

Knowledge Bank: General knowledge of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi and the UAE

1.1 The United Arab Emirates

- The UAE is governed by a Federal Supreme Council made up of seven Emirates. The seven Emirates are:
 - Abu Dhabi
 - Dubai
 - Ajman
 - Fujairah
 - Sharjah
 - Ras al-Khaimah
 - Umm al-Qaiwain
- The combined population of all seven Emirates is 9.27 million (2016)
- The UAE has a mainland surface area of 77,700 square kilometres
- The language spoken by Emiratis is Arabic
- Islam is the main religion
- The flag of the United Arab Emirates contains the pan-Arab colours of red, green, white, and black
- The currency used in all seven UAE Emirates is the Arab Emirate Dirham (AED), more commonly known as the Dirham
- Since May 2016, hotels in Abu Dhabi have charged an additional fee of 20% of the entire hotel bill as well as an extra municipality fee of AED 15 per room per night
- “The Federal Tax Authority (FTA) introduced Valued Added Tax (VAT) in the UAE in 2018 which 5% on goods and services across the UAE”
- Launched in 2010, Vision 2021 wants to make the UAE one of the best countries in the world
- Vision 2021 is a strategy for all seven Emirates for economic growth which does not rely on the production or export of oil
- 15 Arabic phrases with English pronunciation that you will need to know are:

	English	The English Pronunciation
1	Hello (formal)	<i>Assalamu Alaykom</i>
2	Hi (informal)	<i>Marhaba</i>
3	Welcome	<i>Ahlan wa sahan</i>
4	How are you?	<i>Kayfa halok?</i>
5	I'm fine, thank you	<i>Ana bekhayr shoukran</i>
6	My name is ...	<i>Esmee ...</i>
7	What is your name?	<i>Ma howa esmok?</i>
8	Where is....?	<i>Ayna yakoon ...?</i>
9	Good morning	<i>Sabah al-khayr</i>
10	Good evening	<i>Masa al-khayr</i>
11	Good night	<i>Tosbeh ala khayr</i>
12	Good-bye	<i>Ma assalama</i>
13	Excuse me	<i>Law samahat</i>
14	Thank you	<i>Shokran</i>
15	Have a good trip	<i>Rehlah sa'eeda</i>

1.2 The Emirate of Abu Dhabi

- **UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage in Abu Dhabi**
 - **Falconry**, a living human heritage
 - **Arabic coffee**, a symbol of generosity
 - **Majlis**, a cultural and social space
 - **Al-Razfa**, a traditional performing art featuring dance and poetry
 - **Al-Ayyala**, a traditional performing art featuring dance and poetry
 - **Al-Taghrooda**, traditional Bedouin chanted poetry in the United Arab Emirates and the Sultanate of Oman
 - **Al Sadu**, traditional weaving skills in the United Arab Emirates
- Abu Dhabi means 'father of the gazelle'
- Abu Dhabi is the capital and largest of the seven Emirates
- Abu Dhabi occupies more than 80% of the country's total land mass
- Abu Dhabi's coastline stretches over 700 kilometres and includes over 200 islands
- The three distinct regions within the Emirate are: the city of Abu Dhabi, the Garden City of Al Ain and Al Dhafra
- The lowest temperature is about 13°C on a winter's night
- The warmest temperature can be as much as 47°C on a summer's day
- Abu Dhabi is four hours ahead of UTC
- Arabic is the official language of Abu Dhabi, although English is widely spoken
- Vision 2030 is an economic growth plan for Abu Dhabi
- The Department of Culture & Tourism (DCT) regulates and promotes tourism and cultural heritage in Abu Dhabi
- Classified by UNESCO as World Heritage Sites, Al Ain world heritage locations include its six oases and the archaeological sites of:
 - Hili
 - Hafeet
 - Bida bin Saud

1.3 Education

- Public schools are government-funded and free for all citizens of the UAE
- 40% of pupils attend private schools
- Around 2002, there were fewer than one million pupils and students and, in 2017, there are over 2.75 million pupils and students UAE-wide
- Notable higher education institutions in Abu Dhabi:
 - United Arab Emirates University, based in Al Ain
 - Zayed University, Abu Dhabi and Dubai,
 - The Higher Colleges of Technology (HCT), with campuses across the UAE offering a more technically-oriented education
 - Masdar Institute, a graduate-level institution based in Abu Dhabi
 - Abu Dhabi University
 - Khalifa University, Abu Dhabi

1.4 Healthcare

- Healthcare is regulated
- Abu Dhabi's public and private healthcare is free for Emiratis who live and work in Abu Dhabi but expatriates and tourists need to have private medical insurance
- Across all seven Emirates, pre-natal and post-natal care is on par with the world's most developed countries
 - The new-born (neonate) mortality rate has been reduced to 5.54 per 1000 and infant mortality to 7 per 1000
 - Maternal mortality rates have dropped to 0.01 for every 100,000 deaths
- Most infectious diseases like malaria, measles and poliomyelitis that were once prevalent in the UAE have been eradicated
- New vaccination campaigns are taking place to protect against chicken pox, pertussis (whooping cough) and the rotavirus
- Access to clean water in urban and rural areas is assured for 100% of the population
- Close to 100% of the population use modern sanitation facilities
- Life expectancy in the UAE is 76.8 years (figures for men and women combined)
- MERS is a viral illness. Symptoms of MERS are respiratory and include high temperature, coughing and a shortness of breath
- Banned drugs include:
 - Codeine
 - Lithium
 - Diazepam
 - Methadone
 - Alprazolam

Knowledge Bank: The Formation and History of the UAE

Overview of the history of Abu Dhabi and the UAE

1. Early settlement

- Bedouin tribes lived in varied terrain and were self-sufficient with lives built around family values. They moved between the sea for fishing and the desert where they could graze their animals
- The oasis was vital to survival for the Bedouin as a water source but it was also where they harvested crops such as dates
- Dates were a vitamin-rich staple in the nomadic diet, portable for long journeys across desert, mountains and sea
- The camel was central to nomad existence; they provided food and milk as well as transport. Their tough skin and wool was used for household items

2. Ancient trade routes in the Arabian Peninsula

- As nomadic communities settled, trade routes began to emerge right across the Arabian Peninsula
- By the early 7th century, trade routes stretched as far as Europe, India and Asia
- Trade routes were hugely influential in the development of the region and many are still famous today such as the Spice and Silk Routes
- The main route across Arabia became known as the Incense Route or the Incense Road of Antiquity
- The Incense Routes were mostly controlled by the Arabs who brought frankincense and myrrh by camel caravan from southern Arabia and for trade with India, Africa and East Asia

3. Pearl industry

- The pearl oyster or lulu was the main source of economic wealth in the region before the discovery of oil
- Pearl oysters occur naturally in the calm water and shallow banks of the Gulf
- Individual pearls have been found in excavations on archaeological sites that date back at least 7000 years
- The expansion of pearl fishing changed the settlement habits of nomadic communities from their agricultural-based lifestyle to that of the coastal fringes
- Many families settled in places like Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah and Ras Al Khaimah
- The risks of the pearling industry were very great and the life of a pearl diver was dangerous and often short
- The decline of the pearl industry began before World War II and was due to many factors including the production of cheaper cultured pearls in Japan in 1921

4. The Trucial States

- In 1498, a Portuguese explorer established a sea route to India
- The Portuguese explorer was the first European to reach India by sea, opening up a lucrative trade route and bypassing the camel caravans
- By 1515, the Portuguese occupied Julfar near Ras Al Khaimah and built a customs house where they taxed the region's flourishing trade with India and the Far East
- Conflict led to a series of interventions by the British to stop the piracy and, in 1820, the British imposed a General Treaty of Peace on the nine Arab Sheikdoms and established a garrison in the region
- In 1853, the Treaty of Peace in Perpetuity was signed with Britain under which the Sheikhs agreed to a perpetual maritime truce

- The British enforced the Treaty and disputes between the Sheikhs were referred to the British for settlement. As a result of this series of treaties, the area became known as the Trucial Coast and the Emirates as the Trucial States
- The British promised to protect the Trucial Coast from all aggression by sea and to help in case of land attack. The area was known as the Trucial Coast until the creation of the UAE in 1971
- Abu Dhabi is four hours ahead of UTC (Co-ordinated Universal Time – formerly known as GMT).

5. Discovery of oil

- The decline of the pearl industry in the 1930s created significant hardship for the local population with the loss of their largest export
- The economy was struggling but the discovery of oil in Iran, Iraq, Bahrain and then Saudi Arabia was to change all of this
- In 1939, Sheikh Shakhbout bin Sultan Al Nahyan granted the first oil concessions
- The first oil find was under an old pearling bed in the Gulf in 1958
- Oil was then struck in the desert at Murban in 1960
- The first cargo of crude oil was exported from Abu Dhabi in 1962
- There were two oil companies:
 - Petroleum Development (Trucial Coast) Ltd (PDTC)
 - Abu Dhabi Marine Areas Ltd (ADMA)
- Today, oil production in the UAE is in the region of 2.3 million barrels per day
- The UAE is one of the world's biggest oil producers

6. Key milestones for the United Arab Emirates

- In 1966, Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan became Ruler of Abu Dhabi
- Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan became the driving force behind the formation of the United Arab Emirates, a post he held for 38 years
- In 1968, Britain announced it would withdraw its position in the Gulf by 1971
- On 18th February 1968, an historic agreement, the Union Accord, was signed between Abu Dhabi and Dubai in Al Sameeh
- In February 1968, nine states convened a constitutional conference in Dubai and developed an 11-point agreement
- During summer of 1971, Bahrain and Qatar declared independence
- Six Emirates united as one nation on 2nd December 1971; Ras Al Khaimah joined the following year
- Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan is remembered as the builder of the nation and as 'a loving father (Baba) to the nation's citizens'

7. Tribes in the UAE

- Most Emirati nationals can tell you which tribe they belong to
- The name of the tribe may be part of their name. For example:

a. HH Sheikh Zayed as Zayed bin ("son of") Sultan (his father) Al Nahyan (family of Nahyan)



b. On marriage, women keep their father's name so, for example, Sheikh Zayed's wife was HH Fatima bint ("daughter of") Mubarak (her father) Al Ketbi (her family name).

- The two main tribal groupings are the Qawasim and the Bani Yas.
- The Qawasim were land and sea traders and dominated the region of the Emirates of Ras Al Khaimah and Sharjah
- The Bani Yas were agricultural and pastoral tribes based in what is now Abu Dhabi and Dubai
- In 1833, a large influential group of the Bani Yas moved to Dubai under the leadership of Maktoum bin Buti Al Maktoum and this family continues to rule Dubai to this day.
- Sections of the Bani Yas tribe included:
 - Al Rumaithat
 - Al Bu Mahair
 - Al Qubaisat
 - Al Mazrouei
 - Al Hawamil
 - Al Maharbah
 - Al Mishaghin
 - Al Sudan

Knowledge Bank: Abu Dhabi Rulers and Government

The life of Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan

- Sheikh Zayed was the grandson of Zayed the First
- Sheikh Zayed was born in 1918, the youngest of four brothers
- His brother, Sheikh Shakhbout bin Sultan Al Nahyan became ruler of Abu Dhabi in 1928 after the death of their father
- In 1946, Sheikh Shakhbout chose his youngest brother Sheikh Zayed to be the ruler's representative in Al Ain and the Eastern Region; he was only 28 years old at the time
- Sheikh Zayed was appointed ruler of Abu Dhabi in 1966 and set out his vision for a modern and united Emirate state
- Sheikh Zayed was elected as President of the UAE and proved to be a popular and effective leader. He was re-elected every five years until his death
- Sheikh Zayed passed away in 2004, aged 86
- Sheikh Zayed was admired for his commitment to conservation and his ability to keep peace and order

The Legacy of Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan

Sheikh Zayed's plan was to pull together the small Emirates into one large federation, addressing the conflict and enabling development on a large scale. His plans included:

- Expanding the federation
- Reforming education
- Developing industrial sectors and infrastructure
- Protecting the environment
- Peacekeeping and charity work

Current Rulers

Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE and Ruler of Abu Dhabi

- Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan was born in Qasr Al Muwajji in Al Ain City in 1948
- After his father passed away in 2004, Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan became the Ruler of Abu Dhabi and was elected the President of the UAE
- Sheikh Khalifa was appointed as a ruler's representative of the Eastern Region in 1966 when he was only 18 years old. He focused on key projects such as the restoration of the underground irrigation system at Al Ain
- Sheikh Khalifa's role was key within his father's administration, and he was appointed Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi in 1969

General Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi

- Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan is the younger brother of Sheikh Khalifa
- Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan was born in 1961
- Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan is a prominent member of the Al Nahyan ruling family; Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, General of the UAE Armed Forces and Chairman of the Abu Dhabi Executive Council.

The Government structure of Abu Dhabi

- The Executive Council is the executive body that reports directly to the Ruler
- The Government Departments are directed by the Executive Council and the heads of these departments sit on the Council
- The National Consultative Council is the legislative body that is consulted on all laws
- The Ruler signs off all new laws

The Government of UAE

- There are three levels of Government: federal, Emirate and municipal. At the local level, there are also traditional open *majlis* (community gatherings)
- The seven Emirates are: Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Um Al Quwain, Ras Al Khaimah and Fujairah
- The rulers of each of these Emirates sit on the Federal Supreme Council. Every five years it elects the President and the Vice-President
- The Council of Ministers or Cabinet is led by the Prime Minister and is the executive authority of the federation
- The Federal National Council (FNC) is the consultative body and has both a legislative and supervisory role
- Federal Courts include the Supreme Court based in Abu Dhabi
- Local court systems are in place in some of the Emirates; Abu Dhabi has a local court structure
- Sharia courts focus primarily on civil cases between Muslims
- The Constitution of the UAE guarantees equality for women under Article 14
- The Gender Balance Council was set up in 2015 to focus on increasing the role of women in leadership positions
- A military school for women opened in 2014
- Sheikha Lubna Al Qasimi is one of eight women in Cabinet and was recognised by Forbes magazine as one of the 100 most powerful women in the world
- On 28th August every year, the UAE celebrates the Emirati Women Day which recognises the contribution of the nation's women in developing and advancing the country. The date was chosen by Sheikha Fatima Bint Mubarak and it marks the anniversary of the General Women's Union, which was founded August 28, 1975

Knowledge Bank: Religious Orientations within the UAE

1. General knowledge and awareness of Islam

- There are four key characteristics of the Islamic faith: discipline, moderation, community and tolerance. These are built into every aspect of life in the UAE.
- The *Quran* lays down the law of God and the Sunna provides the Prophet's (PBUH) teachings. These are obligatory instructions and guidelines that must be obeyed as testament to the faith.
- The UAE National Tolerance Programme launched in 2016 by the UAE Government illustrates the importance of the four characteristics and their place in public as well as private life.

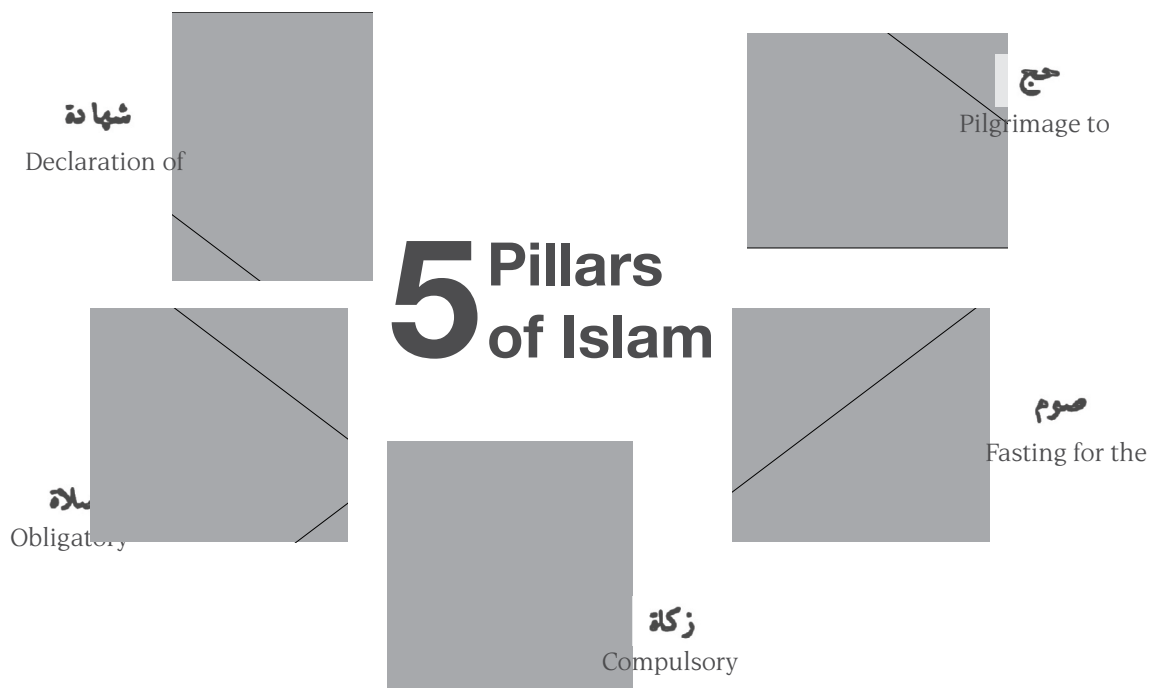
By looking at the following websites, you will understand the importance of discipline, moderation, community and tolerance and its place in the cultural and political system in the UAE:

<https://sites.google.com/site/exploringtheuae/presentation/culture/religions>

<https://government.ae/en/about-the-uae/strategies-initiatives-and-awards/federal-governments-strategies-and-plans/national-tolerance-programme>

2. The Five Pillars of Islam

- These are: the declaration of faith, obligatory daily prayer, compulsory giving of charity or alms, fasting during Ramadan and the *Hajj* or pilgrimage to Mecca
- The discipline and rituals that sit behind each of these provide the foundations of the faith. They are fundamental to community, public and private life, social and cultural heritage. You must have a good awareness of the implications of these Five Pillars on every aspect of life in the UAE



There is lots of information available regarding the historical background to each of the Five Pillars. Gathering information and facts on each one separately is useful so that you can answer tourists' general questions effectively. Here are some websites which offer an outline:

<http://www.religionfacts.com/hajj>

3. The process for preparing for prayers

- As part of the compulsory daily prayers outlined by the Five Pillars of Islam, a ritual form or set process must be followed
- This starts with the ablutions or washing which follows a set pattern of eight steps

4. Islamic holy days and holidays

Islam has fewer holy days and holidays than some religions but the key holidays, such as the holy month of Ramadan and the days of the *Hajj*, are very important and are reflected in all aspects of life. The dates are based on the Islamic calendar and the holy days are officially announced. The feasts celebrate key events in the Prophet's (PBUH) life. Finding out about these events and the symbolism that is applied to each celebration will help you to recount the information to the visitors. The Islamic events considered as holidays in the UAE are:

- Islamic New Year: *1 Muharram*
- *Mawlid an-Nabi* (Prophet's Birthday): *12 Rabi' Awal*
- *Isra' & Mi'raj* (Ascension of the Prophet): *27 Rajab*

Knowledge Bank: Emirati Culture and Traditions

National dress and its origins

Based on the requirements of Islam and the climate, the dress has its origins in a strict code that includes status, religious event, time of day and gender.

National dress for men

- **Kandura** or **dishdash** - a long white garment
- **Tarbusha** - similar to a tie
- **Ghutra** - head dress worn by the males
- **Egal** - the black rope that fixes the ghutra (headscarf) in place
- **Ghafiyah** - usually worn under the ghutra and is not visible
- **Bisht** - a cloak for special occasions
- **Faneela** is like a vest worn under the *kandura*.
- **Woozar** is a piece of white cloth which is tied around the waist under the *kandura*
- **Na-aal** are the traditional footwear

National dress for women

- **Hijab** - is the concept of modesty including the dress code for both men and women
- **Abaya** - long flowing black gown
- **Shela** or **Shayla** - a scarf used to cover the head and face
- **Neqab** - a veil worn by women over the face leaving the area around the eyes clear. It can also be worn with an eye veil.
- **Burqa** is a metallic coloured cloth mask that partially covers a woman's face and upper lip in a horizontal H shape ⁴ which is specific to the UAE.
- **Jelabia Mukhawara** - flowing gown that is worn by women daily or for special occasions

Family life and marriage in the UAE

Islamic law underpins the structure of family life and marriage in the UAE and there is a strict code of conduct. Marriage is the only legal bond for the relationship between a man and a woman.

Source: <https://u.ae/en/information-and-services/social-affairs/marriage>

Traditional houses

Beit Al Shaar – the tent - long, low, black tents of the Bedouin known as *beit al shaar*, or “house of hair”.

Areesh (Barasti) houses – the summer house of the Bedouin, made of a wooden frame and palm fronds.

Barjeel houses – The Wind Tower - like a non-electrical air-conditioner and was used during the summer months to provide some relief from the heat.

Permanent stone houses - made from sun-dried mud bricks with roofs made of palm tree leaves.

<https://dreamingin arabic.wordpress.com/interesting-snippets/traditional-houses/>

⁴ Source: www.thenational.ae/uae/heritage/history-project-the-burqa-1.303584

Falconry and the Abu Dhabi Falcon Hospital

- **Falcons**

- The price of falcons can be over AED 500,000
- 60% are bred and imported from Austria and Germany
- The average lifespan of a wild falcon is 15-20 years and 10-14 years in captivity
- They can breed once a year and lay two to five eggs
- Falcons are the only animals allowed to travel in the cabin on Etihad Airways and First and Business Class passengers are allowed up to two falcons each
- The falcon is the official emblem of the Abu Dhabi government

- **Abu Dhabi Falcon Hospital**

- Opened on 3rd of October, 1999
- The first public falcon hospital in the UAE and the largest falcon hospital in the world
- More than 11,000 falcons are treated annually
- The ADFH has expanded in the fields of education and awareness, training and research
- It treats all kinds of birds and poultry
- It manages the Abu Dhabi Animal Shelter for cats and dogs
- It has its own houbara breeding farm to feed the birds

Hunting with Salukis and the Saluki Centre

- **Fast facts about Salukis:**

- Salukis are very fast, agile and graceful in motion, typically 24-29 inches (60 -74 cm) tall at the shoulder and weigh between 40 and 65 pounds (18 to 30 kg)
- Their sleek bodies have a very low ratio of body fat. Despite their small, narrow heads, they possess strong jaws so can exert a powerful grip on prey
- Their legs are built for maximum acceleration and their feet have thick springy pads which help them on long distances over sand
- The Bedouins used henna or nut oil to harden the Saluki's feet to avoid injuries while hunting in the harsh desert. Their paws can dig tunnels to get at prey
- Salukis are different colours, ranging from pure black to red, sandy and white. The colour is an indication of lineage
- Their fur is silky and normally short with a single layer coat for surviving the heat of the desert. This lack of undercoat means they never develop a typical dog smell
- When they hunted with the Bedouins, the Salukis would eat the same as their masters. Their diet was also supplemented with rice, dates, olives, meat and milk ⁵

⁵ Source: <https://www.thenational.ae/uae/hunting-with-hounds-salukis-could-be-a-bedouin-s-best-friend-1.529281>

Knowledge Bank: Emirati Hospitality

The origins of Emirati hospitality lie in Bedouin traditions and the needs of the nomadic tribes who travelled the deserts of the region.

Communication

- Direct eye contact is offensive between a woman and man who are not relatives but are a sign of trust in a business transaction
- It is disrespectful for a guest to decline hospitality

Greetings

- **When men greet each other** – physical touch such as handshake and nose-rubbing demonstrates trust, friendship and respect between men.
- **When women greet each other** – physical touch also demonstrates friendship between women and indicates that trust and respect is offered, so handshaking and cheek kissing are commonplace.
- **The greeting between men and women** - there is little to no touching between men and women during greetings in public.

Coffee

- Traditionally, a guest will have three cups
- The guest shakes the *finjan* side to side when they have had enough

<i>gahwa</i>	The serving of Arabic coffee on arrival of a guest
<i>finjan</i>	Tiny, handle-less coffee cups
<i>dallah</i>	Large Arabic coffee pot with a long spout
<i>Bukhoor</i>	A perfumed incense passed around the guests to freshen up their hands and face

Palm dates

- Dates hold an important place in Arabian heritage and provide the main source of nutrition in desert communities
- Dates are part of the coffee ritual as a treat offered to guests and a symbol of Emirati generosity
- The Liwa Date Festival in July promotes and celebrates the symbolic and historic role the date palm plays in Emirati culture

Majlis

- A tented meeting place where hospitality was offered and family and business discussions took place
- Originally, people were seated on mats but as the *majlis* became established in homes *tekay* (Arabic cushions) were introduced and rooms became more formally decorated

Incense

- *Oud* and *Bukhoor* are used in the incense burner but can be combined with other ingredients to produce fragrances.
- Arabic perfume uses a range of oils such as rose, jasmine, lilies, sandalwood, musk and citrus fruits. Arabic perfume typically does not contain alcohol

Knowledge Bank: Traditional Industries

Flora and fauna

- Abu Dhabi has over 3,500 native plants
- The *ghaf* tree is an evergreen species and is the national tree of the UAE
- Large mammals include the highly-endangered Arabian leopard and Asiatic lion
- In 1971, Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan made Sir Bani Yas his island retreat and began to establish a nature reserve as part of his 'Greening of the Desert' campaign
- The national animal of the UAE is the Arabian oryx
- The waters around Abu Dhabi are full of a rich variety of marine life including manatees and dugongs (sea cows) as well as endangered blue and fin whales
- As Abu Dhabi is on the migration route between Central Asia and East Africa, many species of bird can be seen, included the rare and protected Houbara bustard
- Rare hawksbill and leatherback turtles can be spotted offshore

Farming

- Vegetable production in the UAE includes onions, potatoes, tomatoes, garlic, cauliflower, cucumber, cabbage, beans, eggplant, peppers, lettuce, lemons and apples
- In 1981, the first dairy farm in the UAE was established
- Abu Dhabi has a wheat farm at Al Ain, to support and train local Bedouins in farming

The *falaj*

- The ancient irrigation system which was relied upon to bring water to barren areas through a complex system of tunnels is called the *falaj* irrigation system
- The main well in a *falaj* system is dug along with smaller wells which are connected by tunnels
- At least five Iron Age *falaj* have been found in the Al Ain area

Date cultivation

- Dates were first cultivated over 7,000 years ago
- Date-palm trees are male or female and ripen in four stages:
 - *kimri* - unripe
 - *khalal* - full-size, crunchy
 - *rutab* - ripe, soft
 - *tamr* - ripe, sun-dried
- A long rope made from palm-tree fibres called a *habool* is used to climb the palm tree for date collection
- There are around 44 million date palms in the UAE
- The seven main varieties of date are: *Khanizi*, *Khallas*, *Dabbas*, *Abu Maan*, *Fardh*, *Nukhba* and *A'adj*
- The Liwa Date Festival is held annually and celebrates the importance of dates in the history and culture of Emirati people

Pearl diving

- The pearl oyster or lulu (*qamashah*) provided a source of wealth in the Emirates
- The oysters grow on the shallow banks (*fasht*) in the Gulf and the quality of the water produces pearls in yellow, pink, white, grey and green
- With the introduction of the cultured pearl in the 1920s, diving for sea pearls became obsolete and economic impact was severe
- The pearl trader was known as: *Al Tawash*

Camels

- For the Bedouin tribes, the camel was essential, providing transport, shade, milk, meat, wool and hides, a bride's gift in marriage and the sacrificial offering at festivals
- Camel breeding in Abu Dhabi is a thriving business
- Camel racing is popular in the UAE
- The normal life span of a camel is 40 years, although a working camel retires from active duty at 25
- Camel milk is more nutritious than cow's milk. It is lower in fat and lactose, higher in potassium, iron and Vitamin C. It is normally drunk fresh from the camel when it is warm, sweet and frothy
- Abu Dhabi has two camel race tracks: the Al Whathba Camel Race track, approximately 45 km from Abu Dhabi, and the Al Maqam Track near Al Ain

Arabian horses

- The Arabian horse is an important part of the cultural heritage and tradition of the UAE
- Excavations of sites in Sharjah, show prized stallions decorated with gold trappings were buried close to their owners over 2,000 years ago
- The breed is distinctive with wedge-shaped heads, a broad forehead, large eyes, large nostrils and small muzzles
- With a distinctive head shape and high tail carriage, the Arabian is one of the most easily-recognisable horse breeds in the world
- International Arabian horse championships see horses competing for a prize of up to AED 15 million

Fishing

- Fishing has been an important part of the UAE economy for many centuries
- In the 1920s, with the collapse of pearling, fishing was essential to survival
- Traditional fishing boats are called dhows
- Dhows used for pearl diving are *Al Banoosh* and *Jalboot*
- Fishing licences are limited and the use of fish traps is regulated
- There are over 500 marine species in the seas around the UAE, ranging from smallest seahorses to largest sharks
- The fishing season in the UAE is from February to June

Knowledge Bank: Regions and Islands of Abu Dhabi

Abu Dhabi City and Islands

The Corniche

- Ten kilometres of reclaimed, highly-landscaped waterfront
- Dedicated cycle paths and pedestrian walkways
- Bike hire for eight kilometres of cycle paths
- Corniche Beach

Yas Island

- An emerging entertainment destination
- Located within a 20 minute drive of the UAE capital

Home to:

- Yas Marina
- Yas Marina Circuit
- Yas Viceroy Abu Dhabi
- Ferrari World Abu Dhabi
- Yas Waterworld
- Yas Links Golf Course
- Yas Beach
- Yas Mall
- Yas Plaza
- Etihad Park
- Etihad Arena
- Warner Bros. World Abu Dhabi
- CLYMB

Saadiyat Island

Located 500 metres off the coast of mainland Abu Dhabi island, a 15-minute drive away from Abu Dhabi city centre and 20 minutes from Abu Dhabi International Airport

The main districts being developed on the island are:

- Saadiyat Cultural District
- Planned museums to be built by the stars of the architectural world here include:
 - Zayed National Museum
 - Louvre Abu Dhabi
 - Guggenheim Abu Dhabi
- Saadiyat Beach District
- Saadiyat Marina District
- Saadiyat Promenade District
- Saadiyat Lagoons District
- Saadiyat Retreat District
- Saadiyat Reserves District
- The Dock (Outdoor Cafés)

Other Saadiyat Island attractions and landmarks:

- Manarat Al Saadiyat
- The UAE Pavilion
- Saadiyat Beach Golf Club
- The St Regis Saadiyat Island Resort, Abu Dhabi
- Park Hyatt Abu Dhabi
- Saadiyat Beach Club
- Saadiyat Public Beach

Natural treasures:

Hawksbill sea turtles nest along Saadiyat Beach every year. They are listed as critically endangered on the International Union for Conservation of Nature's Red List. The turtles have decreased by up to 80 per cent worldwide due to poaching and intention or unintentional destruction of their natural habitat to make way for construction.



Hawksbill Turtle

The Tourism Development & Investment Company (TDIC) in Abu Dhabi began its Hawksbill Turtle Conservation Programme in early 2010 and now over 650 eggs have successfully hatched on Saadiyat Island.

Al Maryah Island

Al Maryah Island features:

- The Galleria shopping mall
- Rosewood Hotel
- Four Seasons Hotel
- A pedestrian promenade which surrounds the island
- Abu Dhabi Global Market Square
- The Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi
- Al Maryah Central shopping mall – yet to be completed

Al Reem Island

Al Reem Island features:

- Paris-Sorbonne University (PSUAD)
- Shams Boutik with its eye-catching Sun and Sky Towers at each end

Nurai Island

Nurai Island features:

- Uninterrupted Arabian Gulf views
- Zaya Nurai Island which is a unique, boutique, private island resort with a 32-bed, all-villa hotel

Al Ain

- A 90-minute drive from Abu Dhabi city
- One of the world's oldest permanently inhabited settlements, and a UNESCO World Heritage Site

Sites and attractions include:

- Bait Mohammed Bin Khalifa
- Al Jahili Fort
- Al Qattara Arts Centre
- Qasr Al Muwajji
- Al Ain National Museum
- Al Ain Palace Museum
- Al Ain Oasis
- Al Ain Zoo
- Hili Fun-City
- Wadi Adventure
- Al Ain Raceway
- Jebel Hafeet mountain

Al Dhafra

Sites and attractions include

- Liwa, an historic oasis town, and the surrounding Liwa Desert
- Rub Al Khali (Empty Quarter), the world's largest uninterrupted sand mass
- Qasr Al Sarab or Mirage Palace, a five-star resort in the Liwa Desert
- Events and festivals throughout the year include:
 - January's Tel Moreeb Festival
 - Al Dhafra Festival
 - Al Dhafra Watersports Festival
 - July's Liwa Date Festival

Sir Bani Yas Island

- Located 170km southwest of Abu Dhabi
- A nature-based destination in the Al Dhafra region

Sites and attractions include:

- Arabian Wildlife Park - 4x4 Nature and Wildlife drive of the park
- Three Anantara Hotels Resorts & Spas' retreats
- Dedicated cruise passenger Desert Island Beach Stopover
- The UAE's only discovered Christian monastery

Knowledge Bank: The Founder's Memorial

Overview

- The Founder's Memorial is a permanent national tribute dedicated to commemorating and reflecting on the legacy and values of the late Sheikh Zayed as a man and a leader.
- The Constellation is housed in a 30-metre-high pavilion, and has a dynamic, three-dimensional portrait of the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan.
- The Constellation can be experienced differently from multiple viewing points around the memorial and from other vantage points.
- Platonic solids are the special three-dimensional symmetrical shapes with unique mathematical properties which helps creating the portrait of Sheikh Zayed.
- Artist Ralph Helmick created the portrait of Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan through an impressive constellation of 1,327 hanging shapes which are suspended through the use of 1,110 cables.
- The Sanctuary Garden is planted with groves of Ghaf and Sidr trees that provide natural shade from the sun.
- A series of Falaj water channels are set into the landscape which reflects Sheikh Zayed's lifelong project to 'green' the Emirates.
- The Heritage Garden has plants traditionally used by the Bedouin like Samr, Sidr, palm tress, Alkali Weed, Desert Cotton, Harmal, Caralluma, Toothbrush Tree, Fitneh, and Henna.
- The Walkway gives the visitors the chance to look out to the skyline of the City of Abu Dhabi, and along the path, words of Sheikh Zayed are inscribed which give insight into the causes and beliefs that Sheikh Zayed held.
- The Welcome Centre houses rarely-seen footage, personal stories, articles and interviews with those who knew and loved Sheikh Zayed. Also, visitors can enjoy the multimedia experience that features a number of screened 'Sheikh Zayed Encounters', which give visitors the chance to hear from the late leader in his own words.

Knowledge Bank: Aldar HQ

Overview

- The architect of Aldar HQ was Marwan Zgheib
- Marwan Zgheib is the founder of MZ Architects who have offices in Abu Dhabi
- Aldar HQ is circular in design
- It is the headquarters of property developer Aldar of Abu Dhabi
- The building is located on Al Raha Beach
- Alder HQ is 121 metres high
- There is 62,000m² of office space over 23 floors

Design

- The circular building is the first of its kind in the Middle East
- The building is positioned on an east/west axis so the sunset and sunrise is reflected in the glass façade
- Aldar HQ has a unique and complex curved glass curtain wall façade
- An external triangular steel 'diagrid' gives the building stability and flexibility
- The roof structure is made from a continuous glass and structural band forming the building's spine

Sustainability

- The design of Aldar HQ was developed in line with the US Green Building Council LEED rating system
- The circular glass façade optimises natural light
- The building features its own waste collection vacuum system, a cooling plant and sustainable lighting and water systems
- Aldar HQ is rated as 82% efficient

Awards

- Best Futuristic Design award - the Building Exchange Conference (BEX) 2008
- One of 16 of 'The World's Most Spectacular Corporate Headquarters' - Emporis in 2013
- Silver Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating from Green Building Council (USA)

Knowledge Bank: Capital Gate

Overview

- Capital Gate is located between Zayed Sports City and the Zayed Military Hospital on Al Khaleej Al Arabi Street, (30th Street)
- The building is owned and was developed by Abu Dhabi National Exhibitions Company (ADNEC)
- The building is 160 metres tall and 35 floors high
- It is the centrepiece and signature tower of the Capital Centre/ADNEC
- The building is connected to ADNEC with a wave-like structure known as 'the Splash'
- ADNEC is the largest conference and exhibition venue in the Middle East at 133,000m²

Architecture

- Capital Gate was designed by architectural firm RMJM (Robert Matthew Johnson Marshall)
- The building was started in 2007 and completed in 2011
- The tower tilts 18° westwards meaning that Capital Gate leans four times as much as the Leaning Tower of Pisa
- Capital Gate was named the 'World's Farthest Manmade Leaning Building' by Guinness World Records in 2010
- The building sits on nearly 500 pile foundations, drilled 30 metres into the ground to support the building's lean
- The central concrete core leans in the opposite direction to the building to help stabilise it
- The building has a steel façade known as a diagrid
- The diagrid is glazed with heat-reflective glass panels that had to be handmade to fit

Environmental impact

- The outer structure known as 'the Splash' protects the floor inside from 30% of the sun's rays
- The upper floors of Capital Gate have a double façade made of special anti-glare glass which reduces heat entering the building by 5%

Andaz Capital Gate Abu Dhabi

- The five-star hotel features 189 guest rooms and 22 suites
- The hotel has unique features such as an outside pool deck on top of 'the Splash', a glass atrium and a suspended tea lounge
- The hotel is popular with golf enthusiasts as it is located 15 minutes away from Abu Dhabi Golf Club
- Business-travellers also use the hotel as it is a 15-minute drive from Abu Dhabi International Airport and attached to the ADNEC

Knowledge Bank: World Trade Centre Souk & Mall

Souk/Central Market

Overview

- World Trade Centre Abu Dhabi is located on the original site of the city's Old Souk on the intersection of 2nd and 3rd Streets
- The Old Souk was built in the early 1970s and housed around 200 small stores selling clothes, shoes, electrical goods and gold
- The original souk was destroyed by fire in 2003
- The developer Aldar Properties approached architects Foster and Partners to rebuild the souk in 2006
- The development was completed in 2014
- The World Trade Centre Souk & Mall is one of the largest Arabic markets in the world

Architecture and design

- Foster used aspects from traditional (vernacular) architecture such as courtyards and narrow alleyways, balconies and walkways, decorative glass windows and Islamic panels
- Modern features include a retractable roof section for climate control, low-rise retail halls called podiums with green roof gardens
- The World Trade Centre Souk & Mall is topped with two blade-shape towers
- The Commercial Tower is known as the World Trade Centre Abu Dhabi or the Arabtec Tower
- The Residential Tower is known as the Burj Mohammed Bin Rashid and is the highest building in Abu Dhabi
- The Burj Mohammed Bin Rashid is 381 metres high with 93 floors. It features one of the world's highest swimming pools
- The hotel Courtyard by Marriott is located adjacent to the city's The Mall at World Trade Center, and the Burj Mohammed Bin Rashid

Knowledge Bank: Etihad Park

Etihad Park

Venue capacities and features:

- Etihad Park is an outdoor entertainment venue located on Yas Island. It is the largest of its kind in the Middle East
- It opened in 2009
- Etihad Park can hold a total of 50,000 people
- The space inside the venue is flexible. It can be arranged with various seating and standing layouts
- There are dedicated VIP areas and the venue also has wheelchair access
- Etihad Park features 'tree house' suites for VIPs which give guests direct and clear views of performances
- Food and drink is available to purchase on-site
- There is free on-site parking for 5,000 cars
- There is a reserved VIP parking area for 250 cars. VIP parking has its own entrance and exit to and from the venue
- Inside the gates to the entrance of du Arena there is a large 'village' area with spaces that can be rented by food and drink companies

Functions and events at Etihad Park

- Concerts featuring international performers and DJs such as Pink, Rod Stewart, Bon Jovi, The Rolling Stones, Madonna, Coldplay, Justin Timberlake, Metallica and Calvin Harris
- Yasalam After-Race Concerts (for ticket holders of the Formula 1 Etihad Airways Abu Dhabi Grand Prix in November)
- Taste of Abu Dhabi Food festival
- Abu Dhabi Pet Festival

Knowledge Bank: Emirates Palace Hotel

Overview

- The five-star hotel is located on the western end of the Corniche in Abu Dhabi City
- Construction of the hotel started in 2001 and it opened in November 2005
- It is operated by Mandarin Oriental but owned by the Government of Abu Dhabi
- Emirates Palace is Mandarin Oriental Middle East flagship hotel
- It has 394 guest rooms and 92 suites
- It took 12,000 workers to construct the hotel
- The distance from the east wing to the west wing of the hotel is 1km
- The hotel's grounds and beach spread over one million square metres; Emirates Palace has its own 1.6 km private beach and harbour
- The hotel features two pools, 15 restaurants including the award-winning Chinese restaurant, Hakkasan Abu Dhabi, which opened in June 2010, the Emirati restaurant Mezlai and Lebanese, Arabic and Italian cuisine
- Other features include a Moroccan-inspired spa with hammam, jacuzzis and steam rooms and an ice cave

Exterior architecture and design

- The architect for the exterior design was John Elliott, architect at Wimberly Allison Tong & Goo (WATG). WATG have designed the Mansion at MGM Grand in Las Vegas, Atlantis, the Palm Dubai and were responsible for the interior refurbishment of Claridge's, London, amongst others
- The Palace's external design is based on traditional Arabian architecture featuring a traditional grand dome with smaller domes repeated over the main and additional buildings
- The central dome is known as the Grand Atrium dome. It is 42m wide and features silver- and gold-coloured glass with a gold finial
- The colours that were used in the building reflect the colours of the desert sand

Interior architecture and design

- The interior of Emirates Palace was designed by Kongsak Yuktasevi of KY&A, specialists in designing the interiors of resorts and spas worldwide
- Yuktasevi took four years to complete the interior design and had a limitless budget
- The interior is lavish in design and features gold, mother of pearl and countless crystals
- The hotel has a collection of 1,002 chandeliers made from Swarovski's premier Strauss crystals. The largest chandelier weighs 2.5 tonnes
- The hotel also features two one-tonne display carpets. Their design shows the hotel itself

Knowledge Bank: Etihad Towers

Overview

- Etihad Towers are part of a mixed-use development containing residential apartments, offices, a five-star hotel and shopping and dining facilities
- The construction of the towers was completed in 2011
- There are five separate towers and a multi-level podium
- The development is located on Corniche West Street, opposite the Emirates Palace Hotel and a 30 minute drive from Abu Dhabi International Airport
- The development site spreads over 500,000m²
- The Towers are located close to the central business district of Abu Dhabi, as well as the Central Bank, the Foreign Ministry and Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) headquarters
- The Towers are owned by HH Sheikh Suroor Bin Mohammed Al Nahyan, a senior member of Abu Dhabi's ruling family and an influential businessman

Architecture and design

- Etihad Towers were designed by Australian architects, DBI Design
- The design of the Towers is futuristic and sculpted in form
- The shape of the Towers is based on symbols such as sails, swords and falconry, which are a part of Abu Dhabi's culture and heritage

Tower 1: Conrad Abu Dhabi Etihad Towers

- Conrad Abu Dhabi Etihad Towers is a five-star luxury hotel
- It has 382 rooms and suites and 199 serviced apartments
- The hotel features the Talise Spa, a private beach and three swimming pools
- The hotel offers 12 international restaurants including Japanese, Italian, French and Lebanese cuisine
- The entire Tower is 277 metres in height and has 69 floors
- The hotel stars in Vin Diesel's famous car jump stunt in the movie 'Fast and Furious 7'

Towers 2, 4 and 5: Residential apartments

- The 885 residential apartments and penthouses within Towers 2,4 and 5 have one to five bedrooms
- Each residential tower has its own gymnasium, sauna and pool, bars, cafés and restaurants
- Tower 2 is 305 metres in height and has 74 floors
- Tower 4 is 234 metres in height and has 61 floors
- Tower 5 is 218 metres in height and has 55 floors
- The hotel's 'Observation Deck at 300' at the 74th floor is the highest public viewing point in Abu Dhabi and looks out over the Presidential Palace and the Emirates Palace Hotel

Tower 3: Offices

- The tower has 54 floors and 45,000m² of office space
- It features a dedicated car park, managed reception desks, a concierge service and security 24 hours a day, seven days a week
- The entire tower is 260 metres high and has 54 floors

The Podium

- Located at the base of the towers, The Podium features:
 - The Avenue, two floors of high-end luxury boutiques. Many of the boutiques have luxurious private rooms for private, VIP shopping
 - public spaces of the Jumeirah at Etihad Towers including a state-of-the-art convention centre, a grand ballroom, a fitness club and wellness centre, the hotel's 12 themed restaurants and cafes and the hotel lobby.

Overview

The Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque is one of the most important sites in the whole of Abu Dhabi. This magnificent structure stands at the entry to Abu Dhabi City. It was built nine metres higher than ground level so that it could be admired from a distance. It is considered to be one of the finest examples of Islamic architecture in the world. The mosque is located on 5th Street, off Sheikh Rashid Bin Saeed Street. Opposite the Grand Mosque stands the Wahat Al Karama (the Oasis of Dignity), a tribute to those who have given their lives for the UAE.

This is the UAE's official and largest mosque and is believed to be the eighth largest in the world. It can hold 50,000 worshippers (20,000 inside and over 30,000 in the courtyard outside). In total, the complex covers an area of 555,000 square metres (55.5 hectares). Abu Dhabi Municipality led the project with more than 38 contracting companies, while Halcrow Ltd., an engineering company based in the United Kingdom, took charge of the concrete construction.

Friday is, of course, the mosque's busiest day when thousands of male and female worshippers gather to hear the *khut'ba* sermon that takes place before the midday prayer. Outside prayer time, visitors are very welcome and complimentary guided tours are available

Plans to build the mosque began in the late 1980s, construction began on November 5th 1996 and it opened for worship in time for Eid al-Adha (The Feast of Sacrifice) in 2007. The mosque was named after the founding father of the UAE and the first president of the union, Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan.

HH Sheikh Zayed

Sheikh Zayed was involved in all aspects of the design and structure of the mosque and chose to have the building covered entirely in white marble as a symbol of purity and peace. He wanted the mosque to be not only a place of worship but also a cultural and educational centre to promote communication, cultural understanding and tolerance.

Unfortunately, Sheikh Zayed passed away in 2004 before the mosque was completed and his son, Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, became president and oversaw completion. Sheikh Zayed's mausoleum is located beside the north side of the mosque. The live 24/7 recitations of the Quran from the mausoleum that are spread throughout the mosque increase the spirituality and beauty of this architecture. The mosque is currently under the supervision of HH Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Presidential Affairs.

External features of the mosque

This impressive mosque is a stunning building which contains 82 domes, approximately 1,000 columns, four minarets, 24 carat gold-plated chandeliers and the world's largest knotted carpet.

The outer surfaces of the mosque, including the walls, domes and minarets, are covered in flawless SIVEC marble from Macedonia;- more than 165,000 square metres of marble was needed. In the courtyard (the *Sahan*) the floor is covered with 30 different types of coloured marble tiles from Italy, India, Greece and China.

The courtyard

A *Sahan* or courtyard area is found in other large grand mosques, as well as the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque. It is an outside space used for worship at important religious times of the year such as during Ramadan, Eid al-Fitr (The Feast of Breaking the Fast) at the end of Ramadan and Eid al-Adha. This area can accommodate up to 30,000 worshippers when full.

The floor of the courtyard was designed by British artist, Kevin Dean, who created a floral design with lilies, irises and tulips set on multi-coloured marble tiles. Dean also worked on the decoration of four internal arches, the floor and walls of the main prayer hall and the floors of the northern and southern entrances. In the book, *The Moon and the Minaret*,¹ Dean described how he wanted the designs to have a theme to link them together whilst representing Islam as an international faith. He cleverly used flowers from countries in the northern hemisphere in the northern entrance and plants and flowers from the southern hemisphere in the southern entrance. Flowers from the Arab Gulf region were used in the designs in the main prayer hall.

Knowledge Bank: Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque

Overview

- The Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque is located on 5th Street off Sheikh Rashid Bin Saeed Street, opposite Wahat Al Karama in the capital of Abu Dhabi
- It stands at the entrance to Abu Dhabi City and was built nine metres higher than street level so that it could be visible from a distance
- The Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque is the UAE's official mosque
- It is one of the finest examples of modern Islamic architecture worldwide
- It is the UAE's largest mosque and the eighth largest in the world with a capacity for more than 50,000 worshippers (20,000 inside and 30,000+ outside)
- It covers an area of 555,000m²
- The concrete structures were built by Halcrow Ltd., an engineering company based in the United Kingdom
- The mosque is named after the founding father of the UAE and the first president of the union, Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan
- Construction started in 1996 and was completed in 2007 in time for *Eid al-Adha* (The Feast of Sacrifice)

HH Sheikh Zayed

- HH Sheikh Zayed was involved in all aspects of the design and construction of the mosque
- When HH Sheikh Zayed passed away in 2004, his son Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan became President and completed construction
- HH Sheikh Zayed elected to have the mosque constructed in white marble as a symbol of purity and peace
- HH Sheikh Zayed wanted the mosque to be a place of worship as well as a cultural and educational centre to promote communication, cultural understanding and tolerance
- Sheikh Zayed's mausoleum is located beside the north side of the mosque where the live Quran recitation is 24/7 nonstop by 24 reciters (each one will recite for one hour)

Features of the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque

- The mosque features:
 - 82 domes
 - approximately 1,000 columns
 - 24-carat gold plated chandeliers
 - the world's largest hand-knotted carpet

Friday is, of course, the busiest day in the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque when thousands of male and female worshippers gather to listen to the *khut'ba* sermon that takes place before the midday prayers.

The marble

- The outer surfaces of the mosque are covered in flawless SIVEC marble from Macedonia
- The SIVEC marble covers the:
 - domes
 - minarets
 - walls
- The design of the mosque required more than 165,000 m² of SIVEC marble
- The mosque's courtyard (the *Sahan*) is covered with thousands of marble tiles from Italy, India, Greece and China, with more than 30 different types of coloured marble
- In the main prayer hall, Italian marble has been used on the columns and the *Qibla* wall

The courtyard (*Sahan*)

- The *Sahan* or outside courtyard area is unique to grand mosques
- It is an outside space used for worship at important religious times of the year such as *Eid al-Fitr* (The Feast of Breaking the Fast) and *Eid al-Adha* (The Feast of Sacrifice) prayers and during the Holy Month of Ramadan
- The *Sahan* can accommodate up to 31,000 worshippers when full
- British artist, Kevin Dean, created a floral design for the floor of the *Sahan* with flowers such as lilies and irises; the rest of the floor is set with tiny pieces of white marble. Possibly the largest marble mosaic in the world

Exterior columns

- The mosque has more than 1,000 white columns which are decorated in a floral design made from semi-precious stones, and mother-of-pearl at the centre of flowers
- Each piece of marble for the columns was carved and inlaid by hand using the Italian technique called *pietra dura*
- The design of the columns is based on the trunk of the date palm which has historical, cultural and economic importance for Abu Dhabi

Minarets

- The minarets are a significant feature of the mosque and rise over 100 metres from each corner of the courtyard
- Minaret in Arabic is '*Manara*', which means lighthouse or place of enlightenment
- Originally minarets were used for the *mu'athin* to call worshippers to prayer
- There is a library located in one of the minarets; this is the only library in the world inside a minaret
- The *Adhan* (call to prayer) is centrally called in the Mosque and is broadcast to all mosques throughout the main island of Abu Dhabi City

The domes

- The largest dome in the mosque is 84 metres high and 36.2 metres across
- It is located over the centre of the main prayer hall
- The crowns of the domes are in Moghul style and shaped like onions and are covered in white marble
- On top of the largest dome sits a crescent-shaped finial in gold-glass mosaic
- The domes feature arched windows at the bottom to let natural light through
- The insides of the domes are covered in verses from the Holy Quran
- As well as white domes, green glass domes can be found above the separate washing (ablution or *wadu*) facilities for men and women

Reflective pools

- Rectangular blue-tiled reflective pools run around the perimeter of the mosque
- Reflective pools are a traditional feature of Islamic architecture and gardens
- The spectacular lighting of the mosque at night projects the blue colour from the pools onto the white marble of the mosque

Lunar lighting

- The clever lighting system at the mosque was designed by lighting architects, Jonathon Speirs and Major
- There are 22 light towers and each contain ten – 13 projectors
- The lighting mimics the moon's phases; as the moon becomes fuller, the lighting increases in brightness

Internal features of the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque

Iznik tiles

- The mosque features traditional Turkish Iznik tiles
- The tiles are floral in design and are decorated with calligraphy of verses from the Holy Quran
- The calligraphy tiles were designed by Hasan Celebi who is a famous Turkish calligrapher
- Iznik is a town in Bursa Province in the west of Turkey

The foyers

- The foyers of the mosque are the main prayer hall entrances
- The walls and the floors of the foyers were also designed by Kevin Dean, a British artist and designer, to look like gardens
- At the centre of the central foyer (the main foyer) is a large blue crystal chandelier (it is in fact the smallest of seven chandeliers created for the mosque)
- Four blue chandeliers can be found at the entrances of the foyers
- The largest of the blue chandeliers is 4.5m across, 6.5m high and weighs two tonnes located at the central foyer (the main foyer)
- All the mosque's chandeliers were designed by the German lighting designer, Faustig
- They are made from gold-plated (gilded) steel and Italian glass with a total of 40 million Swarovski crystals used in all seven chandeliers
- The central foyer features its own dome. It is one of the largest in the mosque and like the others is decorated on the inside with calligraphy of the verses of the Holy Quran

Glass designs

- The mosque features Italian Murano glass doors throughout to bring light into the inside of the mosque
- The glass doors have a three-paned design. The external clear panes sandwich an intricate floral design in the centre

The main prayer hall

- The main prayer hall can accommodate around 7,800 worshippers
- The hall is mainly used when there are large groups of worshippers during Eid, Ramadan and Friday Sermons
- The prayer hall is symmetrical in design which is a feature of Islamic architecture
- The hall has 96 vertical columns placed in groups of four to support the mosque's structure
- The columns have a vine design which is made out of mother-of-pearl
- At the top of the columns there are gold-coloured palm fronds

Interior walls

- The interior walls of the mosque are covered with patterned Italian marble

Qibla wall

- The main prayer hall has a special wall named the *Qibla* wall
- The *Qibla* wall points towards *Ka'abah*, a building of special significance in the holy city of Makkah, Saudi Arabia, that Muslims face when praying
- The *Qibla* wall is lit and covered in Italian marble, designed in a Fatimid Kufic style featuring flowers with five petals
- The *Qibla* wall calligraphy was designed by Emirati, Mohammed Mandi Al Tamimi
- At the centre of the *Qibla* wall is a large circle with 'Allah' (God Almighty) written inside

The *Mihrab* (niche)

- The *Mihrab* is an important part of a mosque and in the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque is found in the middle of the *Qibla* wall
- The semi-circular *Mihrab* is the place where an Imam (prayer leader) stands to speak to and lead the worshippers into prayer
- The *Mihrab* is traditionally semi-circular in design, and used to help project the Imam's voice so all worshippers could hear him

The *Minbar*

- The *Minbar* is a type of pulpit where the Imam stands to deliver the sermons
- It is one of the earliest Islamic architectural features
- In the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque the *Minbar* can be found on the right of the *Mihrab*
- On Fridays, the Imam addresses worshippers directly from the *Minbar* to deliver the *khut'ba* sermon

The carpet

- Covering the floor of the main prayer hall is a huge and intricately designed Islamic carpet
- The carpet was pronounced as the world's largest hand-knotted carpet by Guinness World Records in 2007
- 1,200 craftspeople hand-knotted and wove the carpet together over 2 years
- The carpet covers the entire floor-area of the main prayer hall
- The wool and cotton carpet is 5,400 m² and weighs 35 tonnes
- The carpet features raised lines to show worshippers where to stand to pray
- The carpet is designed with a traditional Islamic medallion and floral pattern

Chandeliers in the main prayer hall

- The main prayer hall has three identically-designed chandeliers of varying sizes
- The largest chandelier is found in the middle of the hall and is 10m across, 15.5m high and weighs around 12 tonnes
- It is considered to be the largest chandelier in any mosque worldwide
- The design of the chandeliers is based on the date palm tree

Knowledge Bank: Nation Towers

Overview

- Nation Towers is a mixed-use hotel complex located on Abu Dhabi's Corniche
- There are two towers; Tower 1 as a residence has 64 stories, and Tower 2 has the offices and hotel and has 52 stories
- The roof of the base pavilions, represents the image of waves of both sand and water to create a powerful architectural statement.
- The St. Regis Abu Dhabi Hotel is located between the 33rd and 50th floors on Tower 2
- The hotel offers an array of leisure facilities, including the region's first Remède Spa and the Nation Riviera Beach Club, and 11 distinctive food and beverage venues, including a restaurant by the Michelin-starred chef Gary Rhodes.
- The complex is connected to the beach, Nation Riviera Beach Club and pool pavilion across the Corniche by way of a tunnel that passes under the wide waterfront boulevard.
- The pavilion podium has a luxury retail space called Nation Galleria which has different dining options (Middle Eastern, Indian, Mexican), and a cinema and luxury brand outlets.

The sky bridge:

- It connects the towers at a height of 202m which is 30 metres higher than the sky bridge of the Petronas Tower in Malaysia.
- It accommodates the world's highest interconnecting presidential St. Regis Hotel suite which is housed on both 48th and 49th floor.
- The weight of the bridge is over 400 tonnes.



Knowledge Bank: W Abu Dhabi

Overview

- W Abu Dhabi is a five-star hotel and the centrepiece of the Yas Island Marina complex
- The hotel was developed by Aldar Properties
- Construction of the hotel started in 2007 and it opened in November 2009 in time for the Formula 1 Etihad Airways Abu Dhabi Grand Prix of that year
- Abu Dhabi International Airport is a 10-minute drive away. It takes 15 to 20 minutes to drive to the city centre
- The hotel is well-positioned for visitors to access some of the family attractions on Yas Island such as Yas Waterworld, Ferrari World Abu Dhabi, Yas Marina and Yas Mall
- The hotel has 499 guest rooms and 75 suites
- The hotel sits on both sides of the Yas Marina Circuit, Formula 1 Etihad Airways Abu Dhabi Grand Prix racetrack and is linked by a bridge
- It is built half on land, half on water
- In some rooms, visitors can watch a car race from their balcony or relax beachside in the sun
- The hotel features: access to Yas Beach, a grand ballroom, a library, a fitness centre, a luxury spa (ESPA at W Abu Dhabi Abu Dhabi) with steam room and rooftop pools with great views at sunset
- For dining options, the hotel boasts six international restaurants that include Italian, Indian, Middle Eastern, Japanese and Asian cuisine

Architecture and design

- The hotel was designed by Hani Rashid and Lise Anne Couture of Asymptote Architecture, New York who worked with Jestico + Whiles and Richardson Sadeki to create the hotel's design
- W Abu Dhabi is made up of two hotel towers of 12 floors each. One of the towers is actually within the Formula 1 Etihad Airways Abu Dhabi Grand Prix 1 race circuit and the other in Yas Marina
- The hotel towers are linked together by a steel and glass bridge
- The hotel is covered in a unique 'gridshell' structure represents a traditional Emirati fishing net and from a distance this looks like a veil covering the hotel
- The gridshell is made up of a steel and glass covering spanning 219 metres and fitted with 5,096 diamond shaped glass panels
- The glass panels are fitted with LED lighting which produces a beautiful effect at night
- The hotel was designed to represent speed (the racetrack) and traditional Islamic arts and crafts at the same time
- Inside, the hotel's lobby walls are based on a modern version of a traditional Arabic feature called a *mashrabiya*, a type of window which features carved wood latticework and is often inset with stained glass
- The rest of the interior décor is contemporary in design

Knowledge Bank: UAE Currency Museum at the Central Bank

Overview

- The UAE Currency Museum is located on the ground floor of the Central Bank, near Al Bateen Wharf in Abu Dhabi City
- The museum explains the history of currency in the region, including the introduction of the dirham in 1973
- It includes a part of the Central Bank's collections of:
 - currency notes
 - currency coins
 - commemorative coins
 - samples of issues of UAE currency notes
 - currency from other countries
 - cash counting and sorting machines used by the Central Bank in the past
 - gifts
- The museum opened in 2013 to mark 40 years of the UAE Central Bank
- A commemorative coin was released to mark the 40th anniversary of the bank
- Visitors will be able to see old cash-counting machines and cash-sorting machines
- Old note shredders are also on display, which were used to make holes in the security features of recalled notes. These machines could process 100 notes at a time
- The museum has processing machines which could check for authenticity at a rate of eight notes per second
- Visitors to the museum will learn about a time when Abu Dhabi had its own currency, different to that used by Dubai and the northern Emirates
- Collectors can pay tens of thousands of dirhams for pristine examples of first-issue notes
- The first issue AED 1,000 note is the most valuable to collect
- The first notes issued had both Arabic and English lettering, with various Emirates landmarks printed on them, similar to those in circulation today
- The first dirham notes were in denominations of AED 1, 5, 10, 50 and 100. Three years later, the AED 1,000 note was released

Opening hours

9am - 3pm daily

Charges

Free

Tour size

Maximum 15-20 persons (booking in advance is required)

Knowledge Bank: Manarat Al Saadiyat

Overview

- Manarat Al Saadiyat is located on Saadiyat Island
- It consists of a 15,400m² arts and culture centre
- It has three major gallery spaces, a central events gallery, and a 250-seat theatre
- The gallery exhibits art from all over the world
- The centre hosts regular exhibitions and lectures, and the Abu Dhabi Art Fair every November

Opening hours

Open daily from 10am - 8pm except during Ramadan

Charges

Entry is free

Knowledge Bank: Saadiyat Cultural District

Overview

- The Cultural District is located on the upper west area of Saadiyat Island
- The district is an area of Saadiyat Island which has been dedicated to culture and the arts, which aims to draw visitors from across the globe
- The Cultural District has a land area of 2,800,000m²
- The Cultural District comprises key buildings:
 - Louvre Abu Dhabi
 - Zayed National Museum
 - Guggenheim Abu Dhabi
 - UAE Pavilion

The District

- The featured buildings will sit alongside an upscale retail destination called The District, as well as exclusive residences, hotels, and educational facilities
- The District has 550 units featuring luxury and fashion brands, restaurants, galleries and entertainment venues
- The District has four distinct zones:
 - **Luxury Street** – for luxury fashion brands
 - **The Canal Zone** – a boardwalk featuring many restaurants and beverage outlets
 - **High Street** – for flagship fashion brands
 - **The Crescent Arcade** – three levels featuring entertainment venues alongside fashion stores and restaurants

Knowledge Bank: Zayed National Museum

Overview

- The museum site is located on the eastern edge of the Saadiyat Cultural District
- It will be the national museum of the UAE
- The museum will tell the story of Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan al Nahyan and explore the history of the UAE
- It was designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architect, Lord Norman Foster
- The museum site will include a landscaped garden, which will form a key part of the visitors' experience
- Visitors to the museum will learn about the changing culture of the UAE, Sheikh Zayed's love of the natural world, and how Arabic culture and inventions have influenced the rest of the world

Opening hours:

Opening soon - no details on opening hours or cost available yet.

Knowledge Bank: Guggenheim Abu Dhabi

Overview

- The museum will be located on a peninsula at the north-western tip of Saadiyat Island
- The Guggenheim will aim to show the history of art across cultures
- Exhibitions will rotate and explore how art has developed in similar ways over time, in different locations
- Visitors will view a collection from the 1960s to the present day composed of a variety of media, including work that has been specially created for the site
- The building was designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architect, Frank Gehry
- Gehry has stated that the design is “intentionally ‘messy’, moving into clarity.” The cones of the building were inspired by ancient wind-towers ‘barjeel’. These cones help provide the building with ventilation and shade the gardens
- The galleries are connected by a central catwalk, and vary in height and shape. This gives greater flexibility for the building’s curators
- The building will be the largest of the Guggenheim locations
- The site will include a large theatre, capable of seating 350 people, as well as shops, a research centre and a library

Opening hours:

Construction is not yet complete on this site. There is no estimated date of completion.

Knowledge Bank: UAE Pavilion

Overview

- The UAE Pavilion is located next to the Manarat Al Saadiyat building
- The Pavilion was originally designed by Foster and Partners and built for the 2010 Shanghai Expo, which had the theme 'Better Cities, Better Lives'
- At the Shanghai Expo, the building showcased environmentally-friendly projects such as Masdar City, a carbon-neutral, zero-waste community in Abu Dhabi
- The Pavilion had nearly two million visitors while located at the Shanghai Expo and was one of the largest structures on display
- The building design was inspired by the sand dunes that are common across the UAE
- The building is over 20 metres high and has total footprint of 3,452m²
- The building was designed to be easily dismantled to make relocation possible when the Expo ended
- After the Expo ended, the building made a lengthy journey to reach Abu Dhabi
- The components of the building filled over 50 containers, with some of the largest parts being transported as open-sea freight due to their weight of almost 60 tonnes
- The construction of the building in Saadiyat was completed in 2011 when it opened to the public

Berklee Abu Dhabi:

- Berklee Abu Dhabi is located in the newly renovated pavilion.
- It is the first Middle East branch of Berklee College of Music.
- It offers workshops, masterclasses, courses, ensembles, and labs led by world-renowned artists and instructors.
- Live performances from students, alumni and global artists are hosted in the college.
- It accommodates a performance space, a recording studio, rehearsal studios, practice rooms, ensemble rooms and a multimedia tech lab.

Knowledge Bank: Union Square

Overview

- Union Square is located near the Qasr Al Hosn in Abu Dhabi city centre
- It is also known as Etihad Square (sometimes spelt as Al Ittihad Square) or Culture Square
- The area was once considered the heart of the city
- The area also contained the original souk, the city's first bus station and clocktower as well as the Al Fahimi mosque
- There used to be a large cannon sculpture on display in the square, giving it the nickname Cannon Square
- The cannon sculpture was replaced with traditional symbolic monuments as part of recent renovations
- National symbols of Abu Dhabi's traditions and hospitality are displayed here:
 - **coffee pot**, or *dallah*, for hospitality
 - **incense burner**, *mabkhara*, for hospitality
 - **rosewater sprinkler**, *marrash* for hospitality
 - **fort**, for strength and power
 - **food cover made from palm fronds**, *mechabba*, for heritage

Knowledge Bank: Wahat Al Karama

Overview

- The memorial was opened in 30 November 2016
- The memorial is located between the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque and the General Headquarters of the UAE Armed Forces in Abu Dhabi City
- Wahat Al Karama literally means 'the oasis of dignity'
- The site is a memorial which honours all the heroes of the UAE since the country's birth in 1971
- Wahat al Karma comprises five areas:
 - Visitor Centre
 - The Memorial Plaza
 - The Memorial
 - The Pavilion of Honour
- The Memorial itself is composed of 31 huge aluminium-clad tablets, which lean on each other, symbolising the unity, solidarity and mutual support that bind together leadership and citizens with the servicemen and women who protect them
- Visitors can read the Armed Forces Pledge of Allegiance which is engraved on a long spine at The Memorial
- Quotes and poems from various high-profile figures are inscribed on the panels

The Pavilion of Honour

- The Pavilion is an open-air, geometric building which is clad with aluminium plates on its inner wall
- The name, rank, location, and date of death of each of the UAE's heroes is inscribed on the aluminium plates
- The plates are made from reclaimed armoured service vehicles from the UAE Armed Forces
- The roof of the building is constructed from eight slabs. Seven of these slabs symbolise the Emirates of the UAE, with the additional slab symbolising the heroes themselves
- Seven large transparent glass panels represent the seven Emirates and are surrounded by a pool of slowly-moving water

Memorial Plaza

- The Plaza is over 4,000m²
- The Plaza offers clear views of the memorial and neighbouring mosque
- The Plaza includes an amphitheatre which can seat over 1,200 people
- A shallow pool in the centre of the Plaza reflects the neighbouring memorials and provides a place for reflecting the Grand Mosque of Sheikh Zayed, and part of the memorial

Opening hours:

Wahat Al Karama is free to enter. The Visitor Centre is open daily 9am until 10pm. Opening hours can vary during visits from official delegations, national days and special events.

Tours take place daily in Arabic or English at 11am and 5pm.

Knowledge Bank: Zayed Heritage Centre

Overview

- The museum is located in the Al Bateen district
- The museum is dedicated to the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan and includes mementoes of his life
- A photo gallery documents the life of the Sheikh and includes photographs of visiting foreign dignitaries
- Over 200 photographs are on display, the earliest is from the late 1950s
- Visitors can see some personal belongings of the Sheikh, learn about his favourite hobbies and view the extravagant gifts he received from all over the world
- A highlight of the museum is a collection of the Sheikh's favourite cars
- The photograph collection includes private photos, such as rarely seen pictures of the Sheikh's funeral. Visitors can see the images of the late Ruler wrapped in the national flag while carried to his resting place
- Visitors can pose and take photographs with one of the Sheikh's hunting rifles
- A solid gold and granite mantel clock is on display in the museum
- As a mark of respect, visitors should wear appropriate and respectful clothing and refrain from using offensive language
- One room features a wall detailing the history of the Abu Dhabi Company for Onshore Petroleum Operations Ltd
- The Emirates Post room contains a collection of stamps spanning decades and from across the Emirates. The collection includes a portrait of Sheikh Zayed made from postage stamps
- The Abu Dhabi Police room includes displays of the uniforms and tools used throughout the years by the local police force

Opening hours:

The museum is open from Sunday to Thursday - 8am to 3pm. It is closed on Fridays and Saturdays.

Tours

Guided tours in English and Arabic are available with advance bookings.

Knowledge Bank: Abu Dhabi Corniche

Overview

- The Corniche is an 8km pedestrianised walk- and cycle-way than runs alongside Corniche Road (which is also known as 1st Street)
- The Corniche is one of the best-known areas in Abu Dhabi City and is popular with residents and tourists
- In the 1960s, the Corniche was developed after the discovery of oil
- Big hotels such as The Sheraton Hotel and Resort, Al Ain Palace Hotel and the Hilton Abu Dhabi were built for the new influx of business people into Abu Dhabi
- The current footpath and cycleway were built on reclaimed land between 2003 and 2004
- Before 2003, the buildings along the Corniche used to sit at the edge of the Arabian Gulf
- These days the Corniche features children's play areas, separate cycle and pedestrian pathways, cafés and restaurants, and the Corniche beach – a Blue Flag, family-friendly beach park with lifeguards
- The Corniche is also a site used for UAE National Day celebrations when the walkway fills up with thousands of people, parades, entertainers, concerts and fireworks
- The Corniche also hosts the F1 FanZone™. This event takes place at the same time as the Abu Dhabi Formula 1 Grand Prix in November. Giant TV screens show the race live for the public
- The Corniche also hosts after-race concerts and creative workshops to make the most out of the Grand Prix event

Eating out

- There are lots of fast food options in the crescent of outlets by the public Corniche beach
- The Khalidiyah area at the west of the Corniche is a popular place to eat. Restaurants and cafés are open until 4am on Thursday and Friday nights
- Visitors and residents often picnic in the public parks found along the length of the Corniche

Shopping

- Nation Galleria shopping mall, located on the west of the Corniche, has a good range of designer shops and an organic supermarket
- Other shopping malls located near the Corniche include Marina Mall, Khalidiyah Mall, World Trade Centre Souk and Mall and Abu Dhabi Mall
- Popular supermarkets in the west Corniche area include Spinneys and Abela

Transport

- There is a large car park by the Nation Towers skyscrapers on the southern end of the Corniche with free and paid parking spots and an underpass to access the beach
- Cycling along the Corniche is a great way to see the views
- There is a dedicated cycleway and plenty of spots to hire bikes with the main place near to the Hiltonia Beach Club at the west end of the Corniche

Knowledge Bank: Emirates Park Zoo and Resort

Overview

- Emirates Park Zoo and Resort is located in Al-Bahia, a north-east suburb, approximately 35kms from Abu Dhabi City
- The zoo opened in 2008 and was the first private zoo in the UAE
- The entire zoo is kept cool with a misting system for visitors and animals alike
- As well as animals, the zoo has a resident band from Ghana who drum and play African music to get visitors in the mood to enjoy their experience
- The zoo is currently undergoing a major upgrade with additions such as:
 - zip lines and tree top activities
 - an indoor marine zone with 26 salt-water and four fresh-water tanks
 - playgrounds and gaming zones
 - international fast food chains

Animals

- The zoo currently houses 1,700 animals in several different zones:
 - **Petting zoo** – for visitors to pet and feed camels, ostriches, sheep and goats
 - **Bird Park** – featuring owls, Harris hawks, falcons, eagles, peacocks and parrots
 - **Snake Alley**
 - **Flamingo Park**
 - **Giraffe Park**
 - **Wildlife Park** – with elephants, cheetahs, bears, crocodiles, lions, leopards, gazelle, Arabian oryx and tigers including a pair of rare white tigers
 - **Reptile House** - featuring lizards, pythons, geckos, water dragons and tortoises
 - **Primate Parade** – with a variety of monkeys and baboons
 - **The Aquarium** – with hundreds of magnificent and colourful fish, sharks, damselfish and stingrays
 - **Predators and Wild Animals enclosures** – housing lions, cheetahs and dozens of zebras
 - **Animal theatre** – the park features a large animal theatre where the staff educate visitors about the species there
 - **Sea Lion shows** – there is also a sea lion show where the three residents provide daily entertainment by juggling, breakdancing and standing on their flippers!

Emirates Park Resort

- The Emirates Park Resort is connected to the zoo
- It has 68 air-conditioned rooms and four suites
- It is a traditional Arabic-designed resort suitable for families
- All accommodation options have balconies overlooking the zoo, cave or garden

Zoo opening hours

Sunday – Wednesday: 9am-8pm

Thursday – Saturday: 9am-9pm

Knowledge Bank: Ferrari World

Overview

- Ferrari World is located on Yas Island
- It was developed over three years from 2007 – 2010 and covers an area of 86,000m²
- It is the world's first Ferrari-branded theme park and is open 365 days a year
- The theme park features rides, attractions, live shows and experiences all inspired by Ferrari
- Visitors can find the world's biggest Ferrari store inside the park
- The Ferrari logo on the roof, the largest ever created, measures an incredible 65m in length and covers an area of 3,000m²

Experiences, rides attractions and shows

Roller-coasters

Name	Opened	Details
Turbo Track	2017	The latest ride for thrill-seekers! Back-to-back seats and back-to-back thrills. It takes riders up a vertical climb and releases them at the top for an amazing zero-gravity fall
Flying Aces	2016	This white-knuckle ride was inspired by Count Francesco Baracca, the 'ace of aces' aviator. Riders enter a military biplane and rise up 63 metres at a 51-degree incline. Riders hit speeds of up to 120 kilometres per hour and get to experience the world's highest roller-coaster loop
Fiorano GT Challenge	2010	Riders race each other on a circuit of parallel tracks in a replica of a Ferrari F430 Spider. The circuit is full of twists and turns and riders will reach speeds of up to 95km/h
Formula Rossa	2010	Riders travel from 0 to 240km/h in less than five seconds in the world's fastest roller-coaster!

Other rides

Name	Type	Details
Karting Academy	Go-karts	A 290-metre-long competitive track inspired by the Yas Marina Circuit
Scuderia Challenge	Interactive motion simulator	Participants race a variety of Ferraris, solo or in a group, on the virtual Yas Marina Circuit and try to achieve the best lap time
Tyre Twist	Teacup ride	Participants sit inside a giant tyre styled like a F1 tyre and twist around and around at speed like a traditional teacup ride
Viaggio in Italia	Flight simulator	Participants enter a flight simulator to fly over an Italian landscape inspired by the legendary open-road endurance race Mille Miglia

Knowledge Bank: Marina Eye

Overview

- The Marina Eye is located in front of Marina Mall in the Al Marina area of Abu Dhabi City
- It is a large Ferris wheel with 42 capsules, including special VIP capsules
- The wheel opened to the public in 2015
- The wheel is 60 metres high
- A ride on the wheel takes five minutes
- Visitors can see the Corniche and the Abu Dhabi skyline and a great view of the Emirates Palace Hotel
- The views are particularly spectacular at night when Abu Dhabi City and the wheel itself are lit up

The capsules

- The wheel has 42 air-conditioned and heated capsules with wireless communication and panic alarm system
- Visitors can ride the wheel day or night, summer or winter, as there is climate control

The VIP capsule

- VIP capsules are equipped with:
 - glass floor
 - leather interior
 - DVD player
 - tinted windows
 - cup holder
 - refrigerator

Opening hours:

Open seven days a week

Thursday to Saturday from 11am - 1am

Sunday to Wednesday from 11am - 11pm

Charges

The price of a ride is AED 50 and AED 30 for children under 12

Knowledge Bank: Yas Marina Circuit

Overview

- Yas Marina Circuit is located on the Yas Marina site in the heart of Yas Island
- Circuit Length: 5.554kms
- Race Distance: 305.470 km
- Number of Laps: 55
- Lap Record: 1:40.279, set by Sebastian Vettel in 2009
- Circuit Turns: 21
- Circuit Direction: counter-clockwise
- Stadium Capacity: 60,000

DRIVER/PASSENGER EXPERIENCES

- Yas Marina Circuit offers a number of unforgettable driver and passenger experiences in a choice of cars including an Aston Martin GT4, Caterham Seven, Formula Yas 3000 and Ferrari 458 GT.
- Before jumping into the vehicle, drivers receive a technical briefing from a racing coach. They then get into the driver's seat, learn the correct racing line and practice handling the complex turns of the circuit. The Passenger experience consists of being driven by an expert Yas Racing School professional racing driver, so you can relax and enjoy the ultimate in driving excellence.

YAS KARTZONE POWERED BY ADNOC

Boasting a 1km track, with three separate configurations, Yas Kartzone powered by ADNOC is the perfect place to visit for a high-energy, fun session behind the wheel as guests compete against friends and family to see who will cross the finish line first. The venue is also available to host birthday parties, group and corporate events.

YAS IN SCHOOLS

Yas in Schools presented by ADNOC, aims to inspire and develop "The Engineers of the Future" by ensuring they are equipped with 21st Century skills and developing their passion for STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) subjects.

Working together in small enterprising teams, students design, innovate, manufacture, test and race small-scale model cars to take part in competitions.

The challenge provides a platform for youngsters to learn new skills, get creative and develop both individually and as part of a team.

HEALTH AND FITNESS

Yas Marina Circuit is the living, beating heart of health and fitness within Abu Dhabi. Over 200,000 people visit Yas Marina Circuit each year to walk, cycle, run, swim and generally keep fit and healthy. With weekly mixed gender and female-only programmes, as well as annual events to keep people motivated to live a healthy lifestyle, it serves as a meeting place for families, friends, fans of motorsport and athletes alike throughout the year.

ComYAS Programmes include:

ADNOC TrainYas Ladies presented by Abu Dhabi Sports Council

ADNOC TrainYas Ladies presented by Abu Dhabi Sports Council, which takes place at Yas Marina Circuit every Monday, is an initiative for ladies to engage in fun and healthy fitness activities on the world-famous Formula 1 track. All fitness levels are welcome, regardless of whether you want to do an intense workout or simply take a leisurely stroll.

ADNOC TrainYAS presented by Abu Dhabi Sports Council

Taking place on Sunday and Tuesday evenings, ADNOC TrainYAS presented by Abu Dhabi Sports Council gives members of the local community an opportunity to run, walk or cycle on the Formula 1 track. Males and females of all ages and fitness levels are invited to come along and work on their personal fitness goals in unique surroundings.

Train AM by Abu Dhabi Cycling Club

TrainAM by Abu Dhabi Cycling Club is a platform for cyclists who are up at the crack of dawn, and open to all cyclists who are members of Abu Dhabi Cycling Club.

TriYAS

ADNOC TriYAS presented by Abu Dhabi Sports Council is a community triathlon held annually at Yas Marina Circuit. The 2020 event was the 10th instalment and saw the highest number of Emirati competitors to date.

ESPORTS

In 2020, Abu Dhabi Motorsports Management, in conjunction with Gfinity, launched YAS HEAT, its very own esports racing team.

The team, made up of top-tier talent from around the world and UAE esports racing stars of the future, compete in a number of virtual racing competitions, including the V 10 R-League, where they go up against motorsport powerhouses such as BMW, McLaren and Red Bull Racing.

The YAS HEAT Academy, meanwhile, provides a platform for aspiring esports racing talent from the MENA region to hone and develop their skills with the long-term aim of competing in global competitions for the team.

Charges

Visitors should check the website for the most up-to-date charges for all activities and experiences at Yas Marina Circuit:

<https://www.yasmarinacircuit.com/en/experiences/?tab=openyas>

Knowledge Bank: Yas Waterworld

Overview

- Yas Waterworld is located on Yas Island to the west of Ferrari World Abu Dhabi
- Yas Waterworld is a water park that covers an area the size of approximately 15 football pitches
- It opened in 2013
- The park draws on Abu Dhabi's heritage and has 'The Legend of the Lost Pearl' as its theme
- Visitors follow the story of a young Emirati girl, Dana, on a mission to find a legendary pearl as they make their way around the attractions
- As well as the water rides, there is a souq and exhibitions about pearl-diving

Rides and attractions

- The park features 45 rides, slides and attractions – five of which are one-of-a-kind
- The rides are categorised within four 'thrill' levels
- **Shaheen's Adrenaline Rush** rides include:
 - **Rush Rider** – a flowboarding ride
 - **Dawwama** - A 20-metre high funnel with six people in a raft. The world's first and largest hydromagnetic-powered waterslide at over 235 metres long!
 - **Falcon's Falaj** - A six-person water coaster ride
 - **Bubbles' Barrel** – the world's largest surfable sheet of water with three-metre high waves for flowboards and bodyboards
 - **Jebel Drop** - a free fall speed slide
- **Sultan's Young Fun**, featuring:
 - Family pool play areas
- **Dhabi's Exciting Adventure**, featuring:
 - **Bandit Bomber** - an interactive 550-metre water rollercoaster with on-board water and laser effects, another world first!
 - Water slides
 - Fast-flowing wave river ride called Yadi Yas
- **Hamlool's Moving & Grooving** featuring:
 - Lazy river family ride
 - Wave pool
 - Dedicated spray cannon and water balloon areas

Dining

- Options include:
 - Salma's Snack Shack for juices and smoothies
 - Ice cream venues
 - Dana's Diner for quick eats
 - Chubby's kitchen for a sit down meal
 - Al Wa'Ha Cabanas for VIP service in two sizes for four or six guests

Opening hours

- November to March: 10am - 6pm
- April to May: 10am - 7pm*
- June to August: 10am - 8pm*
- September to October: 10am - 7pm
- Every Thursday from 9th March: 10am - 5pm and to reopen from 6pm - 11pm for Ladies' Night*

*Whole period of Ramadan: 10am - 6pm. No Ladies Night on Thursdays

Knowledge Bank: Warner Bros. World Abu Dhabi

- Warner Bros. World Abu Dhabi is the world's first ever Warner Bros. branded indoor theme park.
- The park brings to life fan-favorite DC Super Heroes like Batman, Superman and Wonder Woman, alongside beloved Animation characters from Looney Tunes and Hanna-Barbera like Tom and Jerry, Bugs Bunny, Scooby-Doo and The Flintstones, all under one roof for the first time in the region.
- World Abu Dhabi, guests are transported to six immersive lands, including Warner Bros. Plaza, DC Entertainment's Metropolis and Gotham City, as well as Warner Bros. Animation's Cartoon Junction, Bedrock, and Dynamite Gulch.
- The Park features a total of 29 state-of-the-art exhilarating rides, interactive family-friendly attractions and unique live entertainment

Opening hours are subject to change, please keep an eye for updates.

www.wbworldabudhabi.com

Knowledge Bank: CLYMB™ Abu Dhabi

- CLYMB™ Abu Dhabi is the world's ultimate adventure hub offering world-class skydiving and climbing experiences.
- CLYMB Abu Dhabi houses two record-breaking attractions; the Indoor Skydiving Flight Chamber and the indoor climbing wall The SUMMYT.
- CLYMB Abu Dhabi houses the World's Largest Indoor Skydiving Flight Chamber at 10 meters (32 feet) in width and 32 meters (104 feet) in height.
- CLYMB Abu Dhabi is home to the region's tallest indoor climbing wall at 42 meters (138 feet).

Opening hours are subject to change, please keep an eye for updates.

www.clymbabudhabi.com

Knowledge Bank: Al Wathba Wetland Reserve

Overview

- Al Wathba Wetland Reserve is located 40km south east of Abu Dhabi City, between Musaffah, and the Abu Dhabi-Al Ain Truck Road
- The total area of the reserve is relatively small at five square kilometres
- The reserve was established in 1998 by the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan
- It opened for the first time to the public in 2014
- It is a series of shallow natural and manmade lakes and wetlands, sand flats (*sabkhas*) and dunes
- It was the first site in Abu Dhabi to be protected by law and was declared a Ramsar site (a wetland site of international importance) in 2013

Vegetation and wildlife at the reserve

- The reserve is the home and stop-off point for over 250 species of birds as well as dragonflies and damselflies
- There are 37 plant species and vast array of aquatic life
- Over 4,000 migratory flamingos stay at the reserve from autumn until spring each year
- There is a resident flamingo population at the reserve all year when the majority of the migratory birds fly home to South East Asia for the summer
- 231 flamingo chicks were hatched at the Al Wathba reserve in 2013
- The chicks are born a grey colour and only turn pink when they turn two years old!
- Other bird life includes eagles and the endangered sociable lapwing
- Other species found at the reserve are the black-winged stilt, the spiny-tailed lizard, white desert gerbils, hedgehogs, hares and foxes among others

Activities for visitors

- The reserve features a bird hide (a wooden hut with a long, narrow opening) for viewing the wetland birds close up
- There are two self-guided walking trails, one is 1.5km and a longer one of 3km which run close to the flamingo colonies
- Both walking trails have helpful and informative signage

Opening times and prices

- The reserve is closed from May until October due to the breeding season
- Visitors can usually start to access the reserve again by mid-October
- Opening times are Thursdays and Saturdays from 8am - 2pm
- It is free to enter the reserve and the tours are also free although visitors should book in advance
- Long sleeved light tops and long trousers with a hat or head covering are comfortable and practical for exploring the reserve

Visitor information

- The reserve has a Visitor Experience Centre where visitors can watch a short film about the reserve and its importance
- The reserve has recently added visitor toilets and parking
- The reserve encourages visitors to pre-book tours by appointment in order to minimise impact on the reserve and preserve the vegetation there

Knowledge Bank: Mangrove National Park

Overview

- Mangrove National Park is located just outside Abu Dhabi City centre on Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Street, near the Anantara Hotel
- It is a dense mangrove forest stretching more than 19km²
- Abu Dhabi's coastal areas are lined with approximately 70km² of mangrove forests which makes up almost 75% of the total mangrove forest area in the UAE
- Mangrove is strong shrub or tree that grows in salt water and has adapted to living in severe coastal conditions
- In Arabic, mangrove is known as *qurm*
- The Mangrove National Park is protected by the Environment Agency Abu Dhabi (EAD) by government order
- It is hailed as one of Abu Dhabi's most important ecological features
- As well as mangrove forests, the park has salt marshes, mudflats and a variety of important algae populations
- Visitors can see hundreds of bird, plant and other species in and around Mangrove National Park
- There are currently more than 60 species of birds feeding and nesting along with fish, shellfish and crabs
- The park also provides a protected sanctuary for turtles, dugongs and dolphins
- Visitors who love nature or the outdoors and want a break from the hustle of Abu Dhabi City will enjoy spending time here

Approved environmentally-friendly tours

If visitors wish to explore the mangroves by kayak or boat, they must use an approved, environmentally-friendly tour operator. A list of these can be found on the Environment Agency Abu Dhabi's webpage:

<https://www.ead.gov.ae/en/experience-green-abu-dhabi/places-to-go/mangrove-national-park>

Knowledge Bank: Masdar City Project

Overview

- Masdar City is located 17km south east of the city of Abu Dhabi, beside Abu Dhabi International Airport
- The Masdar City project is led by Masdar, a subsidiary of the Mubadala Development Company
- The project is funded by the Government of Abu Dhabi
- Masdar City is Abu Dhabi's 'city of the future' and aims to become the world's most sustainable eco-city
- The city project was initiated in 2006 and construction started in 2008
- Six buildings were completed and occupied by 2010
- The city project aims to be completed by 2030
- Masdar City is a model for an environmentally-friendly mixed-use urban environment
- The City will show how areas can urbanise and still reduce energy, water and waste. This is called its 'greenprint'
- The city project will be set around the Masdar Institute of Science and Technology, one of the first buildings completed
- The Masdar Institute of Science and Technology is a graduate research university working solely on energy and sustainability solutions
- All businesses within Masdar City will have to focus on protecting the environment
- The city will eventually accommodate 40,000 residents and 50,000 commuters
- Masdar City manages the Zayed Future Energy Prize
- The Prize is an annual award to recognise excellence in renewable energy and sustainability.
- The award was launched in 2008 and established by the United Arab Emirates leadership
- The prize represents the vision of the Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan al Nahyan, who supported environmental, social and economic sustainability as an important part of the heritage of the UAE

Architecture and green design

- Masdar City was designed by the British architectural firm Foster and Partners
- Each building in Masdar City is constructed with low-carbon cement, utilises aluminium that is 90% drawn from recycled sources, and is designed to reduce energy and water consumption by at least 40%
- The design was of a car-free environment with Personal Rapid Transport (PRT) pods to run along dedicated tracks - small, unmanned cars to transport residents, workers and visitors around the city. Due to cost, the PRT pods were restricted to the original pilot scheme and plans now include the use of electric, driverless vehicles
- The architecture is a combination of modern technology and ancient Arabic architectural techniques
- The building that houses the Middle East headquarters of Siemens has a vertical wind tunnel that distributes a cooling breeze to surrounding streets
- The city creates clean solar energy from the sun with rooftop solar panels and a solar farm on the edge of the city which is one of the largest in the Middle East
- Masdar Park is an outdoor dining destination with cafés and restaurants housed inside recycled shipping containers powered by solar panels as well as a children's playground, music wall, sports facilities and design installations themed on sustainability.

Businesses in Masdar City

- **The current business tenants in Masdar City include:**
 - Masdar Institute of Science and Technology (part of the Khalifa University of Science & Technology)
 - Siemens
 - The headquarters of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA)
 - General Electric
 - Mitsubishi
 - Schneider Electric
 - The Global Green Growth Institute
 - General Electric Ecomagination Centre
- Construction is well underway on the new Masdar Institute Neighbourhood, a major mixed-use development of offices, residential, retail and public open space
- This will provide Masdar City with more than 100,000m² of new development and is due to be completed in 2020
- Restaurants, cafes and supermarkets inside Masdar City include:
 - Barbacoa Mexican Cuisine
 - Café Il Di Roma
 - Caribou Café
 - Jim's Kitchen Table
 - Osha Gourmet Emirati Cuisine
 - Sumo Japanese Cuisine
 - F-Mart Supermarket

Opening hours

- Masdar City is open to visitors from Sunday - Thursday from 8.30am - 4.30pm

Charges

- Admission to Masdar City is free

Knowledge Bank: Abu Dhabi City Golf Club

Overview

- Abu Dhabi City Golf Club is located in the Al Mushrif area on Mussafah Road in the heart of Abu Dhabi city
- It is Abu Dhabi's first nine-hole facility and known as 'The People's Golf Course'
- It was an 18-hole sand course for 22 years before it became Abu Dhabi's first grass course
- The grass course was designed in 1988 by British golf course designer, Ian Scott Taylor
- The course consists of a single, par 70, nine-hole golf course with water hazards at over half the holes
- A total of 6,307 yards for men and 5,403 yards for ladies
- Holes 7-9 are known as 'Amen Corner' by locals as they are so difficult to play
- The golf club caters for events, banquets and weddings
- Golfers can enjoy:
 - a clubhouse with 19th Street bar and restaurant
 - a 'pavilion' terrace with daily barbecue from 5pm
 - a Japanese sushi restaurant
 - a Korean restaurant
 - a golf academy featuring the only two-tiered driving range in Abu Dhabi and junior golf academy
 - three floodlit tennis courts
 - an outdoor pool with Jacuzzi and a pool bar
 - a gym
 - a sauna
 - a floodlit course for after dark golfing
 - GPS-equipped golf carts
 - a locker room

Opening hours

- Tee times/golf course are from 6am – 8.30pm (8.30 is the last tee time for nine holes)
- Last tee time for 18 holes is 6.30pm

Charges

- For the most up-to-date green fees check the website:

<http://adcitygolf.com/golf-information/green-fees/>

Knowledge Bank: Abu Dhabi Golf Club

Overview

- Abu Dhabi Golf Club is located just opposite Al Forsan International Sports Resort off the Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Street (E10)
- The club is a 15-minute drive from the city centre and 10 minutes from Abu Dhabi International Airport
- The club opened in October 2006 although preparation started in 1992
- The club is one of the most luxurious golf resort experiences in the Middle East and described as a 'super course' by the golfing media
- It is managed by Troon Golf, a famous international golf-resort management organisation
- The golf club has two golf courses:
 - Par 72, championship, 18-hole championship course with 90 challenging bunkers and seven lakes
 - Par 36, nine-hole garden course which is fully floodlit for night golf
- Both courses were designed by Peter Harradine, a world-class golf-course architect
- Golfers can enjoy:
 - luxurious Falcon Clubhouse built in the shape of a falcon on top of a golf ball
 - restaurant
 - swimming pool
 - pro shop
 - driving range
 - putting green
 - golf clubs, trolleys and buggies for hire
 - locker room

Events

- Abu Dhabi Golf Club is home to the European Tour Abu Dhabi HSBC Championship, a European PGA Tour event

Acclaim and awards

- AGM Platinum Award in 2016
- Winner of the 'Best Course in the Middle East' at the Asia Pacific Golf Summit in 2013

Opening hours

- The club is open daily from 6am –11.30pm

Charges

- The club has a 'dynamic' pricing structure which means fees go up and down according to time of the day, week and year. Visitors should check prices on the online booking system on the website.

Knowledge Bank: Saadiyat Beach Golf Club

Overview

- Saadiyat Beach Golf Club is located just off the Sheikh Khalifa Highway (E12) on Saadiyat Island
- It is situated next to Saadiyat Beach, Park Hyatt Abu Dhabi Hotel and Villas, and St. Regis Saadiyat Island Resort
- It opened in 2010 and is the region's first ocean golf course
- The course was designed by Gary Player, the world-famous golf course architect and player
- The course consists of a single par 72, 18-hole golf course
- On-course hazards include 60 bunkers, salt water lakes and sand dunes
- Golfers can enjoy:
 - Luxurious clubhouse with terrace
 - A putting green
 - Golf clubs, trolleys and buggies for hire
 - A locker room
 - A restaurant and bar

Environmental design

- The course has been designed to strict environmental guidelines in order to minimise impact on the natural environment
- The course makes the most of its surroundings and golfers may get the opportunity to see:
 - strolling mountain gazelles
 - dolphins
 - protected Hawksbill turtles

Events

- The golf course hosts two new professional golfing events:
 - The Fatima Bint Mubarak Ladies Open
 - Saadiyat Beach Classic is a celebrity Pro-Am, involving both professionals and amateurs, held after the Abu Dhabi Championship

Opening hours

- The practice range is open daily from 7am to 8.30pm
- The golf club is open daily from 7am to midnight

Charges

- The club has a 'dynamic' pricing structure which means fees go up and down according to time of the day, week and year.

Knowledge Bank: Yas Links Golf Club

Overview

- Par 72 Championship Links Course
- 112 Bunkers
- 300,000 m3 of capped sand
- 1.8 million m3 of Dredged material
- 8 holes play along the coastline, with every hole offering a view of the coastline
- Undulations vary from +1m - + 8m above sea level
- Wall to wall “Paspalum Platinum” grass
- Championship Tees – 7,414 yards
- 18 Hole Championship Course
- 9 Hole Floodlit Par 3 Academy Course
- Floodlit Practice Area
- Spacious Golf Academy with 6 covered hitting bays and 2 indoor swing studios, accompanied by the latest golf instructional instruments including Toptracer Range – Ball tracking technology with 6 in bay screens
- Andalucía style clubhouse
- Lobby reception area
- Golf Shop
- Locker Rooms
- Infinity Swimming Pool
- Spacious Events Lawn
- Anahata For Him – Men’s Spa
- Gymnasium

Awards and acclaim

- 2020 World Golf Awards: United Arab Emirates’s Best Golf Course 2020 and Abu Dhabi’s Best Golf Course
- Ranked 9th in Leading Courses Golf Choice Awards 2020
- 2019 winner – 48th Best Golf Course in the World
- 2018 winner – 44th Best Golf Course in the world
- 2018 winner - 70th Top Golf Course in the World, Golf World
- 2016 winner - Best Golf Course in The Middle East, Asian Golf Monthly
- 2016 winner - Best Golf Course in The Middle East, Golf Digest 2016
- 2014 winner - Middle East Golf Awards – Best Overall Experience (Players Choice)
- 2014 winner - Middle East Golf Awards – General Manager of the Year 2014
- 2013 winner - Voted number 1 Golf Course in the Middle East, Golf Digest
- 2013 winner - Golf Course of the Year (Middle East) Above AED 400, Middle East Golf Awards
- 2013 winner - 2nd best destination to visit in Abu Dhabi, Trip Advisor
- 2011 winner - Best Golf Course, Middle East Golfer Awards
- Ranked 95 in Golf World’s Top 100 Courses 2011
- 2012 winner - Ranked 24th World’s Best Courses Outside of America - Golf Digest USA – 2012 (there are over 30,000 golf courses in the world)

- Best Sporting Club and Best Bar in Abu Dhabi – Ahlan 2012
- 2012 winner - Middle East Sports Talk Golf Awards – Best Course, Best Club, General Manager of the year 2012

Opening hours

- Golf Course – 6:00 am until sunset
- Golf Shop – 5:30 am to 9:30 daily
- Hickory's – 6:30 am – 12:00 am (Midnight)
- Element Fitness – Saturday – Thursday 7:00 am – 10:00 pm / Friday: 9:00 am – 5:00 pm
- Toptracer - Sun-Thurs 5:00 pm – 9:00 pm/ Friday and Sat 10:00 am – 9:00 pm

Knowledge Bank: Yas Kartzone

Overview

- Yas Kartzone is located near Gate 20 of the Yas Marina Circuit on Yas Island
- The track is 800m long with lots of dramatic twists and turns
- The karts available include Cadet Karts for drivers aged eight to 12 and Senior Karts of eight horsepower for drivers over 13
- There are separate adult karting sessions for drivers over 18
- Yas Kartzone has an 'Arrive and Drive' option for visitors to turn up and drive and options for groups of 15 or more that can be booked in advance
- Children's karting sessions are 10 minutes long
- Adult drivers have up to 15 minutes' race time
- After the race, drivers can see their results on a television screen at the track's reception area
- Drivers are also sent an SMS message to tell them how well they have done in comparison to other drivers and the best times of the week and month

Kartzone rules

- Drivers must wear sneakers or trainers. No high heels or sandals should be worn
- Drivers must sign in and change into racing gear and receive a briefing before driving a kart
- Drivers under 17 years of age must attend the briefing with an adult. The adult will sign a disclaimer for the driver under 17
- Drivers must be over eight years old and over 1.3 metres tall
- For Arrive and Drive drivers, karts are subject to availability

Opening hours

- Arrive and Drive sessions are daily from 2pm - 9.30pm

Charges

- Prices for karting will be subject to change. Check the website for the most up-to-date prices:

<https://www.yasmarinacircuit.com/en/kart>

Knowledge Bank: Al Forsan International Sports Resort

Overview

- Al Forsan International Sports Resort is located in Khalifa City, a 10-minute drive from the Abu Dhabi International airport
- The resort is the first in the Gulf to offer both Olympic disciplines and clay pigeon shooting along with shooting ranges

Outdoor facilities

Sporting clays

- 18 sporting clay ranges each with four different traps, for shooters of all levels
- Four luxury air-conditioned pavilions and a veranda on five levels to shoot from
- Three Olympic or double trap fields with voice control to release the clays for advanced shooters
- Three Auto Ball Trap ranges with voice control to release the clays; particularly suitable for beginners
- Six skeet fields built to the high standards demanded by the International Shooting Sports Federation (ISSF)
- Shotgun rental with a good range of high-calibre firearms

Archery

- 10 lanes are available for archers to fire from 5m to 60m
- High-quality equipment is available to hire including recurve bows
- Archers are supplied with safety and protective equipment such as tabs, arm guards and releases

Indoor facilities

Handgun ranges

- 25m and 50m indoor ranges are available to shoot handguns
- Each of the ranges has 10 lanes
- The ranges cater for those who have Olympic-standard shooting experience through to providing an enjoyable entry-level experience for visitors
- Shooters can also use the ranges for shooting small-calibre handguns such as a Glock, Sig Sauer or Beretta Pistol

Rifle ranges

- There is a 300m rifle range featuring LOMAH systems (Location of Miss and Hit)
- The LOMAH system tracks all shots and display them on monitors

Laser simulators

- Al Forsan has two indoor laser simulators
- The simulators are designed to practise the art of shooting for all ages

Resort requirements

- Visitors wishing to shoot at the resort must bring the following documents:
 - Valid identification document
 - Driver's licence
 - Original passport or passport copy
- Shooters under the age of 18 must provide:
 - Parent or legal guardian's identification
 - Personal identification
 - Disclaimer signed by the parent or guardian who supplied the identification document

Opening hours

Daily from 2pm - 11pm

Knowledge Bank: Caracal Shooting Club

Overview

- Located in the grounds of the Armed Forces Officers Club in the Al Maqta area of Abu Dhabi City
- Caracal is the first commercial shooting club in Abu Dhabi
- It has been open to the public since 2008
- The facility features state-of-the-art equipment and, at the same time, revives the Islamic art of shooting and marksmanship
- The club features indoor and outdoor lounge areas and a coffee shop
- One-hour, one-to-one lessons are available for beginners and experienced shooters

Indoor facilities

- The club offers a 25m range with:
 - an overhead retractable target system
 - shooting distances from 10m, 15m, 20m and 25m
 - adjustable target zones for increased accuracy
 - rotating targets
 - a variety of paper target models
 - an electronic target system with hits instantly displayed on a monitor at the shooting line
- Other indoor facilities available at the club:
 - Gymnasium
 - Cardiovascular machines
 - 50m indoor pool
 - Squash courts
 - Aerobic hall
 - Bowling
 - Billiards and snooker
 - Table tennis
 - Indoor multi-purpose hall (basketball, football, volleyball and tennis)

Outdoor facilities available at the club:

- Three football courts
- Four tennis courts
- Paintball field
- An all-terrain motor vehicle circuit
- Cage football

Club requirements

- All beginners receive a gun safety briefing and advice on the basics of marksmanship by club staff before they are allowed to shoot
- Visitors wishing to shoot at the resort must bring one of the following identification documents:
 - Driver's licence
 - Original passport or passport copy

Opening hours

- Saturday to Thursday: 12pm - 9.30pm
- Friday: 2pm - 9.30pm

Knowledge Bank: Abu Dhabi Pearl Journey

Overview

- The Abu Dhabi Pearl Journey is located at the Eastern Mangroves Hotel & Spa
- It is the first cultural and tourism product of its kind in Abu Dhabi
- A unique 'edutainment' (education + entertainment) experience gives visitors information on the history of the pearling industry in the Arabian Gulf
- Each tour takes approximately one hour, however if the boat is full it will take around 90 minutes
- Every guest will go away with a pearl they have discovered themselves. Everyone gets the chance to search for a pearl in oysters that are opened for them by the team
- Refreshments of water, Arabic coffee and dates are offered to all guests
- Guests will sail across the water on a traditional '*jalboot*' that was used for pearl-diving in the Arabian Gulf region
- Avid bird watchers may spot herons, gulls and, if they are lucky, flamingos during the tour
- Dolphins have been known to join the tour and swim alongside the boat
- During the tour, guests sit on the deck of the *jalboot* on traditional Arabian floor cushions
- Guests will learn about the traditional songs sung by the divers on board the *jalboots*
- The tour is accompanied by a soundtrack of *hoyamal* music
- The industry used to be very competitive, with divers occasionally swallowing their best finds to keep them safe!
- The *jalboot* can take a maximum of 10-15 guests per tour

What is included in a tour

- Arabian hospitality - water, coffee and dates
- Sail on a traditional *jalboot*
- Mangrove views
- Demonstration of pearl-diving
- Oyster opening demonstration

Opening hours

- Open daily from 9am - 7pm
- Booking is essential

Charges

- AED 500 per person - children under three years old free of charge
- Group bookings of 10+ guests receive a discounted charge of AED 450 per person

Knowledge Bank: Beaches in Abu Dhabi

Overview

- Abu Dhabi City is surrounded by the beautiful warm waters of the Arabian Gulf
- There are public and private beaches for visitors to enjoy and relax on
- Abu Dhabi's beaches are clean and safe. Some have Blue Flag status, the international award for beaches and marinas that guarantees clean and safe bathing water
- All of Abu Dhabi's main beaches have good amenities like public toilets, food and beverage outlets, parking and most have sun loungers and umbrellas
- Most beaches are free for visitors although some do charge a small entry fee

Beachwear

- Beachwear should only be worn in the beach areas and not in public or when accessing or exiting beaches
- Modest western-style swimsuits or bikinis for women are acceptable at all beaches
- Visitors should not wear overly-revealing swimwear
- Topless or nude sunbathing is strictly prohibited
- Men and women should cover up when away from the beach areas
- Men should only bare their chests in beach areas

Knowledge Bank: Corniche Beach

Overview

- Corniche Beach is located in the middle west section of the Corniche Road walk- and cycle-way
- The beach has Blue Flag status and has plenty of lifeguards
- There is a public beach and three other sections:
 - Section one, Al Sahil, is for singles and groups
 - Section two is for families and is denoted as a quiet zone – it is screened off from public view
 - Section three is for families – it is also screened off from public view
- The beach has up to 50,000 visitors per month
- Weekends are busier and free beach umbrellas may be harder to find
- Visitors can enjoy swimming out up to 40 metres away from the shore - the area beyond this is cordoned off with floating fences
- There are more than 1,100 free parking spaces within a five-minute walk of the beach

Beach facilities

- Children's playground
- Volleyball basketball and football courts
- Prayer facilities
- Beach library
- Tourist and community police office
- A variety of food and drink outlets including a juice bar, BAKE and Café Brasileira
- Bathrooms, showers and changing rooms

Beach opening hours

- 7am to midnight for Al Sahil Beach
- 7am to 10pm for the family beaches
- Swimming times are from 7am to sunset

Charges

- Entry to the public beach is free
- AED 10 entry to the family and singles sections

DID YOU KNOW? Before the 1970s, the Corniche Beach was a slim stretch of sand, just enough for dhows and ships to anchor.

Knowledge Bank: Yas Beach

Overview

- Yas beach is located on the southern shores of Yas Island and Yas Island's sites and attractions and easily accessible from the beach
- Set on a majestic stretch of white sand
- Visitors staying at any of Yas Island's hotels can enter the beach for free with a voucher from their hotel reception

Beach facilities

- Beach lounge area with an open-air DJ booth, bar, infinity pool and five private chalets
- Splash pool for children with waterfall feature
- Noukhada water-sports outlet with sailing boats, kayaks, windsurfs, paddle boards and jet skis for hire or for tutored activities
- Volleyball courts
- Yas Beach Store
- Snack shops and The Yas Beach Pizza Oven

Opening hours

- 10am to 7pm on weekdays and weekends

Charges

- Free entrance is provided to all Yas Island hotels' guests
- AED 60 on weekdays and AED 120 on weekends and public holidays for non-guests, which includes a day pass and a towel
- Children under 12 go free

Knowledge Bank: Saadiyat Public Beach

Overview

- Saadiyat Beach is located on Saadiyat Island and is its first public beach
- The 400-metre public beach is surrounded by a Dune Protection Zone. This prohibits any development 60 metres from the shoreline to prevent damage to the dunes and to protect the nesting areas of the endangered hawksbill turtles which nest and breed on Saadiyat Island
- The 9km stretch of sand incorporates Saadiyat Beach Golf Club, Manarat Al Saadiyat exhibition centre, Saadiyat Beach Club and five-star beachfront hotels and resorts operated by St. Regis and Park Hyatt

Beach facilities

- Eco-friendly water sports activities such as windsurfing and sailing
- Weekly beach yoga classes
- Over 300 sun loungers
- Towel and locker rental service
- Showers and changing rooms
- Retail shop
- Beach café
- 200 car parking spaces within easy walking distance

Opening hours

- Open daily from 8am to sunset

Charges

- Entry is AED 25 for adults
- AED 15 for children over six years old
- Children aged five and below enter free
- An entrance fee of AED 50 on weekdays and AED 75 on weekends and public holidays includes an umbrella and a sun lounger

Knowledge Bank: Al Bateen Beach

Overview

- Al Bateen Beach is a public beach which overlooks Hudariyat Island and Hudariyat Bridge to the west of Abu Dhabi
- The beach covers 800 metres of waterfront
- Al Bateen Beach has been awarded the prestigious Blue Flag sustainability award by the Emirates Wildlife Authority

Beach Facilities

- Children's playground
- Volleyball courts
- Football playgrounds
- Prayer facilities
- Tourist and community police offices
- A restaurant and café
- Water games rental
- Sun lounger and umbrella rental

Opening hours

- 7am to midnight
- Swimming times are from 7am to sunset

Charges

- Entry is free

Knowledge Bank: Al Bateen Beach for Women

Overview

- Al Bateen Beach has a dedicated ladies-only section
- This secluded section of beach can accommodate up to 1,100 women and children
- Al Bateen Beach, including the women's section, has been awarded the prestigious Blue Flag sustainability award by the Emirates Wildlife Authority
- Women and children are protected, with an emphasis on safety and privacy
- High fences and barriers enhance privacy and seclude woman and children from public view
- An all-female lifeguard crew ensure beach-goers are safe at sea
- Cameras, animals, fishing and camping are strictly prohibited

Beach facilities

- Children's games hall
- Volleyball court
- Prayer facilities
- Nursery
- Chair and umbrella rental
- Lockers
- Bathrooms, showers and changing rooms
- Female lifeguards and staff

Opening hours

- Open daily from 10am - 10pm
- Swimming times are from 10am - sunset

Charges

- Entry is AED 25 for adults and AED 5 for children aged three to 12
- Boys above the age of six are not permitted

Knowledge Bank: Noukhada

Overview

- Noukhada is Abu Dhabi's premier watersports centre
- The main activities operate from the E48 launch point and the Eastern Mangrove Marina. However, activities are operated from various locations
- The watersports centres offers a variety of activities including:
 - Kayaking
 - Sailing
 - Windsurfing
 - Stand-up paddle boarding
 - Dragon boating
- Kayak tours are available to a number of different locations around Abu Dhabi, offering an environmentally-friendly way to explore
- Noukhada works with local storyteller John Stark, who provides workshops for school-age students and helps them to develop ideas to help preserve their environment
- Dry bags are available to help keep belongings safe
- Evening tours are available with dinner included at a selection of local restaurants
- Visitors can take a self-guided tour through the mangroves on kayaks
- If guests are lucky, they will see the best of the local wildlife, including dolphins, fish, turtles and birds
- Noukhada offers an opportunity for an overnight adventure. Guests paddle to a desert island where they will cook their own meals on a barbecue, camp under the stars and paddle back the next day
- Noukhada Adventure Company are world-record holders – they set a world record for the fastest circumnavigation of Yas Island by sailboat

Children

- Children younger than three years old are not allowed on tours
- Those aged three to seven years old must be accompanied by one parent per child
- Children aged seven to 16 years old must be accompanied by a nominated adult

Opening hours

- Activities are available daily. The office operates from 8.30am to 5.30pm daily.
- Booking is recommended.

Charges

- Costs vary depending on the chosen activity. Discounts and offers are available on the website.

Knowledge Bank: Yas Marina

Overview

DOCK

www.yasmarina.ae/dock

Yas Marina is located at the heart of Yas Island and offers:

- 227 fully serviced wet berths catering for boats from 8 to 175 metres with competitive annual packages, plus track view and non-track view berthing options
- 93 shaded parking slots for boats on trailers ranging from 7 to 12 metres, featuring an onsite petrol station, double slipway, washdown area and maintenance yard.
- Member benefits including a personal concierge service and 24/7 customer service. Annual berth holders receive complimentary access to our Member and Crew benefits program, which includes discounts throughout the year.
- Casual berthing rates available with complimentary visitor berthing for up to 4 hours, allowing boat owners to dock, dine and discover Yas Marina's many outlets.

DINE

www.yasmarina.ae/dine

- **Aquarium**

Famed for its lively atmosphere, sensational seafood dishes and views, Aquarium is an elegant but relaxed restaurant at the heart of Yas Marina. Catering to all guests, the venue offers the freshest ocean catches and has a selection of options for meat-lovers and vegetarians. Those in the mood for sundowners and shisha will discover a wide selection available on the expansive menu. Well-mixed beverages and attentive service make for a relaxed venue for couples, families and groups of friends.

- **Boroughs**

The coffee shop offers a variety of aromatic coffees, smoothies and snacks. Located on Yas Marina promenade, the casual spot welcomes foodies and fitness enthusiasts with post-workout protein shakes, healthy breakfasts, mouth-watering treats and welcoming service.

- **Casa de Cuba**

A Cuban bar like no other, Casa de Cuba was created by the legendary Dinos Constantinides. The venue has been conceptualized to give guests an uncompromising authentic Cuban experience, from décor, hosting floral patterns and raw materials, and scent, coming from fresh flowers, to taste, from Dinos' award-winning food and mixed house beverages.

- **Cipriani Yas Island**

Internationally acclaimed Cipriani Yas Island is Abu Dhabi's top Italian restaurant, offering a truly authentic and individual Italian service, combined with high-class cuisine steeped in Italian traditions and history. The iconic brand is owned by four generations of the Cipriani family and originates with the famed Harry's Bar, which launched in Venice in 1931. The restaurant is renowned for creating simple Italian food cooked to perfection, using the freshest premium produce flown in from Italy.

- **Diablito Food & Music**

Serving authentic Mediterranean cuisine, Spanish tapas, pintxos, homemade pizzas and more, this two-story casual restaurant with a rooftop dining space is the perfect spot to sip on sundowners while watching the sunset and the yachts sail into Yas Marina. The restaurant also creates the perfect platform for business lunches or private occasions.

- **Iris**

Iris Yas Island stands out as a trendy lounge with its chilled vibe, artisan house beverages and great views. As the hours tick by the casual lounge turns into Abu Dhabi's chicest nightlife venue, a well-known post-work hangout for inspired house beverages, flavoursome food, lounge music and sunset views. Set against the picturesque backdrop of Yas Marina, the expansive outdoor terrace overlooks yachts and the striking W Abu Dhabi – Yas Island.

- **Mr. Miyagi's**

Already recognised as an award-winning restaurant for phenomenal food and unbeatable entertainment in Dubai, the infamous Mr. Miyagi's brings its social singing wings to the capital, featuring delicious culinary flavours and flamboyant atmosphere with heel-clicking rhythms. The hotspot showcases themed offerings, including the much-loved Wok & Roll brunch ready to 'wok up' everyone's week.

- **Stars 'N' Bars**

The American award-winning restaurant Stars 'N' Bars offers sports screening, food, house beverages and live entertainment through the week with astounding views of Yas Marina. Expect the best International cuisine in town serving classic burgers, wings, ribs, nachos, fajitas, steaks, salads and more. The varied selections of food are a crowd pleaser for all ages. The à la carte menu offers pre-game nibbles, hearty mains, healthy salads, kid's meals and late-night bites.

- **The Scene by Simon Rimmer**

The Scene's gastronomic kitchen, led by famous UK celebrity chef Simon Rimmer, defines quintessential British fare using seasonal ingredients and innovative flavours. The talented chef and his team offer a true taste of home. The Scene is the ultimate gastropub experience serving British classics with a retro twist, specialist mixed house beverages and infusions.

DISCOVER

LIFESTYLE & FITNESS OUTLETS

www.yasmarina.ae/discover

Vogue Fitness

Raising the bar for fitness in Abu Dhabi, Vogue Fitness offers a multitude of programs ranging from CrossFit and Conditioning to specialty classes including Olympic Weightlifting and Gymnastics. With over 1000 square meters of both indoor and outdoor training space, Vogue Fitness offers a truly world class platform for you to exceed your health and fitness potential.

Bounce Back Physiotherapy

Established with one goal in mind - to provide every patient with an excellent, fully comprehensive personalised physiotherapy service. Ensuring the highest level of professional standards, the physiotherapists utilise new and emerging research and evidence-based treatment underpinned with a combined experience base of 60 years.

Yas Marina Sailing and Rowing Centre

Yas Marina's Sailing and Rowing Centre welcomes guests with premier facilities, shining light on all things sailing and rowing, including courses for adults with passionate instructors and activities for all ages. Sailing and rowing aficionados, as well as newbies embracing these sports can meet fellow water lovers and enjoy the tranquil waterways surrounding Yas Island.

Abu Dhabi Sailing Academy (ADSA)

Discovering the joys of sailing, ADSA offers lessons, team building, charter and racing events. Visitors can explore the Abu Dhabi Sailing Academy with their family, friends and colleagues and sail the Arabian sea for pleasure, fun and fitness. Based in Yas Marina, Abu Dhabi Sailing Academy now offers a range of sailing classes for children and adults with experienced and passionate instructors, many of whom have years of experience at a professional level.

Monty's Rowing Club

Proud to have introduced rowing to the UAE in 1999, Monty's Rowing and Paddle Sports is the UAE's premier rowing club. Featuring Learn-to-Row programmes teaching rowing for all ages as well as coaching and rowing for experienced rowers. Rowing is an ideal sport for all water enthusiasts as you can row all year long.

Eywoa Watersports

Eywoa is an expert in extreme water sports, specialising in wakeboarding, wake surfing and wake foiling with staff who can teach beginners and help experienced riders improve their techniques and tricks. All lessons are given by former pro and/or qualified instructors.

CHARTER COMPANIES

Captain Tony's Charter Cruises

Captain Tony's is the first eco-conscious boat tour operator in Abu Dhabi – by bringing their passengers 'up close and personal' with the unique environment found within the coastal and inland waters of Abu Dhabi. Included in the relaxing sunset cruise, guests will be able to enjoy beverages as the sun sets over the skyline of the city. The trip features educational and insightful knowledge of the local culture and environment, perfect for school trips, families and group of friends.

The Captain's Club

The Captain's Club is the first boat club in Abu Dhabi to provide a boat ownership alternative, where the dream of owning a boat became affordable and with 100 % relief from the boat's cost, parking cost and maintenance cost. Once a member, there will be training conducted to become a captain, and daily unlimited access to all of the boats in the fleet, where the annual cost is less than 10% of the cost of owning and managing your own boat.

Xclusive Boat Club

Xclusive Boat Club is the most recent venture that allows one to be the Captain of a choice of well-maintained fleet. Conceptualized for convenience, it is the easiest way to get on to the waters without the hassle of owning a boat. The fleet owned by Xclusive Boat Club is brand new and includes fishing boats, wakeboarding boats, mini yachts, speed cruisers and many more.

Knowledge Bank: Shopping Malls in Abu Dhabi City

Overview

- Shopping is a national pastime in Abu Dhabi in the souks (see Section 6 for information on souks and traditional shopping) and the modern air-conditioned malls
- Abu Dhabi has a wide range of malls including some extra-special luxury malls
- Visitors and residents use the malls not only to shop but to catch up with friends and to watch a movie or go bowling often until late in the night
- During Eid and Ramadan, special events, shows and concerts are often held at the malls around the city

The Galleria

Overview

- The Galleria is located in the capital's new Central Business District on Al Marayah Island
- The Galleria is connected with the Rosewood Abu Dhabi, a five star hotel, through a unique network of climate-controlled corridors
- The Galleria houses 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 Abu Dhabi include:
 - Aspinal of London
 - Celine
 - Diane von Furstenberg
 - Jimmy Choo
 - Marc Jacobs
 - Mulberry
 - Paul Smith
 - Alexander McQueen
 - Moschino
- Restaurants and cafes, including:
 - Almaz by Momo
 - Emporio Armani Caffé

Opening hours

- Thursday: 10am - midnight
- Friday: 12 noon - midnight
- Saturday to Wednesday: 10am - 10pm

Avenue at Etihad Towers

Overview

- Located in Etihad Towers on the north west of the island and linked to Conrad Abu Dhabi Etihad Towers
- Avenue at Etihad Towers has one of the world's most expensive and exclusive collections of boutique shops
- Many of the boutiques have luxurious private rooms for VIPs to shop in privacy
- Avenue includes 'first' luxury brands for Abu Dhabi and the Gulf including:
 - Chloé
 - Givenchy
 - Hermès
 - Herve Leger
 - Lanvin
 - Manolo Blahnik
 - Tom Ford
 - Versace

Opening hours

- Saturday to Thursday: 10am – 10pm
- Friday: 3pm – 11pm

Nation Galleria

Overview

- Located at the foot of the twin Nation Towers on the west of the Corniche
- Nation Galleria is a high-end boutique retail destination set out over three floors
- The mall houses some of the world's most unique and renowned retail outlets
- Visitors can directly access the mall from Nation Residences, Nation Offices and the St. Regis Hotel
- Some of the key brands at Nation Galleria include:
 - Godiva
 - Leopolds of London
 - Lamborghini
 - Porsche Design
 - Villeroy and Boch

Opening hours

- Sunday to Wednesday: 10am - 10pm
- Thursday to Saturday: 10am - midnight

Yas Mall

Overview

- Yas Mall is located at the heart of Yas Island
- The mall houses over 400 stores and more than 60 restaurants and cafés over three floors
- Yas Mall also offers family entertainment including:
 - 20-screen state-of-the-art cinema operated by VOX Cinemas
 - Family entertainment zone by Fun Works
 - A direct link to Ferrari World Abu Dhabi
- Yas Mall houses the capital's only Apple store

Abu Dhabi Mall

Overview

- Abu Dhabi Mall is located in the Tourist Club Area, connected to Beach Rotana Hotel
- The mall has 200 shops and averages 40,000 visitors a day
- It has a wide variety of restaurants and coffee shops
- It also features a children's play area and a Cineplex
- There are numerous big brands at the mall such as:
 - Paris Gallery
 - Jashanmal
 - Grand Stores
 - Carolina Herrera
 - Zara and H&M (fashion and style)
 - Marina Furniture

Opening hours

- Saturday to Wednesday: 10am - 10pm
- Thursdays and Fridays: 10am - 11pm

Marina Mall

Overview

- Marina Mall is located in Al Marina district and a three-minute walk from the Corniche
- The mall has more than 400 stores over five floors and features:
 - 100m-high viewing platform
 - ice rink
 - bowling alley
 - Cineplex
 - musical fountains
- A new addition to the mall is CityStore, the region's first standalone store for Manchester City Football Club
- 'Let Hope Shine' is a Marina Mall initiative organised to improve lives and create opportunities for people around the world

Opening hours

- Saturday to Wednesday: 10am - 10pm
- Thursdays and Fridays: 10am - midnight

Khalidiyah Mall

Overview

- Khalidiyah Mall is located a few minutes away from the Corniche Beach
- The architecture of the mall is traditionally Islamic
- There are over 160 shops
- Highlights include:
 - UK department store Debenhams
 - many cafés and restaurants
 - a large food court
 - an amusement centre with arcade games
 - a brand new dedicated 3D cinema
 - a bowling alley

Opening hours

- Sunday to Wednesday: 10am - 10pm
- Thursday to Saturday: 10am - 11pm

Al Wahda Mall

Overview

- Al Wahda Mall is located opposite the main bus terminal in the heart of Abu Dhabi
- The mall attracts over 30 million visitors annually and houses 350 brands
- It features a wide range of stores, large and small, local and international including:
 - Lulu Hypermarket
 - H&M
 - Mamas & Papas
 - Pull & Bear
 - Bershka
 - Gant
 - Virgin Mega Store
 - Mac
- The mall has over 50 food and beverage outlets

Opening hours

- Sunday to Wednesday: 10am - 11pm
- Thursday to Saturday: 10am - midnight

World Trade Centre Mall

Overview

- The World Trade Centre Mall is located on the site of the old Central Market, just off 5th Street in Abu Dhabi city centre
- It features the region's first House of Fraser
- Several Abu Dhabi firsts including:
 - Karen Millen
 - BCBG
 - Missoni
- There are a wide selection of casual dining options – including Shakespeare & Co and the Asian-themed, American casual restaurant P.F. Chang
- The mall also features:
 - an eight-screen cinema
 - more than 3,000m² of terraces and landscaped rooftop gardens
 - two central atriums that sit under a fully retractable roof

Opening hours

- Weekdays: 10am to 10pm
- Weekends: 10am to 11pm

Mushrif Mall

Overview

- Mushrif Mall is located on 25th St, Airport Road, Al Mushrif close to the Hilton Capital hotel
- The mall is a three-floor retail 'megaplex' housing a mix of shopping, dining, leisure and entertainment
- The mall 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
- The mall's features, among many others, are:
 - Lulu Hypermarket
 - The Market – the city's largest indoor fresh market
 - more than 200 retail outlets offering mix of luxury fashionable shopping at its best
 - expansive food court, the biggest in the Middle East
 - restaurants with alfresco dining option
 - cafeteria and coffee shops

Opening hours

- Thursday to Saturday: 10am to 11pm
- Sunday to Wednesday: 10am to 10pm

Knowledge Bank: Bait Mohammed Bin Khalifa

Overview

- The home was built in 1958 for the late Sheikh Mohammed bin Khalifa Al Nahyan (1909-1979).
- The house was built at the height of the UAE's Transition Period (1930s-1960s), a time in which hybrid architectural styles evolved.
- This home was once an eminent landmark and focal point for the community of Al Ain, and now conserved, as a vibrant hub for city residents by opening its doors as a community center in 2021.
- The permanent exhibition at Bait Mohammed bin Khalifa gives an overview on the history of both the home itself and of the wider World Heritage property of the Cultural Sites of Al Ain;
 - Exhibition Room 1: The House & Al Ain World Heritage Site
Introduces the visitor to BMBK and situates the house within the Al Ain UNESCO World Heritage Sites.
 - Exhibition Room 2: A glimpse into the 1960s
Introduces visitors to HH Sheikh Tahnoun, son of Sheikh Mohammed bin Khalifa.
 - Exhibition Room 3: Adapting Building Traditions
Focuses on various elements of Transition Period architecture as represented in BMBK.
 - Exhibition Room 4: The Transition Period in Al Ain
Describes the Transition Period in Al Ain and the urban transformations in the city.
 - Exhibition Room 5: Conserving the House
Explains the conserving process. It displays pieces from BMBK explaining their conserving process and a documentary movie regarding the conservation process.
 - Exhibition Room 6: Sheikh Mohammed bin Khalifa Life & Legacy
Focuses on Sheikh Mohammed bin Khalifa. Features a movie with oral narration and visuals on Sheikh Mohammed and his role during the Sheikh Shakhbut and Sheikh Zayed eras.
 - Exhibition Room 7: At the Heart of the Community
Focuses on the house as a community space. It accommodates three optical theatres about the house in social and communal events.
- The Archaeological Wall is an outdoor exhibition which illustrates the physical transformations of Bait Mohammed bin Khalifa since it was first built in 1985.
- BMBK accommodates spaces available for hire by community groups and public or private institutions, and reservation requests can be made by email, phone or onsite.

Knowledge Bank: Al Ain Camel Market

Overview

- The Al Ain Camel Market is located east of Jebel Hafeet in the region of Al Ain
- It is the last camel market of its kind in the UAE
- Al Ain is thought to have the largest camel population in the UAE

The market

- The camel market is a must-see for visitors who wish to understand the historic and cultural importance of the camel in Abu Dhabi and the UAE
- It is located near to the Bawadi Mall, a popular shopping destination with many well-known retailers and brands
- Camels are still an important part of Arabian culture and used for milk, meat and racing
- Peak trading hours at the market are early in the morning, just after opening
- Early in the morning there are often mock races held to train those destined to be camel jockeys
- There are excellent photo opportunities but visitors need to ask permission and be prepared to negotiate a cost, usually AED 10 - 20
- Experiences such as trying fresh camel milk, holding a new-born lamb or hand-feeding the camels may be on offer at a cost

Camels

- Visitors will be able to see a few varieties of camels on show at the market:
 - Show camels, which are black
 - Milking camels with big round bellies
 - Tan coloured racing camels, with long legs
 - Big bulls for breeding which do a lot of roaring and show a lot of teeth
 - Wobbly, wide-eyed babies
- The camels can cost anywhere from AED 300 - 55,000 depending on their age and intended purpose
- The most expensive camels are sold for camel racing
- Other livestock is also on sale at the market, such as goats and sheep
- Taxis to and from the market can be hard to find, so visitors should ensure they take a car, or ask the taxi they came in to wait for them when visiting
- The market traders come from all over the Middle East, from Afghanistan to Pakistan

Opening hours

From 6am – 7pm with shops closing at 11pm

Charges

- Entry is free for the general public
- For organised tour groups there will be a fee of AED 30 per person

Knowledge Bank: Al Ain Museum

Overview

- Al Ain Museum is located in the centre of Al Ain City on 1st Street
- The museum is the oldest in the UAE, established in 1969
- The museum was originally located in Sultan Fort, however it was relocated to its current position in 1971
- Sultan Fort lies within the grounds of the museum
- The museum charts the history of Al Ain from the Stone Age through to the foundation of the UAE, a view of the country's 7,500-year-old traditions and culture
- When visiting the museum, visitors will be able to see many archaeological artefacts from the region, including tools and arrowheads dating to the sixth millennium BC
- The museum is divided into two main sections: Archaeology, and Ethnography

Ethnography section:

- In the Ethnography section visitors will be able to see a variety of objects which tell the story of the UAE people in the pre-oil era and the life in the region of the Emirates. Visitors can see ancient writing tools, such as an animal shoulder blade which was used as a tablet for writing practice
- 4,000 year old jewellery is on display along with cosmetic cases and a model wearing a historic traditional wedding dress
- Traditional farming tools are on display in the Agricultural Wing
- Visitors who explore the household exhibits will gain insight into the daily life of the nomads and the settled people
- The museum has a wing dedicated to weapons, where visitors can see a variety of swords, shields, daggers and an axe

Archaeology section:

- The Archaeological section displays objects from the Stone Age to the Islamic period
- Some of the archaeological items are from tombs and settlements that have been excavated in the Al Ain area
- This section of the museum takes visitors on a tour of various ages in human history such as the Stone, Iron and Bronze Ages

Knowledge Bank: Al Foah Date Factory

Overview

- The Al Foah company was established in 2005
- It is now the largest date company in the world
- Its headquarters is in the Al Ain region approximately 90 minutes' drive from Abu Dhabi City and close to Al Ain International Airport
- In 2016, a library opened on site at the Al Foah headquarters to support the education of employees, suppliers and clients
- Al Foah is a subsidiary of SENAAT, which is owned by the Government of Abu Dhabi
- 90% of the dates produced are shipped abroad to over 48 countries
- 80,000 tonnes of dates are exported yearly
- The top ten markets for dates are: UAE, India, Oman, Bangladesh, Morocco, Indonesia, Jordan, Syria, Sri Lanka and Somalia
- Al Foah sell a variety of date products including stuffed dates, date syrup and date Halwa (a type of confectionery)
- Al Foah incorporates four brands which are aimed at different customers
- In 2014, Al Foah became the first company in the world to introduce automated sorting of dates, introducing machines which sort the dates by quality, size and colour. Their largest machines can sort up to six metric tonnes of dates per hour
- During peak harvesting season, Al Foah operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week
- Dates have been farmed in Arabia for over 8,000 years
- The farming of date palms originated in the Middle East, eventually spreading to North Africa, North America, South Africa and Australia
- The date fruit can be eaten when it is ripe, semi-matured or dried
- It is tradition to break Ramadan fast with a handful of dates
- Dried dates can keep for up to 18 months
- Dates are rich in natural phenols, which are excellent antioxidants
- Dates are a good source of fibre and can help to maintain a healthy digestive system
- Dates are a good source of potassium and iron, as well as Vitamin A, Vitamin E and Vitamin C

Al Foah Date Farm

- Al Foah Date Farm is located in Al Ain City
- It is the largest organic date farm in the world
- It spreads over 634.6 hectares and is growing 63,000 date palms organically
- The farm is certified by ECOCERT – an organic certification organisation based in France
- It is also certified by UAE Organic
- The farm has over 147,000 date palms of up to 100 different varieties
- Peak harvesting season runs from August to October

Knowledge Bank: Al Jahili Fort

Overview

- Al Jahili Fort is located in the centre of Al-Ain city in the grounds of Al Jahili Park
- The fort symbolises the traditional architecture and cultural heritage of Abu Dhabi
- The fort was built by HH Sheikh Zayed the First and is one of the largest forts in Al Ain
- Visitors can read a poem dedicated to the fort's original builder at the main entrance of the square fort.
- Construction began on the fort in 1891, this work was completed in 1898
- The Al Nahyan family historically used the fort as a summer retreat
- The site now consists of a round watchtower, a square fort with defensive towers at its corners, two large walled enclosures and a detached mosque
- There is an exhibition of black and white photographs by the traveller Wilfred Thesiger in the north wing of the courtyard
- Visitors can also browse the onsite bookshop
- During periods of historical political unrest the fort has been used to shelter residents of the local area
- The British Forces used the site as a base in the early 1950s, adding barracks and a small hospital

Architecture

- The original construction consisted of two buildings, a separate round tower, and a large courtyard framed by walls over 6 metres tall
- The tower is located 50 metres away from the square fort and consists of four concentric tiers. The design resembles Bronze Age towers discovered during archaeological digs in the Hili area

Conservation

- Major conservation work was carried out in 2007 to preserve the fabric and value of the building. This work included updating the newer parts of the fort into a visitor centre and temporary exhibition spaces
- The conservation work included the addition of a cooling system to ensure the temperature inside the fort was comfortable all year round. A network of chilled water pipes run beneath the plaster of almost every vertical and horizontal surface
- The conservation project won the Terra Award in 2016
- A reconstruction of the north gate of the nineteenth century enclosure took place in 2013. The reconstruction was based on evidence gathered from archaeology and historic photographs

Opening hours

- Open daily from 9am - 5pm
- Friday: 3pm - 7.30pm

Charges

- Entrance to the fort is free

Knowledge Bank: Al Khaznah Tannery

Overview

- The Tannery is based in the desert between Al Ain and Abu Dhabi, approximately 200km from Dubai
- Al Khaznah Tannery is owned by the Government of Abu Dhabi
- Al Khaznah was opened for business in 2007
- The Tannery mainly processes camel leather, but also works with cow hides, goat skin and sheepskin
- The boutique offers a variety of products made exclusively with Al Khaznah leathers
- The Tannery is the only leather processing plant in Abu Dhabi and is the most technologically advanced in the UAE
- During a tour, visitors will see the leather tanning process taking place
- The Tannery employs experienced and skilled leather workers from many countries, including Egypt, Sudan, Philippines, India and Iraq as well as many locals
- The production of the leather is customised depending on the client's needs
- Due to the care and craftsmanship Al Khaznah employs, products can take up to 10 weeks to produce
- The leathers have been used to make clothing, accessories, furniture and even wall panels

Environment

- The Tannery prides itself on using natural products to process the leather, ensuring products are free from chromium and other metals
- Al Khaznah leathers are biodegradable, sustainable, metal-free and meet the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH) standards for the protection of human health and the environment from the risks that can be posed by chemicals
- The leathers are softened using natural oils; these oils are made from sustainable vegetable extracts
- All of the hides processed are sourced locally to reduce the environmental impact
- The Tannery itself contributes to the reduction of CO₂ in the atmosphere by using it in their production process
- 80% of the water used in the production process is then recycled and reused
- Waste products from the production process can be used as plant fertiliser
- If one of their leather products happens to end up in a landfill, it will biodegrade within four months

DID YOU KNOW? The centre has a fully-equipped pottery studio, a digital room suitable for photography and computer classes, a spacious calligraphy studio, an exhibition hall, and a café. Amazing facilities for creative types!

Further your knowledge

<https://abudhabiculture.ae/en/experience/culture-centres/al-qattara-arts-centre>

Visit Abu Dhabi's informative video on Al Qattara Arts Centre:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pdd6Bmg_BcM

Knowledge Bank: Al Qattara Arts Centre

Overview

- Al Qattara Arts Centre is located near Al Qattara Oasis, in the restored Al Qattara fort complex in Al Ain
- The centre opened in 2011
- The centre is the first of its kind in Al Ain
- The aim of the centre is to provide a place for the UAE community to study and practise arts and culture
- Visitors to the arts centre can browse the on-site gallery, library, exhibition hall and archaeological basement.
- The centre offers classes in a variety of subjects, such as computing, music, drawing, painting and Arabic calligraphy
- Classes are taught by experts in their field, such as the calligraphy class which is taught by Mohammed Mandi, the man responsible for the decorative designs on the country's bank notes
- The centre has hosted temporary exhibitions on a variety of arts, such as a feature on comic book art, and work by local artists and mixed media arts
- The excavations during the building of the arts centre uncovered a five-metre-long sequence of archaeological layers from the late Islamic period to the Iron Age, 3,000 years ago
- Visitors can view a special presentation of the local archaeology in the centre's basement studio

Opening hours

- Saturday - Thursday 8 am to 8 pm
- Closed Friday

Knowledge Bank: Qasr Al Muwajji

Overview

- Qasr Al Muwajji is located in Al Ain city in the Al Ain region of Abu Dhabi
- It was built in the early years of the twentieth century
- The fort is located within the World Heritage Site in Al Ain
- The fort was the site of Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan's *diwan*, or public council, where he received guests and heard the concerns of the community
- In 2008, the Department of Culture & Tourism (DCT) began extensive archaeological and conservation work at Qasr Al Muwajji
- It was restored and reopened to the public in 2015 as a museum and permanent exhibition
- The site is the birthplace of Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan in 1948
- The earliest dated coin excavated on the site is from 1897, which helped to provide an estimate for the construction of the site

Museum

- The new exhibition space was designed to complement the architecture of Qasr Al Muwajji, ensuring that it does not impact on the historic fabric of the fort
- There are two main sections to the museum:
 - An area in the courtyard walled with glass with views of the surrounding area
 - A tour through the north-west tower and its rooms
- The exhibitions tell the story of the fort and sets out the chronology of the members of Abu Dhabi's ruling family
- The 'President of the Nation' exhibition tells the story of Sheikh Khalifa through seven chapters, using photographs, poems and animations
- Inscribed in wood at the end of the exhibit is a poem written by Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, dedicated to Sheikh Khalifa
- Visitors will learn about Sheikh Khalifa's childhood, including his education and favourite pastimes
- A number of personal items are on display, including some of the Sheikh's falconry equipment
- The building has transparent flooring which allows visitors to view the archaeological remains of the site
- A highlight of the museum is an interactive table which delves into the history of the fort

OPENING HOURS

Open daily except Mondays

- From 9am to 7pm
- Fridays: 3pm to 7pm

Charges

- Entry is free

Knowledge Bank: Souq Al Qattara

Overview

- Souq Al Qattara is located in Al Ain city on the road that connects the Al Qattara and Al Jimi oases
- The Souq is a seasonal market where visitors can sample sweets, dates and Arabian coffee, and can purchase hunting and riding tools, incense and traditional clothing
- The Souq was founded by Sheikh Shakhbut bin Sultan Al Nahyan in the mid-20th century
- The Souq hosts lectures on the heritage of the UAE and local archaeological sites, arts and culture exhibitions, as well as family activities
- Every Thursday and Friday evening from October to May, visitors will be able to see a variety of folklore shows and traditional dance performances
- The market was initially established with individual mud shops, a typical traditional market which was an important community centre and a place for locals to shop and gossip
- The market was abandoned approximately 15 years ago after the discovery of oil changed the lives of those in the region
- The market was restored by the Department of Culture & Tourism (DCT) to become the attraction and cultural centre it is today
- The Souq is home to a number of celebrations throughout the year:
 - the Traditional Handicrafts Festival
 - UAE Flag Day celebrations
 - UAE National Day celebrations

Traditional handicrafts market

- A traditional handicrafts market is held next to the Souq Al Qattara
- It is a traditional market held only on Thursday, Friday and Saturday
- Visitors can purchase handmade and local products
- The market was set up to help local producers develop their skills, support local families and encourage traditional crafts
- The old-style market has 30 internal and 20 external shops selling local handicrafts and artwork

Opening hours

Opening hours are from 8am to 1pm and 4pm to 10pm from October to May

Traditional handicrafts market opening hours

Every Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 10am to 1pm and 4pm to 10pm from October to May

IMPORTANT: Both markets close from the end of May until October to undergo renovation and repair in preparation for the new season.

Knowledge Bank: UNESCO World Heritage Sites of Al Ain

Overview

- The UNESCO sites in Abu Dhabi are all in the Al Ain region, approximately 160 kilometres (100 miles) east of the capital of Abu Dhabi
- Al Ain is known as the 'Garden City' as it has the most green areas in Abu Dhabi
- In 2011, Al Ain was the first region in the UAE to be included on UNESCO's World Heritage Site list, comprising four locations: Hafeet, Hili, Bida Bint Saud and Oases Areas
- A UNESCO World Heritage Site is a place listed as being of 'special cultural or physical significance'
- If sites are nominated to be listed as a World Heritage Site, they must meet UNESCO's criteria of 'outstanding universal value'
- The sites in Al Ain clearly show the transition from nomadic to settled communities around the Al Ain oases which gave birth to the Emirati culture
- The Al Ain World Heritage Sites date back to the Stone and Bronze Ages
- The archaeological and architectural remains give visitors an insight into the people's development, creativity and strength
- The sites show how the local population was able to adapt to the harsh desert environment and live there continuously from the Neolithic Period to the present day
- They give the visitor insights into Abu Dhabi's unique cultural traditions which developed in oases and desert environments

Knowledge Bank: Al Ain Oasis

Overview

- Al Ain Oasis is located in the middle of Al Ain city in the region of Al Ain in Abu Dhabi
- It was the first managed UNESCO World Heritage Site in the UAE
- UNESCO designated the oasis a World Heritage Site in 2011
- Al Ain Oasis was opened to the public as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2016
- The oasis covers over 3,000 acres and is home to over 147,000 date palms
- There are around 100 different varieties of date palms located in the oasis
- The oasis includes 550 farms and local farmers still work on the date palm plantations today
- It is a cool place with lots of shade from the palm fronds
- It is popular with visitors and families looking to escape the heat of the city
- Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan wanted the oasis to be maintained and improved so that future generations of Emiratis and visitors to Abu Dhabi could enjoy and learn from it

Oasiscape

- Oasiscape is the name of the official visitor route around the oasis
- It gives visitors insights into the oasis' buildings, the *falaj* irrigation system and traditional methods of palm cultivation

Eco-centre

- The Eco-centre within the oasis educates visitors through interactive installations

Miniature Oasis

- The Miniature Oasis is a scale model which shows visitors how the oasis was built and why
- The Miniature Oasis has buildings and the irrigation channels made to scale

West Gate Exhibition

- Just inside the entrance to the West Gate there is a permanent exhibition known as *falaj*scape which gives visitors more information on the traditional *falaj* watering system which dates back thousands of years

Oasis Garden

- The Oasis Garden is three separate gardens: the Pre-Oasis Garden, the Orchard Garden and the Symbolic Garden
- The three gardens represent the three layers of a traditional oasis farm
- Traditional oasis farms formed in a vertical layered system
- The layered gardens give crops and fruit-trees the nutrients they need to survive
- This three-layered approach was vital for the self-sufficiency of the community

Pre-Oasis Garden

- The Pre-Oasis Garden is the first and bottom layer of the three-tiered system
- Crops such as wheat are grown at this level to provide food and also to stop the fertile soil from becoming desert sands once more (desertification)
- Medicinal herbs and plants of great cultural or religious importance are also grown in the Pre-Oasis Garden
- The crops and the herbs are placed next to baby palm trees which provide the shade they need to grow

Orchard Garden

- The second layer of the Oasis Garden contains fruit-trees and sugar cane which are both important food sources

The Symbolic Garden

- The third and tallest layer of the Oasis Garden system is known as the Symbolic Garden
- Tall trees and plants are grown here to protect and give shade to the fruit and grains on the lower levels

Al Ain Oasis opening hours

Oasis: daily 8am - 5pm

Restaurants, cafés and shops: daily midday - 9pm

Charges

Free to enter

Knowledge Bank: Bida Bint Saud

Overview

- Bida Bint Saud is located 15km north of Al Ain city
- The site is a collection of burial chambers or tombs
- The tombs are located by the Qarn Bint Saud rock
- The Qarn is easy to locate being 800m long, 25m wide and 40m high

Design and age

- A number of tombs have been found at the base and on the top of the Qarn
- At the base of the Qarn, the tombs date back to 3000 BC
- They are similar in design to the Jebel Hafeet tombs with round, single chambers
- Like the Hafeet tombs, they would have originally formed a dome shape
- At the top of the Qarn, a collection of tombs from the Bronze and Iron Ages were found dated from 2000 to 300 BC
- In these tombs, double-edged swords have been discovered up to 40cm long!
- Archaeology teams have found a few pieces of pottery and stone containers, blades, arrowheads and beads thought to be of a later date

Public buildings

- 1.5km to the west of the tombs, archaeologists discovered a *falaj* water irrigation system dating back 3000 years
- This is thought to be one of the first of this type of irrigation system in the world
- Near to the *falaj*, parts of a public building were discovered
- The building is thought to have been a chief's *majlis* or meeting place
- A large courtyard was found in this spot with the base of 12 pillars which would have supported a roof structure
- Along with the meeting place, rooms used for storage were found and storage containers thought to have been for water
- The water could have been distributed from the *falaj* to the site in the containers
- This early settlement was significant in the development of the region

Knowledge Bank: Hili Archaeological Park

Overview

- Hili Archaeological Park is located approximately 12 kilometres to the north of Al Ain city in Hili
- The settlement and tombs dating back to the third millennium BC were discovered when archaeologists excavated there in the 1960s
- The archaeology of Hili gives archaeologists, locals and visitors an indication of what early life was like in the region
- Most of the monuments found in Hili are from the Umm an-Nar period (2500 - 2000 BC)
- The Umm an-Nar period dates from around 2500 BC to 2000 BC which is during the time of the Bronze Age
- The period is named after Umm an-Nar island off the coast of Abu Dhabi where a settlement and tombs from this time were found
- The Government of Abu Dhabi decided to build Hili Archaeological Park around the tombs and settlements so the public could see them
- The style of the park is relaxed and informal; it is set in gardens

Hili Settlement

- At the end of the 1960s, the first digs uncovered remains of Umm an-Nar period (2500 – 2000 BC) settlement and tombs
- The buildings uncovered were round in shape and made of bricks that were not baked or ‘fired’
- The round shape of the buildings was thought to be important. The buildings were actually small fortresses or towers built around a well
- The construction of the towers indicates that Al Ain was becoming an important trade and economic centre already in the Bronze Age. One of the reasons for this was that copper was mined from the nearby mountains and traded as far away as Iraq
- The *falaj* discovered near Hili Archaeological Park is one of the oldest known examples of the *falaj* irrigation system in the world, dating to around 1000 BC

Hili Tombs

- The tombs at Hili date back to the same Umm an-Nar period as the settlement
- Approximately 600 people of all ages were buried across the site
- One of the most interesting tombs discovered is known as Hili Grand Tomb; it is 2.5m high and 8m across
- In Hili Grand Tomb, six chambers were discovered along with human remains
- At the entrance of two of the tombs, there are beautiful engravings animals and people
- Near to the tombs, pit graves were discovered

Opening hours

Saturday to Thursday: 9.30am - 4.30pm

Friday: 10am - 10pm

Knowledge Bank: Jebel Hafeet tombs

Overview

- The site of the Jebel Hafeet tombs is located near the Omani border to the east side of the region of Al Ain
- The tombs are made from roughly-cut stone blocks stacked on top of each other and are referred to as 'beehive' tombs as they are round in shape
- They consist of a single chamber with several people buried inside
- The tombs are 5,000 years old and are the earliest Bronze Age tombs discovered in the UAE
- The discovery of the Hafeet tombs gave the name of a new period in the early part of the Bronze Age named the 'Hafeet Period' which dates from 3200 BC to 2700 BC. During this period, most of the inhabitants of the UAE were nomads who kept sheep, goats, and cattle. At the same time, however, some people also started to live in settled communities and grew crops, as seen at the site of Hili 8
- Hundreds of the beehive tombs are placed at the base of Jebel Hafeet mountain
- They were pronounced a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2011 and since then have been protected and preserved
- They will form part of the Mezyad Desert Park and be open to the public

Discovery

- The site of the tombs was discovered by the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan in the 1950s
- Sheikh Zayed instructed a team of Danish archaeologists to excavate the site in 1959
- The Danish team uncovered the tombs and also found ceramic pots and copper objects inside
- Visitors can see these artefacts in the Al Ain National Museum

Knowledge Bank: Al Ain Zoo

Activities

There are a variety of activities that visitors can enjoy at an extra cost, including:

- Budgie Feeding
- Penguin Feeding Show
- Parrot Talk
- Giraffe Feeding
- Hippo Talk
- Lion Feeding Time
- Cheetah Run Show
- Crocodile Feeding Show
- Crocodile Feeding Show
- Reptile Encounter
- Asian Animals Feeding Time
- Arabian Animals Feeding Time
- African Animals Feeding Time
- Parrot Show
- Wings of the Sahara Show
- Monkeys Enrichment Time
- Chimpanzees Feeding Time
- Gorilla Feeding Time
- Dinner with the Lion
- Feeding Safari Lions

Please check our website for the updated timings www.alainzoo.ae

Tickets

Check Al Ain Zoo's website for the most up-to-date charges and group rates etc.

https://online.alainzoo.ae/zaa_b2c/opentickets.html?productGroup=WGEADM

Other facilities and attractions within the zoo

Al Ain Safari

<https://alainzoo.ae/al-ain-safari>

Sheikh Zayed Desert Learning Centre (SZDLC)

Al Ain Zoo Experiences:

<https://alainzoo.ae/explore-zoo/experiences>

Al Ain Zoo Services:

<https://alainzoo.ae/explore-zoo/visitor-services>

Al Ain Zoo corporate offers:

<https://www.alainzoo.ae/discounts-and-offers>

Knowledge Bank: Green Mubazzarah Park and Hot Springs

Overview

- Green Mubazzarah Park and Hot Springs is located at the base of the Jebel Hafeet mountain in Al Ain
- The park and hot springs are a ten minute-drive from Al Ain Zoo
- The 160 hectare (395 acre) park is thought to be the greenest area in the UAE
- The greenness is due to natural, hot underwater springs that rise to the surface
- The source of the hot springs was formed as the result of thousands of years movement of rocks or plates up to 2km below the surface
- The movement of the rocks caused them to split and this acted as channels for the water to rise to the surface
- The water temperature of the springs at the Green Mubazzarah is between 40°C and 45°C
- The hot water is thought to have therapeutic properties
- The land around Green Mubazzarah is constantly watered by the springs
- It was developed and overseen by Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, founder of the UAE, and opened to the public in 2004
- Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan was often referred to as 'the man who turned the deserts green' and the park is part of his legacy
- The park and springs are very popular for residents and visitors, with thousands of people visiting them on public holidays
- The park also features camping, barbecuing and fishing facilities
- In the park, there are four indoor swimming pools, two for men and children and two for women only (aged 12 and upwards)
- Al Ain Municipality has recently announced that it will issue fines to visitors who leave rubbish behind or make fires outside permitted areas

Green Mubazzarah Chalets

- Visitors wishing to stay overnight at Green Mubazzarah can stay at the Green Mubazzarah Chalets
- There are over 200 chalets at the site run by Danat Hotels

Charges

Entrance to the Green Mubazzarah Park is free.

The swimming pools cost AED 5 per person for an all-day pass

Knowledge Bank: Hili Fun City

Overview

- Hili Fun city is located near Hazza Bin Zayed Stadium in the north of Al Ain
- The site is located near to the Hili Archaeological Park, a site which has been recognised by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site (see UNESCO World Heritage Sites for further information) and is also where ancient tombs have been discovered
- The park was opened in 1985 by His Highness Sheikh Tahnoon bin Muhammad Al Nahyan
- Hili Fun City was the Gulf's first-ever theme park
- The park underwent a complete refurbishment and transformation and reopened to the public in 2009
- The park contains more than 30 attractions from thrilling rides to family-friendly rides
- The park has recently opened a 3D cinema experience
- The park also features a family show, amphitheatre, picnic and play areas
- The competitive price of Hili Fun City makes it a firm favourite for families visiting Al Ain

Attractions

- **Sites and attractions at Hili Fun City include:**
 - 3D Cinema opened in 2017
 - Twister Mountain – a twisting rollercoaster opened in 2010
 - Sky Flyer - a set of carriages that spin round 360 degrees
 - Thunderbolt - mobile carts that spin round a central column and swing side-to-side
 - A carousel
 - Trains including a circus train and The Hili Express
 - Ali Baba flying carpet ride
 - Hili Mouse junior rollercoaster

Opening hours

	October - May	June - September
Public Holidays	10am - 10pm	4pm - 10pm
Friday and Saturday	12 noon - 10pm	4pm - 10pm
Monday to Thursday	4pm - 10pm	5pm - 10pm

The park is closed on Sundays, unless a public holiday falls on Sunday. Wednesdays are reserved for ladies only.

Charges

Hili Fun City charges AED 50 from Wednesday to Saturday and AED 45 on Mondays and Tuesdays. Admission is free for children less than 90cm tall.

Knowledge Bank: Wadi Adventure

Overview

- Wadi Adventure is located next to Green Mubazzarah Park and Hot Springs in the foothills of Jebel Hafeet mountain in Al Ain city
- Wadi Adventure is a man-made, high-tech water sports facility
- It is the first park of its kind in the region
- Visitors to the park can enjoy activities in zoned areas:
 - **Wake Park** – for wakeboarding where riders ride a small thin wakeboard pulled by an electrically-driven cable
 - **White-Water Rafting Channels** – there are three channels - green for beginners, blue for intermediate and black for advanced rafters. Rafters enjoy hour-long sessions on the water after a 15-minute safety and tuition briefing. Wadi adventure has the world record of the longest artificial facility for rafting at 1.7 kilometres for the three combined channels. The white-water channels are used for all levels of kayaking
 - **Airpark** – featuring an aerial high ropes obstacle course, a zip wire, a climbing wall and a giant swing
 - **Surf Pool** – visitors can surf the world's largest man-made wave at 3.3 metres
 - **Open Beach** – visitors can take leisurely swim after all that activity in the heated family swimming pool or the kids' splash area
- Visitors can take lessons for all sports and activities and tuition is provided by certified trainers for all levels of competency
- Visitors can rent or buy all equipment from the H₂O store or they can bring their own equipment to use after a safety check from park staff
- Participants for the activities must be above 1.2 metres tall

Food and drink

- Visitors can grab a snack at Rafter's Grill
- The Surf Café offers sit-down meals
- Mango Mango is the place for slushies, ice creams and desserts
- Outside food and beverages are not permitted into the park

Events

- The Middle East's first-ever World Rafting Championship was held at Wadi Adventure in 2016

Acclaim

- Surfing Magazine voted Wadi Adventure's surf pool on to its '50 Favourite Surfing Sites' list worldwide
- The magazine ranked the pool the 41st best surfing beach in the world, even though it has artificially created waves

Opening hours

- Open daily from 11am - 7pm
- The Open Beach is open daily:
 - Weekdays from 5pm - 6.45pm
 - Fridays from 3pm - 6.45pm
- Ladies' Nights are held twice a month (second and fourth Thursday of the month)

Charges

- General admission is AED 50 for an adult
- Family passes are available for AED 120
- Admission for children below 1.2 metres is AED 25
- Admission for guardians is AED 25
- Visitors should check the website for up-to-date prices for activities

Knowledge Bank: Al Ain Safari

Overview

- Al Ain Safari is located at Al Ain Zoo on Nahyan the First Street in Al Ain city
- It is the world's largest man-made African-style safari park in the world and opened in 2016
- The 217-hectare safari park is part of Al Ain Zoo's expansion plans and aims to attract more foreign visitors to the area
- The park has 38 varieties of African plants and a variety of African animals
- There are over 250 animals for visitors to see while on safari
- A large hotel is currently being constructed that will overlook the safari park grounds

Animals

- Visitors to the safari park will see a variety of African and local animals
- Large animals include:
 - lions
 - zebras
 - giraffes
- Smaller animals include:
 - meerkats
 - dama gazelles
- Birds include:
 - crowned cranes
 - ostriches
- Critically-endangered or locally-extinct animals include:
 - the scimitar oryx
 - the addax

Tours

- There is a wide range of different safari options and packages for visitors to choose from
- Visitors can share a 26-seat truck with other zoo guests, with a driver and expert safari guide
- Alternatively, visitors can hire a private SUV, which will be driven by a safari guide
- The SUVs can drive near to the lion enclosure which allows visitors to study the cats in a natural environment
- Night safaris are also available for the daring visitor!

Opening hours

The safari is open daily from 9am - 7pm

Charges

Up-to-dates prices for tours can be found on the Al Ain Zoo webpage:

<http://www.alainzoo.ae/en/en-visit/en-tickets-groupbookings.html>

Knowledge Bank: Arabian Nights Village

Overview

- The Arabian Nights Village is located in the Razeen area of Al Khatim on the Abu Dhabi - Al Ain highway
- The village is 50km from exit 59 of the highway
- The village is a purpose-built 'desert experience' with organised desert activities which opened in 2012
- Arabian Nights Village is open to day guests and overnight visitors
- The village hosts private guests and corporate events

Accommodation

For overnight guests, there are four different styles of accommodation:

- Bedouin tents (*Bayt Al Shaaer*)
- Palm houses (*Bayt Al Bahar*)
- Desert houses (*Bayt Al Bar*)
- The Fort Tower (*Al Manha*)

Activities

Activities organised by the village include:

- Day desert safaris with certified and licensed safari drivers
- Overnight desert safaris with certified and licensed safari drivers
- Dune bashing in modern Toyota Land Cruisers
- Quad biking
- Sand surfing
- Sand sledding
- Fat biking
- A swimming pool at the village can be used for free by overnight residents or for a small charge for day guests

Dining and entertainment

Al Maqam Restaurant – a buffet restaurant with live cooking stations featuring:

- Local Emirati dishes
- Traditional Arabic dishes
- International classics
- Live cooking stations and spit roasts
- Live bread making
- Healthy food choices
- Complimentary soft drinks
- A wide selection of beverages
- Arabian-style floor level and sunken seating, *majlis* style
- Fire pits for winter nights
- Palm-thatched terrace
- Shisha and alcohol is available at an extra cost
- Live entertainment including musicians, belly dancers, henna artists and falconers
- Outdoor evening meals start at 7pm

Information for visitors

- There are two transportation options available to get to the village from Abu Dhabi:
 - **Coach/transfer service from Abu Dhabi:** the coach leaves daily at 3pm from Khalifa Park, behind the Park Rotana complex in Abu Dhabi
 - **Self-drive:** confident drivers with a 4X4 vehicle can access the village by road
- Dress code is conservative although this is a purpose-built tourist destination so appropriate beach wear is considered acceptable when by the pool
- Visitors should dress appropriately for activities, with light, loose-fitting clothes for modesty and protection from the sun. A hat or head covering is also advisable
- A wrap, light cardigan or jacket is recommended for winter nights

Charges

Visitors are advised to check the website for the most up-to-date rates for accommodation and activities:

<https://arabiannightsvillage.com/>

Knowledge Bank: Jebel Hafeet

Overview

- Jebel Hafeet is a mountain located in Al Ain
- Although part of the mountain straddles the border of Oman, the peak is in Abu Dhabi
- The 1,249-metre-high summit is the highest peak in Abu Dhabi
- The road up and down Jebel Hafeet is famous for driving and cycling
- In the foothills of the mountain, over 500 ancient burial tombs dating back 5,000 years have been discovered and excavated by archaeologists (see UNESCO World Heritage Sites within this section for more information on the Hafeet tombs)
- The Mercure Grand Jebel Hafeet Hotel is situated on the mountain at approximately 915m high
- The hotel is famous for stunning views of Al Ain well and organises activities to make the most of the mountain
- Visitors going to the top of Jebel Hafeet are advised to take a jacket or coat as temperatures are cooler at the top
- Winter afternoons are a good time to visit as the views are clear
- In the summer months, visitors are advised to go in the evenings when the temperature is cooler
- From Al Ain city, Jebel Hafeet provides a stunning night view as the road to the summit is lit and shimmers in the distance

Drive Jebel Hafeet

- The 11.7- kilometre road up and down to the summit is considered the best driving road in the UAE
- It has been voted as the greatest driving road by various international magazines and websites
- The road is rated alongside the famous Stelvio Pass in Italy and the Great Ocean Road in Australia
- The road contains two lanes in the upwards direction and one coming down
- The road features 21 sweeping and hairpin turns
- Drivers find the road up relatively easy to drive at speed as they can clearly see the road ahead
- The road surface is super smooth which means that cars do not suffer wear and tear
- Police impound visitors' cars and issue fines if they catch them driving without due care and attention. Even a sudden swerve can result in a fine of AED 1,000

Knowledge Bank: Shopping Malls in Al Ain

Overview

- Al Ain city has a good range of malls and souks (please refer back to Section 6 for information on souks and traditional shopping in Abu Dhabi)
- New openings and expansions of existing sites have seen the malls on offer expand in recent years
- The main shopping malls are:
 - Al Ain Mall
 - Al Jimi Mall
 - Bawadi Mall
 - Hili Mall
 - Al Foah Mall

Al Ain Mall

Overview

- Al Ain Mall is located in Al Ain city, very close to the Omani border
- It opened in 2001 and houses 350 stores and 60 cafés and restaurants
- In 2011, Al Ain Mall underwent a major expansion and nearly doubled its original size
- The city's top entertainment facilities can be found in the mall including:
 - the first full-sized ice rink in Al Ain made from real ice
 - a bowling and billiard centre
 - the Grand Cineplex
- Known as the 'ever-active mall', Al Ain Mall runs year-round promotions and campaigns offering luxurious grand prizes

Opening hours

- Weekdays 10am - 10pm
- Weekends from 10am - midnight

Al Jimi Mall

Overview

- Al Jimi Mall is located in the centre of Al Ain near to the Hazza Bin Zayed Stadium
- It was developed on the site of a meat and vegetable market that was built in the 1980s
- Al Jimi Mall opened in 2002
- The mall is set over two levels with a third to be completed in 2018
- It offers hundreds of shopping options, including:
 - Carrefour
 - Centrepoint
 - Home Centre
 - Fun City
 - Paris Gallery
 - Magic Planet
 - Virgin Mega Store

Opening hours

- Daily from 7am - midnight

Bawadi Mall

Overview

- Bawadi Mall is situated in an unusual location on the gravel flats of Khattam Al Shikla heading towards Mezyad
- It is the largest mall in Al Ain city and opened in 2009
- The mall houses over 400 shops of both international and regional brands, and a range of high street and designer names
- The mall also has a food court and many casual dining outlets
- Family entertainment includes:
 - a ski village
 - a roller-coaster
 - an eight-screen cinema
 - a 16-lane bowling alley

Opening hours

- Sunday to Thursday from 10am - 10pm
- Fridays and Saturdays from 10am - 11pm

Hili Mall

Overview

- Hili Mall is located in the heart of Al Ain city's Hili district
- It is a boutique mall with over 120 shops over three levels
- The mall houses a premium selection of:
 - men's, women's and children's fashion and accessories
 - electronic appliances
 - household goods
 - home décor and furnishing
 - coffee shops
 - restaurants
 - family entertainment
 - food court options
- The mall is linked to the five-star Hili Rayhaan Hotel by Rotana

Opening hours

- Daily from 9am - 1am

Al Foah Mall

Overview

- Al Foah Mall is located in the north of Al Ain
- The mall is Al Ain city's newest entertainment and shopping centre
- The mall houses fashion, accessories, book, toy and homeware stores
- There is also a sizeable children's entertainment complex
- The mall has a 12-screen multiplex cinema

Opening hours

- Sunday to Thursday from 10am - 10pm
- Fridays and Saturdays from 10am - 11pm

Knowledge Bank: Qasr Al Sarab Desert Resort by Anantara

Overview

- Qasr Al Sarab Desert Resort by Anantara is a five-star luxury resort located in the Liwa city in the Al Dhafra Region of Abu Dhabi
- Liwa is situated on the edge of the *Rub' al Khali* or Empty Quarter, the largest uninterrupted sand mass in the world which has featured in recent Star Wars films
- Qasr Al Sarab is 200km from Abu Dhabi city and approximately a two-hour drive
- The resort is sometimes referred to as The Mirage Palace
- The separate Royal Villas are designed to look like palaces, with private pools and butler service
- The resort features the Anantara Asian and Arabic Spa, a fitness centre, tennis court, swimming pool, kids' club, business centre and a library
- Dining options include international cuisine at Al Waha, Suhail, a seafood restaurant and Mediterranean food is served at Ghadeer which is accessed by a romantic candle-lit bridge
- The resort offers a four-course champagne dinner for two in a private Bedouin tent with a personal butler and a fire pit to keep visitors warm in the winter months

Architecture and design

- The resort is designed to resemble a fort (*Qasr*) with turrets, torches, arches and palm-lined courtyards
- The Middle-Eastern luxurious interiors feature desert and earthy colours and the soft furnishings are made from local fabrics
- Guest rooms have balconies that take in the view of the desert dunes
- When constructed the cost included the running of power and water supplies from Abu Dhabi city

Awards

- Since its opening, Qasr Al Sarab has been awarded worldwide tourism awards such as:
 - Middle East's Leading Desert Spa Resort 2015
 - United Arab Emirates' Leading Desert Resort 2015, 2014 and 2013
 - Middle East's Leading Desert Resort 2012, 2011 and 2010 ¹
 - A place on the Condé Nast Traveller UK's 2010 Hot List

Desert activities available to visitors:

- Dawn dune walks
- Camel trekking
- Dune bashing
- Desert yoga
- Horse riding
- Desert fat-biking
- Full moon desert experiences
- Camp fire barbecues
- Archery
- Mountain biking
- Desert drives
- Tour of Liwa City
- Falconry and saluki show in cooler months (subject to weather conditions)

¹ Source: www.worldtravelawards.com/profile-29500-qasr-al-sarab-desert-resort-by-anantara

Knowledge Bank: Arabian Wildlife Park

Overview

- The Arabian Wildlife Park is located on Sir Bani Yas Island, Al Dhafra region, and stretches over more than half of the island (1,400 hectares)
- It is a two and a half hour drive from Abu Dhabi plus a boat transfer to the island
- The late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan had a vision to protect endangered species and the island's plants and animals
- Sheikh Zayed established The Arabian Wildlife park on Sir Bani Yas Island as a reserve in 1971
- Today, the park is a wildlife sanctuary for over 10,000 free-roaming animals
- The focus of the Arabian Wildlife Park is to create a functioning ecosystem for the animals and birds that mimics what happens in the wild as far as possible
- The park is home to the Arabian rock hyrax, the beisa oryx, ostriches, giraffes and the striped hyena, among others
- Cheetahs have been brought onto the island to provide a natural predator in order to control the park's population naturally
- Visitors to the island can enjoy activities such as:
 - Nature and wildlife drives in 4 x 4 guided by the island's expert guides
 - Horse riding on Arabian horses from the reserve's own paddocks
 - Mountain biking – a blue route for a scenic gentle ride and a purple route for a more dramatic and strenuous ride!
 - Land sailing
 - Culture and history tours
 - Nature walks with tour guides
 - Falconry
 - Archery
 - Snorkelling

Breeding and relocation

- There are some endangered species that the park's conservationists and vets breed and rehabilitate

Striped hyenas

- The striped hyenas were the first predators to be introduced to the island as a natural form of population control
- The hyenas are classified as vulnerable worldwide and extinct in the UAE by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
- The first male and female hyenas have successfully bred their own family
- The hyenas now hunt and feed themselves which is known as 're-wilding'

Northern cheetah

- The northern cheetah is classified as vulnerable worldwide by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
- The northern cheetah is completely extinct in the wild throughout the UAE
- Male and female cheetahs were introduced to the island and, like the hyenas, have successfully bred and have their own family
- The cheetahs now hunt and feed themselves which is known as 're-wilding' and can be seen chasing prey around the park

The Arabian oryx

- In the early 1970s, the Arabian oryx was actually extinct in the wild in the UAE
- The late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan arranged to have three female and two male oryx from Al Ain Zoo placed in the nature reserve to try and bring them back from extinction
- The plan was a success and visitors can now see 500 Arabian oryx roaming freely around the reserve

Arabian tahr

- The Arabian tahr is a small stout mammal resembling a goat and can be found on the Hajar Mountains on the border of the UAE and Oman
- The Arabian tahr is classified as endangered on the Red List by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
- The Arabian tahr is now living in a specially-made camp that looks and feels like their natural habitat
- The Arabian tahr will soon move to a larger enclosure which also mimics their natural environment so visitors can learn more about them
- Eventually, the tahr will move into an even bigger enclosure so they can adjust and re-wild under supervision
- The tahr will then be released into the wild under the supervision and direction of the island's specialist staff

Information for visitors

- Visitors can drive two and a half hours from Abu Dhabi and then board a boat transfer to the island
- Visitors can also charter a private seaplane through the Seawings Company
- Visitors should contact the island to enquire about booking activities and the best times to visit

Knowledge Bank: Desert Island Beach Stopover

Overview

- Abu Dhabi Desert Island Beach Stopover is a location with a beach stopover, for both large and small vessels, on Sir Bani Yas Island in the Al Dhafra region of Abu Dhabi
- It is the first location of its kind in the Arabian Gulf
- Passengers can disembark and enjoy a relaxing day on the desert island beach
- A dedicated welcome centre can help visitors to book excursions
- The island stopover can include a barbecue lunch, cocktails and beachside massages
- Over half of Sir Bani Yas Island is made up of the Arabian Wildlife Park. The park is home to more than 10,000 free-roaming animals

What to see and do on Sir Bani Yas Island

Passengers on the Desert Island Beach Stopover can enjoy:

- Adventure activities
- Beach and watersports
- Unique excursions such as:
 - traditional Al Serdal Pearl Diving experience
 - cultural heritage tours of the island
 - horse-riding on Arabian horses
- Relaxing on the 1.2km stretch of beach exclusively for cruise passengers, which features:
 - VIP, family and standard sections
 - sunbeds and umbrellas
 - VIP cabanas
 - a spa area
 - indoor and outdoor freshwater showers
 - three buffet areas and grill stations

Knowledge Bank: Architectural Styles in Abu Dhabi

1. Traditional or vernacular architecture

- This type of architecture relied on the skills and tradition of local builders rather than trained architects
- The UAE's permanent dwellings were built of stone *guss* (mud mixture made into blocks) and were roofed with palm fronds
- Fossilised coral, cut in blocks, bonded with *sarooj* (a blend of red clay and manure), or a lime mixture from seashells, and plastered with chalk and water paste, was used widely in coastal regions

2. The development of Abu Dhabi

- The first returns in oil production prompted the first plans for the city's developments in the early 1960s
- The earlier fishing town was swept away to make way for the grid system and road networks
- Abu Dhabi was planned according to Le Corbusier's Modernist ideals
- The city grew from its focal point, the Al Hosn Palace, and slowly took shape, transforming into a busy commercial city with oil, construction and finance sectors as its new economic drivers
- By the 1970s, rapid growth was seen with the construction of housing projects, markets, public buildings and community facilities to cater for the influx of expatriates who were needed to build the Emirate
- The design and construction of the buildings of the 1980s were of inferior quality because the demand for housing was so high and quality control mechanisms were not fully in place
- In the 1990s, a wave of reconstruction was undertaken to preserve the buildings constructed in the 1980s
- By the 1990s, building rules had been relaxed
- Development was booming in the 1990s and the increase in the population dramatic. To meet demands, curtain wall buildings were erected
- In 2010, the Department of Culture & Tourism (DCT) launched the Modern Heritage Preservation Initiative which was concerned with the protection of the heritage of iconic modern buildings of post-oil times
- After 2010, rules on the heights of buildings were relaxed which allowed Abu Dhabi's buildings to grow towards the sky
- The main streets are:
 - The Corniche
 - Airport Road
 - Sheikh Zayed Street
 - Hamdan Street
 - Khalifa Street
- Sectors or specific industries tend to be clustered within streets. Examples are:
 - Hamdan Street - for general shopping
 - Khalifa Street - for banking
 - Al Najdha Street - hardware stores
 - Defense Street - mobile telephone shops
 - Sheikh Zayed Street - all things computer-related

3. Key architects and iconic buildings of the post-oil era

a. Iconic buildings

- Abu Dhabi Bus Station/Terminal
- Sheikh Zayed Stadium in Zayed Sports City
- Al Bateen Mall with its flying canopies design
- Maqta Bridge
- The Armed Forces Officers' Club
- The Intercontinental
- Le Meridien and Hilton hotels

b. Key architects and their buildings

- Rifat Chadirji - National Theatre and Cultural Centre, 1977
- Henri Colboc - Zayed Sports City, 1979
- Georgi Kolarov for Bulgar Consult - Bus Station/Terminal, 1989
- Abad Al-Radi and Nazar Ahmed - Old Fish Market, 1992-2005
- Wimberly, Allison, Tong & Goo (WATG) - Emirates Palace Hotel, 2005
- Yousef Abdelky - Design of Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan Mosque, 2007
- Spatium – Interior Design of Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan Mosque, 2008
- Hani Rashid and Lise Anne Couture of Asymptote Architecture - Yas Viceroy Hotel, 2010
- DBI Design - Etihad Towers, 2011
- Zaha Hadid Architects - Sheikh Zayed Bridge, 2010
- Benoy - Ferrari World, 2010
- MZ Architects - Aldar HQ, 2010
- RMJM Architects - Capital Gate Building (ADNEC), 2011
- Pelli Clarke Pelli Architects – The Landmark, 2013
- Foster and Partners:
 - Masdar City Masterplan (2007-ongoing)
 - Masdar Institute (2007-2015)
 - Al Raha Beach Development (2007)
 - World Trade Centre (2006-2014)
 - World Trade Centre Souk (2006-2014)
 - Zayed National Museum (2016-TBA)
 - Reem Island Residential Towers (2008-TBA)

Knowledge Bank: Cuisine and Knowledge of Local Restaurants

Culinary background

A long trading history with other countries in the region and Asia has brought a fusion of local and imported ingredients which have become an important part of Emirati dishes

Traditional Emirati food items

Appetisers

<i>Robyan Mashwi</i>	Grilled jumbo prawns
<i>Hobbol</i>	Deep-fried fish roe
<i>Naghar Mashwi</i>	Grilled squid
<i>Al Sehnah</i>	Deep-fried anchovies
<i>Samboosa</i>	Deep-fried pastry filled with either vegetables or vegetables and meat

Soups

<i>Shorbat Harrees</i>	Wheat and meat soup
<i>Shorbat Deyay</i>	Chicken soup
<i>Shorbat Adas</i>	Lentil soup
<i>Shorba Bahreia</i>	Seafood soup

Salads

<i>Salatat Jarjeer</i>	Rocket salad
<i>Salata Khadra</i>	Green salad
<i>Salatat Basal Wa Tomat</i>	Tomato and onion salad
<i>Salatat Hamba Wa Jarjeer</i>	Rocket and mango salad

Knowledge Bank: Local Information and Emirati Laws for Visitors

1. Navigating around Abu Dhabi
2. Public transport in Abu Dhabi
3. Local legal system and general laws that should be highlighted to tourists to ensure awareness

1. Navigating around Abu Dhabi

Official tourist/visitor maps

Free maps provided by hotels do not always provide all the information a visitor would need and are mostly concerned with marketing restaurants or services. The official Visit Abu Dhabi map should be given out to visitors. The map is available to download from the Visit Abu Dhabi website. Alternatively, you can request a stock of these maps from the Department of Culture & Tourism (DCT).

2. Public transport in Abu Dhabi

Taxis

- Taxis in Abu Dhabi are regulated by the Centre for Regulation of Transport by Hire Cars (TransAD), a government organisation established in 2006
- TransAD's mission is to establish a safe, secure, accessible and efficient public transportation system in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi
- TransAD works in collaboration with the Emirates Driving Company which provides training programmes and assessments to develop practical skills for taxi drivers
- There is no specific city centre taxi stand apart from at shopping malls and centres
- Customer bookings over the phone or through an app are monitored to ensure customers are updated on their pick-up times and that taxi drivers complete job requests

Passenger rights and responsibilities

- Customers have the right to:
 - decide on the route
 - see the taxi meter
 - refuse multiple hiring
 - have the air conditioner on
 - refuse to pay additional amounts or tip
 - see the driver's photo identity card
- Customers are responsible for:
 - paying the correct fare, including any tolls and booking fees that apply
 - wearing a seat belt at all times
 - not eating, drinking or smoking in the taxi
 - not asking the driver to stop where it is illegal or unsafe to do so
 - ensuring any child under 12 months is secured in an approved child seat ⁷

⁷ Source: www.abudhabi.ae/portal/public/en/citizens/vehicles-and-transport/public-transport/taxi-service-in-abu-dhabi

Chauffeur-driven services

- Chauffeur-driven services are operated by Careem Limo throughout Abu Dhabi
- Visitors entering Abu Dhabi via the airport can travel to the city centre in a fixed-rate limousine available at the taxi pick-up area

Buses

- Public buses in Abu Dhabi are regulated and operated by TransAD. They operate regular services with more than 650 buses servicing over 95 routes
- The seats for female passengers are situated immediately behind the driver
- The seating section for men is at the back of the bus

Car hire

Visitors will need the following documents to be able to rent a car in Abu Dhabi

- Driver's passport
- Credit card
- Valid driving licence

Car Parking - m-Mawaqif

- m-Mawaqif is the name of Abu Dhabi's parking system
- Premium parking zones are indicated by white- and turquoise-coloured kerbs. Drivers can park in these zones for up to four hours at a time
- Standard parking zones are indicated by black-and turquoise-coloured kerbs and drivers are permitted to park there for up to 24 hours
- The parking system is in operation in Abu Dhabi from 08.00 am – 12.00 midnight Saturday – Thursday. Fridays and public holidays are free

3. Local legal system and general laws that should be highlighted to tourists to ensure awareness

- The main basis of the legal system in the UAE is founded on Sharia law⁸ although most of the laws passed and the system itself are a blend of Islamic and European models of civil law
- The **Constitution** of the UAE was created at the time of the formation of the federation of the UAE and the unification of the Emirates in 1971
- **The Peripheral Offices Section**, affiliated with the LRCB, is the body responsible for spreading awareness of laws, values and morals through the police and community education lectures.
- It is mandatory to carry personal identification at all times. This should be either a passport or a national ID card
- Importing any pork products into the UAE is illegal
- Importing pornography into the UAE is illegal
- There is a **zero tolerance for drugs-related offences**; penalties for possession of even a small amount of an illegal substance can incur a minimum four-year jail sentence
- If visitors are using doctor-prescribed drugs such as painkillers or antidepressants, they should carry a doctor's note
- It is a punishable offence to drink alcohol while walking in the street or park and it is against the law to be drunk in a public place
- The legal age for drinking alcohol is 18 in Abu Dhabi

⁸ Source: Sharia law is a religious law forming part of the Islamic tradition. It is derived from the religious precepts of Islam, particularly the Quran and the Hadith.

- The legal age to smoke tobacco in the whole of the UAE is 18 years
- Smoking is illegal in government buildings, offices and shopping malls
- Electronic or E-cigarettes are illegal in the UAE and are likely to be confiscated at the border
- If a visitor pays for something by cheque and they do not have enough money in their account to clear it, they will face criminal and civil charges
- People who swear, make rude finger, hand or other gestures could be jailed or deported
- People kissing or touching each other in public could be arrested for doing so
- Taking pictures of certain government and military buildings is illegal as is photographing aircraft and plane spotting
- Taking pictures or recordings of strangers, particularly women, without permission is illegal and can lead to arrest or fines
- Equipment like satellite phones, listening or recording devices, radio transmitters, powerful cameras or binoculars, may require a licence for use in the UAE

Find out more on the UAE federal laws

<https://u.ae/en/information-and-services/justice-safety-and-the-law/how-are-uae-laws-issued-and-how-to-find-them/where-to-find-uae-federal-laws>