



# Sporting arena

## Dubai Rugby Sevens

The Emirates Airline Dubai Rugby Sevens is not only the opening round of the IRB Sevens World Series, but is one of the biggest social weekends of the year. Featuring sixteen of the best Seven-playing nations in the world, the Dubai Rugby Sevens has grown into an adrenaline-packed sporting event that attracts die-hard fans from around the globe.

## UIM Class 1 World Offshore Powerboat Championship

Dubai has played an important role in the development of powerboat racing in the Middle East. With contestants coming in from all over the world, this much-awaited event is packed with tremendous excitement. It is also very popular because the country is home to the Victory Team, which is one of the best powerboat teams in the world.

## Dubai International Sailing Week Regatta

Since 2000, the Dubai International Sailing Week Regatta has been making world headlines every year. With over 160 international sailors participating, this mega-event is held in the month of January and adds new life to the calm waters of the Arabian Gulf.

## Dubai Traditional Dhow Sailing Race

Held at regular intervals from September to May, the Dhow Sailing Race is definitely the most spectacular event on Dubai's water sports calendar. The sight of majestic wooden dhows racing through the aquamarine waters, strikingly evokes the Arabian lifestyle of yesteryears.

## Dubai International Kitesurfing Tournament

During the month of March, kitesurfing enthusiasts faithfully gather from around the world for this

breathtaking event. Here, you can enjoy watching experts perform some amazing stunts. The tournament also holds a separate competition for racing and freestyle tricks.

## A1 Grand Prix of Nations

The Dubai Autodrome, the region's first fully-integrated motorsports facility, hosts the renowned A1 Grand Prix of Nations. Pitting driver against driver and country against country, enjoy this adrenaline-filled event that is held annually. This state-of-the-art facility also holds the FIA GT Championship as well as the first 24-hour race in the Middle East.

So whether you are looking for a fun-filled shopping holiday or an exciting family event, you're sure to find it all in the multifaceted city of Dubai.

## United Arab Emirates

Dubai is the second largest of the seven emirates that form the United Arab Emirates and ranks as the country's leading commercial centre. The other six emirates are Abu Dhabi - the federal capital, Sharjah, Ajman, Umm Al Quwain, Ras Al Khaimah and Fujairah.

## Location and Area

Dubai is located on the southern shore of the Gulf in the south-eastern part of the Arabian Peninsula. It lies between 55°16 East and 25°16 North. The total area of the Emirate is 3,885 sq. km.

## Visas

- **AGCC Citizens** - Citizens of the Arab Gulf Co-operation Council member states (Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Oman, Saudi Arabia) do not need a visa.
- **AGCC Residents** - AGCC expatriate residents who meet certain conditions may obtain a non-renewable 30-day visa upon arrival at the approved ports of entry.
- **Citizens of Western Europe and the Pacific Rim** - Citizens of UK (with the right of abode in the United Kingdom), France, Italy, Germany, Holland, Belgium, Luxembourg, Switzerland, Austria, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Portugal, Ireland, Greece, Finland, Spain, Monaco, Vatican City, Iceland, Andorra, San Marino, Liechtenstein, USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Brunei, Singapore, Malaysia, South Korea and holders of Hong Kong SAR passports will be granted a free One Entry Visit visa on arrival in the UAE. Currently, it has been decided to postpone the implementation of the new regulation as far as Cyprus is concerned. The visa enables them to stay for 60 days. The visa is renewable for a total stay of 90 days for a fee of AED 500.

- **German Citizens** - German citizens (tourists and business people) may apply to the UAE embassy in Germany for a one or two year multiple-entry visa. No sponsor is required. The maximum duration of stay of visa holders should not exceed three months a year. The visa fee is AED 1,500.
- **US Citizens** - US citizens (tourists and business people) may apply to the UAE embassies in the US for one to ten year multiple-entry visas. A sponsor is required and the visa will be granted free of charge. The maximum duration of stay should not exceed six months a visit.

- **Entry Service Permit** - An Entry Service Permit applies to the following categories and their families accompanying them: company manager's representatives, sales managers, account auditors, delegations from companies or establishments to carry out a commercial activity in the UAE, enquirers requested by any of the establishments/companies operating in the UAE assumed to carry out an urgent task. Such visa is also granted to nationalities authorised to obtain a tourist visa, as per the Ministerial Council's decision. This visa is valid for use within 14 days from the date of issue.
- **Tourist Visa** - A special category of visas under the Visit Visa type is a Tourist Visa, which can be obtained for individual tourists from: East and West Europe, Turkey, Bulgaria, Poland, Ukraine, Albania, Russia, the Hellenic Republic, St Kitts-Nevis, St Lucia, Mexico, Cuba, Bermuda, Belize, Guyana, French Guiana, Martinique, Antigua and Barbuda, St Vincent, Kingston, Palao other non-defined American nationalities, Thailand, South Africa, Singapore, China, Malta, Cyprus. The Tourist Visa entitles its holder to a 30-day stay and is non-renewable.

- **Multiple-entry Visa** - Multiple-entry Visas are granted to business visitors who have a relationship with either a multinational or other reputable local establishments, and who are frequent visitors to the UAE. This type of visa is valid for six months from the date of issue and the duration of each stay is 30 days. The validity is non-renewable. The cost of this visa is AED 1,000. The visitor must enter the UAE on a visit visa and obtain the multiple entry visa while in the country. The visa would be stamped on the passport.

- **96-hour Visa for Transit Passengers** - Transit passengers stopping at Dubai International Airport for a minimum of 8 hours are eligible for obtaining a 96-hour transit visa.

- **Transit Visas** - This is a special type of visa, which applies to passengers passing through UAE airports. For those who travel with Emirates Airlines, transit visas can be arranged by the Airline itself. But those flying through other Airlines have to contact the Marhaba Services directly. For transit passengers or those holding special permits, or for visit or mission, the passport or the document must be valid for at least three months.

- Nationals of Israel may not enter the UAE.
- A penalty charge of AED 100 per day is imposed on visitors who overstay.

For further information visit [www.dnrd.gov.ae](http://www.dnrd.gov.ae) or e-mail: [dxbinmig@emirates.net.ae](mailto:dxbinmig@emirates.net.ae)

## Climate

Dubai has a sub-tropical arid climate. May to September is summer, when temperatures range between 40°C and 48°C. However, during the winter months, temperatures range from 10°C to 30°C in winter. Rainfall is predominantly in winter and amounts to some 13cm annually.

## Clothing

Summer clothing may be worn for most of the year but the temperature can drop during the winter. At the pool or on the private beaches, swimwear is quite acceptable, but when in the city and public areas, care should be taken not to give offence by wearing clothing that may be considered revealing.

## Language

The national language is Arabic but English is widely used.

## Currency

The monetary unit is the Dirham (AED) which is divided into 100 fils. The official exchange rate is US\$1 = AED 3.675.

## Banks

Many international banks are represented by branches in Dubai. Bank hours are 0800 to 1300, Saturday to Wednesday and 0800 1200, Thursday.

## Credit Cards

American Express, Diners Club, Visa, MasterCard, etc. are generally accepted in the main hotels and shops.

## Tipping

Tipping practices are similar to most parts of the world.



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To position Dubai as the leading tourism destination and commercial hub in the world and to strengthen the Dubai economy.

# Festivals & Events in DUBAI

# Where fun meets family.



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# Dazzling festivals

Although Dubai is considered the ideal holiday spot throughout the year, the best time to visit the city is during the breathtaking festivals and exciting international events. Watch the city come to life as people from over 200 countries come here to be part of the excitement. During your stay, don't miss the opportunity to visit the magnificent tourist sites that will leave you completely spellbound.

## Dubai Shopping Festival

During the Dubai Shopping Festival, the city becomes the most sought-after shopping extravaganza in the world. Enjoy a menu of attractions during the month-long festival, which is dotingly called DSF.

Attracting millions of visitors every year, DSF is a celebration of non-stop shopping bargains and store giveaways. The entire city offers unbelievable

discounts on everything - from cars, electronics and computers to fashion, jewellery and perfumes.

## • Shopping malls

Enjoy a wonderful assortment of discount offers, free gifts and special promotions at Dubai's world-class shopping malls. From chic designer wear to the latest electronic gadgets, the tax-free price tags are sure to make you reach for your wallet. In addition, the magnificent architecture and grand interiors make your visit an unforgettable experience.

## • Global Village

Shop to your heart's delight at the massive Global Village, which is one of the major attractions of the festival. Countries from all over the world assemble here to exhibit their exotic wares. Whether you are looking for silks and tapestries from China, traditional paintings and instruments from Kenya, apparel and accessories from Italy or a 30-minute foot massage from Cambodia, the world is at your fingertips.

The imposing façade of each pavilion elaborately transports you to another country. In this mini world tour, take a fascinating glimpse of Egypt's pyramids, India's Mysore Palace, China's Imperial Palace and Japan's Himeji Castle. Don't miss the live performances by folk bands and dancers that will keep your camera contantly clicking.

After shopping, treat your taste buds at the bustling food court, where you can choose from a variety of cuisines - Arabic, Mongolian, Thai, Japanese, Chinese, Italian, Mexican and Indian. If you are seeking more fun and excitement, then the games arena is worth a visit. There are great prizes to be won in games of skill and some spine-tingling rides that are sure to double your thrills.

## • Night Souq

Scout the popular streets of Al Riqqa, Al Muraqabbat and Al Seef that spice up the action till the midnight hour. The atmosphere hums with excitement as street performers and a variety of carnivals offer a visual

treat in addition to authentic Arabian gourmet treats at the numerous street-side cafés. Don't miss the dazzling fireworks every evening that colourfully light up the night sky.

## • Parks

During DSF, scores of events are lined up for the little ones. From scintillating Aqua Fantasia shows and huge markets to remarkable plays and appealing competitions, the parks offer unlimited excitement for children.

Quite clearly, Dubai is indeed the perfect venue where 'One world, One Family, One Festival' come together and keep you coming back for more.

## Dubai Summer Surprises

The Dubai Summer Surprises (DSS) is an annual festival event that offers 'Big Fun for Little Ones', and focuses on knowledge and entertainment for kids during the yearly summer vacation. Attracting families from around the world, DSS offers unlimited fun and

excitement for ten weeks and is usually held between the months of June and September. Savour the special surprises that are primarily held in Dubai's outstanding shopping malls. There are nine themed events - School's Out Surprises, followed by Food, Ice, Flower, Heritage, Water, Techno, Global and finally the Back-to-School Surprises.

Don't forget to visit one of the most popular destinations, Modhesh Fun City, where children queue up for the colourful and brightly-lit rides. Modhesh (Arabic for 'incredible and amazing') is the much-loved mascot of DSS. In fact, the birth of Modhesh gave this festival a fun and cheerful dimension.

The major attractions at Fun City are the Modhesh Theatre and Kitchen and the various zones like Sand Sculpting, Clever Thinking, Art and Craft, Automobile, Lego, Soft Play, Family and e-zones.

Also visit the Modhesh Fun Fair, which has many entertaining and challenging electronic games.

## Dubai the City that Cares

Since 1998, Dubai organises an annual shopping festival during Ramadan called 'Dubai the City that Cares'. The event is primarily geared towards the spirit of charity during the Holy month. The Dubai Charity Forum is organised and stands are set up for donations by various non-profit organisations.

The festival also hosts the yearly Dubai International Holy *Quran* Award, where male youngsters compete by reciting from memory various verses of the Noble *Quran*.

Shopping centres and *souqs* come alive after *Iftar* till late at night. You'll be amazed to see people shopping till as late as 1 am. Don't forget to grab some great bargains during the festival promotions.



# International events

Dubai has earned its reputation as the sporting capital of the Middle East. The sporting calendar is filled with international events that attract top sports personalities and avid fans from around the world.

## Dubai World Cup

The world's richest horse race, the Dubai World Cup is held annually at Nad Al Sheba Club. Feel the excitement rising every minute as the horses gallop towards the finish line. In this elegant and elite event, the scene-stealers are actually the women who display their finest gowns and hats as they compete for the coveted title of Best Dressed Lady and Best Hat. The Dubai World Cup has established itself not only as one of the most important horse-racing events but also a fashion rendezvous that you can't afford to miss.

## Dubai Tennis Open

Held annually at the state-of-the-art Dubai Tennis Stadium, the Dubai Tennis Open attracts most of the world's top players including Andre Agassi, Roger Federer, Marat Safin, Lindsay Davenport and the Williams sisters. In fact, Dubai made world headlines when tennis legends, Andre Agassi and Roger Federer, couldn't resist the temptation to have a friendly match on the world's highest tennis court, the helipad of Burj Al Arab, which is undoubtedly the world's most luxurious hotel.

## Dubai Desert Classic

A prestigious golfing tournament, the Dubai Desert Classic has been regularly attracting many of the world's leading golfers and thousands of avid

spectators, year after year. In addition to playing an important role in the international sporting arena, it is universally recognised as one of the finest golf events in the Middle East.

The tournament is usually held during the winter months (January to March). Observe the masterful strokes of players like Tiger Woods, Vijay Singh, Ernie Els and Colin Montgomerie among other greats. Feel your heart skip a beat as you watch a breathtaking eagle on the last hole. And finally, share the jubilation at the grand presentation finale as the worthy winner proudly holds aloft the massive Dubai Desert Classic trophy.

