

DUBAI

Dubai is the second largest of the seven emirates of the United Arab Emirates on the Persian Gulf. It has the largest number of population among them. Today, the economy of Dubai grows stronger because of its revenue from trading, financial services, tourism, construction, real estate and the hotel industry. The unique architecture such as the Palm Jumeirah or exotically expensive hotels like Burj al Arab draw tourists in droves to this Arab emirate. Not just this, the sun glazed Arabian Desert awaits you with its mesmeric sand dunes and beautiful sunsets. Dubai is a second name to opulence and extravagance, which is a must for any traveler looking to spend holidays in the Middle East.

Cultural History

Dubai is totally an Islamic country with deep rooted Islamic culture and traditions. At first there was a small fishing tribe living here and then the Maktoum family led Bani Yas tribe took over. Ever since then, the Maktoum family has been ruling this land. Even though it is an Islamic state, other religions are allowed to be practiced here and they also have their own religious temples. Dubai is largely populated by expatriates and less of the original populace. However, mosques and the Islamic call to prayer is a frequent reminder of its original heritage.

Food

Food in every region is always a product of the local availability and produce. Dubai is a land of white sandy desert, camels, and cattle with little vegetable produce; yet its cuisine is world famous. Take for instance the **Stuffed Camel** has found its place in the Guinness Book of World Records. A full camel is stuffed with delicious chicken, fish, sheep, and eggs in layers! In addition to this, the must-try dishes include Hummus, Shawarma, Al Harees, Ghuzi, and Falafel.

Top Must See in Dubai

Burj Khalifa is at the top of the list of sight-seeing. This architectural beauty of 150 floors stands in the central part of the city with the ocean and desert on either side. Its ingenious engineering has been stunning people from all over the world.

Burj Al Arab can surely take your breath away with its ostentatious 7 star luxury, extensive outdoor swimming pools, rooftop tennis courts, magnum corridors with matching chandeliers, bars, restaurants, fish aquarium and well-groomed and courteous staff.

Dubai Aquarium is right inside the Dubai Mall. There are about 300 sharks and rays besides other marine life swimming around you while you stay in the safe enclosure. Shark feeding is one attractive feature in this aquarium.

Palm Jumeriah is exactly that – strips of islands resembling the fronds of the palm tree. You will find many beach resorts, business hotels/inns, condos, lodgings in these artificial fronds. Yes, Palm Jumeriah is the elitist of elite's destination!

Wild Wadi Water park, Dubai Museum, Dubai Fountain, Dubai Mall, Dubai Waterfront and Dubai Creek are some of the other stunning attractions of Dubai.

Desert Safari will allow you to experience the Arabian Desert with its gorgeous sand dunes, sunsets, and Arabic food. Ride a camel or get a henna tattoo on your hand or wrist or perhaps take long draws of smoke from hookah around the campfire!

Gold Souk will enthrall you with the amount of gold jewelry on display, sold by sheikhs. If you want to see abundant gold in a variety of gorgeous jewelry pieces, then a visit to the Gold Souk will complete your trip.

How to get to Dubai

Flights from Manchester, Heathrow and Gatwick fly straight to Dubai International Airport (DXB). Emirates Airline, Flydubai, Qantas and British Airways have regular flights from and to Dubai from all over the world. Al Maktoum International is the new futuristic airport at Dubai World Central.

Best time to go to Dubai

Dubai is warm and sunny the year round except in May and September when it can be tortuously hot. Best times are as follows and you can choose according to your preferences:

- Dubai Shopping Festival happens in January or February.
- Dubai Tennis Open – February/March
- Annual Dubai Shopping Festival is for 4 weeks starting from mid-March.
- Dubai Rugby Sevens – December
- Dubai Camel Racing in November Thursdays and Fridays.

Travel Tips

- Traveling with children is not a problem in Dubai, as people love kids. Hotels have special arrangements for baby-sitting
- Women traveling alone must dress suitably covered in all public places, except within their resort/hotel/beach club
- Muslim men most often do not shake hands with women, so wait for a handshake offer
- Five star hotels, the airport, major malls, parking areas are all specially adapted for travelers with disability
- Shops close for Friday prayers between 11.30 am to 1.30 pm
- Tipping is a common practice in Dubai
- No toilets for women in bus stops or souks