



Sporting events

Dubai International Marine Club hosts a wide variety of water sport events throughout the year. So when you are in Dubai, don't miss the opportunity to experience any of these action-packed events live.

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 usually held in the month of January.

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 evoke the Arabian traditions of yesteryear.

Dubai International Kitesurfing Tournament
During the month of March, kitesurfing enthusiasts from around the world flock to Dubai 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.

So whether you want to feel the excitement of water sports or escape to serenity underwater, you're sure to find it all in the multifaceted city of Dubai.

For further information, contact any of the following water sport facilities:

- **Dubai International Marine Club**
Tel: +971 4 3995777
Website: www.dimc-uae.com
- **Le Meridien Mina Seyahi Beach Resort and Marina**
Tel: +971 4 3993333
- **One & Only Royal Mirage**
Tel: +971 4 3999999
- **Madinat Jumeirah**
Tel: +971 4 3668888
Website: www.madinatjumeirah.com
- **The Jumeirah Beach Club**
Tel: +971 4 3445333
Website: www.jumeirah.com
- **Dubai Water Sports Association**
Tel: +971 4 3241031
Website: www.dwsa.net

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-Navis, 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 or e-mail: dxbimmig@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.

Working Hours
Business: 0800 - 1300 and 1600 - 1930, Saturday to Thursday. Most of the multinational companies work from 0900 - 1800 with a one hour lunch break.
Government offices: 0730 - 1430, Saturday to Wednesday.
Exchange houses: 0830 - 1300 and 1630 - 2030, Saturday to Thursday.
Shopping malls: 1000 - 2200, Saturday to Thursday and 1600 - 2200, Friday. Thursday afternoon and Friday is the weekend in the Islamic world.

Photography
Normal tourist photography is acceptable but it is considered offensive to photograph Muslim women. It is also courteous to request permission before photographing men.

Bargaining
Bargaining is expected in the souq and is quite usual elsewhere. Vendors will usually drop the price and often quite substantially, particularly for a cash sale.

Communications
Telecommunications in Dubai are excellent. Telephones have international direct dialling to most countries in the world. Full telex, telefax, and electronic mail facilities are widely available. There is an efficient and reliable postal service. The General Postal Authority also offers a courier service. Muntaz Post delivers to most parts in the world and commercial courier services are widely used.

Media
There are three English language newspapers published in Dubai - Gulf News, Khaleej Times and Emirates Today. International newspapers, magazines and journals can be bought at bookshops and supermarkets. Dubai has both Arabic and English commercial radio and television stations, as well as access to international satellite TV programming.

Medical Care
Medical services in Dubai are of an international standard.

Electricity
The electricity supply in Dubai is 220/240 volts at 50 cycles. US-made appliances may need a transformer.

Water
Tap water is quite safe to drink. But locally bottled mineral water is generally served in hotels and restaurants.

For complaints about your Dubai experience or the Department of Tourism, please contact Business Development Department on DTCM address below or e-mail ecomplaints@dubaitourism.ae.

For further information on DTCM's overseas offices in Australia, France, Germany, Hong Kong, India, Italy, Japan, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Russia, Sweden, Switzerland, South Africa, USA and UK, please contact DTCM on the address below.

Water sports in **DUBAI**





Deep sea fishing

Hire a boat and go deep sea fishing to get some prize catches like the hammour, barracuda, shark and sailfish. The best fishing period is from October through April, although there are still some catches that you can get during the summer months such as the sailfish and queenfish. Stop your boat over a reef or wreck if you wish to catch small and medium fish.

Sailing

Escape into the water and go sailing, which is one of the most popular pastimes in Dubai. Choose from any of the sailing boats, dinghies or traditional dhow and relax as you listen to the rhythmic sounds of the waves.

Swimming

There's nothing like an energising swim in the sun-kissed waters of the Arabian Sea while you get yourself a deep tan. Enjoy the company of people from

all over the world as you dip into the most popular waters of the region.

Scuba diving

Prolific marine life, good underwater visibility, a profusion of coral reefs and easily accessible wrecks make Dubai the preferred destination for scuba divers. Dive into the deep ocean and discover the mysteries that await you underwater. Make sure you carry your International Diving Licence; and if you don't possess one, then simply attend the special diving courses ranging from an introductory dive to technical diving from international training organisations like PADI, BSAC, CMAS, NAUI, IANTD, HAS and many more.

Whether you are a novice or an expert, with top-notch diving equipment and experienced dive masters, you can rest assured you'll have a safe and comfortable diving experience. Choose from any of the challenging

dives for ship wrecks, marine life or coral reefs, but if you have more time on hand then all three are worth a shot.

As you go down to the ocean bed, explore the various ship wrecks that range in depth from 12 to 80 metres. Most of the wrecks have gone down due to bad weather or marine accidents and few have been created to form artificial reefs. Diving here will also give you an opportunity to see the various waterfront developments like the Palm, the World and many more.



Adventurous rides

Once you finish the desert adventures of sand skiing, dune driving and exploring the *wadis*, it's time to take on the many exciting water sports available in Dubai. From jet skiing and scuba diving to sailing and wind surfing, you're sure to double your thrills on the calm yet challenging waters and feel a rush like never before.

Jet skiing

Go on an enthralling trip as you deftly manoeuvre the jet ski, and race with the wind through the refreshing waters off Dubai's coast. Feel the water spray all over your body as you sharply power slide around corners and zip across the waves to make this ride even more exciting.

Parasailing

Let the mighty sea breeze carry you higher as you go parasailing above the aquamarine waters of the Arabian Sea. Take in the breathtaking view of the endless ocean from above, as you're pulled by a high-powered speed boat.

Wakeboarding

Experience the heart-pounding action of wakeboarding, the aquatic equivalent of snow boarding. Step on the wakeboard, and using the momentum of the speed boat, create a big wake to pull off some amazing stunts.

Kitesurfing

Push yourself to the limit in this extreme sport. Instead of the speed boat, enjoy the unpredictability of the sea

wind as it pulls your kite in the direction that it chooses. An adventure only for the brave hearted, do take some formal instructions before kitesurfing. With the high-speed winds in Dubai, experience true freedom and get your adrenaline gushing.

Windsurfing

Feel the cool sea breeze rush through your hair as you go windsurfing. Choose from a wide variety of boards available here and head into the inviting waters. Let the wind carry you around in this thrilling sport.

Speed boating

Go on an exciting adventure by renting some of the fastest speed boats in the region. A great way to get away from it all, experience the unique bumps in the sea as your boat races against the wind.



Exciting waters



Underwater mysteries

As you visit the following popular wreck sites with your dive master, be amazed by the wide range of marine life here, which also includes whale sharks and dolphins during winter.

• Sheikh Mohammed Barge

Enter this former working barge that was deliberately sunk approximately 12 nautical miles offshore on the order of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum to create an artificial reef. Go a little further and find another boat and lifting crane amongst a large variety of marine life.

• Barge Sarraf

About 7 nautical miles off Jumeirah, discover the 42-metre long coastal motor vessel, which is in close proximity to a car barge complete with various vehicles

and a tug boat. These vessels have been lying upright in 22 metres of water since it sank in 1985, and provide a good opportunity for a limited penetration dive. Observe a multitude of fish including barracuda, guitar sharks and spotted eagle rays.

• Cement Barge

Approximately ten minutes from Dubai, is the 25-metre long vessel that sits upright in 10 metres of water. Enjoy this relatively easy dive, which is ideal for novices. Take this splendid opportunity to see colourful fish like the clownfish, parrotfish and stingray.

• Port Rashid Wrecks

As you swim through the breakwater at Dubai Dry Dock, which is the final resting place for a number of wrecks, explore vessels like the LC Beauty Judy, an 8.5-metre landing craft, a tug boat – MV Ant and Nasser, a 9.8-metre long motor vessel. These vessels

lie in approximately 16 metres of water and provide a great opportunity for some interesting exploration.

• MV Dara

Considered to be one of the most historic wrecks on the West Coast, MV Dara was sunk in 1961 by an Omani mine and resulted in a loss of 238 lives. Take a closer look at the ship which lies on her starboard side in 20 metres of water. Dara is 399 ft in length and weighs a massive 5,030 tons. Explore this site which is classified as one of the advanced dives due to tidal influences.

Snorkelling

In case you don't have a licence for scuba diving, then grab the opportunity to go snorkelling. Enjoy the colourful coral reefs as you swim by in the company of turtles. Also, catch a rare glimpse of the harmless reefshark that lives in the Arabian Sea.