

THE 2026 RAMADAN HANDBOOK

UAE Edition

February 2026

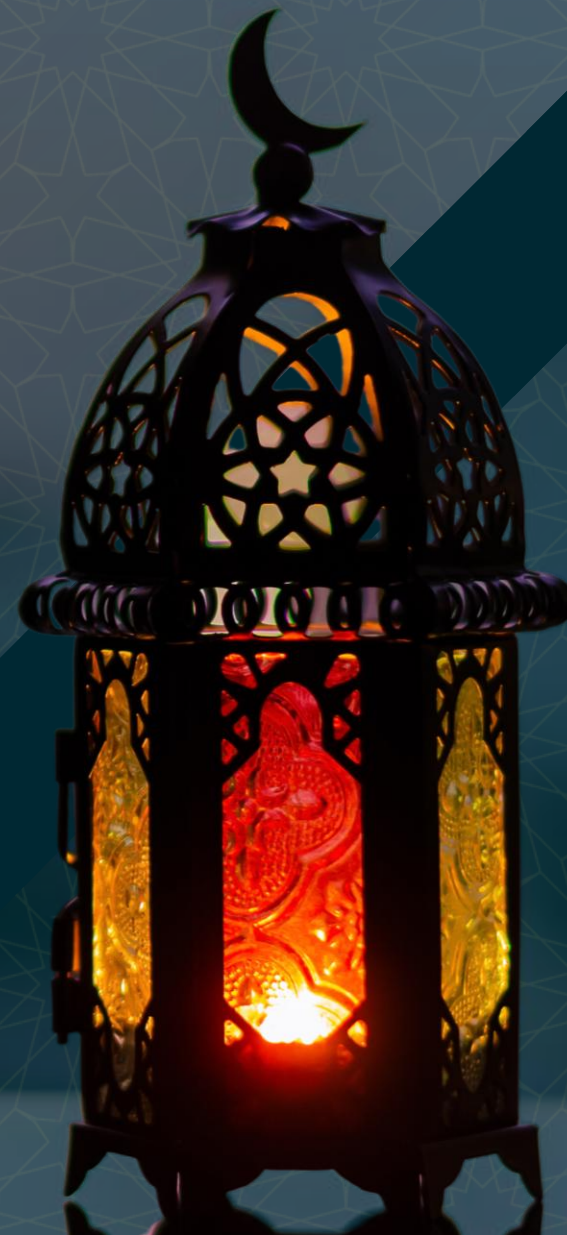


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Lifestyle Changes In Ramadan

01





For the vast majority, Ramadan is a deeply spiritual period, centered on reflection, devotion, and giving.



81%

Take Ramadan as a time of deep spiritual reflection and increased religious devotion



80%

Believe Ramadan is about engaging in acts of charity

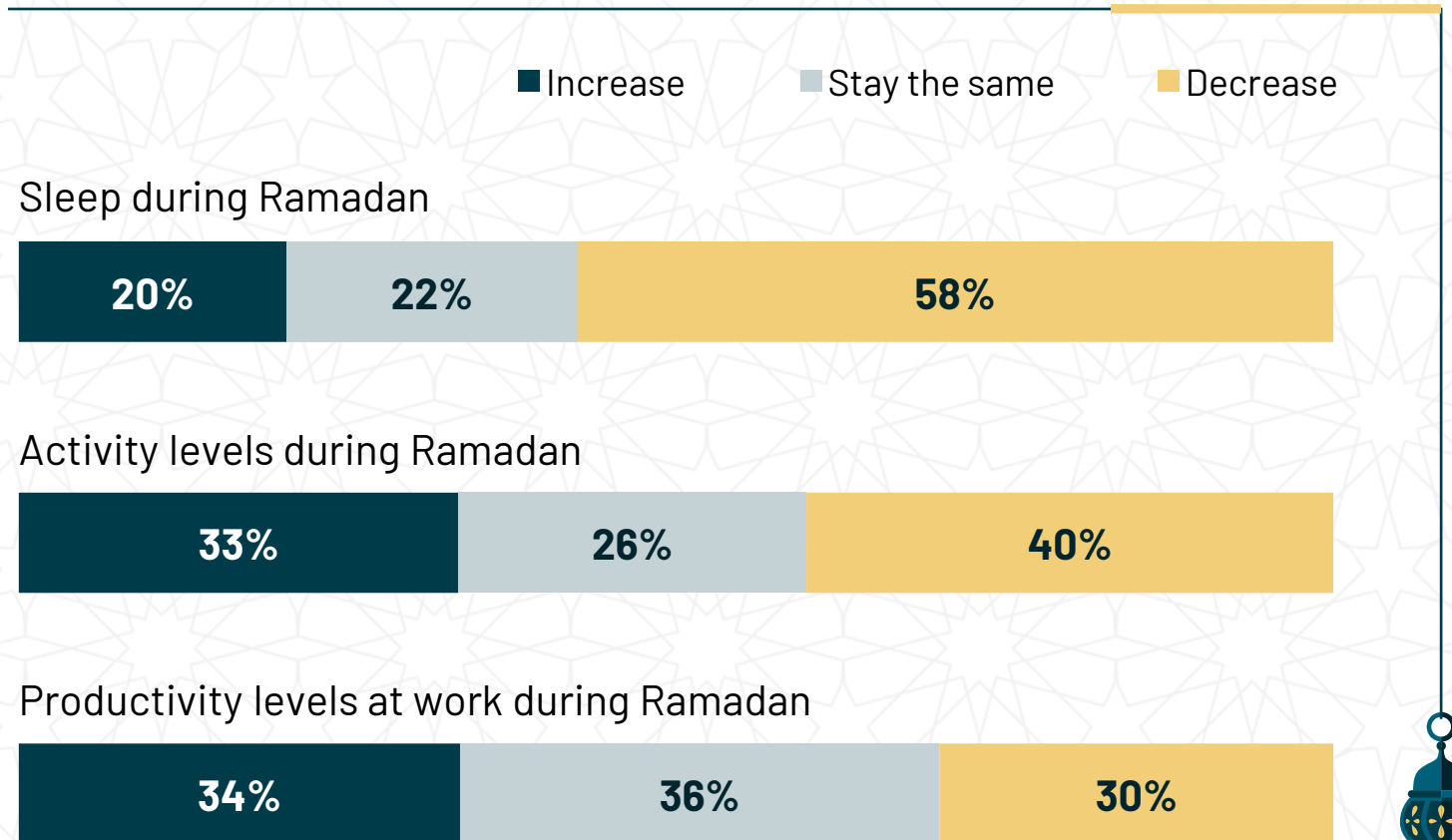


77%

Focus more on spirituality during Ramadan



Despite reduced sleep, most continue to maintain their activity and productivity during the holy month.



Sleep, activity and productivity

- by demographics

20%



58%

33%



40%

34%



30%

Sleep during Ramadan

% Increase

% Decrease

Activity levels during Ramadan

% Increase

% Decrease

Productivity levels at work during Ramadan

% Increase

% Decrease

	Male	Female	18 - 24	25 - 34	35 - 44	45+	Nationals	Expats	Upper Income	Middle Income	Lower Income
	23%	13%	25%	23%	15%	9%	32%	18%	21%	18%	24%
	53%	67%	50%	53%	69%	66%	40%	61%	59%	57%	55%
	35%	30%	35%	38%	28%	23%	43%	31%	34%	32%	34%
	38%	44%	39%	37%	47%	40%	30%	42%	40%	39%	41%
	34%	34%	28%	38%	32%	35%	37%	33%	35%	33%	31%
	29%	33%	33%	29%	30%	26%	26%	31%	29%	30%	33%

At the same time, Ramadan is a moment of emotional connection, with many reconnecting with family and drawing on a strong sense of nostalgia.



87%

Spend more time with family
than with friends during
Ramadan



69%

Feel that Ramadan evokes
a sense of nostalgia, taking them
back to cherished family times



Yet alongside this warmth, there is a perception of fewer shared gatherings and a softer sense of Ramadan's spirit.



53%

▲ +5 pts

Feel that nowadays, fewer people gather around the iftar table as compared to the past

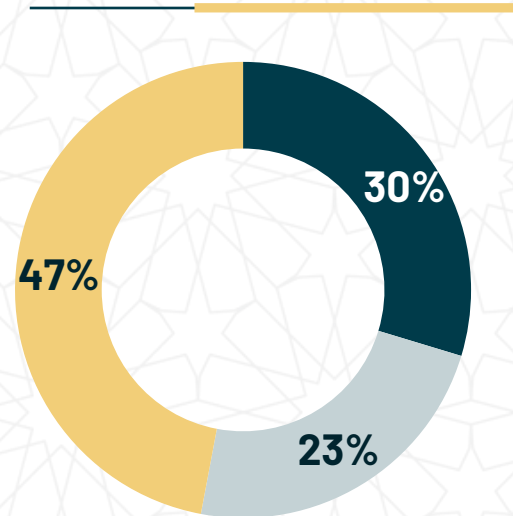


46%

Believe the spirit of Ramadan doesn't feel as strong as it did in the past



As a result, nearly half spend more time at home during Ramadan, opting for fewer outings.



- Go out more during Ramadan
- No change
- Go out less during Ramadan



By Gender

Male	32%	26%	42%
Female	24%	18%	58%

By Age

18-24	37%	24%	39%
25-34	36%	18%	45%
35-44	17%	29%	54%
45+	10%	29%	61%

By Nationality

Nationals	43%	28%	29%
Expats	27%	22%	51%

By Income Level

Upper Income	29%	26%	44%
Middle Income	33%	19%	48%
Lower Income	24%	24%	52%



With more time spent at home, many place great importance on creating a festive atmosphere during Ramadan.

59%

**Believe that
decorating and
creating a festive
atmosphere at home
is an essential part of
Ramadan customs**

By Gender



By Age



By Nationality



By Income Level



Eating Habits In Ramadan

02



Alongside spiritual reflection, Ramadan is widely seen as a time to reset the body and focus on health.



81%

▲ +7 pts

Consider Ramadan an opportunity to reset their body



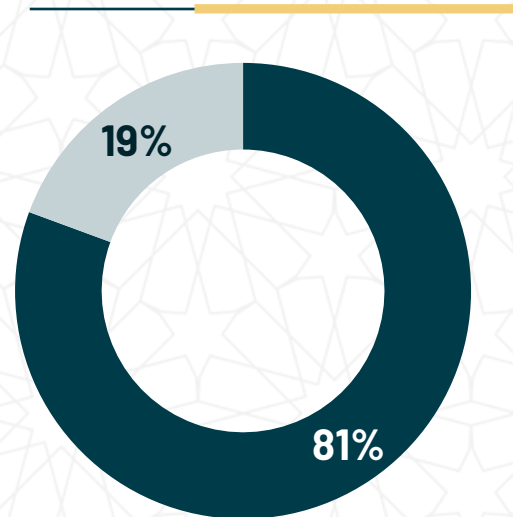
74%

Consider Ramadan as a period of physical discipline and health consciousness





This focus on health translates into everyday choices, with most people leaning towards home-cooked meals during Ramadan.



- Tend to eat more home-cooked meals
- Tend to eat out more



By Gender

Male	79%	21%
Female	84%	16%

By Age

18-24	75%	25%
25-34	79%	21%
35-44	85%	15%
45+	90%	10%

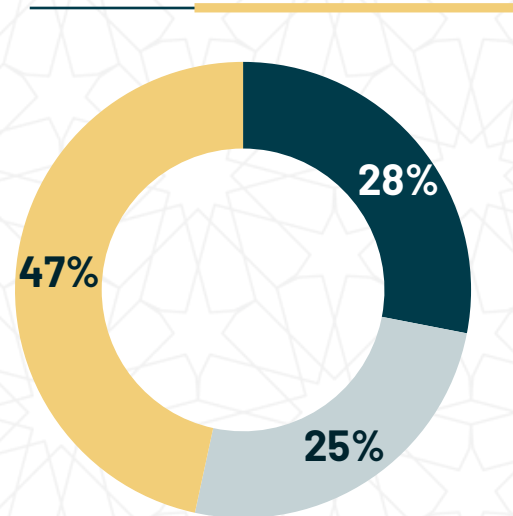
By Nationality

Nationals	70%	30%
Expats	83%	17%

By Income Level

Upper Income	76%	24%
Middle Income	82%	18%
Lower Income	89%	11%

As home-cooked meals take priority, 1 in 2 order food delivery less frequently during Ramadan.



- Order food delivery more often during Ramadan
- No change
- Order food delivery less often during Ramadan



By Gender

Male	29%	26%	45%
Female	25%	24%	51%

By Age

18-24	31%	30%	39%
25-34	31%	27%	42%
35-44	22%	17%	61%
45+	21%	32%	47%

By Nationality

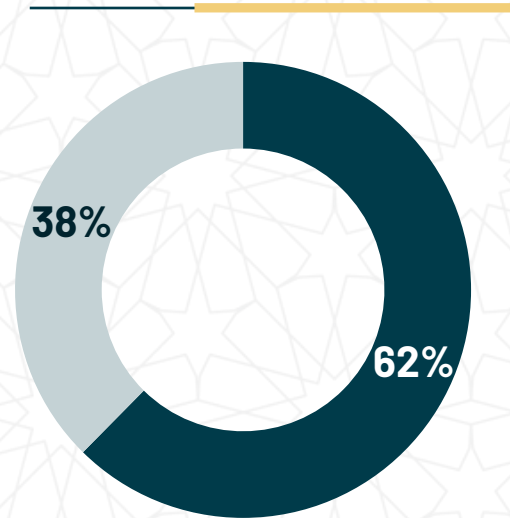
Nationals	37%	30%	33%
Expats	26%	24%	49%

By Income Level

Upper Income	26%	30%	44%
Middle Income	31%	23%	45%
Lower Income	26%	18%	55%



That said, food delivery is more common at Iftar than at Suhoor.



- Tend to order food delivery more for Iftar meals during Ramadan
- Tend to order food delivery more for Suhoor meals during Ramadan



By Gender

Male	61%	39%
Female	65%	35%

By Age

18-24	63%	37%
25-34	61%	39%
35-44	62%	38%
45+	69%	31%

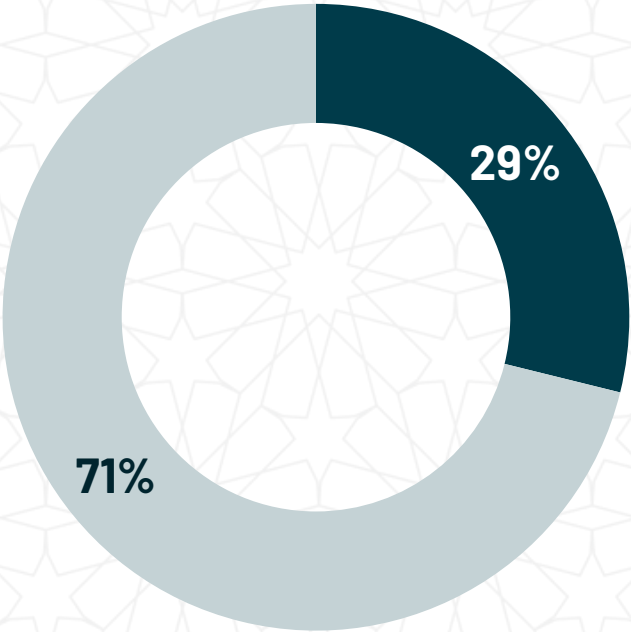
By Nationality

Nationals	44%	56%
Expats	66%	34%

By Income Level

Upper Income	58%	42%
Middle Income	67%	33%
Lower Income	65%	35%

At Iftar, meals follow familiar traditions, typically beginning with dates and accompanied by daily appetizers and a variety of main dishes.



- Usually eat one main dish during Iftar
- Usually eat a variety of main dishes during Iftar

92%

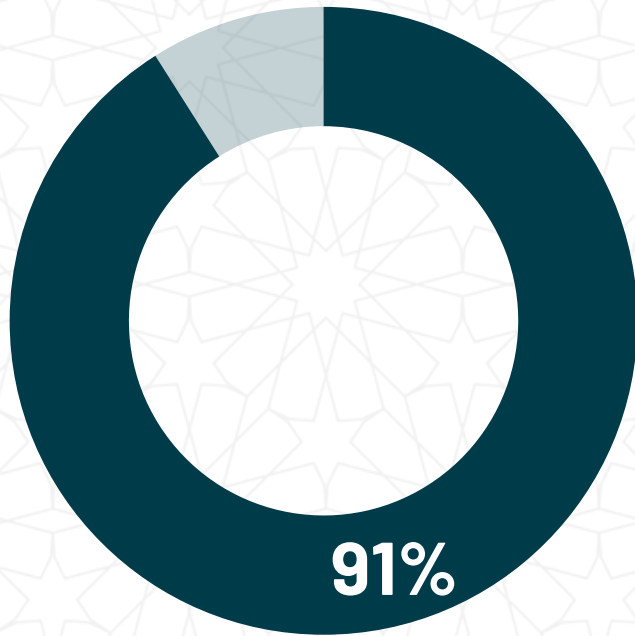
Always break their fast with dates

79%

Have appetizers everyday at Iftar



After Iftar, snacking is common, often balancing healthier choices with occasional indulgence.



Usually have snacks after Iftar

82%

Have healthy snacks after Iftar

48%

Have unhealthy snacks after Iftar



Snacking behaviour during Ramadan

- by demographics



	Usually have snacks after Iftar	Have healthy snacks after Iftar	Have unhealthy snacks after Iftar
Male	90%	82%	49%
Female	91%	81%	47%
18 - 24	96%	83%	63%
25 - 34	87%	80%	47%
35 - 44	94%	84%	42%
45+	80%	78%	24%
Nationals	95%	88%	68%
Expats	90%	80%	44%
Upper Income	92%	80%	51%
Middle Income	91%	85%	44%
Lower Income	87%	79%	50%



Meanwhile, Suhoor remains a consistent part of Ramadan nights for the vast majority.

88%

Have Suhoor
on most nights

By Gender



By Age



By Nationality



By Income Level





With multiple eating occasions and a wide spread of dishes, many make a conscious effort to repurpose leftovers and reduce food waste.

68%

Make an effort to repurpose leftovers to minimize food waste during Ramadan

By Gender



By Age



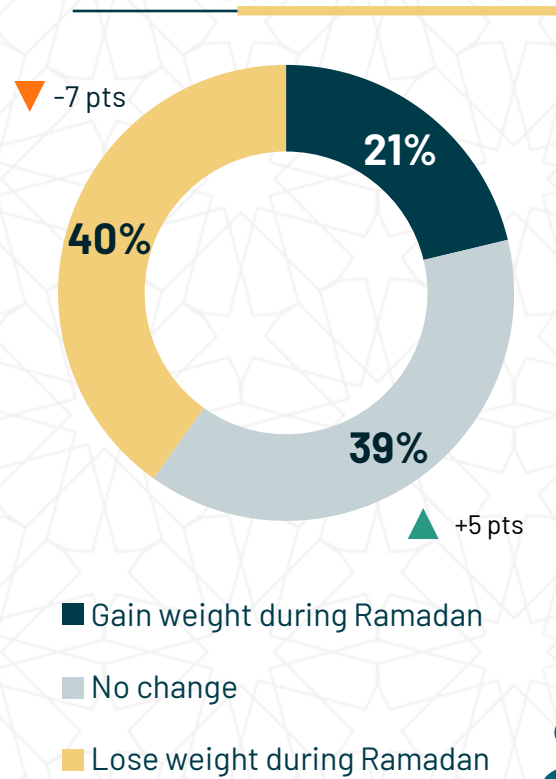
By Nationality



By Income Level



Despite shifts in eating habits, most people tend to maintain or lose weight during Ramadan.



By Gender

Male	21%	37%	42%
Female	21%	43%	36%

By Age

18-24	25%	40%	34%
25-34	22%	36%	42%
35-44	17%	40%	43%
45+	16%	45%	39%

By Nationality

Nationals	33%	41%	27%
Expats	19%	38%	43%

By Income Level

Upper Income	22%	38%	40%
Middle Income	22%	36%	42%
Lower Income	18%	45%	37%

Financial & Shopping Behaviors In Ramadan

03



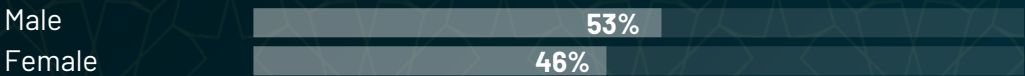
For many, Ramadan brings added responsibilities and higher everyday costs, making financial planning a key focus, often with saving starting well in advance.

51%

Agree that financial planning becomes a priority during Ramadan to manage both personal and communal duties



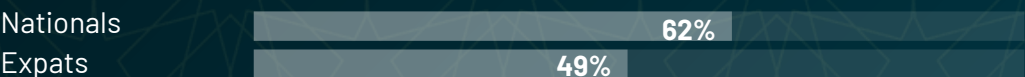
By Gender



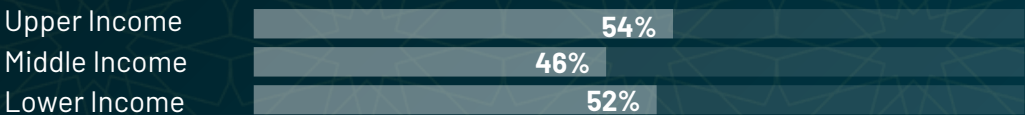
By Age



By Nationality



By Income Level

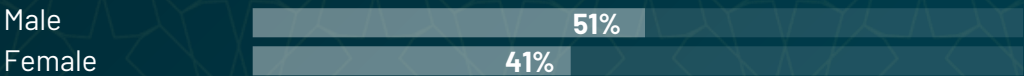


48%

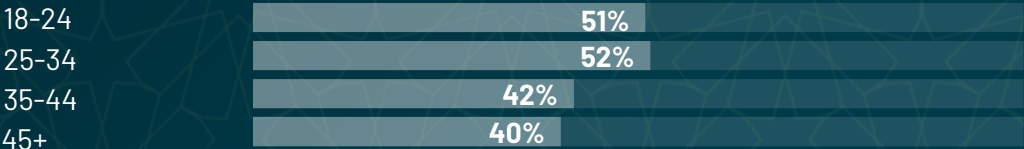
Tend to save more money in the months leading up to Ramadan to prepare for the increased expenses



By Gender



By Age



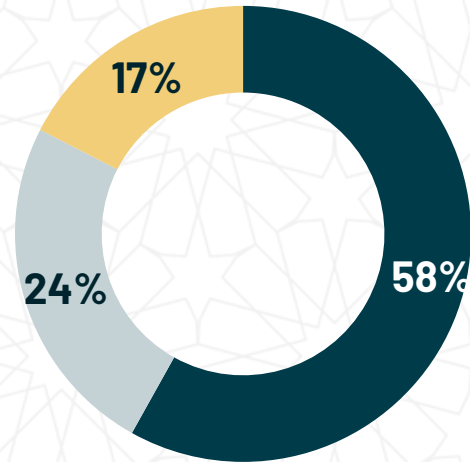
By Nationality



By Income Level



Despite planning and saving ahead, spending still rises for most during Ramadan.



- Spend more money
- No change in spending habits
- Spend less money



By Gender

Male	59%	24%	18%
Female	56%	26%	17%

By Age

18-24	55%	30%	15%
25-34	57%	22%	21%
35-44	64%	22%	14%
45+	59%	26%	15%

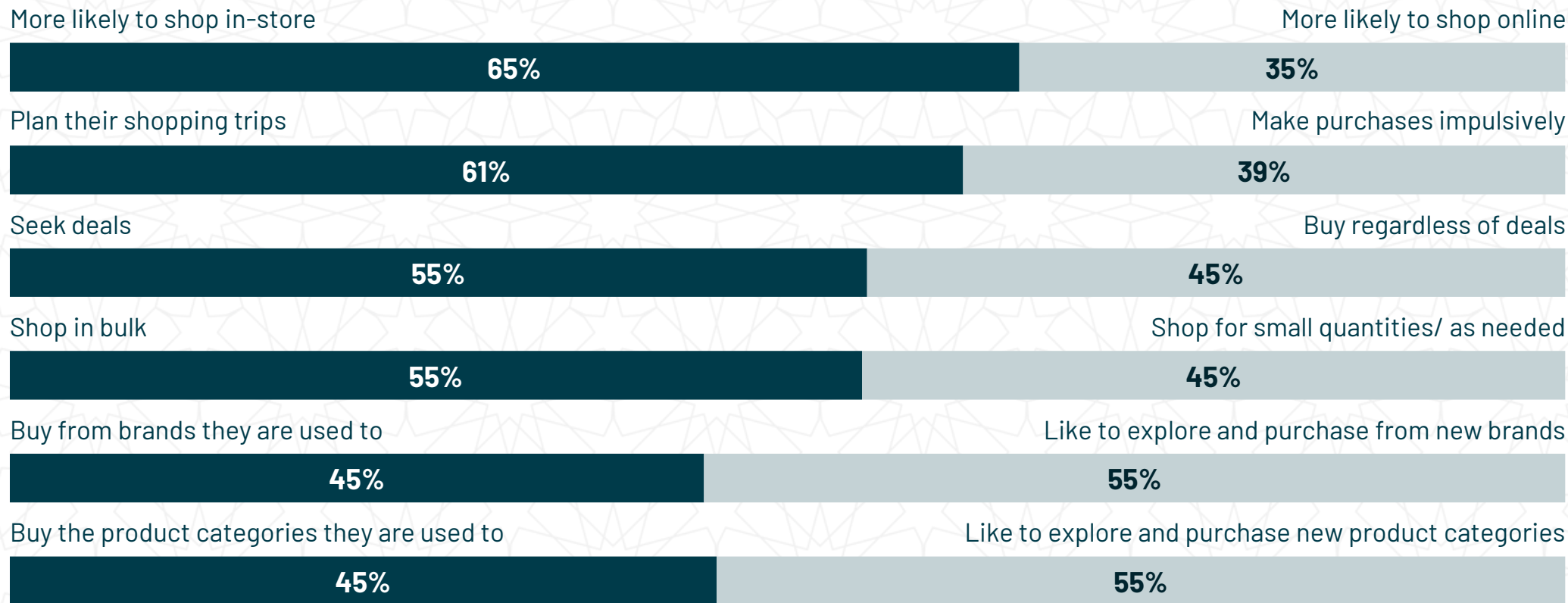
By Nationality

Nationals	63%	24%	13%
Expats	57%	25%	18%

By Income Level

Upper Income	56%	29%	15%
Middle Income	65%	16%	19%
Lower Income	50%	30%	20%

As spending rises, Ramadan shopping becomes more intentional, with shoppers in the UAE more likely to go in-store, plan their trips, and seek deals, while staying open to new brands and categories.



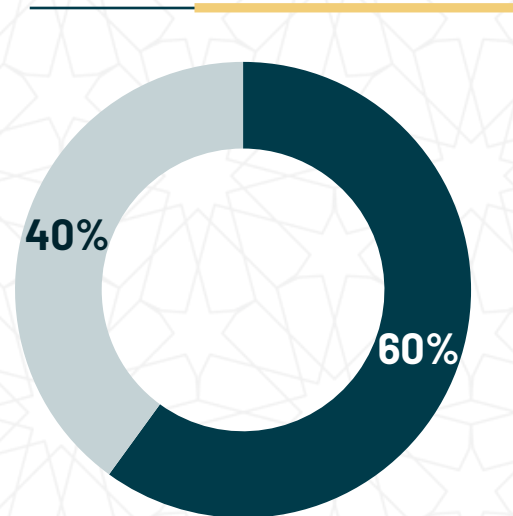
Types of shoppers during Ramadan

- by demographics

	65%	35%	61%	39%	55%	45%	55%	45%	45%	55%	45%	55%
	Shop in-store	Shop online	Planned shoppers	Impulsive shoppers	Seek deals	Buys regardless of deals	Shop in bulk	Shop as needed	Buy familiar brands	Try new brands	Buy familiar products	Try new products
Male	64%	36%	59%	41%	54%	46%	54%	46%	42%	58%	46%	54%
Female	66%	34%	67%	33%	57%	43%	58%	42%	51%	49%	45%	55%
18 - 24	60%	40%	65%	35%	58%	42%	61%	39%	53%	47%	56%	44%
25 - 34	66%	34%	56%	44%	52%	48%	50%	50%	42%	58%	42%	58%
35 - 44	67%	33%	66%	34%	55%	45%	56%	44%	43%	57%	45%	55%
45+	68%	32%	60%	40%	62%	38%	57%	43%	37%	63%	27%	73%
Nationals	65%	35%	60%	40%	45%	55%	55%	45%	53%	47%	51%	49%
Expats	65%	35%	62%	38%	57%	43%	55%	45%	43%	57%	44%	56%
Upper Income	61%	39%	62%	38%	52%	48%	56%	44%	44%	56%	45%	55%
Middle Income	70%	30%	60%	40%	54%	46%	55%	45%	45%	55%	47%	53%
Lower Income	64%	36%	64%	36%	64%	36%	51%	49%	46%	54%	42%	58%



Even so, grocery shopping is an enjoyable part of the Ramadan experience for many.



- Consider shopping for food and beverages to be an enjoyable activity during Ramadan
- Find shopping for food and beverages a chore during Ramadan



By Gender

Male	58%	42%
Female	65%	35%

By Age

18-24	67%	33%
25-34	52%	48%
35-44	64%	36%
45+	67%	33%

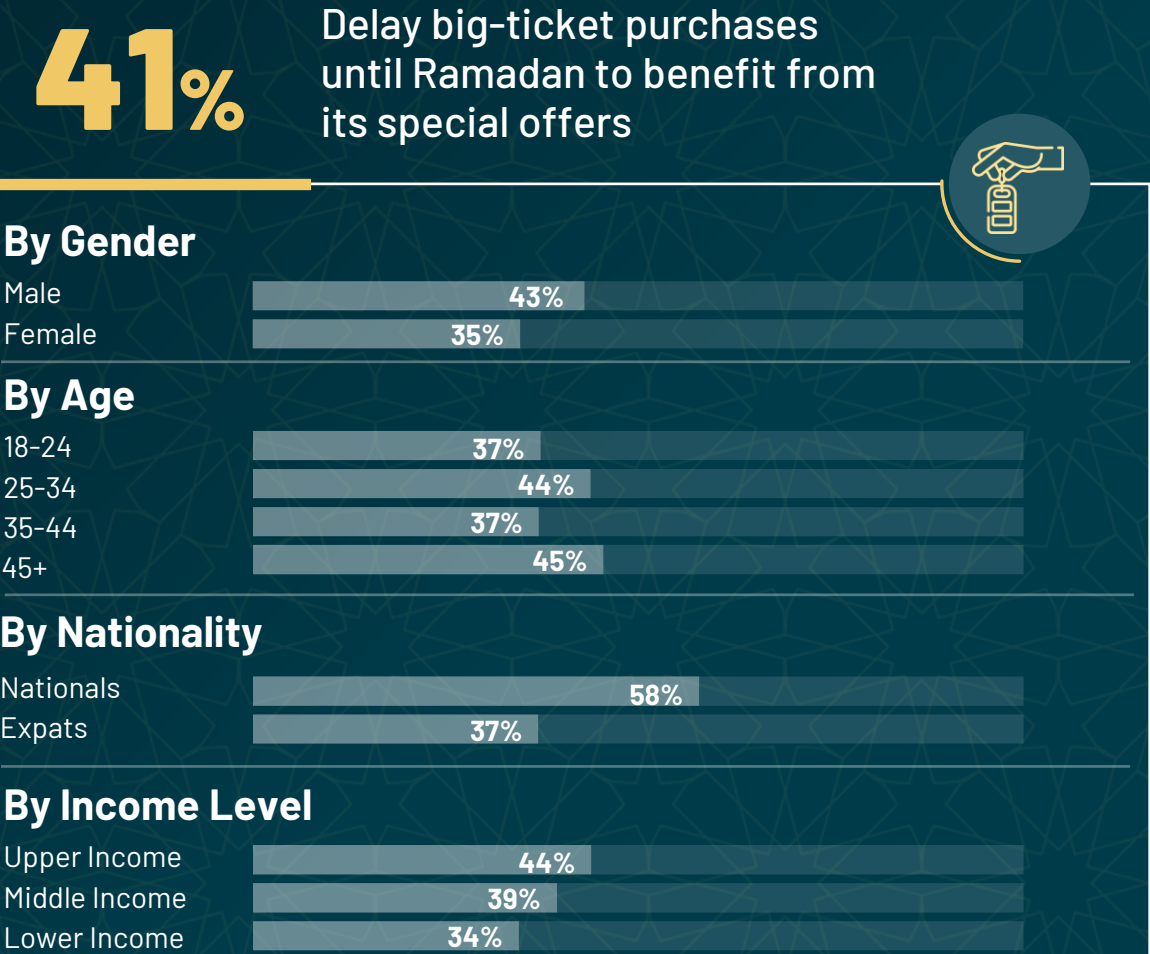
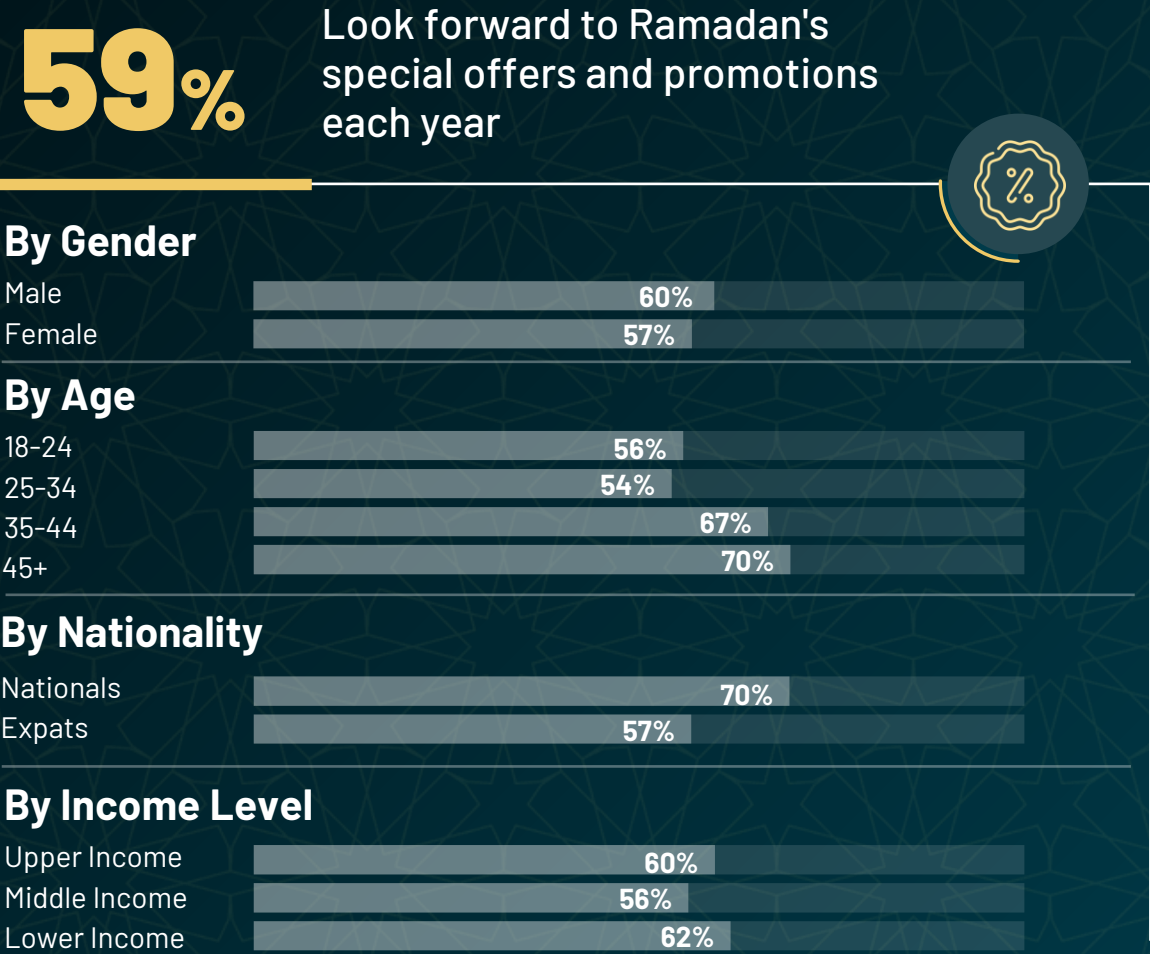
By Nationality

Nationals	54%	46%
Expats	61%	39%

By Income Level

Upper Income	63%	37%
Middle Income	56%	44%
Lower Income	63%	37%

Ramadan promotions become a key moment shoppers look forward to, often shaping both what they buy and when, with many delaying bigger purchases to benefit from discounts.



Entertainment Choices In Ramadan

04



During Ramadan, entertainment is largely social and home-focused, with visiting loved ones and shopping trips topping the list.

Top entertainment activities during Ramadan – Top 10



Entertainment activities during Ramadan

Top 10 - by demographics

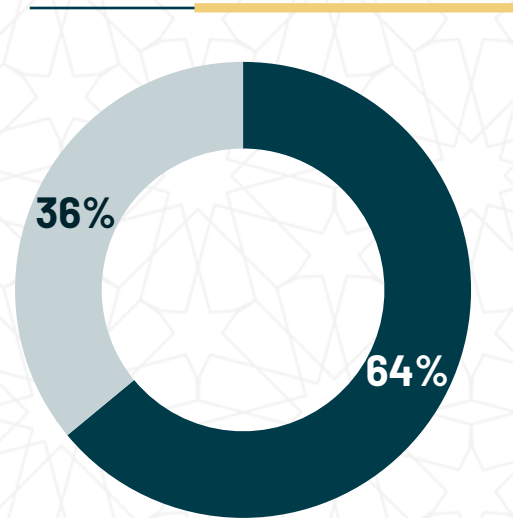
		52%	29%	24%	21%	20%	12%	12%	12%	12%	12%
		Visiting friends or family	Shopping/going to mall	Visiting Ramadan tents	Dining out at restaurants	Watching TV	Watching sports out	Watching sports at home	Outdoor activities	Engaging in sports	Going to bazaars
	Male	48%	27%	24%	18%	23%	16%	15%	10%	14%	10%
	Female	59%	34%	25%	28%	12%	4%	3%	17%	8%	17%
	18 - 24	55%	23%	18%	17%	18%	14%	8%	16%	24%	10%
	25 - 34	46%	28%	23%	23%	22%	14%	14%	13%	10%	11%
	35 - 44	56%	34%	31%	22%	18%	10%	12%	10%	7%	16%
	45+	60%	39%	27%	13%	19%	10%	11%	4%	-	11%
	Nationals	42%	20%	20%	15%	29%	23%	8%	10%	23%	17%
	Expats	54%	31%	25%	22%	18%	10%	12%	13%	10%	11%
	Upper Income	58%	28%	28%	20%	17%	13%	11%	14%	14%	12%
	Middle Income	48%	33%	19%	23%	25%	12%	12%	11%	9%	11%
	Lower Income	44%	22%	24%	18%	17%	13%	12%	10%	14%	13%

Brand Interaction & Advertising

05



When it comes to discovering brands during Ramadan, digital channels dominate.



- Use online sources to obtain information about brands
- Use offline sources to obtain information about brands



By Gender

Male	66%	34%
Female	59%	41%

By Age

18-24	61%	39%
25-34	64%	36%
35-44	67%	33%
45+	60%	40%

By Nationality

Nationals	52%	48%
Expats	66%	34%

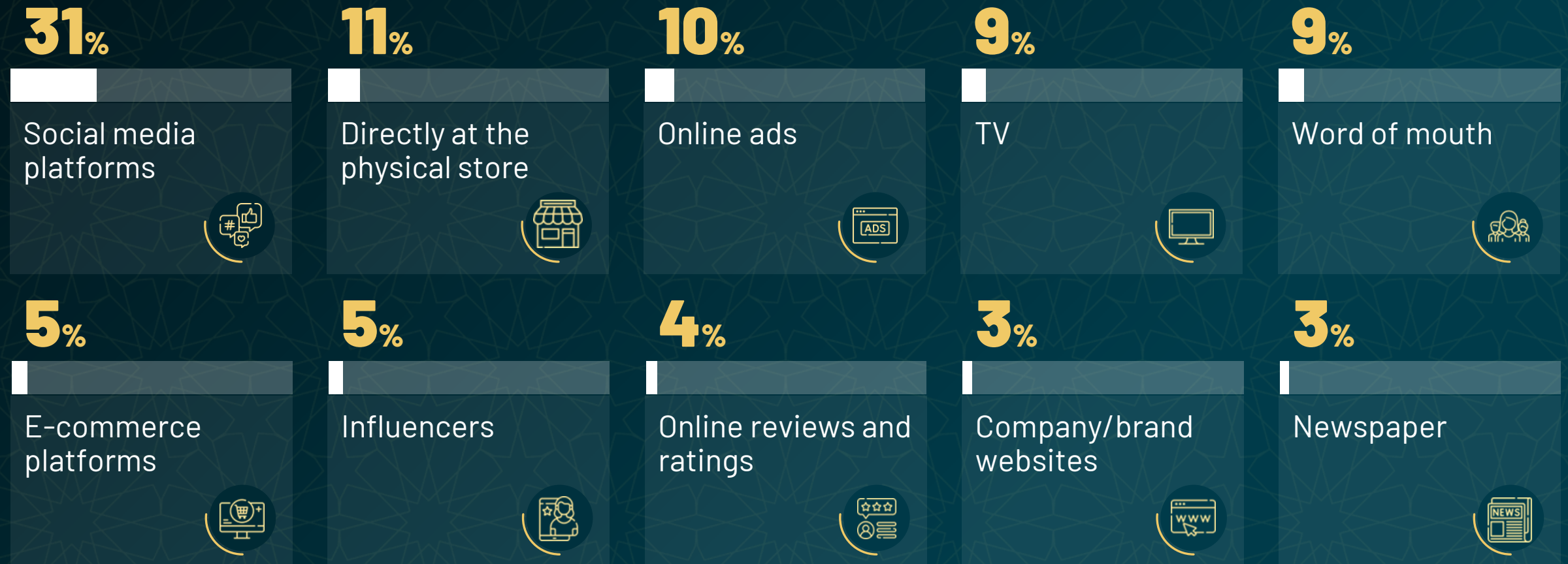
By Income Level

Upper Income	63%	37%
Middle Income	60%	40%
Lower Income	73%	27%



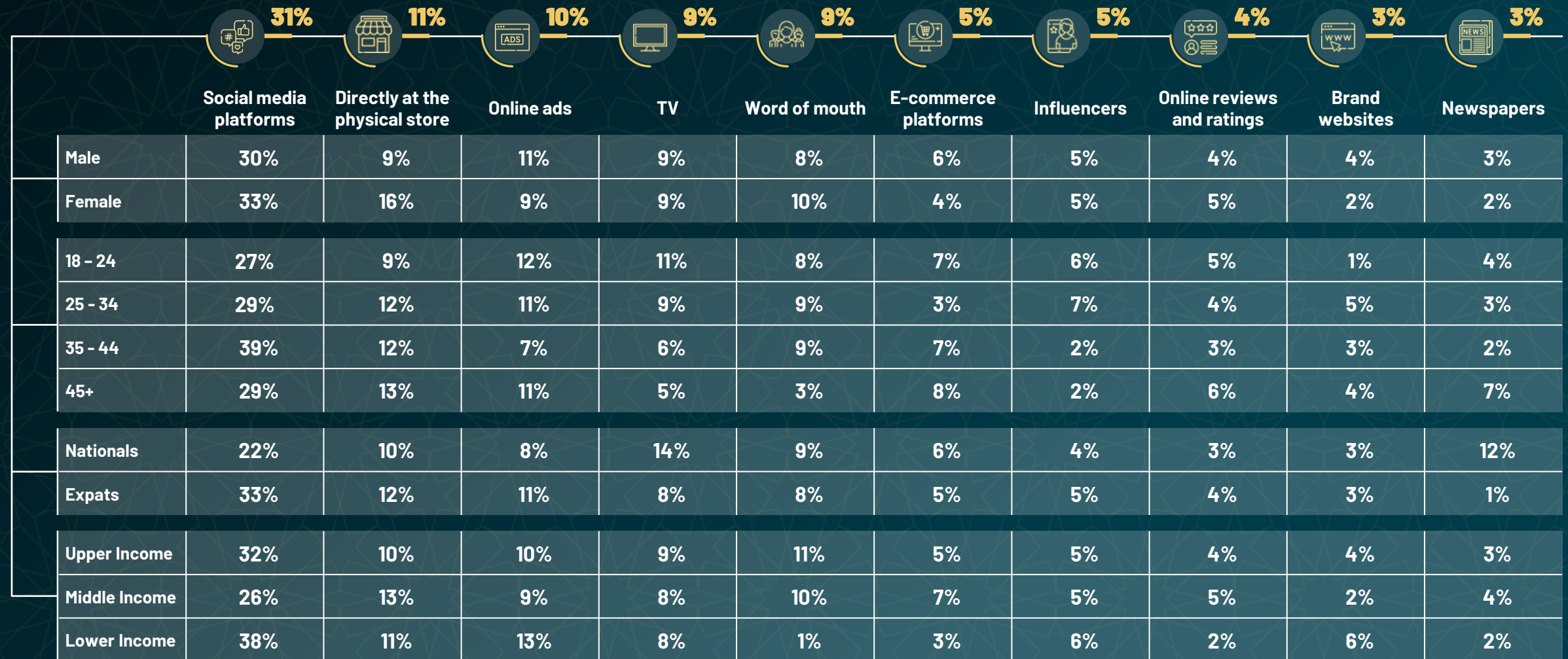
Within this digital-first landscape, social media emerges as the top source of brand information.

Main sources used to obtain information about brands – Top 10

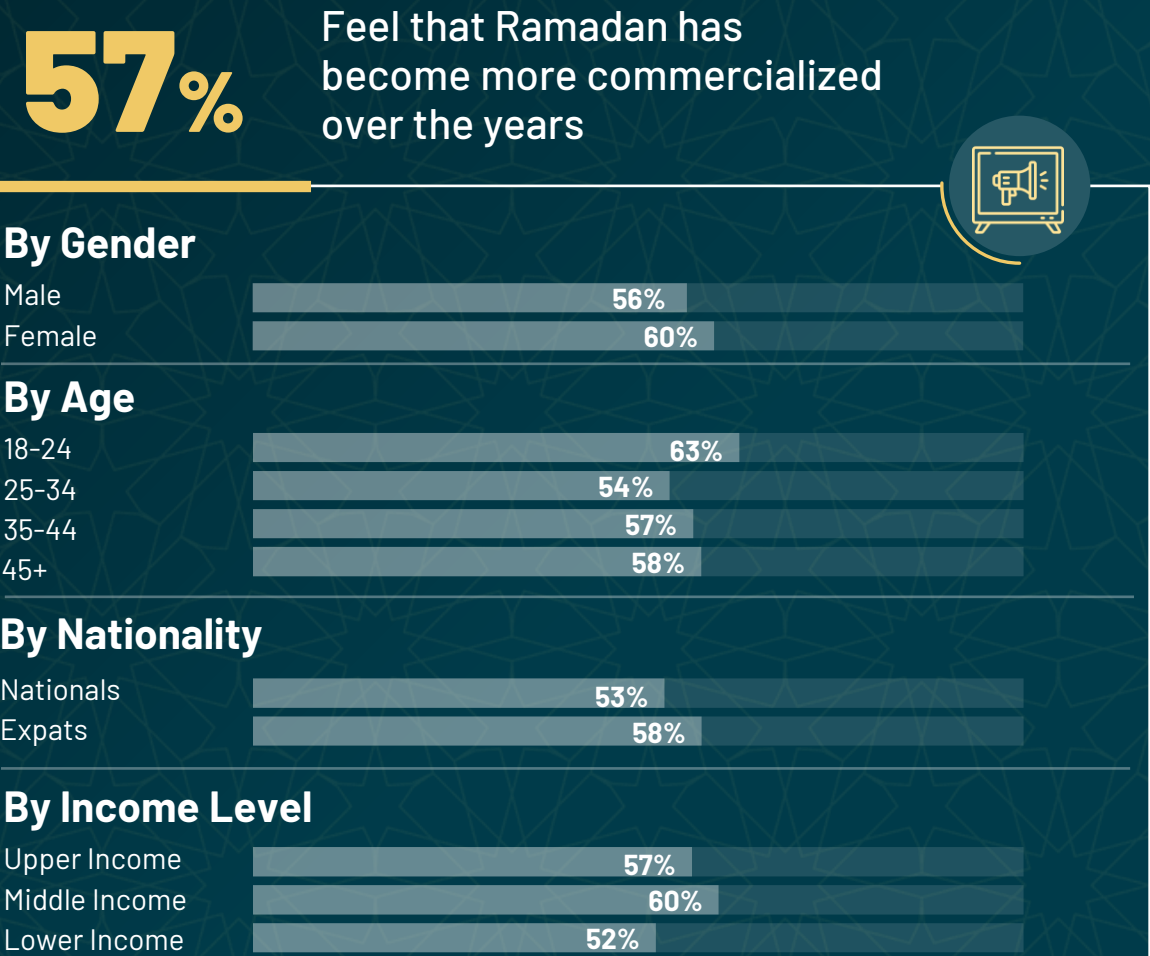
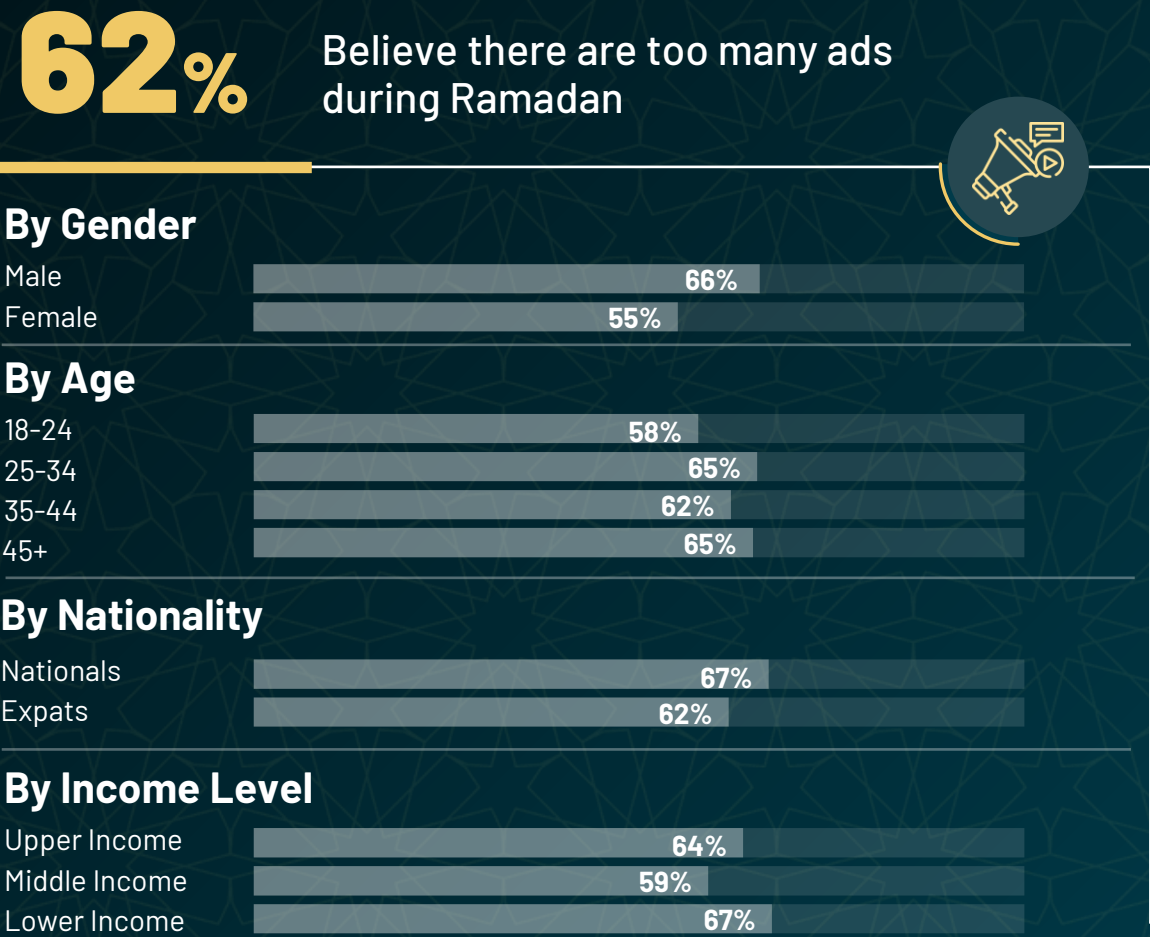


Main sources used to obtain information about brands

Top 10 - by demographics



However, this heavy presence fuels perceptions of ad overload, with many feeling the month has become increasingly commercialized.



Yet despite this sentiment, Ramadan advertising remains effective, translating into strong brand recall and purchase decisions.

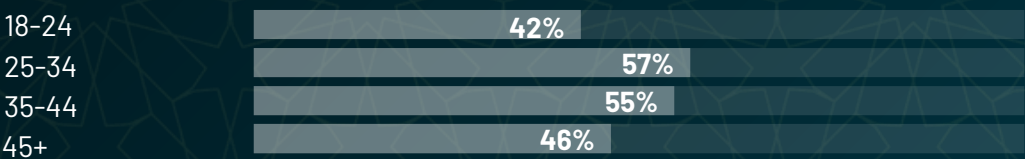
52% Have previously purchased a product based on an ad they saw during Ramadan



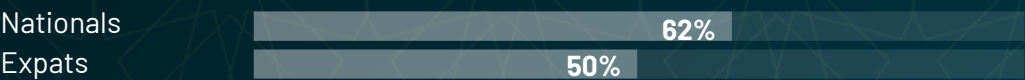
By Gender



By Age



By Nationality



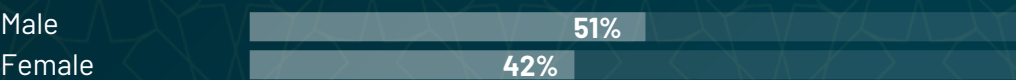
By Income Level



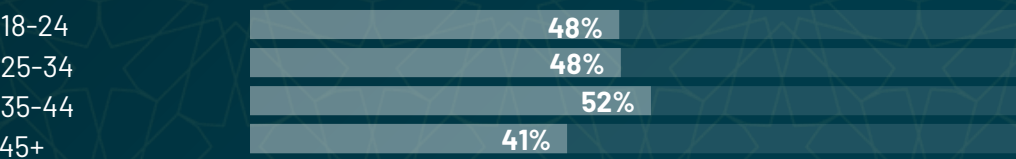
49% Are more likely to remember brands that advertise during Ramadan



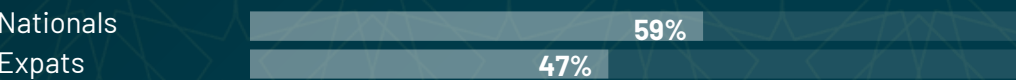
By Gender



By Age



By Nationality



By Income Level



Most Prominent Ramadan Brands

06



Brands most associated with Ramadan in UAE

Top 10 brands – sorted by alphabetical order



The Ramadan Personas

07



The diverse Ramadan personas – each with unique attitudes and behaviours during the holy month

29%

The Content Explorer



25%

The Passionate Shopper



18%

The Social Connector



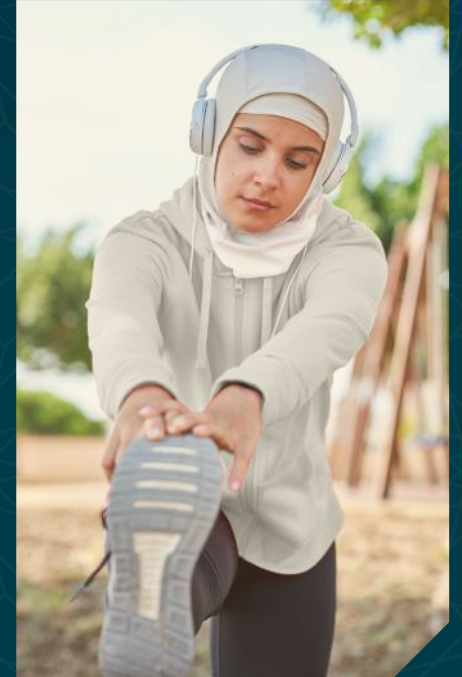
15%

The Festive Spirit



13%

The Self Nurturer

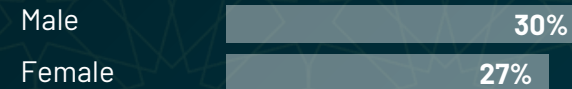




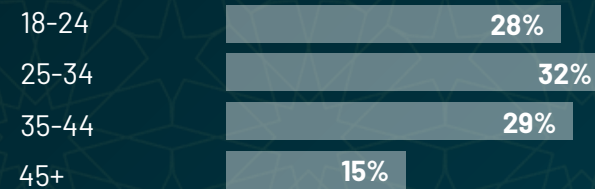
Who is the Content Explorer? (29%)

A digital enthusiast who engages deeply with Ramadan-related programs and content on social media

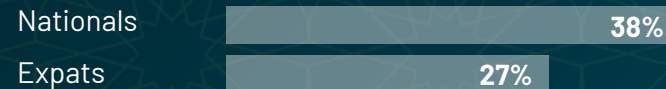
By Gender



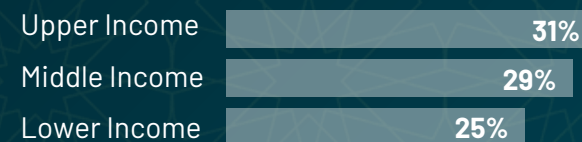
By Age



By Nationality



By Income Level



80%

View Ramadan as a season for exploring and watching series and catching up on Ramadan-themed programs

65%

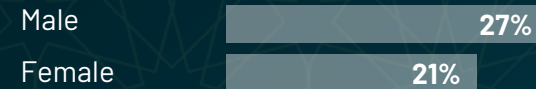
View Ramadan as a time for digital connection and engaging with Ramadan-related social media content



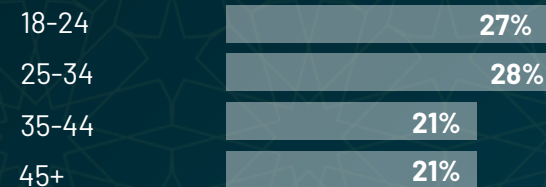
Who is the Passionate Shopper? (25%)

A shopping lover who indulges in the busy markets and attractive deals during Ramadan

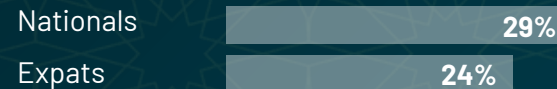
By Gender



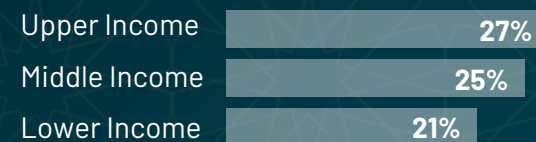
By Age



By Nationality



By Income Level



74%

Take Ramadan as a time to indulge in shopping, whether for Eid gifts or personal treats

56%

Perceive Ramadan as a season of shopping, with attractive deals and bustling markets



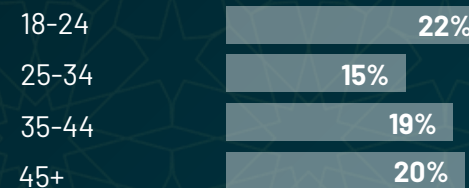
Who is the Social Connector? (18%)

A social butterfly cherishing shared experiences and connections during Ramadan with family, friends and the community

By Gender



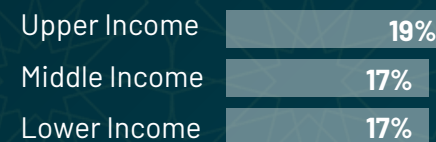
By Age



By Nationality



By Income Level



82%

Believe Ramadan a time to connect with many friends and social groups

72%

Believe Ramadan is a time of togetherness and shared experiences with loved ones



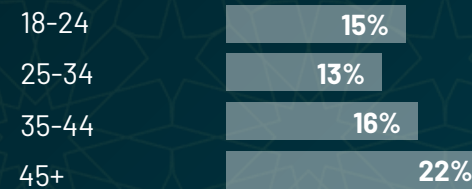
Who is the Festive Spirit? (15%)

A person who creates a festive atmosphere around them and enjoys the traditions of Ramadan

By Gender



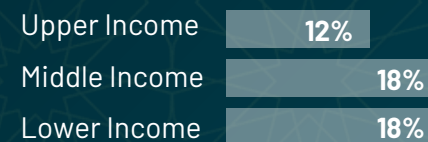
By Age



By Nationality



By Income Level



78%

Believe that decorating and creating a festive atmosphere at home is an essential part of Ramadan customs

58%

Believe that Ramadan embodies the spirit of festivity, with its community Iftar/Suhoor meals and shared joy



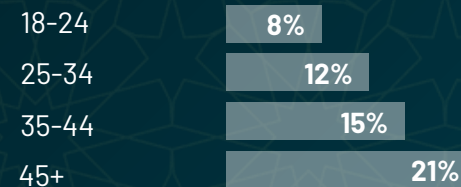
Who is the Self Nurturer? (13%)

A person who sees Ramadan as a time not only for spiritual growth but also physical well-being and health consciousness

By Gender



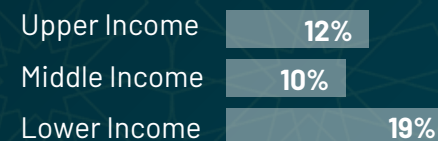
By Age



By Nationality



By Income Level



97%

Consider Ramadan an opportunity to reset their body

95%

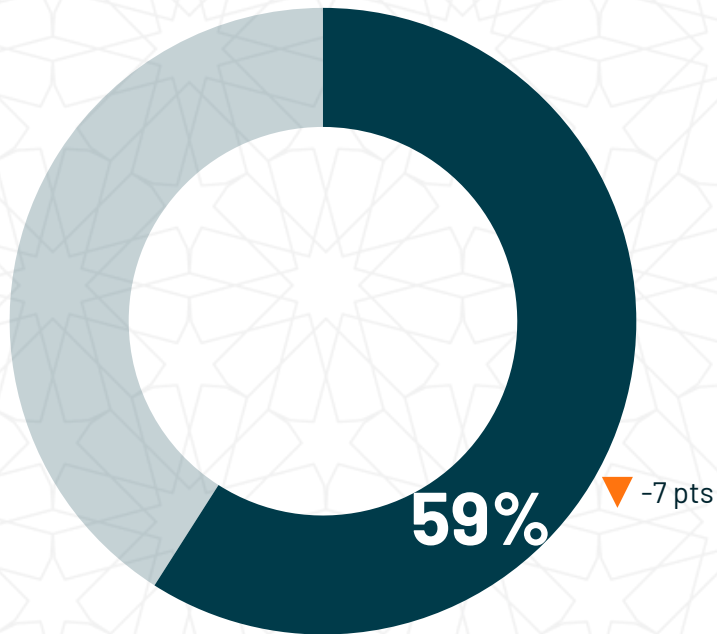
Consider Ramadan as a period of physical discipline and health consciousness

Eid Plans

08



Looking ahead to Eid, many already have plans in place for travel and time away, with a stronger inclination towards domestic trips or staycations than international travel.



Plan on traveling during the Eid holiday

37%

Plan on travelling domestically or having a staycation

22%

Plan on traveling internationally



Travel plans during the Eid holiday

- by demographics



	Plan on traveling during the Eid holiday	Plan on travelling domestically or having a staycation	Plan on traveling internationally
Male	63%	39%	24%
Female	50%	31%	19%
18 – 24	59%	40%	19%
25 – 34	58%	37%	21%
35 – 44	62%	36%	26%
45+	54%	28%	26%
Nationals	62%	40%	22%
Expats	58%	36%	22%
Upper Income	62%	38%	24%
Middle Income	55%	33%	22%
Lower Income	59%	40%	19%

Sample and methodology

Sample size

500 respondents

Sample criteria

General public: representative of the Muslim population across gender, age (18+), nationality, regions and SECs

Methodology

The survey was conducted via Ipsos online panel

Geographical coverage

Conducted in UAE
with a nationwide coverage

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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