

UNITED ARAB
EMIRATES:

ABU DHABI



Abu Dhabi

Avanti[®]
Destinations



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SHEIKH ZAYED MOSQUE

Abu Dhabi roughly means 'Land of the Gazelle' in Arabic. The story goes that the emirate was founded when a young antelope led a wandering tribe to a fresh water source on an island that was teeming with gazelles. Since ancient times, this coastal settlement relied on pearl-diving, trading, fishing, and falconry. When oil was struck in Umm Shaif in 1958, it marked the beginning of the region's eventual transformation from its modest origins to the economic powerhouse that it is today. Now under the banner of the United Arab Emirates, Abu Dhabi has blossomed under the guidance of modern UAE's founding father — the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan.

Abu Dhabi is the capital of the UAE — a glitzy, cosmopolitan, and culturally packed destination that has attracted countless expats and visitors from across the globe. Comprised of over 200 islands, this astounding archipelago offers everything that travelers can expect from a superlative destination — captivating history, rich cultural experiences, breathtaking nature, exciting adventures, luxurious accommodations and amenities, world-class shopping, and delicious culinary options.



UNITED ARAB EMIRATES



ABU DHABI CITY

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GETTING TO ABU DHABI

Although Etihad Airways is the only airline that flies non-stop from the United States to Abu Dhabi, visitors from the US can travel to the UAE capital with relative ease. Etihad offers year-round flights that originate from Chicago (ORD), New York City (JFK), and Washington DC (IAD). Popular carriers like American Airlines, Air Canada, and Air France also offer alternative options with connecting flights. With less than an hour and a half of drive time, Abu Dhabi's proximity to Dubai presents a fantastic opportunity to combine the two renowned destinations into one amazing itinerary. Visitors who are mainly focused on the capital can conveniently opt for excellent day trip options to Dubai. For those who are keen to have a more definitive UAE experience, they can easily stitch the two sheikhdoms by augmenting their vacation with additional days and booking accommodations and tours accordingly.



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QASR AL HOSN

Converted into a museum in 2018 following several years of careful conservation and restoration efforts, Qasr Al Hosn is now one of Abu Dhabi's most popular draws. This famous structure is one of the country's oldest and is comprised of two buildings — the Inner Fort (which was originally built in 1795) and the Outer Palace (which was constructed between 1939-1945). Aside from being a strategic base that overlooked coastal trade routes and protected the surrounding settlement back in the day, Qasr Al Hosn also served as the home of the ruling family at one point in time.

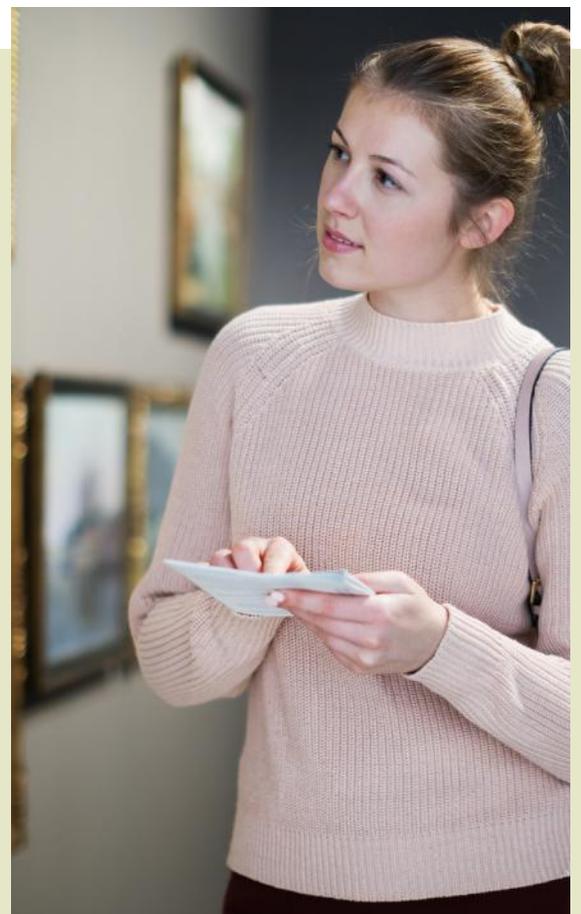


WHAT TO DO IN ABU DHABI: CULTURE & HISTORY



LOUVRE ABU DHABI

Arguably the premier arts destination in the UAE, Louvre Abu Dhabi is located at the heart of Saadiyat Island's cultural district. This visually stunning museum-city has a total of 55 buildings and 23 galleries, most of which are blanketed by a striking silver dome — the centerpiece of Pritzker laureate Jean Nouvel's innovative design. Louvre Abu Dhabi houses a myriad of artworks ranging from Arabic pieces to European masterworks, as well as notable loans from renowned museums like Musée du Louvre, Musée d'Orsay, and Centre Pompidou.



SHEIKH ZAYED GRAND MOSQUE

Designed and built to embody Islam's message of peace and tolerance towards people of all beliefs, this magnificent place of worship is the largest and most important mosque in the country. Naturally, travelers should be mindful of proper attire and decorum during their visit. Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque is a spectacular showcase of Islamic architecture, complete with superlative elements like its 1,000-plus amethyst-and-jasper-embedded columns, towering minarets, numerous white marble domes, gold-plated Swarovski chandeliers, and record-setting hand-woven carpet — the largest of its kind in the world.





QASR AL WATAN

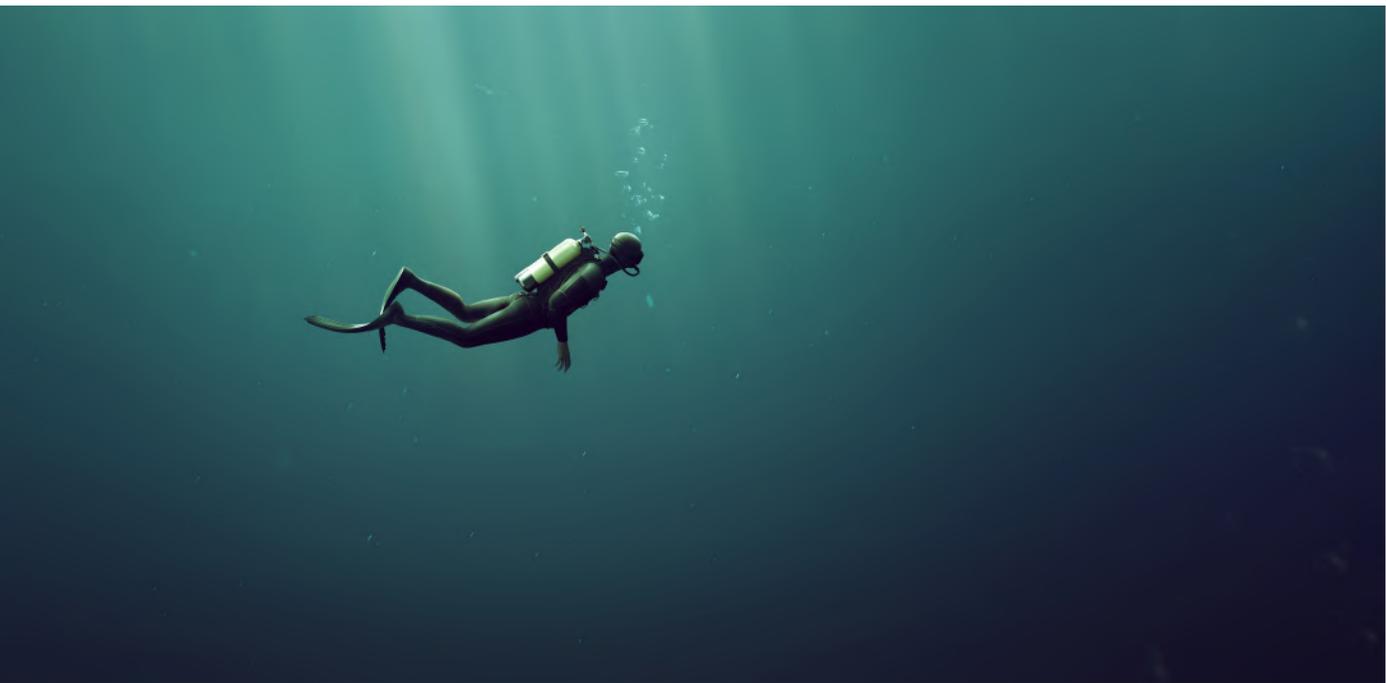
Not only is Qasr Al Watan a working Presidential palace that has hosted numerous foreign dignitaries and heads of state, this majestic structure is also a popular cultural attraction since it was opened to the public in 2019. From its intricate architectural design to its ornate interior to its fascinating exhibitions, everything about Qasr Al Watan is a tribute to the country's founding and a celebration of Arab culture, heritage, and artistry. Aside from admiring the massive collection of books, manuscripts, and artworks that are housed inside the palace, visitors should not miss the family friendly 'Palace in Motion' event — a breathtaking light and sound show about the story of the UAE.





FALCON HOSPITAL

The falcon — which has been used as a hunting aid by the Bedouin for centuries and is an integral part of Emirati culture and history — is the country's national bird. So, it's not surprising that the world's first and largest public medical institution exclusively for falcons can be found in Abu Dhabi. Since opening in 1999, the sprawling hospital sees approximately 11,000 falcons annually and boasts excellent facilities including 200 air-conditioned treatment rooms, x-ray machines, and an in-house laboratory.



PEARL DIVING ISLAND

Pearl diving is one of the UAE's most treasured traditions and has been a pivotal part of local culture since the ancient times. Its history can be traced all the way back to 7,000 years ago, with evidence pointing to Emirati pearls making their way as far as Viking-era Scandinavia. Long before the oil boom of the early 60's, pearl diving was essential to the economy despite being a seasonal industry — to the point where the profession was one of the key factors for the founding of coastal hubs like Abu Dhabi and Dubai. Keen visitors can take a day trip to Dalma Island to check out one of the most historically important diving sites in the region.



WHAT TO DO IN ABU DHABI: DESERT & OUTDOORS



ISLANDS & BEACHES

Abu Dhabi's history is intertwined with both the desert and the sea, the latter being evident with the fact that the emirate is an archipelago that's made up of over 200 islands. These islands — many of which are accessible — offer everything from pristine nature, interesting wildlife, cultural attractions, world-class venues, luxurious recreation options, and family friendly entertainment.

Abu Dhabi's beaches are particularly noteworthy for its powder-soft white sand and top-notch beachfront accommodations.





EMPTY QUARTER DESERT

Also known as Rub' al Khali, the Empty Quarter is the world's largest sand sea. The sprawling expanse is roughly the same size as France, holds about half as much sand as the Sahara Desert, and encompasses parts of the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Oman, and Yemen. The desert's famed golden and red dunes are a magical sight to behold — beautiful beneath the glare of the sun or under the soft light of the moon and the stars. The Empty Quarter is the home of Tel Moreeb, which means 'Terrifying Mountain' — the world's tallest sand dune and a popular magnet for 4x4 enthusiasts and dirt bikers.



AL AIN OASIS

Just two hours away from Abu Dhabi lies Al Ain — an inland oasis near the border of Oman that's fondly referred to as the 'Garden City' of the UAE. This area is one of the oldest permanently inhabited settlements in the world and is a designated UNESCO World Heritage Site. Al Ain is famous for its date palms, fruit trees, camel souks, historical forts, archaeological parks, and Jebel Hafeet — the second highest peak in the Emirates.



MANGROVE NATIONAL PARK

MANGROVE NATIONAL PARK

Mangrove National Park is one of the UAE's most important ecological assets and is a superb family friendly destination for bird watchers, nature lovers, and photographers. This biodiverse nature reserve covers 75% of the total mangrove forest area in the country and features hundreds of bird, animal, and plant species as well as scenic waterways that are ideal for kayaking.





AL WATHBA WETLAND RESERVE

Although the UAE is known for its desert landscapes, the country has one of the most unique and diverse natural geographies in the world — a nation filled with environments that feature towering mountains, fertile oases, rocky wadis, pristine beaches, mangrove forests, and wildlife havens. Established by the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, Al Wathba Wetland Reserve was the first area in Abu Dhabi that was designated for protection by law. The reserve is famously known as the home of hundreds of animal species including thousands of greater flamingos.





FERRARI WORLD

Visitors who are fans of the legendary Maranello-based luxury sports car maker should not miss this massive attraction. Ferrari World is the largest indoor theme park in the world and features incredible shopping and dining options, fascinating motorsport collections and exhibitions, state-of-the-art simulators, and a variety of exhilarating rides like the famous Formula Rossa — the fastest rollercoaster in the world.

WHAT TO DO IN ABU DHABI: THEME PARKS & THRILLS



YAS MARINA CIRCUIT

Opened in 2009, this advanced and ultra-modern racetrack is the home of the Formula 1™ Etihad Airways Abu Dhabi Grand Prix. The technically challenging circuit was designed by Herman Tilke — a famed German engineer and racing driver. Yas Marina is considered as one of the best venues in the F1™ calendar, consistently attracting excited motorsport fans from all around the globe.

CLYMB™

Adding to the ever-growing list of superlative tourist attractions in the UAE, Abu Dhabi's CLYMB™ is an adrenaline-filled facility that features the world's biggest indoor skydiving flight chamber as well as the tallest indoor climbing wall. Whether you are a curious beginner or an experienced adventurer, there's plenty of memorable experiences that would suit your preferences and skill level.



YAS WATERWORLD

Spanning 15 soccer fields, this Emirati-themed waterpark is one of the most popular attractions on Yas Island. The park offers an array of seasonal events and is home to over 40 exhilarating slides and rides — five of which are unique to Yas Waterworld. Must-try experiences include the Dawwama (the world's first and largest six-person tornado water coaster), Bubble's Barrel (the world's largest surfing sheet wave), and the Bandit Bomber (a thrilling suspended roller coaster with laser and water effects).





WARNER BROS. WORLD

Venture into the fantastic world of DC Comics (Batman, Superman, Wonder Woman, etc.), Looney Tunes (Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck, etc.), and Hanna-Barbera (Flintstones, Jetsons, Scooby-Doo, etc.) through this billion-dollar attraction located on Yas Island.

The massive fully air-conditioned indoor theme park is a superb way to beat the desert heat. Boasting 29 state-of-the-art rides and a slew of shows and entertainment options, Warner Bros. World is perfect for families or adults who are young at heart.

WHAT TO DO IN ABU DHABI: SHOPPING & DINING



MALLS, SOUKS & MARKETS

The UAE is a veritable heavyweight when it comes to shopping. From luxurious high-street designer shops at places like the Galleria Mall and Marina Mall (one of the largest in the world) to the exotic commodities and craft goods that you can discover at souks and markets, Abu Dhabi is a shopping haven that would never cease to amaze.



MINA HOTEL

Nestled inside the modern Al Diar Mina Hotel located at the Al Zahiya district, Al Mina Restaurant is a great option for visitors who are looking for a relaxing and exclusive dining experience that is conveniently near Abu Dhabi's main business and entertainment areas.



ANNEX

This multi-level social space inside a 5-star hotel delivers an excellent range of dining and entertainment experiences. The bottom and second levels feature a dance club and a lounge. Go all the way to up to access ANNEX Rooftop, where you can enjoy delicious Peruvian-inspired dishes along with the drink of your choice while enjoying scenic views of Al Bateen Marina.



SUHAIL

Set inside the Qasr Al Sarab Desert Resort at the outskirts of the Empty Quarter, Suhail serves fine cuts of meat and fresh seafood sourced from all over the world along with award-winning wines. Named after the star that the ancient Bedouins used to navigate the desert, this rooftop bar and restaurant delivers an exceptional al fresco dining experience while you take in stunning views of the valley below.





ESSENTIAL ABU DHABI

5 DAYS / 4 NIGHTS
ABU DHABI

This superbly curated package conveniently condenses Abu Dhabi's must-try activities and must-visit locations into one seamless itinerary. Ideal for travelers who have a limited amount of time to spend in the emirate, this vacation features a well-balanced selection of enjoyable experiences.

LET'S GO!

RVPs

RECOMMENDED VACATION PACKAGES



BEST OF THE EMIRATES

7 DAYS / 6 NIGHTS
DUBAI & ABU DHABI

Unlock the highlights of the UAE's most popular cities — Abu Dhabi and Dubai — through this excellent itinerary. Head to Dubai to check out its historic gold and spice souks, cruise along Dubai Creek aboard a traditional abra, and experience a sunset desert safari like no other. Proceed to the nation's capital, Abu Dhabi, to explore its top attractions including the majestic Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque.

LET'S GO!

CONNECT THE CAPITALS

7 DAYS / 6 NIGHTS
TEL AVIV & ABU DHABI

Stitch together two of the most fascinating cities in the Middle East — Tel Aviv and Abu Dhabi — into one memorable vacation. Enjoy Tel Aviv's sun-kissed beaches, whitewashed Bauhaus architecture, and delicious cuisine before jetting off to Abu Dhabi for a dose of its unique Emirati culture and religious heritage.

LET'S GO!





ABU DHABI DESERT ESCAPE

6 DAYS / 5 NIGHTS
ABU DHABI & DESERT RESORT

From admiring notable tourist icons in the capital such as Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque to enjoying luxurious vacation experiences at a glitzy high-end resort in the middle of the Arabian desert, this excellent itinerary offers an enticing respite from the stress of the daily grind.

LET'S GO!



RITZ CARLTON



CROWNE PLAZA ABU DHABI YAS ISLAND 4*

Set inside a popular Abu Dhabi tourist area, this upscale 4-star property offers ideal proximity to key attractions like the Yas Links golf course and the Ferrari World Abu Dhabi theme park.

LET'S GO!



HILTON ABU DHABI YAS ISLAND 4*

This upscale accommodation located along Yas Bay offers elegant and well-appointed rooms with floor-to-ceiling windows, superb amenities including four bars and restaurants, and complimentary Yas Island Theme Park passes.

LET'S GO!

RECOMMENDED HOTELS



JUMEIRAH AT SAADIYAT ISLAND RESORT 5*

This luxurious 5-star property sits along Saadiyat Island's prime beach area and features rooms that have floor-to-ceiling windows that deliver fantastic views of the Arabian Gulf.

LET'S GO!



CONRAD ABU DHABI ETIHAD TOWERS 5*

Set inside the imposing Etihad Towers complex, this luxurious hotel delivers fantastic views of the capital and the Persian Gulf. The 5-star property features a 74th-floor observation deck, 12 award-winning restaurants and bars, a full-service spa, and a private beach.

LET'S GO!



RITZ-CARLTON ABU DHABI GRAND CANAL 5*

Set inside a Renaissance-inspired building, this luxury resort — which features high-end amenities like eight restaurants and butler service — is an exercise in sheer opulence.

LET'S GO!



AL WATHBA DESERT RESORT AND SPA 5*

Located almost 20 miles from Al Wathba Wetland Reserve, this upscale wellness resort in an excellent option for travelers looking for a respite that's bathed in tranquility and natural beauty.

LET'S GO!

RECOMMENDED EXPERIENCES IN ABU DHABI



ABU DHABI CITY TOUR

Enjoy a 6-hour exploration of several top attractions within the capital. Your first stop would be Saadiyat Island where you'll get to check out the precious artifacts and artworks housed inside the Louvre Abu Dhabi. Cap the tour with a visit to the majestic Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque — the largest and most beautiful mosque in the UAE.

LET'S GO!



LOUVRE ABU DHABI ENTRANCE

Get access to one of the country's most popular tourist draws. Built in partnership with France and Musée du Louvre, this museum holds a superb collection that contains an array of must-see items ranging from Arabian artifacts to French masterpieces.

LET'S GO!



MORNING DESERT SAFARI

Immerse yourself within the expansive desert wilderness outside of Abu Dhabi's city limits through this exciting 4-hour tour. Have a go at adrenaline-soaked activities like dune bashing aboard a 4x4 Land Cruiser as well as sandboarding.

LET'S GO!



DESERT SAFARI WITH ROMANTIC DINNER

Escape the stressful daily grind with an afternoon that's packed with exciting and memorable adventures including boisterously romping across the dunes aboard a 4x4 and learning more about camels with a visit to a local farm.

Cap the day by surprising your special someone with a sumptuous dinner by candlelight — savoring the delicious meal and the unique romantic atmosphere of the exotic desert environment.

LET'S GO!

CAMEL TREKKING

Hop aboard a camel for a uniquely satisfying and almost meditative ride across the dunes. Aptly nicknamed by the locals as the 'ships of the desert', these noble creatures are one of the most integral aspects of the desert way of life — from transportation to nourishment.

LET'S GO!



DESERT SUNRISE SAFARI

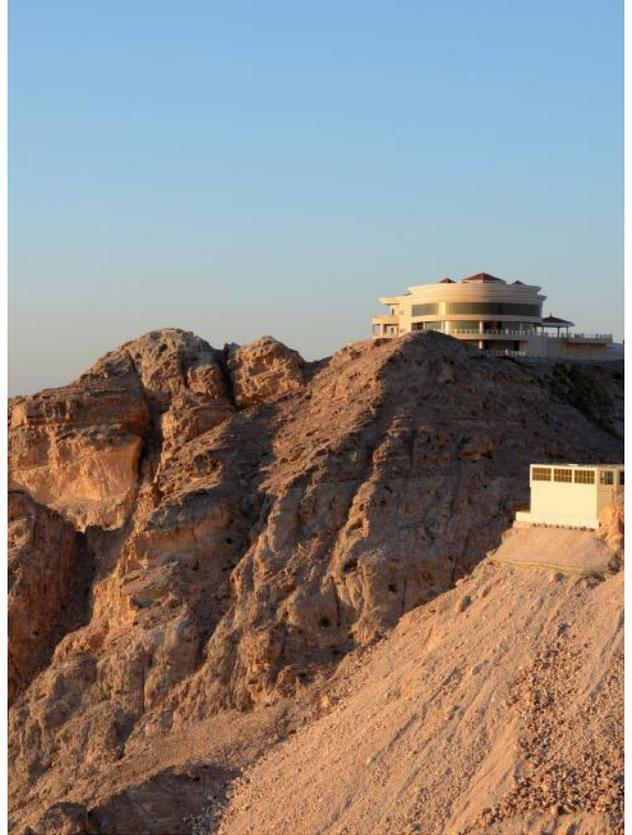
For early birds, there's a few things that are as equally captivating and smile-inducing than watching the sun slowly rise over the horizon. What elevates this experience to the next level is the fact that you are in the middle of the desert — completely immersed in an almost-otherworldly environment as the red, gold, and earth hues change dramatically around you. After sunrise, put the icing on the proverbial cake with some fun-filled desert activities.

LET'S GO!

AL AIN OASIS TOUR

This excellent day tour lets you explore notable attractions in Al Ain which includes the numerous date palm groves, the area's various natural springs, the delightfully frenetic camel market, the fascinating museums, and the towering Jebel Hafeet.

LET'S GO!

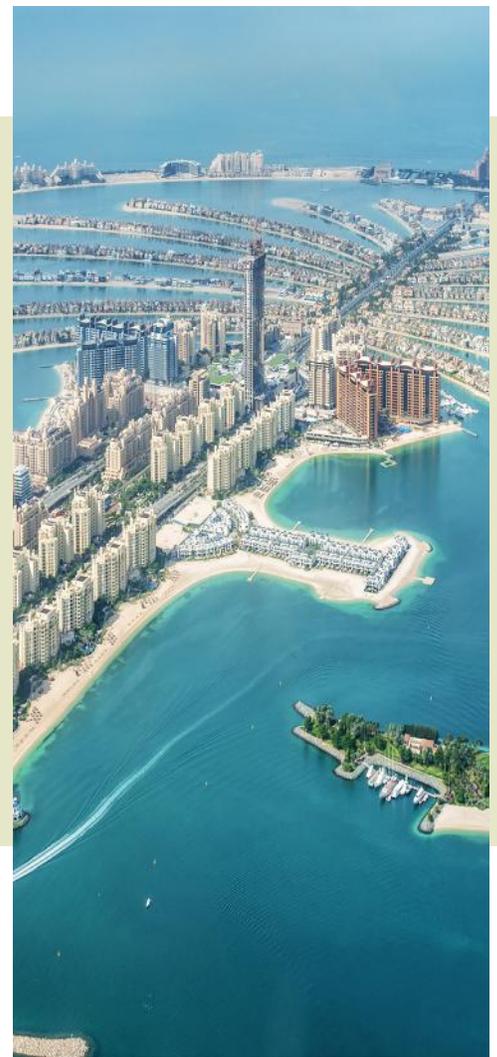


RECOMMENDED DAY TRIPS FROM ABU DHABI



TRADITIONAL DUBAI CITY TOUR

Although known for its marvelous modern skyline that's dominated by cloud-kissing skyscrapers like Burj Khalifa, Dubai also has a strong historical side that warrants exploration. This superb day tour lets travelers step away briefly from Abu Dhabi in order to check out Dubai's cultural and heritage attractions like Jumeirah Mosque and the city's famous gold and spice souks.



LET'S GO!

SAVE THE DATE

ABU DHABI GRAND PRIX

For the next 10 years, Abu Dhabi Grand Prix will aptly serve as the season finale for the pinnacle of motorsport racing and technology — Formula 1™. From November 17 to 20, the prestigious race will once again electrify the audience at the renowned Yas Marina Circuit. Who will take this year's championship? Will everything come down to the wire? We simply can't wait to find out!



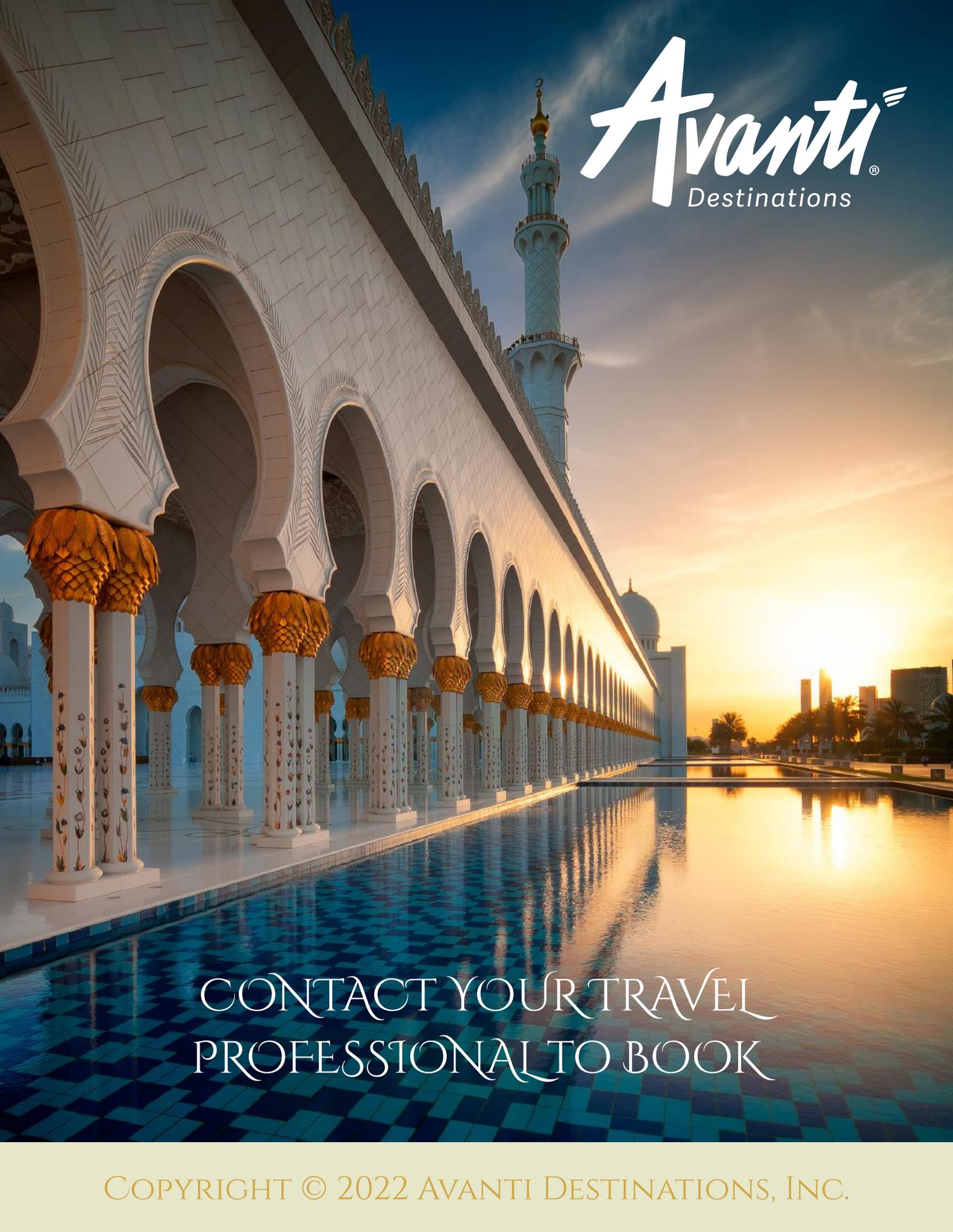
RAMADAN

Islam is the official religion of the UAE, and one of the most revered events in the annual Muslim calendar is Ramadan — a month-long holy tradition that commemorates the revelation of the Holy Quran to Prophet Muhammad. It's a time of abstinence from food, drink, smoking, and unclean thoughts between dawn and dusk. Ramadan culminates with a three-day celebration and holiday called Eid Al Fitr.



AL DHAFRA FESTIVAL

Every year, hundreds of people from across the region flock towards the UAE (at the edge the expansive Rub' Al Khali desert) to take part in the Al Dhafra Festival. This fascinating event is a wonderful celebration of Bedouin culture and history. Festival highlights include the famous 'Mazayna' (camel beauty contests), purebred Arabian horse racing, and falconry.



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