

destination focus...

Essential UAE

Destination summary

Located on the Arabian Peninsula, the United Arab Emirates borders Oman to the east, Saudi Arabia to the south and shares borders with Qatar and Iran. With 1,318 kilometres of coastline, traditionally famous for fishing and pearl diving, the oil industry now dominates the economy bringing huge wealth to the emirs. The UAE consists of seven emirates – Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Umm al Qaywayn, Ajman, Fajairah and Ras al Khaymah. Abu Dhabi is the capital city of the UAE and its second largest city, Dubai City is the largest city in terms of population. Abu Dhabi lies on a T-shaped island on the western coast of the Musandam Peninsula. The city is the seat of government for the UAE and home of the Abu Dhabi royal family. The city has grown into a major political, industrial, commercial and cultural centre and has been classified as the richest city in the world. The city of Dubai is situated 130 kms north of Abu Dhabi and has been a strategic regional trading port, on Dubai Creek, for over a century and like Abu Dhabi has become a global city as a result of the oil industry. Dubai is renowned for its skyscrapers and high rise architectural wonders, such as the 828 metre Burj Khalifa, as well as the man-made Palm Islands, hotels and shopping malls. Dubai is attracting many larger innovative sports and cultural projects and events. Since 2011 Dubai has been rated one of the best places to live in the Middle East.

Brief history

Archaeological evidence points to civilisations being located in the UAE from the 3rd century BC. Envoys from Muhammad in 630 heralded the conversion of the region to Islam. Portuguese expansion into the Indian Ocean in the early 1500's resulted in many skirmishes with the Ottomans in the Persian Gulf and the region was known to the British as the *Pirate Coast*. Most UAE nationals are descended from two tribal groupings – the Qawasim and the Bani Yas. The Bani Yas Bedouin, with numerous family subsections, was originally based in the Liwa Oasis. In 1793 the Al Bu Falah section migrated to the island of Abu Dhabi when fresh water was discovered there. One family group, the Al Nahyan family, later became the royal family of Abu Dhabi. Pearl trading became a major business and by the 19th century, treaties between Great Britain and the sheikhs of the Arab States of the Persian Gulf resulted in Britain being a major influencer in the region. Initially Britain's main interest was to protect its trade routes to India but after India's independence in 1947, the British transferred their interests towards oil exploration. 1958 saw the first oil struck and the rest is history!

UAE with Hosmark

Hosmark represents six luxurious 5* Anantara properties in the UAE – five in Abu Dhabi and one in Dubai.

All ideal for groups looking for that very unique experience.

Abu Dhabi

Eastern Mangroves Hotel & Spa is part of an integrated hotel, marina, retail and residential destination. Providing a stunning, luxurious haven overlooking untouched natural mangroves, just 5 minutes from central Abu Dhabi. The hotel consists of 222 rooms and suites across 5 levels, an Anantara spa, hammam and gym. Theatre capacity for 450 delegates plus 5 dedicated breakout and board rooms.

Qasr Al Sarab Desert Resort by Anantara is located in the legendary Empty Quarter of the Liwa Desert. All 206 rooms look out onto the world's largest uninterrupted sand desert with private pools, outdoor terraces and covered day beds. The meeting venue can accommodate up to 250 delegates.

Desert Island Resorts on Sir Bani Yas Island: 3 idyllic island resorts on this unique wild life haven south west of Abu Dhabi. Island activities include wildlife/nature walks and drives, mountain biking, archery, kayaking and snorkeling. The Desert Island Conference Centre offers meetings facilities for 460 theatre.

Desert Islands Resort & Spa is a 5* luxury hotel offering 64 beautifully appointed rooms, suites and villas. 4 small meeting rooms are available with a maximum theatre capacity of 26. All rooms in the main hotel have sea views.

Sir Bani Yas Island Al Yamm Villa Resort: 30 luxury villas located on the beach, inspired by the traditional Arabic fishing and pearl diving villages;

Sir Bani Yas Island Al Sahel Villa Resort: 30 luxury villas located in a savannah style setting surrounded by wildlife – opened December 2013.

Dubai

Anantara Dubai The Palm Hotel Resort is a 5* resort on the crescent of Dubai's iconic Palm Jumeirah. Opened in September 2013, set amidst lush landscaping with 293 rooms, suites and villas. Facilities include a private beach, 3 natural lagoons, shoreline infinity pool, water sports, spa and 6 themed restaurants. The ballroom accommodates 260 theatre style.

Popular group activities

Horse riding and camel racing; falcons and wildlife; golf, ski-ing, motorsports and every type of sport known to man; shopping malls and theme parks

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Climate/when to go/ time zone

UAE has a hot desert climate. June to September is extremely hot and humid with averages of 38°C with sandstorms occurring intermittently during this period. The cooler season is from November to March where temperatures range between moderately hot to warm – 30°C in November to 18°C in January. The UAE is 4 hours ahead of UK time.

Population/language/currency

The city populations of Abu Dhabi and Dubai number 921,000 and 2.1 million respectively. Arabic is the official language. English is widely spoken and many road signs and menus are dual language. Currency is the dirham. The traditional UAE weekend has been Thursday afternoon and Friday, however much of the private sector now works through Thursday afternoon and close on Friday and Saturday.

Passports/visas/health

A valid passport plus a return air ticket is required. Most citizens of the world are issued with a free-of-charge visa upon entry; others will need to apply for a visa from their UAE Embassy before travel. Check before travelling.

Flight access

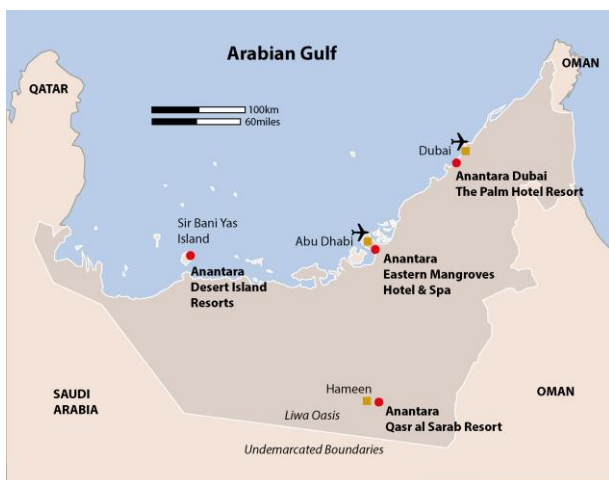
Abu Dhabi and Dubai International Airports are served by a number of direct, daily flights from the UK with an average flight time of 7 hours. The road transfer time between Abu Dhabi and Dubai is 90 minutes.

Abu Dhabi hotel transfer times

Eastern Mangroves Hotel & Spa: 15 minutes by road;
Qasr Al Sarab Resort: 90 minutes by road; Sir Bani Yas Island Resorts: 40 minutes flight.

Dubai hotel transfer time

Anantara Dubai The Palm Hotel Resort: 45 mins by road.



UAE with Hosmark

Top Essential things to do

Abu Dhabi

Ferrari World Abu Dhabi: the world's largest indoor theme park

FI Racetrack: it's inaugural race in November 2009 was Formula One's first ever day-night race

Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque: one of the world's largest mosques with a capacity for 41,000 worshippers

The Corniche: a pristine Blue Flag beachfront

Al Ain: the oasis city in the Emirate's heartland

Liwa Desert: marvel at the peace of the gateway into the legendary Empty Quarter

Dubai

Burj Khalifa: the world's tallest building at 828 metres – a ground breaking feat of architecture and engineering

Dubai Mall: the world's largest and most visited shopping/entertainment destination

DMC recommendations

Arabian Adventures; SNATA

F & B tips/info

Stuffed camel – with chickens, eggs, fish and rice

Al Harees – meat and wheat cooked overnight in a clay pot.

Shawarma – lamb or chicken with garlic sauce, pickles, fries and tomatoes wrapped in Arabic roti

Al Machboos – slow cooked rice, meat, onion and dried lemon with salt and spices

Hummus – served with shawarma or pitta bread

Souvenirs/shopping

Gold, luxury goods, spices and virtually anything you wish

Famous Emiratis

Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan (1918-2004)

Founding father of the UAE and very popular with Emiratis, ex-pats and nations with ties to the UAE

Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan (born 1948)

Current president of the UAE; the Burj Khalifa, the tallest building in the world, was named after him

Sheikh Mohamed bin Rashid Al Maktoum (born 1949)

The incumbent prime minister of the UAE and architect of modern Dubai

Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan (born 1970)

Half-brother of the current president of the UAE and full brother of the crown prince. Best known in the UK for his acquisition of Manchester City Football Club for the Al Nahyan family

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