



Industry Briefing Papers 2016

ASIA: QATAR

1. What is currently making news in your country when it comes to spa, wellness, wellness travel or well-being?

1. At a general level, the development graph of Qatar, has been one that has climbed steeply; the country has achieved in a couple of decades, what others would have taken much longer.

2. Driven by the country's Leadership and a growing market, Qatar's Wellness industry is poised to grow at a double-digit rate over the next five years, with certain sectors, such as Wellness and beauty treatments, projected to grow at more than 35-40%. The growing wellness industry has attracted a number of domestic entrants and international players.

3. Evolving lifestyle trends are changing the Qatari mind-set, and a great deal of importance is now attached to Wellness. While, health foods and drinks and tonics have traditionally been integral to a healthy diet, people are now increasingly looking at new avenues of Wellness. In order to maintain and improve their Wellness, they engage in activities such as regular exercise, massage therapies and counselling.

4. A renaissance is also being witnessed on the traditions of Islamic Wellness, which is indigenous to the region. In the Middle East the Wellness culture was dominated by the medical aspects- however, the philosophy is shifting towards the more spiritual and lifestyle approach. Qatar has been announced as the host country for the World Tourism Day in 2017. Events to be held as part of this will also benefit the Wellness initiatives being promoted.

5. Modern concepts like stem cell based therapies for a wide range of conditions are also being researched on at institutions like the Qatar Biomedical Research Institute (QBRI). Another organization that is playing a major role in delivery of Healthcare and Wellness initiatives is SIDRA, which has recently commenced operations of, what will eventually be a leading medical facility in the region. Both, SIDRA and QBRI are entities with the fold of Qatar Foundation, which has been spearheading human development in the country for more than a decade now.

6. The Wellness travel & Medical Tourism segment is also growing as shown by the advent of specialist tour operators. The packages in vogue with Qataris currently are primarily related to Lifestyle Management and Wellness Treatments which are provided out of destination markets in Europe, India and the Far East. Catering to the needs of fitness-conscious travelers, companies have also started offering packages that combine health routines along with the tourism packages. These packages include yoga holiday, detox holidays, beach spa holidays, and luxury trips that make wellness a priority.

7. The other important fact that needs to be considered is - in 2013, about 3,160 Qataris were sent abroad for medical treatment and the resultant expenditure borne by the state was around US\$ 609 Million. The Government is increasingly promoting initiatives on Wellness to curtail this expenditure with the target being to prevent illness rather than cure. Qatar is faced with critical public health challenges, with over 60% of deaths caused by chronic diseases, injuries, and congenital diseases, driven by risk factors that are largely preventable. A shift in the current healthcare system's focus from management of illness to more proactive prevention and early detection of ill health will be crucial to the success of the National Health Strategy.

8. The Primary Healthcare Corporation is has recently opened at facility and two more are scheduled to open within a couple of years. The larger wellness centres will include facilities such as a swimming pool, massage room and gym to help Qatari people, especially children and families, live healthier lives.

2. Please provide one sentence that describes what you think is the most important development in your country for each of the following wellness sectors:

Spas:

The 'now' culture and fast paced life in the Middle East means clients want to see instant results and specialist spas are beginning to offer cosmetic, dental, laser, and Botox treatments alongside traditional spa therapies.

Beauty:

The Doha Beauty Show (scheduled in October 2016) is the first of its kind event in Qatar that is dedicated to local and international trade and beauty professionals as well as local consumers.

Fitness:

Increasing awareness of the role played by fitness practices in maintaining Health & Wellness has led to double digit growth in fitness industry revenues (pegged at US\$ 65 Million as of 2015).

Nutrition:

Consumers are becoming more attuned to the importance and value of green, eco, sustainable and organic practices and products - this is also signaled by the emergence of health food ventures in Qatar.

Wellness Tourism:

The emergence of certified Health and Wellness facilitators and growth in the number of people opting for Spa-cations- entire weekends are now being created as retreats that deliver a spa journey tailored to meeting individual needs of the mind and body.

Wellness Communities or Real Estate:

Under the patronage of the Leadership, a new world class Destination Spa and Wellness Resort is being developed - due for completion in 2018, this will signal the advent of Destination Spas to the GCC.

3. Our theme this year is “Back to the Future.” What do you feel is your country’s most significant contribution to what is now a global wellness economy?

The Leadership in Qatar, has been at the forefront of comprehensive reforms to provide all Qataris with access to world-class facilities for Health & Wellness. Under their stewardship, pioneering research was initiated to commence development of a world class facility that will provide both, dimensions of the health tourism spectrum, including therapeutic treatments & diagnostics of the medical end and high-quality beauty and pampering treatments of the wellness end.

On completion, this will turn out to be a centre of Excellence. At the core of its offer are wellness programs: a carefully crafted set of services, treatments and activities that are designed to deliver a particular wellness solution, such as weight-loss, detoxification, or mental balance. These wellness programs will reflect the inner values of purity and personal discipline. The programs will integrate today’s leading wellness practices, such as medical diagnostics, fitness, or nutrition, with the wellness traditions of Islamic regions identified in research.

Qatar, an Islamic country, is also poised to be a major center for inbound Halal Tourism with the development of many of the infrastructure projects currently in the pipeline. On completion, these projects will enable Qatar to carve a niche in the Halal Tourism market, estimated to be around US\$ 142 Billion in 2014.

4. What do you feel is the biggest challenge in your country when it comes to growing the wellness economy?

Effective evolution and implementation of policies in this area will require a paradigm shift in mindsets - a change that will require people to think that fundamentally, Wellness / Health is not signified purely by absence of disease. This line of thought is incorporated into the National Vision 2030 and will hopefully propel the country forward in the right direction.

Applying a wellness approach can be useful in nearly every human endeavor. Currently, the approach to Wellness in Qatar is reactive rather than proactive. The

growing incidence of chronic lifestyle related diseases in Qatar and the wider GCC region is evidence towards this -16% of Qatar's adult population has diabetes, while 77% are overweight or obese. Qatar could reduce its morbidity and mortality through the promotion of wellness.

5. While no answers are right or wrong, we would like to know what you feel is the difference - if any - between the terms/concepts of "wellness" and "well-being" in your country.

Wellbeing is considered to indicate absence of health problems. Wellness on the other hand has a more "preventive" connotation.

SUBMITTED BY:

Name: Abdulla Hassan Al Mehshadi
Title: Chief Executive Officer
Company: MSHEIREB PROPERTIES
Email: aalmehshadi@msheireb.com
Phone Number: 974 4459 0443

