

United Arab Emirates (UAE)



Allah, al-Waṭan, al-Ra'îs (God, The Homeland, The President)

- ✓ Discover the endless sunshine, glittering cities, iconic skylines, unrivalled shopping and starry desert nights of the United Arab Emirates.
- ✓ The UAE consists of seven emirates: Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Ajman, Fujairah, Ras Al Khaimah, Sharjah and Umm Al Quwain. It has grown from a quiet backwater to one of the Middle East's most important economic centres. The rippling sand dunes of the country's Bedouin past start where the futuristic cities along the coastline end. But it's not all windswept Arabian deserts and gravity-defying skyscrapers. The rugged and jagged peaks of the Hajar Mountain Range run across the north of the UAE and into Oman providing glorious solitude from the big city life.
- ✓ Dubai and Abu Dhabi are the most popular emirates to visit. Dubai is all about glitz and glamour with incredible skyscrapers, mega shopping malls and luxury hotels. There's also miles of sandy beach, celebrity chef restaurants, sky-high bars, the historical Dubai Creek and fascinating souks. Oil-rich Abu Dhabi is the capital of the UAE and the largest of the seven emirates. It is home to the Louvre Abu Dhabi and the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque. Its islands and coast are lined with golden sandy beaches and wildlife-filled mangroves.



Capital
Abu Dhabi



Population
9 million



Language
Arabic



Time Zone
GMT+4:00
(Gulf Standard Time)



Electricity
220v, 50Hz.



Currency
The United Arab
Emirates dirham (AED)

When to Go

SEASONS

The UAE features a desert climate with hot summers and cool winters. Winter season runs from October to March. Summer starts in late May and lasts until September.

WEATHER

The most pleasant period to visit and travel around the UAE is during winter season (October to March) when the weather is moderate and pleasant with an average day time temperature of 25 degrees. In July and August the temperatures can reach 45 degrees. Rain is a rarity with only five days of rain on average each year.



WHAT TO BRING

Light, cotton clothes, but bring a jacket for winter as it can get cool in the evenings, especially up in the mountains. Comfy walking shoes are recommended as some of the shopping centres are huge! Remember that arms and legs need to be covered when visiting mosques, and women should also cover their hair.

ADDITIONAL REMARKS

Temperatures can soar very high during July and August, however there are still plenty of indoor activities to do in the UAE. Most hotels have beautiful pools with shaded areas and it's still possible to sunbathe, especially in the mornings and late afternoons.

Customs & Traditions

ART & ARCHITECTURE

The architecture of the UAE has undergone dramatic transformation in recent decades, from a collection of fishing villages to a global and dynamic business hub. Between the 1960s and 1970s, architecture was traditional, with narrow alleys and wind tower houses, reflective of a strong Bedouin heritage. From the early 80s the architecture changed to the modern and even futuristic high rises for which the major cities of the UAE are known today.

DANCE & THEATRE

Emirati music and dance are performed during joyous occasions such as Eid, engagements, wedding parties and celebrations in general. The UAE has its own exclusive types of music and dance that have been regularly practised in the past and are still a well-kept tradition for today's generation. The Belly Dance is one of the most well-known entertainment artforms. It's an expressive dance performed by women in dazzling costumes and involves complex movements of the torso.

ETIQUETTE

The UAE is surprisingly liberal, with alcohol sold in all the emirates except for Sharjah, however only drink in licensed hotels, restaurants and bars. Swimwear is fine by the pool or on the beach but dress modestly elsewhere. Do cover arms and legs when visiting mosques; women should also cover their hair. Don't show too much intimacy in public and be especially mindful of behaviour during Ramadan.

PEOPLE

According to the World Bank, the population is 9.68 million. The UAE's population is growing more and more diverse with an expatriate community that makes up around 80% of the population.

RELIGION

Islam is both the official and majority religion in the United Arab Emirates followed by approximately 76% of the population. Other religions represented in the country include Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism and Sikhism and are practiced by non-nationals.

