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## Turkish Tourism Keen to Expand Destination Portfolio for GCC Travellers

**Dubai - Apr 09, 2014:** Turkish Tourism has witnessed growing numbers from the GCC countries. This has resulted in a more strategic effort to promote the country in a more diversified way. The new cultural and information attaché, Mustafa Ozdemir at the Turkish Consulate General in Dubai talks to Travel Daily Middle East about his plans for the region.

As per recent statistics, the visitor numbers have been growing every year. The number of UAE nationals have grown from 36,769,039 in 2011; 48,000 in 2012 to 53,000 in 2013. “These numbers and growth is encouraging. These guests explored the known destinations such as Istanbul, Bursa, Yalova and Trabzon areas. However, we want to showcase more of the country,” said Ozdemir.

Turkey offers varied niches across its different destinations. With a strong tourism standing in the global market – Turkey welcomed around 175,522 GCC nationals which was clearly divided across UAE nationals amounting 52,424; Kuwait travellers account for 88,238; Qatar with 16,830 and finally, Bahrain with 16,230 travellers to Turkey in 2013. Ranking 6th in the global tourism listing, Turkey’s overall visitor numbers touched 35 million for 2013.

“These numbers from the region continue to increase every year. However, there are no official records for spending from these countries but on an average the ratio is far above normal,” added Ozdemir.

The plans going forward are clearly to showcase new destination offerings such as Antalya, Izmir and the north side of Turkey. One key niche segment which stands out is golf tourism and Antalya, certainly has many world-renowned courses on offer. Currently, the big numbers for golf to Turkey come from Germany, Russia and UK.

Ozdemir concludes saying: “Our plans is certainly to go beyond Istanbul and present new destinations to GCC travellers. We would also like to focus on the wedding and honeymoon segment. Antalya makes a perfect choice and will soon be connected by Air Arabia making the destination more accessible.”

### ENDS ###

### **About Turkish Cultural and Tourism Office:**

The Turkish Cultural and Tourism Office in Dubai is the official representative of the Republic of Turkey Ministry of Culture and Tourism. One of the main aims of the Tourism Office is to bridge the gap between cultures and foster relationships with the travel industry by organising promotional activities throughout the GCC. The Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism participates in travel exhibitions and conferences to position the country as a leading tourist destination. With its breath-taking views, unique historical and archaeological sites, steadily improving hotel and touristic infrastructure and a tradition of hospitality and competitive prices, it's no wonder Turkey is among the most sought-after travel destinations in the world.

The primary functions of The Turkish Cultural and Tourism Office in Dubai are:

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- Supervises all promotional activities relating to Turkey in the GCC
  - Liaise with travel agencies
  - Organises roadshows to further promote Turkey as a destination for leisure, shopping, health, sports and invest in the MICE (meetings, incentives, conference and exhibitions) Middle East market.

To read aggregated news about Turkish Tourism please click "here":[http://www.tcf-me.com/client\\_portal/turkey-tourism/content\\_items](http://www.tcf-me.com/client_portal/turkey-tourism/content_items)

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