

Countdown to reopen Saudi Arabia for tourism with conditions

A Monitor Report

Date: 16 May, 2021



Riyadh : Travel Operators in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), are gearing up for Saudi's Arabia resumption of international flights.

According to the Saudi Ministry of Interior, the travel ban will be lifted on May 17 for specific groups and tourists.

A major booking platform, saw a 52 per cent increase in international flight searches and a 59 per cent increase in international hotel searches, following the announcement.

Around 25 per cent of travellers are looking to travel within the 15 days of Saudi resuming flights where the search demand for this period has increased by 80 per cent since the date of the announcement.

Egypt topped the list for the flight search destinations, followed by Philippines, Morocco, Jordan and Turkey. We also saw new vacation destinations emerge for flight searches such as Maldives, Tunisia, Ukraine, Greece, and Sri Lanka.

Saudi Arabia constitutes a significant percentage of the tourism sector in the Middle East. The country has been handling the pandemic very well, reinstating

confidence for travellers.

Those who are allowed to travel to Saudi Arabia include citizens who received two doses of coronavirus vaccine or who passed 14 days after taking the first dose of the vaccine as well as people who have recovered from coronavirus, given they have spent less than six months since their infection as confirmed by the data displayed on Tawakkalna App. In addition to the citizens who are under the age of 18 years, provided that they show an insurance policy before traveling approved by the Saudi Central Bank.

Departing travellers out of Saudi Arabia need to show a PCR test certificate from an accredited screening center in the Kingdom. Upon return to the country, travellers will have to quarantine for seven days and take a PCR test at the end of the week.

Resorts are leading the searches for travellers with 58 per cent growth, followed by the apartments and hotels.

Around 68 per cent of travellers searching for flights are solos, 20 per cent families, and 12 per cent are couples.

Saudi Arabia is has been rolling out the Covid-19 vaccination to its residents. It has one of the lowest new cases per capita in the MENA region.

Travellers are feeling more reassured where airports and hotels are reinstating the confidence in travel. With stringent precautionary measures followed and safety measures that meet the high standards, we expect a steady recovery for the tourism sector.