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## Yotel breaks ground on first property in the Middle East

May 23, 2016



Following the inking of a long-term agreement with Dubai Investment Properties, Yotel, an affiliate company of Kuwait-listed IFA Hotels & Resorts KSCC, broke ground last week on its inaugural hotel in the Middle East, which is expected to open its doors to the public in 2018 on Sheikh Zayed Road.

Due to be Yotel's Middle Eastern flagship, the new hotel will be home to 582 cabins and serviced apartments, dedicated co-working and meetings spaces, a gym and a pool deck. It will represent the brand's debut in the serviced residence game.

The new property will be a short walk to the Business Bay monorail station and only a few minutes from Downtown Dubai, the Burj Khalifa and the Dubai Mall.

CEO, Yotel, Hubert Viriot enthused: "We are delighted at the excellent progress we're seeing with our first location in the Middle East. Dubai is one of the most visited cities in the world, and we are excited to bring affordable luxury to its visitors. The thriving hospitality market here is a natural place for our debut into the serviced apartment segment, delivering outstanding quality at an affordable price."

Also commenting was executive director, Dubai Investment Properties, Francois Faure: "Yotel's first Middle Eastern hotel will be a unique offering to the local hospitality market and we were delighted to be joined by the Yotel team for our ground breaking ceremony in April. Following an initial period of excavation and preparation work, we will kick off our 24-month construction programme for completion in 2018. Yotel is forward-thinking and focussed on innovative design and technology – qualities which perfectly align with Dubai Investment Properties' business ethos."

Inspired by first-class plane travel, taking the concept of luxury airline travel into compact but luxurious spaces, Yotel was founded by founder, YO!, Simon Woodroffe OBE. The company is headquartered in London and has offices in Boston and Dubai.

This agreement marks the first phase of Yotel's aggressive expansion into the Middle East. The company is currently in the midst of negotiations for potential hotel projects in other key destinations in the region, including Riyadh, Jeddah, Muscat and Abu Dhabi.