



*Doha Festival City*



# Festival Edits

Qatar's Retail  
Trends Report 2025



## Welcome Note from **Mohamed El-Sharkawy**

*Associate Director - Malls Leasing, Doha Festival City*

It's a pleasure to welcome you to Festival Edits: Qatar's Retail Trends Report 2025 by Doha Festival City. Through in-depth research, collaborations with leading institutions and brands, and insights from a range of expert voices, this first-of-its-kind report in Qatar reflects how Doha Festival City, the premier destination for style, expression and coveted trends, continues to evolve alongside the vibrant community it serves.

As Qatar's most visited mall, Doha Festival City brings together more than 500 stores and over 100 dining experiences, featuring first-to-market names that shape both the national and regional fashion and beauty narrative. While we are proud to be the country's top shopping destination, Doha Festival City is also much more. It has become a social and cultural hub, a space where fashion and beauty enthusiasts come together to explore, connect, and express their individuality.

Here, consumers feel part of a global fashion conversation while staying rooted in their local identity, discovering new trends, celebrating craftsmanship, and expressing themselves through the brands they love. The Festival Edit report was created to enable us to share our expert industry insights with our extended network and community, highlighting the voices and trends shaping Qatar's dynamic, multi-national and ever-growing consumer environment. Our research has revealed that Qatar's fashion and retail identity is evolving. And Doha Festival City continues to be at the forefront of that evolution. Driven by data, defined by experience, and deeply attuned to what inspires today's shoppers, we see retail trends not as simple transactions, but as a wider window into culture and community. From youth-powered fashion to conscious beauty, and from loyalty innovation through Blue AI to our ongoing commitment to sustainability, Doha Festival City continues to redefine what retail means in the region.

We invite you to delve into The Festival Edits, discover the insights shaping Qatar's growing fashion and beauty landscape, and join us in writing the next chapter of style, community, and innovation.



# Executive Summary

## FESTIVAL EDITS

Qatar's Retail Trends Report 2025, by Doha Festival City, Qatar's destination for style, expression, and coveted trends, presents the most comprehensive view to date of how Qatar's fashion, beauty and retail landscape is evolving, led by new consumer values, cultural confidence, and a dynamic interplay between global influence and local identity. Drawing on proprietary data from Ipsos and the Doha Festival City 2025 Consumer Survey, alongside industry insights, expert voices, and regional market analytics, the report maps the shifts shaping how people shop, express themselves, and build community in Qatar today. Doha Festival City, as the country's most visited retail destination, sits at the centre of these conversations. With over 500 stores, more than 100 dining concepts, and a fast-growing portfolio of first-to-market names, it has become a cultural anchor where style, creativity, and community converge.

## 1. WHAT QATAR WANTS NOW: THE CONSUMER PULSE

Qatar's retail landscape is undergoing a behavioural transformation. Malls are no longer defined solely by transactions; they are the social backdrop to everyday life. Visitors come for connection as much as consumption, combining shopping with dining, leisure, fitness, and family time. Both Ipsos and Doha Festival City's internal data show that most consumers visit weekly and spend 2.7 hours per trip, confirming the mall's place in their weekly rhythm. Consumers are diverse, globally attuned, and young: nearly half of Doha Festival City visitors are under 35, with Millennials and Gen Z driving interest in streetwear, beauty, modest fashion, and jewellery. Emotional drivers such as ambience, excitement, and belonging now outweigh functional ones. Doha Festival City leads on total awareness (83 per cent), top-of-mind recall, loyalty, and Net Promoter Score, making it Qatar's most emotionally resonant mall. Beauty and fragrance rank among top reasons for visiting, with Gen Z women especially prioritising makeup and perfume. Youth shoppers blend categories fluently, pairing luxury scent with athleisure or streetwear with modest silhouettes, reinforcing malls as sites of cultural expression.

## 2. THE MOODBOARD: CULTURE AND SEASONAL LENS

Consumer sentiment across the Gulf is optimistic and outward-looking, reflecting a blend of cultural pride and global engagement. Qatar's post-World Cup environment continues to fuel tourism, creativity, and a sustained appetite for self-expression. Fashion in the region mirrors this cultural confidence. Soft-power dressing, built on precise tailoring, fine materials, modest silhouettes, and refined branding, dominates international runways and lands naturally in Qatar's modest fashion culture. Consumers adopt trends through a local lens, remixing global styles with heritage elements. Brand desirability remains high, with labels such as Cos and Ralph Lauren among the most sought-after. Sport-coded aesthetics continue to influence everyday style, fuelled by Qatar's sporting legacy and a young demographic that merges athletic wear with cultural sensibilities. The rise of gaming and esports also introduces new digital references into the scene inspired by gamer activity. The seasonal calendar, from Ramadan to international sporting tournaments, further shapes demand for occasion dressing, beauty, and elevated fragrance.

### 3. THE TREND EDIT: FROM FORECAST TO FLOOR

Spring/Summer 2026 womenswear pivots toward quiet luxury, minimalist tailoring and refined detail, interpreted locally through modest fashion that blends layered silhouettes, flowing hems, and abaya-inspired outerwear. Demand for modest-meets-contemporary dressing is particularly strong among Gen Z Qatari females. Menswear evolves into relaxed yet structured tailoring, with global runways signalling a return to clean silhouettes and contemporary classics. At Doha Festival City, young male shoppers show high interest in athleisure and cross-category wardrobes that combine utility, tailoring, and sport. Genderless fashion gains traction among younger shoppers, who value fluid silhouettes and comfort-led styling. Athleisure continues to dominate, with brands like New Balance, Represent, Lululemon and Alo Yoga redefining luxury performance wear in Qatar. Jewellery's cultural significance remains strong with modern takes like stacking. While outfit customisations are prominent among outlets for local dress, exceeding global averages due to Gulf cultural norms. Retailers reflect this through curated edits involving both global and regional designers.

### 4. INSIDE THE BEAUTY CABINET

Beauty is one of Qatar's fastest-growing and most culturally expressive categories. Prestige beauty surged by 12 per cent in 2024, with skincare growing at 17 per cent and fragrance commanding nearly half of the market. A major shift is the rising influence of K-Beauty and Japanese beauty, driven by demand for performance-led, clinically inspired formulas. Doha Festival City's beauty offering, from Hermès Beauty to Gold Apple, Sephora, CREED, KIKO and MAC, mirrors this duality between innovation and cultural heritage. Gen Z Qatari females are the most beauty-engaged demographic, prioritising makeup, fragrance, and skincare. Scent remains deeply rooted in cultural ritual, with oud, bukhoor, and artisanal perfumery continuing to shape both local and international fragrance development. Partly beauty-related activations at Doha Festival City, including Front Row Live, Emerging Voices, and GQ Live, illustrate how experiential programming strengthens loyalty, with community events ranking among the most influential mall features in Ipsos data.

### 5. STYLE AND COMMUNITY: FASHION AND BELONGING

Global retail is transitioning toward experiential community hubs, and Qatar is leading this shift. The country's creative fashion ecosystem, spanning Doha Design District, M7, Scale7, and Fashion Trust Arabia, cements fashion's role as cultural expression. Doha Festival City mirrors this through programming that brings together designers, students, influencers, and consumers. Events act as social anchors, with nearly one-quarter of visitors attending specifically for cultural or community experiences. Digital culture complements this physical ecosystem. Gen Z shoppers rely heavily on social media for fashion discovery, while regional creators encourage authenticity and real-life connection. Influencer-led engagement is moving toward more meaningful, value-driven interactions, reinforcing fashion as a social language.

## 6. CONSCIOUS FUTURES: SUSTAINABLE STYLE AND LOCAL VOICES

Sustainability is emerging as a defining value in Qatar's fashion and beauty landscape. Consumers increasingly seek brands that reflect craftsmanship, transparency, and responsibility. Ipsos data shows growing interest in sustainable and local designers, especially among young female shoppers. Doha Festival City supports this shift through sustainable brand curation, eco-conscious retail practices, and collaborations with organisations such as Earthna. The mall integrates smart, energy-efficient systems and aligns with Qatar National Vision 2030 goals on environmental responsibility. Local designers and regional brands embrace circularity, conscious materials, and ethical production. This movement reinforces Qatar's broader sustainability narrative, where tradition, community, and innovation converge.

## 7. FUTURE VIEW: RETAIL INNOVATION AND WHAT'S NEXT

Retail across the Gulf is entering a phase defined by AI, immersive media, and phygital integration. AI in Gulf retail is projected to grow from 5 billion US dollars in 2023 to 31 billion US dollars by 2028, reshaping how consumers navigate spaces and engage with brands. Doha Festival City is already implementing these shifts through large-scale digital screens, programmatic advertising, and data-led personalisation driven by partners such as Elan Media and Blue Rhine Industries. Smart infrastructure, predictive analytics, and immersive installations are redefining the mall journey. Loyalty is also being reimaged. Al-Futtaim Blue Rewards and the newly launched Blue AI transform loyalty from a points programme into a personalised lifestyle ecosystem, offering curated recommendations, exclusive content, and seamless checkout across multiple brands. Looking ahead, AR try-ons, AI styling, and smart fitting rooms will become mainstream, reshaping discovery and reducing returns, while creating a retail environment that merges efficiency, entertainment, and emotion.

## CONCLUSION

Festival Edits: Qatar's Retail Trends Report 2025 reveals a retail landscape defined by culture, technology, and community. Qatar's consumers are curious, expressive, globally connected and deeply rooted in local identity. Their preferences are shaping everything from beauty to fragrance, modest wear to menswear, and sustainability to digital innovation. Doha Festival City stands at the forefront of this evolution, not only as a retail destination, but as a cultural hub, a platform for creativity, and a future-ready ecosystem where global trends meet local energy. Looking ahead, AR try-ons, AI styling, and smart fitting rooms will become mainstream, reshaping discovery and reducing returns, while creating a retail environment that merges efficiency, entertainment, and emotion.

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*Associate Director - Malls Leasing, Doha Festival City*

Executive Summary

## 1. WHAT QATAR WANTS NOW: THE CONSUMER PULSE

Qatar's shoppers are redefining the purpose of the mall. No longer just retail spaces, malls have become cultural and social hubs where fashion, beauty, and community intersect. This section explores how experience, emotion, and belonging now drive loyalty and shape fashion and beauty retail's connection with its visitors.

## 2. THE MOODBOARD: CULTURE AND SEASON LENS

Fashion in Qatar reflects a dialogue between global trends and local culture. From soft-power tailoring to modest sportswear, style is rooted in heritage yet shaped by an evolving sense of identity. This section explores how global influences, cultural pride, and sport-coded aesthetics define the region's seasonal mood.

### Expert Voices:

Bianca Brigitte Bonomi

Director, Harper's Bazaar Qatar and Esquire Qatar

Sheikh Khalifa Al-Thani,

Founder & CEO, Intajat

Ahmed Al Meghessib,

Head of Esports, Qatar Esports Federation;

Founder, Ukiyo

Walid Chahine,

Chief Operating Officer of Azadea Group



### 3. THE TREND EDIT: FROM FORECAST TO FLOOR

Trends in Qatar are more than seasonal they're translations of global fashion through a regional lens. From quiet luxury and fluid tailoring to genderless design and elevated athleisure, this section maps how brands interpret craftsmanship, identity, and contemporary ease across categories that define how the region dresses today.

#### Expert Voices:

Waad Ali

Founder of Waad Designs

Bianca Brigitte Bonomi

Director, Harper's Bazaar Qatar and Esquire Qatar

Prakash Maroli

Retail expert and founder of Ideas Unlimited

Stuart Henwood

Senior Director of New Balance in Middle East, Africa and India

Michael Collins

Head of Creative, VM & Marketing at Harvey Nichols Doha

### 4. INSIDE THE BEAUTY CABINET

Beauty in Qatar is becoming a more intentional blend of innovation, storytelling, and self-expression. From the rise of K-Beauty and clean formulations to the region's enduring love of scent, Inside The Beauty Cabinet explores how local and regional beauty offerings mirror shifting values, sensory rituals, and innovation across global and regional brands.

#### Expert Voices:

Mariam Khairallah

Global Senior Artist, MAC Cosmetics

Sara Al Rashid

Founder, Asteri Beauty

Atef Hassan

Managing Partner, Jovoy Rare Perfumes

Erwin Creed

Perfumer and Co-Creative Director, Creed

### 5. STYLE AND COMMUNITY: FASHION AND BELONGING

Malls these days are transforming from a retail destination into a stage for culture, creativity, and connection. This section explores how cultural landscapes, events, collaborations, and social storytelling shape a shared sense of belonging across Qatar's fashion and beauty community.

#### Expert Voices:

Michael Moles

Head of Retail Operations, Doha Festival City - Al-Futtaim

AlFtoon Al Janahi

Qatari Content Creator & Entrepreneur

### 6. CONSCIOUS FUTURES: SUSTAINABLE STYLE AND LOCAL VOICES

Sustainability extends beyond design and into community, blending innovation with cultural values of craftsmanship and care. This section highlights how retail is shaping Qatar's conscious fashion movement through collaboration, education, and initiatives that turn awareness into everyday action.

#### Expert Voices:

Shireen Obeidat

Head of Partnerships and Outreach, Earthna

Gills Manjulakshmi

Sustainable Fashion Designer & Curator

Rumana Nazim

Founder, The Edit

### 7. FUTURE VIEW: RETAIL INNOVATION AND WHAT'S NEXT

The future of retail is being written through data, design, and digital intelligence. This section explores how the mall sphere is embracing AI, immersive media, and personalized loyalty to create adaptive, emotion-driven experiences that fuse the physical and digital worlds. At Doha Festival City, Al-Futtaim Blue reflects this shift, turning loyalty into an experience shaped by data, emotion, relevance, and reward.

#### Expert Voices:

Timothy Hufford

Digital Director, Elan Media

John P. Joseph

Founder, Blue Rhine Industries

Dany Karam

Chief Marketing & Partnerships Officer, Al-Futtaim Blue

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# What Qatar Wants Now The Consumer Pulse



# The New Mall Mindset

Step into any mall in Qatar and you'll see it instantly: families gathering over meals, friends catching up in cafés, and young shoppers exploring the latest global names alongside emerging local brands. Malls have become more than retail centres. They are woven into the city's social rhythm, the backdrop for everyday rituals, weekend escapes, and milestone celebrations.

Today's visitors aren't just seeking products, they're searching for connection, curation, and belonging. In short, malls are where style and community come together.

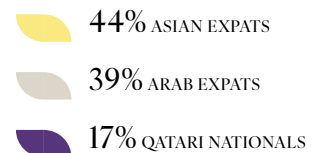
## WHO ARE THESE SHOPPERS?

**D**oha Festival City's shopper base reflects Qatar's cosmopolitan mix of Qatari nationals, and Asian and Arab expats<sup>1</sup>. Nearly half are under 35, with Millennials and Gen Z dominating the shopper profile<sup>2</sup>. These consumers are expressive, globally attuned, and drawn to categories like streetwear, beauty, modest fashion, and jewellery<sup>3</sup>.

On the other spectrum of the scale are older Millennials and Gen X visitors<sup>4</sup>. Ipsos data shows that across this shopper base, dining, family activities, and leisure services like cinema and event outings rank highly<sup>5</sup>, alongside enduring interest in premium retail categories such as jewellery and luxury fashion<sup>6</sup>. These patterns highlight that while younger and older consumers may come with different priorities, there is overlap. Both groups share enthusiasm for dining, perfumery, and fashion, underscoring Doha Festival City's role in bridging generations through experiences that appeal across age segments.



A COSMOPOLITAN SHOPPER BASE



## WHY THEY VISIT?

**S**hopping tops the list, but dining and time with family and friends follow closely behind<sup>7</sup>. On average, visitors combine 3.2 activities per trip, pairing shopping with dining, entertainment, or fitness. Qatar nationals are even more likely to engage in leisure services like cinema and event offerings<sup>8</sup>. Both Ipsos and the Doha Festival City 2025 Consumer Survey confirm malls are part of weekly life. Ipsos finds most visit 1–2 times weekly for around 2.7 hours<sup>9</sup>, while the Shopper Insights Study 2025 shows nearly two-thirds of younger respondents visit weekly, and about two in ten visit monthly.

<sup>1</sup>Ipsos, Slide 7

<sup>2</sup>Ipsos, Slide 7

<sup>3</sup>Ipsos, Slide 14

<sup>4</sup>Ipsos, Slide 7

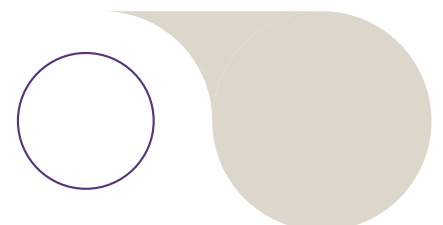
<sup>5</sup>Ipsos, Slide 10

<sup>6</sup>Ipsos, Slide 14

<sup>7</sup>Ipsos, Slide 10; Doha Festival City 2025 Consumer Survey, Q2

<sup>8</sup>Ipsos, Slide 10

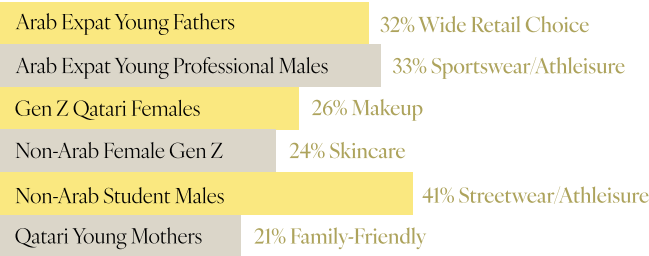
<sup>9</sup>Ipsos, Slide 9



TIME AND PURPOSE AT THE MALL

Shopper Profiles at a Glance

FROM MALL'S PROFILES SURVEY



VISIT FREQUENCY

Ipsos 1–2 times per week,  
2.7 hours per visit (Slide 9).

MALL'S SHOPPER INSIGHTS STUDY 2025



PURPOSE OF LAST VISIT



Experience Over Transactions

Ambience and atmosphere play a decisive role in where people choose to spend their time, ranking highly in decision-making<sup>1</sup>. The look and feel of a mall aren't just decoration, it's a driver for choice. Ipsos confirms emotional drivers such as excitement, care and belonging, now outweigh functional ones like convenience<sup>2</sup>. Doha Festival City is leading on awareness (83%) and visitation, with the highest Net Promoter Score (NPS) of all Doha malls, a direct measure of loyalty and advocacy<sup>3</sup>. Awareness here covers both total awareness, including how many people know the mall, and top-of-mind recall, where Doha Festival City is the first mall consumers name, unprompted. In other words, in Qatar Doha Festival City isn't simply on the map, it's the first name that comes to mind, the destination people choose, and the mall they return to with loyalty.

AMBIENCE AND ADVOCACY

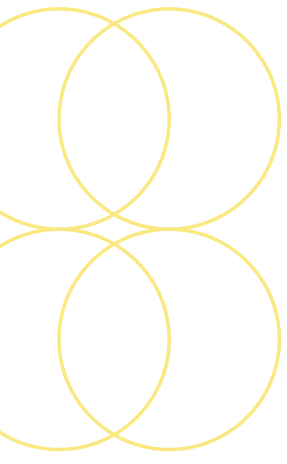


Doha Festival City 2025 Consumer Survey Q3  
50% cite ambience/events/personalization.



Ipsos Slide 52 DHFC highest NPS  
(Doha Festival City scored top marks at 62%)

<sup>1</sup>Doha Festival City 2025 Consumer Survey, Q3  
<sup>2</sup>Ipsos, Slide 34  
<sup>3</sup>Ipsos, Slides 16, 18 & 52



# A Youth-Led Revolution

*More than any generation before them, young consumers are reshaping malls into hubs of culture, where fashion, beauty, skincare, belonging, and even eSports co-exist.*

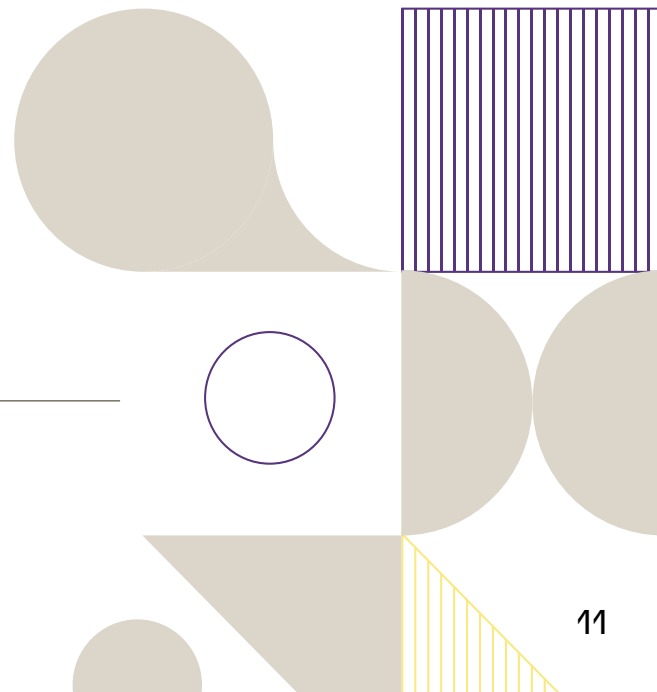


## BLENDING CATEGORIES THAT ONCE FELT WORLDS APART

These shoppers, who dominate the mall visitor demographic, shape culture in real-time, pairing luxury fragrance with sneakers, skincare rituals with streetwear aesthetics, or modest fashion with edgy streetwear<sup>1</sup>. Tribes exhibit fluid tastes and form around categories: beauty collectors, streetwear enthusiasts, and modest fashion communities. External studies reinforce their future importance. A 2024 Journal of Marketing Analytics study found loyalty dips in early adulthood but rebounds later, rooted in the “core memories” formed in youth. Qatar’s youth see malls as cultural arenas, where discovery and community matter as much as retail. Doha Festival City is already doing this by blending the global and regional, curating events that inspire, and creating experiences that will turn today’s youth into tomorrow’s most loyal advocates.

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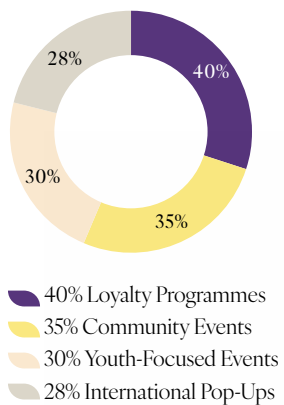
<sup>1</sup>Ipsos, Slide 14



## YOUTH INTEREST AND LOYALTY DRIVERS: CATEGORY EXCITEMENT AMONG YOUTH SHOPPERS<sup>1</sup>

Streetwear/Athleisure	34%
Premium Perfumery	32%
Modest Fashion	28%
Beauty	24%
Jewellery	22%

## TOP LOYALTY DRIVERS FOR YOUTH<sup>2</sup>



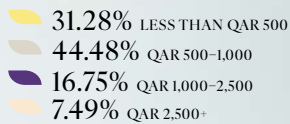
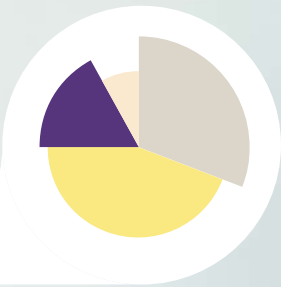
<sup>1</sup>Ipsos, Slide 15

<sup>2</sup>Ipsos, Slide 15



# BEAUTY IS A TOP-TIER PRIORITY

## *MONTHLY FASHION AND BEAUTY SPEND*



Beauty and fragrance are primary missions and a desired focus for shoppers at Doha Festival City. Ipsos shows premium perfumery and beauty rank alongside streetwear and jewellery as the most exciting categories<sup>1</sup>, especially among women, who also drive overall visitation<sup>2</sup>. The Doha Festival City 2025 Consumer Survey confirms they spend: QAR 500–2,500 monthly on fashion and beauty, underscoring their commitment to beauty as a core part of lifestyle spend<sup>3</sup>.

At Doha Festival City, stores like Gold Apple, Hermes Beauty, Sephora, and Creed anchor the category. Their pull lies as much in storytelling and immersive events as in product.

<sup>1</sup>Ipsos, Slide 14

<sup>2</sup>Ipsos, Slide 20

<sup>3</sup>Doha Festival City 2025 Consumer Survey



# The Doha Festival City Effect

Doha Festival City leads in visitation and conversion<sup>1</sup>, and tops the Brand Index, underpinned by emotional drivers like trust, care, and excitement<sup>2</sup>.

The Doha Festival City 2025 Consumer Survey confirms younger shoppers fold malls into their weekly lives, and Doha Festival City's mix of ambience, events, and exclusives make it their cultural anchor.

## AWARENESS AND BRAND DESIRE

Awareness, top-of-mind leader

Emotional drivers (trust, care, excitement) 83%

## SHOPPERS' FIRST CHOICE FOR THE FUTURE

Doha Festival City Mall	74%
Mall B	61%
Mall C	60%

<sup>1</sup>Ipsos, Slide 18

<sup>2</sup>Ipsos, Slide 30 & 34



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The Moodboard  
Culture  
And  
Season

# SEASONAL *Mood*



BIANCA BRIGITTE  
BONOMI

Global runways this year have leaned into soft-power. This means it's all about style that's subtle, polished yet authoritative, with a strong emphasis on precise tailoring, fine materials, covered silhouettes, and restrained branding where storytelling matters<sup>1</sup>. So how could this be interpreted in Qatar and across the Gulf? ***"In Qatar, and throughout the Gulf, there is a strong focus on craft and heritage"***, says Bianca Brigitte Bonomi, Director of Harper's Bazaar Qatar and Esquire Qatar. ***"Consumers here also focus on conscious luxury, with tangible interest in ethically sourced, produced garments, and transparent fashion brands"***. Many leading industry voices have also noted trend-light and vibe-heavy looks or fragmented micro-stories. This translates to lots of small, mixable ideas and a few undisputed must-haves that consumers remix locally. Waistcoats layered with abayas, scarf-draping for occasion wear, and reimagined kaftans are examples of how global trends and seasonal moods have adapted locally and across the region<sup>2</sup>. ***"Trends can be a useful source of inspiration, a means of curating a new season wardrobe. But for me, fashion is about reflecting our individual aesthetics and style perspectives"***, Bonomi adds.

Brand momentum still matters. The Lyst Index, a quarterly ranking built from 160 million annual shoppers worldwide, documents brands such as Cos, Ralph Lauren, Saint Laurent and Loewe, most of which are available from Harvey Nichols concessions at Doha Festival City, among the hottest labels that consumers covet<sup>3</sup>.

This is also true in the Gulf. The desire for brand names, powered category growth as luxury fashion rose by 6% in 2024, according to Chalhoub Group's GCC Personal Luxury 2024, Market Research Unstoppable<sup>4</sup>.

Beauty tracks the same cultural current. The Gulf favours fragrance, where the category holds the largest share of prestige beauty at 49%, with niche/private collections making up 40% of total fragrances<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>1</sup>Vogue UK, Vogue US, BoF, BoF

<sup>2</sup>Vogue Business, Vogue Business, Vogue Arabia.

<sup>3</sup>Lyst

<sup>4</sup>GCC Personal Luxury 2024, Market Research Unstoppable (Chalhoub 2024, Slide 9).

<sup>5</sup>GCC Personal Luxury 2024, Slide 11

# Cultural Sentiment

## What People Are Feeling And Wearing

Post-pandemic, the region's mood is steady and optimistic as 97% of Gulf consumers overwhelmingly intend to keep or increase spending and report broadly positive emotions, with Gen Z as the most upbeat<sup>1</sup>.

That optimism translates into style, where global ideas are taken up with confidence and re-shaped locally.

*“Cultural identity is at the heart of how trends are interpreted here”,* says Sheikh Khalifa Al-Thani, Founder and CEO of Intajat, the Qatar-based platform that connects local creatives with consumers. *“Even as global influences arrive, they’re reshaped through our values of modesty, heritage, and pride”.*

In Qatar, the World Cup legacy matured into record tourism, with 5.8 million visitors in 2024, keeping the city in “event mode” and reinforcing a feel-good, outward-looking culture<sup>2</sup>.

Shoppers are also globetrotting curators. In recent months, the Chalhoub report also noted that 79% of GCC consumers travelled in the first quarter of 2025, with 63% of them shopping abroad<sup>3</sup>, blending resort practicality with event dressing. *“What makes Qatar’s fashion scene unique is the way international styles are reimagined to reflect local culture”,* Al-Thani adds. *“There’s a constant dialogue between modernity and tradition, and consumers here truly value that”.*



<sup>1</sup> GCC Personal Luxury 2024, Market Research Unstoppable (Chalhoub 2024), Slides 16–17

<sup>2</sup> Qatar Tourism

<sup>3</sup> GCC Personal Luxury 2024, Market Research Unstoppable (Chalhoub 2024), Slide 17



## Contextual Cues: Global And Regional References

International sport and culture continue to set the local tone. The FIFA World Cup legacy and Qatar 2023 AFC Asian Cup kept sport-coded style in circulation from jersey graphics, scarf stripes and club palettes filtering into modest silhouettes and occasion looks<sup>1</sup>.

Athleisure evolving from gym gear to lifestyle statement is prominent, as New Balance, Represent, and Alo Yoga debut at Doha Festival City, joining Lululemon in redefining Qatar's luxury performance scene with culturally infused design<sup>2</sup>. *"Since the World Cup, there's a stronger sense of cultural confidence"* says Ahmed Al Meghessib, Head of Esports, Qatar Esports Federation and Founder of Ukiyo, an athleisure and lifestyle label. *"Young people are proud to represent Qatar while embracing global trends. We're seeing a blend of Qatari minimalism and tradition meeting international streetwear, creating something authentic and new to the region."*

Regionally, blockbuster brand activations recalibrate taste toward couture craft and fragrance artistry. These include Christian Dior's Designer of Dreams in Riyadh and Sephora in Dubai<sup>3</sup>. In Doha Festival City, luxury department store Harvey Nichols collaborated with GQ and Doha Festival City to host GQ Live masterclasses and in-conversations, where a vibrant international and local fashion and beauty community could blend<sup>4</sup>. Seasonal calendars also shape local aesthetics. In the first quarter of 2025, the prestige beauty market continued its positive trend, rising by 23 percent compared with the same period last year, driven by Ramadan and festive demand<sup>5</sup>. Alongside Ramadan and Eid, the international world of gaming, live streams and content creators, are shaping taste. This digital culture shows up in everyday wardrobes through colour, graphics and athletic details.

*"Esports and online communities are shaping lifestyle trends faster than ever",* Al Meghessib says. *"Gamers here are style-conscious from how they present themselves online to how they dress in real life. Brands that understand this intersection will define the next generation."*

To plan around these moments, brands map the local cultural calendar, forecasting when to release limited-edition capsules, window stories, in-store edits, and content that mirror those moments, shaping palettes, fabrics, and silhouettes<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>1</sup>ESPN, The Guardian

<sup>2</sup>I Love Qatar

<sup>3</sup>GCC Personal Luxury 2024, Market Research Unstoppable (Chalhoub 2024), Slide20

<sup>4</sup>Gulf Times

<sup>5</sup>GCC Personal Luxury 2024, Market Research Unstoppable (Chalhoub 2024), Slide11

<sup>6</sup>Vogue Business



## How The Mood Lands At Doha Festival City

From a consumer behaviour lens, Ipsos shows that Doha Festival City shoppers visit often and stay longer - fostering small, regular style updates. Amidst the modernity-infused cultural storytelling we see evolving locally, the pattern points to the soft-power evolution, complimented by global trends<sup>1</sup>.

At the mall, consumers' appetites meet a broadened mix. Hermès Beauty opened at Doha Festival City in May 2024, introducing a high-craft approach to fragrance and skincare that aligns with the region's soft-power mood<sup>2</sup>. Accessible luxury and lifestyle are rising in parallel, with POLO Ralph Lauren joining in September 2024, supporting everyday polish and sport-coded references<sup>3</sup>.

This mix enables the consumer mood mapped out, from forward-looking modest wear to modular styling, options for shoppable touchpoints across Doha Festival City's luxury and lifestyle offer variety.

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<sup>1</sup>Ipsos, Slide 9

<sup>2</sup>GCC Personal Luxury 2024, Market Research Unstoppable (Chalhoub 2024), Slide19

<sup>3</sup>GCC Personal Luxury 2024, Market Research Unstoppable (Chalhoub 2024), Slide19





## Shaping the Market Mood: Azadea on Curating Qatar's Style

WALID  
CHAHINE

Founded with a commitment to bringing globally loved brands closer to regional consumers, Azadea Group has helped shaped the fashion and lifestyle landscape across the Middle East for decades. With a portfolio that spans high-street icons, sports and lifestyle leaders, and next-generation retail concepts, the group continues to evolve alongside Qatar's dynamic and fashion-forward community. In this conversation, Walid Chahine, Chief Operating Officer of Azadea Group shares insights on how fashion lines are curated for the local market mood, the factors shaping consumer behaviour, and what's next for the country's fast-growing retail scene.

**How do you tailor fashion demands in Qatar for your highstreet fashion lines across both men and womenswear (Zara, Mango, Bershka, Urban Outfitters, etc.)?**

Our approach to trend curation in Qatar is guided by a deep understanding of the local customer; one that values individuality, quality, and international influence, while staying mindful of cultural preferences. Through a close alignment with our global brand partners, we adapt key seasonal directions to suit the region's aesthetic, climate, and lifestyle needs. Lightweight fabrics, modest silhouettes, and transitional pieces are core to the collections, ensuring global trends are interpreted through a lens of local relevance.

**What do you use to inform the collections you embrace for Qatar and are there any significant correlations?**

We rely on a combination of global fashion insights, in-market data, and consumer behaviour analytics to understand what resonates with our customers in Qatar. There's a strong correlation between digital influence, particularly social media trends, and purchasing decisions. At the same time, local shoppers are increasingly drawn to balancing global trend adoption with a refined sense of personal style.





**And the same for your Sports brands for men and women – is modesty a core or is the young demographic in the country a core part of the equation?**

Both factors play a key role. For our sports and athleisure brands, we recognise that Qatar's customer base spans a young, dynamic demographic with a growing focus on wellness, self-expression, and performance. Modesty remains an important consideration, reflected in the growing demand for versatile activewear that offers both coverage and comfort. Our assortment combines technical innovation with inclusive design, supporting every individual's fitness journey and lifestyle preferences.

**Are there any general updates on what's upcoming for Qatar-based brands?**

Qatar's retail and fashion sector continues to evolve rapidly, positioning the country as a leading regional hub. With rising footfall and international visitor spending, brands are expanding their presence through new concepts, elevated store designs, and more personalised shopping experiences. Government-backed initiatives, such as Visit Qatar's campaigns with local, regional and global celebrities and influencers, are driving tourism and helping to put Qatar on the global map; a momentum that was first established during the FIFA World Cup. Looking ahead, the market is set to see continued growth in experiential retail, digital integration, and locally tailored collections that reflect Qatar's youthful, fashion-conscious consumer base. These developments are creating an environment where both established and emerging brands can thrive, leveraging increased tourism and government support to connect with a broader audience.

**Any upcoming campaigns in the country to be aware of?**

Azadea remains focused on enhancing the customer experience through seasonal retail moments and mall-wide activations. We continue to align with key periods in Qatar's retail calendar, including Ramadan, Eid, Sales, and Qatar National Day through refreshed collections, in-store experiences, and engaging visual merchandising across our portfolio of brands. In parallel, we are strengthening our digital and omni-channel initiatives to create a seamless connection between physical and online retail, ensuring our customers in Qatar enjoy a dynamic and immersive shopping journey year-round.

ZARA



3

The Trend Edit  
From  
Forecast  
To Floor

# Spring / Summer 2026

## The Womenswear Edit

Seasonal style in the region means global trends are translated into modest silhouettes, with tailored ease, unique details and craftsmanship, signalling consumer interest in individual expression.

At Doha Festival City, these global shifts and their regional expressions resonate across brands, stores and categories and are translated into collections that feel personal, purposeful, and timely.

Womenswear in the Spring/Summer 2026 season channel quiet luxury through minimalist tailoring, neutral palettes, bold, feminine pierced blouses with statement sleeves and collars – as trends shift further into individualisation in 2026<sup>1</sup>.

What could this mean for modest fashion in Qatar? Modest fashion is likely to continue to intersect seamlessly, with flowing hems, layered ensembles, and longline coats elevating everyday wear. Going as far as continuing to be in conversation with global runway trends and lending its aesthetic to some of the most coveted brands<sup>2</sup>.

*“The Middle East plays a key role in the global fashion industry and is a powerful force within it; creating rather than just following trends that in turn influence what we see on international runways – modest wear being a prime example”,* Harper’s Bazaar Qatar’s Bianca Bonomi states.

### The Demand

When asked about fashion priorities, **22%** out of a pool of 100 Gen Z Qatari females, listed modest-meets-contemporary style as an interest<sup>3</sup>. The demand answered on-ground: Meanwhile, the brands available at Doha Festival City such as Waad Design, are answering with versatile maxi-dresses, fluid tailoring, and abaya-inspired outerwear that balance trend relevance with cultural resonance.

### Interesting Add-On Trend Ripples

This balance between local tradition and global influence is also shaping how fashion is presented across Doha’s retail landscape.

*“Merchandise and retail as a cultural reflection directly reflect the country’s unique environmental and cultural duality where global luxury meets traditional modesty”,* notes Prakash Maroli, retail expert and founder of Ideas Unlimited.

<sup>1</sup>Vogue Business

<sup>2</sup>NSS Magazine

<sup>3</sup>Priority Fashion, Doha Festival City 2025 Consumer Survey





## WAAD ALI TALKS ABAYAS

# Modest Fashion & Modern Identity

For Waad Ali, founder of Waad Designs which has its flagship store at Doha Festival City, modest fashion in 2025 continues to evolve around balance, between timeless codes and contemporary ease. *“The monochromatic trend is the strongest we’re seeing now, and it translates beautifully to abaya fashion”,* Ali says. *“It’s elegant, effortless, and very wearable”.*

While colour palettes differ across the Gulf, design sensibilities are shaped by local culture.

For her, structured silhouettes like jacket-cut or long blazer abayas define the season, offering versatility that transitions easily between occasions. But across styles and colours, *“Our clients in KSA and the UAE are drawn to brighter hues, while in Qatar, black remains the master of all colours”,* Ali explains.

Ali adds that modest fashion in Doha remains deeply rooted in cultural identity. *“Clients in Qatar are very serious when it comes to wearing abayas. It’s the one thing all generations agree on”* she says. *“Even when traveling they will still wear the abayas proudly”.*

Ali also adds that this sense of pride is one of the reasons why international brands are embracing modest design in regional collections. *“The world has now become more accustomed to the concept of modesty and abayas, inspiring international brands to create exclusive collections for the GCC”.*



# Menswear trend predictions for 2026

Menswear in 2025 is all about relaxed tailoring, utility wear, and clean silhouettes. Dominating the runways are oversized blazers, wide-leg trousers, and soft-shouldered jackets. Mid-tones, earthy and neutral palettes are accentuated by bold prints and sporty elements that mix function with form<sup>1</sup>. In 2026, we'll see the return of sleek tailoring, shorts, adventurous design or, with something reserved for every unique taste palette<sup>2</sup>.

As 2026 approaches, menswear builds on this ease with sharper tailoring, innovative cuts and playful reinterpretations of classics, trends already identified in the runways, from renewed structured suits to utilitarian silhouettes and elevated accessories<sup>3</sup>.

At Doha Festival City, young Arab expat professionals show a 44% share for sportswear and athleisure consumer bracket but also shop for workwear, accessories and jewellery<sup>4</sup>, indicating an appetite for cross-category wardrobes that blend tailored and athletic influences.

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<sup>1</sup>JOOR Trend Report

<sup>2</sup>L'OFFICIEL

<sup>3</sup>GQ, Oct 2025; Vogue Business, Jun 2025

<sup>4</sup>Fashion Priorities, Doha Festival City 2025 Consumer Survey



# Genderless Fashion in the Gulf

Genderless fashion continues to embrace fluid silhouettes, unisex tailoring, and comfort-over-convention. Specifically, drop shoulders, shared neutrals, and soft fabrics have been defining this global movement<sup>1</sup>.

*Around 8% of female Gen Z Qatari nationals at Doha*

*Festival City* explicitly prioritize experimenting with genderless and unconventional looks, with another 10% mentioning it in combination with affordability, modest fashion, or global trends<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Fiber2Fashion

<sup>2</sup> Fashion Priorities, Doha Festival City 2025 Consumer Survey



# From Gym to to Generation The Athleisure Edit



## STUART HENWOOD

Sportswear is no longer confined to the gym, it's setting the pace for global fashion growth and projected to outperform the wider market by the end of 2025<sup>1</sup>. Designers are elevating everyday staples from tracksuits to windbreakers and technical layers into versatile style statements<sup>2</sup>.

At Doha Festival City, this resonates strongly where 42% of young Arab expat professional males, questioned in the mall's 2025 consumer survey, said they shop for athleisure and sportswear. The figures are also predominantly significant among non-Arab expat male students, with 39% saying they also prioritise the category<sup>3</sup>.

Doha Festival City's tenant brands are responding to this interest with trendy sneakers, breathable fabrics adapted to the local climate, and hybrid looks that shift seamlessly from workout to social.

***"New Balance, through both its product and ambassador roster, continues to get younger"***, says Stuart Henwood, Senior Director of New Balance, Middle East, Africa and India.

***"Through our partnerships we're engaging Gen Z and millennial consumers at a local level like never before"***.

<sup>1</sup> BOF

<sup>2</sup> Vogue

<sup>3</sup> Most Shopped Category, Doha Festival City 2025 Consumer Survey

# Heritage Refined Contemporary Jewellery in Qatar

Jewellery in 2025 continues to build on a decade defined by storytelling through design. From layered chains to mixed metals, and sculptural cuffs, these trends allow wearers to build personal narratives through their jewellery<sup>1</sup>. This aligns with the momentum in the Gulf, where jewellery grew 7% in 2024, underscoring demand for heritage and craftsmanship<sup>2</sup>.

*“You have the world’s most sought-after Western luxury brands that work as status symbols,”* adds Maroli.

*“But on the other end? the retail environment prominently features highly refined, local Qatari craftsmanship particularly in bespoke tailoring for the national dress such as thobes and abayas as well as in high-end jewellery, often featuring pearl motifs.”*

Again, this is directly reflected with Doha Festival City shoppers. Young Arab expat professional males dedicate 13% of spend on accessories and jewellery, while non-Arab expat females shop beauty and jewellery across categories, as listed in the mall’s major consumer survey.

The 13 % spend among young Arab expat men is unusually high by global standards. In Western markets, men’s jewellery is still emerging, worn for statement rather than habit. But in the Gulf, it’s woven into everyday style and cultural identity. Gold, leather and designer accessories are markers of polish and personal success, not extravagance. According to Business of Fashion, men’s jewellery is among luxury’s fastest-growing categories. Meanwhile, in the Middle East accessory spend, including jewellery, exceeds global averages by several percentage points, showing this demographic’s interest in jewellery is less trend-driven and more lifestyle-defining<sup>3</sup>. Doha Festival City stores reflect this appetite with micro-charms, stacking rings, and regional designers, translating global aesthetics into everyday keepsakes.



<sup>1</sup> Vogue Australia

<sup>2</sup> GCC Personal Luxury 2024 (Chalhoub Group), Slide 10

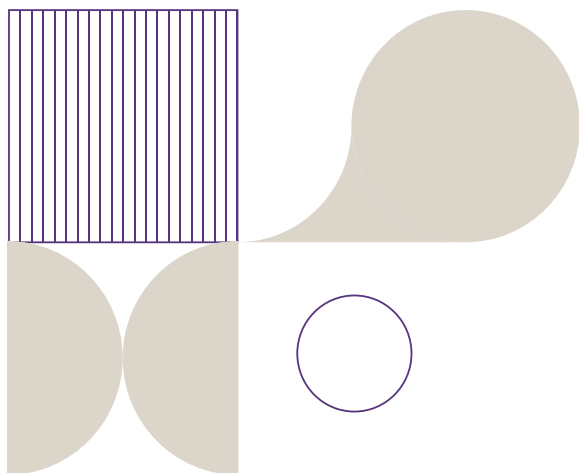
<sup>3</sup> Vogue Business



## The Cultural Significance of Gowns in Qatar

In Qatar, gowns hold deep cultural and emotional significance, especially during weddings where fashion becomes an expression of joy, family, and heritage. Bridal and evening gowns are often the centerpiece of celebration, symbolizing grace, sophistication, and the merging of tradition with modern design. From lavish embroidered fabrics to sleek contemporary silhouettes or modestly draped pieces, each gown tells a story of individuality and occasion<sup>1</sup>.

The trend board here displays some of the upcoming styles expected to be popular in the next year, reflecting the evolving tastes of Qatar's fashion-forward brides and guests.



<sup>1</sup> I Love Qatar



# Defining Luxury Through A Local Lens

## Michael Collins On Curating Style At Harvey Nichols Doha

As Head of Creative, VM & Marketing at Harvey Nichols Doha, Michael Collins plays a leading role in shaping how global fashion and beauty trends are translated for Qatar's discerning clientele. Through a thoughtful blend of curation, storytelling, and experience-driven retail, he ensures that the Harvey Nichols identity in Doha reflects both international sophistication and the cultural rhythm of the region, positioning the store as a destination where luxury meets relevance.

**What global fashion and beauty trends are you currently seeing resonate most strongly with shoppers at Doha Festival City?**

At Harvey Nichols Doha, we are seeing a strong preference for elevated minimalism and quiet luxury across both fashion and beauty. Customers are gravitating towards clean silhouettes, refined fabrics, and timeless pieces that emphasise quality over logo-centric statements. In beauty, the focus has shifted toward skin health, clean beauty, and multi-tasking products that enhance natural radiance. There is also an ever-growing reaction in fragrance, particularly in layering and niche perfumery, categories that allow our clients to express individuality and taste.

**Which categories or products are performing best in-store right now, and how do they reflect wider seasonal movements in fashion and beauty?**

Eveningwear and occasion dressing continue to take centre stage, perfectly mirroring Doha's vibrant, event-filled social scene. Labels such as Zimmermann, Taller Marmo, and Solace London remain go-to favourites for effortlessly sophisticated looks that balance modern femininity with timeless appeal.



Accessories and handbags maintain strong performance, with contemporary luxury brands such as Jacquemus and occasion brands like Rosantica resonating strongly as clients seek transitional pieces that make a statement with subtle elegance.

Across beauty, the spotlight remains on skincare, fragrance, and high-performance haircare. Cult favourites such as Byredo, La Mer, and Le Labo lead the charge, reflecting the global “skin-first” philosophy and an ever-deepening appreciation for self-care as the ultimate form of luxury.

**How does Harvey Nichols adapt international runway and beauty trends to suit the preferences of Doha’s consumers?**

Our approach focuses on curation and cultural relevance. While we bring global runway and beauty trends to Doha, we tailor our buy to align with the region’s lifestyle and aesthetic, favouring modest silhouettes, elegant tailoring, and bold evening looks that complement the city’s social scene.

In beauty, we adapt by spotlighting glow-enhancing makeup and hydrating skincare formulations that cater to the local climate. Exclusive regional edits and shade extensions also ensure inclusivity and resonance with our clientele, allowing our offering to feel globally informed yet distinctly local.

**Can you share examples of how Harvey Nichols is responding to these shifts, whether through bestselling categories, exclusive launches, or evolving customer preferences you’re noticing in Doha?**

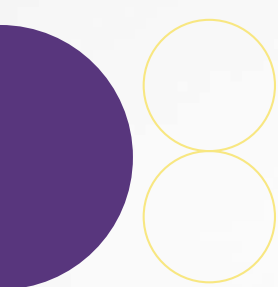
We have recently amplified our focus on exclusive brand collaborations and in-store pop-ups that enhance the shopping experience. From beauty masterclasses during our Botanical Beauty Week to exclusive capsule collections and limited-edition fragrance launches, we aim to create a more immersive and personalised retail journey.

The demand for conscious luxury and emerging designer labels has also shaped our seasonal selections, ensuring our assortment feels both aspirational and locally relevant, a true reflection of Doha’s evolving definition of modern luxury.



4

# Inside The Beauty Cabinet



## BEAUTY FORECAST

Beauty in 2025 has been defined by intention: formulas that work, textures that feel effortless, and rituals that align with culture and identity. In the wider Arabian Gulf dynamic, prestige beauty was the fastest-growing luxury category in 2024, up by 12%. Within beauty, skincare grew most rapidly (+17%), while fragrance held the largest share of beauty, making up 49% of the segment<sup>1</sup>.

Beyond the dominance of the international beauty retailer giants, something particularly interesting that has evolved in the Qatar beauty sector is the emergence of an Asian market influence: K-Beauty (Korean Beauty) continues to set the pace globally, with dermocosmetics forecast to expand steadily in South Korea as consumers increasingly demand efficacy-driven, clinically inspired products. On the other hand, Japanese premium fragrance has seen strong momentum, recording a 6.7% CAGR from 2019 to 2024, supported by new user acquisition and premiumisation<sup>2</sup>.

Across Qatar's kiosks and stocked amidst the limitless array of offerings at Gold Apple, K-Beauty and Japanese innovations are something to be reckoned with – challenging the previously long-standing traditional structure of the major beauty conglomerates<sup>3</sup> with the promise of beauty products that achieve increasingly immaculate filtered looks and perfectly seamless “glass skin”.

Alongside this uptrend, is the consistent presence of majorly sought-after beauty retailers like MAC Cosmetics, Sephora, and KIKO MILANO. While Sephora continues to sustain its popularity for its range of products from the wider international beauty scene and traditional conglomerates<sup>4</sup>, KIKO helps serve equally keen beauty consumers on a budget<sup>5</sup> and MAC retains its customer base among those loyal to the quality on offer.

***“Growth comes from makeup that performs like skincare and artistry that feels wearable,” says Mariam Khairallah, Global Senior Artist at MAC Cosmetics. “MAC delivers this through innovations in their foundations and concealers which give luminous hydration with all-day wear. We keep our edge by staying connected to our consumers and our pro makeup artist community. Their voice ensures our products meet the region’s performance needs while keeping artistry at the centre.”***

<sup>1</sup>GCC Personal Luxury 2024, Market Research Unstoppable (Chalhoub 2024, Slide 11), L'OFFICIEL

<sup>2</sup>(Euromonitor, Asia Pacific Beauty: 2025 Outlook)

<sup>3</sup>The Business of Fashion

<sup>4</sup>Meydan Case Study

<sup>5</sup>The Business of Fashion



## On the K-Beauty Trend

“It is the year of mannequin skin,” says Khairallah. “Hyper-real, perfected, and luminous. At MAC we capture this with skin-first approach. It’s a look that is balanced with futuristic lip textures, delivering shine that feels almost weightless.”

At Doha Festival City, Gen Z Qatari females show the clearest preferences for beauty needs. Makeup takes the lead with over 40%, prioritizing it as their top beauty spend, followed by fragrance at around 25%, and skincare at just over 20%<sup>1</sup>.

For shoppers, the convergence between global dermocosmetics, K-Beauty, Japanese minimalism and alternative perfumery, including an increasingly booming Middle Eastern perfume market, means the “beauty cabinet” is no longer a collection of products but a reflection of identity, lifestyle, and aspiration.

<sup>1</sup>Doha Festival City 2025 Consumer Survey



# Reimagining Beauty

## Asteri's Vision For Intentional Beauty



### SARA AL RASHID

Founded in Saudi Arabia, Asteri redefines regional beauty with clean formulations tailored to the Gulf's climate and lifestyle. In this conversation, founder Sara Al Rashid shares her insights on the future of beauty covering evolving routines, conscious consumer values, and how Asteri blends performance with authenticity.

**Which beauty categories do you believe will be the must-haves for and where is Asteri focusing its product development?**

Skin-first makeup is leading the way. Consumers want lightweight, breathable textures that nourish the skin while offering performance. We're focusing on complexion enhancers, tinted bases, hydrating concealers, and setting formulas that protect and perfect. Another growing category is hybrid lip care: balms, glosses, and lipsticks with skincare-level ingredients. Asteri's product development for 2025 leans into this synergy, formulas that deliver both beauty and benefit, blending colour with care.

**How are shoppers in Qatar and the wider Middle East shaping beauty preferences, and what role does this play in Asteri's strategy?**

Consumers in the Middle East are deeply beauty conscious. They value luxury, efficiency, and individuality all at once. Their preferences are setting new global standards for performance and experience, demanding long-wear, radiant finishes that withstand heat and humidity without compromising comfort. This understanding is at the heart of Asteri's strategy. From product formulation to in-store experience, we design with the regional woman in mind, her lifestyle, her climate, her beauty rituals.

**What shifts in consumer behaviour have you been noticing most strongly?**

The most powerful shift is toward intentional beauty. Consumers are more conscious of ingredients, sustainability, and the emotional connection behind a brand. They want transparency, clean formulations, and brands that align with their values. Asteri responds through our clean, vegan, and sustainable approach, over 50 percent recycled packaging, FSC-certified materials, and a growing focus on refillable systems. But beyond the product, it's about community. For Asteri it's celebrating sisterhood, heritage, and authenticity under our ethos of Sisters Under the Stars.

## FROM SKIN TO SCENT

Evidently, Qatar's beauty offerings continue to reflect a spectrum of perspectives, capturing the dialogue between international innovation and regional identity. From Guerlain's centuries of French craftsmanship to Kayali's modern reinterpretation of Middle Eastern perfumery, the mix corresponds with a diverse dialogue between global creativity and cultural sensibility.

From beauty to scent, Qatar's fragrance houses mirror the same blend of heritage, inspired by the old-age ritual of oud and bukhoor (wood chip and powder oil incense) immersion and experimentation.



### QATAR'S OUD STORY

For centuries, fragrance has been woven into Qatari life. In Doha's historic Souq Waqif, merchants traded oud, amber, and rose oils long before modern perfumery took shape. Today, the heritage of fragrance lives on in Souq Waqif, where the aromas of handcrafted oils and traditional beauty rituals continue to define everyday culture and the enduring art of scent in Qatar, through modern interpretations like those seen at local outlet Al-Jazeera Perfumes, and even international premium brands like Creed.



## ERWIN CREED

Creed, alongside regional leaders Al-Jazeera Perfumes, and most recently trending Reef Perfumes, have become synonymous with the technique of coupling craftsmanship with culture, serving a large local and regional consumer bracket with a refined taste in modern-yet-traditionally enriched and complex aromas. With the demand for perfumery set to expand in a projected compound annual growth rate <sup>1</sup> of over 6% in the next five years <sup>2</sup> the sector sees no signs of slowing down any time soon.

*“The Gulf region holds one of the most knowledgeable and discerning fragrance audiences in the world and it has always been a source of inspiration for Creed,”* says Erwin Creed, Perfumer and Co-Creative Director at Creed in London.

*“Their refined taste for depth, quality and artistry in scent continues to inspire global trends, and the way local clients wear and appreciate scent informs how we develop and present our collections worldwide.”*

With 32% of Qatari Males who shop at Doha Festival City making it known that they look out for premium perfumery <sup>3</sup>, and a sustained interest in perfumery as second choice beauty buy for female Qatari Gen Zs <sup>4</sup>, the need for premium brands to continue incorporating traditional scents is apparent.

<sup>1</sup>CAGR

<sup>2</sup>The Arabian Post

<sup>3</sup>Ipsos, Slide 14.

<sup>4</sup>Doha Festival City 2025 Consumer Survey



# Scent and Story: In Conversation with Jovoy Rare Perfumes



**ATEF  
HASSAN**

Jovoy Rare Perfumes curates independent fragrances defined by craftsmanship and narrative depth. Managing Partner Atef Hassan discusses how cultural tradition are shaping niche perfumery in 2025, and how Jovoy's Doha Festival City boutique reflects this balance between Parisian artistry and regional heritage.

**What themes are defining niche fragrance in 2025?**

We're seeing a strong movement towards personal identity and self-expression, where people choose a scent not just for how it smells, but how it makes them feel. At Doha Festival City, this resonates beautifully because shoppers here are incredibly experience-driven.

**Are there specific approaches shaping how consumers experience scent this year?**

Today's consumers want to connect with a fragrance beyond the bottle. Ingredients now also represent sustainability, origin, and transparency. Natural oud remains a signature note in the region, but we're seeing modern interpretations to create something entirely new. Storytelling is equally important. A perfume house that shares its creative process, heritage, and inspiration builds a deeper relationship with the customer.

**How do cultural touchpoints influence how Jovoy curates and localises its offering?**

In Qatar, fragrance is deeply embedded in daily life and traditions. From hospitality to weddings and Eid celebrations, scents play a symbolic role. We curate our collections with this in mind, offering products that fit seamlessly into these traditions. Our boutique at Doha Festival City reflects this approach and feels like an extension of these rituals while mirroring the spirit of our flagship store in Paris.

# BEYOND THE SHOP FLOOR

## What In-Mall Beauty Activations Do For The Beauty Community

Doha Festival City discovered that simply offering beauty retailers was not enough to sustain inspiration and engagement among beauty enthusiasts. By curating immersive beauty activations, the mall ensured that customers could connect more deeply with their favourite brands, transforming shopping into a shared experience that made them feel part of a vibrant beauty community that the mall and its partners were willing to go above and beyond for.

## Beauty Experiences That Stand Out

The first activation came through the Emerging Voices event in collaboration with Harper's Bazaar Qatar in September 2024, which featured a BYREDO beauty giveaway marking the start of a new season dedicated to fragrance and self-expression. By October, GQ Live x Harvey Nichols Doha elevated the beauty conversation with a makeup masterclass led by Salima Aliani and the GQ Style Closet, spotlighting luxury beauty houses such as Tom Ford Beauty, Dolce & Gabbana Beauty, and Byredo. The momentum continued in November with Front Row Live at Doha Festival City, where beauty took centre stage through masterclasses by MAC, Charlotte Tilbury, and Haneen Al Saify, alongside an exclusive fragrance session with Creed - reinforcing Doha Festival City's role as a destination where beauty goes beyond the shelves.

These activations directly respond to consumer desires: Ipsos research shows that community events and international brand pop-ups rank among the most appealing mall features for Qataris. Together, they illustrate how Doha Festival City blends education, entertainment, and community, cementing its role as Qatar's leading beauty and fashion hub.



5

Style And  
Community

Fashion And  
Belonging



## STYLE AND BELONGING

As online shopping reshapes convenience, physical destinations are evolving into places of gathering and identity, designed for connection, culture, and shared experience. A 2024 report by TrendHorizon describes this global pivot as the rise of “immersive community hubs,” where social spaces, events, and design experiences redefine the purpose of the mall<sup>2</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Ipsos Slide 13

<sup>2</sup> Trend Horizon

# QATAR'S FASHION DESIGN ECOSYSTEM AND IMPRINT

In Qatar, this merging of commerce and culture reflects the country's wider creative momentum. Fashion platforms like design hub Doha Design District (DDD), design incubation and exhibition platforms M7, Scale7 in the midst of Msheireb's bustling modern-yet-traditional sandy artistic landscape, and design support trust Fashion Trust Arabia, have contributed to making Doha a focal point for fashion and collaborative design initiatives, inviting the world in to see the sector with a tinge of local commentary and commercial immersion.

This is well exemplified in Fashion Trust Arabia's collaboration with Hamad International Airport, which invited Qatari and regional designers to reimagine the airport's customer-facing uniforms. By opening a platform for emerging talent to showcase their work to millions of travellers annually, the initiative reflects how Qatar's creative ecosystem merges commerce, design, and community. The collaboration underscores the city's approach to style as a tool for identity and belonging - demonstrating that fashion, whether in malls, public spaces, or airports, is increasingly a medium for shared cultural experience and creative expression<sup>1</sup>.

Furthermore, at Galleria Mall - Msheireb in Doha, three emerging designers from academic institution VCUarts Qatar showcased work rooted in sustainability, heritage and identity, reinforcing how retail environments are now leveraging creative talent to shape meaningful brand and community narratives<sup>2</sup> – underscoring an activation of a shift toward spaces where fashion collaboration and commercial purpose converge to foster experience, and expression.

As The One World observes, Middle Eastern consumers are drawn to brands and spaces that offer experiences rooted in identity and storytelling, aligning perfectly with Qatar's approach to retail as a canva for culture<sup>3</sup>.

***“Qatar’s architectural language reflects the spirit of its people, deeply rooted in heritage yet constantly reimagined through innovation and creativity. This ongoing dialogue between tradition and modernity shapes not only our spaces, but also how we express ourselves through fashion, design, and lifestyle,”*** Dana Kazic, Director at Doha Design District, notes.

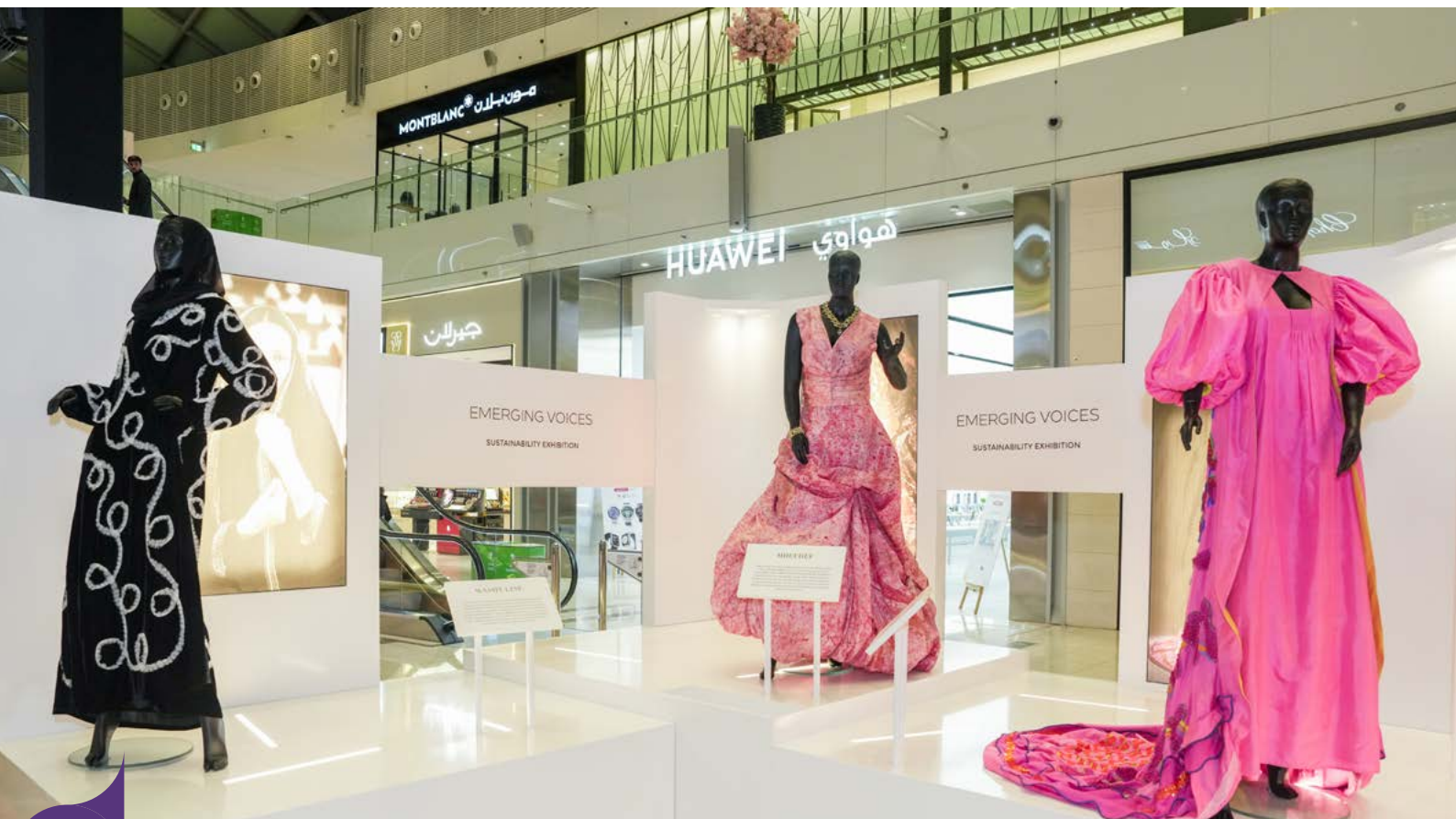


<sup>1</sup> Fashion Trust Arabia

<sup>2</sup> Marhaba

<sup>3</sup> The One World

Doha Design District (DDD) have incorporated their own community outreach through fashion brand showcases with The Hoshino Trunk show, featuring luxury shoes especially selected for Qatar and hosted by the Japanese luxury shoemaker Master Hoshino<sup>1</sup>. Beyond their partnerships with Liberty and VCU, DDD host a Design Week offering everything from jewellery and skincare workshops, to perfume and aesthetic candle-making workshops all within the dynamic Msheireb environment that has become so synonymous with the fashion, style and design landscape that so effortlessly spills over to all corners of the city.



At Doha Festival City, this call found expression through Emerging Voices - a collaborative exhibition and event with Harper's Bazaar Qatar, VCUarts Qatar, and Scale7. The showcase brought together student and incubator talent alongside culturally-infused and sustainability-focused pop-ups, embodying the dialogue between style, community, and conscious creativity<sup>2</sup>.

Against this backdrop, Doha Festival City has steadily translated belonging into live public moments, transforming its retail floors into cultural stages, using fashion as a catalyst for community connection. Consumer insight underscores this shift: A quarter of respondents said they visit the mall specifically for its events, activations, and community programming<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Gulf Times

<sup>2</sup> Harper's Bazaar Qatar

<sup>3</sup> Doha Festival City 2025 Consumer Survey

# How The Environment Converges With Style And Belonging



As Qatar's retail and cultural landscape evolves, design has become central to how people experience space, style, and community. Qatar's unique desert landscape, architecture and fashion share a natural dialogue here, each shaping how identity is expressed, and creativity is lived. Qatar's fashion ecosystem reflects this exchange between heritage and innovation.

Beyond the bespoke community and fashion initiatives, from contemporary reinterpretations of modest wear to global showcases celebrating Arab creativity, Qatar's design landscape continues to redefine what modern Middle Eastern fashion looks and feels like. For instance, abayas have come to blend effortlessly into the environment – incorporating Islamic art, the sandy and earthy tones of the region, all the while creating an artistry and innovation that can only be attributed to the rich fusion and interplay of the surroundings<sup>1</sup>. Thobe-complimenting Arabian sandals for men (called Na'al) achieve the same, with fine leather and earth hue sueded-comfort<sup>2</sup>. Emulating the architectural dynamics of contemporary, yet geometrically and modestly-inspired dynamics of Qatar's epitomal design-inspired quarters, Qatar's evolving style scene further reveals how modesty, culture, and contemporary aesthetics can intertwine.

*“At Doha Design District, we see this intersection come alive, where architecture inspires aesthetics and fuels self-expression. Spaces like Msheireb Downtown Doha embody this evolution, they are more than built environments, they are catalysts for creativity, reflecting Qatar's growing confidence and global influence in design.”*

<sup>1</sup> Harper's Bazaar Arabia

<sup>2</sup> Q Tip

# Real-Life Connection is Trending



Community in Qatar extends beyond the mall floor and onto digital platforms, where social media plays a central role in shaping how people experience fashion and beauty. In the Doha Festival City 2025 Consumer Survey, half of Gen Z Qatari females identified social media as their main source of fashion and beauty discovery<sup>1</sup>.

Globally, social commerce is shifting audiences from passive viewing to co-creation, as platforms like TikTok Shop normalise creator-led discovery and purchasing<sup>2</sup>. Although the facility is not yet available in Qatar, the launch of it in Western and Asian markets in 2025 suggests that it is only a matter of time<sup>3</sup>. All the while, younger consumers are re-centring authenticity and community as core values in fashion engagement<sup>4</sup>.

Regionally, content creators are navigating these same dynamics. According to the InfluAnswer Arabia 2025 report, conducted by Weber Shandwick MENAT, 59% of MENA creators cite platform algorithms as one of their biggest hurdles to staying authentic online, highlighting the growing tension between visibility and authenticity<sup>5</sup>. This shift toward more genuine, community-driven content, with real-life connections reinforces how platforms are evolving into spaces of shared identity rather than pure visibility.

The trend toward real-life connection is also growing. The InfluAnswer Arabia 2025 report also reports that nearly two-thirds (63%) of MENA creators say events must deliver something beyond the ordinary, while 80% cite real-life connection with a brand as their main reason for attending events<sup>6</sup>.

This kind of influencer and community-building dynamic in the fashion and beauty industry of Qatar has been seen in the activities of personalities like Marion Esquivel, Haneen Al Saify and Mariam Farid who often, not only attend fashion and beauty events in the Doha fashion scene, but also take time out of their regular screen-talk engagement dynamic to mingle and interact with the fashion community through presenting and masterclass gigs. Qatari influencers Al Saify and Farid have formed a very key part of a wider trend of modest fashion community<sup>7</sup> who share updates and posts with their following on the latest styles they've embraced or the brands that they love. While Esquivel has taken on the role of sharing general everyday commentary on her activities and engagements – offering followers an intimate look at her life, how she gets ready or is done up with new beauty looks.

<sup>1</sup> Doha Festival City 2025 Consumer Survey

<sup>2</sup> Vogue business

<sup>3</sup> Digital Product labs

<sup>4</sup> WWD

<sup>5</sup> Weber Shandwick Menet, InfluAnswer Arabia 2025, Slide 5

<sup>6</sup> Weber Shandwick Menet, InfluAnswer Arabia 2025, Slide 11

<sup>7</sup> Harper's Bazaar Arabia



# Shaping Spaces Community in Motion



Across the Gulf and globally, malls, and even brands, are increasingly defined not only by what they sell but by the experiences they stage. Leading destinations are being reframed as cultural anchors, places that people visit to discover and connect - as much as for retail needs. WWD notes this by reporting that the most resilient retail develops a strong sense of place by weaving entertainment, dining and culture in one space<sup>1</sup>. Regionally, the model is accelerating where lifestyle-led centres are among the fastest-growing assets, with consumers spending longer in multi-purpose destinations that blend shopping with leisure and technology<sup>2</sup>.

With fashion runways, esports arenas, indoor snow parks, cultural partnerships and tailored events, Doha Festival City demonstrates in a tangible manner how the mall landscape has evolved into multipurpose hubs of connection, leisure, and style, anchored in both global relevance and local resonance.

*“At Doha Festival City, we’ve seen first-hand that today’s visitors come for more than shopping, they come to connect, experience, and discover individually with friends or as a family,”* says Micheal Moles, Head of Retail Operations for Doha Festival City.

*“Our role is to continually evolve the mall into a space that reflects how people now live and socialise, whether that’s through fashion, dining, or entertainment. The goal is to create meaningful moments that keep our community coming back.”*

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<sup>1</sup>WWD

<sup>2</sup>Vogue business



# Fashioning Community Through Events

## How Doha Festival City Has Answered The Call

Responding to this unique environmental need, Doha Festival City has gathered the fashion community through meaningful events that offered visitors something far more rewarding than regular shopping trip. In collaboration with leading partners, these experiences brought together Qatar's diverse and dynamic social fabric, from families and influencers to industry experts from the design landscape authorities like DDD, Scale7 and M7 creating moments of true engagement and vibrancy.

### MALL ACTIVITIES THAT MADE THE DIFFERENCE

- Emerging Voices in collaboration with Harper's Bazaar Qatar was a very unique opportunity to also draw from the designer and artist community in Qatar.
- While GQ Live with Harvey Nichols Doha, brought in male representation and community as Olympic champion Mutaz Barshim and Founder and Creative Director of Rhude, Rhuigi Villaseñor, joined engaging discussions and masterclasses on global and local style.
- In Front Row Live with Harper's Bazaar Qatar, headlined by Mona Kattan, Co-Founder of Huda Beauty and Founder of Kayali, alongside international fashion entrepreneur and style influencer Leonie Hanne, a celebration of creativity and connection united the country's evolving design and fashion landscape.

*"Doha Festival City has become a stage for experiences that bring people together,"* Moles adds.

*"From our fashion and beauty collaborations to immersive entertainment and cultural events, we're building a destination that captures the spirit of Doha where global trends meet local energy, and where retail truly becomes part of everyday life."*





# Finding Your Tribe on Community & Creativity



## ALFTOON ALJANAHI

A leading Qatari content creator and entrepreneur, AlFtoon AlJanahi has built a community grounded in creativity, authenticity, and connection. In this conversation, she reflects on what it means to find your tribe, the power of shared values, and how Doha's creative spaces are shaping a new sense of belonging.

**The idea of “finding your tribe” has become such a defining part of creative and social culture. What does that phrase mean to you personally?**

To me, finding your tribe means surrounding yourself with people who understand your dreams and energy, people who lift you up and inspire you to be your best self. It's not about having a big circle, it's about having the right one that feels like home.

**Why do you think it's important to have a community of people who share your values and outlook, especially in the world of beauty, fashion, and content creation?**

Because creativity doesn't grow in isolation. When you're around people who share your values, you find strength, collaboration, and purpose. In the beauty and fashion space, that shared understanding helps us create with meaning not just for trends, but for impact.

**Do you think fashion and lifestyle spaces in Doha, both online and in person, help women connect with like-minded communities and foster a sense of belonging?**

Absolutely. Doha has become such a vibrant hub for creative women. Whether it's through local events, pop-ups, or digital spaces, women here are finding each other, sharing ideas, and building supportive networks. There's a real sense of sisterhood growing, one that celebrates individuality and unity at the same time.

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Conscious Futures

Sustainable  
Style And  
Local Voices

*Fashion's next frontier isn't faster, it's fairer. Around the world, sustainability has evolved from a corporate buzzword into a defining measure of progress, creativity, and conscience.*

In Qatar, this shift is tangible — from couture collaborations to conscious consumer habits. For instance,<sup>1</sup> Fashion Trust Arabia recently partnered with Lebanese designer Zuhair Murad and Bags of Ethics on a line of reusable tote bags crafted from certified organic upcycled materials. Made by a 90% female workforce, these designs unite sustainability with luxury while supporting the non-profit's mission to nurture emerging designers across the MENA region. Similarly, Harvey Nichols Doha now showcases a growing portfolio of local sustainable brands, such as (Ninth Sustainable Fashion), founded by Fatima Al Mohannadi, which uses environmentally responsible materials for children's wear, and formerly (RSPR) by Rina Saleh, an athleisure label known for its planet-friendly production and minimalist aesthetic. These homegrown innovators are setting a precedent for fashion that honours both planet and purpose<sup>2</sup>.

In fashion, global brands such as Marks & Spencer, Lululemon, and Zara's Join Life line are integrating recycled fibres and sustainable cotton, echoing a global trend toward circular design and mindful consumption<sup>3</sup>. Global and local beauty brands are also embracing this shift. Creed continues to use natural oils in small-batch production, while Guerlain's eco-designed refillable packaging supports global bee conservation. Charlotte Tilbury and Asteri champion refillable and vegan beauty, while international leaders like Kiehl's and MAC at Doha Festival City embed circular practices through refill stations and return incentives.

These global and local efforts resonate with Qatar's shoppers. According to Ipsos, 15% of local consumers enjoy discovering sustainable brands, and 14% actively seek local or regional designers. The Doha Festival City 2025 Consumer Survey found similar enthusiasm among Non-Arab Female Gen Z shoppers, who show increasing interest in environmentally responsible fashion choices.



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<sup>1</sup>Fashion Trust Arabia

<sup>2</sup>I Love Qatar

<sup>3</sup>Sustainable Practices Report, Doha Festival City



In Qatar, sustainability is supported by a wider national push: it is emerging as both a value system and a source of creativity. Anchored in the Qatar National Vision 2030, which promotes harmony between growth and environmental preservation, this movement reflects the country's long-term commitment to environmental development — promoting renewable energy, responsible stewardship, and quality of life. From how cities are designed to how people dress, sustainability is becoming part of Qatar's visual and cultural language, a shared pursuit of beauty, purpose, and responsibility<sup>1</sup>.

This same ethos extends to Torba Farm, Qatar's family-run oasis of sustainable agriculture in Al Khor, where organic produce and artisanal wellness goods reflect the nation's growing appetite for eco-conscious living.

As Sonali Raman, Faculty at VCUarts Qatar, explains, ***"The path to change has already begun."*** The university's Fashion and Sustainability course and its Eco Lux Lab workshops, held at Msheireb's Doha Design District, have become vital platforms for raising public awareness about ethical fashion. These initiatives have introduced the public to sustainable denim production, perfume-making using natural essences, and circular design principles - all of which contribute to a stronger, more informed fashion ecosystem in Qatar.

Meanwhile, M7, Doha's hub for innovation and design, continues to champion local brands through its fashion incubator and accelerator programmes, fostering dialogue between creativity and conscience.

Across the Middle East, this shift is redefining luxury itself. The region's new generation of shoppers value craftsmanship, transparency, and ethical design, merging modern aspirations with cultural authenticity. Gulf economies are reinforcing this momentum through sustainability strategies that encourage innovation and circular production<sup>2</sup>. Around the world, 70% of consumers now expect brands to act responsibly and are willing to pay more for products that align with their values<sup>3</sup>, while the global sustainable clothing market is expected to triple by 2034<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>1</sup>The Peninsula

<sup>2</sup>Accio.com

<sup>3</sup>PWC

<sup>4</sup>Gminsights.com



# Style with Purpose Building a Culture of Sustainability



## SHIREEN OBEIDAT

Shireen Obeidat is the Head of Partnerships and Outreach at Earthna, a non-profit policy and research centre established by Qatar Foundation. Her work focuses on building strategic collaborations and public engagement that advance Earthna's mission to promote sustainability across education, innovation, and environmental practice in Qatar.

**How are cultural and seasonal shifts in Qatar influencing the way people think about style and sustainability?**

At Earthna, we've seen that Qatar's unique cultural identity and seasonal rhythms are increasingly shaping how people approach style and sustainability. The shift towards more conscious consumption is closely tied to a growing appreciation for traditional Qatari values like modesty, craftsmanship, and community which naturally align with sustainable practices. People are becoming more mindful of the materials they wear, their origin, and longevity, which is a positive shift towards a more sustainable mindset.

**How do collaborations major retail destinations such as Doha Festival City help drive conscious consumerism?**

These collaborations are essential. When organisations like Earthna bring sustainability expertise and platforms like Doha Festival City bring reach and influence, we can create impactful, large-scale change. Together, we can design initiatives that are not only educational but also experiential. These partnerships help embed sustainability into everyday consumer interactions, turning awareness into action and shaping habits at scale.

**What role can young designers, students, and creative communities play in embedding sustainability into Qatar's cultural and fashion identity?**

Young creatives are at the heart of this transformation. They bring fresh perspectives, challenge norms, and are more open to experimenting with sustainable materials, technologies, and models. In Qatar, we see an exciting movement where fashion is becoming a medium for storytelling celebrating heritage while pushing innovation.



# Sustainability at Doha Festival City

Qatar's transformation also extends to infrastructure and transport, where sustainability is no longer a future goal but a lived reality. A PwC report highlights that electric mobility is rapidly gaining traction in Qatar, driven by national targets that aim for EVs to represent 10% of total vehicle sales by 2030<sup>1</sup>. Already, 73% of public buses are electric, supported by a growing network of charging stations and local assembly plants - a tangible demonstration of Qatar's commitment to clean energy and sustainable mobility.

At the retail level, Doha Festival City has positioned sustainability as a core pillar of its identity, mirroring the goals of Qatar National Vision 2030. The mall's design integrates greenery, energy-efficient systems, and intelligent HVAC technology, reducing energy use by 25%. During Earth Hour 2025, two young Qatari visitors symbolically dimmed half the mall's lights, highlighting how community participation is driving environmental awareness<sup>2</sup>.

Globally, shopping centres are evolving into "green hubs", adopting LED lighting, solar panels, and circular infrastructure to minimise their carbon footprint<sup>3</sup>. At Doha Festival City, these practices are paired with a curated retail mix of sustainable fashion and beauty brands— from Lululemon's recycled polyester to MAC's refill initiatives — and a culture of collaboration that empowers both consumers and creators to make conscious choices.

Through its Festival Cares programme, eco-conscious partnerships, and commitment to circular design, Doha Festival City stands as a benchmark for sustainable style in Qatar, bridging innovation, culture, and community - and proving that conscious fashion is not just a movement, but a mindset shaping the nation's future.

Industry leaders emphasize that the next step is turning awareness into mainstream adoption. *"The shift towards more conscious consumption is closely tied to a growing appreciation for traditional Qatari values like modesty, craftsmanship, and community, which naturally align with sustainable practices,"* says Shireen Obeidat, Head of Partnerships and Outreach at Earthna.

Obeidat stresses that reducing textile waste and improving supply chain transparency are urgent priorities, and that malls like Doha Festival City play a crucial role by hosting campaigns, exhibitions, and partnerships that educate consumers.

This ongoing focus on collaboration and innovation is also reflected in the retail mix and brands housed within the mall, many of which are advancing sustainability in their own production and design practices. Designers are also leading this transition.

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<sup>1</sup>Under PWC

<sup>2</sup>New In Doha

<sup>3</sup>Longevity Partners





## GILLS MANJULAKSHMI

Qatar-based Sustainable Fashion Designer and Curator, notes that sustainability has long guided her practice.

*“Shoppers from our brand Aadima have shown genuine curiosity about the principles and materials we use... Many of our buyers even take pride in saying that what they wear is not only stylish but also guilt-free,”* she explains.

Manjulakshmi adds that Doha Festival City amplifies these voices by showcasing sustainable collections and curating eco-conscious experiences: *“By giving visibility to eco-conscious collections, whether from international brands or local creatives, it bridges the gap between awareness and accessibility.”*

Through its integration of green design, energy-saving practices, eco-conscious brand curation, and partnerships with sustainability leaders, Doha Festival City actively supports Qatar’s conscious consumer movement and provides a benchmark for sustainable style in the region.



# Redefining Retail: The Edit's Vision for Conscious Fashion



## RUMANA NAZIM

Rumana Nazim is the founder of The Edit, a Dubai based multi-brand concept store dedicated to sustainable and contemporary fashion curating a mix of local, regional and international designers. Nazim has become one of the leading voices in the regional fashion ecosystem, bridging sustainability with cultural relevance for a new generation of consumers.

**How do you see sustainability evolving in the fashion and beauty industries across the Gulf region, and what role can retail spaces play in that shift?**

The Gulf region is in an exciting phase when it comes to sustainability in the fashion and beauty industries. When you're in the early stages that's when you're truly innovating, building and pioneering. Retail spaces can show that you can have luxury and conscious fashion, and you can do it without compromising on either. It's about learning what people from all around the world have done and improving on that, and I think we're in a very privileged position that we are able to do that.

**What do you think can make sustainable fashion and beauty more appealing or accessible to consumers?**

It can be very overwhelming for customers to think about sustainability. There is a false narrative out there that sustainable fashion is not aesthetically appealing, is expensive, or it doesn't relate to them. It comes down to education and not overwhelming your customer. As retailers, it's our responsibility to explain why a particular product is better for you. Education is crucial, and making sure their shopping experience is a seamless journey. It's letting them see that you don't have to change your life to make your fashion and beauty choices more sustainable, it's simply lifestyle addition.

**What role do you think conscious consumer communities will play in shaping the future of fashion and beauty in the Gulf?**

Younger consumers in the Gulf are leading the way. They are very conscious about what they buy and how they consume and aren't interested in over consumption. They're more aware and educated about what they're consuming. It's a very powerful mindset, because it's shift in the market at scale very quickly. They hold brands accountable, and they're going to be the reason why sustainable fashion and beauty are not going to be alternatives, and why they become the norm.

7



Future View  
Retail  
Innovation  
And What's  
Next



Retail's next chapter is unfolding through intelligence and imagination. Guided by Qatar's national ambitions for digital transformation under Qatar National Vision 2030<sup>1</sup>, malls in the country are evolving into adaptive ecosystems where data, design, and experience converge. Anchored in the region's digital transformation goals<sup>2</sup>, operators are rolling out AI-led analytics and real-time insight tools<sup>3</sup>.

From digital way-finding and immersive interfaces to VR/AR-driven interactivity and smart-data platforms, physical destinations are re-positioning as social, omni-channel anchors. Across the region and worldwide, this is retail re-imagined.

## EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES

Artificial intelligence (AI), augmented reality (AR), and immersive media are redefining malls across the Gulf, shifting them from traditional retail spaces to spaces with infinite potential when it comes to digitally-enhanced experiences.

According to the AI in GCC Retail report, released in April of this year, AI has rapidly expanded across the sector, with services valued at nearly \$5 billion in 2023 and already moving toward a projected \$31 billion by 2028<sup>4</sup>.

Following a wider international trend for increasingly savvy AI innovations, the region is likely to see campaigns that follow suit. Among brands to be leading the charge in AI modification is Nike with their metaverse developments<sup>5</sup>. In 2025 Nike introduced AI-powered customisable avatars in its Roblox world, Nikeland, letting users create lifelike versions of themselves to try on new product drops virtually. The feature turned gaming into a direct retail touchpoint, driving engagement and product exploration. Within a month, it generated over 2.3 million avatars and boosted product page clicks by 19%<sup>6</sup>.

Perhaps one of the most notable of tech-infused retail experiences in the region: in Dubai this year, Sephora brought back its highly successful digitally immersive event, Sephora<sup>7</sup>, showcasing how technology can elevate beauty experiences<sup>8</sup>. Through AR try-ons, AI-powered recommendations, and personalised consultations, the event transformed shopping into an interactive and customised journey. Its success set a new benchmark for beauty marketing in the Middle East, proving that immersive events, influencer collaborations, and tailored experiences are key to building engagement.

Nearly all retailers surveyed in the region have either adopted AI or are running pilot projects, and more than 97% are actively increasing investment to scale its impact<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Communications and Technology (MCIT)

<sup>2</sup> Gulf Luxury Retail Future

<sup>3</sup> Vogue, BCG, McKinsey

<sup>4</sup> Al Futtaim, AI in GCC Retail, Page 2

<sup>5</sup> Metaverse Fashion Week

<sup>6</sup> Zeely

<sup>7</sup> Cosmopolitan Middle East

<sup>8</sup> UAE Stories

<sup>9</sup> Al Futtaim, AI in GCC Retail, Page 7



## How This Looks At Doha Festival City

“Technologies like AI, AR, and immersive media are redefining malls from shopping spaces into experiential destinations,” says Timothy Hufford, Digital Director at Elan Media (Q1) and one of many specialists behind Doha Festival City’s digital innovations.

By combining AI-powered reporting tools with programmatic digital campaigns, Hufford explains that Elan Media is already delivering smarter, data-led insights across both online and offline channels within Doha Festival City’s environment - setting a benchmark for the region.

### FUTURE-FORWARD

The next phase of retail is being defined by concepts that extend far beyond transactions. Across the Gulf, malls are evolving into adaptive ecosystems, where data, design, and digital tools converge to create seamless journeys.

The AI in GCC Retail report highlights how the future of shopping will be shaped by immersive technologies, agentic AI (AI with limited supervision), and hyper-personalisation - with physical stores increasingly mirroring the convenience of online retail <sup>1</sup>. At the same time, physical spaces are embracing automation, computer vision, and mixed reality to transform how consumers navigate and engage <sup>2</sup>.

On ground in Doha, these shifts are already informing the way the mall experience can be re-imagined with Doha Festival City and Blue Rhine Industries’ installations of several LED screens and digital solutions for Nike, JD Sports and Watson - integrating computer vision, predictive analytics, and responsive media systems and allowing environments to become leaner and more interactive.

*“With the arrival of AI, we see malls moving from static infrastructure to adaptive ecosystems,”* says John P. Joseph, Founder of Blue Rhine Industries - another organisation hailed for its work with retail spaces and building digital overhaul.

By embracing these future-forward concepts, a model for how malls can blend efficiency, emotion, and innovation becomes apparent.

*“By 2035, we’ll see phygital stores dominate, fully merging e-commerce with physical retail,”* Joseph adds. *“Devices in your pocket will sync seamlessly with the mall environment, shaping your journey in real-time. In short, malls will be a platform where every screen, speaker, and sensor respond to you.”*

<sup>1</sup> AI Futtaim, AI in GCC Retail, Pages 17-18

<sup>2</sup> AI Futtaim, AI in GCC Retail, Page 16

## Personalisation And Loyalty

Loyalty is no longer measured by discounts alone. Today's consumers expect programmes that are personalised, flexible, and emotionally rewarding. Ipsos research confirms this shift, showing that loyalty programmes, with exclusive rewards, is the number one most attractive mall feature for shoppers in Doha, ranking higher than community events, pop-ups, or wellness spaces<sup>1</sup>.

Doha Festival City is answering to this need through Blue Rewards, Al-Futtaim's lifestyle and rewards platform. The programme goes beyond transactional points, offering cashback, 2-for-1 deals, and exclusive and immersive experiences across fashion, dining, leisure, and entertainment.

With the launch of Blue AI earlier this year, the smart lifestyle advisor developed in the United Arab Emirates and expected to be gradually available in Qatar and the region, members can now receive tailored recommendations, one-click multi-brand checkouts, and even advice on beauty, fashion, or automotive choices based on their preferences<sup>2</sup>. Through these innovations, Doha Festival City is positioning loyalty not as a service but as a personalised gateway to deeper consumer connection.

*"Blue is evolving into a lifestyle ecosystem that provides seamless, integrated experiences" says Dany Karam, Chief Marketing and Partnerships Officer at Al-Futtaim Blue.*

*"It's not just about transactions. With Blue AI, we're creating personalised journeys that connect customers emotionally, offering privileges, exclusive access, and rewards that reflect how people live, shop, and engage."*

<sup>1</sup> Ipsos, Slide 13

<sup>2</sup> Blue AI



## Projected Trends for 2026

In the upcoming year, there will likely be a more active role played by Middle East retail in embracing digital transformation through innovations, at events and in-store, with virtual models and smart fitting rooms, taking precedence. These technologies are reshaping how consumers discover, try, and buy fashion - offering further personalization and efficiency in shopping experiences that bridge online and in-store worlds. As seen with global leaders such as Zara, Nike, and H&M, tools like AR try-ons, AI styling, and RFID-powered fitting rooms not only boost engagement and sales but also reduce returns and support sustainability<sup>2</sup>. For regional retailers, integrating such advancements will be key to staying competitive and aligning with the expectations of increasingly tech-savvy consumers.

*“Looking ahead, AR and immersive activations will allow fashion and beauty brands to engage shoppers in interactive ways,”* says Timothy Huffard. *“This will make the mall experience more personalized, entertaining, and future-ready.”*

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<sup>1</sup>Future Stores

<sup>2</sup>CAAD Retail Design

# Appendix And Methodology

## SURVEY METHODOLOGY AND DATA SOURCES

This report draws on two proprietary consumer surveys conducted by Doha Festival City. The first is the Brand Index Tracking Research in collaboration with Ipsos is a leading global market research company specialising in consumer insights and brand performance tracking. The second was conducted through Doha Festival City's internal platform and is entitled the Doha Festival City 2025 Consumer Survey.

The surveys served to combine quantitative and qualitative methods. Additional insights were sourced from Chalhoub Group's GCC Personal Luxury 2024: Unstoppable, Euromonitor's Asia Pacific Beauty: 2025 Outlook, InfluAnswer Arabia 2025, Artificial Intelligence in GCC Retail report by Al-Futtaim, Ecology Sustainability Design Criteria by Doha Festival City and Al-Futtaim, and Doha Festival City Sustainability Earth Day report.

Industry publications used in the report included Business of Fashion, Vogue Business, Vogue Arabia, and Fast Company Middle East. Findings were enriched through interviews with key opinion leaders, brand partners, and retail experts to provide a holistic view of Qatar's evolving fashion and beauty landscape.

Brand Partners and Collaborators

Produced by Doha Festival City in collaboration with Harper's Bazaar Qatar, Esquire Qatar, and Earthna, leading, with contributions from leading retailers including Creed, New Balance, Waad Design, Jovoy Rare Perfumes, New Balance and The Edit. Data and insight partners: Ipsos

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## FOR LEASING OR BRAND PARTNERSHIPS:

Key Terms

**QUIET LUXURY:** Understated, high-quality style that signals refinement over logos.

**Conscious Consumption:** Buying decisions guided by ethics, sustainability, and purpose.

**SOFT POWER:** Influence expressed through culture, aesthetics, and identity.

**PHYGITAL:** The blending of physical and digital retail experiences.

**AI-DRIVEN PERSONALISATION:** Use of artificial intelligence to tailor products, content, or offers to individual consumers.