their inability to indulge in late night 'entertainment' in the Kingdom.

Travel ad recall



Almost unanimously, the travel and tourism ad for Egypt titled 'Albait Baitak' was cited as the most memorable, motivating and welcoming ad due to the meaning it conveys, "I love it...it means that they offer services where you feel that you are at your house and as if Egypt is your country"

Top travel destinations

Regional

- Syria
- Egypt
- Dubai
- Jordan
- Turkey

International

- Malaysia
- Indonesia
- Thailand
- Japan
- China/Korea

The rich and famous go to...



- Europe (mainly for shopping)



- Austria & Switzerland for natural beauty



- France & UK for history & culture

My travel 'essentials'



His
 Watch
 Gel
 Map for the region
 Shaving Kit including toothbrush and toothpaste



Theirs
 Laptop, which interestingly emerges as a must-have for both genders, across life stages !
 Camera
 Perfume
 Shoes
 Sunglasses
 Moisturizer
 Holy Koran



Hers
 Credit Card
 Swimming costume
 Bags/Purses
 Video Camera
 Sun block cream
 Kohl

Sources of travel info



- For the males, both single and married, as well as single female climbers, the Internet emerges as the main source of information pertaining to travel. Expedia.com and Booking.com are cited by respondents and travel agents alike as the most popular travel booking sites
- Among females, 9 out of 10 homemakers cite Television as their main source of travel information, quoting travel ads as big motivators.