

TOURIST SPENDING IN THE UK

AUGUST 2008 VS AUGUST 2007

Data supplied by Global Refund (www.globalrefund.com)

The Middle East continues to show steady growth in sales with an impressive 74 per cent rise in tourist spend, accounting for more than 80 per cent of non-EU tax-free shopping in the UK. It may have been ranked first in the top 10 nationalities because this year Ramadan began earlier (at the start of September), with shoppers splashing out before returning home.

The oil countries have seen a healthy increase this month. Nigerian visitors are now second in the top 10, above Russia and China, with their average spend increase attributing to a 42 per cent rise in sales, despite a drop of 11 per cent in transactions.

Tourists from Pakistan spent less this month, with sales down 28 per cent and transactions down 29 per cent. The US also experienced declines, both in transactions (-10 per cent) and sales (-14 per cent), with an average spend of just £521. The US made up less than 1.6 per cent of total tourist spend last month.

To conclude, the average spend from Middle Eastern tourists was the highest, at £2,684, while Australian tourists spent the least (£413). Transactions increased 20 per cent and sales were up 60 per cent overall. August proved to be a positive month, with significant growth generated by the UK luxury sector.

	SALES AMOUNT		TRANSACTIONS		AVERAGE SPEND
	Share of total	Change vs last year	Share of total	Change vs last year	
MIDDLE EAST	81%	74%	56%	37%	£2,684
NIGERIA	3%	42%	4%	-11%	£1,341
RUSSIA	2%	22%	4%	9%	£1,101
UNITED STATES	2%	-14%	6%	-10%	£521
CHINA	1%	58%	2%	-14%	£1,101
PAKISTAN	1%	-28%	2%	-29%	£1,059
AUSTRALIA	1%	30%	4%	49%	£413
INDIA	1%	18%	2%	-12%	£922
CANADA	1%	71%	2%	10%	£677
HONG KONG	1%	5%	2%	-6%	£614
OTHERS	8%	23%	18%	11%	£815
TOTAL	100%	60%	100%	20%	£1,870