

Dubai to host first in-person global travel, tourism event since the onset of Covid

Arabian Travel Market (ATM) 2021 has reconfirmed that Dubai will host the largest in-person travel & tourism event in the world, since the onset of the pandemic last year. Now in its 28th year, ATM 2021 will go ahead at the Dubai World Trade Centre (DWTC) on Sunday 16 to Wednesday 19 May, as final preparations are being put in place.



Image Supplied.

"The theme of this year's show is *A new dawn for travel and tourism* and the spotlight will be focused on the very latest Covid news from around the world – vaccine rollouts, the current state of the industry and more importantly, what the future holds," says Claude Blanc, portfolio director, WTM and IBTM Portfolios.

ATM 2021 features 67 conference sessions with over 145 local, regional and international speakers overall. Onsite, there is a Global Stage which will include a hotel industry summit, dedicated buyer forums for Saudi Arabia and China, an International Tourism & Investment Conference (ITIC), as well as an aviation panel and a special session on Gulf-Israeli ties.

Other features this year will include Travel Forward at ATM, which has world-class technology experts, providing industry-leading insights about the latest technologies and trends that will undoubtedly shape the future of travel and tourism.

Connecting destinations

A total of 62 countries are being represented on the exhibition floor this year such as the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Israel, Germany, Cyprus, Egypt, Indonesia, Malaysia, South Korea, the Maldives, the Philippines, Thailand, Mexico and the US.

"This underscores the importance of ATM, connecting destinations with their source markets," says Danielle Curtis, exhibition director Middle East, Arabian Travel Market.

ATM 2021 will be held at the Dubai World Trade Centre, spread across nine halls. Consistent with the existing density restrictions and social distancing guidelines and regulations, there will be 11,000 people in the halls at any given time.

In addition to the in-person Arabian Travel Market event, the travel events that are part of Arabian Travel Week are: travel technology exhibition Travel Forward, Arrival Dubai for the tours and attractions sector, GBTA's half-day virtual business travel conference, ITIC's Middle East Tourism Investment Summit, speed networking events for digital influencers and regionally focused buyer groups including China, and of course ATM Virtual, the online edition of the ATM exhibition.

New hybrid format

This year, for the first time in ATM history, a new hybrid format will mean a virtual ATM running a week later to complement and reach a wider audience than ever before. ATM Virtual, which made its debut last year, proved to be a resounding success attracting 12,000 online attendees from 140 countries.

"It is imperative that we include a virtual element, many industry professionals from around the world, may not be able to attend in-person every year, particularly this year with travel restrictions changing rapidly around the globe," says Curtis.

"Due to Dubai's commitment to maintaining the highest standards of health and safety and its effective citywide management of the pandemic, it was awarded a 'Safe Travels' stamp from the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC)," adds Curtis.

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