

Young Saudis Fuel Strong Growth in Domestic Tourism, Wyndham Research Finds

Wyndham Hotels & Resorts reveals Gen Z travel trends in Saudi Arabia, with rising interest in cultural, sustainable, and value-driven travel aligned with Vision 2030's domestic tourism goals.

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia – 12 May 2025 – A new research report by Wyndham Hotels & Resorts reveals that Saudi Arabia's Generation Z is driving the country's tourism landscape—fueling a surge in domestic travel rooted in cultural exploration, digital engagement, and sustainability.

Conducted in partnership with YouGov, the study shows that **over half (54%)** of Gen Z Saudis have taken a domestic leisure trip in the past six months, with 29% of respondents planning to continue travelling locally in the future. The emerging trends from the research underscore how travel has become a meaningful part of everyday life for young Saudis, not a luxury, but a lifestyle, a result which is driven by the Kingdom's Vision 2030 goals to increase domestic tourism to 55 million trips annually by 2030 and raise tourism's GDP contribution to 10%.

*"What we're witnessing is a generational shift," said **Dimitris Manikis, President EMEA, Wyndham Hotels & Resorts.** "Gen Z travellers in Saudi Arabia are increasingly choosing to explore their own backyard, not just out of convenience, but because they're proud of what the Kingdom has to offer. They're driven by a desire to connect with local culture, contribute to the economy, and travel more sustainably. At Wyndham, we're proud to support this transformation by offering stays that meet their expectations for value, comfort, and digital ease, while helping them engage more deeply with Saudi Arabia's nature, heritage, and communities."*

Key Trends: Gen Z Travellers in Saudi Arabia

1. Homegrown Adventures Take Centre Stage

The appetite for domestic travel is strong, with 54% of Gen Z respondents choosing to explore the Kingdom, reflecting their engagement with Saudi Arabia's fast-growing tourism ecosystem. This enthusiasm is particularly strong among young women, with 55% of female Gen Z travellers opting for local adventures, a sign of growing independence and deeper cultural curiosity. From heritage villages in Al Ula to coastal escapes in Umluj and urban culture in Jeddah and Riyadh, young Saudis are uncovering the richness of their own country.

2. Travel is a Lifestyle, Not a Luxury

Among Gen Z not currently in the workforce, a remarkable 72% have travelled recently, showing how deeply travel is woven into youth culture. With increased investment in festivals, giga-projects, and local experiences, short breaks and micro-trips are gaining popularity.

3. Digital-First Discovery

In line with Saudi Arabia's status as one of the most connected societies globally, 39% of Gen Z travellers cite social media as their primary source of inspiration. This digital influence is not just about where they discover destinations, it's also about *why* they go. A striking 64% say they enjoy travelling to places featured in their favourite movies, TV shows, or trending on social media. Furthermore, 81% are open to using AI-powered travel tools, signalling strong readiness for next-gen, tech-driven travel planning.

4. Value Over Status

Gen Z is choosing experiences over extravagance, favouring accommodations that offer comfort, community connection, and affordability. Accommodations that feel like a home away from home, enable longer stays, or reflect the local character are especially popular for their authenticity.

Wyndham's growing presence in Saudi Arabia, with five active brands and ambitious plans to expand further, including a recent **Ramada by Wyndham signing in Makkah**, underscores this shift in traveller preference. **Ramada Encore by Wyndham Al Khobar Corniche**, is a standout example, offering modern comfort, affordability, and local flair that captures the kind of grounded yet connected experience today's Gen Z travellers seek. It's hospitality that speaks Gen Z's language, authentic, rooted, and rewarding.

5. Sustainability is a Standard

Environmental awareness is increasingly influencing the travel decisions of Saudi Gen Z. The research shows that over a third (35%) actively seek out eco-friendly hotels, while nearly half (45%) prefer using sustainable modes of transport. These preferences align closely with national efforts such as the Saudi Green Initiative, which aims to promote environmental stewardship across industries, including tourism.

At Wyndham, sustainability isn't an add-on; it's built into how we operate. **Six out of our 10 hotels** in Saudi Arabia have earned the Level 1 Wyndham Green Certification or higher—including **Wyndham Garden Dammam**, which has achieved Level 5, the highest tier in our program. The hotel leads on multiple fronts: it partners with local firms to recycle paper, hazardous materials, and e-waste, earning monthly green certification reports; it engages guests through digital screens and in-room messaging on towel reuse and energy-saving practices; and it's preparing to launch a solar project for its outdoor areas. For Gen Z, responsible travel isn't a trend, it's the baseline.

Regional trends confirm this momentum: Across the GCC, Gen Z travellers are setting new expectations for how, why, and where they travel. In the UAE, for example, this generation is driving a shift toward local getaways, cultural discovery, and immersive experiences, often influenced by what they see on TikTok or Instagram. They're choosing hotels that reflect their values: eco-conscious operations, flexible tech-enabled services, and stylish spaces that feel social and shareable. While Saudi Arabia's Gen Z market is at an earlier stage of evolution, it's moving rapidly in the same direction. With one of the youngest populations in the world and a bold national agenda to develop its tourism and cultural economy, the Kingdom is poised to emerge as a regional hub for Gen Z-driven travel. The opportunity to shape this narrative by creating hospitality experiences that resonate with young Saudis is both timely and transformative.

Wyndham: Aligned with the Kingdom's Vision

With a growing presence across Saudi Arabia, Wyndham Hotels & Resorts is playing an active role in the Kingdom's tourism transformation, contributing to Vision 2030 by making travel more accessible, inclusive, and purpose-driven for the next generation.

From Riyadh to Dammam to Al Khobar, Wyndham's diverse portfolio of brands offers more than just a place to stay, they serve as launchpads for exploration, connecting travellers to the heart of Saudi culture, business, and natural beauty. Whether it's a weekend escape or a city break, Wyndham provides experiences that resonate with Gen Z's values: authenticity, comfort, and value.

Among its most Gen Z-aligned offerings is **TRYP by Wyndham**, a lifestyle brand built around urban connectivity, cultural immersion, and social experiences. Already present in the UAE, TRYP's design-led spaces, curated local experiences, and vibrant communal areas are crafted for a generation that values personality over prestige and purpose over luxury. As Gen Z interest in cultural discovery and digital convenience grows in Saudi Arabia, TRYP represents a compelling opportunity to meet this demand and expand Wyndham's local presence.

Complementing this is the **Wyndham Rewards**® loyalty programme, designed to deliver meaningful benefits to today's value-conscious traveller, and the **Wyndham Green** sustainability framework, which ensures that environmental responsibility is embedded across the guest journey. These initiatives reflect the brand's long-term commitment not only to guests, but to the communities and destinations it serves.

As Saudi Arabia opens a new chapter in domestic tourism, Wyndham is proud to be part of the story, empowering young Saudis to travel with intention, reconnect with their roots, and shape a more vibrant, connected future for the Kingdom.

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About the Research

This research was conducted by YouGov in March 2025 on behalf of Wyndham Hotels & Resorts. The study surveyed a total of 457 Gen Z respondents (aged 18–26) across the United Arab Emirates (n=230) and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (n=227), using an online quantitative methodology. Respondents were selected to reflect a broad demographic cross-section within each market. For more information, visit: <https://www.wyndhamhotels.com/en-uk/hotel-deals/discover-gcc-region>

About Wyndham Hotels & Resorts

Wyndham Hotels & Resorts (NYSE: WH) is the world's largest hotel franchising company by the number of franchised properties, with approximately 9,300 hotels across over 95 countries on six continents.



Through its network of approximately 907,000 rooms appealing to the everyday traveller, Wyndham commands a leading presence in the economy and midscale segments of the lodging industry. The Company operates a portfolio of 25 hotel brands, including Super 8®, Days Inn®, Ramada®, Microtel®, La Quinta®, Baymont®, Wingate®, AmericInn®, ECHO Suites®, Registry Collection Hotels®, Trademark Collection® and Wyndham®.

The Company's award-winning Wyndham Rewards loyalty programme offers over 115 million enrolled members the opportunity to redeem points at thousands of hotels, vacation club resorts, and vacation rentals globally. For more information, visit www.wyndhamhotels.com.

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