

Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Investment and Development Authority Heads to Europe to Boost Visitor Numbers

Charter flights from Germany, Austria and Sweden bringing 55,000 visitors to the emirate

(Ras Al Khaimah, UAE 8th December, 2011) The Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Investment and Development Authority (Ras Al Khaimah TIDA) recently signed an agreement with the Swedish tour operator Apollo, which is part of the Swiss Kuoni Group, in a bid to bring an additional 5,000 visitors to the emirate spending over 150,000 room nights between November 2011 and April 2012. The weekly 221-seat charter flight from Sweden, one of the emirate's main inbound markets will operate throughout the winter season.

Commenting on the new charter service, Yasser Norman, CEO, Kuoni Destination Management said: "Kuoni Destination Management is delighted to have built such a strategic partnership with the Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Investment and Development Authority and would like to thank them for their support and cooperation with Desert Adventures and the Apollo team on this project. We now have a strong platform to enable us to further promote the emirate of Ras Al Khaimah to our international clientele across the Kuoni Global network."

The Apollo agreement is the second charter flight service to be introduced by Ras Al Khaimah TIDA over the last three months. In September Ras Al Khaimah TIDA signed an agreement with German Tour Operator, *Reise Service Deutschland* and the Dubai-based Destination Management Company *World of Travel* to introduce five weekly charter flights from Germany and one weekly charter flight from Austria to Ras Al Khaimah.

This charter service has already resulted in a substantial increase across both room revenues and hotel occupancy with figures released for October 2011 showing a seven per cent increase in hotel occupancy and an increase of US\$ 1.7 million in beach hotels and resort room revenues compared to October 2010. The weekly charter flights on RAK Airways' Boeing 757-200 aircraft have brought visitors from various areas of Germany including Hamburg, Frankfurt, Dusseldorf, Berlin, Munich and the Austrian capital, Vienna and will continue until June 3rd, 2012.

“The introduction of charter flights into Ras Al Khaimah is proving to be a huge success in reaching our main objective of doubling our visitor number to 1.2 million by 2013,” said Victor Louis, Chief Operating Officer, Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Investment and Development Authority. He added: “In light of the success from both our German and Swedish charter services, next year we plan to introduce more charter flights from more countries in Europe. We are also working on setting a dedicated charter operation company specialized in Tour Operators Business under the Ras Al Khaimah Airport operation. ”

As a Government entity set up to develop and promote the emirate's tourism infrastructure and potential Ras Al Khaimah TIDA constantly seeks opportunities to expand visitor numbers to the emirate. Representation at major international travel trade shows provides an excellent platform to achieve these goals; an activity that was recently successfully completed with Ras Al Khaimah TIDA's participation at the World Travel Market exhibition in London, UK, at the beginning of November 2011. Through one-on-one meetings as well as media interviews, the delegation from Ras Al Khaimah, headed by Ras Al Khaimah TIDA Chief Operating Officer, Victor Louis promoted the emirate to the UK and European outbound markets as an affordable luxury destination for leisure, adventure and business travel. The recent activities in London are expected to further increase the number of visitors from Europe in the coming year.

To further boost the promotional push into Europe, Ras Al Khaimah TIDA is currently planning a two-week road show to major European outbound markets for January and February 2012 where the focus will be on further educating the European travel industry on the attractions of the emirate, as well as investigating opportunities for additional European charter flights.

Commenting on the European Road Show, Victor Louis said: “Europe is an important market for Ras Al Khaimah. The emirate provides an ideal getaway for European visitors who are seeking sun, leisure, adventure, great value for money, and quality experiences. With a temperate climate, rugged terrain and superb beach facilities, Ras Al Khaimah is a global contender as an exciting winter-sun holiday destination.”

In addition to the road show, Ras Al Khaimah TIDA recently appointed representative offices for public relations activities in Germany and Russia, which works on educating the travel professionals, in these markets and promotes the emirate’s attractions to the consumers of through various media activities.

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Captions

Image 1:

Ras Al Khaimah - 1st charter flight from Sweden arrived to Ras Al Khaimah

Image 2:

Ras Al Khaimah TIDA team welcome the 1st charter flight from Sweden arrived to the emirate

About Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Investment and Development Authority

The Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Investment and Development Authority (Ras Al Khaimah TIDA) was established in May 2011 as a Government of Ras Al Khaimah entity to both develop and promote the emirate’s tourism infrastructure and potential both domestically and abroad.

Ras Al Khaimah TIDA is responsible for establishing the emirate of Ras Al Khaimah as a premier quality-value destination for leisure, adventure and business travel. In order to achieve its goals, the Authority has a Government mandate to license, regulate and monitor the emirate’s hospitality industry. It conducts research and analysis of future tourism projects and current trends, create and implement the branding, marketing and promotion of Ras Al Khaimahs tourism products and services and develop, implement and support strategies designed to encourage tourism investment into the Emirate.

Clear strategic goals and targets have been set by Ras Al Khaimah TIDA including increasing the total number of annual visitors to Ras Al Khaimah to 1.2 million by 2013, and increasing the emirate’s total hotel and resort room inventory to 10,000 keys by 2016. These targets will be achieved through a myriad of activities including the representation of Ras Al Khaimah tourism industry at overseas travel shows, conferences and exhibitions together with education of travel professionals regarding Ras Al Khaimah’s tourism products and unique attractions through workshops, road-shows, familiarization and training programmes; media and consumer campaigns and promotions; the coordination and implementation of joint initiatives with key travel industry players; the hosting of leading sporting, cultural and trade exhibitions and events; and the development of the Emirate’s tourism infrastructure and attractions through the implementation of strategies and initiatives specifically designed to generate and encourage direct tourism investment and investment opportunities into Ras Al Khaimah.

Ras Al Khaimah has its own unique identity with a diversity of landscapes that makes it the perfect getaway for leisure, adventure, and quality-value experiences. The emirate presents an extensive selection of exclusive outdoor adventure activities from mountain climbing and mountain biking to kayaking and fishing. For relaxation visitors to

Ras Al Khaimah can enjoy idyllic sojourns along the emirate's white sandy beaches and resorts and an eclectic selection of international gourmet experiences and world-class spas.

www.rasalkhaimahtourism.com

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