

# **MASTERS THESIS**

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# 1. Summary

The study aimed to draw attention to the significance of tourism and its function in fostering economic development in developing nations, where the Middle East and North African economies are said to be supported in large part by tourism. The development of cultural tourism is crucial because the tourism sector in Syria is still in its infancy, especially after a decade of war. The study covered Damascus' tourism potential with the goal of boosting foreign tourism arrivals and generating more income for the local economy.

In this study, the topic of presenting the application of the principles of city marketing was examined in the case of Damascus, the capital of the Syrian Arab Republic and one of the largest cities in the country. Damascus is the oldest continuously inhabited city in the world and a major cultural center for the Levant and the Arab world. The purpose of this thesis was to identify potential investment development plans and their justifications, as well as to confirm the significance of Damascus in terms of cultural tourism. In order to improve some of the activities that take place there, such as promoting tourism, luring residents from outside the area, or attracting investment and business, the study also focused on creating the mental image and identity of the city or region.

As previously mentioned, Syria's historical and cultural traits rank among the most significant tourist destinations, while traditional architecture, handicrafts, cuisine, language, and events are some of the factors that enable communities. This study is one of the first studies to demonstrate a connection between visitors' perceptions of the significance of heritage sites and their visits there.

This study makes an effort to highlight the most significant tourist destinations in Damascus, including mosques, churches, castles, fortresses, cafes, etc. Through which it is possible to pinpoint the most significant historical eras that Damascus experienced at that time. Furthermore, it is believed that such research can deepen our comprehension of the political, social, and historical circumstances that prevailed in the Near East during those periods and have persisted to the present. Most importantly, it can help us appreciate a situation that is entirely distinct and appropriately remote from our own.

In conclusion, having a strategic marketing plan for Damascus has the potential to be advantageous for the whole country as well as this area. If properly managed, Syria's heritage monuments, with its rich history and culture, could become among the world's most popular tourist attractions.