

*Welcome to Dubai* covers some useful basic information about doing business in Dubai. It has been produced by New Zealand Trade and Enterprise Dubai to help ensure your visit to the city is as successful and as trouble-free as possible. Our staff have comprehensive local knowledge of the city and the culture as well as being experts in exporting to the United Arab Emirates. We can offer you an extensive range of services to assist with your stay in the United Arab Emirates, ranging from appointment programmes to escort and interpretation assistance. Contact your New Zealand Trade and Enterprise client manager for further information. Welcome to Dubai, we hope you have an enjoyable and profitable stay.

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# welcome to Dubai



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**Welcome to  
Dubai**

**Jan 2006**

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This document is one of a series of free information tools for exporters produced by New Zealand Trade and Enterprise. New Zealand Trade and Enterprise provides a wide range of standard services and sophisticated solutions that assist businesses through every stage of the export process.

For information or advice, ring NZTE on 0800 555 888, visit [www.marketnewzealand.com](http://www.marketnewzealand.com), or contact your Client Manager.

## contacts

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New Zealand Trade and Enterprise (NZTE) Dubai is located on Sheikh Zayed Road, the main highway of Dubai leading to Jebel Ali and Abu Dhabi. The office is just 15-20 minutes drive from Dubai airport (depending on traffic), and is within 15 minutes travelling time of most five star hotels.

The best way to reach the NZTE office from the airport is by taxi. This should cost about AED40 and take around 15-20 minutes, depending on the traffic. Most taxis will know the Fairmont Hotel on Sheikh Zayed Road. The API Tower, where the NZTE office is located, is a blue glass tower immediately next to the Fairmont Hotel. For a map and more detailed directions to the NZTE office, please visit the exporter information section of [www.marketnewzealand.com](http://www.marketnewzealand.com).

New Zealand Trade and Enterprise in Dubai is responsible for NZTE's market coverage in the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Oman, Qatar, Syria, The Palestinian Territories and Yemen. NZTE Dubai is also responsible for the overall management of NZTE offices in Riyadh (Saudi Arabia) and Karachi (Pakistan).

There is a New Zealand Consulate General located in the same office as NZTE, which is accredited for Dubai. New Zealand does not have an Embassy in Dubai, with the Embassy in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, accredited to cover the Gulf States and Egypt.

Those New Zealand exporters wanting further information on the United Arab Emirates in New Zealand should read the NZTE Country Guide on the UAE or ring NZTE's Enterprise Hotline on 0800 555 888.

## background information

### Geography and Climate

The UAE is a federation of seven member states, or emirates, of which Dubai is one. The UAE was established in 1971 and consists of the emirates of Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Umm Al Quwain, Ras Al Khaimah and Fujairah. Although Abu Dhabi is the capital of the UAE, Dubai is the second largest emirate, ranking as the UAE's most important port and commercial centre. It is situated on the banks of the Dubai Creek, a natural inlet from the Arabian Gulf, which divides the city into the Deira district to its north, and Bur Dubai on its south.

The UAE has a sub-tropical, arid climate. Rainfall is infrequent and irregular. Falling mainly in winter, it amounts to some 13 centimetres a year. Temperatures range from a low of about 10°C to a high of 48°C. The mean daily maximum is 24°C in January rising to 41°C in July.

All hotels, offices, taxis and private cars are air-conditioned.

## Population

Nearly one and a half million people live in Dubai, with Abu Dhabi and Dubai accounting for almost two thirds of the UAE's population. Only about 20% of the UAE population are local 'emiratis', the rest are nationals of the Middle East, Europe, the Americas, Australasia, South Asia and South East Asia.

## government

The Supreme Council of the UAE, comprised of the hereditary rulers of the seven emirates, is the highest federal authority. It is responsible for general policy matters involving communications, education, defence, foreign affairs and development, and for ratifying Federal laws.

The Federal Council of Ministers, responsible to the Supreme Federal Council, has executive authority to initiate and implement laws. The Federal National Council is a consultative assembly of 40 representatives who are appointed for two years by the individual emirates. The Council monitors and debates government policy but has no power of veto. While Abu Dhabi is the centre of federal government activities, most ministerial departments also maintain offices in Dubai. Various government departments and ministries, both federal and local, are key to setting up and doing business in Dubai.

## Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry

The Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry was set up by the Dubai Government to provide a variety of services to the Dubai business community. Among other activities, the Chamber compiles business-related data for the emirate, issues certificates of origin of commodities and other goods, nominates experts for goods surveying, receives commercial complaints, and holds economic and commercial conferences. Every commercial, professional and industrial company must register with the Chamber, although exceptions may be made for some very small businesses.

## Dubai Department of Economic Development

The Dubai Department of Economic Development, also known as the Economic Department, is the first port of call if you are planning on opening an office outside a free trade zone. It is the authority that issues trade licences and, reflecting the local economy, this office is known to be very busy. This department has a comprehensive website: [www.dubaied.gov.ae](http://www.dubaied.gov.ae).

## Dubai Municipality

The Municipality is another key institution when setting up an office outside of free zones. All companies must gain approval from the Municipality for their premises before setting up. The Municipality also approves and monitors all construction in Dubai, and is responsible for a variety of municipal services such as environmental protection, regulation and public health services. The Dubai Municipality consists of numerous departments, each at a different location. The head office is currently located in Deira, near Etisalat. They also have a comprehensive website: [www.dm.gov.ae](http://www.dm.gov.ae).

## Ministry of Economy and Commerce

The Ministry of Economy is a federal institution overseeing all economic activity in Dubai. Foreign companies wanting to set up a branch in Dubai, as well as insurance companies, agents and brokers, must obtain approval from this Ministry. The Ministry also handles the registration of commercial agents and agencies.

## Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs

This Ministry is also a federal institution and is responsible for approval of all labour-related permits (with the exception of some free zones). Only official representatives of companies deal directly with this Ministry.

## doing business in dubai

It is important for New Zealanders doing business in Dubai and the UAE to understand etiquette and the manner in which business is conducted. The following are some aspects you should consider when doing business in Dubai. For more tips on doing business in the UAE, please refer to NZTE's UAE Country Guide, which is available on [www.marketnewzealand.com](http://www.marketnewzealand.com).

- The people of Dubai are friendly and hospitable and visitors are welcomed. Muslims are forbidden by their religion to drink alcohol. Alcohol should not be offered to Muslims and pork products should not be eaten in their presence. Smoking in offices is quite common.
- The official language in Dubai is Arabic. Other widely used languages are English, Urdu, Hindi, Malayalam and Farsi. Most business people either speak English or have an English-speaking person on their staff.
- In business, it is customary for visitors to be offered refreshments, usually coffee or tea. It is polite to accept at least one, but preferably two cups, before refusing a refill. Asking for water only is acceptable.
- It is essential for business visitors to arrange appointments well in advance and to be punctual. However, as elsewhere in the Middle East, it is usual to expect to be kept waiting and for meetings to be interrupted by incoming telephone calls, visitors etc.
- The concept of time is rather fluid in the Middle East and people are often late for meetings. Be patient if your host is delayed as this can easily be due to an unexpected (and possibly more important) other visitor. Early morning appointments are not a good idea. If you are late for an appointment ring and tell them you are held up. Generally they will wait for you.
- Business cards are given out readily, so ensure you have a sufficient supply. If visiting the region regularly, it is useful to have business cards printed in Arabic and English.
- It is recommended that you do not come to the region on business in summer (July/August) as most people are on holiday. Similarly, coming to the region during Ramadan is not advisable.
- Muslims are not permitted to eat, drink or smoke between dawn and dusk during the month of Ramadan. The Muslim calendar is twelve days shorter than the Gregorian calendar, meaning that the dates for Ramadan change every year. Over the next two years, Ramadan begins on 24 September 2006 and 14 September 2007. Visitors should take particular care not to cause offence during this time. It is not recommended to do business in the UAE during Ramadan as the business hours are short.
- Dubai is a hub for many Middle Eastern trade shows, and hotels can be booked out months in advance at some times of year. It is advisable to book at least four months prior to GITEX, the annual computer exhibition held in October, and the bi-annual Dubai Airshow, usually held in November. Hotel rates can be considerably higher during these periods.

- Social customs vary between the emirates, and within areas. Modes of dress and behaviour that may be acceptable in Abu Dhabi City and Dubai and in other towns frequented by western expatriates may be frowned upon in strict Muslim quarters. Dubai combines traditional Arab culture with a western outlook and is much more liberal in its attitudes than Abu Dhabi.
- Men and women should dress in a conservative manner throughout the emirates, with formal dress (suits and ties or blazer and tie for men) for business and social functions. Care should be taken to dress in appropriate clothing; men should always wear a shirt and women should avoid wearing revealing dresses or very short skirts.
- Normal tourist photography is acceptable, but it is considered offensive to photograph unknown Muslim women.
- Don't use your left hand when receiving or offering items as it is considered unclean.
- Don't sit with the soles of your feet facing other members of a group, as this is considered offensive.
- Refrain from expressing extreme views and try to avoid controversial conversations about political issues or religion.

## working hours

Within Dubai (as well as across the Middle East), there is considerable variation in working hours and days. It is wise to check the hours of companies prior to setting up appointments and finalising travel plans. These are some general guidelines for entities in Dubai:

Government departments: Saturday-Wednesday 8am-2pm  
Local UAE companies: Saturday-Thursday 8am-2pm, 4pm-6pm  
Multinational companies: Sunday-Thursday 8am-5pm

Banks remain open until about 1.30 pm on weekdays, but close early on Thursdays. Large supermarkets are generally open from 9.00 am to 10.00 pm throughout the week, and shopping malls are usually open for around 12 hours starting from 10 am (later on Fridays). Other shops in the city generally close between 1pm and 4.30 pm.

Note that all companies are closed for business on Fridays. Also remember that during the holy month of Ramadan working hours may be different: government and some private sector companies' working hours will be reduced by 2 or more hours, whereas shops and shopping malls open later in the day and stay open until much later. It is best to call ahead of time to confirm opening hours to avoid frustration.

## hotels and accommodation

### Hotels/Daily Living Costs

Many of the world's top hotel chains can be found in the UAE, including the Hilton, Sheraton, Ramada, Le Meridien, Marriott, Holiday Inn, Inter-Continental, and Hyatt Regency. Daily corporate rates vary between NZ\$250 and NZ\$600 plus a 20% tax and service charge. The average cost of three meals per day, plus incidentals, is around NZ\$250.

Most leading hotels will provide a pickup service from Dubai Airport for their guests. Emirates Airlines first class and business class passengers can arrange a free pick up and drop off from their hotels to the airports.

Corporate rates at most hotels can be obtained under the NZTE name for group bookings only. During peak occupancy periods (January ~ end March and October / November) however, it can be easier to secure rooms and preferential rates through travel agencies, who have access to block bookings. NZTE suggests the following hotels as offering good locations and relative service in the 4 ~ 5 star range.

Shangri-La Hotel – 5 star on Sheikh Zayed Road  
[www.shangri-la.com](http://www.shangri-la.com)

Dusit Dubai – 5 star on Sheikh Zayed Road  
[www.dusit.com](http://www.dusit.com)

The Fairmont Dubai – 5 Star on Sheikh Zayed Road (next door to NZTE Offices)  
[www.fairmont.com](http://www.fairmont.com)

The Novotel World Trade Centre Dubai – 4 star (next door to Dubai Exhibition Centre)  
[www.novotel.com](http://www.novotel.com)

Towers Rotana – 4 star on Sheikh Zayed Road  
[www.rotana.com](http://www.rotana.com)

## money

### Currency

The official currency unit of the United Arab Emirates is the Dirham (AED), which is divided into 100 fils. There are no restrictions on the import and export of currency. The dirham is pegged to the US dollar at a rate of 3.68 (fixed since 1981). It is recommended that visitors carry US dollars for easy conversion, however other major currencies, especially Euro, are also accepted. The following denominations are in circulation: Notes: 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200, 500 and 1000 AED  
Coins: 5, 10, 25 and 50 fils; 1 AED.

In January 2006, one New Zealand dollar bought approximately 2.6 UAE dirham. To check current exchange rates, ask your local bank or view the following website: [www.oanda.com](http://www.oanda.com), select "FX Converter".

### Credit Cards

Major credit cards are widely accepted at hotels, travel agents, retailers, restaurants, and supermarkets. There are Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) throughout the UAE, although a pin number must be used to access cash. You may only receive AED7000 in a 24 hour period from an ATM. There are generally no restrictions on the amount of currency that may be taken into or out of the UAE. Visitors are advised not to exchange foreign money in hotels. A better rate of exchange will be given in banks.

### Banks

Major banks are open from 8:30am to 1.00pm Saturday to Thursday. They close on Fridays and public holidays. Some banks and branches are open slightly longer hours. Some banking services are not available an hour before closing. Internet banking is available.

## Tipping

All hotel and restaurant bills include a 20% tax. Tipping is not mandatory, but generally expected.

## Transportation

There is no train or metro and only a limited bus service in Dubai. There are, however, many taxis, which are reasonably priced.

## Taxis and Car hire

There are three major taxi companies and these are all metered cabs. If you choose a non-metered cab, negotiate the rate first. Taxi drivers from Dubai, as opposed to the other emirates, will generally be more familiar with Dubai streets, therefore avoid catching taxis from other emirates when travelling around Dubai. An easy way to ensure the taxi is from Dubai is by checking the car's number plate, as they usually state which emirate the taxi is from.

Hertz, Avis and other international car hire firms all operate in the UAE. We recommend New Zealand business people on first-time visits use taxis, which can be hired either at a daily cost of approximately NZ\$200 per day or on an ad hoc basis. Local car hire rates vary between NZ\$50 and NZ\$100 per day.

## Dubai Airport

The Dubai airport is a large modern airport and is currently being expanded. As a result of construction work on a new terminal you may notice changes in road access to the airport. There is a large duty free shopping area and taxis and hire cars can be hired at the terminal.

### Major Airlines into the Middle East

Over 80 airlines fly into Dubai. The best links from New Zealand are:

- Emirates Airlines (via Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane) from Auckland or Christchurch. There are Emirates Airlines offices in Auckland and Christchurch.
- Singapore Airlines (via Singapore)
- Cathay Pacific (via Hong Kong)
- Thai Airlines (via Bangkok)

## shopping

Dubai is one of the world's most attractive shopping destinations. Major shopping festivals are held following Eid Al Adha (in 2006, starting mid January), summer and during Ramadan. It is worth bargaining in all stores with no marked prices and even those with marked prices in the case of electronics and jewellery.

## Shopping Malls

There are a number of excellent shopping malls that have a large variety of shops. Most are open from 10 am to 1 pm and 4.30 pm to 10 pm, and the larger ones are open all day. All taxi drivers will know the location of all major malls.

- **Deira City Centre:** This is an entertainment and shopping complex with over 300 shops, as well as a movie theatre, a Virgin Megastore, an indoor leisure complex and themed courtyards. Shops include Carrefour, Ikea (household items), Debenhams, Woolworths, as well as a good variety of other shops and restaurants. Virtual tours are available on its website ([www.deiracitycentre.com](http://www.deiracitycentre.com)). The mall is open all week.
- **Mall of the Emirates:** This recently opened shopping mall boasts an inside ski slope. Ski Dubai is designed to simulate an Alpine resort. To generate interest, cafes are at the base of the hill, with a two-story window separating patrons from the skiing. A 14 screen Cinestar complex and a new two-level Magic Planet family entertainment centre including, indoor roller coasters and simulators, are also located here, along with 300 retail outlets. For more information, go to [www.mallofemirates.com](http://www.mallofemirates.com).
- **Ibn Battuta Mall:** This mall is based on the journey of famous Arab traveller and scholar, Ibn Battuta. The mall is segmented into six distinct architectural zones, representing key destinations visited by Ibn Battuta throughout the Far East, Middle East and North Africa. It is well worth a visit for the architecture alone and of course has a wide range of retail outlets including the French supermarket Geant. For more information, go to [www.ibnbattutamall.com](http://www.ibnbattutamall.com).
- **Bur Jurman Shopping Mall:** A mall with a wide range of good quality shops, such as British Home Stores and JC Penney's, designer clothes and shoes etc. The mall has recently been expanded. For more information on the wide range of shops, visit their website ([www.burjuman.com](http://www.burjuman.com)).
- **Wafi City Shopping Mall:** A wide range of designer goods and luxury shops. For more information, go to [www.waficity.com](http://www.waficity.com).

## Supermarkets

- **Carrefour:** French owned chain, which sells food and a variety of consumer goods, such as household items, clothing and electrical goods. Has excellent meat, fish, and cheese sections, however sells no pork products. There is a Carrefour in Deira City Centre.
- **Choithrams:** Indian Owned supermarket chain, which has most major UK/USA brands and many Indian speciality brands; has a separate pork section.
- **Spinneys:** Most major UK brands with good fruit, meat, and fish sections. Has separate pork section.
- **Co-Op:** UAE owned co-operative, which is quite cheap and has a reasonably good range. However, it doesn't sell any pork products, pet food, some feminine products or any products that may contain pork traces (such as gelatine and marshmallows).
- **Park N' Shop:** Smaller supermarket in Jumeirah, excellent choice of UK and US products, has separate pork section, and good meat section.

## Wine Alcohol Outlets

There are only two alcohol outlets in Dubai. These are Maritime and Mercantile International ([www.mmidubai.com](http://www.mmidubai.com)) and African & Eastern Ltd. Only non-Muslim UAE residents with a liquor permit can buy alcohol. All alcohol has a 30% tax on it.

Alcohol is freely available at bars and restaurants within four and five star hotels. Prices are high, with mark-ups of up to 500%. You are legally allowed to bring four bottles of liquor into the country on arrival. There is a large duty free shop in the arrival area at the airport.



## Gold

Gold jewellery is amongst the cheapest in the world. You can buy gold in a variety of places, including Dubai's famous gold market (see below for more information), shops around Dubai or Dubai airport. The Damas chain of jewellery shops has over 70 outlets and sells 18 karat European style jewellery. They have branches in the gold souk and many hotels in Dubai. Prices will vary according to the weight and daily gold price.

## Carpets

Dubai offers a wide range of Persian carpets at very reasonable prices. Remember to bargain.

## Souks (markets)

The souks (traditional markets) on both sides of the Creek are attractive not just for their shopping bargains, but also as places for visitors to wander. A collection of narrow alleys have survived on the Deira side of the Creek despite intensive building in recent years. In the tiny lanes of the spice souk, the atmosphere of the past can be enjoyed, with bags of spices, incense, rose leaves and traditional medicinal products stacked outside each of the stalls.

- **Gold Souk:** This is Dubai's most famous market and has about 350 gold shops.
- **Spice Souk:** Located in the Deira side by the Creek. Excellent for saffron and nuts of all kinds.
- **Sharjah Souk:** This souk is not in Dubai, but in the emirate of Sharjah, and is around 30 minutes from Dubai. It is a large souk with carpets and tourist items. Please note that very conservative dress rules apply in Sharjah.

## food

Dubai's many fine hotel restaurants offer a microcosm of the world's cuisine. The choice is extensive; Gulf and Middle Eastern, Indian, Filipino, Thai, Chinese, Japanese, German, French, Italian, and Mexican. Most hotels will have at least four restaurants. All hotel restaurants levy a 20% service charge on top of the bill.

Outside the hotels, Dubai offers the visitor hundreds of small eating-places scattered throughout the city. Fast food ranges from several big international chains to "shawarma" stands, selling grilled shavings of lamb or chicken, mixed with salad and rolled inside a pocket of Arabic bread.

By night, Dubai has something for all tastes and budgets. Due to the licensing laws in Dubai, alcohol can only be served in hotels. Bars and pubs can be found in all the top hotels, with many of them featuring live music. There are a choice of discotheques and Arabic nightclubs. Dubai is also on the regular circuit for many international entertainers, including rock bands, opera, and the London theatre.

## health

### Hospitals/Clinics

Medical facilities in Dubai are generally satisfactory. Emergency treatment can be obtained from the Rashid Hospital (04 337 4000). There are also a number of privately run hospitals. NZTE

strongly recommends health insurance if you come to the region and the use of private hospitals in the case of an emergency. If you are involved in a car accident, by law you will be taken to Rashid public hospital to be seen by a government hospital doctor.

- **Welcare Hospital LLC**  
Tel: 04 282-7788  
Fax: 04 282-8226  
Emergency number: 04 282 7788  
Email: [welcare@emirates.net.ae](mailto:welcare@emirates.net.ae)  
Web: [www.welcarehospital.com](http://www.welcarehospital.com)
- **American Hospital Dubai**  
Tel: 04 336 7777  
Fax: 04 3365176  
Web: [www.ahdubai.com](http://www.ahdubai.com)
- **Al Zahra Private Medical Centre**  
Tel: 04 331 5000  
Fax: 04 331 4369  
Web: [www.alzahra.com](http://www.alzahra.com)

The Welcare and American hospitals are private hospitals and have many European and American doctors and nurses. Ask your hotel's concierge for assistance.

- **Expatriate Doctors**  
Dubai London Clinic - Tel: 04 344 6663  
General Medical Centre - Tel: 04 349 5959
- **Expatriate Dentists**  
Dr. Michael's Dental Clinic - Tel: 04 349 5900  
Dubai London Clinic (emergency) - Tel: 04 344 6663

*This list of hospitals, doctors and dentists is provided for the convenience of enquiries. Neither the New Zealand Government nor New Zealand Trade and Enterprise accepts responsibility for the competence or otherwise of the practitioners.*

## Health Tips

No vaccinations are normally required by the Dubai authorities. However, visitors should check with their carrier when making reservations, as health regulations may change without notice. Tap water is nominally safe to drink, although does not taste great relative to New Zealand. There is an abundance of bottled distilled and mineral water available.

## communications

- **Post:** There are post offices throughout Dubai. Post from the UAE can be slow and unreliable. Overseas airmail tends to be more reliable than local mail. Local mail between the emirates can take up to two weeks, whilst an airmail letter to Europe takes about five days.

- **Telegrams/Faxes:** Telegrams can be sent to most parts of the world 24-hours a day. Fax facilities are available in all hotels and many five star hotels offer fax facilities in each guest room.
- **Internet:** Most good hotels have Internet access in the rooms and/or at their business centres. It can be slow due to the proxy and some people experience poor connectivity. The cost is approximately US\$1 per hour. Check the rate with the hotel, as bills can be very costly. There can be difficulty connecting from remote email, especially on Fridays.
- **Mobile Phones:** Mobile phones are widely used and usually printed on business cards. It is strongly recommended that you bring a mobile with global roaming when you come to the region. It is possible to purchase a local mobile number whilst in Dubai with prepaid cards. You need to take a passport copy with the entry visa page and AED165 to either Etisalat (telecommunications company) or Axiom retail shops.
- **Newspapers:** There are two local English-language daily newspapers – the Gulf News and the Khaleej Times. Local and international newspapers are available at major hotels, bookstores and news stands. For regional business news and information you can read MENA Report online ([www.menareport.com](http://www.menareport.com)).
- **Radio:** The English-language service of UAE Radio Dubai broadcasts daily on 92MHz FM 24 hours a day. Channel 4FM also broadcasts 24 hours a day on 104.8MHz.

## electronics

Voltage in Dubai is 220 volts, which is the same as in New Zealand. However, the plug is a UK plug, so you need an adaptor to use New Zealand appliances. Remember to bring an adapter or ask your concierge for one. Most major hotels provide hair dryers and other amenities.

## visa requirements

Citizens of a number of countries, including New Zealand passport holders, will be issued entry permits, or free visit visas, on arrival in the UAE. This is valid for one month and can be extended for a further two months on application. Entry to most Arab countries is forbidden to travellers whose passports bear Israeli stamps.

Visa requirements for entering Dubai vary greatly between different nationalities. Visa regulations and any costs involved are always subject to change and should, therefore, be checked with the nearest UAE embassy prior to travel. The nearest UAE Embassy for New Zealand citizens is located in Canberra, Australia.

In Dubai, the Dubai Naturalization and Residency Department is the administrative authority of the Ministry of Interior that deals with issuing visas to visitors entering the UAE.

## tourist information

- **Wild Wadi Waterpark:** This is one of Dubai's biggest tourist attractions and features 23 water rides as well as a fake thunderstorm. For more information go to [www.wildwadi.com](http://www.wildwadi.com).
- **Dubai Creek:** Lined by dhows, the Creek offers a picturesque glimpse of Dubai's trading heritage. It can be crossed by "abra" (water taxi) and tour operators offer day or night cruises.
- **Dubai Museum:** Al Fahidi Fort, recently renovated to house an excellent museum, portrays Arab life throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and the development of Dubai. There are also 4,000-

year-old archaeological finds among the many displays. Open 7.30am to 8.30pm daily and 2.30 pm to 8.30 pm on Friday.

- **Bastakiya:** The old Bastakiya district with its narrow lanes and tall wind-towers gives a glimpse of old Dubai. Immediately to the east of Al Fahidi Fort, it is the largest concentration of traditional courtyard houses with wind-towers. The wind-towers, the earliest form of air-conditioning, were used to cool homes in the Gulf.
- **Shindagha:** At the mouth of the Creek, Shindagha is the original site from which Dubai grew. The former home of the ruling Maktoum family has been carefully reconstructed here and gives wonderful views of the Creek. Each room of the house shows a different aspect of the history of Dubai. Open 9.30 am to 9.30 pm daily and 3 pm to 8 pm on Friday.
- **Dubai Creek Golf and Yacht Club and Emirates Golf Club:** Close to the heart of the city on the banks of the Creek are 200 acres of championship standard golf course. The complex includes a marina, and the spectacular dhow sail architecture of the main club house is a Dubai landmark. Emirates Golf club is a 36-hole, par 72 course with many lakes and undulating fairways. Home of the annual PGA Desert Classic, the course is highly regarded by many of the world's top professionals.
- **Dubai Golf and Racing Club:** Horse racing is a much-loved sport in the UAE and regular meetings are held throughout the cooler months. Trips to the racetrack at Nad-Al-Sheba, which encircles an 18-hole links golf course, can be arranged by your hotel.
- **Camel Racetrack:** Camel racing is a popular local sport and takes place on weekends (Thursday and Friday) throughout the winter. Most tour operators or your hotel can organise a trip to the track for an exhilarating and truly Arabian experience.
- **Hatta Fort:** In the foothills of the majestic Hajar Mountains, Hatta is a comfortable resort ideal for a weekend getaway. The historic Hatta Fort overlooks the village. The area is a much frequented picnic spot and tour operators can arrange for a four-wheel drive safari into the mountains to the Hatta Pools.
- **Desert Safaris:** The major tour operators offer a variety of exciting days, sunset and overnight desert safaris by four-wheel drive vehicle. These combine exhilarating dune driving with the opportunity to travel through ancient Bedouin villages, visit camel farms and perhaps explore the attractive scenery of the mountain wadis (valley) in the foothills of the starkly beautiful Hajar Mountains. Particularly popular are safaris in the cool of the evening offering dune driving, spectacular sunset views and as the highlight, a traditional Arab barbecue complete with music and belly dancing under the stars. Check with your hotel for details.
- **Mosques:** Dubai has many fine mosques. One of the largest and most beautiful is Jumeirah Mosque, which is a spectacular example of modern Islamic architecture. Note that non-Muslims are generally not permitted to enter Mosques. However, during Ramadan tours are taken through this mosque on a Thursday morning as part of Sheikh Mohammed Cultural Understanding programme.
- **Medinat Jumeirah:** This new resort is a city-on-the-sea and is located adjacent to Burj Al Arab and the Jumeirah Beach Hotel. The resort houses two hotels with bedrooms and villas, as well as traditional souks that are separated by artificial lakes and date palm trees. Visitors can experience the rich heritage and traditions of Arabic culture in a relaxed atmosphere.
- **Visiting surrounding emirates and countries:** The emirates of Fujairah and Ras Al Khaimah as well as neighbouring countries Oman and Bahrain are within easy reach of Dubai and are accessible by car or by air.
- **Fujairah** is one of the UAE's most scenic emirates with its picturesque fortresses, dramatic mountain scenery, unspoilt beaches and pleasant climate. Only a 90-minute drive from Dubai, there are numerous tourist attractions and the Emirate has a variety of hotels catering to all tastes.
- **Ras Al Khaimah** is 100 kilometres northeast of Dubai and its proximity to natural attractions such as the Hajar Mountains, the Musandam Peninsula, the Straits of Hormuz, and the

UAE's east coast make it an ideal base from which to explore the natural beauty of the northern emirates.

- **Oman:** The Sultanate of Oman is four hours by road from Dubai along a desert road or less than an hour's flight away and offers a variety of tourist attractions. Oman currently has a so-called common visa facility with the Emirate of Dubai, which means that New Zealand citizens with a valid visa for Dubai can enter Oman. However, it is always best to check with the Omani authorities prior to departure. If you are hiring a rental car in Dubai, you must check to see if it is registered and insured to drive through to Oman – many times they are not and you will be turned back from the Oman border.
- **Bahrain:** The small island kingdom of Bahrain is about an hour's flight from Dubai and easy to explore by car. Contact the authorities for details on entry requirements.
- **Three well-known tour operators:**  
Arabian Adventures - Tel: 04 343 9966  
Net Tours - Tel: 04 266 6655  
Orient Tours - Tel: 04 282 8238

## security / safety

Dubai is one of the safest cities in the world, even at night. People may walk alone with confidence. You should nevertheless take sensible precautions about your safety at all times. The New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs advised in July 2003 that Westerners in the Gulf States and the Arabian Peninsula may be targets of terrorist organisations. It is therefore best to check official travel advisory information prior to departure.

## guides on the middle east

There are a number of good guides and books to read on Dubai and the UAE. These are a few we would recommend:

- **Dubai Explorer:** This comprehensive guide by Explorer Publishing provides information on a variety of subjects for visitors or new residents, including on the UAE economy, Government, business practices, setting up a business, travelling, entertainment, schooling and many more subjects. If you are unable to buy this guide from your local bookstore, the guides by Explorer Publishing can be bought online through Amazon. The Explorer Publishing website provides more information on available guides, [www.the-explorer.com](http://www.the-explorer.com).
- **Lonely Planet Guides to Dubai / Arabian Peninsula / Middle East:** These guides are very useful if you are planning on travelling in the region. Full of sound advice and good practical information, they should be available through most good bookshops in New Zealand. Check [www.lonelyplanet.com](http://www.lonelyplanet.com) for further information.
- **MEED Guide:** This is the Middle East Economic Digest guide ([www.meed.com](http://www.meed.com)) and is available from UAE bookshops. It is updated annually and provides good business and economic information.
- **Don't they know it's Friday? Cross-cultural considerations for business and life in the Arabian Gulf:** This book by Jeremy Williams is published by Motivate Publishing ([www.motivatepublishing.com](http://www.motivatepublishing.com)) in Dubai and provides a good insight into local customs and behaviour in both the social and business context. It is thoroughly recommended for businesspeople new to the region.

## emergency numbers

Emergency Service	Phone Number
Police	999
Fire	997
Ambulance	998
Electricity and Water	991
Airport Enquiries	206 6666
Road Service (AAA)	800 4430
Telephone Directory	181

## useful websites

Site	Address
Dubai Municipality	<a href="http://www.dm.gov.ae">www.dm.gov.ae</a>
Dubai World Trade Centre, exhibition and events	<a href="http://www.dwtc.com">www.dwtc.com</a>
Dubai City Guide	<a href="http://www.dubaicityguide.com">www.dubaicityguide.com</a>
Dubai maps by Dubai City Guide	<a href="http://www.dubaicityguide.com/maps/maps.asp">www.dubaicityguide.com/maps/maps.asp</a>
Dubai Look, nightlife information site	<a href="http://www.dubailook.com">www.dubailook.com</a>
Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing	<a href="http://www.dubaitourism.ae">www.dubaitourism.ae</a>
Dining in Dubai	<a href="http://www.diningindubai.com">www.diningindubai.com</a>
Dubai International Airport	<a href="http://www.dubaiairport.com">www.dubaiairport.com</a>
Emirates Airline	<a href="http://www.emirates.com">www.emirates.com</a>
Etisalat White Pages	<a href="http://www.whitepages.ae">www.whitepages.ae</a>
Etisalat Yellow Pages	<a href="http://www.yellowpages.ae">www.yellowpages.ae</a>
Dubai Media City	<a href="http://www.dubaimediacity.com">www.dubaimediacity.com</a>
Dubai Internet City	<a href="http://www.dubaiinternetcity.com">www.dubaiinternetcity.com</a>
Dubai Financial Market	<a href="http://www.dfm.co.ae">www.dfm.co.ae</a>
Dubai Shopping Festival	<a href="http://www.mydsf.com">www.mydsf.com</a>
Dubai Sports	<a href="http://www.dubaisports.com">www.dubaisports.com</a>
Dubai World Cup (horse race)	<a href="http://www.dubaiworldcup.com">www.dubaiworldcup.com</a>
Dubai Golf, information on Dubai's golf courses	<a href="http://www.dubaigolf.com">www.dubaigolf.com</a>
Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum's official website	<a href="http://www.sheikhmohammed.co.ae">www.sheikhmohammed.co.ae</a>

For business related links in the UAE, please read the UAE Country Guide available from the exporter information section of [www.marketnewzealand.com](http://www.marketnewzealand.com).

# exporter information tools

Welcome to  
Dubai

Jan 2006

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