

## Oman sees surge in passenger traffic in January

- A Monitor Desk Report

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**Muscat - Oman's tourism sector experienced an exceptional year in 2023, exceeding expectations with a record-breaking 4mn visitors.**

The momentum continues in 2024 with a significant 21.6pc increase in airport passenger traffic by the end of January totalling 1,417,442 passengers.

This surge aligns with the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism's ambitious goal to attract 11mn tourists annually by 2040, as part of the broader Oman Vision 2040 objectives.

Comparative data from the National Centre for Statistics and Information shows passenger numbers rose from 1,165,556 at the end of January 2023.

Muscat International Airport, in particular, saw a notable increase of

22.7pc, serving 1,290,552 passengers on 8,756 flights - 16pc up from 2023. This included 8,090 international flights serving 1,200,822 passengers, and 666 domestic flights serving 89,730 passengers.

Indian travellers led the arrivals (86,234) and departures (82,807), followed by nationals from Bangladesh and Pakistan.

Salalah Airport also reported an increase - 14pc - in passenger numbers, totalling 120,506, alongside a 4.5pc increase in flights. International and domestic flights through Salalah Airport served 58,657 and 61,849 passengers, respectively. Additionally, Suhar and Duqm airports contributed to the overall growth. Suhar had 1,140 passengers and Duqm 5,370.

The hospitality sector mirrored the positive trend with revenues of 3- to 5-star hotels in the sultanate totalling RO24.75mn at the end of January 2024, marking a 17.1pc increase from the previous year. The total number of hotel guests surged 20.5pc to 215,660, with a notable occupancy rate growth of 16.2pc.

Omanis constituted the majority of hotel guests (75,219), followed by Europeans (73,325) and Asian visitors (27,191) - up 17.9pc and 27.8pc respectively.

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