

General Directorate of Residency and Foreigners Affairs in Dubai And Dubai Tourism Sign Strategic Partnership Agreement

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The General Directorate of Residency and Foreigners Affairs - Dubai (GDRFA–Dubai) and the Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing (Dubai Tourism) have signed a strategic partnership agreement to enhance cooperation and promote online services and platforms designed to facilitate processes for the issuance of residency permits for various investor programmes and special visas. These include the Distinguished Guests and the Virtual Working programmes, 'Golden Visas' for investors and retirement visa for retirees.

The agreement will enhance cooperation and communication between the two entities and pave the way for the exchange of expertise, experiences, studies, creative and innovative ideas and field visits, which contribute to Dubai's development and help better serve residents and visitors. GDRFA-Dubai and Dubai Tourism will also collaborate in organising training programmes and developing new proposals, as well as coordinating across related initiatives and their attendance at events and conferences within and outside the UAE.

The agreement is in line with the vision of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, to position Dubai as a safe and stable international investment destination and the preferred destination for tourism and residency. It also builds on collaboration and efforts to achieve sustainable development promote happiness and a high quality of life and safeguard the values of tolerance and peaceful coexistence.

The agreement was signed by **His Excellency, Major General Mohammed Ahmed Al Marri, Director General, GDRFA -Dubai, and His Excellency, Helal Saeed Almarri, Director General, Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing (Dubai Tourism)**. The signing ceremony was held at the head office of GDRFA-Dubai on 12 January and was attended by officials from both government bodies.

H.E. Major General Mohammed Ahmed Al Marri, Director General, GDRFA - Dubai, said "We are committed to strengthen and consolidate cooperation between various government and private sectors in the UAE in general and Dubai in particular, as well as exchange experiences in order to facilitate procedures for residency permits for different categories of people. This agreement further enhances the existing strategic relations between GDRFA - Dubai and Dubai Tourism and our efforts to support Dubai's role regionally and internationally and enhance its image as the preferred tourism and global investment destination. It is noteworthy that during the challenging times, Dubai was able to preserve its global reputation and stand with strength and confidence in effectively dealing with the impact of the pandemic."

H.E. Major General Mohammed Ahmed Al Marri affirmed that this cooperation came within the framework of achieving government directions aimed at strengthening Dubai's position on the global investment map and making it the best place to visit, live and work. He also praised the efforts made by Dubai Tourism and their support to enhance the emirate's position globally and promote the city to attract tourists and investors.

H.E. Helal Saeed Almarri, Director General, Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing (Dubai Tourism), commented: "Our agreement with GDRFA-Dubai will boost recently launched development strategies inspired by the vision of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, to position Dubai as the preferred destination for global travellers and foreigners seeking residency. With a modern lifestyle, world class infrastructure and healthcare system, and a diversity of tourism experiences, Dubai offers the perfect residency option for entrepreneurs, investors and professionals.

"As we continuously strive to innovate in showcasing the city as a must-visit destination, spurred on by new trends in global travel and the significant shift that we are now seeing in the way people choose to work, our partnership with GDRFA will help further enhance the initiatives launched by Dubai Tourism including the 'Retire in Dubai' and 'Virtual Working' programmes aimed at reinforcing Dubai's status as the lifestyle and tourism destination of choice and the leading hub for remote work, entrepreneurship and investment."

The partnership agreement will facilitate the issuance of residency permits for investors, entrepreneurs, and retirees, along with other relevant processes, such as application assessment procedures and the issuance of special entry permits to those who are eligible to obtain an investor residency permit. GDRFA-Dubai and Dubai Tourism will collaborate on online services, providing useful links to various services, along with the necessary authorisation, allowing people to apply for these special residency permits, in addition to online access to applicant data. The two entities will cooperate in providing technical support to these online platforms and services.

GDRFA and Dubai Tourism will work closely to market the programmes covered by the agreement, and will provide information and services that are necessary to issue residency permits and visas. The two entities will also implement joint activities including marketing programmes and share expertise and best practices.

Cruise ships and yachts are also covered by the agreement, which facilitates entry and exit procedures for crews and passengers. GDRFA- Dubai and Dubai Tourism will have additional discussions to better understand the needs of cruise ship and yacht owners, while taking part in joint committees and contributing with meaningful

proposals to showcase Dubai as an attractive tourist destination. They will also collaborate through industry events and fairs that will introduce the services offered by GDRFA -Dubai.

The agreement also allows for the training of employees under jointly organised annual training programmes. Every year, Dubai Tourism will also offer two GDRFA employees the opportunity to join a Diploma programme offered by the Dubai College of Tourism free of charge.