

HALAAL TOURISM COME HOME TO SANHA HOSPITALITY

Travel and tourism is the world's largest commercial service sector industry with an annual estimated value of US \$3 trillion by the year 2021.

Halaal tourism is a subcategory of tourism which is geared towards Muslims who wish to abide by the rules of Islam. It is one of the fastest-growing facets of the global travel industry. Growing at nearly double the rate of the global travel market the spend has been increasing by \$10 billion annually, reaching \$177 billion in 2017. This is forecasted to reach US \$274 billion by 2023, making it one of the industry's fastest growing sectors.

This trend should not be surprising. After fourteen hundred years Islam has spread to almost every country on earth. Muslims are of all hue and nationalities, speak many languages and reside in almost all of the world's 196 countries. They are in a majority in 57 of them. In 2015, Islam had 1.8 billion adherents making up about 24.1% of the world population. By 2020, approximately 26% of the world's population will be Muslim. The emerging middle class of Muslim travellers around the world is driving this phenomenal growth.

THE MUSLIM TRAVELLER – RESPECT AND DIGNITY

Research shows that Muslim travellers value things just as much as other do with regards to comfort, safety, good food, cleanliness and very importantly respect and dignity. However, the majority expressed

dissatisfaction related to consideration of their faith and values. Some basic requirements are:-

1. **Halaal Food:** Food that is permissible (Halaal) to eat according to Islamic law. This is food that does not fall into the category of Haraam (forbidden). Food and beverages must be free of pork, non-Halaal ingredients, alcohol / intoxicants, harmful substances, unhygienic elements and any form of contamination with unlawful items.

Consumption of Halaal is an extremely important and mandatory part of the Muslim faith that heavily influences the choice of accommodation. Provision for quality Halaal meals on the premises and/or ensuring a list of easily accessible Halaal-certified outlets and caterers is a major plus factor for any establishment. A big aspect of the travel experience is trying out new cuisines. It's not just a question of finding Halaal food but finding authentic local food that is Halaal.

2. **Mini Fridge:** All alcoholic beverages must be removed from the room fridge prior to the guest's arrival/occupation.
3. **Room Décor:** Décor, ornaments, picture frames etc. should not depict animate objects and images deemed offensive. Check with your guests who will appreciate the efforts.
4. **Prayer facilities:** The provision of a prayer area or mats, the current prayer

times and clear marking showing the direction of prayer in the rooms will most certainly be a boon for Muslim guests.

5. **Availability of water in wash rooms:** A fundamental need is the availability of water in the toilet area which is a basic Islamic hygiene requirement. This can be easily addressed by the installation of hand showers or bidets or at the least by the provision of watering containers/jugs.
6. **Female swimming/spa times:** Offering female only spa or pool swimming times will help ensure your Muslim guests feel comfortable.
7. **Housekeeping and room staff:** Dress codes in Islamic cultures are relaxed behind closed doors and therefore hotels must be sensitive and address the concerns many Muslim travellers have with housekeeping and room staff.
8. **Important contact information:** A list of local Masaajid (Mosques) in the vicinity and a few important Islamic institutions be available for guest support, cultural tours, etc.
9. **Availability of the Quraan:** a simple way to send out a welcoming message to

Muslim guests is to let them know that copies of the Quraan are available for their use if required.

10. **Ramadaan services and facilities:** It is the holiest month of the Muslim calendar when fasting is undertaken. There is total abstinence from partaking of any food and drink between dawn and dusk. The service of a wakeup call and meals provided two hours before sunrise and at the breaking of the fast at sunset must be an essential offering.

BRING IT HOME WITH SANHA HOSPITALITY

With growing demand from local and international Muslim travellers who require an independent third party Halaal assurance, South Africa's internationally-respected Halaal authority has extended its services to the tourism sector.

Backed up with over two decades of world-class Halaal certification excellence, it is ready to assist your establishment with its hospitality Halaal accreditation.

Whether it is the local day tripper, business traveller, extended family holiday, hosting a conference, accreditation/certification will give you the competitive edge on your journey on the Halaal road to success.

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