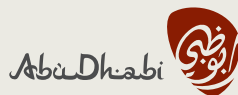




What to see and do



travellers welcome:
www.visitabudhabi.ae





dear

VISITOR

WHETHER YOU'RE MAKING YOUR first trip to Abu Dhabi, or are on a return visit, I hope you find in this guide a host of experiences to engage and entertain you.

Abu Dhabi's tourism offering is intertwined with our rich culture and heritage and an increasingly flourishing local and regional arts scene. It is an offering which is constantly being refined and expanded with an underlying theme of delivering experiences to enrich the lives of our residents and valued visitors alike.

We in Abu Dhabi have been blessed with a geographic diversity that allows you to explore natural islands, vast deserts, all the conveniences and luxuries of a modern capital city, cooling oases and sweeping, pristine beaches.

Here you will also find diversity in the cultural offering from UNESCO World Heritage Sites to award-winning and ground-breaking architectural icons.

There is now much more than ever to see and do in Abu Dhabi at your leisure. We have award-winning golf courses, luxury resorts in the city, on the beach, in the desert and on island getaways – and many have adventure activities to make your stay memorable. Of course we also have headline attractions – and more are on the way – and an increasing number of tours and attractions.

This is a destination that will intrigue, captivate and entice you to return again and again. And, as the emirate's event calendar is extensive and varied, you may well discover a major event is happening while you're here or may have even timed your trip with one of them. I would advise you all to register with www.visitabudhabi.ae so that we can keep you up-to-date with the many happenings and developments in this destination of distinction.

Mubarak Al Muhairi
Director General
Abu Dhabi Tourism & Culture Authority





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the what,
where & why



OUR WAYFARER GUIDE

A TRUE DESTINATION of distinction, Abu Dhabi is developing at a significant rate while preserving, protecting and promoting its rich culture and its intriguing past. The emirate abounds with compelling heritage sites, engaging cultural and modern-day attractions and idyllic touches of luxury.





discover a



DESTINATION APART



A RELATIVELY SHORT TIME AGO, Abu Dhabi emirate was little more than an empty, albeit beautiful, desert inhabited by nomadic tribes, with a sprinkling of villages around the more fertile oases.

The economy was based around pearl diving, fishing and date palm cultivation. Meaning 'Father of the Gazelle' in Arabic, Abu Dhabi was founded when a young antelope led a wandering tribe to fresh water, on an island with no more than 300 palm ('barasti') huts, a few coral buildings and the Ruler's fort. This simple island

settlement has since been transformed into the modern, cosmopolitan city of Abu Dhabi and the high-rise capital of the United Arab Emirates. The discovery of oil in 1958 brought radical change to the emirate and its population, its revenue was wisely invested which led to a complete turnaround in Abu Dhabi's fortunes. Thanks to this new found wealth and the strong leadership of the late UAE President and Ruler of Abu Dhabi, His Highness Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan, the emirate prospered and developed, with an infrastructure built virtually from scratch.

Growth

While recognising the success of the oil sector, Abu Dhabi is working hard to reduce its reliance on hydrocarbons and to broaden the emirate's economy. Investment in infrastructure, tourism, transport, health and education is ongoing and in line with the government's 2030 plan. Tourism is playing an integral role in this economic transition, with the emirate targeting 2.8 million hotel guests per year by the end of 2014. Major new attractions are being progressed along with luxury resorts, desert retreats and business centre hotels.

Tourism

With natural islands, more than 400 kilometres of pristine coastline, tranquil oases, UNESCO World Heritage Sites, modern cityscapes, rocky, mountain-like heights, and awe-inspiring deserts, Abu Dhabi offers a diversity of visitor experiences. It is also preserving and leveraging its rich cultural heritage so that visitors can share in a centuries-old history and its traditions, many of which continue today. Visitors can tour former palaces, forts, one of the world's largest mosques, renovated oases, desert camps and experience falconry, camel trekking and Arabia's famed hospitality.

Abu Dhabi's attractions are equally diverse. The emirate's tourism industry is managed, regulated and promoted by Abu Dhabi Tourism & Culture Authority (TCA Abu Dhabi), which operates a world-class hotel and hotel apartment classification system that ensures visitors' accommodation expectations are met. It also certifies and trains tourist guides to deliver memorable and informative guest experiences.

Abu Dhabi also hosts many major international events, with a significant number being initiated and organised by TCA Abu Dhabi. These include a PGA golf tournament, a gourmet food festival, EidFests, a summer family carnival, heritage festivals and art exhibitions.



Liwa Fort

ruling FAMILY



THE AL NAHYAN FAMILY has ruled Abu Dhabi since 1793 and has transformed the emirate into a modern society which maintains respect for its roots and preserves its natural and cultural heritage.

The Ruler of Abu Dhabi is His Highness Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, who is also the current UAE President. Sheikh Khalifa is ably supported by his brother, his Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces.

The late Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan



facts & FIGURES



WITH RESPECT FOR its own culture and that of others underpinning Abu Dhabi's character, the emirate is emerging as a global cultural hub.

Population

Abu Dhabi is the largest and most populated of the seven emirates that make up the United Arab Emirates, with over 80% of its landmass. The emirate's population, now over 2.3 million, is expected to reach 3 million by 2030. Across the UAE, Emirati citizens make up nearly 20% of the total population; the other 80% are expatriates from Asia, Africa, Australia, Europe and North America.

Local Time

The UAE is four hours ahead of UTC (Co-ordinated Universal Time – formerly known as GMT) and there is no daylight saving. Hence, when it is 12.00 midday in Abu Dhabi, it is 3am in New York, 8am in London, 10 am in Johannesburg, 1.30pm in New Delhi, and 6pm in Sydney (not allowing for any summer time saving in those countries).

Social & Business Hours

Generally, government departments, embassies and consulates work from 8am to 4pm. Embassies and consulates may designate specific times of day

for processing certain requests (such as passport applications) so always call before you visit. The Islamic holy day is Friday and most organisations operate a Friday / Saturday weekend. Shops and many visitor attractions are open on both days, though usually towards the end of the day or in the early evening on Fridays.

Ramadan Hours

During the holy month of Ramadan shops often change their hours by closing during the day, re-opening an hour or two after sunset, and staying open later at night. Food outlets and restaurants generally remain closed or offer takeaway services only during the day and then open up for Iftar after sunset.



CLIMATE



Al Ain Oasis

THIS IS A DESTINATION with almost year round sunshine, little rainfall and near perfect winter temperatures.

Abu Dhabi has a sub-tropical, arid climate. Sunny blue skies and high temperatures can be expected most of the year. Rainfall is sporadic, falling mainly in winter (November to March) and mostly averaging 12 cms per year. Rain is more common in the 'Oasis City' of Al Ain, the emirate's second largest city, due to its proximity to the Hajar mountains. Temperatures range from a low of around 13C (50F) on a winter's night, to a high of around

42C (118F) on a summer's day. The cooler months, November to April, are the most pleasant time to visit, when temperatures are around 24C (75F) during the day and 13C (56F) at night.

Flora & Fauna

For an emirate with such an arid climate and little rainfall, Abu Dhabi has surprisingly diverse indigenous flora and fauna. The emirate is home to about 3,500 native plants despite its high soil salinity and harsh environment. The date palm is the most widely cultivated of the indigenous flora, providing wonderful

seas of green, especially in the oases. Lush mangrove forests can be found offshore Abu Dhabi city and many of the islands – mangrove protection schemes have been particularly successful in maintaining this essential element of the emirate's bio-diversity.

Heading towards the mountains, flat-topped acacia trees and wild grasses make the terrain feel more like savannah than desert. Indigenous fauna includes the highly endangered Arabian leopard and the ibex, but sightings of both are extremely rare. Realistically, the only large animals you will see are camels and goats (often roaming close to the roads). Other desert life includes the sand cat, sand fox and desert hare, as well as gerbils, hedgehogs and geckos. Recent studies have shown that the number of bird species is increasing, due in part to the emirate's increasing lushness. This is most apparent in the parks in spring and autumn, as the emirate lies on the route for birds migrating between Central Asia and East Africa.

Marine life is abundant with coastal waters being home to tropical fish, coral, dolphins, the dugong (sea cow) and turtles. Eight species of whales

and seven dolphin species have been recorded in UAE waters. Four or five of the world's seven turtle species are indigenous, including the hawksbill and leatherback. All are endangered, and successful conservation programmes have ensured they still nest on protected areas, particularly on Saadiyat Island. Throughout Abu Dhabi emirate, local municipalities have established extensive 'greening' programmes. Roadsides are incredibly lush, with grass, palm trees and flowers lining main streets. Within Abu Dhabi city, there are more than 20 manicured public parks.



culture &

LIFESTYLE



THE COMBINATION of international influences and a strong commitment to local heritage has created an intriguing mix of new and old.

Culture

Abu Dhabi's culture is firmly rooted in Arabia's Islamic traditions. Islam is more than a religion; it is a way of life that governs everyday events from what to wear to what to eat and drink. The UAE's culture and heritage is inextricably linked to its religion, and it is a shining example of Islam's true commitment to tolerance and

hospitality. Foreigners are free to practise their own religion and the dress code is reasonably liberal. Women are able to drive and walk around unescorted. Among the most highly prized virtues are courtesy and hospitality, and visitors are sure to be charmed by the genuine friendliness of the people. Despite the speed of economic development over the last 41 years, Abu Dhabi continues to promote traditional cultural and sporting events, such as falconry, camel racing and dhow sailing.

Language

Arabic is the official language, although English is widely spoken and most road and shop signs and restaurant menus are in both languages. The further out of town you go, the more Arabic you will find, both written and spoken. Arabic isn't the easiest language to pick up, or to pronounce, but if you can throw in a couple of Arabic words here and there they will be warmly received.

Religion

Islam is the official religion of the UAE, and is widely practised. The basis of Islam is the belief that there is only one God and that Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) is his messenger. The Islamic holy day is Friday and there are five pillars of Islam, which all Muslims must follow: the Profession of Faith, Prayer, Charity, Fasting, and the Pilgrimage to Makkah. Additionally, a Muslim is required to pray (facing Makkah) five times a day. The times vary according to the position of the sun, when the modern day call to prayer is transmitted through loudspeakers on mosque minarets.

The UAE Constitution provides for freedom of religion in accordance with established customs. Abu Dhabi



is tolerant of other religions with people being free to practice their religious beliefs, so long as they do not interfere with Islam. Non-Muslims can get an insight into Islam through complimentary guided tours of the spectacular Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque – one of the world's largest. The tours run at different times during the week.

**www.szgmc.ae
tour@szgmc.ae**



Ramadan

Ramadan is the holy month in which Muslims commemorate the revelation of the Holy Quran (Islam's holy book). It's a time of fasting and Muslims abstain from all food, drink, smoking and unclean thoughts (or activities) between dawn and dusk. At sunset, the fast is broken with the Iftar feast, the timings of which are published in all daily newspapers and on our www.visitabudhabi.ae destination website. All over the city, festive Ramadan tents are filled to the brim each evening with people of all nationalities and religions enjoying traditional Arabic mezze and sweets. The dates of Ramadan change each year following the Islamic

lunar calendar. Non-Muslims are respectfully required to refrain from eating, drinking or smoking in public places during daylight hours. Failure to do so could upset people or lead to an official complaint. During Ramadan, the sale of alcohol is restricted to after dusk, while shops and parks usually open and close later. In addition, no live music or dancing is allowed (so nightclubs tend to close for the entire month) and cinemas limit daytime screenings. Ramadan ends with a three-day celebration and holiday called Eid Al Fitr, which is characterised by gifts being given amongst families, friends, neighbours and charities.

National Dress

UAE nationals usually wear traditional dress in public. For men, this is the kandura – a white, full length shirt-like garment, which is worn with a white or red checkered headdress, known as a ghutra. This is secured with a black cord (agal). Sheikhs and important businessmen may also wear a thin, gold-trimmed robe (bisht) over their kandura at important events. In public, women wear a long, loose black robe (abaya) that covers their

normal clothes – plus a headscarf (sheyla). The abaya is often of very sheer, flowing fabric with intricate embroidery and beadwork along the wrists and hemline. Sheylas are also becoming more elaborate and a statement of individuality, particularly among the young. Headwear varies with some women wearing a thin black veil covering their face and others, generally older women, wearing a leather veil (burka), which covers the nose, brow, cheekbones and lips.



getting AROUND



CHEAP TAXIS, a well-planned road system and plenty of sidewalk space make Abu Dhabi easy and pleasant to navigate. Due to the relative ease of getting around, visitors may opt to rent a vehicle. People often rely on landmarks to give directions. Abu Dhabi city is linked to the mainland by four bridges Al Maqtaa, Sheikh Khalifa, Sheikh Zayed and Mussafah and it has a New York style grid road system.

Taxis

Taxis are reasonably priced and plentiful and can be flagged down at the roadside or booked by phone through the Centre For Regulation Of Transport By Hire Cars (TransAd) by calling 600 535353. Street taxis are easily recognised either by their silver livery and yellow roof sign. Daytime (6am – 10pm) metered fares in the city start at AED 3.50 (US \$1) for flagged cabs, AED 8 (US \$2.2) for cabs

booked by phone, and increase by an additional AED 1.60 (50 cents) for every kilometre. Night fares are slightly more, starting at AED 4.00 (US \$1.69) and increasing by AED 1.69 (55 cents) per kilometre. A tip is not expected but always welcome.

Many taxi drivers do not speak fluent English, and are not always familiar with street names, so it helps to know exactly where you are going. It's also helpful to take the phone number of your destination with you in case you get lost.

All taxi companies service the airport in addition to specially registered airport taxis. The journey into town from the airport costs AED 70 – 80 (approx US \$30).

Abu Dhabi taxis are going environmentally friendly. They're being fitted with a system which allows them to use compressed natural gas (CNG) which produces less emissions and pollutant than petrol.

Car Rental

You will find all major car rental companies in Abu Dhabi, plus a few extra, and it's worth remembering that the larger, more reputable firms generally have more reliable vehicles and a greater capacity to help in an emergency (an important factor when handling the trying times following an accident). All services are provided inclusive of registration, maintenance, replacement, 24-hour assistance and insurance (comprehensive insurance with personal accident cover is advisable). For short term rental, many companies offer daily rates – there are booths at the airport and most of the major hotels, there are numerous shops dotted throughout the city, and you can book via

www.visitabudhabi.ae.

It's worth ringing around for rates, although usually the most competitive rates can be found online. To hire any vehicle you will need a passport copy, credit card and a valid driving licence from your home country, or a valid international driving licence. If you have a residence visa, you will need to have a valid UAE driving licence.

Mawaqif – Paid Parking System

In Abu Dhabi city paid parking is enforced round-the-clock, excluding Fridays and public holidays. Parking meters set time limits for use of public parking spaces, which helps organise parking and prevent illegal parking. At premium parking lots on main streets, vehicles can park for up to four hours at AED 3 (82 cents) per hour. In standard spaces, the rate is AED 2 (55 cents) per hour for a maximum of 24 hours. Drivers who park outside the designated spaces; indicated by turquoise and white or blue and black markings, can be fined from AED 200 – AED 1,000 (US \$54 – 273).

Buses

Abu Dhabi's modern air-conditioned buses operate round-the-clock. The service is easy to use, with passengers hopping in and out of any bus by placing a two dirhams in the collection box next to the driver.

If you are planning to use the bus on a regular basis, weekly passes – AED 30 (US \$8) are also available.

Visitors who qualify need to apply online for their free pass and can collect it from Abu Dhabi's Central Bus Station.

For more information on bus services, fares and schedules, or to download bus routes, visit www.ojra.ae



CAR HIRE COMPANIES

Abu Dhabi

Al Ghazal Transport Co	+971 2 634 2200	www.adnh.com
Avis Rent A Car	+971 2 621 5400	www.avisuae.ae
Budget Rent A Car	+971 2 443 8430	www.budget.com
Diamond Lease	+971 2 622 2028	www.diamondlease.com
Dollar Rent A Car	+971 2 641 9002	www.dollaruae.com
Emco Rent A Car	+971 2 633 8933	
Europcar	+971 2 626 1441	www.europcar-uae.com
FAST Rent A Car	+971 2 632 4000	www.fastuae.com
Hertz Rent A Car	+971 2 672 0060	www.hertzuae.com
National Car Rental	+971 2 800 3130	www.national-me.com
Thrifty Car Rental	+971 2 676 7649	www.thrifty.com

Al Ain

Avis Rent A Car (Al Ain)	+971 3 768 7262	www.avisuae.ae
FAST Rent A Car (Al Ain)	+971 3 766 7330	www.fastuae.com

USEFUL PHRASES

Greetings

Hi	Salam
Good morning	Sabah el kheer
Good evening	Masaa el kheer
Welcome! (to greet someone)	Marhaba
How are you?	Kaifa alhal
I'm fine, thanks	Ana bekhair, shokran
And you?	Wa ant?
Thank you (very much)!	Shukran (jazeelan)
You're welcome! (for thank you)	Afwan
Good night	Tosbeho ala khair
Goodbye	Maia salama

Asking for Help and Directions

I'm lost	Adaitu tareeqi
Can you help me?	Momkin mosa'adati?
Straight/left/ right	Ala tool/yisar/yameen
How much is this?	B kam hatha? (th as in bath)
Excuse me...! (to ask for something or to pass by)	Law samaht

MONEY



Local Currency

The UAE's monetary unit is the dirham (AED), which is divided into 100 fils. Notes are in denominations of AED1,000, 500, 200, 100, 50, 20, 10 and 5. Coins are in denominations of AED1, and 50, 25, 10 and 5 fils, although the 10 and 5 fils coins are rarely used. The Dirham is fixed to the US \$1.00 = AED3.67.

Money

Cash is still the UAE's preferred payment method, although credit and debit cards are widely accepted. Foreign currencies and travellers' cheques can be exchanged in licenced exchange offices, banks and hotels – a passport is required. Personal cheques can be a bit trickier and many places won't accept them. If you're shopping in the souks (markets) or in smaller shops, cash is the best, and often the only option.

Banks

An expansive network of local and international banks, strictly controlled by the UAE Central Bank, offers a full range of commercial and personal services. Transfers can be made easily as there is no exchange control and the dirham is freely convertible. Banking hours are generally Saturday to Thursday, 8am – 1pm and 5pm until 9pm.

ATMs

Most banks operate ATMs, which accept a range of cards. Most ATMs, although linked to a specific bank, are part of a central network so you can transact with a bank card for a nominal charge. Common systems accepted around Abu Dhabi include American Express, Cirrus, Global Access, MasterCard, Plus System and VISA. ATMs can be found in all shopping malls, major supermarkets, most petrol stations and the airport.

For international cards, the exchange rates used in transactions are normally competitive and the process is faster and far less hassle than using traditional travellers' cheques.



Money Exchanges

Exchange Houses are all over Abu Dhabi and offer rates often better than the banks. You'll find them in all major malls and popular shopping districts. They are usually open Saturday to Thursday, from 8am – 1pm and 4.30pm to 8.30pm, and on Friday evenings. Many hotels will also exchange money and travellers' cheques at standard (non-competitive) rates.

ESSENTIAL INFO



ABU DHABI'S VIRTUALLY CRIME FREE environment and well organised emergency services will bring you peace of mind and a relaxing stay.

In Emergency

The emergency phone number for Abu Dhabi Police is 999. Whether you need police assistance, an ambulance or the fire department, this is the number to call. If you are involved in a traffic accident, it's important to contact

the police immediately. In case of a minor incident, move your car to the side of the road, as there are fines for obstructing traffic. You cannot file an insurance claim without a police report.

For other enquiries, Abu Dhabi Police operates a dedicated Tourism Police section which will advise and guide you on a range of matters. You can contact them by calling toll-free on 800 2626.

Abu Dhabi has also implemented dedicated waters for jet ski and motorsports, and operates a marine emergency hotline where information on marine navigation can also be obtained – 996. www.bihar.ae.

As per UAE federal law and Abu Dhabi Government law, all visitors to the UAE must have medical insurance cover. In case of emergency, treatment to stabilise the case is free. Other treatment must be covered by a cash payment or insurance card for covered individuals.

In a medical emergency, Abu Dhabi's Sheikh Khalifa Medical City (+971 2 610 2000) and Al Noor Hospital (+971 2 626 5265) both have Accident and Emergency units. If you are injured in a traffic accident, you will automatically be taken to Sheikh Khalifa Medical City, as it has the best A&E treatment facilities.

Women

Women should not face any problems while travelling in the UAE. The police are helpful and respectful; call them at any time if you face any unwanted attention. It is courteous to dress with a little modesty, particularly in outlying areas where people tend to be more conservative.



Children

Abu Dhabi is a safe and entertaining place for children of all ages. There are plenty of parks, some great sandy beaches, and kids zones and crèche facilities in all major shopping malls. The majority of hotels cater well for children and offer everything from babysitting services to child friendly activities and children's swimming pools. Restaurants vary; some welcome children more than others.

People With Disabilities

Most of Abu Dhabi's five-star hotels, malls and heritage attractions have wheelchair facilities. Wheelchair ramps often have steep angles. When asking if a location has wheelchair access, make sure it really does as an escalator is considered wheelchair access to some. Abu Dhabi International Airport is well equipped for physically challenged travellers. There is a special check-in gate with direct access from the car park, as well as dedicated lifts, and a meet and assist service.

What To Wear

Lightweight summer clothing is suitable for most of the year, but something slightly warmer may be needed for the winter months. Be sure to take some sort of jacket or sweater when visiting hotels or the cinema, as the air conditioning can be fierce.

Although the attitude towards dress is fairly liberal throughout the emirate, a healthy amount of respect for local customs doesn't go amiss, especially when shopping or sightseeing.

Short or tight clothing can attract unwelcome attention. Malls, health clubs and resort facilities are generally more accepting of what's fashionable, but when visiting government offices it is best to cover your shoulders and legs. It is especially recommended that you dress more conservatively during Ramadan. In the evenings, restaurants and clubs usually have a mixture of styles – western, Arabic and Asian. Again, ladies are advised to take a pashmina or jacket because of cold air conditioning.

Photography

While normal tourist photography is acceptable, it is polite to ask permission before taking photos of people, particularly women. Photographs of government buildings, military installations and ports and airports should not be taken. Also, cameras may be banned in public areas designated for women and children only.



exploring ABU DHABI



FROM ABU DHABI CITY'S FAMOUS Corniche to the Oasis City of Al Ain and the massive Liwa Desert dunes in Al Gharbia (Western Region), local tour operators will help you explore and discover this intriguing emirate.

Tour Operators

Almost all tour operators offer city excursions and desert safaris, while some specialise in more diverse activities such as tours of the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque, rounds of golf,

fishing, sailing or diving expeditions, kayaking trips through mangrove forests, helicopter tours and desert driving courses or visits to the Abu Dhabi Falcon Hospital or Saluki (desert hunting dogs) Centre. Check the list below for some ideas.

Desert Safaris

Starting with an exciting ride up and down some of the desert's biggest dunes, you can try sand skiing before watching the sun set. After driving a

short distance further to a permanent desert camp, you are treated to a sumptuous barbecue, followed by shisha, camel rides, falconry displays and henna painting. You can choose to stay overnight or combine it with a trip into the mountains. Costs vary.

Abu Dhabi Tour

A tour of the UAE capital usually takes in everything from the evolving skyline to sandy shores and iconic buildings. A stroll along the Corniche will give you a glimpse of everyday Abu Dhabi life and the chance to savour some picturesque scenes. A half day tour will include the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque, the Abu Dhabi Corniche, and the Heritage Village.

Al Ain Tour

Al Ain was once a vital oasis on the caravan route from the UAE to Oman. The history of the 'Oasis City,' the emirate's heritage heartland and one of the world's oldest permanently inhabited settlements, can be explored through visits to the 175 year old Al Nahyan family fort, the Al Ain National Museum and a trip to the prehistoric tombs at Hili Fort – known to be over 4,000 years old. Other attractions include the Al Ain oases, Al Ain Zoo, the camel market – one of the last few



remaining, Wadi Adventure, a man-made white water rafting, kayaking and surfing playground in the shadow of Jebel Hafeet, and the world's most advanced go-karting facilities, for a taste of the fast track.

For family fun, try the renovated Hili Fun City, the Gulf's oldest theme park, which now offers one of the cheapest days out, with entry no more than AED 45 (US \$12).



Al Gharbia Tour

A great reason to start exploring this vast region is the drive to Liwa – a historic oasis town at the entry to the Rub Al Khali (Empty Quarter), the world's largest uninterrupted sand mass. Liwa will blow you away with massive expanses of awesome desert and the biggest dunes this side of the Sahara. Prepare for the UAE's most adventurous off-road driving, and some of its most incredible scenery.

Al Gharbia's history is encompassed in the myriad of ancient forts which dot the landscape, and together present a snapshot of this region's

fascinating history – all set against dramatic landscapes.

To get a real taste of Al Gharbia's authentic heritage, visit one of the many festivals throughout the year such as January's Tel Moreeb Festival, the pinnacle hill climb event for desert driving enthusiasts or the Al Dhafrah Camel Festival held in December which includes the world's only camel beauty contest, April's Al Gharbia Watersports Festival, fast becoming a highlight on the international sporting calendar, or July's Liwa Date Festival, a showcase for this valued desert fruit.

ABU DHABI TOUR OPERATORS

Abu Dhabi Travel Bureau	+971 2 622 1100
Advanced Travel & Tourism	+971 2 634 7900
Al Ain Travel Bureau	+971 3 754 1159
Al Badeyah Eyes Tourism	+971 2 556 6723
Al Etihad Travel & Tourism	+971 2 765 5223
Al Masaoood Travel	+971 2 621 1797
Arabian Adventures	+971 2 691 1711
Arabian Odyssey	+971 2 621 0101
Cyclone Travel & Tours	+971 2 627 6275
DBA & Sons Travel and Tours	+971 2 627 2999
Desert Adventures Tourism	+971 2 556 6155
Emirates Adventure	+971 2 644 5117
Emirates Travel Express	+971 2 765 0777
Hala Abu Dhabi	+971 2 617 7810
Kurban Travel & Tourism	+971 2 555 0566
Lama Tours	+971 2 677 0877
Net Tours (Abu Dhabi)	+971 2 679 4656
Net Tours (Al Ain)	+971 3 768 7400
Omeir Travel Agency	+971 2 612 3456
Orient Tours	+971 2 667 5609
Safar Travel & Tourism	+971 2 418 0888
Salem Travel Agency	+971 2 621 8000
SNTTA Tours & Travel	+971 2 444 6856
The Vision Tourism	+971 2 294 2290
Travco	+971 2 677 1484



explore, experience
and engage



ABU DHABI CITY

EXPERIENCE ABU DHABI'S DIVERSE and enticing attractions: whether it's touring one of the world's most spectacular mosque's, zooming to the pace of a speedboat tour of the city's coastline, taking in the UAE capital's signature Corniche on a bicycle, or hopping on an open topped Big Bus for a guided tour, you're sure to find activities for every taste.





Abu Dhabi



CITY ATTRACTIONS



CULTURE, HISTORY AND ADVENTURE are encapsulated in Abu Dhabi's wealth of museums, heritage sites and natural wonders which are

complemented by a wide variety of tours and attractions, all offering exciting ways to see the capital – by air, land or sea.

Abu Dhabi Corniche

Corniche Road spans an impressive eight kilometres of manicured waterfront that includes children's play areas, separate cycle and pedestrian pathways, cafés and restaurants, and the Corniche Beach – a lifeguarded, blue-flagged beach park. Individual parks are themed and signposted accordingly. The Family Park near King Khalid Bin Abdul Aziz Street (26th Street) is noted for its creative climbing structures, The Urban Park near Sheikh Rashid Bin Saeed Al Maktoum Street has beautiful gardens. Lake Park near Muroor Street is known for its 'lake' while Formal Park by Baniyas Street is noted for its architecture and maze.

Off Corniche Road, Central Abu Dhabi



Al Bateen Beach

This beach is popular with locals and is used for fishing and swimming. It's great for waterfront picnics, but if you venture into the water keep an eye out for jet skis. To get there, head west on 19th Street (Saeed Bin Tahnoun St) and turn left onto 16th Street when it ends. After 200 metres, you'll see the beach.

Al Bateen Beach Road, Al Bateen
www.bakeuae.com

Capital Gate

Drive down Khaleej Al Arabi Street and you will see a modern day challenger to the Leaning Tower of Pisa. Capital Gate, developed by Abu Dhabi National Exhibitions Company, has been certified as the 'World's Furthest Leaning Man Made Tower,' by Guinness World Records. It leans 18 degrees westwards – more than four times that of Pisa's famous Leaning Tower. The 160 metre (524.9 ft), 35 storey tower is fast becoming a postcard image of Abu Dhabi and makes a great holiday snap. Hyatt Capital Gate Abu Dhabi, a premium 5-star business hotel, is in the iconic building.

Corniche Beach Park

This lengthy stretch of beach extends along Corniche Road from near the Hilton Hotel to beyond Al Khaleej Al Arabi Street, where you'll find its main entrance. During the week you can usually find a beach umbrella, but during the weekend they may all go quickly. You can't swim out very far; floating fences keep you within 40 metres of the beach, and there are plenty of lifeguards around. Abu



Dhabi's pristine Corniche beachfront has the coveted Blue Flag status – the internationally renowned eco-label for beaches and marinas that guarantees clean and safe bathing water.

Visitors flock to the Corniche every day, enjoying three separate sections for families, singles and the general public. There are more than 1,100 free parking spaces with a five minute walk of the beach, which charges AED 10 (US \$2.7) entry to the family and singles sections. Entry to the public beach is free.

Corniche Road West, Al Khubeirah
www.bakeuae.com

Byky Bike

Spend a day in the saddle with a selection of BYKY Bikes go-karts that include single-seater Ferrari licensed products, and a range of family-friendly products that can accommodate up to 4 passengers. Operating from four outlets in prime spots on the Abu Dhabi Corniche, Sheikh Khalifa Park, and throughout Al Ain, sit back and explore in a pedal-friendly environment. Rates start at AED 20 (US \$5.50) per 30 minutes and operate daily from October to April.

+971 50 844 0556
www.q8byky.com

Corniche Pedal Power

A fun and healthy way to tour the Corniche is to hire a bicycle from FunRideSports. With four accessible rental stations along the Corniche boardwalk and its main station outside The Hiltonia Beach Club, bike hire starts at AED 20 (US \$5) per hour for adults and AED 15 (US \$4) for children. Voucher booklets for 15 hours of cycling are AED 200 (US \$54). FunRideSports has a selection of bikes for hire – from mountain bikes for the more adventurous to city bikes which can fit two or three passengers on the back, and even specially designed bikes for ladies wearing abayas.

www.funridesports.com

info@funridesports.com

+971 2 556 6113



Eastern Corniche

Not to be confused with the Corniche on the extreme north of the island, the Eastern Corniche, or New Corniche as it is also known, has a pristine stretch of immaculate lawns, dotted with ornate shelters and large wooden tables, and comes alive as families gather for evening and weekend picnics. Well lit and clean, it is especially busy on winter nights. This is a great place for bird watching and fishing, with the waterway and mangroves bordering one side of the park.

Al Salam St, Al Muroor

Emirates Palace

A real iconic Abu Dhabi landmark, this luxurious hotel blends Arabian splendour with the latest technology to create a magical and memorable experience. During daytime, the hotel's golden-sandy colour contrasts with its fresh green gardens, silvery water fountains and the blue sky. At night,

the hotel's lighting changes subtly, featuring a majestic rainbow-changing effect over the main dome.

The main Palace building stretches over a kilometre from wing to wing, and its gardens and surroundings spread across 100 hectares. The hotel features 114 domes, with the central dome at



an imposing 72.6 metres above ground. Gold, mother of pearl and crystals dominate the interior. The Palace has 1,002 chandeliers, the largest weighing 2.5 tonnes. Other memorable Palace features are its two handmade wall display carpets, portraying the Palace itself and each weighing a tonne, and an extraordinary 'Gold to Go' ATM

machine, which issues gold at market rates, stamped with Emirates Palace – the perfect, memento of your visit.

www.emiratespalace.com

+971 2 690 9000



Ferrari World Abu Dhabi

It's fast and furious fun for all ages at the world's first Ferrari theme park and the largest attraction of its kind. Telling the Ferrari story with passion and excitement through more than 20 exhilarating and educational rides and attractions, interactive shopping and authentic Italian dining experiences, this park is a power draw for fans and families.

Beneath its huge, iconic red roof, attractions include Formula Rossa, the world's fastest roller coaster, where you flex up to 100 facial muscles when reaching speeds of 240 kmph; Galleria Ferrari, the world's largest Ferrari gallery outside Maranello with an interactive display of cars from 1947 through to the present; and Speed of Magic, a fantastic 4-D adventure through deep green jungles, icy caves and ravines and to the mouth of a fiery volcano.

There's a range of Ferrari inspired restaurants and cafés serving exclusive Italian dishes, including Mamma Rossella, a traditional family style trattoria and Cavallino, an elegant dining à la carte restaurant. Shop in the world's largest Ferrari store and a unique 'past and present' outlet, complete with a recreation of Enzo

Ferrari's first garage. Products range from custom made remote control Ferrari cars to exotic gifts handcrafted by Italian artisans. Guests can also enjoy the unique Ferrari boutique where they can create their personalised souvenirs at innovative interactive zones.

Open seven days a week, daily entrance for children over three and under 1.3 metres in height is AED195 (US \$53), while those over 1.3 metres will pay AED 235 (US \$64). Children under three-years-old enter for free. Queue-jumping Premium entrance rates are available, costing AED 315 (US \$85) and AED 385 (US \$105) for those under and over 1.1 metres in height, respectively.

A combination ticket, the Yas Park Pass, which includes access to both Ferrari World Abu Dhabi and Yas Waterworld costs AED 295 (US \$80) for children and AED 360 (US \$98) for adults.

**www.ferrariworldabudhabi.com
+971 2 496 8001**





Observation Deck at 300

On the 74th floor of Tower 2 at the Etihad Towers complex, the Observation Deck at 300 offers unbeatable views of Abu Dhabi's cityscape and surrounding islands. What's more, guests visiting the capital's highest vantage point – the '300' stands for 'metres in the air'

– can take in the sights while enjoying refreshments, light snacks or High Tea.

Entrance for visitors is AED 50 (US \$13.6), redeemable as F&B vouchers at the venue, while guests staying at the five-star Jumeirah at Etihad Towers and children under four enter free. The dress code is strictly 'Business Casual.'

www.jumeirah.com

+971 2 811 5555

The Easy Way to See the Corniche

EZ Taxis is a taxi service using eco-friendly electric vehicles. Ideal for the elderly, handicapped, young children and the foot sore, the open air taxis can carry up to four adults and two children at any time and all for the bargain price of AED 15 (US \$4) per journey. Operating for three kilometres along the Corniche, the service is available from 4pm until 11pm on weekdays, and from 4pm to midnight on weekends. You can hail the taxi as you see it or to request the service with a driver, simply call **+971 56 145 4242.**

easytaxi@hotmail.com



Yas Waterworld Abu Dhabi

For a true full day experience, Yas Waterworld Abu Dhabi is a futuristic waterpark offering 43 thrill-a-minute rides, slides and attractions and a splash of genuine Arabian-themed culture and adventure. The park's accolades include the Middle East's leading attraction at the World Travel Awards, and one of the world's best water parks by CNN Travel.

Amongst its gigantic wave pool, winding raft rivers, three-metre-high Flowbarrel waves, suspended rollercoaster and looping, mazy slides, the adrenaline-fuelled waterpark features a gigantic spherical pearl sitting atop Jebel Dana, the towering core of the park's altitude-defying summit. Measuring eight metres in diameter, the pearl is Yas Island's newest landmark.

Nestled among the 24 rides – four of which are truly unique – is the thematic Hoyamal pearl diving attraction which leverages age-old Emirati traditions and regularly packs its 100-seat amphitheatre. Visitors interact with divers to select an oyster of their choice to create their own pearl jewellery.

Everything in the waterpark revolves around a locally-inspired theme: the story of 'The Lost Pearl', which follows

the adventures of a young Emirati girl, Dana, in search of a legendary pearl which once brought prosperity to her village.

Yas Waterworld also features an Interactive Game experience where visitors vie to become a 'Pearl Master' undertaking a treasure hunt of seven special quests connecting rides, slides and coasters.

Daily entrance for children over three and under 1.1 metres in height is AED 185 (US \$49), while those over 1.1 metres will pay AED 225 (US \$60). Children under three-years-old enter for free. Queue-jumping Premium entrance rates are available, costing AED 315 (US \$85) and AED 385 (US \$105) for those under and over 1.1 metres in height, respectively. Thursday nights are reserved exclusively for ladies, where only women will be allowed into the park from 8pm until midnight.

A combination ticket, the Yas Park Pass which includes access to both Yas Waterworld and Ferrari World Abu Dhabi costs from AED 295 (US \$80) for children and AED360 (US \$98) for adults.

www.yaswaterworld.com

Tel +971 2 496 8236



Abu Dhabi



EXPERIENCES



Abu Dhabi Pearl Journey

Giving visitors a once-in-a-lifetime experience and greater understanding of the Arabian Gulf's ancient pearling industry, the trips start at the InterContinental Abu Dhabi's marina and last up to 90 minutes. Guests climb aboard Jalboot - a traditional pearling dhow with a maximum capacity of 15 people - and set off on a leisurely cruise along the quiet channel lying between Abu Dhabi and Hudairi Yat islands. Seated on traditional Arabian floor cushions, guests enjoy locally-made Arabic coffee and dates while an Emirati guide explains how the country's forefathers dedicated their lives to diving for seashells in the

hope of finding valuable pearls to trade or manufacture jewellery. Local Arabic snacks are served, while a crew member sings traditional Emirati sea-faring songs. During this highly interactive experience, guests witness the traditional way of opening a living, natural oyster, and receive a souvenir pearl, valued at AED 1,000 - 2000 (US \$272.5 – US \$545). Tickets cost AED 500 (US \$136) for adults and AED 400 (US \$109) for children under 12. For groups of 15, the adult rate is AED 450 (US \$123).

www.adpearljourney.com

+971 50 616 4847

Arabian Nights Village

Nestled among stunning dunes, Arabian Nights Village harnesses the soul and essence of old Arabia.

Conceived to let visitors experience the mythical and timeless beauty of the desert and aspects of traditional Emirati life.

The desert journey begins as experienced guides transport guests over towering dunes. As they approach the village – which emerges surprisingly from a gigantic dune valley – guests enter a picturesque courtyard overlooked by two traditional-styled watchtowers - Zakher and Al Manhal - each named after residences of the late Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan, The Father of the Nation.

There are four types of accommodation available - Bedouin tents (Bayt Al Shaaer), palm houses (Bayt Al Bahar), desert houses (Bayt Al Bar), and The Fort Tower (Al Manha), inviting visitors to relaxing Arabian interiors, which transport them to different lifestyles from Abu Dhabi's past.

With lots of desert activities available for the whole family, guests can ride camels, rev-up quad bikes to surmount

towering crescents, get the adrenalin pumping while dune bashing with fully qualified drivers, and sand surf down sheer inclines.

Although internet is available for emergencies, there are no TVs on-site, so guests enjoy sheer tranquility.

Serving a mix of Arabic and international Cuisine, the Al Maqam restaurant (meaning 'The Gathering Place'), is where visitors meet and eat together, while listening to traditional Arabic music. There's also an idyllic 200m² swimming pool to cool down in.

www.arabiannights.ae

Big Bus Tour

Famous for its traditional open top double decker red buses, The Big





Bus Company has carefully designed tours which take visitors to all the major Abu Dhabi landmarks – from the magnificent Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque and the luxurious Emirates Palace hotel, to the Heritage Village and Saadiyat Island. Personal commentary comes in a choice of eight languages (Arabic, English, French, German, Spanish, Italian, Mandarin and Russian) and provides a fascinating insight into Abu Dhabi's history and culture. Tickets are valid for 24 hours and give access to all the Big Bus Tour routes, with 11 stops throughout the city enabling guests to hop on and hop off at their leisure. Tickets are available from individual hotels or the Big Bus sales desk at Marina Mall and can also be bought online

www.bigbustours.com

800 BIG BUS (800 244 287)

Blue Dolphin Company

Sinbad is a traditional Arabian dhow that departs from the Breakwater at 5:30pm every evening and then every hour, on the hour, for the rest of the evening. However, it is advisable to check sailing times as occasionally the dhow is chartered for private parties. The fare AED 10 (US \$3) for adults and AED 5 (US \$1.50) for children includes tea, coffee and soft drinks.

bluedolphinco@hotmail.com

+971 50 685 8305

An evening spent sailing along Abu Dhabi Corniche, while enjoying fine cuisine, is a great dinner alternative. Dinner cruises are available through Al Dhafra and Sunshine Tours

www.aldhafra.net

+971 2 444 9914

Capt. Tony's

Operating from Yas Marina on Yas Island, the company operates a range of cruises around Abu Dhabi's scenic natural islands, including 'Sunset Cruises', 'Island Beach Tours', and tailored 'Romantic Cruises' on locally manufactured, sustainably operated craft. Cruise options lasting a minimum of 1.5 hours, start at AED 250 (US \$68) per person for a minimum of four passengers and run on request. Private charter 'Romantic Cruise' costs AED 2500 (US \$680) including refreshments.

www.captaintonys.ae

+971 2 650 7175

Catamaran Tours

Take a break from the busy city and relax on board Abu Dhabi's largest 74-foot, 11m wide luxury sailing catamaran, while admiring the most remarkable landscapes of the Arabian Gulf shoreline. Belevari Marine Catamaran Tours (afternoon tours every Friday & Saturday) depart from the exclusive Emirates Palace Marina.

Tours cost AED 350 (US \$95) for adults; AED 250 (US \$68) for children, and AED 1,100 (US \$300) for family including unlimited refreshments and lunch.

Explore pristine beaches, swim and snorkel in crystal clear turquoise waters, and keep a camera ready for your chance to take a snap of the playful dolphins.

www.belevari.com

catamaran@belevari.com

+971 2 643 1494 / +971 50 908 7209

Dhow Dinner Cruise Experience

Enjoy a delicious seafood-based dinner aboard a traditional wooden dhow as it plots a course through the breezy waters off Abu Dhabi city's Corniche.

Departing at 9pm, the inert charm of this three-hour cruise lies in the unique Arabian entertainment – making this dhow cruise dinner the perfect option for both first-time visitors and regulars looking for a romantic setting or something a little different.

www.nettours-uae.com,

[email info@nettoursauh.com](mailto:info@nettoursauh.com)

+971 2 679 4658

Helicopter Tours

Get a bird's eye view of the capital's landmarks and heritage sites or experience the majestic Liwa Desert with a Falcon Aviation Services (FAS) helicopter sightseeing tour.

Using the fully air-conditioned, forward-facing seated Eurocopter EC-13, the FAS tours offer outstanding panoramic views of urban and rural Abu Dhabi, from the skyscraper dotted Corniche, to the arid tranquillity of the Empty Quarter – the world's largest expanse of unbroken desert.

With departures to suit clients' schedules, a maximum of six passengers can fit in the EC-130 – the result being an intimate occasion that is perfect for small groups.

The 20 or 30-minute tours depart Marina Mall daily and take in Lulu, Reem, Saadiyat and Yas islands, the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque, Yas Marina Circuit and Ferrari World Abu Dhabi – the world's largest indoor theme park.

The 90 minute Desert Experience tour is a one-way trip to the Qasr Al Sarab Desert Resort deep in the vast splendour of Liwa, at the entrance



to the Empty Quarter. With views of urban Abu Dhabi and its outer suburbs, surrounding farmland and the Liwa Desert and Oasis, guests stay at the five-star, award-winning Qasr Al Sarab (Mirage Palace) for the evening before flying back to Abu Dhabi city the following morning.

Tours start from AED 850 (US \$230) per person.

For reservations:

www.falconaviation.ae

sales@falconaviation.ae

+971 2 444 0007

Kayaking Tours

Noukhada's kayaking tours take you through the natural mangrove forests dotted around the plethora of islands in view of the rising Abu Dhabi city skyline. Try either a Low or High Tide 2-hour kayaking tour to explore the mangroves, or for something special book the monthly Full Moon Tour – all for only AED 200 (US \$ 54) per person. Noukhada also offers half-day island exploring tours for AED 250 (US \$ 67) per person, where you can opt for a beach BBQ AED 350 (US \$ 95) per person or an overnight camping stay AED 500 (US \$136) per person.

www.noukhada.ae

info@noukhada.ae

+971 2 650 3600



Pearl Boats

Whether you are looking for an island drop-off, a sight-seeing cruise or inter-island transportation, Lulu Boats has a vessel for every occasion.

There are 31ft Gulf Craft and 37ft Sea Masters that are perfect for a day of sport fishing. For something a little more opulent, customers can rent a 40ft Oryx, or a brand new 60ft Sea Ray – one of the most beautiful boats on the water – for luxury charters. For a truly special occasion, Lulu also has a locally-made 80ft Al Boom Marine yacht – similar in design to a traditional Emirati sailing dhow – that is the ideal venue for large parties and functions.

With ten vessels offering tours of every variety, Lulu Boats can facilitate pretty much every request, from tailored catering requirements to dedicated scuba-diving or water-sports trips. All tours begin at Abu Dhabi International Marine Sports Club, next to Marina Mall, with trips and packages available – subject to weather conditions – at pre-booked times 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

info@luluboats.com

+971 50 642 9777



Sailing Charters

BuTinah Cruising Boats is a licensed Sea Cruising company, whose name is inspired by Bu Tinah Island off the coast of Abu Dhabi, a protected marine area where nature is respected and allowed to flourish. Private sightseeing cruising and fishing tours onboard the luxury Seavoo play or Sea Master boats which can accommodate 2-14 passengers are available. Prices vary according to passenger numbers and tour duration.

+971 2 681 5555

info@butinahcruising.com

www.butinahcruising.com

Sea Cruiser Boat Tours

A business venture from a young Emirati with a passion for sharing his love of the sea, Sea Cruiser operates two licensed Gulf Craft boats, each holding 18 passengers, two crew members, a professional pilot and lifeguard. Each boat has covered cabins with large glass windows for sightseeing and is specially designed to accommodate divers. Each boat also comes equipped with GPS navigation, tracking equipment and DSC VHF radios which automatically transmit the boat's position in an emergency. Individual life jackets and



safety equipment are provided. Sea Cruiser tours are aimed at providing guests with the best Abu Dhabi has to offer; from a two hour tour of the capital city's famous Corniche to diving, snorkelling and fishing trips and all day cruises of Abu Dhabi's stunning natural islands and emerald green ocean. All tours begin at the Fish Market pier at the end of the Corniche, just before Mina Zayed. They are available at pre-booked times from 8:30am to 8pm, seven days a week.

www.seacruiser.ae
info@seacruiser.ae
+971 50 800 9495

Seawings Abu Dhabi

See the city from a whole new perspective – from a thousand feet above. Seawings, Abu Dhabi's new aerial sightseeing experience, covers all of the city's sights and wonders from the air with their Abu Dhabi Scenic and Yas Classique seaplane tours. Each tour provides spectacular views of the capital city from a Cessna 208 amphibious aircraft.

The exhilarating take-off and landing on water is an unforgettable and unique experience and the panoramic views of the blazing red roof of

Ferrari World Abu Dhabi, Yas Marina Circuit, Emirates Palace, the Abu Dhabi Corniche, the beautiful steel and marble façade of Yas Viceroy Abu Dhabi hotel and the magnificent Sheikh Zayed Grande Mosque are truly breathtaking.

Departures from Yas Marina and Emirates Palace are available on request, and the 30 minute flight costs AED995 (US \$270) per adult and AED 845 (US \$230) per child.

www.seawings.ae

+971 800 SEAWINGS

Speedboat Tours

Nautical thrill-seekers looking for a high-speed way to experience Abu Dhabi's stunning skyline vistas should look no further than Yellow Boats.

With various tours on offer, Yellow Boats' top-of-the-line inflatable craft, powered by the latest generation of eco-friendly engines, take passengers on a thrill-per-minute ride around a host of attractions along the emirate's eye-catching Corniche. Corporate packages are available and can be tailored for a variety of occasions, including client hospitality evenings, team building exercises and product launches.

Running from 8am to 8pm, with Adults starting at AED 150 (US \$41) and children or family tickets at AED 100 (US \$27) and AED 450 (US \$122), buckle up and hold on tight for an experience under the stars that you simply won't ever forget!

www.theyellowboats.com

+971 800 8044

Water Adventure

Whether it's chartering boats, hiring a jet ski, embarking on a fishing or diving trip, Empros water sports has the answer. The company also provides a range of family fun activities with banana boat and donut rides, water skiing and wakeboarding instruction and diving courses. The water sport activities are based along the Abu Dhabi Corniche Family Beach, with tickets available at Gate 2 (opposite Junction of Corniche Rd Street 1 and Khalidiyah 32nd Street), and the Al Sahil Singles Beach, tickets available at Gate 5 (opposite Audi showroom on Corniche Rd Street 1). Jet skis are available at Empros InterContinental Hotel branch.

www.empros.ae

+971 2 628 9704



Abu Dhabi



HERITAGE



Abu Dhabi Falcon Hospital

Guided tours of this award-winning specialist hospital, the most advanced of its kind in the world, are available. You can visit the luxurious wards where the birds are kept, explore the museum which gives an insight into the noble desert sport of falconry, or try your hand at the pursuit in the lush

gardens. Open Sunday to Thursday from 8am to 4pm with tours starting from AED 170 (US \$46) for adult, and AED 60 (US \$16) for children. Advance booking is recommended.

**Near Abu Dhabi International Airport,
Al Raha**

www.falconhospital.com

+971 2 575 5155

Archaeological Site on Sir Bani

Yas Island

Open to the public, this is the UAE's only discovered Christian monastery. Believed to have been built around 600 AD, it was initially discovered on the island during excavations in 1992. Two decades since its discovery, and more than a thousand years since it was built, the public can visit the site and experience another piece of the rich tapestry that makes up the UAE's fascinating history. A new phase of work is currently underway by archaeologists, and treasures are still being unearthed, making the site a significant focal point for history enthusiasts worldwide.

www.desertislands.com

+971 2 406 1400

Heritage Village

Run by the Emirates Heritage Club, this reconstruction of a traditional oasis village provides an interesting glimpse into the country's past. Traditional aspects of the desert way of life, including a campfire with coffee pots, a goats' hair tent, and a falaj irrigation system, are attractively displayed in the open museum. There are workshops where craftsmen demonstrate traditional skills, such as metal work and pottery, while women sit weaving and spinning. The craftsmen are happy to share their skills, and may occasionally give you the chance to try them out. The little spice shop is a treat; you can get a range of dried herbs, handmade soap and plenty of chatter. Entrance is free.

Near Marina Mall, Breakwater

+971 2 681 4455



Miraj Islamic Centre

An extensive collection of museum-like displays of unique Islamic art pieces sourced from around the Muslim world from places like Egypt, Syria, Iran, India, Iraq, Kashmir and Russia. Displays include meticulously hand woven pictorial and bejewelled carpets, silk textiles, jewellery, marble pieces, Arabic calligraphy engraved vases, miniature paintings and experienced staff are on hand to brief visitors on the history and origin of the pieces and the techniques used in making them.

Miraj offers visitors a complimentary pick-up and drop-off service from their hotels as well as welcome refreshments, Arabic Qahwah (cardamom coffee) and dates to groups of over 50 guests. With two properties in Abu Dhabi, the 100,000sq ft flagship Centre adjacent to the five-star Hilton Abu Dhabi Capital

Grand Hotel and just 500 metres from Abu Dhabi's iconic Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque is a stunning new world class museum, and the Marina centre features a rooftop café with panoramic views of Emirates Palace and the Arabian Gulf. Both are open daily from 9am-7pm and entrance is free.

www.mirajislamicartcentre.com

+971 50 250 3950

Saluki Centre

This centre honours the desert traditions of hunting, training and breeding Salukis – a distinctive breed of dog found in desert regions. The centre invites visitors to learn more about the unique traits and care of this type of dog. Open Sunday to Thursday 9am – 3pm.

www.arabiansaluki.com

+971 2 575 5330





Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque

This architectural work of art is one of the world's largest mosques, with a capacity for an astonishing 41,000 worshippers. The mosque's first ceremony was the funeral of its namesake, Sheikh Zayed, who is buried at the site. It features 82 domes, approximately 1,000 columns, 24 carat gold plated chandeliers and the world's largest hand knotted carpet. Unlike other mosques in Abu Dhabi, the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque is open daily to visitors, except on Friday morning, which is for worshippers only. The opening hours are 9am to 10pm (last entry at 9.30 pm) – Saturday to Thursday and 4.30pm to 10pm on

Fridays. Complimentary one hour guided tours run (Sun-Thurs) at 10am, 11am and 5pm. Friday times are 5pm and 7pm and Saturday 10am, 11am, 2pm, 5pm and 7pm.

Tip: Why not finish work, shopping or sight-seeing for the day and take the 5pm 'Sunset Tour'? Get to the mosque around 4:30pm – a wonderful time to take photos – to wind down and chill out for 20 minutes in the lovely, afternoon breeze before taking the tour.

www.szgmc.ae

tour@szgmc.ae

+971 2 441 6444



Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque Centre Library

Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque Centre Library

A veritable treasure trove for literature-inclined bookworms, the specialised, state-of-the-art library at Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque Centre promotes intercultural discourse and interaction by showcasing the powerful continuity and traditions inherent in books spanning multiple Arabic and Islamic eras. On the third floor of the mosque's Northern Minaret, with unobstructed views in all directions, the library's location is unprecedented in its history and design.

Highlights include rare Arabic calligraphy collections and copies of the Holy Qur'an printed in Europe between 1537-1857. There are also more than 50,000 rare editions of manuscripts and imprints. Open Sunday to Wednesday 9am – 8pm and Thursday 9am – 4pm. Saturday 9:30 am – 4:30pm. The library is closed on Friday and all religious and national holidays.

**Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque,
North Minaret, Floor 4**
www.szgmc.ae

Women's Handicraft Centre

This creative initiative is run by the Abu Dhabi Women's Association as a showcase for local arts and crafts. The small museum within is the chance to examine and learn about local artists' handiwork. There is also a shop on site. The round buildings near the museum are workshops where female artists display distinctive Arabian oils, handmade souvenirs, incense, local dress, silver thread work, and weaving. You should remove your shoes before entering each hut, and ask for photography permission. You can get a simple henna design painted on your hand, which will last about two weeks. Open Sunday to Thursday 7am – 3pm

Women's Association Complex
Karama St, Al Mushrif, (near the
Immigration Office and the Royal
Stables)

+971 2 447 6645

Zayed Centre for Studies and Research

For a fascinating sneak peek into the life of the late Sheikh Zayed, affectionately known as the 'Father of the Nation,' visit the Zayed Centre in Abu Dhabi's Al Bateen district. This museum, housed in an Emirati heritage village replete with camels, is an incredible homage to the man who

shaped the nation. A photo gallery of Sheikh Zayed and many visiting regional and international royalty and dignitaries lines the walls of the museum, which is also full of personal memorabilia such as his favourite hunting rifles. Taking centre stage are the late President's cherished vehicles – which he often drove through the city without a bodyguard – and gifts he received from all over the world such as stuffed lions and cheetahs. Zayed Centre is open Sundays to Thursdays (closed over the weekend Friday/Saturday). Guided tours in English and Arabic are available, however you need to book at least one week in advance.

+971 2 665 9555



Abu Dhabi



THE ISLANDS

Monte Carlo Beach



EXPLORING ABU DHABI NEEDN'T be confined to the capital's streets. You can also take to the sea and view some of the islands that are scattered in the waters around the main island. The majority of the islands are flat, sandy and uninhabited, but each has its own character. Both Saadiyat

and Yas islands have a range of exciting facilities and attractions. The exquisite Sir Bani Yas island offers a unique and holistic tourism experience, covering wildlife, nature and adventure based activities, a 5-star boutique hotel and sites of historical significance.

Saadiyat Island

Just 500 metres off the coast of Abu Dhabi city, the 27 square kilometre Saadiyat Island is undergoing remarkable transformation to become a world class leisure, residential, business and cultural hub of global proportions, housing the world's largest single concentration of premier cultural assets. These will include the Louvre Abu Dhabi opening 2015, the Zayed National Museum opening 2016 and, the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi, opening 2017 – all designed by Pritzker prize winners. The island's purpose built visitor centre – Manarat Al Saadiyat (which translates from Arabic as 'a place of enlightenment'), brings the Saadiyat vision to life. Two galleries are open to the public: 'The Saadiyat Story', on permanent display, gives visitors an interactive narrative on the history and cultural vision behind the island, and until September 2013 'Eco Future' an educational, family-orientated exhibition will give visitors a glimpse into an environmentally-friendly future. It is open daily from 10am until 8pm. Adult tickets cost AED 30 (US \$8) with AED 25 (US \$7) for children under 15.

Moved piece by piece from Shanghai, where it welcomed almost two million

visitors to the UAE's national exhibition during the World Expo 2010, the UAE Pavilion is a landmark exhibition and events venue. Hosting the annual Abu Dhabi Art contemporary art fair, the striking dune-shaped structure was designed by London's acclaimed Foster + Partners.

Saadiyat Beach Golf Club is the region's first ocean course; the Gary Player-designed masterpiece respectfully harnesses the natural beauty of Saadiyat Island's magnificent, white sand beaches for a truly unique playing experience.

With two five star hotels – The St. Regis Saadiyat Island Resort, Abu Dhabi and Park Hyatt Abu Dhabi – and more in the pipeline, the island's leisure and hospitality standing is assured. The exclusive Monte Carlo Beach Club, Saadiyat celebrates the elegance of its renowned sister on the Riviera. Leisure services include an outdoor swimming pool, a workout room with fitness and wellness programmes, spa facilities, sauna and steam rooms, kids' pool and playing areas, and private cabanas and loungers set on the stunning, white beach.



The original 'guests' of Abu Dhabi's Saadiyat Island, the Hawksbill sea turtles, continue to nest on the destination's sweeping beachfront. The nine kilometre Saadiyat Beach plays host to several Hawksbill turtle nests every year. The Hawksbill is listed as critically endangered on the International Union for Conservation of Nature's Red List, as its population has declined by more than 80 per cent worldwide over the last three generations due to habitat destruction and poaching. Since master developer Tourism Development & Investment Company began its Hawksbill Turtle Conservation Programme in early

2010, getting the buy-in of developers, contractors and now resort operators, some 650 eggs have hatched successfully on Saadiyat.

Saadiyat is a relaxed waterfront home for residents, a cultural magnet for art lovers, the future home of dazzling architectural icons, a pristine beachfront destination and a focal point for compelling sporting experiences. Saadiyat Island is just seven minutes from downtown Abu Dhabi, 20 minutes from Abu Dhabi International Airport and 50 minutes from Dubai.

www.saadiyat.ae

Manarat Al Saadiyat

This purpose built visitor centre – Manarat Al Saadiyat brings the island's vision to life. It currently has two galleries open to the public. The state-of-the-art Saadiyat Island exhibition, 'The Saadiyat Story,' is on permanent display and gives visitors an interactive narrative on the history and cultural vision behind the island and the Zayed National Museum model.

Manarat also boasts the fully-licensed Fanr restaurant for snacks, lunch and dinner. Open daily from 9am to 9pm.

**www.saadiyatculturaldistrict.ae and/
or www.artsabudhabi.ae**

+971 2 643 5781



Monte Carlo Beach Club, Saadiyat

With its own unique style, Monte Carlo Beach Club celebrates the elegance of its renowned sister club on the Riviera. Leisure services include, outdoor swimming pool, workout room with fitness and wellness programmes, spa facilities, sauna and steam rooms, kids' pool and playing areas, and private cabanas and loungers set on the stunning, white beach. There's also The Library Lounge, a shop, three lounges and restaurants. Visitors can take advantage of this members-only club with daily membership, allowing access to The Turtle Club as well as the beach, pool and spa. Adult weekend rates start from AED 600 (US \$160) or AED 900 (US \$240) per couple, with weekday rates from AED 400 (US \$107) and AED 550 (US \$147) per couple. Reduced rates are available for children.

www.montecarlobeachclub.ae

+971 2 656 3500

Saadiyat Beach Golf Club

This magnificent 18 hole 'ocean' masterpiece was designed by golfing legend Gary Player. It reinforces the emirate's fast rising status as a world class golfing destination of distinction. More information is in the golfing section.

www.sbgolfclub.ae

UAE Pavilion

Moved piece by piece from Shanghai, where it hosted the UAE's national exhibition at the World Expo 2010, the pavilion now stands close to Manarat al Saadiyat adding to the island's cultural attractions. The pavilion's visually commanding seven dunes represent the UAE's seven emirates. Its highest peak reaches 20 metres. The pavilion annually hosts the Abu Dhabi Art contemporary art fair.

www.abudhabiartfair.ae



Monte Carlo Beach Club

Sir Bani Yas Island

As one of the emirate's largest natural islands, Sir Bani Yas Island is the core component of the planned Desert Islands multi-experiential destination 240 kilometres west of the UAE capital.

The island is home to one of Arabia's largest wildlife reserves – the Arabian Wildlife Park – which has more than 10,000 free roaming animals and takes up more than half of the island. There are many Arabian Oryx, gazelles and giraffes, along with the newest arrivals, hyenas and cheetahs. Visitors can get up close and personal, at eye-level, with the island's giraffes from a purpose-built viewing platform made completely from recycled materials. The world's first two zero-emission buses shepherd guests around the island's beautiful landscapes and abundant wildlife hotspots. Guests at the boutique Desert Islands Resort & Spa by Anantara can take 4x4 Nature & Wildlife Drives of the park in specially made vehicles accompanied by expert island staff. Alternatively, guests of the Danat Resort Jebel Dhanna can book a three hour tour.

Sir Bani Yas Island is also home to the UAE's only discovered Christian monastery, which is open to the public.



Believed to have been built around 600 AD, it was initially discovered on the island during excavations in 1992. This historically-important archaeological site makes Sir Bani Yas one of the very few destinations to offer a holistic tourism experience, covering wildlife, nature and adventure based activities, a 5-star boutique hotel, purpose-built convention centre, dive school, stables of Arabian thoroughbreds and sites of historical significance.



Yas Island

Just off Abu Dhabi city, this emerging entertainment destination is within a 30 minute drive of the UAE capital and 50 minutes from Dubai. Here you'll find the fabulous Yas Marina Circuit – the world class motor sports race track which hosts the annual Formula 1® Etihad Airways Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, the stunning Yas Marina with its superb Yacht Club, the Yas Links Abu Dhabi Golf Course, Ferrari World Abu Dhabi, the exhilarating Arabian-themed futuristic Yas Waterworld and seven hotels, including the breathtaking signature Yas Viceroy Abu Dhabi – the only hotel in the world straddling an F1® race track.

www.yasisland.ae

Yas Beach

Set on Yas Island's tranquil southern shores, Yas Beach is the island's only stretch of beach. Open daily from 10am – 7pm, it is a great spot to relax and enjoy sun, sea, sand, food and drinks, and there's plenty of car parking available. Admission, which includes beach towel and sun lounger, is AED 50 (US \$13.60) for adults and AED 25 (US \$6.80) for children aged 8-16, and AED 100 (US \$27.25) for adults and AED 50 (US \$13.60) for children during weekend. Children under 8 enter free. Saturday is half-price for ladies. Guests staying at Yas Plaza hotels have complimentary beach access on presentation of their room card or hotel voucher.

www.facebook.com/yasbeach

+971 56 242 0435

Yas Links Abu Dhabi

On the west shores of Yas Island, the Yas Links Abu Dhabi golf course was designed by Kyle Phillips, one of the world's leading golf course designers, in line with the traditional form of links golf commonly associated with the coastal towns of Scotland and Ireland. Yas Links was voted among the 'Top 10 New International Golf Courses' by the influential US publication Golf Magazine. Yas Links features a 7,450 yard par 72 course, utilising five teeing grounds per hole, with all 18 benefiting from ocean views. It has a clubhouse and world class, floodlit practice ranges. More information is in the golfing section.

www.yaslinks.com

+971 2 810 7710

Yas Marina and Yacht Club

After attracting Super Yachts from as far away as Australia for the annual

F1® Etihad Airways Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, Yas Marina and Yacht Club are the jewels in the crown of Abu Dhabi's ambitions of becoming a strong rival to traditional yachting grounds such as the Mediterranean and Caribbean.

The marina, overlooking the F1® circuit and neighbouring Yas Links Golf Course, has been designed specifically as a Super and MegaYacht venue. It also has a 400 metre long visitor and event pontoon.

Cipriani is set in the stunning Yas Marina & Yacht Club, and overlooking the stunning Yas Marina F1® Circuit, featuring signature dishes from Harry's Bar in Venice and classic Italian favourites.

yasiland@cipriani.com or

www.yasiland.ae



Yas Marina Circuit

This state-of-the-art circuit is home to the annual F1® Etihad Airways Abu Dhabi Grand Prix and is the only F1 circuit with five grandstands – all with covered seating to provide shade from the Abu Dhabi sunshine. The circuit boasts the longest straight on any F1 track at 1.173 kilometres. At its centrepiece is the Yas Viceroy Abu Dhabi, a five star, iconic hotel breathtakingly built half on land and half over the Yas Marina.

It is 365 days of action at Yas Marina Circuit, as year round the track plays host to some of the world's top motor racing series. A full calendar of motorsports and entertainment events include the future champions of Formula 1® in the GP2 Asia Series and, Australia's legendary motor racing series, the V8 Supercars. Top fuel dragsters made their Arabian Gulf debut at the International Drag Racing Festival and the world's top sports car series, the FIA GT Championship. Opportunities at Yas Marina Circuit extend well beyond the Grand Prix, with the circuit being a mixed use venue that can be adapted to meet any event, exhibition or conference.

www.yasmarinacircuit.com

'Behind the scenes' at

Yas Marina Circuit

Take a tour behind the scenes of one of the world's most technologically advanced motorsports circuits. The Yas Venue Tour is a must for those who want to see firsthand how much effort goes into running this large, multifaceted facility. Adults: AED 120 (US \$33), children AED 60 (US \$17); the venue is open on Tuesday to Saturday 10am – 12pm and 2pm – 4pm

www.yasmarinacircuit.com

+971 2 659 9800 or 800 YAS (927)

yas express

yas express is a complimentary shuttle service designed to best meet the transport needs of Yas Island's visitors. Operating daily between 9am – 9pm, yas express connects guests to and from Yas Viceroy Abu Dhabi, Yas Plaza hotels, Yas Central, Ferrari World Abu Dhabi and Yas Waterworld. For guests at Saadiyat Island's beach resort hotels, yas express offers pick up and drop off throughout the day, with a 25 minute complimentary shuttle journey to and from Yas Islands entertainment attractions.

www.yasisland.ae

+971 2 496 8110

Abu Dhabi

ETIHAD

LG

LG



Abu Dhabi



FAMILY



Abu Dhabi Wildlife Centre

This is a rehabilitation and breeding centre for endangered species, operating as a non-profit agency. The centre is open for educational visits and can be contacted through its website. Call ahead for the exact location, as it can be a little tricky to find. Costs for a one hour guided tour are AED 65 (US \$18) for adults and AED 35 (US \$9) for children 12 and under.

Al Ain Road, Near Al Wathba

www.abudhabiwildlifecentre.com

+971 50 721 8169

Al Mushrif Children's Garden

This large park near Airport Road is a wonderful place to take the kids and have a bit of fun. It has amusement park rides (with varying fees), swings, fountains and ample car parking. It's a popular 'ladies only' facility so photography is not allowed. The garden is open from 3pm to 10pm (3pm to 9:30pm on Fridays). On public holidays it is open from 9am to 12pm and 3pm to 10pm. The garden is to the south of Old Airport Road, and its entrance is opposite the National Theatre.

Near Choueifat School, Al Mushrif

Al Nahyan Garden

This well maintained and compact park near the Sheraton Khalidiya ensures your little ones can't get up to too much trouble. Simple play equipment helps the kids let off steam.

Sh Zayed the 1st St, Al Khalidiyah

Capital Gardens

This refurbished park is a welcome patch of green in the city centre. Each little garden cove has a small selection of climbing frames, swings and slides. A large, central pond erupts periodically with bursts from the stunning fountains. Vending machines and an enclosed cafeteria provide refreshment.

Opposite NBAD, Al Markaziyah

Khalidiyah Garden

Taking up a whole block, this large park is popular with families. It has a variety of play areas, with equipment for toddlers and older children. Its

lovely grassy areas are great for picnics, with a number of large trees providing shade.

Al Khaleej Al Arabi St, Al Khalidiyah

Khalifa Park

Just off Salam Street, this is one of the city's larger parks and a major landmark. Inspiration for the gardens has been drawn from Arabic and Islamic architecture and from the world's great gardens. The landscape boasts canals, fountains, lakes and waterfalls. You can tour by hopping on the miniature railway. With play equipment for children, picnic facilities, a garden centre and café and an outdoor auditorium, it's a popular spot in the cooler evenings and during weekends.

Khalifa Park is open from 3pm -10pm daily. Park entry costs AED 1(33 cents).

www.adm.gov.ae



Murjan Splash Park

This entertaining children's destination in Khalifa Park has seven water-based attractions, all for kids up to the age of 12. Its main feature – the 'Water Play Structure' – is a shallow pool with four small waterslides, a giant tipping bucket, a crawl tunnel, water guns, a water umbrella, small tipping buckets, a water wheel, and water showers.

Murjan also has a 257 metre long, 0.6 metre deep 'lazy river' ready for kids to float on. The more adventurous ones can try their hand at the 'Water Balloon Wars'. The Lili Pad Hop has four trampolines with harnesses where

children can jump and flip on. For kids of 11 years and under, the park offers the 'Surf Wrangler'- where kids try their balancing skills by riding a mechanical surfboard and the 'Bumper Boat Lagoon' – small steerable, battery-operated boats for kids to drive around and lightly bump into each other. The park is open daily weekdays 3 – 7 pm (Tuesday is Ladies Day); Weekends (Friday & Saturday) 10am – 7 pm; Entry is AED 40 (US \$11) for children above 75 centimetres; children below 75 centimetres enter for free.

www.adm.gov.ae/murjan
murjan@adm.abudhabi.ae
+971 50 878 1009





Emirates Park Zoo

This is a petting zoo 35 kilometres outside the city on the road to Dubai. The zoo lets children get up close to their favourite animals and combines learning with touch. There are lots of animals in this five acre farm, including peacocks, ostriches, ibex, camels, horses, raccoons, ferrets, and exotic fish and birds. There's a play park for children aged ten and under with a small train and bouncy castles for a fee of less than AED 10 (US \$3), and the good news is that the whole park is covered by a fog system for outdoor cooling to keep the temperatures down. The park is open daily (timings vary); visit the website for details.

Al Bahya, 35km from Abu Dhabi

www.emiratesparkzoo.com

+971 2 563 3100

Old Airport Garden

This is a quiet park and an ideal place if you want to relax after taking the kids ice-skating at the adjacent rink. One side of the park has swings and small tidy gardens, while the other side is more ornamental, with plenty of trees for shade.

**Near Sheikh Zayed Sport Centre
Al Madina Al Riyadiya**

Play at the Malls

Get out of the heat and enjoy indoor parks at Abu Dhabi's malls. Differently themed, these parks usually have an array of computer and video games, carousels and other funfair facilities.

Abu Dhabi

SPORTS & RECREATION



FROM TRADITIONAL DHOW SAILING to playing on some of the region's best golf courses, Abu Dhabi is a destination for the active.

Marine Racing

Abu Dhabi International Marine Sports Club supports a wide range of marine sports, including powerboats, jet skis, sailing, kayaking, wakeboarding and waterskiing. Abu Dhabi was the first Arabian Gulf city to organise a UIM Formula One Powerboat Race.

Powerboat racing now attracts a large, appreciative audience. At this event, 20 to 24 boats representing 12 nations compete at high speed along the narrow, twisting course off the Corniche. The Abu Dhabi International Marine Sports Club organises the annual President's Cup F2000 Powerboat Championship, the National Regatta, the National Jet Ski Championship, and the UAE Wooden Powerboat Championship, all of which are designed to encourage

young Emiratis to remain close to their marine heritage. Each season also sees two open regattas for modern sailing boats (including catamarans, lasers and windsurfers), which are open to all ages and nationalities.

Near Marina Mall

www.adimsc.ae

+971 2 681 5566

DIVING

Many good dive sites are easily accessible from Abu Dhabi, including wreck or deep water dives and reef dives. It is possible to dive year round in the warm seas, and there is a rich abundance of marine life, including barracuda, spotted eagle rays, stingrays, and much more. The following companies offer guided dives from Abu Dhabi:

Freediving UAE

Is the only company specialising in freediving training and courses in the United Arab Emirates. Freediving UAE currently runs a basic Discover Freediving course; tailored to introducing newcomers, of those 18 years and older, to freediving and requiring no open water diving, and three AIDA accredited courses for the more advanced divers. Costs for one day introductory 'Discover Freediving'

course is AED 800 (US \$218), the two day AIDA Foundation course is AED 1,850 (US \$506) and the three day Intermediate and four day Advanced courses are AED 2,881/3,344 (US 790/916) respectively.

Sea Hawk Water Sports

Operating out of Mina Zayed, Sea Hawk Water Sports, owned by an Emirati PADI Master Diver, offers the full spectrum of PADI certified courses, from Junior to Master, tailored to suit visitor needs. Intensive courses can be arranged to complete certification in just four days, perfect for overseas visitors. Utilising its unique local knowledge, Sea Hawk also offers daily dive packages to five locations off Abu Dhabi's expansive coastline, from exploring mysterious ship wrecks to getting up close to the emirate's teeming microlife.

For visitors wanting to stay on top of the water, Sea Hawk also offers thrice-daily, two hour kayaking trips through the vast mangrove forests which characterise Abu Dhabi's coastline. Prices start from AED 150 (US \$41) for adults, and AED 100 (US \$27) for kids (3-12yrs).

www.shw-sports.com

+971 2 673 6688



Sir Bani Yas Desert Islands Watersports Centre

Desert Islands Watersports Centre offers sailing lessons and sunset cruises, as well as diving expeditions and certification.

In addition to numerous kayaking routes through this major non-fishing zone that stretches 8kms from the shores of Sir Bani Yas Island, the waters around the island offer a wide variety of marine life – much of which is unique to the region – allowing remarkable snorkelling.

The centre also has lecture rooms, a practice pool, a restaurant & grill and a shop.

www.desertislands.ae
+ 971 2 801 5400

DIVING CENTRES

Alex Boulting AIDA Master Instructor
www.freedivinguae.com
alex@freedivinguae.com

Abu Dhabi Sub Aqua Club
www.abudhabisubaqua.com
+971 2 673 1111

Al Jazira Dive Centre
www.goldentulipaljazira.com
+971 2 562 9100

Arabian Divers & Sport Fishing Charters
www.fishabudhabi.com
+971 50 614 6931

Sea Cruisers
www.seacruiser.ae
+971 50 800 9495

Sea Tourism
www.seatourism.net
+971 2 681 3064

FISHING

September to April is best for fishing in Abu Dhabi, although it is possible to catch certain species of fish throughout the summer. Commonly caught fish include dorado, kingfish, queenfish, sailfish and tuna. The more adventurous may prefer to try deep sea fishing or trawling.

Sea Adventures Cruising

With a six seater open-deck Barracuda

and a Gulf Craft vessel that seats seven, Sea Adventures Cruising provide a range of full day fishing trips off Abu Dhabi's shoreline. The six hour full day experience costs AED 299 (US \$81) per person or AED 1,499 (US \$408) for a group of six. A pre-booked four hour half day experience for groups of six are also available at AED999 (US \$272), with trips running between 6am-10am or 1pm-5pm.

www.sac.ae

+971 56 733 7811

The following companies offer fishing excursions from Abu Dhabi.

Arabian Divers & Sport Fishing Charters

www.fishabudhabi.com

+971 50 614 6931

Beach Rotana Hotel & Towers

www.rotana.com

+971 2 697 9000

Empros Watersports

www.empros.ae

+971 2 6289704

Lulu Boats

www.luluboats.com

+971 50 642 9777

Sea Cruiser

www.seacruiser.ae

+971 50 800 9495

Sea Tourism

www.seatourism.net

+971 2 681 3064

Sheraton Resort Health Club

www.sheraton.com/abudhabi

+971 2 677 3333

Western Marine Sports Club

www.wmsc.ae

+971 50 76 04 060

Flyboard UAE

Flyboard UAE is behind one most thrilling watersport activities to hit Abu Dhabi. If you've ever wanted to soar into the sky or jump in and out of the water like a dolphin, Flyboarding is definitely for you.

The region's first company of its kind offers Flyboard sessions with a professional coach. Individuals and groups are welcome. All sessions include safety clothes and instruction.

Operating off Yas Island from 11am to 6pm Monday till Saturday with 30 and 60 minute flyboarding sessions costing AED300 (US \$82) and AED500 (US \$136). Group discounts are available, when group consists of minimum 5 people. Booking required.

info@flyboards-uae.com

+971 50 817 3071 (English/German)

+971 50 233 1177 (Arabic/English)

OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

Al Forsan International Sports Resort

This is a truly unique, world class sports and leisure destination within 10 minutes of Abu Dhabi International Airport. The resort, which has five international restaurants and cafés, caters to a wide range of sporting, leisure, and meeting activities. Guests can experience shooting, wakeboarding and waterskiing, horse riding, motorsports, paintball and other leisure activities. The resort is for people of all ages for international sporting events, special occasions and family days out.

Khalifa City A

www.alforsan.com

+971 2 556 8555

CAMEL RACING

A trip to the races can be one of the most memorable highlights of a visit to Abu Dhabi. Cheer on the camels as they gallop around a specially made track, and marvel at how these seemingly ungainly creatures can reach such high speeds. Races normally take place on weekend mornings, with additional races on public holidays. For a taste of this sport, head to the Al Wathba Camel Race Track (about 45km east of Abu Dhabi on the Al Ain Road), or to the Al Maqam Track near Al Ain. Try to get to the racetracks as early as possible to soak up the atmosphere. Entrance is free. More information from The Camel Racing Federation at Al Wathba.

+971 2 583 9200



CRICKET

The state-of-the-art Zayed Cricket Stadium is arguably one of the world's finest cricket grounds. Home to Abu Dhabi Cricket Club, the stadium staged its first international match when Scotland played Kenya in the Intercontinental Cup of November 2004. With a 20,000 seating capacity, the stadium also has numerous grass banks and unseated areas that are perfect for family picnics during day-long Test or One Day International (ODI) matches. Over eight years, the stadium has hosted a variety of international and domestic games, including a series of Tests, ODIs and Twenty20 matches between England and Pakistan in January, 2012.

Abu Dhabi Cricket Council

+971 50 827 1646

Al Ain Cricket Association

www.uaecricket.com

+971 3 703 6942

FOOTBALL

The dome@rawdhat is a football facility open seven days a week, with two indoor (temperature controlled) and outdoor FIFA Grade 1 artificial grass pitches for all-year-round play. They can also be used for cricket,

rugby, American football, etc. The facility stretches over 24,000 square feet and has male and female changing facilities, a prayer room, and a café.

Airport Road, Near Carrefour

www.thedome.ae

+971 2 449 8480





GOLF

With fabulous courses carved out of the desert and along spectacular coastlines, diversity of experiences characterise Abu Dhabi's great golf offering – you can play a different course for a totally different experience every day for six days! Whether it's championship-ready parkland, ocean or Links facilities, a gentle urban centre course, the sheer uniqueness of a world-class 'sand' course, or an attempt at the emirate's longest-hole on a country facility in our Oasis City heritage heartland – we've got compelling choices for you.

Abu Dhabi's Golf in Abu Dhabi initiative provides exclusive, highly attractive rates at three championship-ready courses – Saadiyat Beach Golf Club,

Abu Dhabi Golf Club (ADGC) and Yas Links Golf Club, plus more.

www.golfinabudhabi.com

info@golfinabudhabi.com

Abu Dhabi HSBC Golf Championship

Expect the Unexpected every January with the battle for the coveted Falcon Trophy in this curtain-raiser to the European PGA Tour at Abu Dhabi Golf Club's National Course. Away from the action on the greens, there's children's entertainment, competitions and an array of food and beverage outlets, all of which make it a fantastic family day out.

www.abudhabigolfchampionship.com

Those interested in playing golf, rather than watching it, can get in touch with any of the following clubs in Abu Dhabi.

Abu Dhabi City Golf Club

This nine-hole golf course offers a challenging game, with water coming into play at more than half of the holes, and only two par threes. Set within the circumference of both grass and sand horseracing tracks, this is an intriguing course that offers nightly flood lighting and different tee positions, creating an 18 hole, par 70, 6,395 yard little gem. Water challenges come into play on five of the holes, with testing dog legs left and right and an enormous par five, 630 yard eighth hole, where skilfully designed water hazards cross the fairway. With Night Golf and tee times as late as 8:30pm, and the UAE's first 2 tiered driving range, featuring 36 individual bays, this golf club is open to members and visitors alike.

www.adcitygolf.ae

+971 2 445 9600

Abu Dhabi Golf Club

This is home to the annual PGA European Tour backed Abu Dhabi HSBC Golf Championship and is managed by Troon Golf, one of the sport's most foremost luxury brands. The iconic clubhouse is built in the shape of a falcon overlooking sweeping fairways. Just 30 minutes from the centre of Abu Dhabi, the club's excellent facilities include two par 72 world class 18-hole courses, a driving range, putting and pitching greens, a golf academy that holds lessons for juniors as well as state-of-the-art lighting to provide optimum playing conditions without natural daylight.

Umm Al Nar St, Umm Al Nar

www.adgolfclub.com

+971 2 558 8990



Abu Dhabi City Golf Club



Saadiyat Beach Golf Club

Al Ghazal Golf Club

This purpose-built 18-hole Par 71, 6,724 yards championship standard 'sand' golf course has a 30 bay driving range, teaching academy, function facilities and licensed clubhouse, and is just two minutes from the capital's international airport. Famous for its friendly and hospitable ambience, Al Ghazal is home to the World Sand Golf Championship. Anyone can play here, including transit passengers with a just a few hours to spare, however, it's recommended to call ahead and reserve.

Near Abu Dhabi International Airport

www.alghazalgolf.ae

+971 2 575 8040

Saadiyat Beach Golf Club

This magnificent 18-hole masterpiece, designed by Gary Player, is the Arabian Gulf's first and only 'ocean' course with several beach front holes on the iconic Saadiyat Island. The amphitheatre style Par 72 course features spectacular views of the glittering, crystal blue Arabian Gulf, with over a third of the course having views of the Saadiyat coastline where dolphins are regularly spotted. The imaginative golf course routing provides a spectacular variety of golf experiences, with every hole having its own unique character. From the creation of an aquatic habitat, to the introduction of salt water lagoons and

restoration of the beach and sand dunes, the course has been designed with strict environmental guidelines and sensitivity to the surrounding natural environment. Operated by Troon Golf, the Saadiyat Beach Golf Club – which has the Player designed course at its heart – incorporates a distinguished practice range, as well as a Golf Academy, which boasts a full service restaurant, locker rooms, a fully stocked golf shop and diverse meeting facilities. With features for all levels of golfers, the club offers a true 'Member for the Day' experience for UAE residents, holiday-makers and guests from surrounding hotels on a pay-and-play basis.

www.sbgolfclub.ae

+971 2 557 8000

Yas Links Abu Dhabi

Voted among the 'Top 10 New International Golf Courses' by the influential US publication Golf Magazine, Yas Links Abu Dhabi is the region's first true links golf course on the west shores of Yas Island. Designed by Kyle Phillips, one of the world's leading course architects, the Yas Links Abu Dhabi Golf Course is in line with the traditional form of links golf commonly associated with the coastal towns of Scotland and

Ireland. The Andalucia style Yas Links Golf Club features glamorous open terraces with sea views, a sports lounge and the Barranca fine dining restaurant which has access to two outdoor terraces and a private dining room. The green lawned terraces can cater up to 300 people overlooking natural mangroves, with a pontoon that can accommodate 20 seater vessels and is ideal for corporate events. Hickory's all day dining sports lounge also has a private function room with access to an outdoor terrace. Additional clubhouse features include a swimming pool, steam room with rain showers and a pro-shop. Yas Links is open to members and 'pay & play' guests.

www.yaslinks.com

+971 2 810 7710





HORSE RACING

Horses are of great heritage significance in Abu Dhabi, which has a wealth of equestrian talent.

Abu Dhabi Equestrian Club

This is the home of horse racing in the capital with around 16 race meetings a year, usually held in the afternoons or evenings throughout the cooler season, and admission is free. The race night atmosphere is hard to beat, with six races per evening, starting at 30 minute intervals. There is no betting, but the Tri Cast Competition invites race goers to pick the first three finishers in each race, with prizes for the winners.

www.adec-web.com

+971 2 445 5500

MOTORSPORTS

Warm up on the Yas Marina Circuit, which annually hosts the Formula 1® Etihad Airways Abu Dhabi Grand Prix and learn how to conquer one of the most exciting tracks around. Expert tuition is available in a variety of cars at the Yas Racing School, or bring your own car and drive the full Grand Prix circuit on the Yas Track Day.

In season, there is action almost weekly on the drag strip at the Yas Drag Racing Centre, with spectator entry from AED 30 (US \$11).

www.yasmarinacircuit.com

Yas Kartzone

Experience the thrills and excitement of karting at Yas Kartzone. The kart fleet consists of Cadet Karts for youngsters aged 8 to 12, and Senior Karts for people aged 13 years and above. Yas Kartzone also offers an array of karting options for groups of 15 or more. Open from Tuesday to Saturday from 2pm to 10pm fees are AED 80 (US \$22) for cadets and AED 100 (US \$27) for seniors.

Call 800 YAS (927), +971 2 659 9544
or +971 2 446 0384

Off Road Driving

Desert dunes are ideal for rallying, and many events are organised throughout

the year with the most high profile being the Abu Dhabi Desert Challenge.
www.abudhabidesertchallenge.com

The massive Liwa Desert dunes present an awesome driving challenge. If you're in the emirate during the cooler months and you like adventure, rent a four wheel drive, find a group of eager drivers (you'll need at least three vehicles; never drive alone in the desert) and set out for the sand. Be sure that your vehicle is insured for off-road use and that you have the proper equipment. If you've never driven off road, you should first learn the ropes with one of the several tour companies in Abu Dhabi.



TENNIS

The Zayed Sports City International Tennis Complex, an ATP standard facility with six training courts and a centre court with a spectator capacity of 5,000, hosts the annual Mubadala World Tennis Championship. Each year, the world's best line up to compete for the championship title, for three days of thrilling action over the new year.

Visitors can also play tennis in many hotels and sports clubs throughout the emirate.

INDOOR ACTIVITIES

Zayed Sports City

This huge sports complex has a very affordable bowling alley and an ice rink open to visitors.

www.zsc.ae

+971 2 403 4200

BOWLING

A number of malls have ten-pin bowling facilities for family entertainment. Bowling City (bowling-city.com) has three alleys in Abu Dhabi (Abu Dhabi Mall, Khalidiyah Mall and Al Mariah Mall), and one in Al Ain (Al Ain Mall). Abu Dhabi Country Club in Al Mushrif (+971 2 657 7777) has a four lane facility. The biggest bowling alley in

Abu Dhabi is Khalifa International Bowling Centre (+971 2 403 4648), which has 40 lanes and is one of the world's most modern alleys, there is also a bowling facility at the Armed Forces Officers Club & Hotel.

ICE SKATING

Abu Dhabi Ice Rink, near Zayed Sports City, is an excellent way to escape the heat for a few hours. Apart from the ice rink, there is a video arcade, bumper cars and a restaurant. Lessons are available.

+971 2 403 4333

Marina Mall's Snow World has a smaller 'fun' rink for just a taste of the ice.

+971 2 681 0814

SQUASH

Visitors can play squash in many hotels and sports clubs throughout the emirate. Squash courts are available for hire at: Abu Dhabi Golf Club (+971 2 558 8990), Beach Rotana Hotel & Towers (+971 2 697 9000),

Le Meridien Abu Dhabi (+971 2 644 6666), Sheraton Abu Dhabi Hotel & Resort (+971 2 677 3333) and the Armed Forces Officers Club & Hotel (+971 2 441 4900).



أبو ظبي

Abu Dhabi

SHOPPING



SHOPPING IS SOMETHING OF a national pastime in Abu Dhabi, perhaps because it is so diverse and, of course, tax-free. There's everything from ultra-modern malls with the latest brands, to small, souk like outlets where you can buy traditional perfumes, handicrafts, spices and carpets. You can spend thousands of dollars on a bejewelled designer watch, or pick up a basic timepiece in a supermarket. You can splash out on an haute-couture designer outfit or buy fabric and have a local tailor make up your very own creation for a bargain price.

You can buy a treasured Arabian antique, or a technology busting super modern home entertainment system. Prices are often excellent in comparison to those abroad, especially for carpets, textiles and gold. If you are a good bargainer, you can get even better deals. Shops open at around 10am to 10pm or later on weekends. Although most malls work straight through, some independent shops close for an extended lunch break, usually from 1pm to 4pm. Hours usually change during Ramadan and Eid, with many shops closing for the afternoon and reopening from 7pm until midnight or later.

BEST BUYS

Shopping for souvenirs? Get into a historical habit. Ornate wooden carvings, local art, gold jewellery and carpets reflect the beauty and intrigue of Abu Dhabi's Arabian heritage. From the smallest silver pillbox to a large hand-woven carpet, souvenirs come in all shapes and sizes, and being tax free, can be bought in Abu Dhabi often at a fraction of the cost elsewhere. The trick is to avoid the tourist trap and know where to find authentic items that you will treasure for a lifetime.

ART

Abu Dhabi is home to several reputable galleries featuring interesting exhibitions of local art and traditional Arabian artefacts.

The Folklore Gallery on Khalidiya Street is a great place to browse displays of local pottery and art, and has an excellent framing service.

+971 2 666 0361

Gallery One, inside Qaryat Al Beri, has a range of beautiful photographs and artwork that can be printed onto canvas and mounted, or rolled up into a suitcase friendly tube.

+971 2 558 1822

Barakat Gallery

Barakat specialises in ancient art with genuine antiquities from China, Egypt, the Near East, Africa, Greece and Rome. Items vary widely and include statues, jewellery, coins, necklaces and pottery.

Emirates Palace, Al Ras Al Akhdar

www.barakatgallery.com

+971 2 690 8950



Ghaf Art Gallery

This funky gallery stages exhibitions showcasing local and also sometimes international artists, with new talent regularly exhibiting. The gallery is near Khalidiyah Gardens.

Al Khaleej Al Arabi St, AlKhalidiyah

www.ghafgallery.com

+971 2 665 5332

Salwa Zeidan Gallery

The first private gallery on Saadiyat Island, this gallery serves as a contemporary art space for international and Arabian Gulf artists and emerging talent. Open Sunday through Thursday from 9am to 7pm.

The Collection at St. Regis

Saadiyat Island

www.salwazeidangallery.com

+971 2 666 9656



CARPETS

Buying a carpet can be a fascinating experience; most carpets found in Abu Dhabi originate from Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Turkey, China and Central Asia, and come in an exquisite array of designs and colours. To ensure you are buying the genuine article at a good price, it is advisable to learn a bit about carpets before making your final decision. Visit a number of shops to get a feel for price, quality and traditional designs. As a very rough guide, the higher the number of knots per square inch, the higher the price and the better the quality. Silk is more expensive than wool, and rugs from Iran are generally more valuable than the equivalent from Turkey or Kashmir. Check also whether the carpet was made by machine or hand; handmade carpets are never quite perfect and the pile is uneven, yet they are more valuable than their machine made counterparts. Carpet salesmen will happily offer plenty of advice and can usually be trusted; just don't feel pressured into buying simply because he has unrolled over 30 carpets for you. Most importantly, don't forget to bargain – it's all part of the game and is expected. A good starting point is the Carpet Souk at the port end of Mina Road. Most malls also have well-stocked carpet shops.



GOLD JEWELLERY

Gold jewellery is in abundant supply, whatever your taste. Gold is priced according to the international daily gold rate, and is available in 18, 21, 22 or 24 carats. Shopping for gold is a fascinating activity, due to the wide range of styles available, from clean and classic western designs to opulent, ornate Arabian wedding jewellery. You can also buy gold ingots in varying sizes, either for investment or to have moulded into your own design. In addition to the weight

price, a small charge is added for craftsmanship, which varies according to the intricacy of design. The Gold Souk on 4th Street in Madinat Zayed has many jewellers, including some of the Gulf's largest. Apart from the souk, you'll also find some big name jewellers in the shopping malls, such as Cartier, Chopard and Tiffany & Co. Regional jewellers to look out for include Damas, Pure Gold and Rivoli. Emirates Palace is home to 'Gold to Go', the world's first ATM that dispenses gold.

SOUVENIRS

Historically, Abu Dhabi's desert culture resulted in possessions that had to be practical and transportable. Genuine traditional items, such as wooden chests, can be very expensive and increasingly difficult to find, although 'antique' copies are widely available. Traditional wooden doors are also popular, and can be hung as works of art or transformed into furniture, usually as tables with glass tops. Many outlets selling these large items can arrange shipping back to your home country. Other items with a local theme include the Arabian coffee pot and cups (a symbol of local hospitality), prayer beads in a multitude of colours, and woodcarvings in the form of dhows, falconry equipment and canes (traditionally used in Emirati dancing exhibitions). Ancient looking rifles, muzzle loading guns and the functional yet decorative 'khanjar' (a short, curved dagger in an elaborately wrought sheath) are also popular buys. If you intend to buy these, check first with your airline on procedures for transporting them. Traditional wedding jewellery made of heavy silver or later on gold and crafted into necklaces, bracelets, earrings and rings are coveted forms of historic art, and make beautiful displays when mounted into



glass box frames. Once valued more highly than gold, the dried resin from the frankincense tree of southern Oman has been traded for centuries, and nowadays is often sold with a small wooden chest and charcoal burner as incense kits. Ghutra headscarves, the distinctive white garment worn traditionally as headdresses by men in the Arabian Gulf, have become a popular fashion accessory worldwide. You will find a huge range of ghutra in Abu Dhabi's souks and malls – aside from the standard white, they come in a multitude of different colours and patterns such as chequered red and white, worn in the cooler months.

MADE IN UAE

Made in UAE Souvenirs was founded in 2007 in Abu Dhabi by the Emirati artist Azza Al Qubaisi, and is the first local 100% non-profit project to develop and promote UAE handicrafts and artworks. It is also home to a cultural exchange programme by showcasing handicrafts from different parts of the world.

Discover beautiful creations of local artists and talents beside a wide collection of UAE traditional and silver souvenirs.

**Marina Mall and Women's Union
Abu Dhabi**

www.miuaes.com

contact@miuaes.com

+971 55 493 6308

SOUGHHA

Visitors looking for an authentic souvenir from their visit to Abu Dhabi can now visit the UAE capital's Central Market souk and pick up their own 'Sougha', which in Arabic means the gifts that a traveller brings back from his journey. Created by Emirati women using craft skills passed down through generations, and designed to revive the Bedouin art of weaving among people living in Abu Dhabi, a range of colourful, hand-woven collection of treasures are available to give to family or friends.

sougha@khalifafund.gov.ae





SOUVENIRS YOU CAN EAT

Edible souvenirs include delicious Lebanese sweets (most often made from pastry, honey, ground nuts and dates). Iranian caviar is widely available and good value for money, as it is sold without import duty or any added tax. Chocolate made from camels' milk is a luxurious treat with a smooth texture and a unique flavour that comes from blending camel milk with vanilla, honey and cocoa beans. It is sold in bars, pralines and as camel shaped figurines, and is available from many souvenir shops, as well as supermarkets. Perhaps the most classic edible souvenir is dates; this distinctive fruit holds an important place in Arabian heritage

as a vital source of nutrition. Today, dates are available in many modern varieties, with each having its own distinct colour and flavour. They are even available dipped in chocolate or stuffed with almonds or candied orange peel. Bateel, the renowned dates delicatessen, has an amazing selection of luxury dates and date produce sparkling date juice, date jams and preserves and even balsamic vinegar from dates.

Shops with the Arabian Experience

One of the great things about shopping in Abu Dhabi is that many of the shops offer so much more than the goods they sell – they also offer a unique Arabian experience.

Arjmst

This private atelier showcases the work of the first Emirati designer Azza Al Qubaisi. Her work combines the beauty of nature, deep rooted tradition and the awareness of present and future issues in her fabulous collections and sculptures. She also draws attention to many subjects, from the history of pearl diving (represented in Angel Tears collection), to present environmental issues represented in the Sustainability Collection. Skilful combinations of diamond, gold, silver and other materials give each piece of art its identity and character. Find both exclusive one-off pieces and affordable souvenirs to remember your Abu Dhabi.

www.arjmst.com

+971 2 644 1575

+971 55 471 0080

Yas Perfumes

Made from the resin of the agarwood tree, oud was historically a valuable commodity and today is still a sought after luxury item. Various types of oud have different aromas, but all have a strong, deep scent when burned. You can buy oud as blocks or chips, along with a special burner. Oud oil, however is the result of a complex extraction process, and is popular with Emiratis

who use it as a distinctive, long lasting perfume.

Yas Perfumes, an Emirati company, specialises in oud, oud oils and dukhoons, all of which are traditional regional scents used as perfume and incense, with a selection of French blended perfumes as well. Once you have selected a fragrance, browse through the incredible selection of ornate perfume bottles to store it in. There are numerous branches of Yas Perfumes in Abu Dhabi and Al Ain, including Marina Mall, Abu Dhabi Mall, Emirates Palace and another in Al Ain Mall.



SHOPPING MALLS

Spacious, modern and air conditioned, Abu Dhabi's malls are a welcome escape from the summer heat and a world of choice when it comes to shopping. In Abu Dhabi, malls are a place to catch up with friends or for a family outing – and the fun can go on until late at night. With their imaginative designs and wide range of outlets, shopping malls are perennially popular. The bigger malls buzz with activity as people meet, eat, pose and parade. During festive occasions such as Eid or Ramadan, malls are venues for special events such as dance or cultural shows, often featuring international acts. They also hold numerous raffles, often with huge prizes such as luxury cars or cash.

Abu Dhabi Mall

With over 200 shops and upwards of 25,000 visitors a day, restaurants on every floor, a children's play area and a Cineplex, this is more than just a shopping destination. Look out for big name outlets like Paris Gallery (perfumes, cosmetics, sunglasses, handbags and jewellery), Jashanmal, Grand Stores and Salam Stores (all department stores).

www.abudhabi-mall.com

+971 2 645 4858



Al Raha Mall

Al Raha houses a mixture of entertainment, leisure and shopping (including fashion). Two cinemas show the latest movies and a number of cafés, restaurants and a food court offer a choice of dining. There is also a kids' entertainment area.

www.al-rahamall.com

+971 2 556 2229

Al Wahda Mall

This mall has an inviting, spacious sun roofed design and a myriad of side passages to satisfy curious shoppers. It has a wide range of stores, large and small, local and international, as well as a large supermarket and plenty of dining choices.

www.alwahda-mall.com

+971 2 443 7000

Avenue at Etihad Towers

One of the world's most expensive and exclusive collection of boutique shops. A myriad of luxury brands reside here including Burberry, Canali, Cartier, Hermès, Herve Leger, Manolo Blahnik, Piaget, Salvatore Ferragamo, Van Cleef & Arpels, Tom Ford, Porsche Design and Versace. In total 39 brands have signed up for the destination. Many of the boutiques have luxurious enclaves for VIPs to shop in privacy.

www.avenueatetihadtowers.ae

Fotouh Al Khair Centre

Several of the world's favourite brands are jammed into this spacious mall: Marks & Spencer, Adams, Monsoon, Nine West, and more. Also worth visiting is Falcon Gallery – great for household decorations, candles, flower arranging materials and fancy

goods. At the intersection of Airport Road and Sheikh Zayed 1st Street, it is also affectionately known as 'Marks and Spencer' Mall.

www.fotouhalkhair.com

+971 2 681 1130

The Galleria

In the capital's new Central Business District on Al Maryah Island, with spectacular waterfront and cityscape, The Galleria has over 130 of the world's most renowned brand outlets - including 50 Abu Dhabi 'firsts'.

Designer labels and high-end brands now with their first store in the emirate are: Aspinal of London, Berluti, Boucheron, Celine, Diane von Furstenberg, Jimmy Choo, Marc Jacobs, Mulberry, Paul Smith, Tory Burch, Alexander McQueen, Moschino,



Thomas Pink, Pucci, Bottega Veneta, Balenciaga, Pomellato, Emporio Armani Caffè, Almaz by Momo and Magnolia Bakery.

There's also a tempting range of restaurants and cafes, including Almaz by Momo and Emporio Armani Caffé - and more gourmet outlets to come - Zuma, Biryani Pot, Bentley Bistro & Bar, Burger Fuel, Café Bateel, Caffé Nero, Carluccio's, Magnolia Bakery, Lemongrass, Nolu's Downtown, and Taqado.

The Galleria is connected with the uber-luxurious Rosewood Abu Dhabi - through a unique network of climate-controlled corridors.

www.thegalleria.ae

+971 2 616 6999

Khalidiyah Mall

This mall on Al Nahyan Street features distinctive Islamic architecture and over 160 shops. Highlights include UK department stores Debenhams and BHS, its many cafés and restaurants, and a large food court. There is also an amusement centre with arcade games, a brand new dedicated 3D cinema and a bowling alley.

www.khalidiyahmall.com

+971 2 635 4000

Marina Mall

Right on the Breakwater, this mall features a 100 metre high viewing platform, an ice rink, a bowling alley, a Cineplex, musical fountains and hundreds of big name brands and stores. A true Abu Dhabi landmark, Marina Mall's many restaurants and coffee shops make it possible to spend a full day here. Watch out for the huge annual sale period from mid-January to the end of February.

A new addition to the mall is CityStore which is the region's first stand-alone store of an English Premier League team. The Manchester City FC store features a full range of Club merchandise, including a shirt printing



service to create personalised items.

www.marinamall.ae

+971 2 681 8300

Mushrif Mall

An expansive, three-floor retail megaplex with a mix of shopping, dining, leisure and entertainment, Mushrif Mall is on Airport Road, close to Rocco Forte Hotel and just five a minute drive from Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre, offers everything from luxury fashion to electronic goods and furniture and the Arabian Gulf's biggest food court featuring the first Jimmy's Killer Prawns brand in Abu Dhabi.

www.mushrifmall.com

+971 2 690 4422

MARKETS/SOUKS

Traditional markets have evolved into bustling tourist attractions selling a fascinating collection of goods. Souk is Arabic for 'marketplace.' Historically, dhows from the Far East and India would offload their cargo and the goods would be haggled over in the nearby souks. Over the years the goods on sale have diversified dramatically; today alongside the spices, silks and perfumes you'll find electronic goods, souvenirs, clothing and household items. Abu Dhabi's



souks are worth a visit for their bustling atmosphere, eclectic variety of goods, and to observe the traditional way of doing business.

Fish Souk

Every morning, fishermen load their catch on to the quayside and prepare for a day of haggling; it is a fascinating insight into the way traditional business is done. The fish souk is in Mina Yayed Free Port.

Al Mina Fruit & Vegetable Souk

Across the road from the Fish Souk, this fruit and vegetable market is bursting with colour as each seller arranges his produce outside the shops. The choice is amazing, and you can buy by the kilo or the box. Even if you are not buying, this area provides excellent photo opportunities.

Carpet Souk

Yemeni mattresses and machine made carpets dominate this souk, but bargains can be found if you know what you are looking for. Some of the sellers will make up Arabic majlis style cushions for a very reasonable price. You'll find it on Mina Road, near the main port area.

Souk Qaryat Al Beri

This contemporary adaptation of a typical Arabian souk is home to local and international retail brands, coffee shops and a diverse range of restaurants. Abras (water taxis) take you around the souk via meandering manmade canals, and the stunning waterside complex offers alfresco dining in beautiful architectural surroundings.

www.soukqaryatalberi.com

+971 2 558 1670

The Souk at Central Market

This replica of a traditional Arabian souk is a must for residents and tourists with the emphasis on displaying and selling traditional and regional products ranging from jewellery, carpets, antiques to traditional tailoring, fashion and diverse restaurants.

www.centralmarket.ae

+971 2 499 8444

CENTRES & BARGAIN OUTLETS

Abu Dhabi Co-operative Society Complex

This older shopping centre still buzzes, especially during weekends and evenings. Its main draws are now Splash (trendy, inexpensive fashion), Shoe Mart (huge range of shoes), Lifestyle (funky gifts and much more) and The Baby Shop. Other smaller





Souk Qaryat Al Beri

shops include computer suppliers and ladies' fashion outlets.

www.adcoops.com

+971 2 644 0808

Hamdan Centre

Something of an institution on Abu Dhabi's shopping scene, this vibrant centre in the heart of the city is a good place to buy, leather goods, shoes, sports equipment and touristy knick-knacks, all at bargaining prices. It also has a pharmacy.

+971 2 632 8555

Khalifa Centre

This ethnic mall is teeming with craft and souvenir shops, as well as shops selling Iranian carpets – a great place for souvenirs.

Liwa Centre

This is where to head on Sheikh Hamdan Street for designer jewellery, clothes, makeup, perfume, bookshop and more. Be sure to visit the vibrant food court on the second level or relax in the coffee shop, which is open until midnight.

Madinat Zayed Shopping Centre & Gold Centre

Shopaholics will love this mall. It has over 400 shops selling just about everything and some traditional souk traders have moved here. The Madinat Zayed Gold Centre, next to the main mall, sells the finest gold, diamond and pearl jewellery.

www.madinatzayed-mall.com

Abu Dhabi



A DAY OUT IN ABU DHABI CITY



ITINERARY 1

A DOSE OF CULTURE AND CRUISING THROUGH DINNER.

Morning

Learn all about Islam and some UAE traditions with a visit to one of the world's most impressive mosques, the stunning Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque. This architectural marvel features 80 domes, 1,000 columns, gold plated chandeliers, the world's largest hand knotted carpet with the most knots and space for 41,000 worshippers. Take a one hour, complimentary

guided tour at 10am, 11am or 5pm every Sunday to Thursday; at 2pm, 5pm or 8pm on Fridays; or at 10am, 11am, 2pm, 5pm or 8pm on Saturdays.

www.szgmc.ae

Afternoon

Experience magnificent city views from the 74th floor observation deck within Jumeirah at Etihad Towers, offering uninterrupted 360 degree views across Abu Dhabi's cityscape and spectacular Corniche – at 300 metres, it is the capital's highest vantage point.

From 2pm, partake in the ultimate luxury tradition of high tea at le Café at the opulent Emirates Palace hotel, with platters of dainty sandwiches, petit fours and fluffy scones and a pot of expertly brewed tea or cappuccino dusted with 24-carat gold flakes.

Catch a cab up to the Heritage Village on the Corniche Breakwater and step back in time to a traditional desert lifestyle. Bargain with souvenir sellers and watch craftsmen at work producing pottery, weaving and metal work.

Evening

Enjoy an Arabian feast whilst cruising along the Corniche on a traditional dhow (sailing boat) converted into a restaurant. Be mesmerised by the glittering lights of Abu Dhabi's Manhattan style skyline.

ITINERARY 2

FISHY TALES OF ARABIA

Morning

Rise early to catch the action at the Fish Market in the Mina Area. Be astounded at the astonishing array of fish, including shark, and be ready to get snap up photographs. If you're self catering, choose your favourite seafood and get it cleaned on site

ready for a lunch or evening barbecue. The hustle and bustle of the market brings you wide awake.

Afternoon

Head off for a day's fishing and now you should easily be able to recognise your catch. Take a fishing tour with Sea Adventures Cruising (www.sac.ae +971 56 733 7811) and get to know all about Abu Dhabi's rich maritime heritage whilst taking in its stunning coastline.

Evening

Head to one of the city's fabulous seafood restaurants for a gourmet experience that you will savour long after the meal is over.



ITINERARY 3

ISLANDS IN THE SUN

Morning

Set sail with the Noukhada Adventure Company (www.noukhada.ae, Tel: +971 50 721 8928) for a bright and early eco-tour, kayaking through Abu Dhabi's natural eastern mangrove forests dotted around the plethora of islands in view of the rising city skyline. You'll spend 1.5 hours with an experienced guide who can share details on natural wildlife habitats and point out some of the iconic buildings transforming the horizon, stopping for refreshments on one of the pristine islands.

Arrange for Sea Cruiser Boat Tours (www.seacruiser.ae, Tel: +971 50

800 9495) to pick you up from an agreed destination on the water, and transfer you to Abu Dhabi's signature entertainment destination, Yas Island (www.yasisland.ae). You'll arrive in style, and air conditioned comfort, to the 143 berth Yas Marina which overlooks the Yas Marina F1® Circuit. Experience one of the world's most technologically advanced motorsport circuits by taking the official Yas Marina Circuit Venue Tour (www.yasmarinacircuit.ae, Tel: 800 927). Escorted track tours in an air conditioned coach with a trained tour guide provide an inside view of the pits, team garages and the working environments of the F1® teams in the Paddock Club's team villas. The tour ends with a photo finish opportunity on the Main Straight podium.



Yas Island



Lunch

Delight in the art of cuisine at one of the fine dining restaurants at the extraordinary Yas Viceroy Abu Dhabi (www.viceroyhotelsandresorts.com/abudhabi Tel: +971 2 656 0600), the only hotel in the world to straddle an F1® circuit.

Afternoon

Transfer from Yas Island along the incredible Sheikh Khalifa Highway, connecting to the 27 square kilometres Saadiyat Island (www.saadiyat.ae) which is undergoing a remarkable transformation to become a world class leisure, business and cultural hub. Saadiyat Island will eventually house the Louvre Abu Dhabi, Zayed National Museum and Guggenheim Abu Dhabi. A permanent interactive

display, 'The Saadiyat Story' at the island's dedicated exhibition centre Manarat Al Saadiyat (www.saadiyat.ae or email manaratalsaadiyat@tdic.ae), brings the history and cultural vision of Saadiyat to life. Take an afternoon break in the centre's Fanr restaurant.

Evening

Finish your perfect island day with a visit to Saadiyat Beach Golf Club (www.sbgolfclub.ae, Tel: +971 2 557 8000), a magnificent 18 hole 'ocean' masterpiece designed by golfing legend Gary Player. Squeeze in a game of golf or kick back and relax at the club's signature Hawksbill Restaurant with its sweeping views overlooking the rolling cascades of the course.

explore, experience
and engage



AL AIN **(EASTERN REGION)**

AL AIN WAS ONCE A VITAL OASIS on the caravan route from the UAE to Oman, and is the birthplace of Abu Dhabi's ruling Al Nahyan family. Meaning 'The Spring' in Arabic, Al Ain city is fed by natural springs originating in the rocky heights that surround it. Set among lush oases and towering palm plantations, Al Ain – the Oasis City – is the emirate's heritage heartland, one of the world's oldest continually inhabited settlements and is home to UNESCO World Heritage sites.





Al Ain



ATTRACTIONS



Al Ain Camel Market

This is the last souk of its kind in the UAE and is an excellent opportunity to see camels up close, and to see and hear the traders discussing the price and merits of their animals. There are some excellent photo opportunities, but be careful where you point your lens and always ask permission first. People will try to sell you a tour around the pens, but feel free to walk around on your own. In the livestock section, watch locals arrive in pickups laden with goats and sheep, ready to do some hard bargaining.

East of Jebel Hafeet

Al Ain Oasis

In the heart of the city, this impressive oasis is filled with palm plantations, many of which are still working farms. The cool, shady walkways transport you from the heat and noise of the city to a tranquil haven; all you'll hear is birdsong and the rustle of the palm fronds. You are welcome to wander through the plantations, but it's best to stick to the paved areas, which will take you on a relaxing meander through the trees. Farms occasionally have signs welcoming tourists to walk around. The farms have plenty of working examples of the falaj, the UAE's traditional

irrigation system, which has been used for centuries to tap into underground wells. There are eight different entrances, some of which have arched gates, and entry is free.

Near Al Ain Museum

+971 3 712 8429 / +971 3 712 8523

Al Badeyah Eyes Tourism

This desert camp, nestled in the desert dunes of Al Khaznah, gives visitors a unique insight into UAE traditions and customs as the guest of a local family. Offering different desert safari services, Al Badeyah camp boasts five permanent tents with beds, an original majlis tent for evening activities, two permanent bathroom facilities, along with a children's playground, trampoline and a petting zoo of goats and sheep.

www.abet-uae.com

Al Jahili Fort

The picturesque Al Jahili Fort – you'll

find its image on the back of an AED50 note – is one of the UAE's most historic forts. It was erected in 1891 to defend the city and protect precious palm groves. The former headquarters of the Oman Trucial Scouts, the force that protected the mountain passes and kept inter-tribal peace, it also served as a residence for the local governor. It is set in beautifully landscaped gardens, and visitors are encouraged to explore it. It has been carefully restored and now houses a permanent exhibition of the work of British adventurer Sir Wilfred Thesiger (whom the locals affectionately refer to as Mubarak Bin London) and his 1940s crossings of the Rub Al Khali (The Empty Quarter) desert. Ladies planning to visit are kindly asked to wear flat shoes to avoid damage to the fort's floors.

Near Public Garden, close to the centre of town.

www.visitabudhabi.ae

+971 3 711 8311





Jahili Mosque

To the southwest of Jahili fort is a small mosque which is probably contemporary with the inner fort built by Sheikh Zayed the First at the end of the nineteenth century. The historic fabric of the building survives intact below a new layer of mud plaster added during a conservation project carried out by Abu Dhabi Tourism & Culture Authority. The mosque consists of a single room with an open arcade on the east side and is entered from an enclosed courtyard which would have been covered in summer to provide additional shade. Within the courtyard there is a low stepped platform from which the call to prayer was made and a small room which probably served originally for ritual ablutions.

www.visitabudhabi.ae

Al Ain Zoo

This is home to over 4,000 animals, and at least 30% of its 180 species are considered endangered. Conservation efforts have been strengthened by partnerships with San Diego Zoo, the Fairchild Tropical Botanical Garden in Miami, and the World Association of Zoos & Aquariums. The park covers 900 hectares near the base of Jebel Hafeet. Visitors can see the large animal collection, including the majestic white lions of Sanbona, in enclosures that resemble their natural habitats as closely as possible, and 32 Arabian sand cats – the largest known captive population in the world. Giraffes, zebras, rhinoceroses and hippos co-exist in the mixed African exhibit, while wildlife typical of the local region, such as the indigenous Arabian Oryx and sand gazelle also

share a habitat. There are plenty of green public spaces ideal for picnics and also playgrounds, a cafeteria and a train tour of the wildlife area. In summer, the park is also open nightly from 4pm to 10pm, with a special bird show at 7:30pm. Adult entry is AED 15 (US \$5) and AED 5 (US \$1.50) for children. Under three's are free.

**Near Traffic Police, Jebel Hafeet,
800 2977, +971 3 782 8188
www.awpr.ae**

Al Qattara Arts Centre

On a site that dates to the Iron Age (1100 – 300Bc), this historic renovated fort now houses the Al Qattara Arts Centre – the only one in Al Ain – and carefully maintains a blend of the

traditional architecture with state-of-the-art facilities.

The centre has an extensive arts and culture programme with strong emphasis on local and Arab art, UAE heritage and culture and advanced facilities for studying and improving art skills. With excellent classrooms, including a dry studio for a variety of activities such as music classes and art crafting, a wet studio for drawing and painting, a fully-equipped pottery studio, a digital room suitable for photography and computer classes, a spacious calligraphy studio as well as an exhibition hall, cafe and library.

**www.visitabudhabi.ae
+971 3 761 8080**



Classic Cars Museum at Al Ain Sportplex

This museum is an educational facility that collects, preserves, interprets and exhibits vehicles related to the evolution of transportation in the UAE. You can find informative books with valuable information about old transportation in the UAE.

Open Saturday to Thursday from 5pm –10pm and for pre-booked groups, of at least 10 people, by arrangement on Friday.

www.alainclassiccarsmuseum.com

+971 50 623 1323

Green Mubazzarah Hot Springs

At the bottom of Jebel Hafeet, Abu Dhabi's highest peak, lies one of the UAE's most surprising sights. Green Mubazzarah is a park of undulating rocky terrain that has been landscaped, giving the impression of rolling grassy hillsides with streams, hot springs and waterfalls. Accommodation is available in chalets. Advance reservations are taken.

www.emiratesresidence.com

+971 3 783 9555



Hili Archaeological Garden

Just 10 kilometres outside Al Ain (on the road to Dubai) are the Hili Archaeological Gardens. Combining both a public garden and the archaeological site, this is a popular place for tourists and residents alike. The archaeological site has remnants of a Bronze Age settlement (2,500-2,000 BC), which was excavated and restored in 1995. It is the source of some of the richest finds in the area, many of which are believed to be over 4,000 years old. There are other archaeological structures around the park, but it is chiefly a garden with plants, fountains, and a small children's play area. Hili is near Fossil Valley, an area rich in a variety of fossils dating back many thousands of years to when it was covered by sea.

Mohammed Bin Khalifa St
www.visitabudhabi.ae

Hili Fun City

This flagship family entertainment destination has been a firm favourite since opening in 1985 when it became the Gulf's first theme park. Now renovated, the expansive park boasts 28 attractions for all ages, a family show amphitheatre, picnic and play areas. The all-inclusive price of AED 45 / AED 35 Mondays and Tuesdays (US



\$12.50 / 9.50) for adults and children of 0.89m and above covers entry to the park and 25 rides. The park is open from 10am to 10pm on public holidays and from 12pm until 10pm on weekends. Weekday timings are 4pm to 10pm. Wednesdays are reserved for ladies only and the park is closed on Sundays.

www.hilifuncity.ae
+971 3 784 5542

Jebel Hafeet

This towering rocky height, which stands guard over Al Ain and borders Oman, is forged out of craggy limestone that has been weathered over millions of years. Significant fossil discoveries have been made in the area, which are vital pieces in the jigsaw of the city's ancient history. Over 500 ancient burial tombs dating back 5,000 years have also been found in the foothills of Jebel Hafeet. Rising 1,240 metres, Jebel Hafeet is the UAE's second highest peak. You can drive, or if you have the stamina, cycle to the top via a winding highway, which edmunds.com (the automotive information online source) described as among the world's greatest driving roads. Once you reach the top, you'll be rewarded with magnificent views over Al Ain, where you can take a break at the Mercure Jebel Hafeet hotel near the Jebel's peak.

Wadi Adventure

A man-made white-water rafting, kayaking and surfing playground in the foothills of Jebel Hafeet. The park's 3.3 metre man-made surf wave is the world's largest and its 1.7 kilometre kayaking channel network is the world's longest.

Bringing together water and adrenaline-filled activity, Wadi Adventure makes a great day out for water sports enthusiasts and families. Lessons are provided by certified trainers for all levels of competency; guests can bring their own equipment, rent or buy gear from the resort's shop. Standard adult entrance is AED 100 (US \$27) and AED 50 (US \$13.50) for children. A family pass is available at AED 200 (US \$54). Individual fees for other activities are applicable.

www.wadiadventure.ae

+971 3 781 8422



Al Ain



PARKS & GARDENS



Al Ain Ladies Park

Commonly known as Basra Park, this quiet and attractive garden is for women and children only (boys under the age of 10). If you are looking for somewhere to sit and enjoy the peace, there are plenty of benches under the

shady trees. Play areas with swings, slides and climbing frames are sure to keep the kids busy. A dry wadi (dried up river bed), crossed by wooden bridges, runs through the middle of the park and there is also a small snack bar to satisfy the day's cravings.

Al Ain Paradise Garden

This expansive park – the size of four football pitches – is home to approximately 10 million flowers, a 12 metre tall replica of the Eiffel Tower and it holds the Guinness World Record for the most hanging baskets, having 2,968 in total. Entrance is free.

On Nahyan Al Awal Street at the Zakher roundabout.

www.alainparadise.com

Al Ain Public Garden

The main park in Al Ain, this is a tranquil spot amid the hustle and bustle. Walkways meander under shady trees, fountains are attractively lit at night and areas for younger children have a variety of play equipment. For the older kids, there is a small amusement arcade tucked away near the back entrance.

**Zayed Bin Sultan St,
+971 3 708 4832**

Children's Garden

Within Al Ain Zoo is the fun-filled, outdoor learning scheme 'Children's Garden'. Designed to inspire children of all ages with a love for biodiversity, the new garden showcases the beauty of plants. The Children's Garden features a flower garden, rolling hill, mixed use play areas, picnic spots,

a native plant garden with species indigenous to the UAE, a recycling garden and a vegetable, fruit and herb garden. With spectacular African Baobab trees framing the area, the towering trunks offer a genuine horticulture lesson in how specific plants can adapt to dry soil conditions. Entry is included within the fee to the Al Ain Zoo.

www.awpr.ae



Al Ain



HERITAGE



Al Ain Heritage and Culture Village at Al Ain Sportplex

At the expansive Al Ain Sportplex, the Al Ain Heritage and Culture Village is a destination in its own right. Bringing the richness of Emirati culture and diversity together in one place, the heritage-style theme park invites you to journey into the past and experience traditional UAE life. The

village includes an old café, a popular market, and two theatres where you can enjoy art shows and listen to poetry and concerts. Entrance is free. Open Saturday to Thursday from 9.30am-1pm and 5pm -10pm and on Friday from 4pm -10.30pm

www.alainsportplex.ae

+971 3 768 9779

Al Ain National Museum

On the edge of Al Ain Oasis, this museum showcases the city's unique heritage and history. It is housed in the same compound as the Sultan Bin Zayed Fort (also known as the Eastern Fort), which was built in 1910 and is very well preserved.

The presentations in its three main sections – archaeology, ethnography and gifts – illustrate various aspects of UAE life and include an interesting collection of Bedouin jewellery, musical instruments, weapons, and a reconstruction of a traditional majlis. The archaeological displays are extensive, and include many artefacts from the nearby Hili Gardens so it is helpful to visit the museum first. Some

of the displays, such as the one from Garn Bint Saud (12 kilometres north of Hili), date back to the first millennium BC. The gifts section houses an unusual collection of gifts that Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan received during his lifetime. It includes golden swords, silver daggers and a golden palm tree, among others. The labelling on all displays is in English and Arabic. Hours of operation are generous, from 8am to 7:30pm every day except Monday (closed) and Friday, when the hours are 3pm to 7:30pm. Entrance is Adults AED 3 (US 75cents), Children AED 1 (US 35cents)

Near Al Ain Oasis

www.aam.gov.ae

+971 3 764 1595



Al Ain Palace Museum

This museum is the former home of the late UAE founder, Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan, the Palace was once a political and social hub. Built in 1910, the building became a museum in 1998.

Now creatively restored, the museum houses a large collection of material about the ruling family. Visitors can tour the private rooms and gardens once occupied by the 'Father of the Nation'. The museum is open from 8:30am to 7:30pm Tuesday to Sunday and between 3:30pm to 7:30pm on Friday. Entrance is free.

Al Ain St

+971 3 751 7755

Al Ain University Natural History Museum

For those interested in the UAE's flora and fauna, this museum is a small but informative centre run by the UAE University in Al Ain. It includes a herbarium and collections of various species of animals and birds. A collection of rocks, minerals and fossils is also on display. The museum is open Sunday to Thursday 8am – 2pm. Entrance is free.

www.cos.uaeu.ac.ae

Al Reef Handicrafts Training Centre

This educational centre at Al Ain Sportplex gives you the chance to learn how to make traditional handicrafts of various types. The centre encourages residents and tourists to know more about the UAE heritage during the training sessions held by specialised staff. The sessions are classified according to age group and gender and kids can attend if they are above 5 years old. You must register before attending!

Open Sunday to Thursday from 5pm – 10pm

www.alreeftc.com

+971 50 623 1323

Murajib Fort

Built in 1816, Murajib Fort is the oldest in Al Ain. It is on Al Jimi Street and its restored remains are within beautifully landscaped gardens, which are reserved for women and children. Entrance is free.

Al Jimi St

www.visitabudhabi.ae



Al Ain

SPORTS & RECREATION



AL AIN OFFERS A WEALTH of indoor and outdoor active pursuits. Here's a selection:

Al Ain Sportplex

Aside from motorsports, cricket, soccer, paintball and other attractions, the Al Ain Sportplex is home to the 1.4 km Al Ain Raceway go-karting track – the largest of its kind in the Arabian Gulf.

Kattam Al Shaklah Street

www.alainsportplex.ae

+971 3 768 8888

Go-Karting

The state-of-the-art Al Ain Raceway is ranked as one of the world's top three go-karting tracks and is host to major international events such as the Rotax Max Challenge Grand Finals, the biggest annual event on the global karting calendar. This fully floodlit circuit features three distinctive configurations, providing an exhilarating challenge for drivers of all abilities. Open to the public, drivers can hone their skills on top-of-the-range Intrepid brand rental karts.

The Al Ain Raceway also boasts a restaurant, shisha lounge and meeting rooms equipped with the latest technology and is an ideal venue for team building and corporate events. Exclusive use of the circuit needs to be booked in advance.

Al Ain Sportplex, Kattam Al

Shaklah St

www.alainraceway.com

+971 3 768 6662

GOLF

Al Ain Equestrian,

Shooting & Golf Club

In the foothills of the soaring Jebel Hafeet heights, AESGC is our Oasis City's first 18-hole facility and a

fantastic environment in which to absorb the recuperative majesty of the emirate's second-largest city.

To ensure a consistent challenge, the picturesque, tranquil, Par 71 is compelling, visually scenic, yet a relatively short challenge. With water in play on 12 holes, this stern but decidedly conquerable test also includes the Arabian Gulf's longest Par 5 – the mammoth, 678-yard Hole 10. To complement the 18-hole mainstay, there is also a floodlit, nine-hole, par three Academy Course – the ideal spot for a round of night golf.

www.aesgc.ae

+971 3 768 4888



Al Ain Equestrian, Shooting & Golf Club



Al Ain Golf Club

Near the Danat Al Ain Resort, this club boasts an 18 hole sand course, a clubhouse and a floodlit driving range. Handicaps gained here are valid internationally. Visitors are welcome, but should phone ahead.

Near Danat Al Ain Resort

www.alainsandgolfclub.blogspot.com

+971 3 768 6808

Hilton Al Ain Golf Club

This par three course has an average distance of about 80 yards between each hole and, although short in

length, it can play tough. The course has nearly 30 bunkers and very small quick greens. It is open to non-members, and lessons are available.

Hilton Al Ain

www.al-ain.hilton.com

+971 3 768 6666

HIKING

The areas surrounding Al Ain are perfect for day hikes or long walks. The plantations scattered around the city provide gorgeous, shaded settings for long walks and quiet picnics. More experienced hikers shouldn't miss



the Hanging Gardens hike, which showcases some of the most unusual and unexpected rock formations and plant life in the country.

HORSE RIDING

The Al Ain Equestrian, Shooting and Golf Club has excellent facilities for the equestrian. Whether it's learning to ride, looking to take part in competitions or be a spectator at regular races, this is the resort for you.

www.aesgc.ae

+971 3 702 6405

SHOOTING

The Al Ain Equestrian, Shooting and Golf Club has excellent facilities for beginners, corporate groups and experienced shooters. The club is also a good resource for information on shooting tips, equipment advice, gun tips, and competition opportunities for registered member.

Open 2pm – 10pm and closed on Sunday.

www.aesgc.ae

+971 3 702 5000

Al Ain

SHOPPING MALLS



Al Ain Mall

This bright, modern mall has over 175 stores selling everything from greeting cards to gold jewellery. Entertainment facilities include cinema multiplex, ice rink, family amusement centre, bowling, and a spacious food court.

www.alainmall.ae

+971 3 766 0333

Al Foah Mall

This is Al Ain's newest entertainment and shopping centre. From fashion to accessories, books to toys,

homeware to restaurants, and a kids' entertainment area everything is under one roof. There is also a 12 screen multiplex cinema.

www.alfoahmall.com

+971 3 766 3560

Al Jimi Mall

Offers hundreds of shopping options in over 70 shops, including Womens' Secret, Early Learning Centre, Nine West, Areej and Body Shop.

www.aljimimall.com

+971 3 763 8883

Bawadi Mall

The largest mall in Al Ain, Bawadi Mall has over 400 shops, representing both international and regional brands, and a range of high street and designer names, a food court and many casual dining outlets. Family entertainment includes a ski village, rollercoaster, an eight screen cinema and a bowling alley. The Heritage Village features beautiful Islamic architecture and shops selling classic souvenirs like gold, carpets and handicrafts in a traditional souk environment. There are also two outdoor markets, Bawadi and Al Qaws.

www.bawadimall.com

+971 3 784 0000

Emirates Commercial Complex

Nearly 50 shops line the pavements of this mixed use complex that is particularly handy if you're looking for souvenirs. One of the most popular outlets is Odel Style, where you can buy fabrics and readymade garments with a distinct Arabian feel.

+971 3 751 2111

Safeer Mall

Revolving around the popular supermarket of the same name, Safeer Mall is on the way to Hili Archaeological Park. There are plenty

of clothing and accessory shops to satisfy every shopper.

+971 3 763 3215

Wahat Hili Mall

This neighbourhood shopping centre, which adjoins the five-star Hili Rayhaan by Rotana hotel and is close to the Oman border, houses 160 shops, a ladies-only health club, an expansive entertainment zone and offers a wide choice of restaurants and cafes.

www.whmall.ae

+971 3 762 0207



AL AIN SOUKS

Al Ain Souk

Also known as the Central or Old Souk, this is a great place to explore, savour the local atmosphere and practise your bargaining skills. The souk itself is a rather ramshackle affair but it is certainly different from many of the modern, air conditioned markets found elsewhere.

Muwajei Souk

This modern souk is a long strip of handy shops, including big guns like Choithram, Shoe Mart and The Body Shop. There is also a bakery, a baby shop, a butcher's and a toy shop; even more outlets can be found across the road.

Souk Al Bawadi & Souk Al Qaws

Both of these outdoor markets are attached to the huge Bawadi Mall. Souk Al Qaws features shops of a practical nature set among unique architecture, with over 40 service outlets including banks, money exchanges and travel agents. Souk Al Bawadi has more of a heritage feel, with over 50 shops selling traditional items and souvenirs.

Souk Al Zafarana

This is a jewel of a find which reflects true Emirati culture and tradition while being new. Whether you're looking for traditional garments, incense or spices, henna or oud, or dallah (Arabian coffee pots) this is the marketplace for you. This is the new home of Al Ain's old souk and features Mubdia Village, a section exclusively for women that is staffed by female shopkeepers. Open 10am to 1pm and 8pm until midnight.

Around the corner from Al Jimi Mall.

+971 3 762 1868



Al Ain



A DAY OUT IN AL AIN



ITINERARY 1

**EXCITE, RELAX AND TAKE A WALK
ON THE WILD SIDE.**

Morning

Wake up at around 5:30am to catch the action at the Maqam camel racetrack outside Al Ain. Catch the excitement as owners follow their prize animals in 4x4s from the safety of the inner enclosure. Feel the pride as the trophies are awarded. Head back for breakfast and pool at the hotel.

Afternoon

Wander through the ancient Al Ain Oasis and feel the cares of the world drain away. Be cooled by the wafting palms and see the traditional falaj irrigation system in action. Let your imagination take you back to the days when this was one of the most welcome sights on the Silk Route.

Evening

Take a night time guided tour through the Al Ain Zoo with its night safari. Since many of its animals are nocturnal you get to see species that are hidden from you during the day.

ITINERARY 2

HISTORY & NEW HORIZONS.

Morning

Become immersed in Al Ain's history by visiting its many forts. First, head to the impressive Al Jahili Fort and see the permanent display of the work of British explorer Wilfred Thesiger. Next head to the landscaped gardens of Al Ain's oldest fort – Murajjib Fort – built in 1816. The more adventurous may cross the Omani border into Buraimi to explore Hili Fort.

Afternoon

Al Ain National Museum is varied enough to take up a full afternoon. Start your tour with a look through the archaeology section, which contains

several artefacts from the nearby forts that you will have visited in the morning. Next head to the museum's gifts section to see a collection of gifts given to the late Sheikh Zayed. End with the ethnography section which has a huge collection of Bedouin jewellery, musical instruments, weapons and a reconstruction of a traditional majlis.

Evening

Set out late afternoon and head towards the towering Jebel Hafeet. If you time it well, you can enjoy the sunset while driving up one of the world's most incredible roads. Before you reach the top, turn off for a break at the Mercure Hotel.





ITINERARY 3

Hot Souvenirs, Warm Springs, Cool Golf and a Chilled Out Dinner.

Morning

Wake up early to catch traders at the country's last remaining camel market

near the base of Jebel Hafeet and get up close to the desert way of life. Although you won't buy a camel, take your wallet to buy some handmade camel accessories as they make great souvenir gifts. Later travel to the other side of Jebel Hafeet to explore



the bizarre landscape of Green Mubazzarah and its hot springs.

Afternoon

Enjoy 18 holes of golf on the all grass course at Al Ain Equestrian, Shooting & Golf Club.

Evening

The live entertainment and great food at Min Zaman in Al Ain Rotana attracts a large crowd so reserve a table before hand.

explore, experience
and engage



AL GHARBIA

(WESTERN REGION)

'WHERE THE DESERT MEETS THE SEA',
Al Gharbia makes up over two thirds of Abu Dhabi emirate. Along its hundreds of kilometres of coastline are stunning beaches and islands, which are gradually being developed for visitors.

Al Gharbia is home to Liwa, a historic oasis town that sits at the entry to the Rub Al Khali (Empty Quarter) – the world's largest sand desert. Prepare for the UAE's most adventurous off-road driving and some of its most incredible scenery.





Al Gharbia



ATTRACTIONS



Al Gharbia Watersports Festival

Approximately 120 kilometres from Abu Dhabi, the picturesque harbour town of Al Mirfa boasts a stunning coastline and hosts the annual Al Gharbia Watersports Festival, which is focused on encouraging visitors to explore this pristine and undiscovered area. The festival gathers together champions from across the globe and enthusiasts keen to take part in adrenaline inducing competitions such as kiteboarding, wake boarding and surf-ski kayaking. The 10 day

festival is a family event, where visitors are encouraged to kick back and relax. Camping facilities are provided for participants and visitors, with live evening entertainment, kids play areas and a magical 'Sunset Souk,' a traditional market that opens as the sun goes down every day. Professional trainers and instructors are on hand, offering free sessions for those wanting to learn more about watersport activities.

www.algharbiafestivals.com

Al Mirfa Public Beach

Home to the Al Gharbia Watersports Festival, this is Al Gharbia's only developed beach. It's almost never crowded and there is a small town nearby where you can buy supplies for a night of camping or a day of enjoying the turquoise waters. It's one of the region's best kept secrets.

Al Mirfa, Public Beach, Al Gharbia

Arabian Wildlife Park

On Sir Bani Yas Island – the core component of the planned Desert Islands multi-experiential destination 240 kilometres west of Abu Dhabi – the Arabian Wildlife Park, which is home to more than 10,000 free

roaming animals, takes up more than half of the island. Guests at the boutique Desert Islands Resort & Spa by Anantara can take 4x4 Nature & Wildlife Drives of the park in specially made vehicles accompanied by expert island staff. Alternatively, guests of the Danat Resort Jebel Dhanna can book a three hour tour. There are many Arabian Oryx, gazelles and giraffes, along with the newest arrivals, hyenas and cheetahs. Flight transfers are available from Al Bateen Airport in Abu Dhabi and there's a ferry service from Jebel Dhanna.

Sir Bani Yas Island, Jebel Dhanna

www.desertislands.com

+971 2 801 5400



Archeological Site on Sir Bani Yas Island

Open to the public, this is the UAE's only discovered Christian monastery. Believed to have been built around 600 AD, it was initially discovered on the island during excavations in 1992. Two decades since its discovery, and more than a thousand years since it was built, the public can visit the site and experience another piece of the rich tapestry that makes up the UAE's fascinating history. A new phase of work is currently underway by archaeologists, and treasures are still being unearthed, making the site a significant focal point for history enthusiasts worldwide.

Sir Bani Yas Island, Jebel Dhanna

www.desertislands.com

+971 2 406 1400

Delma Island

Inhabited for over 7,000 years, Delma Island was once one of the Gulf's most important pearl diving centres, and it still maintains strong links to its maritime heritage. Just 30 kilometres off the mainland, it can be visited by ferries from Jebel Dhanna. With a good supply of fresh water, the island is surprisingly fertile, with many farms and plantations growing a wide variety of produce.

Dune Bashing

The vast expanse of desert that lies outside the Liwa oasis is perfect for adrenaline fuelled off-road driving. With 300 metre dunes and long sand valleys, you'll never get bored of desert driving. Rent a four wheel drive from Abu Dhabi, get a good map and explore to your heart's content – but go in convoy – never go into the desert alone.



Liwa Dunes



Emirates National Auto Museum

Some 45 kilometres south of Abu Dhabi city, this impressive pyramid houses an assortment of cars from one dedicated collector: Sheikh Hamad Bin Hamdan Al Nahyan. The museum is home to almost 200 cars, including a vast collection of off-road vehicles and classic American cars, the Sheikh's rainbow collection of Mercedes and the world's largest truck. Some of this impressive collection was featured in the BBC television programme Top Gear. Even if you're not particularly interested in cars, this is a fascinating collection and a great place to stop on the way to or from Liwa. Opening times are 9am to 6pm seven days a week, but are subject to change. Entry is AED 50 (US \$13.50) and children under 10 are free.

South of Abu Dhabi

Hamim Road, Off E11

www.enam.ae

+971 55 749 2155

Tel Moreeb

Considered as one of the world's tallest sand dunes, Tel Moreeb is over 300 metres high and the 50 degree incline to the top makes it a prime destination for motor sports enthusiasts. Each year, the region's most powerful four wheel drives, quad bikes and dirt bikes compete in the Moreeb Hill Climb event, arranged by the Abu Dhabi Motors Club, which is part of the Liwa International Festival in February. It's well worth the trip if you think you can handle the constant humming of super modified engines and loud Arabic music. The large flat area at the base of the dune acts as the base camp for competitors and spectators of the annual Abu Dhabi Desert Challenge cross country rally.

www.admc.ae

Al Gharbia



HERITAGE



Al Dhafra Camel Festival

Featuring nearly 24,000 camels and attracting several thousand spectators every December, this is one of the world's largest desert heritage events. Camel breeders come from throughout the region to compete in this massive camel beauty pageant that celebrates local culture. The event takes place on a huge, barren plain that transforms into a lively city of tents, four wheel drives, handicraft shops and, of course, camels.

Madinat Zayed City

www.algharbiafestivals.ae

+971 2 621 5300

Liwa Date Festival

Held each year in July, the Liwa Date Festival promotes and celebrates the symbolic and historic role that the date palm plays in Emirati culture. The festival revolves around the date competition, in which Emirati farms vie for the title of best date grower. Non-locals can attend and it's an incredible way to experience Emirati culture up close. Prizes are given for the top dates in each category and there is a live date auction where some dates sell for over AED 6,000 (US \$1,650) per kilo.

Liwa

www.algharbiafestivals.ae

Al Gharbia



SPORTS & RECREATION



Dune Dashing

Off-Road Driving

The massive Empty Quarter dunes present an awesome driving challenge. If you're in the emirate during the cooler months and you like adventure, rent a four wheel drive, find a group of eager drivers (you'll need at least three vehicles; never drive alone in the desert) and set out for the sand. Be sure that your vehicle is insured for off-road use and that you have the proper equipment. If you've never driven off road, you should first learn the ropes with one of the several tour companies in Abu Dhabi.

Camping

A trip to the desert isn't complete without a night under the stars. You can arrange camping adventures with a tour company or rent a four wheel drive and buy the equipment yourself. Camping supplies are surprisingly cheap in the emirate and there is no need to buy high quality equipment. Please take your litter home with you – the desert is a sensitive eco-environment. Please respect and protect it.

Al Gharbia



A DAY OUT IN AL GHARBIA



GUESTS AT THE GROWING NUMBER of hotels in Al Gharbia have a host of adventure activities to keep them occupied:

ITINERARY 1

SUNBATHE, SWIM AND DINE.

Morning

Head off to the public beach at the picturesque harbour town of Mirfa.

The water is practically untouched, perfect for a morning in the sun and for swimming or activities with the Western Marine Sports Club.

Evening

Make a reservation at the Zaitoun restaurant at the Danat Resort Jebel Dhanna for a masterful menu of Arabian Gulf and North African dishes.

ITINERARY 2

DESERT DRIVING, DUNE BARBECUES AND MOONLIT CAMPFIRES.

Morning

Head towards the Liwa oasis at dawn and prepare for one of the most incredible landscapes you'll ever witness. Once you reach the crescent shaped Liwa oasis, take some time to drive between the small towns that populate this fertile area. This will be your last stop for supplies before heading into the massive dunes, so make sure you are prepared, and that there is more than one vehicle in your party; never venture into the desert alone. Once past the Liwa oasis, you'll quickly be blown away by the sheer size of the dunes. Find yourselves an area to camp and pitch your tents.

Afternoon

Fire up barbecues, cook yourselves a meal and get ready to blast through the dunes. If you're camping with a guided tour, hold on tight while the experienced drivers take you on a drive you'll never forget. You should also try your hand at sand boarding, the desert equivalent of snow boarding.



Evening

There's nothing like sitting around a campfire with good friends and great food. Start preparing your evening feast, heat up the barbecue and put some wood in the fire pit. As you wait for the coals to heat up, climb the highest sand dune you can and watch what might be the most majestic sunset of your life; the long shadows cast by the dunes only magnify their incredible size. Head back to camp, feast like a king, then sit back and enjoy the company of good friends and endless stars.

Abu Dhabi EVENTS

THE EMIRATE'S PACKED EVENTS calendar means visitors can join in a host of world-class experiences.

December – February

International Emirates Photography Competition Exhibition

Running under the broad theme of 'Decisive Moment', this highly acclaimed annual international competition showcases professional and amateur photography vying for a share of the prize purse of over US\$ 135,000. Up to 300 entries, selected by a jury of international experts, will go on display. Entrance is free. The winning photos are also published in a book.

www.ephotoc.net

To find out what is on during your stay, event information can be found at **www.visitabudhabi.ae** and **www.abudhabievents.ae**

January

Abu Dhabi HSBC Golf Championship

Expect the Unexpected characterises this annual PGA Tour curtain raiser. Held at Abu Dhabi Golf Club, the championship has an engaging spectator village and after-play entertainment to make it a great day out. **www.abudhabigolfchampionship.com**



February

Gourmet Abu Dhabi

This is a 'lifestyle gastronomic extravaganza' featuring a star-studded cast of Michelin-star chefs and special guests, master classes, industry insights from hospitality experts, and Chateau and gourmet dinners hosted by a range of the UAE capital's top hotels.

www.gourmetabudhabi.ae

March

Abu Dhabi International Triathlon

This annual event attracts the world's best triathletes and international amateurs. The race is contested across three distances. The 223kms main 'long course' boasts a gruelling 3km swim, a 200km cycle and 20km closing run. The 'short' course, at half the length, has a 1.5km swim, a 100km cycle and a 10 km run, while the sprint course – which can be run as a team relay – has a 750m swim, a 50km bike and 5km run.

www.abudhabitriathlon.com

March/April

Abu Dhabi Festival

This highly successful international festival advances classical music and fine arts among Abu Dhabi residents and visitors. A culturally-rich and diverse event, it features world-class performances from Plácido Domingo, the majestic Spanish tenor, and Mariinsky Ballet, the revered Russian ballet company.

www.abudhabifestival.ae



Abu Dhabi Desert Challenge

March/April

This is one of the world's most prestigious international cross country rallies and runs annually. This five-day motor sport spectacle is organised by the Automobile and Touring Club of the UAE and is the season-opening round of both the FIA Cross Country Rally World Cup and the FIM Cross Country Rallies World Championship.

www.abudhabidesertchallenge.com

April

Abu Dhabi International Book Fair

Held annually at Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre, this is the Arabian Gulf's fastest-growing book fair with in excess of 600,000 titles on display.

www.adbookfair.com

Al Gharbia Watersports Festival

An all-watersports extravaganza on the beach in the charming fishing town of Mirfa in Al Gharbia – Abu Dhabi's Western Region. The festival is filled with wonder, water and world-class athletes. From kiteboards and surf ski kayaks in the waves to chilled-out camping and concerts on shore, the UAE's wettest, wildest week.

www.algharbia.ae



June/July

SummerFest Abu Dhabi

A mega summer promotion with spectacular flight, attraction and hotel deals, this is a month-long blockbuster, family-centric event packed full of fun, entertainment, action-packed activities and shows.

www.summerinabudhabi.ae

July

Liwa Date Festival

This annual event explores the intricacies of date production and the varied products this desert fruit is now lending itself to. A fascinating insight into many desert traditions, the festival includes a date beauty contest, a date auction and educational sessions on how to care for palm trees.

www.liwadatesfestival.ae

August

EidFest Abu Dhabi

Our Eid. Your Eid – A concept which brings a collection of celebratory activities to Abu Dhabi's visitors and residents, this third edition of the bi-annual festival, centres on the Islamic festivities of Eid Al Fitr and brings to life, once again, the spirit of sharing.

www.eidfestabudhabi.ae

September

Abu Dhabi Hunting & Equestrian Exhibition (ADIHEX)

This is the Arabian Gulf's most renowned hunting and equestrian exhibition where visitors can enjoy camel auctions, saluki and falcon beauty contests, art and coffee-making competitions and a variety of traditional hunting and equestrian activities.

www.adihex.com

October

EidFest Abu Dhabi

Our Eid. Your Eid – A concept which brings a collection of celebratory activities to Abu Dhabi's visitors and residents, this third edition of the bi-annual festival, centres on the Islamic festivities of Eid Al Fitr and brings to life, once again, the spirit of sharing.

www.eidfestabudhabi.ae



October/November

Formula 1® Etihad Airways Abu Dhabi Grand Prix

The highlight of Abu Dhabi's annual motorsport calendar, the Grand Prix is held at the state-of-the-art Yas Marina Circuit, although the entire city catches race fever. A fan zone on the Corniche takes the event beyond the racetrack, while nightly circuit concerts by international stars bring added value for race goers.

www.yasmarinacircuit.ae

Yasalam – Pulse of the capital

Ten days of fun-filled activities and shows surrounding the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix. An interactive F1 fan zone, free concerts during Beats on the Beach weekend, film screenings by the sea and a chance to break a Guinness World Record for sand-castle building.

www.yasalam.ae

November

Abu Dhabi Art

A popular art fair and a modern and contemporary art platform with public programmes, Abu Dhabi Art brings together leading art galleries from across the world. Showcasing a variety of works, from museum-quality pieces to those by emerging artists, the event is at the UAE Pavilion and Manarat Al Saadiyat on Saadiyat Island. Entry is free. Participants have to register and some areas have age restrictions. Workshops are charged.

www.abudhabiartfair.ae

Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Global Arabian Flat Racing Festival

Suit up in your Sunday best and head to Abu Dhabi Equestrian Club for the finale of the Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Global Arabian Flat Racing Festival – a globetrotting 10–race series. Launched to increase the global diversity of purebred Arabian horse racing, this year's event also includes the finale of the inaugural Sheikha Fatima bint Mubarak Ladies World Championship – the first international purebred Arabian series specifically-created for female jockeys. Entrance is free.

www.sheikhmansoorfestival.com



Coutts Polo at the Palace

Coutts Polo at the Palace takes place at the Emirates Palace hotel with a 'Palace Rules' concept designed by the world's best players to enhance the spectator experience.

www.citypoloseries.com

November / December

2013 Al Ain Aerobatic Show

Start the UAE National Day celebrations in the Oasis City with the 10th Al Ain Aerobatic Show. This family event pays tribute to the country's rich culture and heritage with a series of UAE themed aerial displays and on-ground attractions, performances and activities.

www.alainaerobaticshow.com

December

UAE National Day

2 December

This annual two day festival on Abu Dhabi's Corniche features live concerts and entertainment as the city literally comes alive with joyful and exuberant celebration. Buildings are decorated with thousands of lights, which illuminate the city with brilliant colour.

Al Dhafrah Camel Festival

Held in Madinat Zayed in Abu Dhabi's Al Gharbia (Western) region, this annual festival celebrates the importance of the ship of the desert in Emirati society. An intriguing insight into the relationship of this crucial desert animal and man, the festival is a visitor experience with a difference and includes the world's only camel beauty contest.

www.algharbia.ae

www.algharbiafestivals.com



Mubadala World Tennis Championship – Abu Dhabi

Six of the world's top ten players compete for the 'winner takes all' US \$250,000 prize.

Staged yearly at Abu Dhabi International Tennis Complex, Zayed Sports City, and presented by Flash Entertainment, this is one of the Arabian Gulf's fastest-growing and most popular sporting events.

www.mubadalawtc.com

www.thinkflash.ae

All year round

ADNEC Exhibitions & Shows

Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre (ADNEC) is the region's largest and most modern facility of its kind. Throughout the year it hosts a variety of exhibitions and entertainment shows. The ADNEC complex includes luxury hotels, restaurants and a marina.

www.adnec.ae

Yas Island Shows

A wide range of entertainment shows and concerts take place in Yas Island's Du Arena and Du Forum organised by Flash Entertainment.

www.thinkflash.ae



FOREIGN EMBASSIES IN UAE

Afghanistan	02- 6655560	China	02- 4434276
Algeria	02- 4448949	Czech Republic	02- 6782800
Angola	02- 4477042	Egypt	02- 4445566
Argentina	02- 4436838	Eritrea	02- 6331838
Armenia	02- 4444196	Finland	02- 6328927
Australia	02- 6346100	France	02- 4435100
Austria	02- 6766611	Germany	02- 6446693
Azerbaijan	02- 6662848	Greece	02- 4492550
Bahrain	02- 6657500	Guinea	02- 6653166
Bangladesh	02- 4465100	Hungary	02- 6766190
Belarus	02- 4453399	India	02- 4492700
Belgium	02- 6319449	Indonesia	02- 4454448
Belize	02- 6333554	Iran	02- 4447618
Benin	02- 6394665	Iraq	02- 6655152
Bosnia & Herzegovina	02- 6444164	Ireland	02- 4958200
Brazil	02- 6320606	Italy	02- 4435622
Brunei Darussalam	02- 4486999	Japan	02- 4435696
Canada	02- 6940300	Jordan	02- 4447100

Kazakhstan	02- 4476623	Slovakia	02- 6321674
Kenya	02- 6666300	Somalia	02- 6669700
Kuwait	02- 4477146	South Africa	02- 4473446
Lebanon	02- 4492100	South Korea	02- 6439122
Libya	02- 4450030	Spain	02- 6269544
Malaysia	02- 4482775	Sri Lanka	02- 6316444
Mauritania	02- 4462724	Sudan	02- 4446699
Morocco	02- 4433973 / 74	Sweden	02- 6210162
Nepal	02- 6344767	Switzerland	02- 6274636
Netherlands	02- 6958000	Syria	02- 4448768
Nigeria	02- 6166219	Tanzania	02- 6313088
Norway	02- 6211221	Thailand	02- 6421772
Oman	02- 4463333	Tunisia	02- 6811331
Pakistan	02- 4447800	Turkey	02- 4460941
Palestine	02- 4471440	Ukraine	02- 6327586
Philippines	02- 6345664 / 665	United Kingdom	02- 6101100
Poland	02- 4465200	USA	02- 4142200
Qatar	02- 4493300	Yemen	02- 4448457
Romania	02- 4459919		
Russia	02- 6721797		
Saudi Arabia	02- 4445700		
Senegal	02- 6336929		



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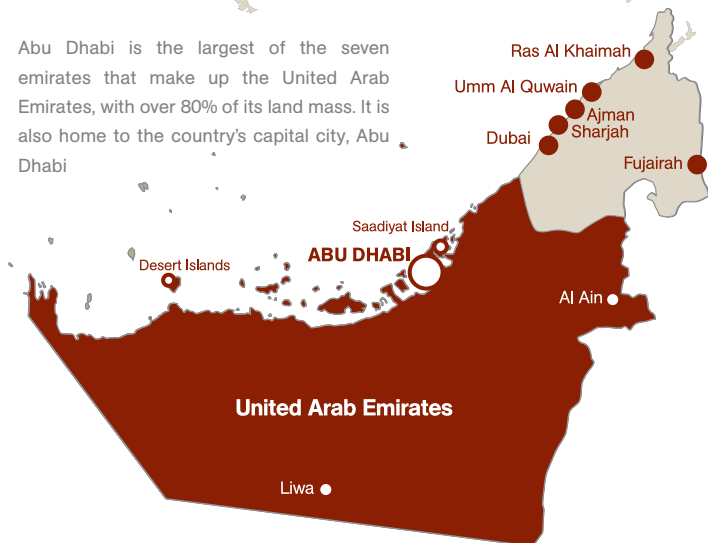
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The United Arab Emirates is on the Arabian Peninsula



Abu Dhabi is the largest of the seven emirates that make up the United Arab Emirates, with over 80% of its land mass. It is also home to the country's capital city, Abu Dhabi.



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Issue: 2014



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