

# Fitur Exhibition

## Tremendous interest in Islamic Tourism

Madrid-Motaz Othman

The Fitur exhibition was held in Madrid (18 January - 1 February). New wings were added to accommodate the demands of the new exhibitors and the increasing requirements of former exhibitors for more space. Islamic Tourism participated in the fair for the second year.

The exhibition revealed that tourism promotion is increasing to unprecedented levels, in Spain in particular and in Europe in general. Many countries are competing to participate in European tourism fairs to promote their sites and attractions. Europe is accorded great importance because of its consumer power, the strength of its currency, the Euro, as well as the spending potential of European tourists. Large numbers of business visitors queued for several hours to buy tickets on the opening day.



The main objective of our participation was to introduce the Islamic Tourism website which has been upgraded and expanded. The website ([www.islamictourism.com](http://www.islamictourism.com)) has two news bulletins - English and Arabic - updated weekly plus links which feature news from all Muslim countries. All issues of the magazine can also be found on the website.

### The Andalucian Section.

We visited the stands of Sudan, Ethiopia, Cameron, Tanzania, Senegal, Kenya, India, China, Malaysia, the Maldives, Seychelles, Macao, Kazakhstan, Tahiti, Serbia, the Czech Republic, Luxembourg, Switzerland, Romania, Malta, Cyprus, Russia, Poland, Turkey, Iran, Libya, Jordan, Syria, Algeria, Palestine, Tunisia, the UAE, Spain, Brazil and Peru. There was a great deal of interest in both the magazine and website and there are good prospects for co-operation with Middle Eastern, European, Asian, African and Latin American states.

Our tour of the exhibition started with African and Asian countries. We met first met the Sudanese Minister of Tourism whose country participated in the exhibition for the first time. The minister expressed an interest in the European tourist. He has also shown an interest in Islamic Tourism Magazine and the website, there will be a link to his ministry and Sudanese tourism will be promoted by the magazine.

Mrs. Rashmi Verma the General Director of the Indian Ministry of Tourism reaffirmed

قسم الأندلس.

our continued co-operation and spoke about India's strong interest in the Middle East. Mrs. Pamela Maria, the Director of Tourism in Goa state, India will be linking her website to ours as will the Greek National Tourism Organisation. The

organisation's President, Mr. Nicos Dimadis, expressed a great interest in our work and we were delighted to co-operate with such an eminent figure in the tourism sector of a European country.

We will also be co-operating with Mr. Igor Liakhovich the head of tourism in Moscow and Mrs. Lodmila Botkina the head of tourism in St. Petersburg.

The Iranians were competing with the Europeans and their large stand held its own. We met Mr. Rasoul Akbari the head ➤

## Exhibitions



Russian Stand.

جناح روسيا.



A model of Bam's castle in the Iranian Stand.

نموذج مصغر لقلعة بام في الجناح الإيراني.



Thailand Stand.

جناح تايلند.

of a tourism company in Kharasan province, whose capital Mashhad was featured in the magazine. He was delighted with the coverage and Iran will continue to feature prominently in the magazine.

We were also assured of co-operation by Mr. Abdul-Razaq Abdul-Qassim the director of international relations in the Libyan ministry of tourism. Libya is adopting an increasingly high profile in Europe and is eager to welcome tourists.

On the well-staffed Jordanian stand, we met Mr. Sultan Abu Jabir who congratulated us on the quality of our magazine, which is highly respected in the field of travel journalism.

We met the Syrian minister of tourism, Dr. Saadallah Al-Qalaa who assured us of continued promotion of his country in our magazine through a variety of advertisements.

The representatives on the Algerian stand drew our attention to the lack of coverage of their country - one of the largest Islamic states but nevertheless extended an invitation to a tourism fair in March.

On the Serbian stand we met Mr. Nikolay Yotovski, who expressed his continuing interest in the Middle East market and said he would participate in the Multaqa of Dubai. Interest in the magazine was not confined to Middle Eastern and European countries. Mrs. Lyda Cortez on the Peru stand and the directors of the Brazilian and the Mexican stands all expressed their interest in the magazine and the website.

Spain has a long association with the Muslim world. Mrs. Dolares Sancho from Almeria promised to cooperate with us in the future. Fitur enabled the magazine to raise its profile and we look forward to promoting tourism throughout the Muslim world with the colleagues and friends with whom we exchanged views and discussed the future of the industry in the 21st century. ■