

An Evaluation of the Structure of the Halal Tourism Market and Its Current Situation in Europe

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Abstract

The Muslim population in the world is increasing rapidly. However, as a result of the improvement in the economic situation of the Muslims, an increase is seen in holiday expenditures. Tourism investors, who follow these developments, produce new touristic products and services to meet the needs of Muslim tourists. This study aims to present an assessment of the structure and current situation of the halal tourism market in Europe. In this context, topics such as the concept of halal, halal tourism, halal hotel certificates, Islamic finance, and the status of the halal market in the world and in Europe are included. The reflections of the concepts of halal and haram in the tourism sector are discussed in this study. In addition, up-to-date data on halal airlines, halal restaurants and halal travel agencies, which are the components of halal tourism, are presented. As a result of the study, it was emphasized that halal tourism will be a new competitive field for the countries in the European market.

Halal Concept

“Halal” is an Arabic term that refers to things that are permissible under Islamic law (Demirci, 2023). In the context of food and drink, “halal” refers to items that are allowed according to Islamic dietary guidelines. This typically includes meat from animals that have been slaughtered in a specific manner, with a blessing recited and facing Mecca, and with the removal of all blood from the meat. The term “halal” is also used more broadly to refer to things that are in accordance with Islamic principles, such as financial transactions, business dealings, and personal conduct.

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In general, the concept of halal is used to refer to things that are permissible and acceptable under Islamic law, as defined in the Quran and the Hadith (the sayings and actions of the Prophet Muhammad). The word “halal” is repeated approximately 40 times in the Quran (DİB, 2023). It is important to note that the exact number of times a specific word is repeated in the Quran can vary depending on the translation and interpretation. In the Quran, “halal” refers to something that is lawful, permissible, or acceptable according to Islamic law. This term is often used in the context of food and drink, as well as other aspects of daily life.

Halal foods and drinks are those that are permissible under Islamic law. According to Islamic dietary guidelines, the following are considered to be halal (Riaz & Chaudry, 2003):

- Meat from animals that have been slaughtered in a specific manner, with a blessing recited and facing Mecca, and with the removal of all blood from the meat. This includes poultry, beef, lamb, and goat, among others.
- Seafood, including fish and shellfish, as long as they have fins and scales.
- Fruits, vegetables, grains, and legumes.
- Dairy products, such as milk, cheese, and yogurt.
- Eggs from chickens or other birds that are considered halal.
- Nuts and seeds, including almonds, hazelnuts, and sunflower seeds.
- Beverages such as water, fruit juices, and soft drinks.

It is important to note that some food and drink items, such as pork and alcohol, are considered to be haram, or forbidden, in Islam. Halal food and drink products are usually labelled as such, and many restaurants and food outlets offer halal options for Muslim customers. The word “haram” is repeated approximately 25 times in the Quran (DİB, 2023). It is important to note that the exact number of times a specific word is repeated in the Quran can vary depending on the translation and interpretation. In the Quran, “haram” refers to something that is unlawful, prohibited, or forbidden according to Islamic law. This term is often used in the context of food and drink, as well as other aspects of daily life. The opposite of “halal,” “haram” is used to describe actions or things that are considered sinful or unethical in the eyes of Allah (Çayıroğlu, 2018).

“Haram” is an Arabic term that refers to things that are forbidden or not permissible under Islamic law. In the context of food and drink, “haram” refers to items that are not allowed according to Islamic dietary guidelines. This typically includes (Demirci, 2023):

- Pork and pork products, such as ham and bacon.
- Meat from animals that were not slaughtered in a specific manner, with a blessing recited and facing Mecca, and with the removal of all blood from the meat.
- Alcohol and intoxicants, including beer, wine, and spirits.
- Carnivorous animals, such as lions, tigers, and leopards.
- Birds of prey, such as hawks and eagles.
- Blood and blood by-products.
- Foods and drinks that contain ingredients derived from haram sources, such as gelatin made from pork bones.

In general, the concept of haram is used to refer to things that are not permissible and unacceptable under Islamic law, as defined in the Quran and the Hadith (the sayings and actions of the Prophet Muhammad).

Halal Tourism

Halal tourism refers to a form of tourism that caters specifically to the needs and values of Muslim travellers (Gündüz, 2020). This type of tourism takes into account the dietary, cultural, and religious needs of Muslims, and provides travel options that are in line with the principles of Islam.

In practice, halal tourism typically involves the provision of halal food, prayer facilities, and accommodations that are appropriate for Muslim travellers. For example, hotels and resorts might offer separate swimming areas for men and women, or provide prayer mats and Qurans in guest rooms (Baysal, 2017). Halal tourism is a rapidly growing sector, as more and more Muslims travel both within their own countries and abroad. In many destinations, local tourism boards and businesses are beginning to recognize the importance of this market and are working to create offerings that are tailored to the needs of Muslim travellers.

Overall, the goal of halal tourism is to provide a comfortable and convenient travel experience for Muslims, while also promoting cultural understanding and respect between different communities. Halal tourism facilities are those that cater to the religious, cultural, and dietary needs of

Muslim travellers. Some of the common facilities and services offered by halal tourism providers include (Gündüz & Topaloğlu, 2021):

- Halal food options: This includes access to halal-certified restaurants, cafes, and food stalls, as well as the provision of halal food in hotels and other accommodation options.
- Prayer facilities: This includes the provision of prayer mats, Qibla (direction of Mecca) indicators, and designated prayer areas in hotels and other public spaces.
- Separate swimming and recreation areas for men and women: This is in line with traditional Islamic modesty guidelines, which require separate spaces for men and women in some activities and situations.
- Modest dress code: Many halal tourism providers have a dress code that is in line with Islamic principles, such as covering the head and avoiding tight and revealing clothing.
- Alcohol-free environments: Halal tourism facilities are typically free from alcohol and other intoxicants, in accordance with Islamic principles.
- Religious and cultural tours: Halal tourism providers often offer tours that focus on Islamic history and culture, such as visits to mosques, Islamic art museums, and historical sites.

These facilities and services are designed to provide Muslim travellers with a comfortable and enjoyable travel experience that is in line with their religious and cultural beliefs (Boğan & Sarıışık, 2019). The goal of halal tourism is to allow Muslims to travel and explore new destinations while maintaining their religious and cultural practices.

Halal Hotel Certificate

A Halal Hotel certificate is a designation that is awarded to hotels that meet specific standards for compliance with Islamic principles, particularly in the areas of food, drink, and other services. The certificate is awarded by organizations that specialize in Halal certification, and the standards and criteria vary depending on the organization (Sabidin, 2015).

The purpose of a Halal Hotel certificate is to provide assurance to Muslim travellers that the hotel they are staying in is in line with their religious, cultural, and dietary needs. The certificate is an indication that the hotel has been thoroughly vetted and meets specific standards for compliance with Islamic principles. Some of the key criteria that a hotel must meet to be

awarded a Halal Hotel certificate include (Pamukçu & Mehmet Sarıışık, 2021):

- Provision of halal food options, with certification from a recognized Halal certification organization.
- Availability of prayer facilities, including prayer mats, Qibla (direction of Mecca) indicators, and designated prayer areas in hotels and other public spaces.
- Compliance with Islamic modesty guidelines, such as separate swimming and recreation areas for men and women and modest dress codes.
- Alcohol-free environments, in accordance with Islamic principles.
- Provision of religious and cultural services, such as access to mosques, Islamic art museums, and historical sites.

Obtaining a Halal Hotel certificate is a rigorous process that involves a thorough review of the hotel's facilities, services, and practices. The certificate is usually reviewed and updated regularly to ensure that the hotel continues to meet the standards and criteria for compliance with Islamic principles.

Halal hotels are a growing market in many countries, but the highest concentration can be found in the Middle East and Southeast Asia (Nurdiansyah, 2016). Some of the countries with the largest number of halal hotels include (GMTI, 2019):

1. United Arab Emirates (UAE)
2. Malaysia
3. Indonesia
4. Turkey
5. Saudi Arabia

In these countries, the demand for halal-friendly tourism is high, and many hotels cater to this market by offering halal food, prayer mats, and other amenities designed to meet the needs of Muslim travellers. Additionally, many of these countries are popular tourist destinations, making them an ideal place for halal hotels to thrive.

Halal Travel Agencies

Halal travel agencies are travel companies that specialize in providing travel services and packages that are designed to meet the needs of Muslim

travellers (Gündüz, 2022). They cater to the religious, cultural, and dietary needs of Muslim travellers, offering services such as:

- Halal-certified hotels and accommodation options
- Halal food options, including access to halal-certified restaurants, cafes, and food stalls
- Prayer facilities, including prayer mats, Qibla (direction of Mecca) indicators, and designated prayer areas
- Modest dress codes and separate swimming and recreation areas for men and women, in line with Islamic modesty guidelines
- Alcohol-free environments, in accordance with Islamic principles
- Religious and cultural tours, including visits to mosques, Islamic art museums, and historical sites

These travel agencies offer a wide range of travel packages, from beach holidays and adventure tours to city breaks and cultural tours, designed to cater to the needs of Muslim travellers. By working with Halal-certified hotels, restaurants, and other service providers, they can provide a seamless travel experience that is in line with Islamic principles.

The goal of Halal travel agencies is to make travel more accessible and enjoyable for Muslim travellers, allowing them to explore new destinations while maintaining their religious and cultural practices (Hsu, Ku, Lai, & Hsu, 2020). By offering services and packages that are tailored to their needs, they can help to create a more comfortable and enjoyable travel experience for Muslim travellers.

Halal Restaurants

Halal restaurants are restaurants that serve food that is prepared and served in accordance with Islamic dietary laws. Halal food is defined as food that is permissible according to Islamic law, and it specifically excludes pork, alcohol, and other products that are considered to be haram (forbidden) (Polas, Raju, Hossen, & Mahbub, 2020).

Some of the key features of Halal restaurants include (Rychkov, 2019):

- Use of Halal ingredients: All of the ingredients used in the preparation of the food must be Halal, and the meat must come from animals that have been slaughtered in accordance with Islamic principles.
- Alcohol-free: Halal restaurants do not serve alcohol, and they do not use alcohol as an ingredient in their dishes.

- Separation of cooking utensils and food preparation areas: Halal restaurants must ensure that their cooking utensils, cutting boards, and other food preparation areas are separate from those used for non-Halal food.
- Availability of Halal certification: Many Halal restaurants display a Halal certificate from a recognized Halal certification organization to demonstrate their compliance with Islamic dietary laws.

Halal restaurants offer a range of dishes, including traditional Muslim cuisine as well as international and fusion cuisine. They cater to the needs of Muslim travellers, as well as the growing population of Muslims in many countries who are looking for food options that are in line with their religious beliefs.

Information sharing is important in food and beverage businesses (Rezaei, Giovando, Rezaei, & Sadraei, 2022). The goal of Halal restaurants is to provide a comfortable and enjoyable dining experience for Muslims, while ensuring that the food they serve is in compliance with Islamic dietary laws (Budiman & Suyana, 2021). By offering Halal food options, they can help to promote cultural and religious tolerance and understanding, and make dining out a more inclusive and accessible experience for Muslims.

Muslim Friendly Airlines

“Muslim friendly airlines” are airlines that cater to the needs of Muslim travellers by offering amenities such as halal food, prayer mats, and other services designed to meet the requirements of Islamic law (Harum, Halim, & Jama, 2018). Here are some examples of Muslim-friendly airlines:

1. Malaysia Airlines
2. Emirates
3. Qatar Airways
4. Etihad Airways
5. Turkish Airlines
6. Royal Jordanian

These airlines are known for their commitment to providing a comfortable and convenient travel experience for Muslim passengers, and they have become increasingly popular in recent years due to the growing demand for halal-friendly travel options (Ahmed, 2023).

Many airlines offer halal food options for their Muslim passengers. The availability of these options can vary depending on the airline, route, and class of travel. Some airlines have a dedicated halal menu that includes dishes prepared with halal-certified ingredients, while others offer the option to request a halal meal when booking a flight (Halal In-Flight Meals, 2023).

It is important to note that the level of certainty of the food being halal can vary, so Muslim travellers should check with the airline or the relevant authorities to determine the level of certifiability of the halal food provided on a flight. In general, Muslim travellers are advised to research their options and make arrangements in advance to ensure that their dietary needs are met while traveling by air. Some airlines may require advance notice to provide a halal meal, so it's always a good idea to check with the airline before traveling.

General Structure of the World Halal Tourism Market

The global Halal tourism market has been growing rapidly in recent years, driven by the increasing demand for Halal travel options among Muslim travellers. According to a recent report, the global Halal tourism market was valued at over \$200 billion in 2020, and it is expected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of over 6% between 2021 and 2028 (Halal Tourism Market, 2022).

The growth of the Halal tourism market can be attributed to several factors, including (Univdatos, 2022):

1. **Increasing Muslim population:** The global Muslim population is growing, and as a result, the demand for Halal travel options is increasing.
2. **Rising disposable income:** As the income of Muslim consumers increases, they are more likely to spend on travel and other leisure activities.
3. **Growing awareness of Halal travel:** As more and more Muslim travellers become aware of the concept of Halal travel, the demand for Halal-friendly travel options is growing.
4. **Growing number of Halal-friendly destinations:** As more destinations around the world cater to the needs of Muslim travellers, the demand for Halal travel is growing.
5. **Expansion of the global travel industry:** The global travel industry is expanding, driven by factors such as increasing globalization and

technological advancements, and this is contributing to the growth of the Halal tourism market.

The growth of the Halal tourism market presents significant opportunities for businesses and organizations that cater to the needs of Muslim travellers, including hotels, airlines, travel agencies, and tour operators. It is also expected to lead to greater cultural exchange and understanding between Muslim and non-Muslim communities around the world.

The expenses for a Muslim traveller can vary widely depending on several factors such as destination, length of stay, travel style, and personal preferences. Some common expenses for Muslim travellers include (Syakirah, 2019):

1. **Accommodation:** This can range from budget-friendly options such as hostels or homestays to more luxurious options such as hotels or resorts.
2. **Transportation:** Costs can include airfare, train or bus tickets, and local transportation such as taxis or rental cars.
3. **Food:** Muslim travellers typically prefer halal food options, which can be more expensive in some countries. Some travellers also choose to bring their own food or prepare their own meals.
4. **Tours and activities:** This can include costs for guided tours, admission fees for cultural sites, and other activities such as shopping or visiting attractions.
5. **Miscellaneous expenses:** This can include visas, travel insurance, and other miscellaneous expenses such as souvenirs or personal items.

It's important to note that these are general expenses and the actual costs can vary widely based on individual circumstances. Some Muslim-friendly travel agencies also offer package deals that include many of these expenses, which can make travel more convenient and cost-effective for Muslim travellers.

The global Islamic finance industry was estimated to be worth over \$2 trillion in assets, with the majority of growth originating from the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries (GCC, 2022). In terms of market share, Islamic banking assets made up around 8-10% of the total banking assets in countries with a predominantly Muslim population, such as Malaysia and Iran. The market for Islamic finance has been expanding rapidly in recent years, with new Islamic financial institutions being established and existing

conventional banks offering Islamic finance products (Held & Ulrichsen, 2011).

Sukuk (Islamic bonds) have become increasingly popular as a means of financing large-scale infrastructure projects, and several governments, including the governments of Malaysia, Indonesia, and Saudi Arabia, have issued sukuk to raise funds. There is also a growing demand for Islamic finance products and services from non-Muslim countries, with a number of conventional financial institutions offering Islamic finance products to meet this demand (Kooli, Shanikat, & Kanakriyah, 2022). Overall, the Islamic finance industry continues to grow and evolve, offering ethical and socially responsible financial products and services to an increasingly diverse range of customers globally (Biancone & Secinaro, 2021).

European Halal Tourism Market

The Muslim population in many parts of the world, including Europe, has been growing in recent years (Skirbekk, 2022). This can be attributed to several factors, including:

1. Immigration: Muslim immigration to Europe has increased in recent decades, leading to a growing Muslim population in many countries.
2. High birth rates: Muslim communities in Europe tend to have higher birth rates compared to other religious and ethnic groups, leading to a growing Muslim population.
3. Conversion: Some non-Muslims in Europe have converted to Islam, contributing to the growth of the Muslim population.

The increase in the Muslim population in Europe has significant social, cultural, and economic implications. It has led to an increased demand for Halal products and services, including Halal food, travel, and finance. It has also led to greater diversity and cultural exchange, as well as a growing recognition of the importance of accommodating the needs and interests of Muslim communities in Europe (Khan & Callanan, 2017).

As the Muslim population continues to grow, it is likely that we will see an increased demand for Halal products and services, as well as greater recognition and accommodation of the needs of Muslim communities in Europe. This will present significant opportunities for businesses and organizations that serve the Muslim market, including Halal food producers, travel companies, and finance institutions.

The European Halal tourism market is a rapidly growing segment of the travel industry, as more and more Muslim travellers seek out destinations and travel services that cater to their religious, cultural, and dietary needs (Doğan, 2019). In recent years, the market has seen significant growth, driven by factors such as:

- **Increasing Muslim population:** The Muslim population in Europe is growing, and this has led to increased demand for Halal travel options.
- **Rising disposable income:** With rising disposable income levels among Muslim populations, more people are able to travel and are looking for travel options that cater to their needs.
- **Growing awareness of Halal tourism:** Increased awareness of Halal tourism has led to greater demand for Halal-certified hotels, restaurants, and other travel services in Europe.
- **Expansion of Halal travel market:** The global Halal travel market is expanding, and Europe is becoming an increasingly popular destination for Muslim travellers, driven by factors such as a growing number of Halal-friendly attractions and facilities, and an increase in the number of direct flights to Europe from the Middle East and Southeast Asia.

European countries such as the United Kingdom, France, Germany, and the Netherlands have become popular destinations for Halal tourism, as they offer a range of Halal-certified hotels, restaurants, and other travel services. Other countries in Europe, such as Italy, Spain, and Portugal, are also investing in their Halal tourism infrastructure in response to growing demand (Halal Booking, 2023).

The European Halal tourism market is poised for continued growth in the coming years, as more and more Muslim travellers seek out travel options that cater to their needs. This presents a significant opportunity for travel companies, hotels, and restaurants to tap into this growing market and meet the increasing demand for Halal travel options in Europe.

The number of Halal hotels in Europe has been growing in recent years due to the increasing demand for Halal travel options, but the exact number can vary depending on the specific definition of a Halal hotel and the criteria used to classify it as such.

According to recent studies, some of the most popular European destinations for Muslim travellers include (www.havehalalwilltravel.com, 2023):

1. United Kingdom: London is a popular destination for Muslim travellers, due to its cultural and historical attractions, as well as its wide range of Halal-friendly hotels and restaurants.
2. France: Paris is a popular destination for Muslim travellers, due to its iconic landmarks and attractions, as well as its large Muslim community and growing number of Halal-friendly hotels and restaurants.
3. Germany: Berlin and Frankfurt are popular destinations for Muslim travellers, due to their cultural and historical attractions, as well as their growing number of Halal-friendly hotels and restaurants.
4. The Netherlands: Amsterdam is a popular destination for Muslim travellers, due to its cultural and historical attractions, as well as its wide range of Halal-friendly hotels and restaurants.
5. Italy: Rome and Milan are popular destinations for Muslim travellers, due to their cultural and historical attractions, as well as their growing number of Halal-friendly hotels and restaurants.

These destinations are popular due to their rich cultural and historical heritage, as well as their growing number of Halal-friendly hotels, restaurants, and other travel services. They offer Muslim travellers the opportunity to explore Europe while also being able to maintain their religious and cultural practices.

It's worth noting that this list is not exhaustive, and other countries in Europe, such as Spain, Portugal, and Belgium, are also becoming increasingly popular destinations for Muslim travellers due to their growing number of Halal-friendly travel options.

It is difficult to measure the number of Muslims visiting Europe. However, the statistics of OIC (www.sesric.org, 2022) member countries can be an important criterion in this regard. It's difficult to estimate the exact number of tourists coming to Europe from countries that are members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), as there is no central database that tracks this information. However, according to the World Tourism Organization, some of the largest source markets for tourists to Europe include OIC countries such as Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.

It's worth noting that the number of tourists from OIC countries can vary greatly depending on various factors, such as economic conditions in the home country, visa requirements, and political stability in both the home country and destination country. Additionally, some OIC countries may have higher numbers of tourists to certain European countries, while others

may have more tourists to different countries in Europe (www.sesric.org, 2022). Overall, while it's difficult to estimate the exact number of tourists from OIC countries, it is safe to say that they make up a significant portion of the total number of tourists visiting Europe.

Conclusion

The Halal tourism market is a growing industry that caters to the needs of Muslim travellers who seek a vacation that adheres to their religious beliefs and practices. Halal tourism is not just limited to the provision of halal food, but it also includes other aspects such as accommodations, transportation, and activities that are in accordance with Islamic principles (Pamukçu, Saraç, & Batman, 2020). In this evaluation, I have discussed the concept of Halal tourism, the various components of the Halal tourism market, and the current situation of the European Halal tourism market.

The Halal tourism market is a dynamic and rapidly growing industry that is expected to continue its growth in the coming years. This growth is driven by the increasing number of Muslim travellers, who are seeking travel options that cater to their religious beliefs and practices. The Halal tourism market is expected to reach USD 300 billion by 2026, indicating the immense potential of this industry (GMTI, 2019).

Halal tourism comprises various components such as halal hotels, travel agencies, restaurants, and airlines that cater to the specific needs of Muslim travellers. These components work together to provide a seamless experience for Halal tourists. Halal Hotel Certificates and Muslim Friendly Airlines play a vital role in building the trust of Muslim travellers.

Halal tourism has a global structure, with significant markets in the Middle East, Southeast Asia, and Europe. The Middle East is the leading market for Halal tourism, followed by Southeast Asia. Europe is a relatively new market but is rapidly growing, with countries such as Turkey, Germany, Spain, Italy and France being the most popular destinations for Halal tourism in Europe.

The European Halal tourism market has immense potential, as it caters to a significant number of Muslim travellers. The market is rapidly growing, with more and more Halal hotels, restaurants, and travel agencies being established. The demand for Halal tourism in Europe is driven by the increasing number of Muslim residents and the growing popularity of Halal tourism worldwide.

Halal tourism provides an opportunity for countries to diversify their tourism offerings and attract Muslim travellers. Countries that are able to provide a comprehensive Halal tourism experience can reap the economic benefits of this growing market. By catering to the specific needs of Muslim travellers, countries can also promote their cultural and religious values, leading to a better understanding and appreciation of diverse cultures.

In conclusion, the Halal tourism market is a dynamic and rapidly growing industry that has immense potential. The market comprises various components, including halal hotels, travel agencies, restaurants, and airlines, that work together to provide a seamless experience for Muslim travellers. The European Halal tourism market is rapidly growing and provides an opportunity for countries to diversify their tourism offerings and attract Muslim travellers. With the growing demand for Halal tourism worldwide, this industry will continue to provide significant economic benefits to countries that are able to provide a comprehensive Halal tourism experience.

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