

Marbella wins Arabian Tourism Award

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Marbella News



The strong links between Marbella and the Arab World were underlined recently as the Arab League Tourism Organisation (ATO) recognised Marbella as a European Tourism Destination of Honour.

Representing 22 countries, the ATO chose Marbella, describing it “a benchmark of excellence worldwide” and noting the “care and attention” that the town provides to Arab visitors make it “the most distinguished city in high-quality tourism.”

Marbella mayor, Ángeles Muñoz, who received the award at the Town Hall from the president of the ATO, Dr. Bandar bin Fahd Al-Fuhaid, stressed that “This distinction will mean that we have even more presence in some of the countries. We have received numerous visitors for many years”.

President of the ATO Dr. Bandar bin Fahd Al-Fuhaid underlined the organisation’s commitment to Marbella, hinting establishing a permanent presence in the town. “We feel so at home that we are considering the possibility of creating a permanent support office for visitors from the 22 countries of the Arab League, with maximum collaboration to help them invest, and even help in the tourist part, that may correspond from the International Tourism Academy to Marbella,” he indicated. “As happens here, where any Arab tourist is welcome, any Spaniard is welcome in Arab countries, where we try to give them the best possible service,” added the president of the ATO, who again thanked the mayor for “her support and collaboration.”

During the meeting, Al-Fuhaid and Munoz discussed various aspects of cooperation, including the exchange of expertise in the quality of tourism services, the training and qualification of tourism sector workers, and the increase of tourism investments.

Al-Fuhaid also said the ATO was considering, in partnership with the Arab Academy for Science, Technology, and Maritime Transport (AASTMT), the establishment of a training and development academy in Marbella. The goal would be to enhance the skills and qualifications of Arab youth for careers in tourism by leveraging Spain's extensive experience, which is recognised as one of the world's leading countries in the tourism sector.

The Mayor highlighted "the friendship that unites Marbella and the Arab countries" and thanked the ATO for "having chosen our city for the granting of an award of such relevance". According to the organisation, this is also, "a recognition of the work carried out by the municipal institution" for the "high quality and professional services in the vacation, family and corporate tourism sector."

She added "The Arab market has increased the number of tourists who choose the municipality to visit, in addition to showing great loyalty to us" and mentioned the fact that European Best Destinations had awarded the town the title of Best European Destination to visit in 2024. Muñoz also thanked the work carried out by the main advisor of the Arab League Tourism Organization and president of the Bluebay group, Jamal Satli Iglesias, who was also present at the ceremony, for his "work as a great ambassador of the city".

Summing up Al-Fuhaid said that he was proud "to present Marbella and its mayor with official recognition from the Arab League as a reference destination for the Arab world and of excellence throughout the world." In this sense, he has valued "the continuous provision of quality and luxury services that are provided in this town to these tourists" and has expressed his desire that "we continue to strengthen the permanent collaboration that exists between the areas of Arab and Spanish tourism."