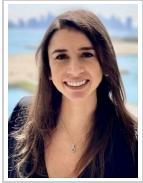


Jordan's soaring tourism sector

📅 July 25, 2023 / 👤 By Maria Quintero



Jordan's cultural legacy includes over 100,000 archeological sites, **UNESCO** World Heritage Sites and religious landmarks. It is also a leader in medical tourism. Prior to Covid-19, it welcomed 250,000 foreign patients, contributing to over USD 1 billion in revenues per year. Likewise, spa and wellness services have flourished on the shores of the Dead Sea.

Tourism contribution

The tourism sector plays a fundamental role in the country's economy. The latest available data reports the industry rebounded from the pandemic-driven slowdown, accounting for 10-13 percent of Jordan's 2022 GDP, bringing in USD 5.8 billion. As of Q1 2023, revenues had already recorded 88 percent growth versus the same last year.

In terms of visitor arrivals, the country recorded 5.05 million tourists in 2022, which was twice the number of arrivals in 2021. This year appears to be promising, with 2.48 million visitors as of May 2023, recording a remarkable 69 percent growth compared to the same period in 2022 and surpassing pre-pandemic figures. The increase in visitation has reached exceptional levels, with forecasts that Petra alone will receive 1.6 million visitors by the end of the year. Moreover, Jordan is set to welcome an additional 10-15 percent of tourists compared to 2019.



Jordan's source markets demonstrate a similar pattern of growth. In Q1 2023, Arab countries emerged as the leading source with 509,000 visitors, representing a notable 62 percent increase. Jordanians residing abroad constituted the second-largest source, while European tourists showed significant growth with a 53 percent increase. Additionally, Asian, American, and African visitors collectively experienced a remarkable 213 percent growth.

The overall increase in tourism has been attributed to the promotional international campaigns launched by the **Jordan Tourism Board** and the growing number of reforms aimed to rise foreign investment and improve ease

Summary

Jordan has become a popular travel destination in the Middle East. It was ranked the sixth Arab country in the 2022 Travel and Tourism Development Index and listed within the top 10 tourist destinations in 2023 by the US Tour Operator Association. Maria Quintero, HVS' associate – consulting and valuation, provides insights into Jordan's success and the factors that make it an appealing choice for travelers worldwide.

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of access and customer experience. Furthermore, the introduction of low-cost airlines, including **Wizz Air** and **Ryan Air**, has attracted a new customer base, tapping into non-traditional source markets.

Hospitality recovery

The rebound in tourism reflects Jordan's hospitality. In 2022, figures indicated a market-wide occupancy of 53 percent in Amman's quality supply compared to 51 percent in 2019. Year-to-date data (June 2023) reports 55 percent occupancy, a 21 percent growth versus the same time last year. Likewise, quality average rates across Amman achieved USD 137 in 2022, 7 percent higher than pre-Covid levels, and have grown 4 percent year-to-year in 2023.

Petra, the Dead Sea, and the country's hospitality industry show growth, reaching 65 percent occupancy, and 61 percent reservation rates and setting extraordinary 2023 trends.

Moving forward

The outlook for Jordan is bright, not only due to the country's culture, history, and scenery but also due to the value and support that the country has given its tourism proposition, which is the true catalyst for diversification, improvement, and growth. In April 2023, the government launched the third phase of the **National Tourism Strategy 2021-2025**, aimed at strengthening the sector's contribution to economic growth and job creation. The protection of Jordan's historic and cultural sites, the upgrade of public and accessible infrastructure, and the growth in number of efficiencies, human development, and investments are all expected to increase the country's competitiveness.

Jordan can diversify its tourism offerings by reinvigorating experiences and hospitality choices. By strengthening niche segments, like medical tourism, outdoor adventure and wellness travel, expanding the national events calendar, promoting sustainable practices and staying updated on consumer preferences, Jordan can provide year-round seasonality and differentiate itself from other destinations.

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About **Maria Quintero**



María is an Associate Director at HVS Dubai working in strategic consulting for hospitality assets across the Middle East and Africa.

As part of HVS, María has been involved in numerous financial studies including complex feasibility projects, re-development plans, appraisals and strategic advisory for hotels and resorts of all asset types. María has also engaged in operator search and selection assignments and specializes in wellness, luxury and hospitality-driven mixed-use developments throughout the GCC.

Prior to joining HVS, María worked in luxury hotel management in UAE and Qatar. She also has experience in business consulting in Colombia.

María holds a Master's Degree on International Business in Hotel and Resort Management from Swiss Hotel Management School, and a Bachelor's Degree in Economics from Universidad de Los Andes, Colombia.

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