

**Everything you want to know
about dubai is in here...**

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TOURIST ESSENTIALS

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- | CAR RENTAL**
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Overview

“In the race for excellence, there is no finish line” – Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, UAE Vice President and Prime Minister and the Ruler of Dubai.

Inspired by the vision of its ruler, the glittering metropolis of Dubai is moving ahead in dizzying pace to clinch the top position among other global destinations, ahead of other traditional favourites like Hong Kong, Paris and Singapore. The government has projected an ambitious figure of 15 million tourists who are expected to arrive in Dubai by 2010.

The world's eyes are strained on Dubai where even the most incredible is becoming possible. Man-made islands, building of a new coastline, the world's tallest habitable tower, new parameters of leisure water-front living, the world's largest mall, a rotating tower....the list is seemingly endless.

Billions of dollars are being pumped into spectacular tourism projects like Bawadi fashioned on the Las Vegas model, clusters of man-made islands are being built all round Dubai's coastline, in the shape of the Palm, and the World.

Then there is the world's tallest tower Al Burj, dwarfing the Taipei 101 and the Petronas Twin Tower, Al Burj. Dubailand with its themed parks and Disney-style entertainment, world class lifestyle resorts like the Dubai Festival City, you can only see to believe the magical transformation of Dubai's skyline.



History



Often described as a city of contrasts, Dubai offers a fabulous cosmopolitan lifestyle with an understated elegance. There are attractions galore for the visitors: sunny beaches, five-star services, legendary hotels, vibrant shopping centres and gleaming skyscrapers vie with the traditional dhows and ancient souks. Where else can a tourist experience everything from large state-of-the-art leisure and retail malls to sandy beaches, turquoise waters, lush green parks and the enduring tranquility of the desert, all in a single day of sightseeing. Dubai's history could make a script for a Hollywood movie pale into insignificance. Before its massive transformation post oil-strike in the 60's, its past paints an intriguing story of pearl divers, smugglers, colonial rule and independence all on the fast forward track.

Historical documentation of Dubai is scarce, but the city's emphatic position as the region's leading trading post dates back to the ancient Kingdom of Sumer around 3000 BC. There are even records that link the emirate to the Bronze Age, Magan civilisation of 2000 BC, and suggest that Dubai Port was the main shipping route between Oman and Mesopotamia, as well as other ancient empires.

The list of occupiers from 3000 B.C. onwards was swift, with one civilization overcoming and conquering the last. Among the most influential was the Persian dynasty of Sassanid, who had taken Dubai Creek and its surrounding areas as its own since 224 B.C. But it was a short-lived occupation. Come the seventh century, the Umayyads came, settled,

and bought with them Islam from western Saudi Arabia.

The Arabs were followed by the Mongols and soon after the Ottomans, each leaving their mark on the local culture and all championing the Islamic religion. From the eighth century onwards, Dubai strengthened its position as a leading trade port between the eastern and western worlds, with the silk trade from China and the pearling industry of the Persian Gulf

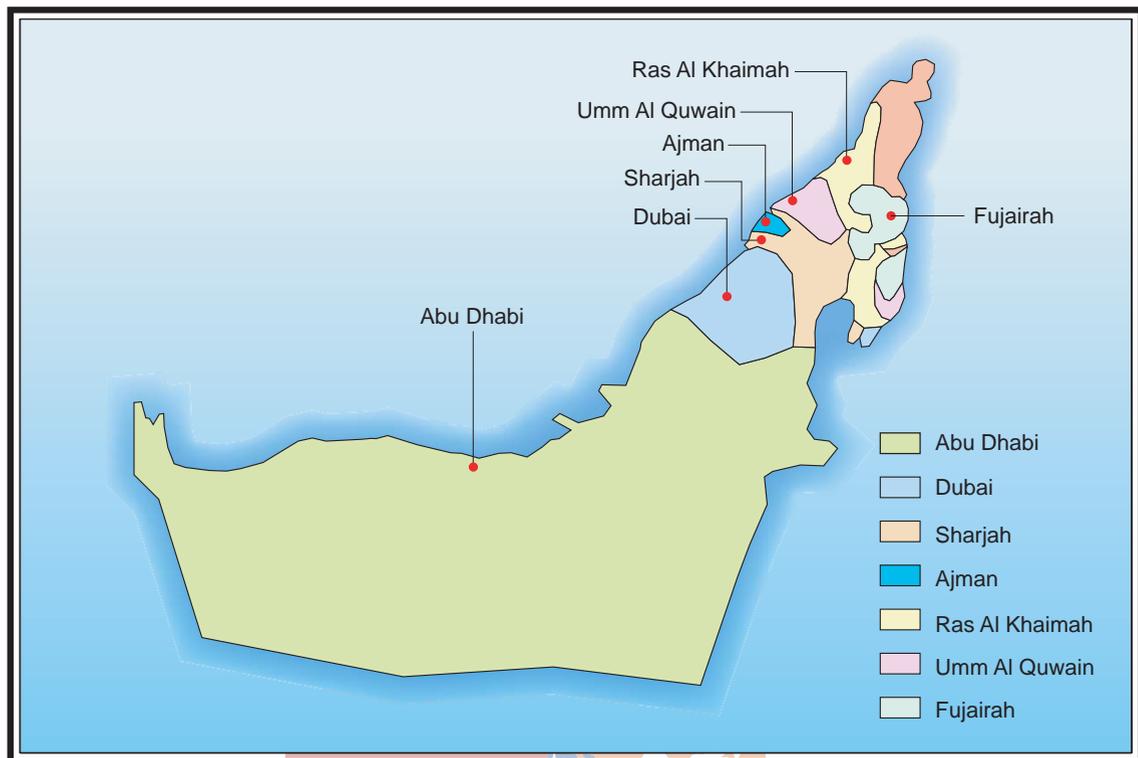


earning the region some major maritime brownie points.

Dubai was taken over in 1830 by the Bani Yas tribe from the Liwa Oasis led by the Maktoum family. Commercial success linked to the liberal attitudes of Dubai's rulers made the emirate attractive to traders from India and Iran who began to settle in the growing town. By the turn of the century Dubai was reputed to have the largest souks in the Gulf Coast with 350 shops in Deira district alone.

While trade developed, Dubai remained a protectorate of Britain as part of the trucial states which extended along the Northern Coast of the Arabian peninsula. When the British withdrew in 1971, Dubai joined Abu Dhabi, Sharjah, Ajman, Umm-Al Quwain, Fujairah and Ras Al Khaimah to form the Federation of the United Arab Emirates.

Geography



The United Arab Emirates sits proudly on the north-eastern tip of the Arabian Peninsula, bordered by Saudi Arabia to the south and west and the Sultanate of Oman to the east and north. The country is made up of seven emirates (Abu Dhabi, Ajman, Dubai, Fujairah, Sharjah, Umm Al Quwain, and Ras Al Khaimah). Abu Dhabi, which occupies over 80% of the country, is the biggest emirate, with Dubai the second largest.

In contrast to Dubai's glittering skyline and larger-than-life projects, the coast of the UAE is littered with coral reefs and over 200 islands, most of which are uninhabited.

The majority of the country is desert, but to the east, rises the formidable Hajar Mountains. Lying close to the Gulf of Oman, they form a backbone through the country, from the Mussandam Peninsula in the north, through the eastern UAE and into Oman.

The Rub Al Khali, more commonly known as the Empty Quarter, occupies a swathe of the south of the country - its desert punctuated by the occasional oasis and spectacular dunes. Common to Saudi Arabia, Oman and Yemen,

it is the largest sand desert in the world, covering an area roughly the same size as France, Belgium and the Netherlands.

Dubai is made up largely of arid desert and with sometimes breathtaking sand dunes hiding the odd oasis. This juxtaposition of geography coupled with incredibly high temperatures limits the variety of flora and fauna present, but you'll be surprised

at just how green parts of the UAE are, and Dubai is no exception with the UAE government spending time and money on its 'greening' programme. Well-maintained grass, healthy palm trees and pretty flowers lining endless roads are a common feature in this part of the world.

But one issue that the UAE is still struggling to overcome is water consumption - currently the highest per capita in the world. A desalination complex has been built in Jebel Ali in an attempt to combat the lack of ground water and meet this near-impossible demand, but long-term solutions are still awaited.

Environment



Although Dubai represents vast stretches of desert land, there are over 3,500 plants endemic to the country, as well as extensive fauna. The birdlife here is reasonably extensive too, but it's the coastline, that is home to an impressive array of natural life, that really takes your breath away. A myriad of tropical fish, as well as a variety of sharks, dolphins and the dugong (sea cow) make up the awesome marine life, which draws divers and snorkellers from all over the world. With various breeds of turtle also indigenous to the region, you could be lucky enough to see Loggerhead, Green and Hawksbill turtles - three of the planet's most endangered species.

Culture

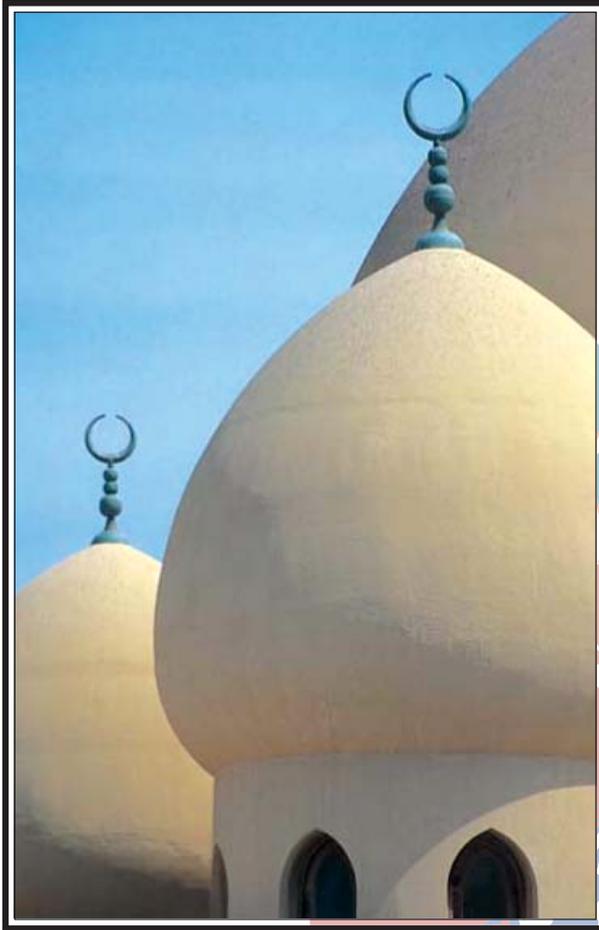
Dubai is well-known as the gateway between the East and the West infusing modernity and style with the traditional Arabic hospitality.

Here you can take your pick from the world's richest horse race and traditional sport of falconry, make merry at the night clubs, shop for the world's biggest brands or go hunting for spices in primitive souks –Dubai has managed to achieve what other Arab cities have failed to do, create the right balance western influence and eastern tradition.

Its culture is rooted in Islamic traditions that penetrate the Arabian peninsula and beyond, but the city's visionary development is evident proof of an open-minded and liberal outlook.



Islam & Ramadan



The timeless values of Islam lie at the heart of Dubai's living heritage providing a strength and inspiration that touches all aspects of everyday life. Ramadan is the holy month in which Muslims commemorate the revelation of the holy Quran and every healthy Muslim is expected to fast from dawn to dusk.

During daylight hours, those fasting and required to abstain from food, drinks and alcohol. The call for prayers at sunset marks the end of the fast for the day and before praying the fast is broken with dates and water. After breaking of the fast, the Iftar meal is eaten with family and friends. In the UAE, traditional Iftaar dishes include Harees (made with meat and cracked wheat), fareed (meat and vegetable stew) and lugamat (deep-fried dough balls with date syrup and honey). The timing of Ramadan is not fixed according to the Gregorian calendar and goes back approximately 11 days every year, subject to the positioning of the moon.

In Dubai Ramadan sparks the spirit of charity among residents as one of the biggest charity

campaigns takes off during this time. Initiated by Shaikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, UAE Vice President, Prime Minister and the Ruler of Dubai, the campaign saw community organizations, sports, clubs, schools, businesses and philanthropists championing the cause of poverty and social development in the world. In 2007, a whopping Dhs. 3.48 billion was raised to help educate poor children throughout the world.

Climate

Perpetual sun and clear blue skies sum up Dubai's weather. The emirate has a sub tropical and arid climate that gets very hot in the height of the summer. Rainfall is infrequent and normally only occurs in winter. Occasionally there are sandstorms when the sand is whipped off the desert. Temperatures range from a low of around 1 D'C (SD'F) in winter, to a high of 48C (118'F) in summer. The mean daily maximum is 24'C (75'F) in January, rising to 41 'C (1 D6'F) in August.



Society

In sharp contrast to other neighbouring Islamic countries, Dubai has consistently encouraged an open-minded and open doors policy. While some of Dubai's neighbouring countries do not allow women to be seen without their male escorts, Dubai presents a very progressive and liberal outlook. Women safely negotiate their way on Dubai's roads even late at night without any eyebrows being raised. There is no dress code and tourists and residents are welcome to embrace any fashion as long as it does not offend anybody's sensibilities.



in place with black cord (agal). Women wear a black abaya - a long, loose black robe that opens from the front. Names are usually taken from an important person in the Quran or the person's tribe. This is followed by the word bin (son of) for a boy, or bint (daughter of) for a girl, and then the name of the child's father. The last name indicates the person's tribe or family. For prominent families, this has Al, the Arabic word for 'the; before it.



All this said and done, the rulers of the Emirates are still very active in preserving the country's heritage and safeguarding the culture from erosion and the negative influence of tourism. Visitors can expect to be charmed by the genuine warmth and friendliness of the people here. And there's no way that you're going to miss the distinct sense of national pride that is prevalent. It's incredibly common, for example, to see locals in their traditional dress. For the men this is a dishdash(a) or khandura - a full-length shirt-dress that is worn with a white or red chequered headdress (gutra) and secured



Economy

While oil has been crucial to Dubai's development since the late 1960's, the non-oil sector currently contributes more than 90 per cent of the total gross domestic product. Tourism, directly and indirectly adds up to 30 per cent of Dubai's non-oil GDP while real estate and construction adds upto 19.4 per cent of the GDP.

In business, the government of Dubai is dedicated to liberal and free market policies and to the creation of a business environment conducive to commercial activity. This is well illustrated by the incentives available to investors at the Dubai Airport Free Zone, Dubai Cars and Automotive Zone, the Gold and Diamond Park, Dubai Internet City, Dubai Media City and Jebel Ali Free Zone and also in the latest projects like the Dubai Healthcare City, Dubai International Financial Centre, Dubai Investments Park, Dubai Multi Commodities Centre, Dubai Silicon Oasis and the Mohammed bin Rashid Technology Park among others.



Ruling Family

The Supreme Council of the UAE comprising of hereditary rulers of the seven emirates is the highest federal authority responsible for general policy matters involving communications, education, defense, foreign affairs, development and for ratifying federal laws.

The Federal Council of Ministers responsible to the Supreme Council has executive authority to initiate and implement laws. The Federal National Council is a consultative assembly of 40 representatives appointed for two years by each individual emirate. The council monitors and debates government policy but has no power to veto.

The President, Shaikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan (who is also the Ruler of Abu Dhabi) succeeded his father Shiakh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan in November 2004.

On February 1, 2008, Ruler of Dubai, UAE Vice President and Prime Minister His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum issued a decree appointing Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum as Crown Prince of Dubai. Sheikh Mohammed issued another decree naming Sheikh Maktoum bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum and Sheikh Hamdan bin Rashid Al Maktoum the Deputy Rulers of Dubai.



VISA REGULATIONS



It is imperative for most people to get a visa stamped on their passport before they enter the UAE. However, the following passport holders can get an entry permit stamped in their passport upon arrival.

Arab Gulf Cooperation Council member states Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and Saudi Arabia.

AGCC expatriate residents who meet certain conditions may obtain a non-renewable 30-day visa on arrival at the approved ports of entry. Visitors who are businessmen, company

managers, representatives, auditors, accountants, doctors, engineers or employees working in the public sector, their family members along with drivers and servants sponsored by them, are eligible for this kind of visa.

The same is applicable for nationals of France, Italy, Germany, Holland, Belgium, Luxembourg, Switzerland, Austria, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Portugal, Ireland, Greece, Finland, Spain, Monaco, Vatican City, Iceland, Andorra, San Marino, Liechtenstein, USA, Canada, Australia, New

Zealand, Japan, Brunei, Hong Kong, Singapore South Korea and Malaysia who can also get their entry permit stamped on their passports on arrival.

Nationals of Israel are not allowed to enter the UAE.

A penalty charge of Dhs. 100 a day is imposed on visitors who overstay. For nationalities which require a sponsor, airlines may seek a confirmation that the sponsor holds a valid visa for the incoming visitor.

Dubai Naturalization and Residency Department (DNRD) issues different types of visas for people entering Dubai. Working hours are from 8 am to 2 pm. Sunday to Thursday except public holidays. Fridays and Saturdays are normal weekend holidays.



96 Hour Visa**Issued upon arrival at the airport**

- Airline sponsored only
- Applicants should have onward booking
- Should have a minimum of 8 hour transit break

Visit visa:**For Personal sponsorship**

- Fees: Dhs 100
- Entry permit application form with completed typed data
- Original Marriage certificate and copy of it, in case of wife sponsorship
- Salary Certificate; The monthly salary should not be less than Dhs. 4000 in case of wife sponsorship, and Dhs. 6000 in case of first relatives sponsorship.
- Copy of the Sponsor passport
- Copy of the Sponsored passport.

Company Sponsorship

- Entry permit application form with completed typed data
- Establishment card and copy thereof
- Copy of the Sponsored passport.

Renewal

- Fees: Dhs 100
- Original Entry Permit.

Extension

- Fees: Dhs. 500
- Original Entry permit
- Extension application form
- Original sponsored passport.

Transit visa

- Fees: Dhs. 120
- Establishment card
- Entry Permit Application form
- Copy of Sponsored passport.

Tourist visa

- Fees: Dhs. 100
- Establishment card
- Statement of tourists' data including accommodation details.

**Regulations for visa application:**

- Passport must have minimum 6 months validity at the time of applying for an Entry Permit.
- All photographs are to be recent color photographs. (Polaroid Photographs are not accepted)
- Those who are already in the U.A.E cannot get another entry permit until he/she departs from U.A.E.

Health Requirements :

No health certificates are required to enter Dubai but it is always wise to check to check before departure since health restrictions may vary.

Customs and Duty-Free allowances

Cigarettes (2000); cigars (400); tobacco(2 kgs); alcohol (non-Muslims only) 2 litres of spirits or 2litres of wine; perfumes.

Dubai Duty-free has a sales outlet in the Arrivals Hall.

There are no customs duties levied for personal belongings however carrying pornographic material and drugs is a criminal offence. Although Dubai has a far more relaxed policy than others with regard to prescription drugs, certain medicines like codeine are banned even if they might be widely available over the counter in other countries.

There are no restrictions on the export and import of local or foreign currencies, however the maximum undeclared cash a passenger can carry is Dhs. 40,000.

AIRPORT



WORLD'S FASTEST GROWING AIRPORT: DUBAI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

Dubai boasts of one of the world's busiest airports with world class leisure facilities that compare favourably with Heathrow and Frankfurt.

Connected to over 205 destinations across six continents through 120 airlines, the Dubai International Airport has grown at an unparalleled average of over 15 per cent annually since 2002.

Dubai International accounts for over 27 per cent of all passenger and aircraft movement in the Middle East and Africa region. Riding on a \$ 4.5 billion expansion plan, the airport will open its new terminal and an associated facility mid of 2008 and another A380 specific facility in 2009, tripling its total capacity to 75 million PPA.

The Dubai International airport handled a total of 34 million passengers, well over the projected 33 million for the year 2007 and earned the distinction of being one of fastest growing airports in the world. The Dubai International airport expects to handle 40 million passengers in 2008 and 60 million in 2010.

Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, President of Dubai Civil Aviation Authority (DCAA) and Chairman of Dubai Airports, said: **'Dubai International's growth is a reflection of the rising popularity of Dubai as an international commercial and tourism hub.** It is also a clear sign of our intent and vision for the future of the aviation sector in Dubai."

The record growth is likely to propel Dubai International higher on ACI's (Airports Council International) list of the world's busiest airports (in terms of international passengers). In 2006 Dubai International was ranked 10 on the list with a passenger throughput of 28.78 million.

The overall growth in 2007 resulted in increased aircraft movement at Dubai International, registering an increase of 9.81 per cent. The airport handled a total of 260,530 movements in 2007 as against 237,258 in 2006. The busiest period for the airport in terms of aircraft movement was in December with over 23,309 aircraft movements. On an average, there are 725 aircraft movements per day at Dubai International.

AIRPORT

DUBAI WORLD CENTRAL –AL MAKTOUM INTERNATIONAL

Work is already in progress on a project to build the world's largest airport — Dubai World Central – Al Maktoum International that will have capacity to cater to 120 million passengers annually and handle 12 million tonnes of cargo at its 16 air cargo terminals.

The first runway at has been completed on time in the projected 600 days - an aviation record for the fastest A-380 enabled 4.5 kilometre CAT

III runway construction. Built by UAE's Al Naboodah Contracting for Dhs. 1 billion (USD272.5 million), the runway is the first tender to be fully executed within Dubai World Central - the mammoth 140 square kilometre urban aviation community, which is centred around Jebel Ali.

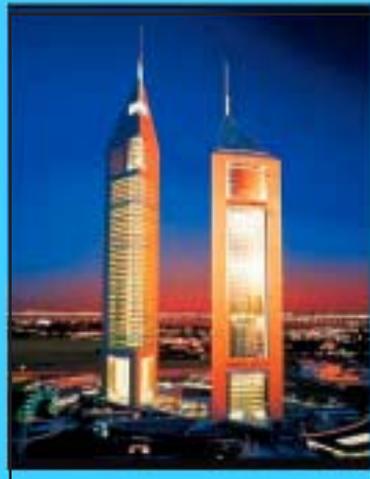
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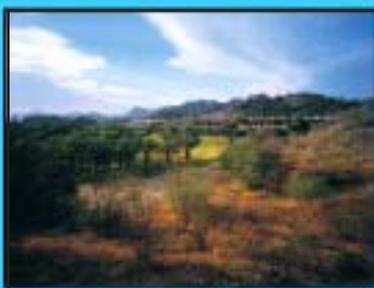
HOTELS



City Center



Emirates Tower



Hatta Forte Hotel

HIGHEST OCCUPANCY RATES FOR DUBAI HOTELS

Dubai has an impressive repertoire of 409 hotel and furnished apartments providing a delightful experience to all: from the budget traveler to the super-rich. The city boasts of the largest concentration of five-star hotels anywhere in the world and the super-rich can will cherish a stay at the iconic Burj Al Arab.

Hotel occupancy rates are high throughout the year and even score over other popular destinations like Paris, Hong Kong, Sidney and London proving that Dubai has come of age as a leading tourist destination.

Dubai's hotels are generally found near the beach, the city or the waterfront.

Despite the already large number of hotels and high occupancy rates, billions of dirhams are being pumped into the hotel industry and there is a consistent increase in waterfront properties.

The Asia-Asia Dubai is touted to be the world's largest hotel in Dubai with 6,500 rooms being built at an estimated cost of Dhs. 1.625 billion.

NEW HOTELS COMING UP IN DEIRA, JUMEIRAH, SHAIKH ZAYED ROAD & BUSINESS BAY

Among some of the new properties that are set to open in 2008, the **Westin Dubai Mina Seyahi Beach Resort and Marina** will open its doors to guests in mid-March.

The **All Suite-Millennium Murooj Property** opened earlier this year in Deira and is being labelled as one of the top leisure properties among Deira hotels. It is a luxurious all suite port in Port Saeed Deira offering panoramic views of the Dubai Creek and surrounding Park.

The five-star **Millennium Towers Hotel** in Dubai is the company's jewel in the bouquet of properties in Dubai. Opening in the first quarter of 2008, it will home to 352 rooms and suites that reflect modern comfort and designs.

HOTELS



Hilton Dubai Jumeirah



Hyatt Regency Dubai



jebel Ali Hotel & Golf Resort

The ultimate luxury is the The penthouse –the hotel's presidential suite that has four bedrooms.

The **Angsana Hotel and Suites Dubai** will be the first Banyan Tree property in the UAE opening this year. The two-tower property will have Tower 1 as the suites tower and Tower 2 as the hotel tower. Located along the Sheikh Zayed Road, the property targets business and leisure travellers.

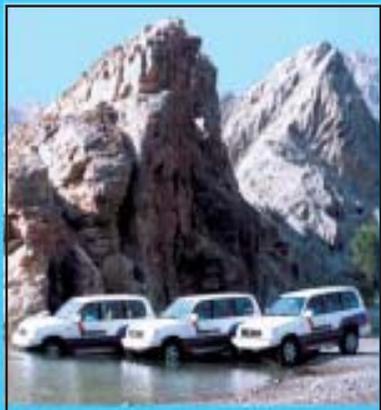
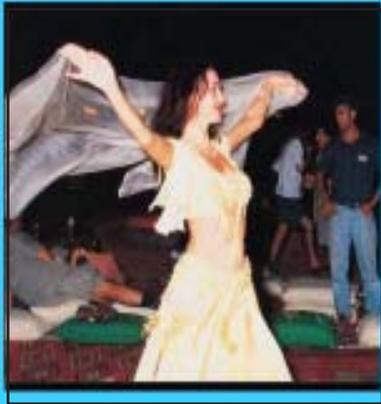
Scheduled to open in 2008 on The Palm, Jumeirah is the **Fairmont Palm Hotel and Resort and the Fairmont Palm Residences**. The property is a 372-room luxury resort with 558 residences.

The opening of the **Radisson SAS Residence Dubai Marina** in the first quarter of 2008 will be the launch of the Brussels-based Rezidor Hotel Group's first luxury apartment in the UAE.

Finally, the Rotana group has four hotels opening in 2008 : **Rose Rotana Hotel**, the tallest All-suites hotel in the world, **Amwaj Rotana Resort**, the company's first resort in Dubai and the **Media Rotana Hotel and Al Sufouh**. Soaring at 72 floors, the Rose Rotana Hotel along Sheikh Zayed Road will have more than 480 luxury rooms while the Amwaj Rotana Resort, Jumeirah on Jumeirah Beach will be part of a new Jumeirah Beach Residence Complex.

The Media Rotana Hotel at the heart of the Dubai Business Hub will offer 467 rooms and suites and a complete range of **MICE** (meetings, incentives conferences and exhibitions) facilities.

TOURISM HOT SPOTS



In a space of 24-hours, visitors to Dubai can revel in the breathtaking scenery of rugged mountain ranges and majestic sand dunes, dip their toes in the waters of the Gulf or just take in the beat of the city. Dubai blends an ultra-modern way of life with the old-world charm of Arabia. Here dusty villages and ancient houses sit beside luxurious residential districts and ultra--modern shopping malls.

Dubai is both a dynamic international business hub as well as a relaxing escape for the visiting tourist. It is also a city where the sophistication of the 21st century goes hand in hand with the simplicity of a bygone era. Whilst visitors and residents are encouraged to enjoy an international lifestyle it is important to appreciate the culture of Dubai which is deeply rooted in the Islamic traditions of Arabia.

Al Boom Tourist Village

The traditional architecture of the Al Boom Tourist Village forms a stately city landmark. Situated adjacent to Creek Park it comprises of a 2,000 -seat banquet hall, coffee shop, restaurant, amusement park, ornamental lake and marina with five cruise boats.

Future plans for the village include a five-star hotel built in the shape of a traditional sailing dhow and self catering as well as fully-serviced chalets.

Al Almadiya School, Museum of Education

Built in 1912 by Sheikh Ahmed bin Dalmouk, the Al-Almadiya School in Deira was Dubai's first school. It has since been restored with natural materials of gypsum, coral, shell, stone and sandalwood as used in the original building.

Archaeological sites

Dubai's three main excavation sites include Al Ghusais, Al Sufooh and Jumeirah. The first two are graveyards dating back more than 2,000 years while the Jumeirah site has revealed artefacts from the seventh to the 15th centuries.

Bait Al Wakeel

Dubai's first office building, Bait Al Wakeel dates back to 1934 and was built by the late Sheikh Rashid at the edge of the Creek near the abra (water taxi) landing in Bur Dubai. The building has been completely restored and now houses a Maritime Museum.

TOURISM HOT SPOTS



Bastakiya and Shindagha

Providing a tantalising glimpse of old Dubai is the old Bastakiya district of Bur Dubai, with its narrow lanes and houses with tall chimney-like structures called wind-towers. Before the advent of air-conditioning, houses were cooled by air being channelled down the wind-tower to the rooms below. Often strips of material or fine cloth were hung from brackets lining the tower to offer additional breeze. Historically, the city was famous for its mass of wind-towers which lined either side of the Creek. The Bastakiya district has recently been renovated to include a museum, cultural centre, restaurants and a heritage hotel with an art gallery.

In the nearby Shindagha district more than 30 traditional houses have been restored in an initiative to re-establish its original character. The area features wind-towers and quaint sikkas (alley-ways).

Benjamaan House

Deira's Benjamin's House has been converted into a museum of traditional architecture. Originally built in 1890, by a famous merchant of the same name, Benjamaan House offers an insight into Gulf architecture.

Burj Al Arab

Set on its own man-made island, projecting 280 metres into the Gulf and shaped like an enormous billowing sail, Burj Al Arab is a 321-metre high masterpiece of architecture. With 202 luxury duplex suites, a restaurant at the very top and the most opulent interior décor, Burj Al Arab is the tallest all-suite hotel in the world.

Burj Al Nahar

Located in the picturesque gardens in Deira, the Burj Al Nahar is one of three watch-towers that guard the old city,

Deira Creek

An impressive sight along the Creek near the dhow wharf is a group of distinctive modern buildings which include the Etisalat Tower, the Department of Economic Development, Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the National Bank of Dubai headquarters, Dubai Creek Tower and Twin Towers.

The Etisalat Tower is topped by a telecommunications dome resembling a giant globe and is particularly striking when illuminated at night. The Department of Economic Development is a five-storey building with delicately designed window screens and massive, decorated main doors.

TOURISM HOT SPOTS



By contrast, the neighbouring Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry tower is a dramatic blue glass-faced structure, a symbol of the emirate's prosperity and forward vision. Nearby is the Municipality building, which manages to convey an impression of cool shade through the clever use of water and screens. Most striking though is the headquarters of the National Bank of Dubai building, home to the DTCM Head Office which, with its use of polished steel and glass, produces a shimmering reflection of the Creek on its curved facade. This eye-catching building, which was designed by Carlos Ott, architect of the Bastille Opera House in Paris, is at its most spectacular best at sunset.

Deira Tower

Dominating Bani Yas Square in the heart of Deira is Deira Tower with its distinctive circular 'cap'. As an early example of the effort to blend modern architecture with older surroundings, Deira Tower incorporates structural features designed to soften the impact of the harsh summer climate on the occupants of the shops, offices and apartments within.

Dubai Creek

Dubai Creek is a natural sea-water inlet which traverses through the centre of the city. Both historically and today the Creek is a focal point for life in Dubai.

A walk along its banks will evoke the city's centuries-old trading traditions,

The colour and bustle of the loading and unloading of dhows, which still ply ancient trade routes to places as distant as India and East Africa, captivates visitors.

The best way to see the Creek is from the water itself. For a nominal sum, small water taxis called abras criss-cross the Creek from the souqs (markets) of Deira to those on the Bur Dubai side. The abras may also be hired and the boatmen will take visitors on a fascinating, hour-long trip from the abra embarkation points to the mouth of Dubai Creek and inland to the Maktoum Bridge, passing a number of the city's historic and modern landmarks along the way.

On the Deira side, a broad and well-lit paved promenade extends from the Corniche allowing for visitors to stroll along the Arabian Gulf. On the Bur Dubai side, between Maktoum and Garhoud bridges, Creek Park offers pleasant, paved walks and extensive landscaped public gardens.

TOURISM HOT SPOTS



At the inland end of the Creek a large, shallow lagoon has been created into a wildlife sanctuary and is a haven for migratory shore birds. During the autumn migration upto 27,000 birds have been accounted for at any point of time , most spectacular among which are the greater flamingos which have made the Creek their permanent home.



Dubai Festival City

The unique waterfront development, iconic resort-style city is a must see. The Dubai Festival City is a place designed for the people of Dubai and its increasing number of visitors. It will offer a wide range of attractions including shops, restaurants and hotels as

The Festival Centre, situated on the curve of the Creek at the very heart of the City is the city's 'jewel in the crown'. With more than 400 shops, 70 restaurants and cafes, a marina, festival square, the Festival Centre offers an unique and vibrant setting where families and friends meet and relax. Additional attractions are a Canal Walk with water taxis to ferry guests to the restaurants, cafes and shops, a boulevard capturing the essence of Paris' Champs Elysee and a waterfront souk embracing Dubai's heritage of Arabian art and crafts.



Dubai Museum

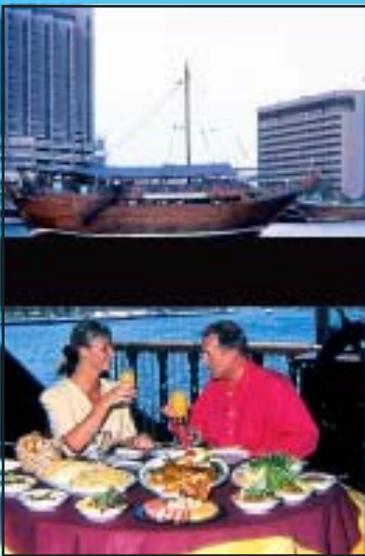
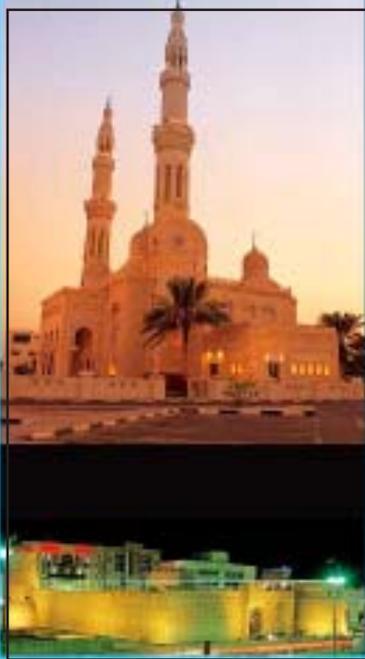
Housed inside the Al Fahidi Fort, Dubai Museum is an imposing building which is also a fascinating military museum. Built around 1787, it once guarded the city's landward approaches and has served variously as a palace, garrison and prison. Renovated for use as a museum in I 971, the building underwent further restoration with the addition of walk-in galleries in 1995.

Colourful and evocative dioramas complete with life-size figures and sound and lighting effects vividly depict everyday life in Dubai during the pre-oil days. Galleries recreate several scenes from the Creek, traditional Arab houses, mosques, the souq, date gardens as well as desert and marine life.



One of the museum's most spectacular -exhibits portrays the underwater world of pearl-diving, accompanied by sets of pearl merchants' weights, scales and sieves. Also on display are fine copper, alabaster and pottery artefacts uncovered from 4,000-year-old graves at Al Ghusais (one of Dubai's archaeological sites).

TOURISM HOT SPOTS



Dubai World Trade Centre

Rising 39 floors above the city, the Dubai World Trade Centre's office tower houses the regional head-quarters of many of the world's largest corporations. Built in 1979, as the tallest building at the time in the Middle East, it has an Arabian restaurant on the 37th floor with stunning views of the Dubai skyline.

Situated nearby is the Dubai International Convention and Exhibition Centre which hosts an active programme of international trade fairs and exhibitions attracting exhibitors and visitors from all round the world.

Dubai Zoo

Located in Jumeirah, the Dubai Zoo is a popular attraction, especially for families.

Its modern facilities, though small, houses many indigenous Arabian species, including the Arabian Wolf, which is no longer found in the wild, Gordon's Wildcat and the world's only captive-breeding colony of Socotra Cormorants.

Featured in its large aviary are regional birds of prey, while nine species of large cat and seven species of primates are also on show, along with many Arabian mammals.

The zoo will soon relocate to a site near Mushrif Park and undergo re-development to display six major habitats: Sub-Saharan Africa, Arabian desert, a Wadi Valley, Arabian Coastal Desert, Asian Temperate Forest and the Himalayan hillside. The new zoo will contain a biodiversity museum, breeding and conservation areas and a well-equipped veterinary centre.

Emirates Towers

Towering above the Dubai skyline is the elegant hotel-and-office complex of Emirates Towers. At 350 metres high, the office tower is the tallest building in the Middle East and Europe, Primarily a business hotel, Emirates Towers has every conceivable luxury for the travelling executive,

Godolphin Gallery

A celebration of the ruling Maktoum family's private racing stable, the Godolphin Gallery houses the world's finest collection of horse-racing trophies. On display are the glittering trophies received from the world's greatest races including the King George and Queen Elizabeth Diamond Stakes, the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe, the Prince of Wales's Stakes and the Dubai World Cup. A truly

TOURISM HOT SPOTS



international experience, the gallery incorporates interactive touch-screen consoles, action photographs, video presentations and memorabilia, all depicting the first nine years of the Godolphin racing stable. Adjacent to Nad AI Sheba racecourse, the gallery is open from January to April and is a unique opportunity to share in one of Dubai's most prestigious operations.

Gold and Diamond Museum

The visitor centre at the Gold and Diamond Park in Al Quoz showcases the history of Arabian jewellery and also includes a guided tour of the adjacent manufacturing plant.

Heritage and Diving Village

Located near the mouth of the Creek, this heritage site presents both a comprehensive insight into the emirate's maritime past and a fine example of traditional Gulf architecture. Local potters and weavers sell their handicrafts in a tented Bedouin village and camel rides are also available.

Heritage House

Located in Deira and built in 1890, this house was once owned by Dubai's most famous pearl merchant, Sheikh Ahmed bin Dalmouk. An excellent example of Dubai's vernacular architecture it was restored and re-opened in 2000 and presents a vivid recreation of local period household interiors.

Madinat Jumeirah

Described as the 'most comprehensive resort in the world', Madinat Jumeirah is a beach resort with a difference, It encompasses two hotels as well as guest houses, a vibrant souk, a theatre, an incredible variety of restaurants, a spa and its own series of waterways served by traditional abras (water taxis).

Majlis Gallery

In white-washed rooms and central courtyard, an old wind-tower house in Bastakiya is home to a delightful art gallery. Hosting ten exhibitions of contemporary artists per year, the gallery complex also provides a range of pottery, glass, fabrics, furniture and other desirable objets d'art,

TOURISM HOT SPOTS



Grand Mosque

Situated on the Bur Dubai side of the Creek near the Ruler's Court, the Grand Mosque is one of Dubai's most distinguished landmarks. With nine large domes boasting stained-glass panels and 45 small ones, it also has the city's tallest minaret, measuring an incredible 70 metres in height.

Jumeirah Mosque

One of the largest and most beautiful of Dubai Mosques is the Jumeirah Mosque, a prominent landmark of the city it is also a popular subject for photographers and appears in many international publications. Built in the medieval Fatimid tradition, it is a spectacular example of modern Islamic architecture and is particularly attractive at night when the subtle lighting throws its artistic twin minarets and majestic dome into relief. The mosque offers guided tours for visitors,

FUN FOR THE FAMILY



Children's City

Children's City is the world's fifth-largest 'infotainment' facility and the first in the Middle East. Aiming to develop children's curiosity through fun and play, the interactive facility houses a fantastic array of attractions throughout its four main play areas including culture blocks, a state-of-the-art 100-seat planetarium and an amphitheatre.

Encounter Zone

Situated in the Wafi shopping mall, Encounter Zone is an entertainment centre with areas for both children and adults. There is the popular Crystal Maze, a horror chamber and fascinating 3D films. The roller-coaster simulator feels like the real thing and children can enjoy a host of rides including the Komet, which shoots around the top of the building. The Encounter Zone features two separate worlds, Galactica, with video and arcade games, and lunarland, centred on a soft play area.



Magic Planet

Housed in the giant Deira City Centre shopping mall, Magic Planet is a unique children's entertainment centre with a bowling alley, a crawling bungle-jungle, a variety of electronic games, theme rides and a mini pitch-and-putt course.

Wonderland

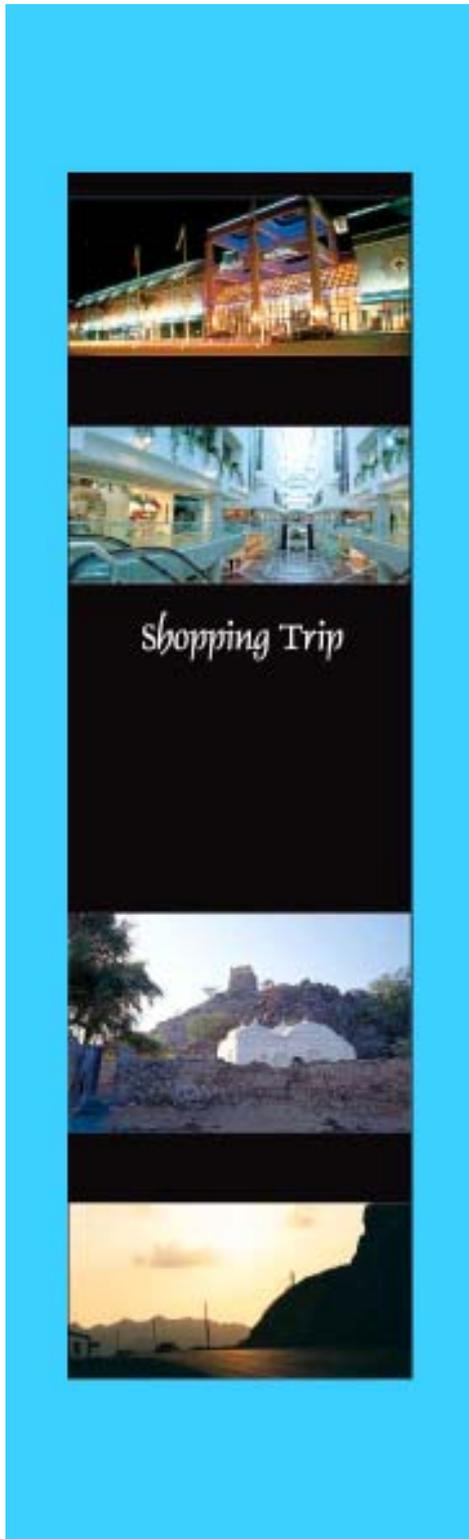
The 18-hectare Wonderland family fun park features a wide range of water attractions and is capable of accommodating up to 8,000 visitors at a time. Wonderland's water rides include speed slides, lazy river, surf hills, twisters, wave runners and a pirate-ship cruise. It also has a water-mist show and water cinema, with videos projected on to a thin film of water plus a full complement of on-land attractions, including an indoor family entertainment centre.



Wild Wadi

An exciting, state-of-the-art water park, Wild Wadi forms part of The Jumeirah Beach Resort. The park has 24 rides, 16 of which are inter-connected including The Jumeirah Scairah, which is the tallest and fastest freefall slide outside the United States. The Summit Surge uses high-powered water jets to transport people simultaneously uphill, while the Wipe-out Flow Rider, another Middle Eastern first, invites thrill seekers to surf a perfectly shaped tube wave which is almost three metres high.

TOURS & EXCURSIONS



SAFARIS & EXPEDITIONS

Inbound city operators offer a wide range of services including city, mountain and desert. In addition to destination management services, they also cover accommodation, airport transfers, ground transport together with daily tours and activities.

Creek Tours : An alternative mode of travel is to cruise along the waters of the Creek in a traditional wooden dhow. The evening cruises generally offer dinner. One of the first companies to introduce the service was Coastline Leisure 18 years ago and one of the most recent is Bateaux Dubai which combines Parisian style gourmet dining with panoramic views of the city from a glass-roofed vessel. For something completely different, the amphibious Wonder Bus Dubai City Tour combines a drive through the city with a cruise on the creek.

Desert Safaris : A trip to the desert should be compulsory on everybody's itinerary as the breath-taking beauty of the desert will remain a vivid memory for many years to come.

Al Maha Resort :

A desert safari with a difference, the Al Maha (Arabic for the Arabian Oryx) is an award-winning luxury resort set in no less than 225 sq. metres off the highway between Dubai and Al Ain.

Bab Al Shams :

Emerging from the heart of the desert, the Bab Al Shams Desert Resort & Spa is an elegant place to stay with a traditional Arabic fort setting.

Dune driving:

Combining the excitement of a roller-coaster ride with the challenge of remaining mobile on a shifting surface, driving on sand is an adventure in itself. Although it's often compared to driving in snow or on ice, as the applied principles of car control are the same. Courses are available, with fully-equipped 4x4 vehicles provided together with expert instruction. Sand-skiing: A sport combining speed and excitement.

TOURS & EXCURSIONS



Wadi bashing:

Driving along the wadis or dry river beds is a popular weekend pastime with both residents and visitors. During the winter the river beds flow with rain water which runs down from the Hajar Mountains, but in the drier months it's possible to drive a 4x4 vehicle along some of the wadis. Although the journey may be a little rough, the dry river beds offer scenes of unexpected natural beauty.

Bird Watching :

Dubai attracts ornithologists from all around the world as almost 400 species of birds have been observed in the emirate. Customised bird-watching tours range from one or two days to a week or more and cover the full extent of Dubai's natural bird habitats including parks, golf courses, desert, mountains and the famous flamingo reserve on the Creek.

Camel racing :

During the winter months, camel races are held on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays and present a vigorous spectacle. Located on the fringe of the city the race track takes on a village-fair atmosphere with vendors selling camel blankets, rugs, beads and a variety of other rural wares. Owners urge jockeys on to the finish line while trainers follow the races in 4x4s, ploughing through the dust of the inside track. The atmosphere is exciting and memorable.

TRANSPORT



Taxis

The majority of taxis in Dubai are metred and operate under four private companies and can be flagged down by the side of the road or called on 04-2080808. Pick up fare is

The starting fare for taxis from the airport is higher. Private taxis are also available outside Dubai's hotels at an extra charge.

Although driver-less and fully automated metro trains are being built and will be fully operational by 2009, taxis still remain the most common way of getting around in Dubai.

Car Hire

If you are an expert driver and possess an international driver's license then renting out a car might make good sense. A majority of the car rental companies operate out of Dubai and you can get good rates, just make sure that it includes comprehensive insurance and Salik (toll tax) for passing through certain roads.



Bus

Buses are becoming more and more visible on Dubai's roads. And the Road and Transports Authority (RTA) is in the process of setting up airconditioned bus shelters to protect commuters from harsh weather. Fares are cheap, from Dhs. 1-3 and are paid to the driver at the time of boarding.



Boat

Dhows or the traditional abras or water taxis are the best way to get a feel of old Dubai and at an incredibly cheap fare of 50 fils to Dhs 1.50. You can also cross over from Deira to Bur Dubai on these water dhows.

For Dhs. 35-50 you can rent out a whole abra for your family.

Cycling

Not recommended in the harsh weather and stressful traffic jams. There are dedicated cycle tracks like the one in Al Mamzar where tourists can cycle in leisure.

Walking

Neighbourhood strolls are fine but don't think of walking long distances without getting dehydrated. In winter, people do walk on the few sideways. If you are an avid walker don't miss out on the brand new Canal Walk at the iconic style resort, the Dubai festival City.

WOMENS ONLY

WOMEN'S ONLY

Dubai is very liberal and progressive. There are absolutely no restrictions that are imposed on women traveling or staying in a hotel unaccompanied. There are no restrictions on dressing as well, but UAE being an Islamic country, too much display of flesh is frowned upon. Women are allowed to don bikinis at the beaches or beach parks, but be prepared to get noticed. In case of lewd comments or eve-teasing please call the special tourist department at **800-4438**. Special female chauffeur-driven taxis for women traveling alone with their children are also available. They can be obtained by calling **04-2080808**.



SPECIAL NEEDS TOURISM



SPECIAL NEEDS TOURISM

At the Dubai International Airport there is a dedicated desk for visitors with special needs located between Rows A and B of the Departure Hall. The airport has made available several electric carts for transporting passengers to and from the new concourse. Within the concourse near the gates 9 and 22, exclusive lounges for the special needs tourists have also been created.

For unaccompanied minors and disabled passengers, personalized services are also available upon request. Visitor passes to departure lounges are also issued to people who escort them. For details please contact the Emirates Airlines office at 04-2061192 for passengers flying to Dubai. For transit passengers please contact 04-2164617 and further information is also available on [04-2164615](tel:04-2164615)

Wheelchairs:

All wheelchair requests must be added to the Passenger Name Record as WCHR-WHEELCHAIR*R for RAMP when a wheelchair is required to cover the distance to and from the aircraft and across the ramp. WCHS-WHEELCHAIR* for STEPS when a wheelchair is required to cover the distance to or from the aircraft and across the ramp. WCHS-WHEELCHAIR*C For CABIN SEAT when a wheelchair is required to and from the aircraft and to and from the cabin seat.



All airlines involved in the passengers itinerary must be advised when a passenger is taking their own wheelchair. The policy for wheelchair passengers accompanied by able-bodied helpers is currently under review and the reservation desk in Dubai can be contacted for further details.

An increasing number of public areas have access and facilities for people with disabilities including ramps and nearby parking spaces and at entrances to shopping centres. A number of city's leading hotels and hotel apartments also have specially adapted rooms and facilities. A majority of the city's inbound operators also accommodate special needs tourists.

SPACE TOURISM



RICHARD BRANSON BRINGS COMMERCIAL SPACE TRAVEL TO DUBAI

Looking for a lifetime opportunity to fly into space? Now Dubai offers you that as well. A call to the Dubai-based travel agency Sharaf Travel can help you get there, albeit at a price of Dhs. 200,000.

Namira Salim a resident of Dubai has signed up to become one of the first people from the UAE to sample the delights of space

tourism. She will be one of 100 people to fly into space on Virgin Galactic - Sir Richard Branson's space tourism initiative under his global Virgin brand.

With the Gulf having the potential to become a highly profitable region to book space tourism flights, due to its prevalence of high net worth individuals, the Dubai-based travel agency has just been selected as the UAE general sales agent for Virgin Galactic.

"We are literally pushing new frontiers in the history of mankind by making commercial space travel a possibility," Sir Richard Branson said. Till date 44,000 people have applied to join the six-member crew of the inaugural flight from New Mexico in 2008.

"Space is somewhere to take your fiancée and even get married. In our lifetime we also hope to open space portal hotels," Sir Richard said in Dubai.

Virgin Galactic is set to launch its first manned flight in late 2009, according to Salaf Sharaf, chairman of Sharaf Travel. The launch site will likely be in the southwestern United States, with each trip featuring three hours in space.

Sharaf Travel's selection as the exclusive ticket sellers for the Galactic service in the region follows a year of courting the UK-based airline for the position, Sharaf said. Virgin first entered the Dubai market in 2006, when it began operating commercial flights from London to Dubai.

"The potential is huge because this is something entirely new, it's the first space tourism in the region, and a totally new concept," Sharaf said.

SECURITY

Security for Tourists

Dubai is considered to be a safe haven for tourists. However if you are in a spot of bother, Dubai Police has created a special cell dedicated to the protection of tourists in the emirate.

The Dubai Police's Tourist Security Department (TSD) was set up on August 5, 2007 with the idea of protecting foreign tourists from any unforeseen trouble and promoting a sense of well-being and security.

A toll-free hotline has been set up for the purpose. And tourists can now contact the new division of police 24/7 at **800-4438**

The TSD workers will provide maximum support and assistance to the tourists taking into consideration that each minute of their carefree holiday is precious. August, 5th 2007 became the first working day of TSD.

Dubai Police also has a confidential reporting Al Ameen in place that helps visitors and residents solve security issues. The department receives all kinds of security, social, economic, financial and traffic problems, complaints and suggestions at the toll-free number **800-4888**.

Members of the community can also communicate by sending in a fax at **04-2097777** or by sending an e-mail on alameen@eim.ae or by sending an SMS on **4444** or access the website www.alameen.ae

EMERGENCY HOTLINE NUMBERS

Tourist Security: 800-4438

Police: (If you are a tourist and in a spot of bother)

Al Ameen Confidential Reporting: 800-4888.

(Report nefarious activities, brawls, spats to the police without revealing your identity)

Police Ambulance: 999

Fire Alert: 997

Emergency Services: 04-2232323

Airport Enquiries: 04-2166666

Internet Complaints : 8005244

Electricity & Water : 991

Metro Taxi : 04-2673222

Dubai Transport : 04-2080808

Cars Taxi: 04-2642825

Directory Enquiry: 04 181

Dubai Hospitals

**Rashid Hospital : 04-3371111
(road accidents, general trauma)**

**Al Wasl Maternity : 04-3371111
Children and Burns**

Dubai Hospital : 04-2714444

NMC Hospital : 04-2683131

Welcare Hospital : 04-2827788 (24 hrs trauma & emergency)
