



BELEK, Antalya: The members of the FAM trip from Kuwait pose for a photograph with Turkish Airlines Kuwait Regional Marketing supervisor Hani Hazem during a gala dinner organized by Karnak International at Regnum Carya Golf & Resort at Belek Antalya.

Sertan Yuces, Turkish Airlines General Manager, Casablanca. Hasan Demir, Turkish Airlines General Manager, Abu Dhabi.

Turkish Airlines: Widening horizons

Airline expands Mideast network, to launch Kuwait-Antalya direct flight

By Sajeev K Peter

BELEK, ANTALYA, Turkey: Widening its horizons, Turkish Airlines, 'Europe's Best Airline' is continuously expanding its flight network in the Middle East region. Even as it strengthens its global footprint with its vast flight network, the airline offers international flights to destinations across the world from most cities in the Middle East, said Hasan Demir, Turkish Airlines General Manager, Abu Dhabi.

Turkish Airlines, Kuwait recently organized a FAM trip to Antalya for representatives from the media and travel industry in Kuwait offering the delegation a first-hand experience on the flourishing tourism industry in the southern city of Turkey. The trip also provided the delegation an opportunity to familiarize with the growing hospitality industry in Turkey, its fabulous mix of great beaches and the traditional Turkish culture and lifestyle. The delegation was led by Turkish Airlines' Kuwait Regional Marketing supervisor Hani Hazem.

Talking to Kuwait Times in an interview on the sidelines of the Karnak International tourism conference at Regnum Carya Golf & Spa Resort, Antalya, Demir gave an overview of Turkish Airlines and its growing operations in the Gulf region.

"Middle East is an important market for Turkish Airlines. We have strengthened our capacity in the region from 10 percent in the first quarter of 2015 to 17.7 percent in the first three months of 2016. We will continue to expand in the region," he said.

Turkish Airlines has added more than 20 cities to its flight network in the last few years and it currently flies to 34 destinations in the Middle East region. It is scheduled to launch direct flight from Kuwait to Antalya, one of the fast-growing tourist destinations in Europe in southern part of Turkey, from July, he informed. Currently, Turkish Airlines operates daily direct flights from Kuwait to Istanbul.

Established as the 'State Airlines Administration' in 1933, Turkish Airlines commenced its first flight to the Middle East 65 years ago, in 1951. Having operated with 33 aircraft and 720 seating capacity between these years, Turkish Airlines started Hajj rounds to



4 star catering

Saudi Arabia, its first destination in Gulf Cooperation Council in 1953 and provided a more comfortable trip for prospective Hajjis travelling between Turkey and Saudi Arabia.

Broadening network

Established in 1933 with a fleet of five aircraft, the Star Alliance member Turkish Airlines is a 4-star airline today with a fleet of 324 passenger and cargo aircraft flying to over 289 destinations worldwide; 240 international and 49 domestic. According to a 2015 Skytrax survey, Turkish Airlines is named as 'Europe's Best Airline' for five and 'Best Airline in Southern Europe' for seven consecutive years. Having won in 2010 the world's 'Best Economy Catering Service', in 2013 the world's 'Best Business Catering Service', and in 2014 'Best Business Catering Service' awards, Turkish Airlines is awarded with the world's 'Best Business Class Lounge Dining' and 'Best Business Airline Lounge' prizes in the Skytrax survey.

Currently with seven US gateways, Turkish Airlines offers 63 flights per week, serving some 5,000 customers. In October 2015, Turkish Airlines added daily flights from Miami, and as of May 2016, daily flights began from Atlanta as well.

Success story

Turkish Airlines' slow but steady growth and evolution as a leading airline in Europe and the



The first class

Middle East over a period of six decades is a success story. No wonder, the airline's success has become a case study at Harvard Business School (HBS) which called "Turkish Airlines: Widen Your World." The study explores the airline's transformation from a regional actor to a global powerhouse in the international aviation industry and discusses its fast and profitable growth in the sector.

Adopting its current name in 1955, Turkish Airlines added Tbilisi to its flight network in 1965, a period right before the jets were included in the fleet, and continued its growth in the Middle East. With the addition of jet planes into the fleet, the airline company gained strength; it carried nearly three million passengers in 1978 and added Baghdad and Tehran to its flight network. In 1979, it commenced the Kuwait flights which lasted four years. Having a flying start in the 1980s, Turkish Airlines opened its Cairo service in 1980. The company commenced Istanbul-Dubai-Karachi flights on November 5, 1983, and Istanbul-Damascus flights in 1984.

1985 saw the start of flights beyond the Far East and the Atlantic as well as the First Class service. The First Class service was first offered on Jeddah and London flights. Importantly, B737s were included in the fleet in the beginning of 1990s. During the following decade, the company's capital volume increased by 100 percent, reaching two trillion

Turkish liras. Right around this time, Turkish Airlines restarted its Kuwait flights and added Bahrain to its flight network.

"Although 2015 was a challenging year globally both economically and politically, Turkish Airlines made satisfactory successes. The airline carried 61.2 million passengers in total with 453,000 flights and a 78 percent seat occupancy rate," said Demir.

The number of the flight points rose to 284 from 261, while the number of the planes to 299 marking most important milestones of Turkish Airlines' development in the Middle East during the millennium.

Arabic language services

Turkish Airlines continues to offer Arabic in all its services to become closer to its guests. The company serves better its Middle Eastern guests with Arabic social media accounts, 24/7 call center service, Arabic interface in the inflight entertainment system, and Arabic-speaking passenger services at Atatrk Airport. Initiated by Turkish Airlines in May 2015, the Middle East call center operates 24/7 in seven countries. The call center personnel who are native Arabic speakers have answered nearly 44,000 calls so far.

In order to keep alive its brand equity that provides a serious advantage in terms of competition, Turkish Airlines invests in its quality of service, in-

flight entertainment systems, comfortable seats, gourmet cuisine and its qualified human resources.

"We are in the forefront of the latest technological advances and innovations in the aviation industry and we have one of the youngest fleets. Currently we have a fleet strength of 324 aircraft both passenger and cargo," said Sertan Yuces, Turkish Airlines General Manager, Casablanca. The fleet consists of aircraft types: A340-300, A330, A321, A320, A319, B737-400, B737-800, B737-900 and B777 ER.

"As the airline expands its routes and number of aircraft, we continue training our employees which is important in insuring the safety of our passengers," said Yuces.

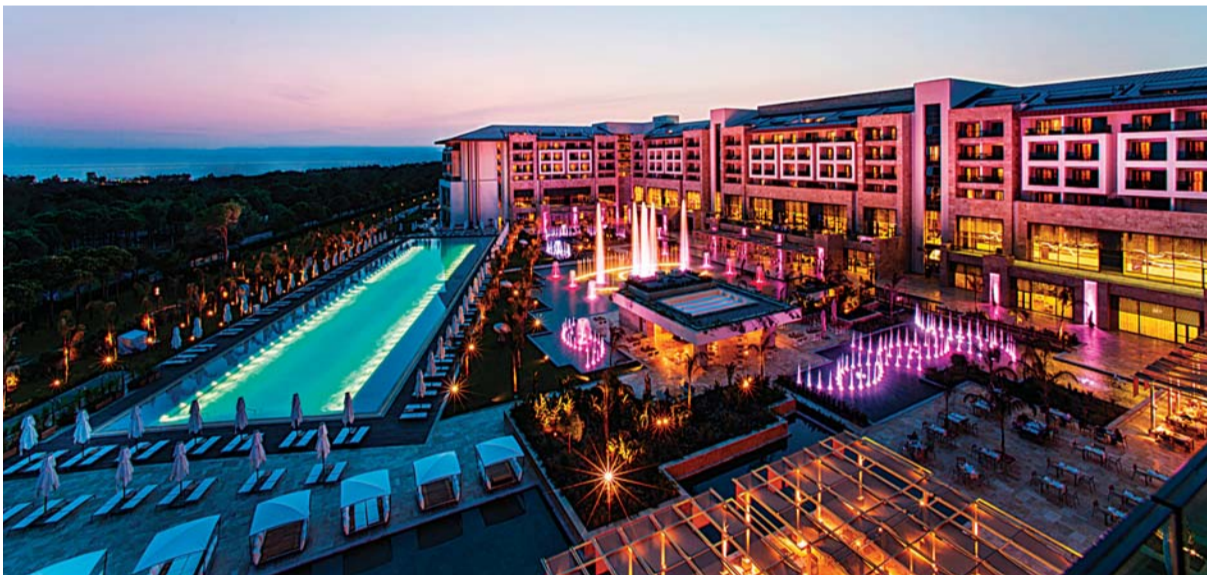
Turkish Airlines regards flight safety and service quality as two of the most indispensable necessities. The carrier currently holds a four-star ranking and consistently strives to secure a five-star ranking.

Understanding the responsibility of being a leading airline within the global aviation community, Turkish Airlines is determined to carry out its mission moving forward with its unparalleled service concept, superior quality, trustworthiness and reliability.

In addition to Europe, Turkish Airlines is also strategically expanding its network into Russia, Central Asia, Far East Asia, the Middle East, Africa and North and South America. As one of the fastest growing airlines in the world, Turkish Airlines holds a strategic position between the East and West.

Facts & Figures

- Number of aircraft: 324 (passenger and cargo)
- Aircraft types: A340-300, A330, A321, A320, A319, B737-400, B737-800, B737-900 B777 ER
- Hubs: Istanbul, Ankara
- Frequent flyer program: Miles & Smiles
- Number of destinations: 289 (240 international, 49 domestic)
- Network strengths: Europe, Russia, Central Asia, Far East Asia, the Middle East, Africa, North and South America



A general view of Regnum Carya Golf & Spa Resort.



BELEK, Antalya: Sardar Mashahdani, Karnak International, addresses a press conference.

Antalya's hotel industry: Reinventing itself

By Sajeev K Peter

BELEK, Turkey: Antalya's hotel industry has reinvented itself over the last few years to accommodate the demands of a fast-growing tourism sector in the region, incorporating luxury five-star amenities that capture the attention of the rich and famous.

Karnak International Travel & Tourism, in association with Turkish Airlines and Regnum Carya Golf & Spa Resort, Belek hosted a B2B workshop at the hotel in which topmost luxury hotels in Antalya met with travel industry experts and the media representatives from the Gulf region. Members of the FAM trip delegation from Kuwait also got an opportunity to interact with the professionals of the hospitality industry in Antalya.

Addressing a press conference on the side-

lines of the workshop, Sardar Mashahdani of Karnak International, briefed the media about the growing tourism industry in Antalya.

Tourism is the backbone of Antalya's economy as it hosts 35 percent of the total number of tourists coming to Turkey. Nearly 6-7 million tourists visit Antalya a year as it attracts visitors throughout the year and an increasing number of hotels remain open all year round.

According to one estimate, a record 12.5 million tourists passed through Antalya in 2014 which is the host city of EXPO 2016. Antalya is home to more than 340 properties with more than 30 five-star luxury hotels in the Belek region itself.

Regnum Carya Golf & Spa Resort

An 11-minute walk from Carya Golf Club, Regnum Carya Golf & Spa Resort, a

luxury, all-inclusive golf resort is 10 km from Troy Aqua water park in Belek-Antalya. The members of the FAM trip delegation from Kuwait were hosted for a three-night stay at Regnum.

This newest luxurious hotel property in Belek and opened in 2014, Regnum has a total of 538 elegantly appointed rooms, suites and villas. The hotel features furnished balconies and marble bathrooms and the bright, contemporary rooms come with flat-screen TVs, free Wi-Fi and minibars with sea views. Suites offer whirlpool tubs, living rooms and private butler service.

Meals are provided in five gourmet restaurants. Other amenities include a gym, a posh spa, and indoor and outdoor pools, plus tennis courts, a football school and a private beach with a pier. The hotel is affiliated with two golf courses.

One of the most striking features of the hotels in Antalya probably is that they serve food and beverages to their guests 24 hours free of charge. "It is our customized service concept. Once you check in, you will be offered a total package and all your needs will be taken care," said an executive at the Regnum.

Rixos World, the Land of Legends

Turkey's first integrated leisure and entertainment park, the Land of Legends by Rixos World Parks & Entertainment, is all set to open its doors to guests in July. Touted to be Europe's largest theme park, The Land of Legends will be a first-of-its-kind destination located in Belek, Antalya.

"This is an initiative that brings together Rixos Hotels and Dragone, creators of world class experimental events, representing a brand

new concept in the field of multi-sensory experiences," said Veronika Uzer, sales manager, Rixos Land of Legends.

According to Uzer, original awe-inspiring characters will bring Dragone's universe to life in the most legendary way giving families and children the chance to experience an innovative and unforgettable new world.

Rixos Premium Belek

Located 50km away from Antalya and 40km from airport, Rixos Premium Belek resort is stretching over 405,000 sqm of Calabrian pine and pistachio tree forests with more than 1 km long warm sunny beach. The resort is built in magnificent natural settings that reveal the spellbinding beauty of the Belek region. Rixos Premium Belek has opened its doors and welcomed its first guest in 2005.



Rixos World, the Land of Legends.



Rixos Premium Belek



BELEK, Antalya: Hotel industry professional meet tour operators at a B2B workshop organized by Karnak International at Regnum Carya Golf & Spa Resort, Belek.