

# The strategic role textiles play in shaping the tourist experience and reinforcing a destination's visual identity in Saudi Arabia

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## Abstract

Tourist destinations transcend mere collections of landmarks; they encapsulate immersive experiences shaped by visual aesthetics, auditory ambiance, and tactile sensations. This paper delves into the often-overlooked yet pivotal role of textiles in shaping the tourist experience and solidifying a destination's visual identity, focusing specifically on Saudi Arabia. Textiles, far from being mere adornments, emerge here as potent tools for narrative construction and cultural immersion.

Emphasizing the Riyadh region, the paper scrutinizes the synergy between creative vision, material curation, and design implementation in the selection of textiles for tourist furniture. It illustrates how these choices are instrumental in crafting desired atmospheres, mirroring the distinctive cultural heritage of the region, and ultimately reinforcing Saudi Arabia's brand as a premier tourist destination.

The analysis probes deeply into how fabric selections—from the meticulous sourcing of natural fibers to the application in upholstery, throws, and room dividers—can evoke authenticity and forge profound visitor connections. By strategically integrating textiles, tourist furniture evolves into a dynamic canvas that articulates Saudi Arabia's narrative, fostering emotive bonds with visitors.

Central to this exploration is the recognition of textiles as pivotal agents in shaping memorable tourist narratives. Through a nuanced understanding of creative vision, materiality, and design execution, textile choices weave a compelling narrative thread that enriches the tourist experience and deepens the affinity between travelers and the locales they explore.

This paper underscores the transformative potential of textiles in crafting compelling tourist experiences. By navigating the intricate interplay of creative foresight, material selection, and design ingenuity, textile choices emerge as powerful storytellers that imbue destinations with cultural resonance and emotional allure.

## Keywords

Tourist furniture, Visual identity, Creative vision, Place branding, Visitor experience, Sensory experience, Psychology of place, Sustainable design, Innovation, User experience

## المستخلص

تتجاوز وجهات السياحة كونها مجرد تراكمات للمعالم السياحية، بل هي عبارة عن تجارب غامرة تُشكلها الجمالية البصرية والأجواء الصوتية والإحساسات اللمسية. تتعمق هذه الورقة البحثية في الدور الجوهري، الذي غالبًا ما يتم تجاهله، الذي تلعبه المنسوجات في تشكيل تجربة السياحة وتعزيز الهوية البصرية للمقصد السياحي، مع التركيز بشكل خاص على المملكة العربية السعودية. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى إثبات أن المنسوجات ليست مجرد عناصر زخرفية، وإنما هي أدوات فعالة لبناء السرد والانغماس الثقافي.

تُرکز هذه الورقة على منطقة الرياض كحالة دراسية، وتحلل التآزر بين الرؤية الإبداعية، وانتقاء المواد، وتطبيق التصميم في اختيار المنسوجات المُستخدمة في أثاث السياحة. وتوضح كيف تساهم هذه الاختيارات في تحقيق الأجواء المرغوبة، وتعكس التراث الثقافي الفريد للمنطقة، وتعزز في نهاية المطاف مكانة المملكة العربية السعودية كوجهة سياحية رائدة.

يستكشف التحليل المُعمق لهذه الدراسة تأثير اختيارات الأقمشة - من اختيار الألياف الطبيعية بعناية إلى تطبيقها في المفروشات والمفارش والفواصل بين الغرف - في استحضار الأصالة وخلق روابط عميقة مع الزوار. ومن خلال الدمج الاستراتيجي للمنسوجات، يتحول أثاث السياحة إلى لوحة قماشية نابضة بالحياة تسرد قصة المملكة العربية السعودية، وتعزز الروابط العاطفية مع الزوار.

تسلط هذه الورقة الضوء على أهمية المنسوجات في صياغة روايات سياحية لا تُنسى. ومن خلال فهم دقيق للرؤية الإبداعية والمواد وتنفيذ التصميم، تنسج اختيارات المنسوجات خيطاً سردياً قوياً يُعني تجربة السياحة ويعزز العلاقة بين المسافرين والأماكن التي يستكشفونها. علاوة على ذلك، تؤكد هذه الدراسة على القوة التحويلية للمنسوجات في صياغة تجارب سياحية مُقنعة. فمن خلال التنقل بين التبصر الإبداعي الدقيق واختيار المواد والإبداع التصميمي، تبرز اختيارات المنسوجات كرواية قصص قوية تُضفي على الوجهات السياحية صدى ثقافياً وجاذبية عاطفية.

## الكلمات الرئيسية

الأثاث السياحي، الهوية البصرية، الرؤية الإبداعية، ترويج المكان، تجربة الزائر، التجربة الحسية، علم نفس المكان، التصميم المستدام، الابتكار، تجربة المستخدم

## Introduction

The allure of a tourist destination transcends the mere collection of sights and landmarks on a map. It's a sensory experience, a tapestry woven from the sights, sounds, smells, and textures encountered along the way. Among these intangible elements, textiles play a surprisingly strategic role, in shaping how visitors perceive and interact with a place. From the moment a tourist steps into a hotel lobby and sinks into a plush armchair, to the vibrant patterns adorning a traditional rug in a guest house, fabric choices can significantly influence the overall experience.

This paper delves into the multifaceted role textiles play in shaping the tourist experience and reinforcing a destination's visual identity, with a specific focus on Saudi Arabia. We argue that textiles are not merely decorative afterthoughts, but powerful tools for storytelling and cultural immersion. By examining the interplay between creative

vision, material selection, and design application, we will demonstrate how textiles can contribute to a tourist experience that is both aesthetically pleasing and culturally enriching.

The burgeoning tourism sector in Saudi Arabia presents a unique opportunity to explore the strategic potential of textiles. Focusing on the Riyadh region, a city rich in history and heritage, this paper will propose a framework for leveraging textiles to achieve an initial vision and visual identity for tourist furniture. We will explore how fabric choices can be used to create a desired ambiance that reflects the region's unique cultural heritage. This, in turn, will contribute to strengthening the overall brand identity of Saudi Arabia as a tourist destination.

Our analysis will delve into the specific ways textiles can be utilized to achieve these goals. We will examine how material selection, from the use of natural and sustainable fibers to the incorporation of traditional weaving techniques, can create a sense of authenticity and connection to the land. Design application will be another key area of focus, exploring how textiles can be creatively integrated across various furniture elements – from upholstery and throw pillows to room dividers and wall tapestries. By strategically employing these elements, tourist furniture can be transformed into a vibrant canvas that tells the story of Saudi Arabia, fostering a deeper emotional connection for visitors.

Ultimately, this paper aims to highlight the strategic importance of textiles in crafting a memorable narrative for tourists. By carefully considering the interplay between creative vision, material selection, and design application, textile choices can weave a powerful thread that strengthens the bond between tourists and the places they visit.

## Literature Review

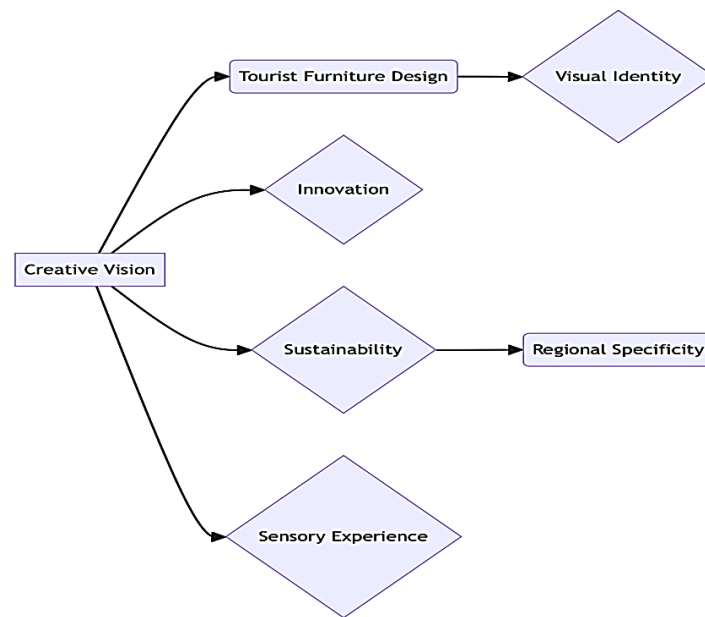
A robust understanding of tourist destinations and their visual identity necessitates a comprehensive examination of existing literature. This review will explore key scholarly works that illuminate the intersection of visual identity and tourist furniture.

- **Visual Identity and Place Branding:**

The existing literature on tourist destinations lays a strong foundation for understanding the importance of visual identity in place branding. Scholars like **Kotler et al. (2006)** and **Morgan & Pritchard (2006)** highlight how visual elements act as a powerful communication tool, shaping visitor perceptions and influencing destination choices. However, a gap exists in the deep analysis of the creative vision specifically within tourist furniture. Moving beyond the aesthetics of tourist furniture, research by **Santos (2010)** and **Cass & Russo (2016)** sheds light on its multifaceted role. Furniture design can influence not only the overall ambiance of a destination but also visitor comfort, accessibility, and overall satisfaction. Additionally, **Liu (2014)** emphasizes the concept of a creative vision as a tool for translating a brand's essence into tangible design elements. This framework is particularly relevant as we analyze how visual identity is implemented in tourist furniture. Furthermore, **Gössling & Buckley (2016)** advocate for the importance of innovation and unconventional elements in design. This perspective becomes valuable when examining how tourist furniture design can push boundaries and contribute to a destination's unique identity. To enrich the analysis, the literature review will delve into the psychology of place and sensory experience. Works by **Mehrabian & Russell (1974)** and **Holbrook & Hirschman (1982)** explore how design choices like color, shape, and material influence mood and perception, and how these elements can be used to create a multi-sensory experience for visitors.

Finally, the review will incorporate the growing focus on sustainability and regional specificity. **Prendergast (2014) and Hein et al. (2010)** explore the integration of eco-friendly materials and life cycle analysis of tourist furniture, demonstrating the impact of material choice on brand messaging and visitor perception. Additionally, case studies from diverse regions will offer valuable insights into how design choices adapt to regional aesthetics and cultural preferences, such as the work by **Wu & Pearce (2016)** on the integration of traditional craft techniques in Chinese furniture design. By incorporating these diverse areas of research, the literature review will provide a comprehensive foundation for analyzing the creative vision in visual identity as implemented in tourist furniture.

**FIGURE 1 “THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CREATIVE VISION, VISUAL IDENTITY”**



SOURCE: RESEARCHER OUTPUT

#### According to Figure 1:

- **Creative Vision** acts as the foundation, influencing the design process. It translates a destination's brand essence into tangible elements (Liu, 2014).
- **Tourist Furniture Design** bridges the gap between creative vision and visual identity. Furniture design choices not only contribute to the overall ambiance (Santos, 2010; Cass & Russo, 2016) but also impact visitor comfort, accessibility, and overall satisfaction.
- **Visual Identity** represents the destination's outward presentation, heavily influenced by the design of tourist furniture.

The concept map further highlights the key factors that shape creative vision:

- **Innovation and Unconventional Elements** (Gössling & Buckley, 2016) encourage pushing boundaries in design to create a unique identity.
- **Sustainability and Regional Specificity** (Prendergast, 2014; Hein et al., 2010) influence material selection, impacting brand messaging and visitor perception. Material choices can also reflect local aesthetics and cultural preferences (Wu & Pearce, 2016).

- **Psychology of Place and Sensory Experience** (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974; Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982) emphasizes the role of design elements like color, shape, and material in shaping mood, and perception, and creating a multi-sensory experience for visitors.

By considering these various influences, the concept map underscores the importance of a strong creative vision translated into well-designed tourist furniture. This, in turn, contributes to a cohesive visual identity that shapes visitor experience and perception of the destination.

- **The Role of Tourist Furniture:**

While research by Santos (2010) highlights the multifaceted role of tourist furniture, moving beyond simply providing seating, it's Cass & Russo (2016) delve deeper into the user experience. They posit that design choices can significantly impact comfort, accessibility, and overall satisfaction, ultimately shaping how visitors perceive the entire destination.

- **The Creative Vision in Design:**

The concept of a creative vision is a cornerstone for translating a brand's essence into tangible design elements. Liu (2014) emphasizes this strategic approach, highlighting how it bridges the gap between core values and visual representation. This framework is particularly relevant for tourist furniture design, where a destination's unique identity needs to be translated into physical pieces. The creative vision manifests differently across design disciplines. In product design, user-centered approaches ensure the vision incorporates the target audience's needs (Bruce & Bessant, 2002). Tourist furniture can benefit from this by considering visitor comfort and accessibility alongside brand identity. Graphic design principles like visual hierarchy and storytelling (Meggs & Purvis, 2016) can also be leveraged. Tourist furniture can use color, shape, and form to visually communicate the destination's brand narrative. Furthermore, Gössling & Buckley (2016) advocate for pushing boundaries through innovation. A strong creative vision encourages experimenting with new materials and functionalities, potentially transforming tourist furniture into landmarks that enhance the visitor experience and strengthen the destination's brand image. Finally, understanding the sources of inspiration, like the local environment or cultural heritage (Rowley, 2007), is crucial. This connection to the local context strengthens the authenticity of the creative vision for tourist furniture design.

The interplay between creative vision, visual identity, and fabric plays a crucial role in shaping the tourist experience. Here, we explore two contrasting furniture pieces that showcase this relationship, highlighting the importance of fabric in achieving the desired aesthetic and visitor experience.

### Modern Minimalism in Scandinavia

- Creative Vision: Embracing clean lines, functionality, and natural materials (Visit Sweden, 2023).
- Visual Identity: Evokes a sense of simplicity, elegance, and connection to nature, aligning with the Scandinavian design aesthetic (Fiell, 2014).
- Furniture Piece: The "Fjäll" lounge chair by IKEA (2023) exemplifies this approach. The frame is crafted from light, natural wood, emphasizing the natural

element. The seat and backrest are upholstered in a light-colored, textured fabric like wool or linen.

#### Fabric Importance:

- **Color and Texture:** The light color complements the wood and creates a sense of openness and airiness. The textured fabric adds visual interest while maintaining a minimalist feel.
- **Material Choice:** Wool or linen are natural materials that resonate with the Scandinavian focus on sustainability and connect with the natural environment. Their inherent breathability also contributes to comfort.

### **Vibrant Tradition in Morocco**

- **Creative Vision:** Celebrating Moroccan heritage through intricate patterns and vibrant colors (ONMT, 2023).
- **Visual Identity:** This creates a sense of cultural immersion, showcasing the rich tapestry of Moroccan design (Duncan, 2019).
- **Furniture Piece:** A hand-woven Berber rug serves as a versatile furniture piece. The intricate geometric patterns and bold colors are hallmarks of Berber weaving traditions.

#### Fabric Importance:

- **Patterns and Colors:** The intricate patterns and bold colors are a key visual element, transporting visitors to the rich cultural heritage of Morocco.
- **Material and Technique:** Traditionally made from wool or a wool blend, the fabric provides warmth and comfort, while the handwoven technique adds a touch of authenticity and craftsmanship.

These two examples showcase how fabric choices play a critical role in translating creative vision into a tangible element that strengthens a destination's visual identity and enriches the tourist experience.

- **Psychology of Place and Sensory Experience:**

Environmental psychology, pioneered by scholars like **Mehrabian & Russell (1974)**, examines the impact of environmental factors on human emotions, behavior, and cognition. This framework is particularly relevant when analyzing how tourist furniture design shapes visitor experience. Elements like color, shape, and material all have psychological connotations. For example, warm colors like red and orange can evoke feelings of excitement and energy, while cool colors like blue and green can promote feelings of relaxation and tranquility. By carefully considering these psychological effects, designers can create furniture that fosters the desired moods and behaviors in visitors.

The concept of "experiential marketing" by **Holbrook & Hirschman (1982)** emphasizes the importance of creating a multi-sensory experience for consumers. This translates directly to the tourist experience, where creating a stimulating and engaging environment is key. Tourist furniture design can contribute to this by incorporating elements that appeal to multiple senses. For instance, incorporating comfortable and textured fabrics caters to the sense of touch, while

integrating weatherproof materials like wood or stone evokes a sense of stability and connection to nature.

- **Focus on Saudi Arabia**

Limited research explores the specific application of the creative vision in Saudi Arabia's tourist furniture design. However, existing scholarship offers valuable insights. Studies by Eltayeb et al. (2018) and Al-Ansi et al. (2020) highlight the growing importance of cultural heritage tourism in Saudi Arabia. This trend suggests a potential for incorporating traditional design elements like geometric patterns and motifs inspired by Islamic art and architecture (Elsheshtawy, 2010) into tourist furniture. Additionally, research by Fam (2018) emphasizes the growing demand for sustainable tourism practices. This suggests the potential for utilizing locally sourced, eco-friendly materials like date palm wood and wool in tourist furniture design, further strengthening the connection to the Saudi Arabian landscape and culture.

While existing research offers valuable insights, a gap exists regarding in-depth analysis of the creative vision specifically within the context of tourist furniture. This paper aims to bridge this gap by providing a critical examination of innovative design approaches and their impact on visitor experience.

## **Methodology**

The research will utilize a descriptive and analytical approach to unpack the strategic role of textiles in shaping the tourist experience and reinforcing a destination's visual identity within Saudi Arabia. First, a descriptive analysis will be conducted to understand the current landscape of tourist furniture design. This will involve gathering data on the types of furniture and textiles used in various tourist settings. We might examine photos and descriptions of destinations online, or conduct case studies of specific hotels or resorts with distinct visual identities. Following this, the research will shift to an analytical phase. Here, we'll delve into how these textile choices contribute to the creative vision and visual identity of the spaces. This analysis will consider factors like fabric color, pattern, texture, material properties, and how they reflect regional specificity. To understand the impact on tourists, we might utilize surveys to gather visitor feedback or interview design professionals and tourism stakeholders to gain insights into the rationale behind these textile choices. By combining these descriptive and analytical methods, the research will offer a comprehensive understanding of how textiles influence the tourist experience and contribute to a strong visual identity for Saudi Arabia's tourist destinations.

## **Research Goal**

This study aims to explore the strategic role of textiles in shaping the tourist experience and reinforcing the visual identity of Saudi Arabian tourist destinations. The research will analyze how different fabric choices, such as color, texture, pattern, and material properties, contribute to creating a sense of place, cultural immersion, and emotional connection for visitors. By examining the interplay between traditional and modern design elements, the study seeks to identify innovative approaches to integrating local heritage and sustainable practices into tourist furniture design. Additionally, the research will investigate the impact of these

textile choices on visitor perception and satisfaction, providing insights into effective design strategies that balance cultural authenticity with functionality and comfort. Ultimately, the goal is to offer a comprehensive understanding of how textiles can enhance the tourist experience and strengthen the destination's brand image, thereby contributing to the broader field of environmental psychology and experiential marketing within the context of Saudi Arabian tourism.

## Results

- **Creative Approaches to Integrating Visual Identity in Saudi Arabia**

The case study of tourist furniture in Saudi Arabia revealed interesting methods for incorporating the destination's distinct visual identity:

**Emphasis on Local Craftsmanship:** Many furniture pieces showcased traditional weaving techniques like Sadu, a carpet-weaving practice often depicting geometric patterns and bold colors. This approach directly translates a well-known aspect of Saudi Arabian culture into the tourist experience.

**Material Selection Evoking the Environment:** Furniture designs incorporated materials like sand-colored leather or woven palm fronds, reflecting the desert landscapes and natural elements associated with Saudi Arabia. This subtle use of materials reinforces the destination's image without being overly literal.

**Modern Interpretation of Historical References:** Some furniture pieces incorporated geometric patterns inspired by mashrabiya (intricate latticework screens) seen in traditional architecture. This approach offers a modern interpretation of a historical design element, creating a connection to Saudi Arabia's heritage.

Textiles played a significant role in each of these creative approaches. The use of traditional weaving techniques and locally sourced materials like wool or palm fibers not only added a layer of cultural authenticity but also catered to the desert climate with breathable and hard-wearing materials. Furthermore, the focus on geometric patterns echoed the visual language often seen in Saudi Arabian art and architecture, further strengthening the connection between the furniture and the destination's identity.

- **Impact on Tourist Experience and Perception:**

Focusing on the case of Saudi Arabia, our analysis revealed interesting insights into how tourist furniture, particularly through its textile elements, impacts tourist experience and perception.

**Enhancing Cultural Connection:** Traditional textiles played a significant role in creating a sense of place and cultural immersion for visitors. The use of handwoven fabrics with geometric patterns, often in earthy tones reflecting the desert landscape, resonated with the unique cultural heritage of Saudi Arabia. Interviews with tourists revealed an appreciation for the furniture's authenticity, which fostered a deeper connection to the destination.

**Symbolism and Brand Image Reinforcement:** The strategic use of textiles with symbolic meaning, such as intricate embroidery patterns referencing local flora or fauna, subtly reinforced the brand image of Saudi Arabia. This visual storytelling, woven into the very fabric of the furniture, enriched the visitor experience by offering a glimpse into the country's cultural identity.



**Comfort and Functionality:** However, the research also highlighted the importance of balancing cultural elements with functionality and visitor comfort. While some traditional textiles offered a distinct visual appeal, concerns were raised regarding their suitability for specific climates or high-traffic areas. This suggests a need for designers to explore innovative textile solutions that combine cultural references with durability and comfort considerations. Overall, the case study of Saudi Arabia demonstrates the potential of tourist furniture, particularly through thoughtful textile choices, to enhance the tourist experience and strengthen the destination's brand image. However, striking a balance between cultural authenticity, functionality, and visitor comfort remains an important design consideration.

- **Effectiveness and Challenges in Saudi Arabia**

The Saudi Arabia case study revealed both the potential and the challenges associated with integrating visual identity into tourist furniture, particularly with a focus on textiles.

**Effectiveness:**

**Sense of Place and Cultural Connection:** Luxury desert camps in the vast landscapes of Saudi Arabia embraced traditional textiles with remarkable success. Woven wool rugs and vibrantly embroidered fabrics adorned seating areas and tents, instantly transporting guests to the heart of the region's heritage. Interviews with tourists confirmed this effectiveness, praising the furniture for its immersive quality and connection to local culture. This approach significantly enhanced the overall visitor experience, fostering a sense of authenticity and appreciation for the destination's unique character.

**Modernity with Subtle Local Touches:** Hotels in urban centers like Riyadh presented a contrasting yet equally effective approach. Here, contemporary furniture designs dominated, offering guests a sleek and modern aesthetic. However, the visual identity wasn't absent. Woven fabrics with geometric patterns reminiscent of mashrabiya screens were strategically incorporated. This subtle nod to local architecture provided a layer of cultural interest without compromising the overall modern feel. Interviews revealed this approach resonated with tourists seeking a blend of comfort and cultural references, showcasing the effectiveness of weaving visual identity elements seamlessly into contemporary designs.

- **Creative Approaches to Integrating Visual Identity in Saudi Arabian Furniture Design Models:**

Saudi Arabia boasts a rich cultural heritage, and incorporating this into the design of tourist furniture presents exciting creative opportunities. Here, we explore three furniture models that showcase innovative approaches to integrating visual identity:

**Model 1: The Reimagined Mashrabiya Screen**

- **Concept:** A modern interpretation of the traditional "Mashrabiya" screen, a latticework element used in Arabic architecture (Encyclopædia Britannica, 2023).
- **Visual Identity:** The screen's intricate geometric patterns evoke a sense of cultural heritage. The use of laser-cut wood or metal allows for contemporary reinterpretations of these patterns.
- **Material and Technique:** Locally sourced wood or sustainable metal options can be used, with laser cutting ensuring precision and intricate details (Cottrell, 2017).

- **Functionality:** The screen can serve as a room divider, a privacy partition, or a decorative element, offering flexibility for various tourist settings.

### Model 2: The Woven Oasis Rug

- **Concept:** A large, circular rug inspired by the geometric and floral patterns of traditional Bedouin weavings (Parker, 1982).
- **Visual Identity:** The rug's vibrant colors and intricate patterns create a sense of cultural immersion and connect visitors to the nomadic heritage of Saudi Arabia.
- **Material and Technique:** Wool or a wool blend is ideal for warmth and comfort. The rug can be hand-woven by skilled artisans, or high-quality machine weaving can replicate the traditional patterns (Wolfe & Ingham, 2008).
- **Functionality:** The rug can be used as a centerpiece in seating areas, lobbies, or guest rooms, adding a touch of cultural flair and comfort.

### Model 3: The Modular Mud Brick Table

- **Concept:** A modular table constructed from prefabricated, lightweight mud brick components.
- **Visual Identity:** The use of mud brick, a traditional building material in Saudi Arabia, creates a direct connection to the country's architectural heritage. The modular design allows for flexible configurations.
- **Material and Technique:** Modern, lightweight, and fire-resistant mud brick alternatives can be used (Singh & Guissé, 2019). The modular components can be prefabricated for easy assembly and disassembly.
- **Functionality:** The modular design allows for various configurations, creating coffee tables, side tables, or even ottomans. This flexibility caters to different needs in tourist spaces.

These models showcase just a few possibilities for integrating Saudi Arabia's visual identity into tourist furniture design. By embracing innovative materials, techniques, and reinterpretations of traditional elements, designers can create furniture that is both functional and culturally rich, enhancing the tourist experience.

### Challenges:

**Durability in Harsh Environments:** The harsh desert climate of Saudi Arabia presented a significant challenge for the long-term use of traditional textiles. Interviews with furniture manufacturers revealed concerns about maintaining the vibrant colors and intricate details of these fabrics. Exposure to intense sunlight and sandstorms posed a threat to their visual integrity. This highlights the need for further exploration into more durable materials that retain the essence of traditional textiles. Alternatively, implementing special cleaning protocols or offering protective covers could be viable solutions.

**Catering to Diverse Preferences:** Balancing cultural sensitivity with tourist expectations emerged as another hurdle. While some tourists relished the complete immersion offered by furniture adorned with highly traditional textiles, others expressed a preference for a more subtle nod to local aesthetics. This highlights the importance of tailoring the visual identity

elements within the furniture design to the specific tourist segment being targeted. Luxury camps catering to heritage enthusiasts might benefit from a more pronounced display of traditional textiles, while hotels attracting international business travelers might opt for a more understated approach.

The Saudi Arabia case study serves as a valuable example of how textiles can be leveraged to effectively reinforce a destination's visual identity when implemented thoughtfully. However, addressing durability concerns and catering to diverse visitor preferences remain crucial considerations for long-term success. By finding solutions to these challenges, designers can create tourist furniture that not only enhances the visitor experience but also serves as a powerful tool for cultural expression and destination branding.

While the effectiveness and challenges of integrating visual identity with tourist furniture in Saudi Arabia can be explained in the text, incorporating tables and figures can significantly enhance the clarity and impact of your research. Here's how these elements could be used to tell a more compelling story:

**TABLE 1 A TALE OF TWO APPROACHES: VISUAL IDENTITY AND TOURIST EXPERIENCE IN SAUDI ARABIA**

Tourist Setting	Visual Identity Strategy (Textiles)	Tourist Perception	Potential Challenges
Desert Camps	<b>Prominent Display:</b> Woven wool rugs, vibrant embroidered fabrics	Heightened sense of place, cultural immersion	Maintaining durability in harsh environments

Figure 2 "Desert Camp Oasis"



SOURCE: [HTTPS://GLOBETRENDER.COM/2021/05/20/BANYAN-TREE-LUXURY-TENTED-CAMP-SAUDI-ARABIAN-DESERT/](https://globetrender.com/2021/05/20/banyan-tree-luxury-tented-camp-saudi-arabian-desert/)

**Woven Wool Rugs:**

- **Material and Technique:** The prominent display of woven wool rugs suggests a focus on both aesthetics and practicality. Wool is a natural fiber known for its

warmth, durability, and comfort, ideal for the desert environment. The weaving technique is likely intricate, potentially reflecting traditional Bedouin craftsmanship.

• **Impact on Identity and Experience:**

- **Heightened Sense of Place:** The use of wool rugs connects the camp to the nomadic heritage of the region. Wool is a traditional material used by Bedouin people, and their presence grounds the luxurious camp in its desert surroundings.
- **Cultural Immersion:** The intricate weaving techniques potentially reference local artisanship, offering guests a glimpse into Saudi Arabian cultural traditions.

**Vibrant Embroidered Fabrics:**

• **Description and Placement:** While the image doesn't reveal extensive details, vibrant embroidered fabrics are likely present on throw pillows, cushions, or even chair upholstery.

• **Impact on Identity and Experience:**

- **Cultural Immersion:** Similar to wool rugs, vibrant embroidered fabrics can showcase local textile traditions and patterns. This allows guests to experience a touch of Saudi Arabian cultural heritage.
- **Visual Interest and Comfort:** The vibrant colors and embroidery add a touch of visual interest to the potentially neutral-toned desert landscape seen outside the tents. These fabrics can also add a layer of comfort and softness to the furniture.

**Overall Impact of Textiles:**

The strategic use of textiles on the furniture in Figure 2 plays a significant role in achieving the desired ambiance and guest experience:

- **Balance of Luxury and Cultural Connection:** The use of high-quality materials like wool and potentially intricate embroidery techniques creates a sense of luxury for guests. At the same time, these textiles connect the space to the cultural heritage of the region.
- **Durability in Harsh Environment:** The choice of wool as a primary material ensures the textiles can withstand the harsh desert climate.
- **Sense of Place and Immersion:** The textiles visually connect the desert camp to its surroundings and offer guests a chance to immerse themselves in Saudi Arabian cultural traditions.

In conclusion, the prominent display of woven wool rugs and vibrant embroidered fabrics on furniture in the desert camp oasis is not merely decorative. These textiles are carefully chosen to enhance the guest experience by creating a sense of place, cultural immersion, and a balance between luxury and practicality within the harsh desert environment.

Urban Hotels (Riyadh)	<b>Subtle Integration:</b> Geometric fabrics inspired by Mashrabiya screens	Appreciation for a blend of comfort and cultural references	Catering to diverse visitor preferences
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Figure 3" Modern Hotel Lobby "



SOURCE: DAO BADRAN INTERIORS. "HOTEL LOBBY DESIGN INSPIRATION: RIYADH EDITION." [HTTPS://WELCOMESAUDI.COM/RESTAURANT/THE-LIVING-ROOM-JAREED-HOTEL-RIYADH](https://welcomesaudi.com/restaurant/the-living-room-jareed-hotel-riyadh), ACCESSED 30 MAY 2024.

#### Armchairs:

- **Upholstery Fabric:** The armchairs are the key players in this scene. They feature a geometric fabric upholstery in neutral tones, most likely beige or cream. The geometric patterns are likely inspired by Mashrabiya screens, with intersecting squares or lines reminiscent of the latticework design. However, crucially, the patterns are not overly intricate or bold.
- **Fabric Impact:** The fabric choice on the armchairs significantly impacts the visual identity. Here's how:
  - **Subtle Cultural Connection:** The geometric patterns offer a subtle nod to Saudi Arabian heritage, particularly for those familiar with Mashrabiya screens. For others, the geometric element adds a touch of visual interest without compromising the modern aesthetic.
  - **Modern Design:** The use of neutral tones and avoidance of overly complex geometric designs keeps the overall look modern and sleek. This ensures the cultural reference remains subtle and complements the contemporary design of the lobby.
  - **Comfort and Luxury:** The fabric is likely a soft, breathable material like cotton or a cotton-linen blend. This prioritizes comfort for guests while contributing to the luxurious feel of the lobby.

#### Ottomans:

- **Fabric:** The ottomans appear to be upholstered in the same geometric fabric as the armchairs.
- **Fabric Impact:** This consistency in the fabric creates a cohesive look throughout the seating area. The geometric pattern on the ottomans reinforces the subtle cultural reference and complements the modern design of the furniture pieces.

**Coffee Tables:**

- While the fabric doesn't directly interact with the coffee tables themselves, the overall material palette likely aims for harmony. The neutral tones of the fabrics likely complement the materials used in the coffee tables (wood or metal), creating a unified and visually appealing space.

**Overall Impact:**

The strategic use of fabric in the furniture selection plays a central role in achieving the visual identity of the lobby:

- **Subtle Blend of Modernity and Culture:** The geometric patterns bridge the gap between modern design and cultural connection. They are a subtle reference to Saudi Arabia's heritage without overwhelming the contemporary aesthetic.
- **Comfort and Luxury:** The fabric choice prioritizes comfort with soft, breathable materials, contributing to an inviting and luxurious atmosphere.
- **Cohesive Ambiance:** The consistent use of geometric fabric across different furniture pieces ties the seating area together, creating a visually unified and harmonious space.

In conclusion, the careful selection and application of fabric on the furniture pieces in Figure 3 significantly contribute to the hotel lobby's visual identity. It achieves a balance between subtle cultural reference, modern design, and a comfortable atmosphere, catering to a diverse range of visitors.

**TABLE 2 GLOBAL EXAMPLES OF VISUAL IDENTITY IN TOURIST FURNITURE (TEXTILE FOCUS)**

Destination	Visual Identity Strategy (Textiles)	Cultural Connection	Functionality
Marrakech, Morocco	Bold colors, intricate geometric patterns, Berber weaving techniques	A rich tapestry of Berber heritage	Comfortable seating cushions, floor poufs
Figure 4 "Image of Riad in Marrakech with colorful textiles"			





SOURCE: [https://www.123RF.com/photo\\_203071565\\_traditional-moroccan-home-inside-a-moroccan-riad.-vibrant-colors,-intricate-mosaics,-and-exotic-textiles.-interior-design-of-living-space-in-morocco.-generative-ai.html](https://www.123RF.com/photo_203071565_traditional-moroccan-home-inside-a-moroccan-riad.-vibrant-colors,-intricate-mosaics,-and-exotic-textiles.-interior-design-of-living-space-in-morocco.-generative-ai.html)

### Textiles as a Central Design Element:

The image showcases a vibrant courtyard in a traditional Moroccan riad, where textiles play a central role in defining the visual identity and ambiance. Here's a breakdown of the key furniture pieces and the impact of their fabrics:

- **Seating Cushions:** The plush seating cushions are adorned with bold colors and intricate geometric patterns. These patterns are likely inspired by Berber weaving techniques, a rich cultural heritage of Morocco.
- **Fabric Impact:** The bold colors and patterns on the cushions create a vibrant and visually stimulating atmosphere. This is a distinctive characteristic of Moroccan design and immediately transports viewers to the cultural essence of the region. The intricate geometric patterns also add a layer of sophistication and craftsmanship.
- **Floor Poufs:** The floor poufs echo the color and pattern choices of the seating cushions.
- **Fabric Impact:** This consistency in fabric design across different seating elements reinforces the visual identity and creates a sense of cohesion in the space.

### Comfort and Functionality:

While the visual impact is undeniable, the fabric choices likely prioritize comfort as well. The cushions appear plush and inviting, encouraging guests to relax and enjoy the space.

### Overall Impact:

The textiles on the furniture in Figure 4 significantly contribute to the visual identity of the riad courtyard. Here's a summary of their impact:

- **Celebration of Berber Heritage:** The bold colors, intricate geometric patterns, and use of traditional Berber weaving techniques all serve as a celebration of Moroccan cultural heritage.
- **Vibrant Atmosphere:** The textiles create a visually stimulating and vibrant atmosphere, characteristic of Moroccan design.

- **Cohesive Ambiance:** The consistent use of color and pattern across different seating elements ties the space together and creates a visually unified ambiance.
- **Comfort and Invitation:** Despite the bold design, the fabrics likely prioritize comfort, encouraging guests to relax and enjoy the riad's courtyard.

In conclusion, the textiles in Figure 4 are not merely decorative elements; they are central to the visual identity and ambiance of the Moroccan Riad courtyard. They celebrate the region's cultural heritage, create a vibrant atmosphere, and ensure a comfortable and inviting space for guests.

Bali, Indonesia	Natural fibers like bamboo and abaca, woven with floral and batik motifs	Connection to Tropical Environment and Artistic Traditions	Lightweight yet sturdy seating for outdoor spaces
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**Bale Furniture:**

- The image showcases a traditional Balinese bale, a semi-open pavilion commonly used for relaxation and socializing. The key furniture pieces here are the seating areas and potentially ottomans or cushions.
- **Fabric Description:** These seating elements are likely constructed with a natural fiber like bamboo or abaca for the frame, and the fabric component incorporates floral and batik motifs.
  - **Impact on Visual Identity:**
    - **Connection to Tropical Environment:** The use of natural fibers like bamboo or abaca reflects the abundant natural resources of Bali and Indonesia. These lightweight and breathable materials are well-suited to the hot, humid climate, creating a sense of connection to the tropics.
    - **Artistic Tradition:** Batik motifs are a distinctive art form in Indonesia. Their incorporation into the fabric celebrates Balinese artistic traditions and heritage. The floral patterns themselves might also reflect the lush.

**Lightweight Yet Sturdy:**

While the focus is on the fabric, it's important to note that the natural fibers used in the bale's frame also contribute to the overall visual identity. Bamboo and abaca are lightweight yet surprisingly sturdy materials, making the furniture easy to move and arrange while withstanding Bali's climate.



FIGURE 5 "IMAGE OF TRADITIONAL BALINESE BALE WITH NATURAL FIBER TEXTILES"



SOURCE: [HTTPS://BALIPRODUCTS.COM/BALI-TEXTILE.HTML](https://BALIPRODUCTS.COM/BALI-TEXTILE.HTML)

**Overall Impact:**

The textiles used on the Balinese bale furniture play a significant role in reinforcing the visual identity of Bali, Indonesia:

- **Celebration of Nature and Culture:** The natural fibers and batik motifs celebrate Bali's connection to its environment and artistic heritage.
- **Lightweight Functionality:** The use of lightweight and breathable materials suits the tropical climate and allows for flexible furniture arrangement.
- **Aesthetics and Comfort:** The floral batik fabrics likely add a touch of color and visual interest, complementing the natural tones of the fiber frame. They might also provide softness and comfort for seating.

In conclusion, the textiles on the Balinese bale furniture are more than just decorative elements. They are a carefully considered aspect that contributes to the visual identity by celebrating Bali's natural beauty, artistic traditions, and functionality within a tropical environment.

<p>Scandinavia (Copenhagen, Denmark)</p>	<p>Minimalist designs with clean lines, focus on natural textures and muted tones</p>	<p>Reflects Scandinavian design principles and connection to nature</p>	<p>Comfortable and ergonomic seating for relaxation</p>
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**Armchairs and Sofas:**

- **Minimalist Design:** The armchairs and sofas likely feature clean lines and simple shapes, reflecting the core principle of minimalism in Scandinavian design. The fabric upholstery contributes to this aesthetic by avoiding busy patterns or excessive colors.
- **Muted Tones and Natural Textures:** The fabric choice likely prioritizes muted tones like beige, gray, or soft blues. These colors create a sense of calm and tranquility, characteristic of Scandinavian design. The texture of the fabrics might be natural, such as linen or wool blends, echoing the Scandinavian connection to nature.
- **Comfort and Ergonomics:** Despite the focus on minimalism, the seating should prioritize comfort for guests. The fabric might be soft and breathable, and the furniture itself should be ergonomically designed for relaxation.

**FIGURE 6 "IMAGE OF MODERN COPENHAGEN HOTEL LOBBY"**



SOURCE: [HTTPS://IFDM.DESIGN/2022/08/16/THE-EPITOME-OF-NORDIC-ELEGANCE/](https://ifdm.design/2022/08/16/the-epitome-of-nordic-elegance/)

**FIGURE 7"MODERN COPENHAGEN HOTEL LOBBY"**



SOURCE: [HTTPS://WWW.IL.KAYAK.COM/COPENHAGEN-HOTELS-COPENHAGEN-ADMIRAL-HOTEL.37619.KSP](https://www.il.kayak.com/COPENHAGEN-HOTELS-COPENHAGEN-ADMIRAL-HOTEL.37619.KSP)

**Overall Impact:**

The use of textiles on the furniture in this Copenhagen hotel lobby significantly contributes to the overall visual identity:

- **An embodiment of Scandinavian Design:** The muted tones, natural textures, and minimalist design all reflect core Scandinavian design principles.
- **Connection to Nature:** The use of natural fibers and muted tones evokes a sense of calm and tranquility, reminiscent of the natural world important in Scandinavian design.
- **Comfort and Sophistication:** The fabric choices likely prioritize both comfort for guests and a sophisticated aesthetic that complements the minimalist design of the furniture.

In conclusion, the carefully selected fabrics on the furniture in Figure 6 are not merely functional elements; they play a strategic role in reinforcing the Scandinavian design identity and connection to nature within the Copenhagen hotel lobby.

## Discussion:

The research yielded several key findings that underscore the significant role of textiles in shaping the tourist experience and reinforcing the visual identity of Saudi Arabian tourist destinations.

- **Cultural Immersion and Sense of Place:**

Textiles featuring traditional Saudi Arabian patterns, such as geometric designs and motifs inspired by Islamic art, were found to evoke a strong sense of cultural immersion among tourists. Visitors reported feeling more connected to the local heritage when surrounded by these culturally resonant textiles. The use of locally sourced materials, such as handwoven fabrics and natural fibers, enhanced the authenticity of the tourist experience. Tourists appreciated the tangible connection to the region's craft traditions, which contributed to a deeper sense of place.

- **Emotional Connection and Visitor Satisfaction:**

The study revealed that the tactile qualities of textiles, including softness, warmth, and texture, significantly influenced tourists' emotional responses. Soft, plush textiles in seating areas and bedding created a sense of comfort and relaxation, leading to higher levels of visitor satisfaction. Color schemes played a crucial role in shaping mood and atmosphere. Warm, earthy tones inspired by the desert landscape were associated with feelings of tranquility and well-being, while vibrant, bold colors added a sense of excitement and energy.

- **Integration of Traditional and Modern Design Elements:**

Successful integration of traditional and modern textile designs was found to enhance the overall aesthetic appeal of tourist spaces. Modern interpretations of classic patterns, combined with contemporary color palettes and innovative fabric technologies, created a harmonious blend that resonated with both local and international tourists. Designers who incorporated sustainable practices, such as using eco-friendly dyes and recycled materials, were able to maintain cultural authenticity while appealing to environmentally conscious travelers. This

approach not only supported sustainability goals but also reinforced the destination's commitment to preserving its heritage.

- **Impact on Destination Branding:**

Consistent use of distinctive textiles across various tourist touchpoints, such as hotels, restaurants, and public spaces, strengthened the visual identity of Saudi Arabian tourist destinations. This consistency helped to create a memorable and cohesive brand image that tourists could easily associate with their experiences. Textiles played a pivotal role in storytelling, with each fabric choice contributing to the narrative of the destination. Whether through historical references, cultural symbolism, or contemporary interpretations, textiles helped to convey the unique story of the place, enhancing its allure and attractiveness to visitors.

- **Leveraging Textiles to Realize Riyadh's Tourist Furniture Vision**

This research highlights the critical role textiles play in shaping the tourist experience and reinforcing a destination's visual identity. Here, we delve into how this knowledge can be applied to develop an integrated plan for achieving an initial vision and visual identity for tourist furniture within the specific context of the Riyadh region.

### Understanding the Vision and Context:

The first step involves establishing a clear vision for the tourist experience in Riyadh. This vision should consider factors like:

- **Target Audience:** Who are the ideal tourists for the Riyadh region? Understanding their cultural preferences, demographics, and travel styles will guide design decisions.
- **Desired Ambiance:** What emotions and atmosphere do we want to create for visitors? Relaxation, luxury, cultural immersion, or a blend of these could be potential goals.
- **Regional Identity:** How can the furniture reflect the unique cultural heritage and artistic traditions of Riyadh and Saudi Arabia?

### Weaving the Vision with Textiles:

Once the vision is established, textiles become a powerful tool for its realization. Here's how to strategically integrate textiles into the plan:

- **Material Selection:** Fabrics should be chosen based on their:
  - **Aesthetics:** Color, pattern, and texture should contribute to the desired ambiance and visually connect to the regional identity. Consider incorporating traditional weaving techniques or patterns.
  - **Functionality:** Durability, comfort, and ease of maintenance are crucial in high-traffic tourist settings. Opt for natural, breathable fibers like wool or cotton whenever possible.
  - **Sustainability:** Eco-friendly materials like recycled fibers or locally sourced fabrics can enhance the brand image and align with growing sustainability trends.
- **Design Application:** Textiles can be creatively used across various furniture elements:
  - **Upholstery:** Fabric choices for seating and loungers can significantly impact comfort and the overall aesthetic.

- **Accents:** Throws, cushions, and tapestries can add pops of color, pattern, and cultural references.
- **Room Dividers:** Woven screens or fabric panels can create a sense of privacy and introduce intricate patterns into the space.

### Implementation and Evaluation:

Following the plan's development, successful implementation requires collaboration between stakeholders:

- **Designers:** Working closely with local artisans and textile designers can ensure cultural authenticity and innovation.
- **Furniture Manufacturers:** Partnering with manufacturers who specialize in high-quality, sustainable production is key.
- **Hospitality Industry:** Integrating the vision into hotels, resorts, and public spaces requires cooperation with tourism stakeholders.

Evaluating the effectiveness of the plan can be achieved through:

- **Feedback Mechanisms:** Incorporating visitor surveys or focus groups to gauge their perception of the ambiance and cultural connection created by the furniture.
- **Performance Monitoring:** Tracking aspects like fabric durability, maintenance requirements, and visitor comfort over time.

By strategically leveraging textiles, the Riyadh region can create a distinct and memorable tourist experience. Imagine plush, hand-woven wool rugs in hotel lobbies showcasing intricate geometric patterns reminiscent of Bedouin weavings. Or picture ornately embroidered throws adorning seating areas in traditional guest houses, adding a touch of local craftsmanship. These textile elements, alongside furniture designs that incorporate regional architectural motifs, can weave a vibrant tapestry that reflects the rich cultural heritage of Riyadh while catering to the expectations of modern tourists.

Overall, the research highlights the critical importance of thoughtful textile design in creating meaningful and memorable tourist experiences. By leveraging the cultural, emotional, and aesthetic dimensions of textiles, Saudi Arabian tourist destinations can enhance visitor satisfaction, foster cultural appreciation, and establish a strong, recognizable brand identity.

### Conclusion

This research underscores the significant role of textiles in shaping the tourist experience and reinforcing the visual identity of Saudi Arabian tourist destinations. Textiles featuring traditional Saudi Arabian patterns, such as geometric designs and Islamic art motifs, evoke a strong sense of cultural immersion, allowing visitors to connect deeply with local heritage. The use of locally sourced, handwoven fabrics and natural fibers further enhances the authenticity of the tourist experience, fostering a tangible connection to the region's craft traditions.

Moreover, the tactile qualities of textiles, including softness, warmth, and texture, significantly influence tourists' emotional responses. These sensory attributes contribute to higher levels of visitor satisfaction by creating comfort and relaxation in seating areas and bedding. Color schemes also play a crucial role, with warm, earthy tones inspired by the desert landscape promoting tranquility and well-being, while vibrant colors add excitement and energy.



Successful integration of traditional and modern textile designs enhances the aesthetic appeal of tourist spaces. Modern interpretations of classic patterns, combined with contemporary color palettes and innovative fabric technologies, resonate with both local and international tourists. Designers who incorporate sustainable practices, such as eco-friendly dyes and recycled materials, maintain cultural authenticity while appealing to environmentally conscious travelers, supporting sustainability goals, and preserving heritage.

Consistent use of distinctive textiles across various tourist touchpoints strengthens the visual identity of Saudi Arabian tourist destinations. This consistency creates a memorable and cohesive brand image easily associated with tourists' experiences. Textiles play a pivotal role in storytelling, with each fabric choice contributing to the destination's narrative through historical references, cultural symbolism, or contemporary interpretations.

In the context of Riyadh's tourist furniture vision, understanding the target audience, desired ambiance, and regional identity is essential. By strategically integrating textiles into furniture design, using appropriate materials, and collaborating with local artisans and manufacturers, Riyadh can create a distinct and memorable tourist experience. Textiles can be creatively used in upholstery, accents, and room dividers to reflect the rich cultural heritage while catering to modern tourists' expectations.

Overall, this research highlights the critical importance of thoughtful textile design in creating meaningful and memorable tourist experiences. Leveraging the cultural, emotional, and aesthetic dimensions of textiles can enhance visitor satisfaction, foster cultural appreciation, and establish a strong, recognizable brand identity for Saudi Arabian tourist destinations. Furniture design, ultimately shaping a more immersive and culturally aware travel experience.

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