



DUBAI TOURISM DRIVES DESERT TOUR & CAMP REGULATION

New Legislation On Standards And Investment In Infrastructure To Raise Dubai Desert Adventures To Best-In-Class Status

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates; 2 May 2016: Dubai's Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing (Dubai Tourism) has unveiled new Desert Tour & Camp Regulations aimed at further elevating the popular Dubai desert experience to best-in-class standards. As part of the initiative, Dubai Tourism has established quality benchmarks for all desert tour operators, including those managing outdoor, cultural and hospitality activities.

Operators will be evaluated on a number of categories including, visitor experience, health and safety, insurance coverage, marketing and advertising as well as transport and logistics. The new Regulations will also focus on the implementation of environmentally sustainable practices. By empowering operators to improve their services and provide detailed information on the activities included in their packages, Dubai Tourism aims to position the Dubai desert tour industry as a safe, authentic and dynamic extension of the destination experience. The new Regulations will come into effect in three months' time giving the industry a sufficient window to adopt the standards.

To bring desert tours on par with other adventure staples in the emirate, Dubai Tourism will also facilitate collaboration between government departments and industry players. This will include increasing dialogue with agencies such as the Roads & Transport Authority (RTA), Dubai Municipality as well as Dubai Police and the Directorate of Civil Defence to ensure that booking agents, camp operators and drivers adhere to codes of conduct, safety regulations and quality standards. The move also allows operators to take ownership of gathering feedback from visitors on performance, with ample support from government entities.

Dubai Tourism will be complementing the introduction of minimum standards with increased investment in upgrading infrastructure, including new regulations with regards to the upkeep of facilities, e-Permit systems to streamline and simplify processes and an inspection system to keep tabs on offending drivers and operators. Guest safety is specifically targeted in the new regulations, such as mandatory child car seat regulations, vehicle inspection criteria and provisions to ensure all in-car safety equipment is



installed by approved vendors. In addition, all drivers must have completed their tour guide certification from Dubai Tourism, deliver mandatory safety briefings to guests and have all correct RTA licenses.

“Close to 20 per cent of all tourists who visit Dubai include a desert experience as part of their agenda and desert-based activities have consistently ranked amongst the top ten must-do activities in Dubai. In order to elevate this signature experience and make it integral to the tourist agenda, we have established a rule book for operators that sets out targets, standards and best practices,” stated Khaled Bin Touq, Executive Director, Tourism Activities & Classification Sector.

“Encouraging operators to scale up their investment and focus in these areas will feed into the overall aim to move desert adventures to the top five adventure activities in Dubai, which in turn will have a knock-on effect of bolstering Dubai’s overall reputation as an adventure hub with a distinct and diverse offering. With over 30 per cent of visitors using online research to select destinations and activities, improving our quality credentials will help generate positive feedback and increased bookings.”

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About Dubai’s Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing (Dubai Tourism)

With the ultimate vision of positioning Dubai as the world’s leading tourism destination and commercial hub, Dubai Tourism’s mission is to increase the awareness of Dubai to global audiences and to attract tourists and inward investment into the emirate.

Dubai Tourism is the principal authority for the planning, supervision, development and marketing of Dubai’s tourism sector; markets and promotes the emirate’s commerce sector; and is responsible for the licencing and classification of all tourism services, including hotels, tour operators and travel agents. Brands and departments within the Dubai Tourism portfolio include Dubai Convention and Events Bureau, Dubai Calendar, and Dubai Festivals and Retail Establishment (formerly known as Dubai Events and Promotions Establishment).

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