

HARAMAIN INSPO NOTICE
Choice of VISA - Umrah vs Tourist
25 December 2023

Asalaamualaikum all.

Alhumdullilah, access to the Harams has eased significantly over the last few months with the introduction of the multiple entry Tourist Visa, allowing travellers to make their own arrangements.

That being said, we have repeated constantly since its implementation, that whilst it is a few hundred rand cheaper, cognisance of the benefits and disadvantages of the Tourist Visa vs the traditional Umrah visa need to be highlighted.

Information given to Mutamireen is vital in ensuring that travellers are able to make considered decisions when choosing their VISA. Alhumdullilah there are many new travel agencies that have opened offering services and packages with tourist visas, but many have not understood the differences themselves.

As we have repeated constantly, travel in peak seasons, and especially winter is challenging on persons health and there has been a significant increase in the number of requests for medical assistance, doctors to come to rooms and where to go for help.

The requests have almost tripled compared to last year December, and we are only half way through the Umrah season. Mutamireen are being turned away from clinics and treatment wrongly informed that the medical insurance covers them, this is for emergency hospitalisation only.

We appeal to everyone, understand the vital differences between the Visas so you can make the right choice for your family.

Please see below once more the differences for your consideration:

1. The Umrah Visa allows you access to FREE primary healthcare at all Ministry of Health Hospitals and Clinics, including dialysis. The tourist visa does not. If you have any medical issues, do not take a tourist visa. Unless you are fortunate enough to have the fund, resources and means as a frequent traveller to have adequate medical aid cover or physical cash on hand to pay for fees in Saudi.
2. The Umrah Visa allows your travel agent to issue you a group Rawdah booking in Medina, which does not count on your personal Nusuk profile. A Tourist Visa does not offer this service.
3. Both visas allow you to purchase Zam Zam and perform Umrah.

If you have no intention or the means to travel again in the allocated validity of multiple entry Tourist Visa, it is absolutely NOT worth it to take it and lose the benefit of the primary healthcare access.

Jazakallah Khair.

Yaseen

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