

## Italy opens its doors to Halal tourism



ITALY

By Stefano Loconte

**Halal tourism has in recent years become a point of reference for many countries around the world, both Muslims and non-Muslims. In fact, this is in line with the increase in Muslim tourists on a year-on-year basis which is recognized both as an opportunity and challenge for the tourism sector in seeking to develop Halal tourism.**

Italy is taking initiatives to open its doors to Halal tourism after seeing the big opportunity it represents in attracting a new style of tourism by connecting people and cultures.

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Halal tourism does not only have a strong commercial potential but also other benefits, such as an increase in competitiveness among international goals to develop strategic marketing tools and plans for industry performance at a global platform to reach higher levels.

As such, Italy is interested to gain access and attract this new type of

tourism. Hotels and resorts in Italy are encouraged to provide Halal food and activities that comply with Islamic law, similar to those developed in other countries, especially in South Asia. To increase the understanding of Halal-related activities and food, universities and research centers in Italy are providing education and training programs on the Halal industry.

Italian restaurants and hotels are keen to provide accommodation services that are Halal-certified. As such, it is essential to standardize the Halal certification procedures so as to be able to welcome new Muslim clients.

The Halal certification body in Italy, Halal Italia, was founded in July 2010, while the Halal Certification Organization and the World Halal Authority play a role in certifying Halal products or services in Italy.

However, Italy is also aware that tourism motivation and satisfaction are key elements to attract returning tourists, whether they are Muslims or non-Muslims. As a consequence, Italy has implemented many instruments to show support to the cause.

This approach demonstrates that the process of opening the doors to the Islamic culture has really begun and it concerns many and different aspects of the Italian framework, not only limited to the finance sector. (F)

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