



# Britain's national tourism agency VisitBritain and the Saudi Tourism Authority sign agreement to boost tourism

VisitBritain

July 2024

May 2024

Britain's national tourism agency VisitBritain and the Saudi Tourism Authority have today, 14 May, signed a Declaration of Intent, setting out areas of co-operation between Britain and Saudi Arabia to develop and grow tourism.

The Declaration, announced during [GREAT FUTURES](#), a major trade expo being held in Riyadh by the UK Government's GREAT campaign in partnership with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's Government, was officially signed by VisitBritain CEO Patricia Yates and the CEO of the Saudi Tourism Authority Fahd Hamidaddin.

VisitBritain and the Saudi Tourism Authority will collaborate on sharing knowledge and expertise on both domestic and international tourism.

**Picture caption, from left at back:** VisitBritain Chairman Nick de Bois; UK Culture Secretary Lucy Frazer MP; His Excellency The Minister of Tourism Ahmed Al-Khateeb; Her Highness Vice Minister of Tourism Princess Haifa Al Saud.

**From left at front:** VisitBritain CEO Patricia Yates and CEO of the Saudi Tourism Authority Fahd Hamidaddin.

**UK Culture Secretary Lucy Frazer said:**

*“Our tourism industry is an integral part of what makes Britain so great, from our breathtaking landscapes and coastlines, to the treasure trove of heritage and culture to be found in our towns, villages and cities - all backed by a brilliant, dedicated workforce.*

*“We’re committed to helping the sector keep growing from strength to strength and I’m delighted that VisitBritain has signed this agreement so we can share the UK’s invaluable expertise on tourism and gain key insights from our Saudi partners.”*

**H.E. Ahmed Al-Khateeb, Minister of Tourism of Saudi Arabia and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Saudi Tourism Authority said:**

*“This agreement offers enormous opportunities for Saudi Arabia and UK to boost tourism and underlines the close relationship between the two countries. We are proud to have hosted more than 165,000 friends from Britain between January and March this year and to have welcomed 100 million visitors in 2023.*

*“We are developing remarkable projects that celebrate our unique culture and heritage as part of our \$800 billion (£640 billion) investment in the Saudi tourism industry, aiming for them to become as iconic as UK attractions like the Tower of London and Stonehenge, and we see limitless potential ahead to welcome visitors from Britain and around the world.”*

**VisitBritain CEO Patricia Yates said:**

*“Visiting the UK is easier than ever for Saudi nationals with the roll-out of the Electronic Travel Authorisation Scheme and we are delighted to sign this Declaration with the Saudi Tourism Authority, collaborating to drive growth from tourism between our countries.*

*“Working with the Saudi Tourism Authority also builds on our wider engagement in Saudi Arabia, from our ongoing work with the travel trade to sell British destinations to our GREAT Britain marketing campaigns to inspire more Saudis to choose Britain for their next visit. We look forward to working with the Saudi Tourism Authority to boost our competitive tourism offer, bringing the best of Britain to Saudi visitors and harnessing the timely and valuable opportunities for growth.”*

The signing of the Declaration of Intent was held as part of [VisitBritain’s wider programme during GREAT FUTURES](#) including its Destination Showcase networking event with trade from Saudi Arabia, promoting British destinations and the latest tourism products and experiences on offer, broadening travel itineraries so Saudi visitors explore more of Britain’s nations and regions.

VisitBritain is also hosting and taking part in panel and roundtable discussions with Saudi counterparts at GREAT FUTURES, sharing insights and experience on topics ranging from promoting a country globally to developing destinations to spread growth from tourism.

To inspire more Saudi visitors to book a trip to Britain, VisitBritain has recently rolled out the latest phase of its GREAT Britain marketing campaign in Saudi Arabia, showcasing the exciting experiences and destinations across Britain’s countryside, coast and vibrant cities. The advertising campaign ‘Spilling the Tea on GREAT Britain’ drives consumers to VisitBritain’s new [Arabic website](#), inspiring visitors from the Kingdom to plan their travel to Britain in 2024 and signposting to the [UK’s Electronic Travel Authorisation Scheme](#) for Saudi nationals.

VisitBritain is also working with partners in market including online travel marketplace Wego to convert the interest to visit Britain into bookings now.

Saudi Arabia is a very important visitor market for the UK. VisitBritain’s latest forecast predicts 240,000 visits from Saudi Arabia to the UK this year, up 9% on 2019. It is forecasting that visitors

from Saudi Arabia will spend £752 million on their trips to the UK this year, up 20% on 2019.