

PRESS RELEASE

Showcasing the Luxury Italian Region of Lazio at Expo 2020 Dubai

The Italy Pavilion hosted a forum 'Lazio, a Luxury Destination', early today discussing the culture, wellbeing, fashion, sport and world-class ingredients that are on offer to visitors from the Gulf region

Dubai, UAE, 11 January 2022: Attracting millions of tourists each year, Italy continues to be one of the world's leading luxury destinations for travellers. Luxury tourism is a key strategic growth area for Italy and Lazio was the subject of today's forum at the Italy Pavilion Amphitheatre, and how the central region will play a crucial role in attracting more wealthy travellers from the Arabian Peninsula and wider Middle East.

Organised by Lazio's Regional Department for Tourism, '*Lazio, a Luxury Destination*', was also attended by **Paolo Glisenti**, Commissioner-General for Italy's participation at Expo 2020 Dubai; **Valentina Corrado**, Lazio Regional Minister for Tourism, Local Agencies, Urban Security, Local Police and Administrative Streamlining; **Quirino Briganti**, Responsible for Lazio Region activities at "Expo 2020 Dubai"; **Matteo Caroli**, Tenured Professor of Economics and International Enterprise Management at LUISS University, Rome; **Giorgio Palmucci**, ENIT President; **Marco Misischia**, National President of CNA (Confederation of Craftsmen and SMEs); **Lavinia Biagiotti**, President and CEO of Biagiotti Group; **Fausto Palombelli**, President of Unindustria Association – division for tourism and leisure, and **Carlo Acampora**, CEO of Grand Hotel Via Veneto.

A high-end tourism survey conducted in May 2021 by Bain & Company on behalf of the Altgamma Foundation (a luxury brands committee) revealed that in 2019, the year before the outbreak of the pandemic, the luxury tourism sector in Italy still generated an overall turnover of 25 billion Euros (pre-pandemic this figure is around 60 billion Euros). This included both direct and indirect revenues from 1% of accommodation facilities and 3% of overnight stays in Italy, accounting for 3% of Italy's GDP that year.

Nicola Zingaretti, President of Lazio, said, "Lazio has huge potential in terms of high-end tourism with top-notch food & wine, art, culture and local craftsmanship just some of the offerings available to visitors. Aside from the magnificence of Rome, our region is home to a vast richness of beauty, traditions and unique locations that appeal to well-travelled tourists."

Besides the economic impact, mainly driven by foreign tourists, high-end tourism helps enhance the image of Italy as a world destination and gives new momentum to the promotion and development of *Made in Italy* excellence. Food and shopping typically represent the reason why visitors choose to visit Italy. The BCG survey commissioned by Altgamma in 2021 shows that among luxury tourists, Italy ranks first in terms of art cities, countryside towns/resorts and experiences related to food & wine, art and culture.

Valentina Corrado, Lazio Regional Minister for Tourism, Local Agencies, Urban Security, Local Police and Administrative Streamlining said, "The Lazio Region's participation in this highly prestigious, international event, is a unique opportunity to showcase our potential to a global audience. At Expo 2020 Dubai, for the first time ever, we are also promoting Lazio as a luxury tourism destination, a sector that is enjoying growth and expansion throughout the Middle East. We want to strengthen the Lazio brand and its top-class excellencies to bring together institutions, associations, enterprises and operators of the trade, highlighting that our region truly is a solid point of reference for travellers and leisure tourists."

Rome is one of the top five destinations for non-European high-end tourists boosting the Lazio region's appeal to travellers from the Gulf region. Tourists from this area typically enjoy art cities, fashion and design, opting for destinations featuring wellness-related offering and locations with activities for families in exclusive facilities, ensuring privacy, security and high-level services.

“Aside from Rome – the art city par excellence and one of the most visited destinations in the world – Lazio also boasts a whole raft of beautiful and spectacular off the beaten track destinations, all of which feature strong cultural, artistic and tourism-related elements,” continues **Valentina Corrado**. “Lazio also offers important strategic assets and incomparable attractions including a natural vocation for wellness tourism; a solid high-end commercial offering featuring the most iconic Made in Italy brands; a host of luxurious accommodation options, villas and prestigious residences; high-quality food & wine and Michelin-starred restaurants; an immense array of heritage destinations including six UNESCO world heritage sites; and a diverse agenda of international events attracting visitors with great purchasing power.

Valentina Corrado concluded, “We are promoting a sector that has been hit very hard by the pandemic through investment and planned activities that will stimulate the entire tourism chain and its satellite industries, to support the sector and make our territory appealing and competitive at an international level. Showcasing and describing the most evocative scenarios of our region and the experiences to potential visitors from the Arabian Peninsula and Gulf, allows us to connect with our guests and give them and insight into the most authentic thrills they can enjoy.”

Leisure travellers from the Gulf region to Italy look for authentic experiences in high-quality accommodation and opt for *Made in Italy* shopping experiences, while savouring delicious local foods. This is, therefore, an important segment for Lazio's tourism economy and all its linked activities, which in turn can benefit the region's entire economic and productive system.