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Curated experiences key to winning over luxury travellers

By Meredith Woo (<https://www.ttgasia.com/author/meredithwoo/>) / Posted on 28 October, 2024 15:59

Destinations around the world are adjusting their offerings to appeal to increasingly discerning high-net-worth individual (HNWIs) travellers for whom exclusivity and authenticity are key.

Franka Gulin, director of the Croatian National Tourist Board, noticed a post-lockdown shift in Asian touring behaviours. From previously large groups, a new type of FITs is on the rise, she noted.



Petra can tap into wellness tourism, leveraging Jordan's strong reputation in medical services; ancient tombs called Loculi in Petra, pictured

"These types of tourists are in need of a curated tailored experience, and this is something that they expect of the premium destination," she added.

Croatia has capitalised on this trend by offering small, luxury accommodation with rich histories, providing HNWIs with a sense of exclusivity as these are often difficult to book.

Jordan, another rising star in luxury tourism, is leveraging its wealth of UNESCO World Heritage Sites, like Petra. However, historical appeal alone is not enough to attract luxury travellers.

"In Petra, 87 per cent of our tourists in 2023 were from North America and Western Europe and a few other (overseas markets). After the war in Gaza, we lost over 80 per cent of (them). Therefore, we have to look into the diversification of markets and products. Luxury tourism is fundamental to that direction," said Fares A Braizat, chief commissioner of the Petra Development and Tourism Region Authority.

One opportunity that Petra could capture would be wellness tourism, he shared, highlighting how Jordan is highly regarded for its medical services and medical industry.

Over in Japan, overcrowding in key cities has been an issue. One strategy is to focus on regenerative tourism, especially to combat overtourism in certain areas, as well as to heighten travellers' emotional involvement while increasing revenue, said Naomi Mano, president and CEO of Luxurique.

Mano added that working with municipalities, unique temples and destinations to curate exclusive experiences can channel tourist dollars to the local community.

"We are almost customising the emotional involvement that these travellers have with these destinations – because when you're donating to something you believe in, or you're donating your time to what you believe in, it gives a further emotional involvement to that destination," she said.