

UAE

Traveler's Handbook



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About UAE

The **United Arab Emirates** is situated in the southeastern Asian continent and the eastern part of the Arabian Peninsula. The term 'Emirate' refers to a principality, and it comes from the word Emir and specifically references principalities ruled by a dynastic Islamic monarch. There are seven emirates in the UAE : Abu Dhabi, Ajman, Dubai, Fujairah, Ras al-Khaimah, Sharjah and Umm al-Quwain. Each emirate has its monarch, but Abu Dhabi serves as the capital, and the Emir of Abu Dhabi serves as President of the UAE.



Time Zone

The United Arab Emirates standard time is UTC +4 and is co-linear with neighboring Oman.

Language

The official language is Arabic. Modern Standard Arabic is taught in all schools, and most native Emirates speak a dialect of Gulf Arabic that is generally similar to that spoken in surrounding countries. Since the UAE is home to a large expatriate community, several other languages are widely spoken, including English, Persian, Hindi, Urdu, Bengali, and Chinese.

Weather/Temperature

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has a desert climate, characterized by pleasantly mild winters and sweltering, sunny summers, with the humidity of the Persian Gulf that makes the heat unbearable. The best time to visit the United Arab Emirates is winter, from December to February, which is a pleasant and sunny season and allows you to avoid the oppressive heat of the long warm season. March and November prefer the latter for a beach holiday because the sea is more generous.

Culture

Emirati culture is based on Arabian culture, with East Africa and Indian Subcontinent cultures. The religion of Islam has had a significant impact on local architecture, music, attire, cuisine, and lifestyle. All social and political matters are driven by Sharia (Islamic) law. However, the UAE is tolerant of other religions and accords religious freedom to the expatriate population. Although Muslims can proselytize to those of other faiths, it is forbidden for those of other faith to proselytize to Muslims. Muslims are not allowed to convert out of Islam, and there are repercussions for those who actively try and encourage Muslims to convert to a different religion.

Visitors to the UAE should dress modestly, particularly in conservative areas and public places like shopping malls. Clothing should not be transparent, indecently exposing parts of the body or displaying offensive pictures or slogans.



Public Transportation

The best way to get around the UAE is by taxi or metro. Metro is available in Abu Dhabi and Dubai, and you must pay using a Nol Card (you can get it from the stations). The metro provides optimal connectivity between Abu Dhabi, Dubai, and its suburbs and the communities of Saadiyat Island, Yas Island, and Al Raha Beach. Taxis can be hailed from the roadside. Although prices are high across the board in Dubai, a taxi won't break a bank, plus they provide the freedom to move at your own pace without the hassle of navigating traffic.

Bus services in UAE are safe, efficient, and clean, and drivers are trained in driving articulated vehicles. They are all air-conditioned; even the bus stations are air-conditioned. In the bigger emirates of Dubai and Abu Dhabi, you will even find several ecological buses that run on rechargeable batteries. For traveling from emirate to emirate, buses are the cheapest and most popular form of public transport.

You can find car rental anywhere, but it is better to find the local car rental companies like when you arrive at the airport or hotels. Dubai Tram is considered the first tram service outside Europe that works on the underground power supply. Dubai tram network covers a distance of 10.6 km with 11 stations.

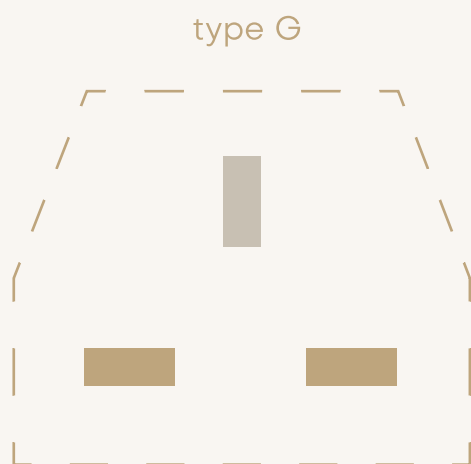
Local Currency

The local currency in the United Arab Emirates is the Arab Emirates Dirham (AED). The current exchange rate is approximately AED 1 = USD 0,27. You can exchange foreign currency in major cities at banks, hotels, and authorized money changers in airports, malls, and public markets. Foreign banks have branches in the UAE, ATMs are placed at several locations in public places. ATMs typically provide the best exchange rates (even when factoring in possible currency exchange fees from your home bank), but traveler's cheques in either US Dollar or UK Pounds Sterling are recommended to avoid additional exchange rate charges.

Most international credit card networks are acceptable in UAE. The most widely accepted cards in all merchants in UAE are MasterCard and Visa. At the same time, American Express (Amex) and Discover are also acceptable in some large hotels and restaurants. Holders of other cards are advised to clarify whether their card is proper in UAE with a commercial bank. There will be instances where stores may not display the symbols of the cards they accept, be sure to check with the salesperson in the store before using your card if your card is acceptable or not.

Electricity

For Dubai and all places within the United Arab Emirates, the associated plug type is G, which is the plug that has three rectangular pins in a triangular pattern. Dubai operates on a 230 V supply voltage and 50hz, and we recommend you bring along a travel adapter.



Value Added Tax (VAT)

VAT refund is applicable in any shop (retailer) that participates in the “Tax Refund for Tourists Scheme.” You can identify these eligible outlets with posters displayed on their storefront and visible to visitors. The sum of tax from several receipts should comply with a minimum of AED 250 (two hundred fifty dirhams). You will get a Tax Free Tag attached to the back of the sales receipt. Goods are purchased within 90 (ninety) days before departing UAE and must be carried out of UAE as accompanied baggage within 90 (ninety) days of the date of purchase.

The Tax refund can only be claimed at the airport on the date of your departure before you check in your luggage. Federal Tax Authority has allocated spaces where tourists can reclaim taxes through a fully electronic system. Please make sure to prepare all the documents needed. See the step as follow :

1. Scan or enter your passport number or GCC National ID card
2. Follow the instructions on the screen, and if you get a green light, you've completed the validation process.
3. If you get a red light, contact one of the staff standing next to the validation point for help.
4. Choose your preferred refund method – credit/debit card or cash.

Basic 'Good to Know' Words

Hello | Marhaba

Use this when you want to greet a person.

Good morning / evening

Sabah el khair / Massa el khair

Use this when you want to greet a person.

Please | MinFadlak

It's polite to use "MinFadlak" when asking or requesting something.

Thank you | Shukran-Lak

Use this to thank someone.

Sorry | Asef

Use this to say sorry to someone.

Yes/No | NaAm / La

Use this when you like or dislike or agree and disagree.

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Travel Requirements

VISA Information

Your responsibility is to ensure that you have the correct documentation for your holiday and onward travel. mytripology cannot accept responsibility for anyone who is refused entry to the country because of a lack the proper documentation. We encourage you to check the latest information with the nearest United Arab Emirates embassy in your country.

Vaccine

Your responsibility is to ensure that you have the correct documentation for your holiday and onward travel.

Insurance

Your responsibility is to ensure that you have the correct documentation for your holiday and onward travel.

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Travel Tips



Travel SIM Cards

Several SIM cards to choose from; however, we recommend using Etisalat and Du. They have the most comprehensive range, and internet speed is excellent throughout the UAE. You can buy the SIM card at Etisalat or Du shops located at airports in the UAE. All foreigners must register their SIM cards with their Passport and UAE visa.

What to wear

Casual and comfortable lightweight clothing is suitable for traveling in the UAE. Dress modestly and don't wear shorts or sleeveless tops when visiting religious buildings. Comfortable walking shoes are recommended and should be removed before entering a mosque. It is recommended to bring a scarf or cardigan to cover up if asked.

What to bring

- **Universal charger / Travel adapter**
- **Water bottle**
- **Sun protection** (during summer)
- **Insect repellent** (during summer)
- **First-aid kit**
- **International driver's** (only if you're driving)
- **Zip-lock bags/reusable bags**
- **A Key/combination lock**





What to Eat and Drink

Despite its reputation as one of the world's most popular centers, United Arab Emirates also offers a variety of traditional foods to its people, residents, and interested visitors. The traditional food of the United Arab Emirates is comparable to that of neighboring nations, including Omani, Saudi Arabian, and Asian dishes. Here is a list of our top 10 best Arabian dishes that you have to try:



Kafta

This is sometimes referred to as the Arabic hamburger. It involves rolling meat into pita bread accompanied by cucumbers, tomato, lettuce, and yogurt.



Luqaimat

This is a piece of pancake that has been fried and then rolled in sesame seeds and flavored with date syrup.



Shawarma

A popular Levantine Arab dish consisting of thinly sliced cuts of meat, like chicken, beef, goat, lamb, and sometimes turkey rolled into a large piece of flatbread or pita that has been steamed or heated. Food like hummus, tahini, pickles, vegetables, and even french fries are added inside the pita.



Al Harees

This dish is typical on special occasions and is one of the favorite meals in the UAE. Meat and wheat are cooked for several hours until the beef has dissolved into the grain. This mixture is then poured into a clay oven or a special earth oven. After being cooked for a long time, it turns into a thick mixture. The result is served with local ghee (clarified butter).



Hummus

A Middle Eastern dip, spread, or savory dish made from cooked, mashed chickpeas blended with tahini, lemon juice, and garlic.



Falafel

A deep-fried ball or patty-shaped patty made from ground chickpeas, broad beans, or both.



Fattoush

Made of fresh lettuce, diced tomatoes, cucumbers, mint leaves, onion, garlic, lemon, and olive oil, it is served with Levantine bread. You will be surprised to find this simple salad dish loaded with flavors.



Tabbouleh

Traditionally served as part of a mezze in the Arab world. A Levantine salad mainly made of finely chopped parsley, with tomatoes, mint, onion, bulgur, and seasoned with olive oil, lemon juice, salt, and sweet pepper. Some variations add lettuce or use semolina instead of bulgur.



Samosa

These hot pastry appetizers were influenced by flavor and techniques from India's Arabian Sea. Some are filled with meat, vegetables, and spices, but the most popular local version is stuffed with three types of cheese.



Majboos

An Arabic spiced rice dish served with chicken, and it is considered a national dish in Arabian Gulf States. It involves rolling meat into pita bread with cucumbers, tomato, lettuce, and yogurt.



Shopping Guidelines

The United Arab Emirates has a diverse range of shopping options, and you can find items such as local snacks, spices, and world-famous textiles and clothes. It also offers you several shopping ways, from informal, bustling souks (markets) to modern and internationally renowned malls. Dubai is known for its endless variety of shopping options.

In Abu Dhabi, you can find ornate wooden carvings, local art, gold jewelry, and carpets that reflect the beauty and enchantment of Abu Dhabi's Arabian heritage for more reasonable prices than in other emirates.

In the souks, bartering and bargaining are acceptable and even expected. Most shops open from around 10.00 AM to 10.00 PM and may stay open later on the weekends. Although most malls work straight through the day, some independent shops close for an extended lunch break, usually from 01.00 M to 04.00 PM. Hours may change during Ramadhan (Islamic's New Year), with many shops closing for the afternoon and reopening from 07.00 PM until midnight, or even later.

Safety Tips

- Be aware of your safety and security at all times.
- The crime rate is low. Petty crime, such as pickpocketing and bag snatching, occurs but is rare. Drink spiking sometimes happens.
- Never accept any item from a stranger.
- Never leave any personal belongings unattended in public places.
- Be prepared for extreme weather. Between June and September, temperatures can exceed 50 Celcius. Sand and dust storms are also ordinary.
- Stay out of the sun in extreme heat and drink plenty of water to keep hydrated.



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Baggage allowance/Excess Baggage

Standard baggage allowance for economy class in UAE is 23 Kg, business class is two pieces up to 32 Kg each, and first-class is two pieces up to 32 kg each for Domestic flights. We recommend you to check the airlines you chose for detailed baggage information. You may purchase at the airport ticket desk and charge based on airline regulations for any excess baggage.

Tipping/Gratuities

It is generally accepted to tip local restaurant staff, luggage porters, drivers, and guides. However, this is not mandatory. Recommended tipping for guides is between AED 5 to 10 per day, and for the driver, it is AED 5 per day. If you wish to tip at the restaurant, the general tipping is usually 10 - 15% of the bill, depending on the service.

Drugs Policy

The UAE is a Muslim country, and illicit drugs are strictly forbidden. For more information regarding UAE drug laws, click [here](#).