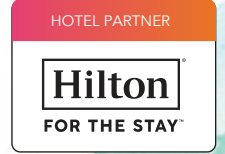


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## Curtain Raiser

# QATAR TRAVEL MART 2024 INAUGURATED WITH FANFARE!

The 3rd edition of Qatar Travel Mart (QTM 2024) was officially inaugurated by HE Sheikh Faisal bin Al Thani, Minister of Commerce & Industry and H.E. Saad bin Ali Al Kharji, Chairman of Qatar Tourism, at the Doha Exhibition & Convention Center.





This milestone event underscores Qatar's commitment to positioning itself as a premier global hub for travel and tourism, bringing together industry leaders, innovators and stakeholders to explore opportunities and shape the future of the sector

The event was marked by the presence of a plethora of distinguished persons, such as His Excellency Dr. Hamad Bin Abdulaziz Al-Kawari, State Minister with the rank of Deputy Prime Minister of Qatar; H.E. Sheikh Faisal Bin Qassim Al-Thani, Chairman of Al Faisal Holding; and, Eng. Abdulaziz Ali Al Mawlawi, CEO of Visit Qatar.

In addition were VIPs such as, H.E Ambassador Mohamed Setri, Ambassador of Morocco to Qatar; H.E Ambassador Mohammed Bin Ali Al Ghatam, Ambassador of Bahrain to Qatar; H.E Mr. Shane Flanagan, Ambassador of Australia to the State of Qatar; H.E Mrs. Erika Bernhard, Ambassador of Austria to the State of Qatar; H.E Mr. Paolo Toschi, Ambassador of Italy to the State of Qatar; H.E Mr. Satoshi Maeda, Ambassador of Japan to the State of Qatar; H.E Mr. Daniel Tănase, Ambassador of Romania to the State of Qatar; H.E Jose Rafael Aguero Avila, Dáffairs of Paraguay to the State of Qatar; H.E Dr. Marcelo Gerona Morales, Ambassador of Uruguay to the State of Qatar; Consul Mr. Juan Martin Benavides, Consul of Uruguay to the State of Qatar; H.E Mr. Drago Lovric, Ambassador of Croatia to the State of Qatar; and, H.E Mr. Md Nazrul Islam, Ambassador of Bangladesh to the State of Qatar.

His Excellency Mr. Saad bin Ali Al Kharji, Chairman of Qatar Tourism and Chair of the Board of Directors of Visit Qatar, said: "The Qatar Travel Mart 2024 marks a strategic milestone in our ongoing efforts to position Qatar as a leading global tourism hub. This event not only underscores the growth and potential of our tourism sector but also serves as an important platform for fostering key partnerships, driving innovation, and advancing sustainable tourism initiatives that align with Qatar's National Vision 2030. Through this exhibition, we aim to showcase Qatar's unique blend of tradition and modernity, offering a compelling destination for travellers and industry leaders alike."

Speaking about Qatar Travel Mart 2024, Rawad Sleem, Co-founder and General Manager of NeXT-fairs, the organizers of QTM, stated: "We are thrilled to open QTM 2024, which represents a milestone in Qatar's journey to become a global tourism hub. This year's expanded event, covering 15,000 square meters, reflects the rapid growth of Qatar's tourism sector and its increasing importance on the world stage. QTM 2024 is not just an exhibition; it's a catalyst for innovation, partnerships, and sustainable growth in the travel industry, aligning perfectly with Qatar's National Vision 2030. This is clear to see with the support of His Excellency Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al Thani, Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and the presence of His Excellency Sheikh Faisal Bin Thani Al Thani - Minister of Commerce and Industry in Qatar (MoCI), and His Excellency Mr. Saad bin Ali Al Kharji, as Chairman of Qatar Tourism, as well as many other distinguished guests here today."



<https://www.qtmqatar.com/>



<https://app.qtmqatar.com/index/registration>



# Katara Hospitality: Setting industry benchmarks



**Katara Hospitality has emerged as the trusted arm of Qatar for advancing the hospitality sector, setting global benchmarks and bringing transformative innovations back to its home country.**



Operating across multiple continents, the company leverages its international presence to redefine standards in service, design, and sustainability while serving as a catalyst for Qatar's hospitality industry development.

### **Global standards, local excellence**

Through managing iconic properties like The Peninsula Paris and Raffles Singapore, Katara Hospitality has gained exposure to diverse global markets. These experiences have enabled the company to adopt and implement world-class practices in Qatar. By merging local cultural nuances with international expertise, it has set new benchmarks in service excellence, sustainable design, and operational efficiency. Its ability to integrate global trends into its domestic portfolio has ensured Qatar's hospitality sector remains globally competitive.

### **Preservation of heritage**

Katara Hospitality's global portfolio includes iconic properties with historical significance. For instance, restoring landmarks like Raffles Singapore and Carlton Cannes reflects its commitment to preserving cultural and architectural heritage. Back in Qatar, this philosophy resonates through projects like the Sheraton Grand Doha, which combines tradition with modern luxury, ensuring these treasures remain relevant for future generations.



### Unlocking new destinations

Katara Hospitality's efforts have gone beyond simply managing hotels; the company has redefined travel by unlocking unique destinations. Properties like The Burgenstock Resort in Switzerland and Fairmont Tazi Palace in Tangier exemplify how Katara curates experiences that showcase the authenticity of each location. This ethos has been seamlessly integrated into Qatar, positioning it as a global destination with authentic, culturally immersive offerings.

### Talent development & community engagement

A cornerstone of Katara Hospitality's mission is nurturing local talent. By offering training programs and career development opportunities, the company empowers Qataris to thrive in the global hospitality industry. Additionally, it engages local communities, ensuring they are integral to the growth of the sector. This inclusive approach fosters a sense of ownership and pride among locals while building a sustainable workforce.

### Sustainability through job creation

Sustainability for Katara Hospitality extends beyond environmental stewardship to social impact. By creating jobs across its extensive portfolio, both within Qatar and abroad, the company has become a significant contributor to employment growth. Its investments ensure economic benefits reach local economies, whether in Doha or destinations such as Lake Lucerne.

Katara Hospitality's visionary leadership, blending heritage preservation, destination development, talent growth, and sustainability, has transformed it into a global ambassador for Qatari excellence.



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A Taste of Arabian Elegance: Sharq Village & Spa, a Ritz-Carlton Hotel



Sharq Village & Spa, a Ritz-Carlton Hotel in Doha, Qatar, offers the epitome of luxury getaways. Nestled in the heart of this vibrant city, the resort beckons with its sumptuous accommodations, world-class spa, and breathtaking Arabian Gulf views, promising an unforgettable escape in the lap of opulence.  
[ritzcarlton.com/sharqvillageandspa](http://ritzcarlton.com/sharqvillageandspa)



# Authentic Qatari hospitality

Dana Club is an established organisation, opened in 1995, and in the business of offering diverse recreation facilities, food & beverage services, outdoor catering, with a unique venue: Jewan Hall, says Ahmad Hussaen Al Abdulla, general manager, Dana Club.



**Ahmad Hussaen Al Abdulla, GM, Dana Club**

“As a property, we are conservative, appealing to the Qatari community by offering ladies only and separate gents only time slots. We are also in the business of offering tennis coaching, swimming lessons, among others for kids and teenagers’ activities and all of these combined make up the identity of Dana Club,” says Al Abdulla.

“As a club that is invested in protecting and appealing to the Qatari population and being owned by Katara Hospitality, among the more than 30 hotels owned by them within and outside Qatar, Dana Club is a project of pride under the Katara Hospitality umbrella,” adds Al Abdulla

### *QTM and tourism in Qatar*

Commenting on the relevance of events such as QTM and the impact these have on the tourism sector in Qatar, Al Abdulla mentions, “Events such as QTM help Dana Club’s exposure to national and international visitors at the event. And the tourism industry in Qatar is strengthened because the club showcases its pride and trust in the local Qatari community.”

### *The future*

“As every business operates, we too at Dana Club want to build value out of our business, strengthening our human capital and infrastructure so that we can serve our clients better. We welcome everyone – members or non-members – to try out our facilities, and invite each and every Qatari resident to try us,” signs of Al Abdulla.



# QTM 2024

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# Tranquility and elegance at Al Aziziyah Boutique Hotel



Nestled within Doha's impressive Aspire Zone, Al Aziziyah Boutique Hotel stands as one of the city's urban country estates, offering a haven of tranquility amidst lush greenery and polished gardens.

With a unique Victorian style of architecture, the hotel invites guests to explore its premises and immerse themselves in its timeless elegance.

"Boasting 139 rooms, ranging from stylish accommodations to luxurious, spacious suites. Each room is traditionally designed and furnished to evoke a warm, and comfortable ambiance."

### ***Dining options, spa & health club***

Al Aziziyah Boutique Hotel offers upscale dining options, including the all-day dining experience at Glass House, Primavera Italian restaurant, and the inviting ambience of English-library inspired Victoria Lounge and an outdoor Patio Café.

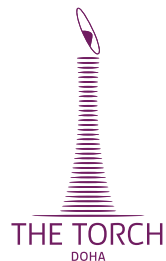
In addition to its exquisite accommodations and dining experiences, the hotel features an outdoor Recreation Center, complete with a swimming pool, children's play zones, and a scenic garden, providing a perfect retreat for families and leisure travelers.

Moreover, Al Aziziyah Boutique Hotel offers a distinguished spa and health club, with an indoor pool, sauna, and provides guests with a range of rejuvenating treatments and wellness services.

Prestigious football clubs, including Bayern Munich and Paris Saint Germain, have chosen Al Aziziyah Boutique Hotel as their ideal accommodation. Located adjacent to the Aspire Football pitches, it offers unparalleled convenience for their needs.

"At Al Aziziyah Boutique Hotel, we are dedicated to delivering exceptional services and attention to detail, ensuring an unparalleled experience for our guests," said Wael Al Sharif, Area General Manager at Al Aziziyah Boutique Hotel. "Our commitment to excellence shines through in every aspect of our hospitality, bringing a breath of fresh air to the heart of Doha."





At 300 m high, with a 360 panoramic view across Doha, our flagship property is a beacon of personalized luxury and well-being.

Modern rooms with our signature iPad control system provides guests with a new era of control & customizable service.

With three signature restaurants, including Three Sixty Doha's only revolving restaurant, we pride ourselves on being on the forefront of Qatari hospitality innovations.



In the heart of Doha's Aspire Zone, one of the cities few urban estates surrounded by lush greenery and polished gardens, the property offers rich and cozy rooms, an elegant Victorian theme, lobby Cafe and an award-winning restaurant. The Glass House restaurant serves international delicacies with an Asian touch, in a unique glass structure for an unforgettable dining experience.

## Exhibitor Voice

# Qatar can offer business growth for the Maldives and Sri Lanka

In conversation with *QTM Showdailies*, Laura Davies, CEO of Luxotic Vacations – a bespoke destination management company (DMC) – on what the organisation brings to the table, why she brought her company to QTM and the locations she promotes.

**Q: Talk us through the company's offerings.**

**Davies:** Luxotic Vacations is a DMC, located in both the Maldives and Sri Lanka, and we offer our worldwide travel partners and direct clients a fully inclusive package to include:

- Accommodation at chosen hotels/resorts;
- Meal plans as required;
- Transportation;
- Required included excursions and experiences; and
- No hidden fees - all our packages include relevant taxes.

**Q: What made you opt to be part of QTM?**

**Davies:** I have been in the industry now for 22 years, I have seen many countries in my time and Qatar is not one I have visited. It is a place where I feel we can grow the business to both the Maldives and Sri Lanka, with the right professional partnerships.

**Q: What lessons did the pandemic teach companies such as yours?**

**Davies:** The pandemic was one of many major incidents that we in the industry have faced – only that this time, it was tougher both professionally and personally for everyone across the globe. Not only did we have to learn how to deal with adapting to the changes of being locked down in our homes but also to working from home and supporting a team working remotely as well.

For us at Luxotic Vacations, we have realised that it is no longer a requirement to have staff sitting in an office for a fixed eight hours a day. Therefore, most of us are working in a hybrid mode and it allows us to offer better support to our clients without fixed office hours.

**Q: Where, in your view, is leisure travel today? Has it approximated pre-pandemic levels?**

**Davies:** I believe in the importance of exploring the world, meeting new people, and immersing oneself in new adventures, cultures, foods, sights & sounds. Strengthening bonds and spending quality time with loved ones is the perfect reason for a holiday. Our business has grown and continues to grow post pandemic.

## How Luxotic Vacations promotes the Maldives and Sri Lanka



### **Maldives:**

Nestled in the heart of the Indian Ocean, the Maldives is a postcard-perfect paradise made up of over 1,000 stunning islands. Known for its white sandy beaches, crystal-clear turquoise waters, and vibrant coral reefs, it's a dream destination for anyone seeking tranquility, luxury, and adventure.



### **Sri Lanka:**

Few places in the world can offer such remarkable landscapes, beaches, cultural heritage and unique experiences. Sri Lanka is home to eight UNESCO world heritage sites, 1,330 km of coastline, 15 National parks, almost 500,000 acres of tea estates, 250 acres of Botanical gardens and 350 waterfalls, to a culture that extends back to over 2,500 years. With so much diversity in culture, landscape and even the weather, you are sure to enjoy a holiday in the island nation of Sri Lanka.



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# Hilton Salwa Beach Resort & Villas: Crafting personalised experiences combining luxury & adventure

Andre Borg, general manager, Hilton Salwa Beach Resort & Villas speaks to QTM Showdaily on his professional journey, the lessons he's brought to his present stint, and the timeless lessons that make hospitality as a business worthwhile.



Andre Borg, GM, Hilton Salwa Beach Resort & Villas

**QTM Showdaily:** Talk us through your professional journey.

**Borg:** My career in hospitality began in Malta, where I studied Hotel Administration and later earned my degree in Tourism Management. I started at Radisson SAS, where I spent 12 years honing my skills. In 2008, I joined Hilton, in Ras Al Khaimah. Over the years, I advanced through several leadership positions, including director of operations at Athenee Palace Hilton Bucharest, hotel manager at Hilton Istanbul Bosphorus. My first general manager role was in Seychelles at Hilton Labriz Resort and Spa, where I led the resort and grew Hilton's footprint in the region. Today, I lead Hilton Salwa Beach Resort & Villas in Qatar, a property that epitomizes luxury and adventure.

**QTM Showdaily:** What learnings have you brought with you as you head this prestigious hotel?

**Borg:** Throughout my career, I've learned that operational excellence, team collaboration, and exceptional guest experiences are the cornerstones of success in hospitality. One of the most significant lessons I've carried forward is the value of leading by example, empowering teams to deliver extraordinary experiences. At Hilton Salwa Beach Resort & Villas, I am committed to continuing this legacy. By nurturing talent, fostering a culture of support, we elevate our team's skills, reinforcing our property's standing as a hospitality leader.

**QTM Showdaily:** Tell us 5 timeless hospitality mantras that do not run out of relevance.

- Borg: 1. Hospitality begins with a smile** (A genuine smile is the simplest and most powerful way to connect with guests.);
- 2. Do the right thing, even when no one is watching** (Upholding high ethical standards ensures trust between team members and guests.);
- 3. Great leaders inspire, not instruct** (True leadership is about guiding, motivating, and empowering others.);
- 4. Teamwork makes the dream work** (When teams work together with respect and shared purpose, they achieve exceptional results.);
- 5. Own it, and make it happen** (Taking responsibility transforms challenges into opportunities.)

**QTM Showdaily:** With Qatar's hospitality map and with so many global brands being present, what challenges do you face as a hotelier?

**Borg:** Qatar's hospitality landscape is highly competitive, with many international luxury brands establishing a strong presence. One of the main challenges for a hotelier is differentiating our offerings in a crowded market while maintaining a unique sense of place.

**QTM Showdaily:** How different is Qatar as a hospitality market – compared to the markets where you have previously served?

**Borg:** Qatar presents a unique blend of challenges and opportunities. The country's tourism landscape is influenced by both regional and global travellers. Qatar's hospitality scene is highly dynamic, with focus on both luxury and experiential travel. Each market has its own characteristics, but Qatar's pace of growth and the diversity of its visitor base make it particularly exciting in the best possible way. Additionally, our strategic partnerships with Qatar Tourism enhances our connection to the country's evolving tourism vision.

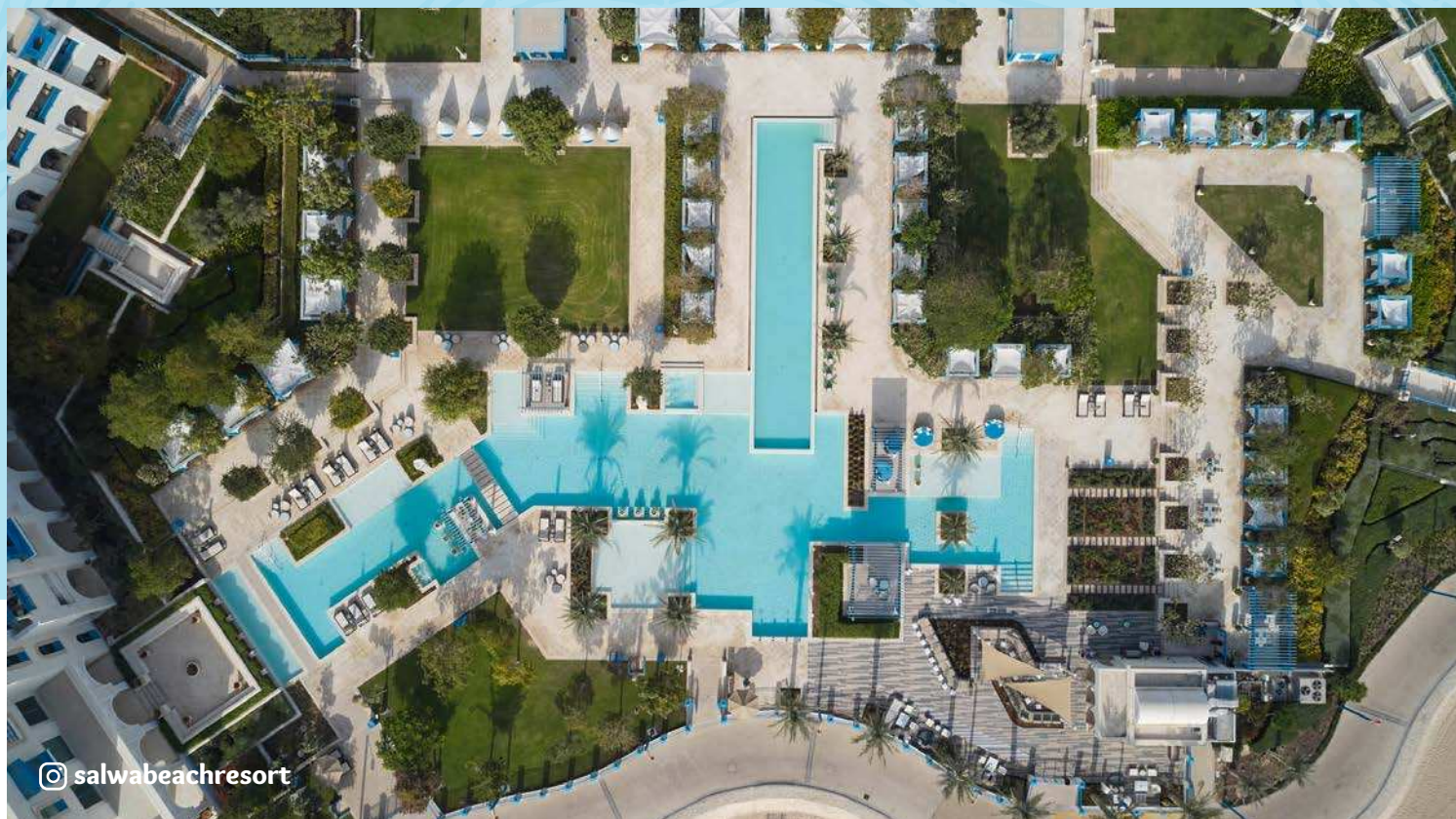
**QTM Showdaily:** What lessons have you learned from the pandemic and how are they helping you do business now?

**Borg:** The pandemic taught us the importance of agility, crisis management. Hospitality is built on human connection, and the pandemic forced us to rethink how we operate and serve our guests. We quickly adapted by implementing safety protocols, offering touchless services by embracing technology. We learned to be more flexible, responsive to guest needs. We now prioritise flexibility in booking, check-in, and overall guest interaction. These lessons have helped us continue to offer a high level of service while ensuring the health and safety of our guests and team.

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Hilton Salwa Beach Resort & Villas is an unparalleled destination with world-class facilities where you can enjoy the comfort of beach villas, rooms and suites. Explore exquisite dining experiences and one of the largest water parks in the Middle East; Desert Falls Water & Adventure Park.

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[www.salwabeachresort.qa](http://www.salwabeachresort.qa)



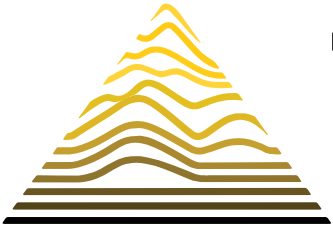
The Salwa Insider

# NeXTairs

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## The Organizer

Nextfairs is a multi-format organizer, with more than 15 years of experience in a diverse array of industries. The company also works as a service provider from A to Z with unique programs that include exhibitions and conferences for the business sector (B2B), clients (B2C), and sales & marketing agencies providing high-quality technology services. Nextfairs has a team of experts in the event organization sector devoted to providing distinguished services in the areas of sales, marketing and operations, with the aim of transforming the State of Qatar into a global destination in the market of conferences, Exhibitions, meetings and events. The company is made up of a progressive team of experienced event professionals who are dedicated to delivering excellence in sales, marketing, and operations on the largest scale with a national mandate to position Qatar as a premium destination for business events.



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