

Fact Sheet

Dubai: The A to Z of sports and activities

Dubai is well established as the "Sports Capital of the Middle East". Its facilities for both active participation and spectator sports have brought Dubai well-deserved international recognition. The range of activities varies from gentle leisure sports to the more challenging and exciting adventures for those seeking thrills.

Archery & Shooting

The **Hatta Fort Hotel** offers clay pigeon shooting and archery ranges, which are professionally supervised. The **Jebel Ali Golf Resort & Spa** offers pistol, skeet and trap shooting as well as simulated laser shooting. Tuition is also available at its shooting academy. www.jebelali-international.com

Badminton

Many of Dubai's top hotels house superb facilities for most racquet sports.

Boating

One of the most accessible sports in Dubai as it is suitable for all ages and abilities including power boating, sailboats, fishing, self powered boats, etc.

Bowling

Dubai Bowling Centre offers tenpin bowling facilities. www.dubaibowlingcentre.com

Camel Polo

Set amid the breathtaking landscape of the highly acclaimed Dubai Polo and Equestrian Club. The Dubai Academy offers the opportunity to be a part of a unique experience, Camel Polo. Fun packed holidays, individual coaching sessions, or corporate events - everything is on offer for the perfect polo experience. Camels are good natured and entertaining and bring a new angle to the traditional game of polo. www.dubaipoloacademy.com

Camel Racing

The sport of Sheikhs (along with horse racing) is one of the most popular spectator sports in Dubai today. The racing season runs from November to March.



Cricket

Those wishing to take part should visit the **Darjeeling Cricket Club**. Matches of 25 overs are played every Friday and an annual six-a-side Gulf tournament is staged in early March. The **International Cricket Council (ICC)** is now headquartered in Dubai and an **ICC Global Cricket Academy** will be located at Dubai Sports City. With the growing interest in cricket in the UAE, players of the calibre of Andrew Flintoff have been attracted to the region to offer coaching sessions.

Cycling

Cycling is a great way to see Dubai. Cycling tours are also available around the mountain enclave of Hatta. Four wheel, five seater bicycles are available to tour some of Dubai's larger parks.

Diving

Takes place along the East coast in waters between Khor Fakkan and Dibba and off the coast of Musandan Peninsula. Dives are offered at all levels and courses are also available for complete beginners. The Emirates Diving Association is the official diving body for the UAE and takes a strong interest in environmental matters. www.emiratesdiving.com

Dune Driving

No trip to Dubai would be complete without a trip to the desert. Dune driving, however, is an adventure in itself! Expert drivers offer a roller coaster ride through the magnificent dunes and wadis (dried-up riverbeds). Sand skiing is an exhilarating activity to complement the desert adventure. These excursions can be booked via local tour operators.

Eating

Dubai's central position between Europe and Asia means that visitors will be able to experience the many culinary delights available in the emirate, from modern French cuisine to traditional Arabic, sophisticated sushi and everything in between. Some of the world famous chefs have established a presence in Dubai; these include Gordon Ramsay, Georgio Locatelli, Nobu Matsuhisa, Mourad Mazouz and Gary Rhodes.

Fishing

During the months of April to September the deep sea fishing season is open and keen anglers can try their luck in the open waters at catching a variety of fish including flying fish, tuna, barracuda, kingfish and sailfish.

Flying

From model flying to the real thing, Dubai offers endless possibilities. Budding pilots can visit the flying school at **Dubai International Airport**. After specific training and a minimum of 40 flying hours, visitors can gain an internationally recognised UAE private pilot licence. Those preferring to let others do the work can enjoy a scenic trip around Dubai in a hot air balloon or helicopter.



Football

Dubai Sports City is the location of the Manchester United Soccer School offering coaching to children aged 6-18 years old, and SocaTots offering coaching for children up to 5 years old. There are also leisure football pitches in various locations in Dubai.

Golf

Dubai offers a stunning range of first-class golfing facilities for all ages and capabilities, including the Ernie Els golf club (www.elsclubdubai.com) and the Earth Golf Course at Jumeirah Golf Estates designed by Greg Norman, which opened in November 2009 to host the Dubai World Championships. Future golf courses will include the Jumeirah Golf Estates courses designed by Sergio Garcia, Vijay Singh and Pete Dye – called Fire, Water and Wind, in addition to Earth, after the four natural elements, and Tiger Wood's first course – Al Ruwya. www.tigerwoodsduhai.com. For bookings, visit www.dubaigolf.com or www.golfindubai.org.

Helicopter Tour

If you really want to see all of Dubai take a 10 minute helicopter tour over Dubai city. The flight goes over the Creek and Port Rashid offering spectacular views of the architecture. www.arabian-adventures.com

Hiking

Hiking through the mountains and wadis of Hatta is a great way to experience some of Dubai's natural beauty. Tours set off around 07.00 each day.

Horse Racing

Meydan Racecourse holds regular races, which begin in January, ending in the highlight of Dubai's racing calendar, the Dubai World Cup at the end of March. www.dubaiworldcup.com. Horse riding facilities and tuition are available at **Arabian Ranches**, **Jebel Ali Equestrian Club** and **Nad Al Sheba**. www.dubairacingclub.com

Hot Air Ballooning

Dubai has the ideal skyline and geography for ballooning. Balloon Adventures Dubai operates some of the largest and most advanced hot air balloons in the world. www.ballooning.ae

Ice Skating



The **Hyatt Regency Hotel** is home to Dubai's ice hockey team whose practice sessions take place on Saturday and Sunday evenings. Other skating facilities can be found at **Al Nasr Leisureland** and the **Galleria Ice Rink**. www.alnasrleisureland.ae and www.dubai.regency.hyatt.com

Jet Skiing

Several of the beach hotels offer jet skis for hire.

Karting

Located next to Jebel Ali Golf Resort & Spa, race days are every other Friday from September to the end of April. www.emsf.ae

Kite Surfing

This relatively new sport has gained quite a following in Dubai and enthusiasts generally congregate along Jumeirah Beach.

Live Music

Some major players in the world of music are adding Dubai to their tours such as Aerosmith, Mariah Carey, Elton John and Shakira. Dubai is also seeing cutting edge DJ driven dance nights and club events. In addition to the international stars, there is also the opportunity to see Arabian and Middle Eastern stars in action too.

Massage

Dubai is the home of luxurious spas and boasts a vast selection within the four and five star hotels and are increasingly attracting more male customers. Dedicated male spas are H2O within Jumeirah Emirates Towers and 1847 at Grosvenor House.

Netball

Netball is a growing sport in the UAE with league tournaments taking place at 'The Sevens' stadium.

Paragliding

One of the most popular activities in Dubai, it is a unique opportunity for sightseeing in Dubai.

Polo

Dubai Polo Academy holds regular matches from October through to April. Tuition for horse riding and polo playing is available. www.dubaipoloacademy.com

Powerboating

The **Dubai Grand Prix** is held each December at the **Dubai International Marine Club** heralding the climax to the **World Powerboat Championship** calendar.



Rock Climbing

The Pharaohs Club at the Pyramids, Wafi City, has the region's only indoor climbing wall. For the competent climber the excellent rock climbing routes in the Hajar Mountains beckon.

Running

In the cooler months this is a popular activity among locals and visitors and there is now a growing number of groups and clubs that regularly meet. There is an annual marathon, which takes place every January, starting and finishing at the Dubai World Trade Centre, the course takes in many landmarks of architectural and historic significance. www.dubaimarathon.org

Rugby

The Dubai Rugby 7s tournament is one of Dubai's most fierce contests attracting teams from England, Scotland, Wales, New Zealand, France, South Africa and Fiji, as well as a team of expats known as the Arabian Gulf team. The event usually takes place the first weekend in December and commands crowds of up to 20,000 for the final. "The Sevens" is the new purpose-built venue for the competition from 2008. www.dubairugby7s.com

Sailing

The tranquil waters of the Arabian Gulf and Dubai's ideal climate add together to make the perfect sailing conditions. Marinas at hotels such as the Jumeirah Beach Hotel and Jebel Ali Golf Resort & Spa, offer a very pleasant day's sail from the sailing clubs on the Jumeirah coastline. Many of the hotels on the Jumeirah coastline will also hire catamarans and dinghies.

Sandboarding

The equivalent of snowboarding, but on the desert dunes, this is a perfect addition to the desert safari excursions and certainly gets the adrenalin pumping.

Seaplanes

Seawings Seaplane Tours offer visitors the opportunity to take an aerial sightseeing tour of Dubai. www.seawings.ae

Shopping

Dubai is a shopper's paradise. Shopping in the souks offers an authentic and traditional insight into Dubai while the many modern malls are a haven for the global designer brands. The world's largest mall, the Dubai Mall offers over 850,000 square feet of fashion retail space (www.thedubaimall.com). Every winter Dubai celebrates the Dubai Shopping Festival, which attracts visitors from all over the world to indulge in some retail therapy. www.mydsf.ae



Skiing

In 2005 Dubai opened the doors to the first indoor ski slope in the desert – Ski Dubai. It is the world's third largest indoor ski slope, measuring 400 metres and using 6000 tons of snow. www.skibxb.com

Surfing

With Dubai's calm waters it is perfect for first time surfers. www.surfersofdubai.com

Tennis

The Dubai Tennis Championships take place towards the end of February; they include men's and women's tournaments. The Dubai Tennis Championships has been named the 2009 ATP World Tour 500 Tournament of the Year and this is the sixth time that the Dubai men's week has won the prestigious 'Tournament of the Year' award. For the budding Federer's, many hotels offer tennis courts and coaching and there is also a David Lloyd Tennis Academy as part of Dubai Sports City. Dubai's Aviation Club is home to Dubai's premier tennis stadium, which plays host to the annual ATP (Association of Tennis Professionals) tennis tournament, the Dubai Tennis Championships. www.aviationclub.ae & www.dubaitennischampionships.com

Volleyball

There are a number of volleyball clubs and beach volleyball available at Sheraton Beach Club and Le Meridien Mina Seyahi.

Wadi Bashing

Wadis are dry riverbeds which flow through rocky valleys which can be driven through in four wheelers. Wadi bashing in Dubai is an activity known to adventure seekers worldwide. Book excursions with a local tour operator.

Walking Tours

The older parts of Dubai – Deira and Bur Dubai – are perfect for walking excursions. These can be done in half a day and take in some of the key highlights in the emirate such as Jumeirah Mosque, Gold and Spice Souks, the Creek, a former residence of the Ruling family of Dubai and Bastakiya – the old part of Dubai.

Yoga

Several different types of classes are available in Dubai to meet the needs of expatriates and visitors. www.yoga.ae

Zorbing

Hurling down a ski run in a large, clear plastic ball might not be everyone's idea of a good time, but for those wanting to give it a try should head to Ski Dubai. www.skidxb.com

