

Tripadvisor  
Travellers'  
Choice Awards  
Best of the Best



دبي



**#1** Destination  
in the World



CITYGUIDE

2024 EDITION



# WELCOME TO DUBAI

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Where dynamic contrasts meet  
endless possibilities.



# دبي

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With its unparalleled coastline, beautiful desert and magnificent cityscapes, memories are just waiting to be made in Dubai, Tripadvisor's most popular destination in the world, for the third year in a row.

Embark on the holiday of a lifetime as you delve into living history by the creek, journey up the world's tallest tower, relax on golden beaches, experience record-breaking theme parks and enjoy some of the most spectacular shopping and dining on the planet.

**Let's explore.**

# THE TIMELINE

**1958**



HH Sheikh Rashid bin Saeed Al Maktoum becomes the Ruler of Dubai

**1985**



Dubai's flagship airline, Emirates, is launched

**1971**



Dubai joins the other emirates to form the United Arab Emirates (UAE)

**1833**

The Al Maktoum tribe establishes the fishing settlement of Dubai

Pearling and maritime trade begin to flourish

**1892**

Oil is discovered in Dubai, attracting foreign trade and boosting the economy

**1966**

**1940**



Dubai World Trade Centre, the city's first skyscraper, opens

**1979**



## A Brief History of Dubai

**2003**



Dubai is recognised by the World Bank and IMF as a financial hub

**2022**



Museum of the Future opens to reveal how the world could evolve

**2010**



Burj Khalifa becomes the tallest building in the world

**2023**



Expo City Dubai hosts COP28, the global summit to tackle climate change

HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum becomes the Ruler of Dubai

HH Sheikh Maktoum bin Rashid Al Maktoum becomes the Ruler of Dubai



**1990**



**2006**

Dubai hosts Expo 2020, the first World Expo in the region



**2021**



# THE ESSENTIALS

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To help you hit the ground running the moment you arrive in Dubai, here's all the information you need to know.



## Currency

The UAE currency is the dirham (AED/Dhs)  
**US \$1 = AED3.67**



## Visas

Citizens of 70+ countries are eligible for visa on arrival, while GCC nationals enjoy visa-free entry to the UAE.

Transit visas (48 to 96 hours) are also available to all passport holders. See the latest visa information on [visitdubai.com](http://visitdubai.com)



## Stay connected

**Electricity:** Power supply is 220/240 volts. Sockets are compatible with UK-standard three-pin plugs. For US equipment, use a 220V to 110V transformer.

**Phones and Wi-Fi:** The country code for the UAE is +971. Tourists get a free prepaid SIM card from telecom operator du at the airport, while free Wi-Fi is widely available across the city – even on the beach.



## Health

If you are travelling with prescribed medication, bring your doctor's note with you. The Rashid, Latifa and Dubai Hospitals offer free emergency services.

Important numbers to know:

- Police – 999
- Ambulance – 998
- Fire Department – 997
- Coastguard – 996



## Weather

Enjoy year-round sunshine in Dubai. **Average temperatures are around 23°C in winter and 41°C in summer.**



# OUR TRADITIONS

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## Arabian culture

Dubai's famed hospitality stems from our inherent values of integrity and respect. Islam is the official religion here, and it plays a significant role in the city's culture. Pay a visit to Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Centre for Cultural Understanding (SMCCU) in the heart of old Dubai to learn more about our customs and traditions.

## National dress



### Women

Emirati women wear a long, loose black coat called an *abaya* over their clothes and cover their hair with a headscarf (*hijab*) for cultural purposes.

Some women also choose to wear a face veil known as a *niqab*, or a traditional face mask worn over the nose known as a *burqa'a*.



### Men

Men wear a long tunic known as a *kandoor*, often with open-toed leather sandals.

The *ghutra* head-dress may also be worn, which was originally used to protect the face from the desert environment. The black rope that sits on top of the *ghutra* is called an *agal*.

## Did you know?

There are more than 200 nationalities living and working in the UAE



# Dubai demystified



## ISN'T IT REALLY EXPENSIVE?

**Dubai** caters to all budgets with affordable hotels, restaurants and activities, and free parks and beaches



## IS ALCOHOL AVAILABLE?

Non-Muslim adults aged 21 and over can drink alcohol in licensed hotels, establishments and restaurants across **Dubai**



## CAN WOMEN DRIVE THERE?

Our culture holds women in very high regard. Both men and women can drive in **Dubai** to their hearts' content



## IS IT OKAY TO HOLD HANDS?

Yes, but visitors are advised to refrain from dramatic displays of affection while in public

## What can I wear?

**Dubai** is a cosmopolitan city that is a melting pot of diverse cultures and religious faiths. All attires are generally acceptable, although there are a few general guidelines to follow:



Swimwear is fine while at the beach and pool, but not appropriate in areas such as business districts and shopping malls.



When you're out and about, especially in summer, make sure you are protected from the sun.



It is advisable to dress conservatively when visiting historical areas and cultural sites.

# DUBAI SIGHTSEEING & ATTRACTION PASSES

Unlock huge savings with pre-paid access to top attractions, tours and activities. Choose from the available attraction passes below.

## Dubai Pass

Experience all that's possible in Dubai for less, with the Dubai Pass. With 48 must-visit attractions and activities to choose from citywide, you can create your own tailor-made Dubai experience, choosing from a wide variety of things to see and do. Each pass offers unbeatable value and convenience – there's no need for cash or a pocketful of tickets. Simply present your pass and you're in.

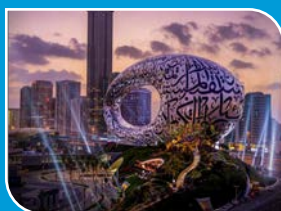
### How it works

1. Pick & Choose: Select the pass of your choice and the attractions you'd like to visit
2. Show & Go: Present your card or iPass at entry or when booking
3. Enjoy & Share: Tag **#DubaiPass** and share your experiences with family and friends



### DUBAI FLEXI ATTRACTIONS PASS

SAVE UP TO 40%



### DUBAI SELECT ATTRACTIONS PASS

SAVE UP TO 50%



### DUBAI UNLIMITED ATTRACTIONS PASS

SAVE UP TO 60%

### SCAN FOR MORE DETAILS



DUBAI  
PASS



GO DUBAI  
PASS

## Go Dubai Pass

Enjoy even more flexible savings with the Go Dubai Pass. With access to more than 45 of the emirate's most loved destinations and activities, you have more control to curate a perfect holiday experience that's gentle on the wallet. Say goodbye to multiple cash transactions and keeping track of different tickets – you just show your digital pass and enjoy the experience.

### How it works

1. Pick & Choose: Once you've purchased your pass, it's ready to use
2. Download & Go: Add your pass to the Go City app and start exploring
3. Enjoy & Share: Tag **#GoDubai** when you share your experiences on social media

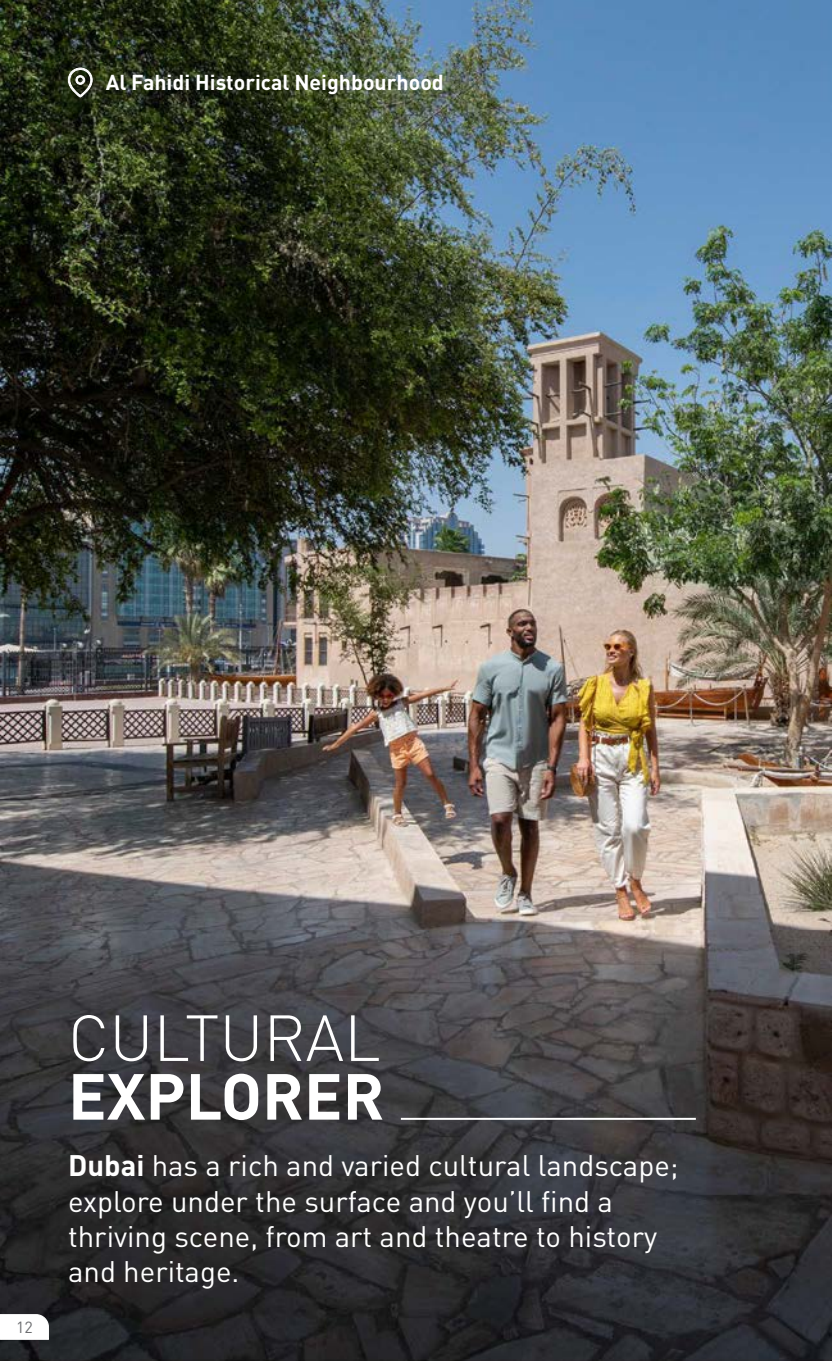


ALL-INCLUSIVE PASS



EXPLORER PASS





# CULTURAL EXPLORER

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**Dubai** has a rich and varied cultural landscape; explore under the surface and you'll find a thriving scene, from art and theatre to history and heritage.

# SEE



## Al Fahidi Historical Neighbourhood

Get a feel for how the city used to be. Most of the buildings here date back to the late 19th century, and now house museums, galleries and cafes.

 [dubaiculture.gov.ae](http://dubaiculture.gov.ae)

## Jumeirah Mosque

With tours for people of all faiths, you'll learn about Emirati culture, Islam and the mosque's elegant architecture.

 [jumeirahmosque.ae](http://jumeirahmosque.ae)



## Alserkal Avenue

Former warehouses are now home to some of Dubai's most innovative artists and curators, along with homegrown cafes and independent picture-house Cinema Akil.

 [alserkal.online](http://alserkal.online)

## Al Shindagha Museum

Enjoy a glimpse of Dubai's more recent history, specifically focused on how the city developed around its historic creek.

 [alshindagha.dubaiculture.gov.ae](http://alshindagha.dubaiculture.gov.ae)





## Dubai Design District

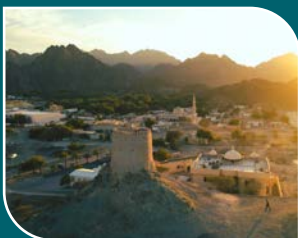
Explore galleries and design-focused shops at this architecturally-stunning space. The precinct also hosts regular exhibitions.

 [dubaidesigndistrict.com](http://dubaidesigndistrict.com)

## Hatta's rich history

Journey decades back to an era of citadels, forts and towers in Dubai's mountain town. Don't miss Hatta Heritage Village, believed to be over 3,000 years old.

 [visithatta.com](http://visithatta.com)



## The Viewing Point

Stroll along this 70-metre observation deck, more than 11 metres above Dubai Creek, for one of the best views in the city. Watch the boats on the creek, and see a stunning skyline sunset.

 [visitdubai.com](http://visitdubai.com)

## L'ÉCOLE School of Jewelry Arts

Supported by luxury jewellery company Van Cleef & Arpels, this Parisian institution is opening a permanent campus in D3. The school offers courses, talks and workshops on jewellery culture for all ages, with in-person and online options available.

 [lecolevancliefarpels.com](http://lecolevancliefarpels.com)







📍 Al Seef

## Did you know?

Archaeological finds reveal that there were humans in the area that's now Dubai over 100,000 years ago. If you're keen to uncover more about the city's past, visit Saruq Al-Hadid Museum, which showcases discoveries from a remote desert site.



# EXPERIENCE

## Museum of the Future

Admire incredible architecture and immerse yourself in a 'living museum' that showcases how societies may function in the future.

 [museumofthefuture.ae](http://museumofthefuture.ae)



## Old-world souks

Shop for lavish gold jewellery, handwoven fabrics, traditional perfumes and special souvenirs – you'll find it all at souks in Deira and Bur Dubai.

 [visitdubai.com](http://visitdubai.com)



## Al Marmoom Bedouin Experience

This themed tour takes in the desertscapes of a protected reserve. You'll experience a camel ride, enjoy a falcon show and lots more.

 [oceanairtravels.com](http://oceanairtravels.com)



## SMCCU

Expand your cultural awareness and gain a greater appreciation of Dubai's customs. Take guided tours and tuck into traditional feasts at the Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Centre for Cultural Understanding.

 [cultures.ae](http://cultures.ae)





### Creek crossing

Dubai Creek the historic heart of the city. Today, you can hop aboard one of many traditional ferry boats, known as abras, to cross its waters for just AED1.

 [visitdubai.com](http://visitdubai.com)

### Theatre of Digital Art


See famous artworks with a high-tech twist at this creative space in Madinat Jumeirah. You can also enjoy everything from live concerts to immersive meditation sessions.

 [toda.ae](http://toda.ae)




### Jameel Arts Centre

Join a guided tour of this thriving art institution located in Dubai's Jaddaf Waterfront. Next door is the nation's first open-air art and sculpture park.

 [jameelartscentre.org](http://jameelartscentre.org)

### Dubai Opera

The world-class performing arts destination hosts the best in cultural entertainment, and even lets you go on a special backstage tour.

 [dubaiopera.com](http://dubaiopera.com)





## Arabian Tea House

As you take in the cool breeze and views of old Dubai, feast on a traditional Emirati breakfast platter.

 [arabianteahouse.com](http://arabianteahouse.com)

## Al Khayma Heritage Restaurant

Focused on farm-fresh ingredients, the menu is wide-ranging, covering everything from hearty meat-laden dishes to sizzling seafood platters.

 [alkhayma.com](http://alkhayma.com)



## Al Fanar Restaurant & Cafe

Designed to celebrate the history of Dubai, the restaurant is akin to a museum of the 1960s with tantalising aromas wafting in from the kitchen.

 [alfanarrestaurant.com](http://alfanarrestaurant.com)

## Bait Maryam

Recognised by the Michelin Guide for its traditional Middle Eastern menu, this eatery is helmed by Salam Dakkar, who was named the region's top female chef by the World's 50 Best in 2023.


 [baitmaryam.com](http://baitmaryam.com)





## Orfali Bros Bistro


Chef Mohamad Orfali joins forces with his pastry-specialist siblings, Wassim and Omar, at this award-winning eatery that breaks boundaries when it comes to Middle Eastern cuisine.

 [orfalibros.com](http://orfalibros.com)



## Al Ustad Special Kebab

This diner has been serving up generous platters of grilled kebabs and fragrant rice at delightfully affordable prices since the '70s.

 [visitdubai.com](http://visitdubai.com)





## INSIDER TIP

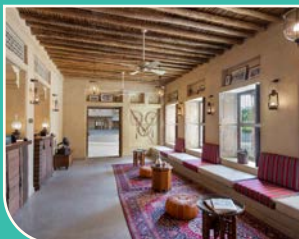


Get a real sense of the city by booking themed cultural tours led by expert Emirati guides at MyDeleel and Meet The Locals. You can also hop aboard the Heritage Express that journeys through Dubai's historic districts.

 [mydeleel.com](http://mydeleel.com) | [@meetthelocalsuae](https://www.instagram.com/meetthelocalsuae) | [heritageexpress.com](http://heritageexpress.com)



# STAY




## Al Seef Heritage Hotel

Traditional architecture meets modern-day luxury here, with plenty of delicious restaurants and fun activities nearby at Al Seef district.

 [hilton.com](https://www.hilton.com)

## 25hours Hotel One Central

This trendy hotel enjoys a prime location, just steps away from Museum of the Future and Downtown Dubai. Enjoy the rooftop pool and colourful spaces.

 [25hours-hotels.com](https://www.25hours-hotels.com)




## XVA Art Hotel

With art-filled rooms, showcasing architectural and cultural motifs of the region, the hotel also features a contemporary art gallery and courtyard restaurant.

 [xvahotel.com](https://www.xvahotel.com)

## FORM Hotel

Design Hotels' first property in the region stands out thanks to its irregularly-sized windows, strong design narrative and refreshing hospitality.

 [form-hotel.com](https://www.form-hotel.com)



# EVENTS



## DIFC Art Nights

Seasonal



Admire works from incredible artists and exhibits from DIFC's galleries dotted across outdoor public spaces.

[difc.ae](https://difc.ae)

## Dubai Design Week

Nov 2024



An annual week-long festival celebrating design and creativity with free-to-attend exhibitions, pop-ups, activities and talks.

[dubaidesignweek.ae](https://dubaidesignweek.ae)

## Art Dubai

1-3 Mar 2024



The Middle East's leading international art fair always impresses. Expect the very best in contemporary and digital art from galleries across the globe.

[artdubai.ae](https://artdubai.ae)



## Global Village


18 Oct 2023 - 28 Apr 2024 



Taking place from October to April annually, this open-air entertainment destination hosts the world in Dubai.

 [globalvillage.ae](https://globalvillage.ae)

## Al Marmoom Heritage Festival

Seasonal 



Celebrating Emirati culture in all its facets, the free and family-friendly event aims to promote and preserve Arabian traditions.

 [almarmoomfestivals.ae](https://almarmoomfestivals.ae)

Download the official Dubai Calendar app or visit the website to see a full list of upcoming shows and events.

 [dubaicalendar.com](https://dubaicalendar.com)



 Available on the  
App Store

 ANDROID APP ON  
Google Play

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Disclaimer: All efforts have been made to ensure accuracy of information at the time of print (February 2024). Dubai's Department of Economy and Tourism accepts no responsibility for errors or omission.

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