

TRAVEL CHECKLIST



☐ Travel documents & confirmation vouchers

Passports, tickets, visas (if you need one)—make sure you have them all. Gulf Dunes organizes all required vouchers for accommodations and destination activities through the on-site coordinator, to ensure smooth facilitation of our groups.

Purchase of suitable travel insurance coverage is highly recommended, such as medical, repatriation, etc. When it comes to medical records, there are no mandatory vaccination requirements unless you have recently transited from a cholera-infected area. Please check for vaccination requirements at the time of booking.

☐ Cash & credit cards

The monetary unit of the UAE is the Dirham (AED). Exchange rate is pegged to the **US\$1 = AED3.66**. Money changers and offsite branches of local banks can be found at the airport, shopping malls and commercial areas.

For credit cards, Mastercard, Visa, American Express and Diners Club are widely accepted.

☐ Power plug adapters

We use British style square, three-pin sockets across the country. The standard voltage is 220/240 volts at 50 Hz.

TRAVEL CHECKLIST



☐ Modest clothing

The UAE is an Islamic country and clothing should be modest. Light cotton garments are ideal during the hot and humid summer months. In the winter months, light sweaters are suitable. Beachwear is acceptable only at beach clubs, hotels and public beaches. During the day, the dress code is fairly casual. Exclusive restaurants and clubs may expect guests to dress more formally during the evening.

Keep shirts or any type of clothing with offensive pictures or slogans in your closet. Decency laws are strictly followed in the UAE.

☐ Sunny day essentials

Remember to bring your sunscreen, hats, sunglasses, and any other gear that will protect you from the sun. The UAE's desert, beaches and leisure parks are just too hard to resist, so you better come prepared for all the fun under the sun.



IMPORTING GOODS

Importing pork products and pornographic materials into the UAE is strictly prohibited and illegal. Videos, books may be subject to scrutiny and may be censored.

MEDICATION

Some prescribed and over-the-counter medicines may be considered controlled substances in the UAE. Bringing in of check-controlled substances without prior permission and documentation from the Ministry of Health may result in prosecution under UAE law. Hence, it is strongly recommended to with UAE representative offices (Embassies and Consulates) or booking agents whether your medication is on the controlled list.

THINGS TO KNOW



The people of the UAE are warm and welcoming. Considering that the country's population comes from more than 200 nationalities, cultural diversity and tolerance are embraced. Nevertheless, the UAE is an Islamic country that is governed by the Sharia law, and everyone is strongly advised to be familiar with and abide by local laws. Customs, traditions and cultural sensibilities are highly valued. Respect, in all aspects, is key.

Be in the know and observe proper decorum. Otherwise, guests may find themselves facing serious penalties for doing something that may not be illegal in their country.

Here are some important notes to remember:

1. Public display of affection is frowned upon and may get you in trouble.

In all public places, holding hands may be tolerated but kissing and petting are not permitted.

2. Swearing and making indecent gestures are not OK.

Be mindful of your language and actions in expressing yourself. Offensive behavior may get one fined or imprisoned.

3. Think before you click: Don't take pictures of others without permission.

The sights of the UAE are picture-perfect; but there are people who are sensitive towards having their photographs taken. Do not take and share on social media photos of people without their consent. Taking photos of aircraft and restricted areas like military buildings, palaces and courts is not permitted.

4. Dress modestly.

Shorts and skirts need to be of appropriate length so as not to indecently expose parts of the body. Ladies, watch your necklines. Cross-dressing is not allowed as well as wearing shirts with obscene graphics or slogans.

5. Respect religion of every kind.

Religious practices are highly respected in the UAE. Blasphemy and sacrilege of any form is considered deeply offensive.

THINGS TO KNOW



THE HOLY MONTH OF RAMADAN

With Islam being the official religion of the country, the month of Ramadan is deemed the holiest. This is a period when Muslims fast from sunrise to sunset. Eating, drinking and smoking in public areas during daylight hours is strictly prohibited. Exceptions are granted only to small children and expecting mothers. Quite recently, fast food outlets located in several shopping malls have been allowed to operate and serve food within an enclosed food court area during. Hence, eating and drinking beyond the enclosed area during the fasting hours is strictly prohibited.

The Holy Month of Ramadan commences as per the moon sighting by Islamic scholars. While the month and date of its observance may vary each year, its duration is for a maximum of 30 days.



GETTING AROUND



How do I say this ...

Arabic is the national and official language of the UAE. English is widely spoken and understood. Majority of the information signs are in both languages.

Here are some Arabic phrases you'll hear in the country and may be useful to you.

Shukran! (Thank you)

Marhaba (Hello)

As-Salaam-Alaikum

(Peace be upon you)

In response to 'As-Salaam-Alaikum', you may say, **Wa-Alaikum-Salaam** (and unto you).



You've found your ray of sunshine.

A subtropical, arid climate with sunny blue skies most of the year is prevalent across the UAE. Rainfall is infrequent and irregular, mainly in winter.

Temperatures range from minimum 27°C (81°F) to maximum 45°C (106°F) from June to September and minimum 14°C (57°F) to maximum 37°C (99°F) from October to May. However, temperatures may also vary from one emirate to another.



Make every second count.

Local Time:

+4 GMT

Weekend:

Saturday & Sunday

Fixed public holidays:

New Year's Day (1 January)
Martyrs' Day (30 November)
National Day (2 December)

Public holidays that are based on moon sighting by Islamic scholars:

Islamic New Year
Prophet Mohammed's Birthday
Accession Day
Eid Al-Fitr & Eid Al-Adha

NUMBERS TO CALL, *JUST IN CASE*

Emergency Number

(Police, Ambulance): **999**

(Fire Department): **997**

Airports

Dubai International Airport (DXB):

+971 4 224 5555

Abu Dhabi International Airport (AUH):

+968 2336 7462

GETTING AROUND



Stay connected.

Etisalat and du are the country's telecommunication providers. **Free internet** through WiFi access is available in public places such as airports, shopping malls, coffee shops

and restaurants. Most hotels also provide guests with free WiFi connectivity. Data roaming is available (with charges).



Eat and be merry!

Most hotels offer local specialties, as well as an eclectic mix of international cuisine. Bottled water is also recommended for personal consumption. Well-known international fast food chains and food outlets can also be found in shopping malls and commercial centers.

ON ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

Being a Muslim country, alcohol is served only at licensed hotel restaurants, bars and nightclubs.

Restaurants outside hotels do not serve alcohol. Alcohol consumption within the emirate of Sharjah is strictly prohibited and illegal.



Keep calm and wander.

Public transport such as buses is available in Dubai and Abu Dhabi. Dubai also has the Dubai Metro. Taxis are available across all the seven emirates of the UAE. For holders of an international driver's license valid for more than six months at the time of visit and are staying in the country only on a tourist or visit visa, reputable rent-a-car companies are also available. Gulf Dunes is also highly capable of providing quality transfers.



Checking in.

It is normal practice for hotels in the UAE to take a photocopy of guests' passport or valid ID. Anyone under the age of 18 years and not accompanied by an adult is not permitted to stay in any hotel in the UAE.

Tipping.

While tipping is not expected and mandatory, it is common practice to do so. Gratuities may be given to hotel staff upon the discretion of guests. Taxi drivers do not expect to be tipped.