



Dubai

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HISTORY



Dubai enjoys a rich heritage, with Dubai history going back to prehistoric times, although the Emirate itself is much more modern. The biggest changes in the history of Dubai have come since the discovery of oil around 50-years-ago.

In the Beginning

Some 800 members of the Bani Yas tribe, led by the Maktoum Family, settled at the mouth of the creek in 1833. Dubai's economy relied heavily on fishing and pearl diving until the mid-20th century when Dubai struck oil in 1966. Oil changed everything for this sleepy town and eventually transformed it into the mega city it is today. Shortly after Dubai switched its currency from the rupee to the riyal (which it still uses today.) With the recent oil money, Sheikh Rashid began developing a modern a city and in 1971 the United Arab Emirates was formed with Dubai as its shiny capital.

The Al Maktoum Family

The Al Maktoum family are descendants of the Bani Yas tribe of the area of what is now the UAE, who were the most powerful and strategic of the familial tribes of ancient Arabia. In 1833, around 800 members of the Al Maktoum family branched away from the main Bani Yas family and took over the Emirate or region of Dubai, establishing themselves as the ruling family of this area. Without any opposition, the Al Maktoum family has ruled Dubai ever since and has now established themselves as the royal family with the titles of Sheikh, roughly translating as "king" in this case. The Sheikh of Dubai now also serves as the Vice President of the UAE, while also serving as the de facto Prime Minister and Defense Minister.

The Pearling Trade

The first few decades of the 20th century were prosperous times in the history of Dubai. It became an important centre for the trading of pearls, thanks to its low taxes and proximity to Iran. The first school, known as the Al Ahmadiya School, was built in 1912 and has now been restored to become one of the more interesting historical sites in Old Dubai.

The Great Depression

1930s was the start of one of the most unsettling times in the history of Dubai. This period saw the pearling trade begin to die off and also witnessed a rise in tensions with its neighbour, Abu Dhabi. In 1947, the British even established a buffer zone between the two emirates, as tensions had erupted in the form of an all-out war. The British eventually departed the Gulf at the beginning of the 1970s, but the discovery of oil in Dubai and Abu Dhabi meant that tensions had died down.



MONEY

MONEY



The United Arab Emirates uses the UAE Dirham, commonly referred to as the "DH" or "Dhs". There are 100 fils in a dirham and there are one, half, and quarter coins. Notes come in denominations of 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200, 500, and 1,000. Something you might encounter is that change is rounded to the nearest coin.

Credit Cards

Major providers such as Visa and Mastercard are widely accepted at major restaurants, stores and hotels in Dubai, with other cards such as American Express less likely to be accepted. However, not all smaller stores and grocery shops will accept your card.

Debit Cards

International debit cards, such as Visa and Mastercard, are widely accepted at retailers.



Visitors from the USA

In Dubai you'll probably find the best rates available if you're changing from U.S. Dollars. The local currency, AED, is pegged to the Dollar, so you'll always receive roughly the same rates (taking into account fees and charges) when exchanging Dollars to Dirhams.

ATMs

A global finance capital, ATMS are found nearly everywhere in Dubai. As long as you have a 4-digit pin number for your card, you can typically withdraw from accounts there. Still, be sure to watch out for offers to be charged in your home currency rather than the local one.

HELPFUL INFO

Climate

Dubai weather is characterised by a tropical desert climate with hot, sunny conditions created by its proximity to the Tropic of Cancer and the Northern desert belt. Summers are very hot, humid and dry with temperatures climbing to 40 °C and higher and rarely dropping below 30 °C. Winters are still warm however temperatures drop considerably to highs of 23 °C and lows of around 14 °C.

Electricity

In the United Arab Emirates the power sockets are of type C, D and G. The standard voltage is 220-V and the standard frequency is 50-Hz.



Technology & Communication

The launch of Dubai Internet City (DIC) in 1999 heralded a new era in the ICT industry not only in Dubai, but across the region. DIC was announced by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, to pioneer the growth of the ICT and technology sectors in Dubai, and to support the Emirate's development into a knowledge-based economy. Both DIC and DOC have grown to become thriving business communities, home to over 1,400 companies, including Fortune 500 companies as well as startups and freelancers.

Infrastructure & Transport

The UAE has the most advanced and developed infrastructure in the region. From roads to airports to telecommunications, the UAE is home to world class facilities that have supported economic growth and enabled the development of business. There are 7 international airports throughout the country. On September 9, 2009, the Dubai Metro was inaugurated and on the next day it opened to the public.

The Dubai Metro consists of 75-km of track between its two lines and cost \$8bn to construct.



In Case Of An Emergency

Police (emergency): 999

Police (non-emergency): 901

Ambulance: 998 or 999

Coast guard: 996

Fire Department: 997

Water / Electricity: 991

Language

Arabic is the national language of UAE. In Dubai, English is used as a second language. Due to a lot of immigrants, a lot of other languages have also gained popularity in the Emirate like Hindi, Urdu, Malayalam, Tagalog and Pashto.



LGBT Travel

Homosexual acts are illegal under UAE law and can incur a jail term and fines. Dubai's authorities are not in the business of searching for gay tourists to arrest, even though homosexual sex is illegal. Campaign group Detained in Dubai says there is a "vibrant underground gay scene in Dubai", but it advises discretion. "Although one should never have to hide who they are, it's the only way to travel safely in the UAE if you are gay," it says.

Religion

Islam is the official religion of the UAE and the majority of Emiratis are Muslim. However, the government is a lot more liberal in this respect than some of its neighbours; the right to freedom of religion is respected, and there is very little interference in the practice of other religions in Dubai.



Getting There

Convenience, speed, and new, modern facilities are just some of the advantages offered at Dubai International airport and Al Maktoum International at Dubai World Central. With over 7,000 weekly flights operated by 125 airlines from 260 destinations on every continent (except Antarctica), you have a wide range of options to choose from when flying to Dubai.

Driving

A first-rate network of roads and highways connects Dubai and its neighbouring emirates, making it a great way to explore the country. An Emirate Route Number designates highways and main roads in Dubai and the United Arab Emirates. In the UAE, cars drive on the right side. Speed limits are clearly displayed and are usually 60–80km/h (37–50mph) around town and 100–120km/h (60–75mph) on highways.

THE EXPERIENCE

Culture

The culture of Dubai is closely intertwined with Islamic traditions. Even though the city is considered as the entertainment capital of the Middle East, the Muslims of the city refrain from the wild parties that can often be found at many of the luxury bars and clubs around the city. The major festival celebrated in Dubai is Eid, observed after the month of Ramadan during which the people fast throughout the day and pay penance for their sins. The other major festival celebrated in the city is the National Day, celebrated in December, commemorating the forming of UAE.

Bucket List

Glamping in the Dubai desert

Skydiving above Palm Jumeirah

Diving at the Lost Chambers Aquarium

Dune Buggy through the Dubai desert

Jet Surf at SeaWake

Family Travel Highlights

Take a tour at the world's largest mall

Enjoy at the world's largest permanent global showcase

Take a walk through the Green Planet

Play on the interactive museum of OliOli

Indulge in an indoor skiing at Malls of the Emirates' Ski Dubai

Tourist Authority

The Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing (DTCM) is the principal authority for tourism in Dubai.



Foods To Try

Manousheh

Kousa Mahshi

Baba Ganoush

Fatteh

Kellaj

Shish Tawook

Manakkish

Luqaimat

Drinks To Try

Freshly Squeezed Juices

Karak chai

Jellab and qamardeen

Laban and ayran

Tamar Hindi



Photography Hot Spots

Burj Khalifa

Dubai Marina

Palm Jumeirah

Business Bay

Jumeirah public beach

Bastakiya

Dubai Creek

Souvenirs To Buy

Dried dates

Camel milk

Assorted candied fruits and nuts

Oudh and Bakhoor

Pashmina Shawls

Gold Jewelry

Coffee and Arabic coffee pot

Hookah pipe/Shisha pipe

