

RAS AL KHAIMAH WELCOMES RECORD VISITORS IN FIRST HALF OF 2026 AS LANDMARK DEVELOPMENTS ADVANCE



Domestic arrivals rise 47% ahead of an anticipated return of international demand

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Ras Al Khaimah, UAE – 23 July 2026 – Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Development Authority (RAKTDA) today announced that the emirate welcomed more than 670,000 visitors in the first half of 2026, marking its strongest first-half performance on record. The growth was driven by robust domestic demand, despite regional conflict disrupting international travel flows.

Phillipa Harrison, CEO of Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Development Authority, said “The destination remained resilient through a period that affected international travel across the region, and a record first half is testament to Ras Al Khaimah's strength as a short-break destination. With new hotels opening and anchor developments advancing at pace, the emirate is entering its next phase of growth with real momentum.”

Highlights include:

- More than 670,000 visitors, the highest first-half performance on record
- Domestic arrivals up 47% year on year, with May the strongest single month in the destination's history
- Average Daily Rate held in line with 2025
- RAK Moments domestic campaign delivered 224,000 room nights, AED 104.4 million in room revenue and 127,817 incremental visitors in Q2 (+67.1% year on year)
- Campaign amplified through partnerships with leading OTAs and travel platforms including Wego, Expedia, Booking.com, Cleartrip, Almosafer and Yandex
- New hotel openings ahead: Rotana Ras Al Khaimah – The Mangroves (Q3 2026) and SAIJ Mountain Lodge by Mantis (Q4 2026)
- Wynn Al Marjan Island on track for 2027, with the Punchdrunk partnership and headline dining concepts announced
- RAKTA advancing connectivity across land, sea and air, with Skyports air taxi operations targeted from 2027 and a cooperation agreement with Dubai Maritime Authority easing yacht movement between the emirates



- Action Flight Aviation and BLINC Space signed an MOU to introduce an astronaut training programme in Ras Al Khaimah, launching from the second half of 2026

Exceptional experiences announced for Wynn Al Marjan Island

Development of Wynn Al Marjan Island, one of the most significant hospitality projects in the region, is progressing steadily, with the resort expected to play a central role in expanding Ras Al Khaimah's international profile when it opens in 2027. Wynn Al Marjan Island recently unveiled a landmark partnership with internationally acclaimed immersive theatre company Punchdrunk, whose first production in the MENA region will be created exclusively for the resort. Conceived and directed by Punchdrunk's Artistic Director and Founder, Felix Barrett MBE, in collaboration with Craig S. Billings, CEO of Wynn Resorts, the original show draws on the spirit of a classic Las Vegas revue, while giving audiences the choice between a traditional seated performance and a free-roaming immersive journey behind the scenes. The partnership builds on a fast-growing roster of dining and lifestyle concepts confirmed for the resort's 22 restaurants, lounges and bars, including an elegant steakhouse by celebrated chef Alain Ducasse and the first international outpost of Delilah, the supper club concept from Wynn Las Vegas. Together, these announcements signal the calibre and creativity guests can expect from Wynn Al Marjan Island, further positioning Ras Al Khaimah to attract high-value international visitors, premium leisure travellers and new audiences seeking world-class hospitality and entertainment in the region.

New hotels and property upgrades

Ras Al Khaimah's hotel sector continues to expand, with new openings ahead and upgrades under way at existing properties.

Rotana Ras Al Khaimah – The Mangroves in Q3 2026, adding a 258-key property set within the mangrove landscape at Al Qawasim Corniche. It features one of the emirate's largest pillar-free ballrooms, ten meeting rooms and a dedicated alfresco events space, expanding capacity to host MICE, social events and destination weddings.

Development of SAIJ Mountain Lodge by Mantis, the first mountain lodge on Jebel Jais, is progressing toward a Q4 2026 opening. The lodge, designed as a reflection of the land and its stories, will offer guest experiences including organic farming, guided treks, beekeeping, stargazing, and wellness rituals.

Alongside these new openings, Pullman Resort Al Marjan Island and Rixos Al Mairid Ras Al Khaimah are undergoing extensive refurbishment. Pullman Resort Al Marjan Island reopens in Q1 2027 with fully modernised accommodation and refreshed interiors that reflect Pullman's lifestyle positioning. At Rixos Al Mairid, the villas, beachfront experiences and selected dining venues remain open for guest stays, while rooms and suites in the main building undergo a comprehensive renovation expected to complete in Q4 2026.

Marjan Advances Landmark Developments Across the Emirate

Master developer Marjan is making significant progress across its portfolio, underlining Ras Al Khaimah's momentum as an investment and lifestyle destination. Marjan Beach, an 85 million sq ft masterplanned development, will comprise eight neighbourhoods, 22,000 residential units and 12,000 hotel keys, creating one of the region's most significant mixed-use coastal destinations. The scale of ambition reflects strong market fundamentals, with Ras Al Khaimah's GDP reaching US\$13 billion in 2025, supported by 4.3 per cent economic growth, reinforcing its position as one of the UAE's fastest-growing investment destinations. Meanwhile, RAK Central Square, the emirate's first Grade A office development, has completed major structural works and reached 25 per cent overall construction as of June 2026, on schedule for its Q4 2027 opening. The five-building development will deliver premium office space with LEED Gold-certified design and integrated retail and dining, located within the RAK Central masterplan with direct access to Ras Al Khaimah International Airport, Dubai and the emirate's key tourism destinations, supporting the ambition to attract 3.5 million visitors annually by 2030.

Expansion of Ras Al Khaimah International Airport

Progress on the new VVIP terminal at Ras Al Khaimah International Airport in partnership with Falcon Executive Aviation continues. Set to open in early 2027, the terminal will strengthen the emirate's connectivity for private aviation and luxury travellers as Wynn Al Marjan Island and a growing portfolio of premium hospitality experiences come online.

The airport has also appointed Duty Free Americas as its travel retail partner, bringing a refreshed, customer-centric retail environment to its duty-free offering and further developing Ras Al Khaimah International Airport as a leading regional gateway.

Seamless Connectivity Across Land, Sea and Air

Connectivity across the emirate is also advancing, with the Ras Al Khaimah Transport Authority (RAKTA) developing a more integrated transport network centred on Al Marjan Island. On land, three new transit stations will strengthen links between city routes, intercity services and key tourism destinations, while autonomous shuttle services, following a successful pilot, are set to begin commercial operation later in 2026. Visitors can also explore the emirate aboard the Classic Taxi Service, a fleet of heritage-inspired vehicles operating across Al Marjan Island and Al Qawasim Corniche, offering a nostalgic way to travel between the emirate's key leisure destinations. In the air, advanced air mobility planning with Skyports targets initial air taxi operations from 2027, with Al Marjan Island as the first node in a planned network connecting Ras Al Khaimah with Dubai and, over time, other emirates. At sea, RAKTA has signed a Memorandum of Cooperation with the Dubai Maritime Authority to streamline the movement of visiting yachts and leisure boats between the two emirates, supporting Ras Al Khaimah's



growing appeal as a marine tourism destination. Bringing it all together is Sayr, RAKTA's smart mobility platform, which helps visitors plan journeys, book services and pay across the network in one place.

A new frontier in experiential tourism

Ras Al Khaimah also continued to expand its portfolio of experiences, with Action Flight Aviation and BLINC Space signing an MOU to introduce an astronaut training programme in the emirate. Launching from the second half of 2026, the programme will include G-force training through aerobatic flights, zero-gravity parabolic flights, and advanced freefall and parachuting experiences suited to commercial spaceflight readiness and high-end adventure tourism. The initiative supports Ras Al Khaimah's ambition to develop future-facing tourism products that attract high-value visitors seeking transformative experiences.

A sharper destination brand for the next phase of growth

As Ras Al Khaimah prepares for its next phase of international tourism growth, Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Development Authority has welcomed Emma Campbell as Chief Marketing Officer. Emma joins from the Department of Culture and Tourism, Abu Dhabi, with two decades of destination marketing experience including senior roles at Tourism Fiji and VisitScotland. The Authority has also appointed M+C Saatchi, the global creative and strategic communications network, to lead the evolution of Ras Al Khaimah's destination positioning, sharpening its international proposition and ensuring it reflects the emirate's evolving tourism offer and long-term development vision.

– ENDS –

Notes to Editors:

About Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Development Authority (RAKTDA)

The Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Development Authority (RAKTDA) was established in May 2011 under the government of Ras Al Khaimah. RAKTDA aims to develop the Emirate's tourism infrastructure and establish Ras Al Khaimah as a world-class destination for leisure and business travel, creating sustainable investment opportunities and enhancing the quality of life for its residents. In order to achieve its goals, the Authority has a government mandate to license, regulate and monitor the Emirate's tourism and hospitality industry.

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