

TRANSPORT

AIR

There are direct flights to Dubai from most European countries and hubs in Africa and Asia. The Americas are increasingly well connected, with Emirates and Etihad (from Abu Dhabi) both flying from New York and Toronto, and Delta flying direct from Atlanta. At research, the only direct flights from South America are from Sao Paulo on Emirates. Dubai's expanding airport is increasingly the major stopover hub between Europe and Asia. For airport information and flight inquiries visit the website at www.dubaiairport.com.

Emirates (www.emirates.com), wholly owned by the Dubai government, remains the major player in the region, flying to more than 90 destinations globally. Secondary carriers include the Bahraini carrier **Gulf Air** (www.gulfairco.com) and Etihad, the UAE's national airline – by virtue of the fact that it's based in the capital, Abu Dhabi. While Emirates' famed service appears to have wilted (especially in economy class), it has a perfect safety record, which is more than you can say about Gulf Air.

In 2007 **Jazeera Airways** (www.jazeeraairways.com), a Kuwaiti airline, became the first budget airline to fly to and from Dubai airport. It offers very competitive prices – it's sometimes possible to find return flights to Beirut or Amman for under Dh400 including taxes. The first low-cost airline in the Middle East, **Air Arabia** (www.airarabia.com) uses Sharjah's airport as its base and covers many destinations in the Middle East and the Indian subcontinent, with return fares typically around Dh1000.

High season for air travel varies between airlines. Generally, it is from late May or early June to the end of August, and from the beginning of December to the end of January. Low season is generally any other time. The tax added to a ticket can also vary wildly depending on the airline, so it pays to shop around.

Airlines

The following is a selection of carriers that fly to and from Dubai.

Air France (Map pp56–7; ☎ 602 5044; www.airfrance.co.ae; Al-Shoala Complex, cnr Al-Maktoum Rd & 9 St, Deira)

Air India (Map pp56–7; ☎ 227 6747; www.airindia.com; Sheikh Rashid Building, Al-Maktoum Rd, Deira)

British Airways (Map pp72–3; ☎ 307 5777; www.britishairways.com; 21st fl, Al-Attar Business Tower, Sheikh Zayed Rd)

Cathay Pacific Airways (Map pp56–7; ☎ 295 0400; www.cathaypacific.com; Al-Shoala Complex, cnr Al-Maktoum Rd & 9 St, Deira)

Delta Airways (Map pp64–5; ☎ 397 0118; www.delta.com; Sharaf Bldg; Khalid bin al-Waleed Rd, Bur Dubai)

Emirates (www.emirates.com/ae) Deira (Map pp56–7; ☎ 295 1111; DNATA Airline Centre, Al-Maktoum Rd); Sheikh Zayed Rd (Map pp72–3 ☎ 316 7535; Sheikh Zayed Rd, near Interchange No 2)

Gulf Air (Map pp54–5; ☎ 800 2200; www.gulfairco.com; Salahuddin Rd, Deira)

KLM (Map pp64–5; ☎ 800 4744; www.klm.com; 9th fl, Gulf Towers, cnr Oud Metha Rd & 20 St, Oud Metha)

Lufthansa Airlines (Map pp72–3; ☎ 343 2121; www.lufthansa.com; 2nd fl, Lufthansa Bldg, Sheikh Zayed Rd)

Oman Air (Map pp62–3; ☎ 351 8080; www.omanair.aero; mezzanine fl, Al-Rais Centre, Al-Mankhool Rd, Bur Dubai)

Qatar Airways (Map pp54–5; ☎ 229 2229; www.qatarairways.com; Doha Centre, Al-Maktoum Rd, Deira)

Singapore Airlines (Map pp72–3; ☎ 316 6888; www.singaporeair.com; DNATA Travel Centre, Sheikh Zayed Rd)

Thai Airways International (Map pp56–7; ☎ 268 1702; www.thaiair.com; Al-Muraqqabat Rd, Deira)

Virgin Atlantic (Map pp64–5; ☎ 406 0600; www.virgin-atlantic.com; Sharaf Bldg; Khalid bin al-Waleed Rd, Bur Dubai)

Dubai International Airport

This airport (Map pp56–7) is the busiest in the Middle East, with over 30 million passengers passing through it in 2007. The major international airlines, including Emirates, use Terminal 1, the main terminal. Smaller airlines, mostly en route to East Africa or the countries of the former Soviet Union, use the dismal Terminal 2. The opening of Terminal 3 and three new concourses in 2008 is expected to increase its capacity to 75 million passengers a year, and the Al-Maktoum International Airport in Jebel Ali, which is set to become the largest airport in the world upon its completion, will boost Dubai's ability to receive visitors even further.

CLIMATE CHANGE & TRAVEL

Climate change is a serious threat to the ecosystems that humans rely upon, and air travel is the fastest-growing contributor to the problem. Lonely Planet regards travel, overall, as a global benefit, but believes we all have a responsibility to limit our personal impact on global warming.

Flying & climate change

Pretty much every form of motorised travel generates CO₂ (the main cause of human-induced climate change) but planes are far and away the worst offenders, not just because of the sheer distances they allow us to travel, but because they release greenhouse gases high into the atmosphere. The statistics are frightening: two people taking a return flight between Europe and the US will contribute as much to climate change as an average household's gas and electricity consumption over a whole year.

Carbon offset schemes

Climatecare.org and other websites use 'carbon calculators' that allow travellers to offset the level of greenhouse gases they are responsible for with financial contributions to sustainable travel schemes that reduce global warming – including projects in India, Honduras, Kazakhstan and Uganda.

Lonely Planet, together with Rough Guides and other concerned partners in the travel industry, support the carbon offset scheme run by climatecare.org. Lonely Planet offsets all of its staff and author travel.

For more information check out our website: www.lonelyplanet.com.

For the time being, Dubai airport is a victim of its own success, with its limited facilities being pushed to extremes by large crowds, especially at the beginning and end of the day when the bulk of departures and arrivals are scheduled. At night it's common to find hundreds of transit passengers sleeping on the floor due to a lack of seating.

There are several places to eat in the departures lounge including a small food court, a seafood bar, the Irish Village pub and Starbucks, although finding tables at peak times is problematic. Dubai Duty Free sprawls over an entire floor of the departures terminal, so there's no lack of shopping facilities. Here you can find travel essentials, books and magazines, electronics, perfumes, cigarettes, food and alcohol at competitive, if not world-beating, prices. There's a hotel at the **airport** (☎ 216 4289) where rooms are available from Dh150 per hour, as well as credit card-powered internet terminals, banks, several currency exchange outlets, a business centre, a prayer room, a health club and designated quiet lounges.

Ask about airport transfers when you book your accommodation. If you're staying at one of the beach hotels along the Jumeirah strip, a transfer can save you lots of money. All transport leaves outside the arrivals hall, and the areas are well signposted (bus, limo, taxi etc). Unlike other Middle East destinations, getting a taxi isn't at all intimidating in Dubai. The cabs line up patiently, drivers are friendly and honest, and the journey is

metered. There's a Dh20 charge levied on these taxis for the run from the airport. A ride to the Deira souq area will cost around Dh35 while to Bur Dubai it costs around Dh45. A ride to the beginning of the Jumeirah hotel area starts at around Dh65. Going the other way, a taxi ride from the Deira souq area to the airport costs Dh15 to Dh20; from Bur Dubai it's about Dh25; from Jumeirah hotels about Dh45.

To get to Deira from the airport by bus (with fares between Dh2 and Dh4), route 401 goes via Baniyas Rd and Naif Rd. For Bur Dubai, route 402 travels through Deira City Centre and Karama on its way to Mankhool Rd, and the C1 goes to Satwa Bus Station. From here you can take the 93 to Safa Park in Jumeirah, Al-Barsha and The Greens. If you arrive during the night, the C1 bus goes to Jebel Ali Gardens via Ghubaiba Bus Station and Satwa Bus Station.

Compared to many cities, the airport is very conveniently located. If there's no traffic, it'll take you 10 minutes to get to Deira, 15 minutes to Bur Dubai, 25 minutes to Sheikh Zayed Rd or Jumeirah, and 45 minutes to reach New Dubai.

Sharjah International Airport

This airport is used mainly by **Air Arabia** (www.airarabia.com) and cargo flights and has improved considerably in recent years. The opening of a second arrivals hall has sorted out what was a serious overcrowding problem

and it's now a much more viable alternative to Dubai. The main problem, as ever, is the traffic on the roads. Although it's only 15km from the Dubai–Sharjah border, a journey in the evening when commuters are making their daily slog home can take up to three hours. If possible, book flights that leave very late at night, early in the morning, or on a Friday.

To get to/from the airport you have to take taxis, since there's no public transport. Sharjah taxis are reliable, metered and comfortable. A trip to Dubai's Gold Souq from Sharjah Airport costs approximately Dh65; a trip to Dubai Marina around Dh110.

Abu Dhabi International Airport

With Etihad often offering cheaper fares to the UAE than rival airlines, an increasing number of passengers are using Abu Dhabi's airport as their entry point to Dubai. Landing in the neighbouring emirate might even save you time too. The airport is compact and efficient, meaning that you can sometimes get from the plane to the street in under half an hour. It's situated 22km from Abu Dhabi in the direction of Dubai, which means New Dubai's beach hotels are only an hour's drive away. Travelling to the same hotels from Dubai airport during rush hour traffic can take considerably longer.

A free shuttle bus to the office of **Etihad Airways** (Map pp72–3; ☎ 343 4443; www.etihadairways.com; Chelsea Tower, Sheikh Zayed Rd) in Dubai is available to Etihad passengers. It's worth booking your seat on the bus at the same time you buy your flights. Business and 1st-class passengers are entitled to limo transfers to Dubai. The taxis that queue up outside Abu Dhabi airport charge between Dh250 and Dh300 for the journey to Dubai. A cheaper, and very reliable alternative is to book a taxi through **Al Ghazal** (☎ 02-444 7787), which charges a set fee of Dh175 to Dubai. There is no public transport to Dubai from Abu Dhabi airport.

BICYCLE

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BOAT

Abras

Around 150 *abras* (small motorboats) cross the Creek from 5.30am until 11.30pm, taking three routes. The routes link **Bur Dubai Abra Station** (Map pp62–3; near Bank of Baroda Bldg) with the **Deira Old**

Souq Abra Station (Map pp62–3; cnr Old Baladiya St & Baniyas Rd). The second route connects **Al-Seef Station** in Bur Dubai to the **Baniyas Station** (Map pp54–5; Dubai Souq) in Deira, and the third route goes from the **Dubai Old Souq Abra Station** (Map pp62–3; Dubai Souq) to the **Sabkha Abra Station** (Map pp62–3; cnr Al-Sabkha & Baniyas Rds). A small number of *abras* are kept on this third route throughout the night. Like shared taxis, *abras* leave when full (around 20 passengers), but it never takes more than a few minutes for one of them to fill up. The fare is Dh1 and you pay the driver halfway across the Creek. Note that it can be quite tricky getting on and off the *abras* – not something to attempt wearing high heels.

It's usually possible to charter your own *abra* from an entrepreneurial bloke with his own boat. You'll have to haggle for a good deal, but Dh60 for an hour of cruising, or Dh15 for a direct journey to the other side, is a fair price. An alternative is to go with one of the official municipal *abras*, which cost Dh100 per hour.

Water Buses

For all their charm, *abra* rides can be a little uncomfortable during the summer months. For air-conditioned, properly seated comfort, you can take a water bus along four Creek-crossing routes from 6am to 11pm daily. Route 1 goes from **Sabkha Abra Station** (Map pp62–3; cnr Al-Sabkha & Baniyas Rds) to **Bur Dubai Abra Station** (Map pp62–3; near Bank of Baroda Bldg). Route 2 connects **Baniyas Station** (Map pp54–5; Dubai Souq) to the **Dubai Old Souq Abra Station** (Map pp62–3; Dubai Souq). Route 3 starts at **Sabkha Abra Station** (Map pp62–3; cnr Al-Sabkha & Baniyas Rds) and ends at Al-Seef Station; and Route 4 goes from Baniyas Station to Al-Seef Station. Tickets are Dh4 – you can pay cash onboard or buy a Dh40 smart card, which gives you a 10 percent discount on journeys.

BUS

The gradual introduction of air-conditioned shelters is making bus travel in the summer months a viable option. While Dubai's long-suffering bus users have welcomed the new shelters, bar some justifiable grumbles that they're far too small, further improvements need to be made. The buses are infrequent and often drive straight past stops; the timetables are confusing and hard to locate, and the routes are circuitous to say the least. On the plus side, bus travel is very cheap and offers large savings over long distances. A Dh70

taxi journey from Ibn Battuta Mall to Deira's Gold Souq, for example, is reduced to Dh2.50 if you hop on the number 8.

Local buses operate out of the two main stations in Deira and Bur Dubai: the **Deira bus station** (Map pp54–5; off Al-Khor St, near the Gold Souq) and the **Bur Dubai bus station** (Map pp62–3; Al-Ghubaiba Rd, next to Carrefour), Dubai's main bus station. In the official timetables the two stations appear as 'Gold Souq Bus Station' and 'Al-Ghubaiba Bus Station', respectively. Numbers and routes are posted on the buses in English as well as Arabic. Fares are Dh1 to Dh3.50, depending on the distance travelled. You pay the driver, so keep some change handy. A free schedule and route map can be picked up from either bus station, or from the tourist office in Baniyas Sq.

Note that most buses start and finish their days a bit later on Friday and there is only a limited service while noon prayers are underway. From Saturday to Thursday, buses run from approximately 5.45am to 11.15pm at intervals of 15 to 20 minutes. There is also a daily night bus that stops at all the major bus stations.

Bus travel between emirates is slowly improving. The Emirates Express leaves the Bur Dubai bus station every 20 minutes at peak times (and every 40 minutes at less busy times) and takes just under two hours to reach Abu Dhabi. It costs Dh15 each way and tickets should be purchased from the Emirates Express ticket office at the bus station. Bus E306 does the journey from Dubai to Sharjah, with Dh5 tickets available on the bus. There is also a bus from Bur Dubai that does the return journey to Al-Ain (90 minutes one-way) once every half an hour or so. This costs Dh20. Minibuses serve the rest of the country, including Ajman, Umm al-Quwain, Ras al-Khaimah and Fujairah. Infuriatingly, these buses will only get you out of Dubai and don't offer return journeys.

For information on public buses, including detailed route maps, check-in with **RTA** (Roads and Transport Authority; ☎ 800 9090; www.rta.ae).

CAR & MOTORCYCLE

If you are planning on taking a day or overnight excursion from Dubai, hiring a car is the best and cheapest way to do it. If you decide to hire a car to get around the city, don't expect a very relaxing holiday... Traffic congestion in Dubai can be a real problem at peak hours, which occur three times a day

(although everyone will say that it's all day): between 7am and 9am, 1pm and 2pm and most of the evening from 6pm onwards. The worst congestion is around the approaches to Al-Maktoum and Al-Garhoud Bridges and along Al-Ittihad Rd towards Sharjah. Accidents are frequent, so it's a good idea to tune into the radio to get traffic updates.

A road toll, known as *Salik* (meaning 'clear and moving'), was introduced in the summer of 2007 to help combat congestion. Each time you pass one of the two tolling points – at Al-Garhoud Bridge and Sheikh Zayed Rd next to Mall of the Emirates – Dh4 is automatically deducted from the car's prepaid *Salik* account. If you buy or borrow a car you must make sure there is a *Salik* tag affixed to the front mirror. These are available from EPPCO, ADNOC and Emarat petrol stations, cost Dh100, and include Dh50 of credit. Citing a dubious Dh1 administrative fee, car hire companies charge Dh5 for each toll point crossing upon the return of the vehicle.

It is compulsory to wear seatbelts in the front, and it is illegal to use a handheld mobile phone while driving, although many motorists seem to ignore this rule. As you would expect, Dubai is not short on petrol stations and gas is cheap compared to the rest of the world. Petrol is sold by the imperial gallon (an imperial gallon is just over 4.5L) and costs around Dh7 per gallon.

It is not possible to hire motorcycles in Dubai – which is probably just as well after you've seen a couple wedged under trucks. Before you drive in Dubai, read the boxed text, p180, for some important safety messages.

Hire

As in most countries, a credit card is essential for hiring a car at a reputable rental company in Dubai. If you do find a car rental company that will take a cash deposit instead, not only will you probably have to leave your passport with them, but you may not receive full insurance. Some agencies insist on a credit card deposit as well as your passport. Find another agency if this is the case. You do not have to leave your passport with them. A photocopy of it is sufficient.

For tourists, most foreign driving licences are accepted in Dubai so long as you are either a citizen or a resident of the country that issued the licence. However, some companies insist on an international licence, so it's worth getting one of these before you leave home.

At large international agencies, small cars

ACCIDENT ALERT

If you are unfortunate enough to have an accident, no matter how small, you are required to wait at the scene and report it to the **traffic police** (☎ 999). Unless your car is causing a major traffic jam, do NOT move it until the traffic police get there. If there has been an injury, or it's not blindingly obvious who was at fault, don't move the vehicles at all. For insurance-claim purposes you must have a police report, and if you move your car, the police may not be able to issue a complete report. Outside Dubai you should leave your car exactly where it is, no matter how bad an obstruction it is causing, and call the police immediately. If you are driving a hire car and you have a crash, your insurance will not cover any damage unless a police report is written.

such as a Toyota Yaris start at about Dh145 per day with another Dh40 for collision damage waiver (CDW) insurance. These rates drop to about Dh150 per day including CDW if you pay for a week's hire upfront and around Dh100 per day with insurance if you pay for a month. If you have taken out CDW, the larger agencies do not charge an excess in the case of an accident that is your fault. Always call the police if you are involved in an accident; see [above](#) for more details.

At the smaller agencies, you should be able to negotiate a net rate of around Dh135 per day, including CDW insurance. With these agencies, no matter what they tell you, you may still be liable for the first Dh1000 to Dh1500 of damage in the event of an accident that is your fault, even if you have CDW. Sometimes this excess is only Dh250 if you have paid CDW. Ask questions and read the small print on the contract carefully.

The first 100km or 150km per day are usually free with additional kilometres costing 40 or 50 fils each. If you rent a car for more than three days, you should be given unlimited mileage.

Most agencies have free pick-up and delivery within Dubai, either to/from a hotel or the airport. They also offer a chauffeur service, but you'll pay around Dh200 per eight hours for this privilege. If you are just moving around Dubai for the day, it is cheaper to use taxis.

Although smaller agencies are generally cheaper than the larger chain companies, it's worth considering the convenience of being able to contact the local office of a reliable company if you are driving out of Dubai and something goes wrong. It's also worth ensuring complete insurance cover (zero liability).

There are dozens of car rental firms in Dubai, including all the major international chains as well as plenty of local companies. The highest concentrations of local companies are in Deira on Abu Baker al-Siddiq Rd,

just north of the Clock Tower Roundabout, and on Omar ibn al-Khattab St. They are also found on the Bur Dubai side of the Creek on Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Rd, just north of Al-Adhid Rd; and on Kuwait St in Karama.

Unless you make specific arrangements, your rental car insurance will not cover you when in Oman. This means that if you go to Hatta, which involves passing through about 20km of Omani territory, or visit Buraimi on an excursion to Al-Ain, you will not be covered for any accident while in Omani territory. Ask for this coverage if you intend to head into Oman.

Avis (www.avis.com) Airport (Map pp56–7; ☎ 224 5219; airport arrivals hall; ☎ 24hr); Deira (Map pp56–7; ☎ 295 7121; Al-Maktoum Rd, Deira)

Budget (www.budget.com) Airport (Map pp56–7; ☎ 224 5192; Airport arrivals hall; ☎ 24hr); Airport Rd (Map pp56–7; ☎ 282 3030; Airport Rd, just before Cargo Village)

Diamondlease (Map pp72–3; ☎ 343 4330; www.diamondlease.com; Sahara Towers, Sheikh Zayed Rd)

Europcar (Map pp56–7; ☎ 224 5240; www.europcar-dubai.com; Airport arrivals hall; ☎ 24hr)

Hertz (www.hertz-uae.com) Airport (Map pp56–7; ☎ 224 5222; Airport arrivals hall; ☎ 24hr); Airport Rd (Map pp56–7; ☎ 282 4422; Airport Rd, just before Cargo Village)

Thrifty (☎ 355 6732; www.thrifty.com) Airport (Map pp56–7; ☎ 224 5404; Airport arrivals hall; ☎ 24hr) Plus various locations around Dubai.

Road Rules

Most people drive on the right in Dubai, which is the side you're supposed to drive on. The speed limit is 60km/h on city streets and 80km/h on major city roads – if you actually reach these speeds, send us a postcard. On Sheikh Zayed Rd and on other dual-lane highways around the UAE the official speed limit is 100km/h on some sections, but otherwise it's 120km/h. If you are caught speeding, you will be fined, but in some cases you will simply

be sent a bill by the police. For this reason, most car rental companies require customers to sign a statement acknowledging that they are aware of this and authorising the rental company to charge their credit card for any tickets that turn up after they have left town. So if you see a flash of light while powering down Sheikh Zayed Rd, check your credit card statements when you get home. There are also speed cameras on the major highways.

Increasingly, the busier city streets have a strictly enforced four-hour limit on parking. Tickets must be purchased from one of the many orange machines and displayed on your dashboard. Rates start at Dh2 for an hour. Parking rates apply from 8am to 1pm and from 4pm to 9pm Saturday to Thursday. Compliment the parking inspectors on their groovy safari suits all you like, but good luck getting out of a fine – they are ruthless and scarily efficient. Parking in the centre of Dubai is free on Friday and holidays. Fines for not buying a ticket start at Dh100, and you can't re-register your car until you've paid up.

TAXI

Dubai has a 5000-strong, modern fleet of metered taxis. During the day the starting fare is Dh3 plus Dh1.68 per kilometre, and at night (10pm–6am) the starting fare is Dh4. If you book a taxi in advance, the starting fare is Dh6, or Dh7 at night. Dh4 is added to your fare every time you pass a *Salik* toll point. We've heard complaints that a small number of drivers are taking advantage of tourists by

charging more than Dh4 at the toll points, or charging for a toll when no toll point has been crossed. Such misbehaviour is rare and most drivers are honest, speak good English, know all the major hotels and landmarks, and drive safely. Tips are not expected, but drivers work a 72-hour week (and sometimes over 100 hours) for a low wage and appreciate the acknowledgement of their hard work.

It's usually fairly easy to catch a taxi, especially during the night or from major malls and hotels, but there are a few trouble spots where hour-long waits are not unusual. Due to the road toll, it's particularly hard to hail taxis on the streets in the area near Al-Garhoud Bridge, especially in Oud Metha. There's also a chronic taxi shortage in the area near the *abra* stations in Deira, by the shopping district of Karama, and in Bur Dubai by the bus station. You can also expect lengthy queues at the shopping malls on weekday evenings and Friday afternoons. At City Centre and Mall of the Emirates, two of the worst offenders, you can often bypass the queues by catching taxis from in front of the Sofitel Hotel and the Kempinski Hotel respectively.

A serious problem is that it's extremely difficult to find a free taxi between 4pm and 5.30pm in all parts of the city. This is when most drivers end their shifts and have to deliver their cars to their partners (usually two drivers share a car, working 12 hours each). Few drivers are willing to risk picking up customers who might extend their shift and delay their partner's start time. The thought of staggering shift times, it seems, hasn't occurred to the taxi companies.

MOTORING MAYHEM

Driving in Dubai is not for the faint of heart. Although it's not as chaotic as in other parts of the Middle East, drivers tend to cut in front of you, turn without indicating and view roundabouts as a lane-less free for all. Out on the freeway, driving in the lane closest to the centre of the road at speeds of less than 160km/h will invoke some serious headlight flashing from the latest model Mercedes trying to break the Dubai–Abu Dhabi land-speed record. It's no wonder that Sheikh Zayed Rd is the deadliest road in Dubai.

So it's no surprise that UAE has one of the world's highest rates of road deaths per capita. Inappropriate speed and reckless driving are the major causes as well as pedestrians crossing against the lights or not at crossings. In 2007 an average of 23 people a month died on Dubai's roads. The worst aspect of this is that there doesn't seem to be sufficient incentive not to drive badly. Although speeding fines are meted out, many people view speed cameras as toll booths you don't have to stop at. Causing a death through an accident requires the payment of blood money (*dhiyya*) to the victim's family. Although this is a large sum (up to Dh200,000), nationals are insured against it. This often means that the only punishment for causing death or injury through reckless driving is an increased insurance premium.

If you're used to counting drinks down at the local to see whether you're over the alcohol limit or not, we'll make it easy for you – if you've had one, or even half of one, you've had one too many. Dubai has a zero-tolerance policy on drink-driving, and if your vehicle is stopped and you're found to have been driving under the influence of alcohol, you'll be a guest of Dubai Police for at least one night. If you have been involved in an accident and have been drinking, your insurance will be voided whether you were responsible for the accident or not.

SLOW TRAIN COMING

Dubai's driverless light-rail system is scheduled to partially open in September 2009 and be fully completed by 2012. The Dubai Metro will consist of at least four lines. The red line will run from the airport past BurJuman, the Emirates Towers and Burj Dubai to the Jebel Ali Port Station. To travel the entire length of the line will take an hour and trains will run daily from 5.30am to 12.30am. The green line, expected to be fully operational by March 2010, will loop through the city centre, starting at Festival City and ending at Rashidiya. The purple line will connect the current airport to the new airport in Jebel Ali, and the blue line will run along Emirates Rd. At the time of writing, unspecified fifth and sixth lines are expected to be announced, but these won't link Dubai to Sharjah or Abu Dhabi. This being Dubai, the trains will have a VIP class with leather seating, along with a separate area for women and children, and economy class.

You can book taxis in advance by calling the numbers below, although sometimes it's hard to get through and you can expect up to a 30-minute wait at peak hours.

An army of unlicensed drivers in unmarked cars seek to take advantage of the shortages. These are usually men trying to earn some money on top of their normal jobs. Often four of five people will club together to buy a car, take turns working as drivers and share the profits. Bear in mind that it's illegal to pay for a ride in an unlicensed taxi, and if you're involved in an accident, you could face a fine.

Several private taxi companies (also known as 'luxury taxi' companies) serve the major hotels and shopping malls. It's common to hear drivers of these taxis reply 'same, same' when you ask if their ride will be more expensive than normal taxis. Ignore them – these taxis will charge at least 30 percent more for the same journey and can hit your pockets hard if you're stuck in traffic.

Most taxi drivers know the city well and are good at their jobs, but some really don't have a clue. New drivers are expected to learn on the job, which means you'll occasionally get somebody in his first week who doesn't know the city at all. To avoid an expensive and frustrating journey, ask the driver to radio his office or flag down a colleague to get directions as soon as it's clear he's inexperienced.

Dubai Transport Corporation has women

taxi drivers (in pink taxis, no less) and if you book in advance, it can provide eight-seater vehicles or wheelchair-accessible taxis at no additional cost.

Taxi companies include the following:

Cars Taxis (☎ 269 3344)

Dubai Transport Company (☎ 208 0808)

Metro Taxis (☎ 267 3222)

National Taxis (☎ 339 0002)

DIRECTORY

BUSINESS HOURS

Most people work a five-day week from Sunday to Thursday, although the six-day week is still fairly common and many work on Saturdays. Private companies usually work a 9am to 6pm day and government departments generally work between 7am and 2pm, although government offices that deal with the public often have extended business hours and are sometimes open on Saturdays. Banks are generally open from 8am to 2pm Saturday to Thursday, while most shops are open from 10am to 10pm Sunday to Wednesday and 10am to midnight Thursday to Saturday.

CHILDREN

Families are well catered for in Dubai. There are plenty of beaches, parks and activity centres to keep kids amused, and the shopping malls and hotels usually have play areas for young children. Many restaurants have children's menus, especially in shopping malls. We have highlighted Dubai's best family restaurants by using the child-friendly icon in the Eating chapter. All the major parks have playgrounds too. There is very little crime in Dubai, but driving standards are poor, so parents should take extra care when crossing roads with kids. For the best children's activities, check out our Top 10 For Kids (see the boxed text, p71). Lonely Planet's *Travel with Children* by Cathy Lanigan is a good book that prepares you for the joys and pitfalls of travelling with the little ones, while the website *Dubai Kidz* (www.dubaikidz.biz) contains detailed and up-to-date listings specific to children.

Babysitting

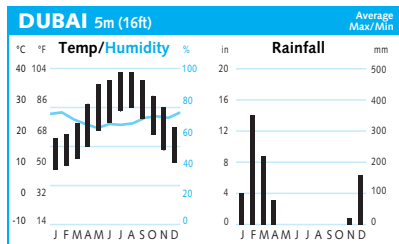
Most of the large hotels offer babysitting services at around Dh75 for three hours. These tend to be reliable as hotels are very used to large numbers of children visiting. Locals and expats with children generally have maids, and those who don't often 'borrow' a maid from a neighbour for the night if they want to go out – the maids are usually more than happy to earn the extra money.

CLIMATE

We can't stress strongly enough that Dubai turns into a sauna in the summer months (May to September). In July and August average daytime temperatures are around 43°C with 85% humidity. Sometimes the heat reaches 48°C and the humidity 95% – and rumours always swirl around in the heat that it has reached 50°C somewhere in the UAE. The sea temperature in the height of summer (July and August) is about 37°C, which provides no relief, and hotel swimming pools have to be cooled during this time so the guests don't assume they're being parboiled for dinner. Don't expect to do any sightseeing beyond shopping malls and hotel lobbies during these months. See p15 for more information on the best times to visit Dubai.

In March and April, and October and November, the weather is very pleasant, with temperatures in the low 30s. In winter (December to February), the weather is usually perfect, although there are the occasional cold patches around New Year. Unlike the desert area inland, Dubai doesn't get too cold on winter nights, with the lowest temperature hovering around 15°C, but bring a warm jacket if you're visiting at this time of year.

It doesn't rain often, or heavily, although when it does (usually in December or January), getting around can suddenly become difficult as streets turn into rivers and traffic becomes chaotic, with accidents everywhere. Drivers are not used to wet road conditions, and the city planners decided Dubai didn't need a drainage system, so there are no gutter or storm-water drains. The average annual rainfall is about 6.5cm per year (and it rains only five days a year on average), but rainfall



varies widely from one year to the next. Sandstorms can occur during March and April, although Dubai is protected from the swirling dust and sand to some degree by its ever-increasing number of tall buildings.

COURSES

Most language courses on offer are for English. There are only a few places where English speakers can study Arabic. This is because of the great demand by UAE national students and expats from the Subcontinent who want to improve their employment opportunities in the world of business, which is dominated by the English language. The following centres offer Arabic courses:

Arabic Language Centre (Map pp72–3; ☎ 308 6036; [alc@dwtc.com](http://alc.dwtc.com); Dubai World Trade Centre, Sheikh Zayed Rd) Runs five courses a year in Arabic from beginner to advanced levels. Private tuition starts at Dh185 per hour and group classes cost around Dh1800 for 30 hours.

Berlitz Language School (Map pp76–7; ☎ 344 0034; Jumeirah Beach Rd) Offers courses in a number of languages, including Arabic and Urdu. The latter is useful to know to some extent, as this is the language of many of the Pakistani expats in the UAE.

Polyglot Language Institute (Map pp54–5; ☎ 222 3429; www.polyglot.co.ae; Al-Masaeed Bldg, Al-Maktoum Rd, Deira) Beginner courses and conversation classes in Arabic, French, German and English. A 10-week Arabic course with three classes per week costs Dh2050 including materials. Private tuition costs around Dh8000 for 25 90-minute lessons.

Sahary Gate (Map pp62–3; ☎ 353 5660; www.saharygate.com; Bastakia House no 14, Bur Dubai) Offers courses in spoken Arabic from beginner to advanced levels. A four-week course costs around Dh1000.

Cultural

Dubai International Art Centre (Map pp76–7; ☎ 344 4398; www.artdubai.com; Villa 27, Street 75B, near Town Centre, Jumeirah Rd) Offers a plethora of art-related courses, but it's the Arabic calligraphy lessons that are most appealing. DIAC is expected to relocate to more spacious premises in the future, so visit its website for up-to-date info.

CUSTOMS REGULATIONS

The duty-free allowances for tobacco are 400 cigarettes, 50 cigars or 500g of loose tobacco. Non-Muslims are allowed to import 4L of alcohol or two cartons of beer, each consisting of up to 24 355ml cans. You are generally not allowed to bring in alcohol if you cross into the

UAE by land. No customs duties are applied to personal belongings. The following goods cannot be brought into the country: controlled substances (see boxed text, p186), materials that insult Islam (this includes books such as Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*), firearms, pork, raw seafood and pornography. For a full list see www.dubaicustoms.gov.ae.

ELECTRICITY

The electric voltage is 220V AC. British-style three-pin wall sockets are standard, although most appliances are sold with two-pin plugs. Adaptors are inexpensive and available in small grocery stores and supermarkets. The two-pin plugs will go into the three-pin sockets, but this does involve a technique that won't be seen in a workplace safety video anytime soon.

EMBASSIES

Generally speaking, the embassy will not be much help in emergencies if the trouble you're in is your own fault. Remember that you are bound by the laws of the UAE. Your embassy will not be very sympathetic if you end up in jail after committing a crime locally, even if such actions happen to be legal in your own country.

In genuine emergencies you might get some assistance, but only if other channels have been exhausted. For example, if you need to get home urgently, a free flight is exceedingly unlikely – the embassy would expect you to have insurance. If you have all your money and documents stolen, it might assist with getting a new passport, but a loan for onward travel is out of the question.

Embassies & Consulates in Dubai

Most countries have diplomatic representation in the UAE. Dubai is home to several consulates and one embassy, the British embassy; other embassies are in Abu Dhabi and are listed in the front pages of the Dubai phonebook. The telephone area code for Dubai is ☎ 04.

Australia (Map pp62–3; ☎ 508 7100; www.uae.embassy.gov.au; 25th fl, BurJuman Centre, Bur Dubai; ☎ 8am–3.30pm Sun–Wed, 8am–2.45pm Thu)

Canada (Map pp62–3; ☎ 352 1717; dubai@international.gc.ca; 7th fl, United Bank Bldg, Khalid bin al-Waleed Rd, Bur Dubai; ☎ 8am–4pm Sun–Thu)

Egypt (Map pp64–5; ☎ 397 1122; 11 St, Bur Dubai; ☎ 9am–noon Sat–Wed)

France (Map pp72–3; ☎ 332 9040; www.consulfrance-dubai.org.ae; 18th fl, API World Tower, Sheikh Zayed Rd; ☎ 8.30am–1pm Sat–Thu)

Germany (Map pp64–5; ☎ 397 2333; www.dubai.diplo.de; 1st fl, Sharaf Bldg, Khalid bin al-Waleed Rd, near BurJuman Centre, Bur Dubai; ☎ 8–11am Sun–Thu)

India (Map pp64–5; ☎ 397 1222; www.cgidubai.com; 7B St, Bur Dubai; ☎ 8am–4.30pm Sun–Thu)

Iran (Map pp76–7; ☎ 344 4717; www.iranconsul.org.ae; cnr Al-Wasi Rd & 33 St, Jumeirah; ☎ 8am–1pm Sat–Wed)

Italy (Map pp72–3; ☎ 331 4167; www.ambadubai.esteri.it; 17th fl, Dubai World Trade Centre, Sheikh Zayed Rd, Za'abeel; ☎ 9am–noon Sun & Tue–Thu)

Netherlands (Map pp64–5; ☎ 352 8700; www.netherlands.ae; 5th fl, ABN-Amro Bank Bldg, Khalid bin al-Waleed Rd, Bur Dubai; ☎ 9am–noon Sat–Thu)

Oman (Map pp64–5; ☎ 397 1000; general@ocodubai.com; 11 St, Bur Dubai; ☎ 7.30am–2.30pm Sat–Wed)

Qatar (Map pp62–3; ☎ 398 2888; qatar98@emirates.net.ae; cnr Al-Adhid Rd & 52 St, Al-Jafiliya; ☎ 9–11.30am Sun–Thu)

South Africa (Map pp64–5; ☎ 397 5222; www.southafrica.ae; 3rd fl, Sharaf Bldg, Khalid bin al-Waleed Rd, near Bur Juman Centre, Bur Dubai; ☎ 8.30am–12.30pm Sun–Thu)

Syria (Map p52; ☎ 266 3354; cnr 15 & 10C Sts, Al-Wuheida Street, Deira; ☎ 8.30am–2.30pm Sat–Wed)

Turkey (Map pp72–3; ☎ 331 4788; tcdubkon@emirates.net.ae; 11th fl, Dubai World Trade Centre, Sheikh Zayed Rd; ☎ 10am–noon Sun–Mon, Wed & Thu)

UK (Map pp62–3; ☎ 309 4444; www.britisheembassy.gov.uk/uae; Al-Seef Rd, Bur Dubai; ☎ 7.30am–2.30pm Sun–Thu)

USA (Map pp72–3; ☎ 311 6000; www.dubai.usconsulate.gov; 21st fl, Dubai World Trade Centre, Sheikh Zayed Rd, Za'abeel; ☎ 7.30am–4pm Sat–Wed)

EMERGENCY

Ambulance (☎ 998/999)

Fire department (☎ 997)

Police (☎ 999)

GAY & LESBIAN TRAVELLERS

Homosexual acts are illegal under UAE law and can incur a jail term. You will see men walking hand in hand, but that's most likely a sign of friendship and is no indication of

sexual orientation. Although no bars, clubs or cafés would dare identify themselves as gay-friendly for fear of being raided and shut down, there are venues in the city that attract a sizeable gay and lesbian crowd. It is sometimes possible to get info on these venues from websites, but you can't access gay and lesbian interest websites from inside the UAE.

We don't recommend Dubai as a holiday destination for same-sex couples. Booking a hotel room can be awkward and potentially risky, and open displays of affection are likely to land you in trouble.

HOLIDAYS

See the Islamic Holidays table (opposite) for the approximate dates of the religious holidays observed in Dubai. Lailat al-Mi'raj is the celebration of the Ascension of Prophet Mohammed. Eid al-Fitr is a three-day celebration that occurs after Ramadan, and Eid al-Adha is a four-day celebration that occurs after the main pilgrimage to Mecca, or *haj*.

Secular holidays are New Year's Day (1 January) and National Day (2 December). The death of a minister, a member of the royal family or the head of state of another Arab country is usually marked by a three-day holiday. Newspaper websites (p37) are the quickest way to find details when this occurs. If a public holiday falls on a weekend (ie Friday or Saturday), the holiday is usually taken at the beginning of the next working week.

The Islamic calendar starts at the year AD 622, when Prophet Mohammed fled Mecca for the city of Medina. It is called the Hejira calendar (hejira means 'flight'). As it is a lunar calendar, it's roughly 11 days shorter than the Gregorian (Western) calendar, which means that Islamic holidays fall 11 days earlier each year. However, this is not a fixed rule, as the exact dates of Islamic holidays depend upon the sighting of the moon at a particular stage in its cycle. This can be as informal as a group of elderly imams being taken on a night-time drive into the desert to confer on whether or not the new moon is visible. This is why Islamic holidays are not announced until a day or two before they occur, and why they differ from country to country.

Ramadan

This is the month during which Muslims fast during the daylight hours. They must also refrain from sex, swearing, smoking or any

ISLAMIC HOLIDAYS

Hejira	New Year	Prophet's Birthday	Ramadan	Eid al-Fitr	Eid al-Adha
1430	29 Dec 08	09 Mar 09	21 Aug 09	21 Sep 09	28 Nov 09
1431	18 Dec 09	26 Feb 10	11 Aug 10	09 Sep 10	16 Nov 10
1432	07 Dec 10	15 Feb 11	01 Aug 11	30 Aug 11	06 Nov 11
1433	27 Nov 11	05 Feb 12	21 Jul 12	19 Sep 12	26 Oct 12

other indulgence. This is to clean the mind and body to better focus on their relationship with Allah.

During Ramadan, government offices ease back to about six hours' work (well, attendance) a day. Bars and pubs are closed until 7pm each night, live music is prohibited and dance clubs are closed throughout the month. Camel racing ceases too. Some restaurants do not serve alcohol during this month. Everyone, regardless of their religion, is required to observe the fast in public (see p106)

For visitors interested in Islam or religion in general, this is a fascinating time to visit Dubai. If you walk the backstreets of areas such as Satwa at Iftar, you'll see mosques with mats and carpets laid out with food ready for mosque attendees, and witness the streets come to life – well into the wee hours.

INTERNET ACCESS

Dubai is the most wired city in the Middle East and you should have no trouble getting online. In the UAE the internet is accessed through a proxy server, which blocks pornography, gay interest sites, websites considered critical of Islam or the UAE's leaders, dating and gambling sites, drug-related material and the entire Israeli domain. To the irritation of the country's huge foreign workforce, peer-to-peer and Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) software such as Skype is banned in the UAE.

Every major hotel offers in-room internet access, either broadband or wireless. Hotels usually charge extortionate rates for an hour of access (Dh40 to Dh60 is not uncommon) and more reasonable rates if you pay for 24 hours up front (around Dh80 to Dh100).

Hotels aren't the cheapest source of wi-fi access. Etisalat's Hotspots service is available at all branches of Starbucks, Barista and Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf, as well as the major shopping malls and various other restaurants and cafés (see www.etisalat.ae for the full list). The easiest way to gain access is by buying a prepaid card from the venue itself, or by

using your credit card. You enter your card number and mobile phone number in the fields provided, and you'll be sent an access code by text message. It costs Dh15 for one hour, Dh30 for three hours and Dh70 for 24 hours. If you have a UAE mobile phone and subscribe to Etisalat's Wasel service, you can use Hotspots for Dh10 an hour. In addition to Hotspots venues, many other malls, hotels, restaurants and cafés offer their own wireless services, which are often free if you make a purchase.

Visitors without wi-fi on their machines can access Etisalat's Dial 'n' Surf service at ☎ 500 5555; all you need is a modem and a phone line. No account number or password is needed. It is charged at 12 fils per minute directly to the telephone you are connected to. If you're staying at a hotel, you should check whether the hotel will charge you an additional fee for using their phone line.

If you don't own a computer, nearly all hotels have business centres although your best bet is likely to be an internet café, which may charge as little as Dh2 an hour for access. The following are pleasant and reliable:

Al-Jalssa Internet Café (Map pp62–3; ☎ 351 4617; Al-Ain Shopping Centre, Al-Mankhool Rd; ☎ 8am–1am) Wireless internet at Dh10 per hour.

F1 Net Café (Map pp76–7; ☎ 345 1232; Palm Strip Shopping Centre, Jumeirah Rd; ☎ 10am–10pm)

LEGAL MATTERS

Dubai maintains the death penalty for drug importation, although the penalty usually ends up being a very long jail term (see boxed text, p186). Jail sentences for being involved in drugs by association are also fairly common. That means that even if you are in a room where there are drugs, but are not partaking, you could be in as much trouble as those who are. The UAE has a small but growing drug problem, and the authorities are cracking down hard on it. The secret police are pervasive, and they include officers of many nationalities. Theft and writing bad cheques

DRUGS: ZERO TOLERANCE

We can't shout the following words loudly enough: do not attempt to carry illegal drugs into Dubai. In fact, even if you're not attempting to import drugs, you should double-check that there isn't the faintest speck of anything illegal anywhere in your baggage or on your person. You must also ensure that medicines and drugs legal in your country are legal in Dubai before travelling with them. If you have illegal substances in your bloodstream, this still counts as possession too, and a urine test could see you found guilty. Several drugs available over the supermarket counter in other countries are banned substances in the United Arab Emirates. [Fair Trials International](http://www.fairtrials.net) (www.fairtrials.net) publishes a list of banned substances on their website.

There are a number of tourists in Dubai prisons or detention centres still waiting to discover what they're being charged for. Some recent cases reveal just how unforgiving Dubai's drug laws are:

- A British tourist was arrested at Dubai airport after 0.03g of cannabis, an amount smaller than a grain of sugar and invisible to the human eye, was detected on the stub of a cigarette stuck to the sole of his shoe. He was sentenced to four years in prison.
- A British TV producer was arrested and held for possessing the health supplement melatonin, which is taken to cure jet lag and is legal in the UK and Dubai. After being cleared of importing an illegal substance, he was held for over a month without charges in a Dubai prison while they tested the rest of his possessions. See www.freediz.com for more information on this case.
- A Saudi man was sentenced to four years in prison after a tiny and dried up leaf of Qat (a mild stimulant, which is legal in Yemen) was found on his clothing.
- A Swiss man was reportedly imprisoned after customs officials found three poppy seeds on his clothes. These had fallen off a bread roll he ate at Heathrow.
- A British woman was held in custody for two months before UAE customs officers accepted that the codeine she was using for her back problem had been prescribed by a doctor.

are also taken pretty seriously and usually involve jail and deportation.

If you are arrested, you have the right to a phone call, which you should make as soon as possible (ie before you are detained in a police cell or prison pending investigation, where making contact with anyone could be difficult). Call your embassy or consulate first. If there is an accident, it's a case of being guilty until proven innocent. This means that if you are in a road traffic accident, you may be held under police guard until an investigation reveals whose fault the accident was. Note that drinking alcohol in a public place that is not a licensed venue is illegal. The penalties vary from a warning to a fine. If police approach you when you're camping, put away any alcohol.

Dubai Police has established a [Department of Tourist Security](#) (☎ 800 4438) to help visitors with any legal complications they may face on their trip.

MAPS

Maps of Dubai are available from the bigger bookshops (see the Shopping chapter, p86). All the maps mentioned here should also be available in the bookshops at five star hotels. The *Dubai Mini Map* (Dh15), published by Explorer, provides a large fold-out overview map with detailed maps of key areas. Explorer also

publishes a more detailed *Dubai Map* (Dh45) and an *Off-Road Map* (Dh30), which is very useful if you plan to drive in the desert.

MEDICAL SERVICES

There are pharmacies on just about every street in Dubai. See the daily newspapers for a list of pharmacies that are open 24 hours on that particular day. If you need to get to a pharmacy urgently, call ☎ 223 2323, a hotline that will tell you where the nearest open pharmacy is. As a visitor you will receive medical care, but you will be charged for it. It's important to have health cover for your trip as a lengthy stay in a hospital in Dubai will be expensive. Generally the standard of medical services is good.

The following government hospitals have emergency departments:

Al-Maktoum Hospital (Map pp54–5; ☎ 222 1211; Al-Maktoum Hospital Rd, near cnr Omar ibn al-Khattab Rd, Rigga)

Al-Wasl Hospital (Map pp64–5; ☎ 324 1111; Oud Metha Rd, south of Al-Qataiyat Rd, Za'abeel)

New Dubai Hospital (Map pp54–5; ☎ 271 4444; Abu Baker al-Siddiq Rd, near cnr Al-Khaleej Rd, Hor al-Anz)

Rashid Hospital (Map pp64–5; ☎ 337 4000; off Oud Metha Rd, near Al-Maktoum Bridge, Bur Dubai)

If you need nonurgent care, ask your consulate for the latest list of recommended doctors and dentists. Some are listed here in case you need to find one and your consulate is closed:

Al-Zahra Private Medical Centre (Map pp72–3; ☎ 331 5000; Za'abeel Tower, Sheikh Zayed Rd)

Dubai London Clinic (Map pp76–7; ☎ 344 6663; Al-Wasl Rd, Jumeirah) The clinic also has an emergency section and dental services.

Manchester Clinic (Map pp76–7; ☎ 344 0300; Jumeirah Rd, just north of McDonald's)

MONEY

The UAE dirham (Dh) is divided into 100 fils. Notes come in denominations of five, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200, 500 and 1000. There are Dh1, 50 fils, 25 fils, 10 fils and 5 fils coins. The coins only show the denomination in Arabic, so it's a great way to learn. At the time of writing, the UAE dirham is pegged to the US dollar, but rising inflation has fuelled speculation that this will soon change.

ATMs & Credit Cards

There are globally linked ATMs all over Dubai, at banks, shopping malls and at the upmarket hotels. Visa, MasterCard and American Express are widely accepted at shops, hotels and restaurants throughout Dubai and debit cards are accepted at bigger retail outlets.

Changing Money

You'll probably get a better deal at Dubai airport than you will at your home country, but the best rates are to be found in the city itself. In central Deira, especially along Sikkat al-Khail St, and around Baniyas Sq, every other building seems to contain a bank or a moneychanger. In Bur Dubai there are plenty of moneychangers (though most of them only take cash and not travellers cheques) around the *abra* dock. Thomas Cook Al-Rostamani has a number of branches around the city, including one on Sheik Zayed Rd (Map pp72–3), south of the Crowne Plaza Hotel; on Kuwait St (Map pp64–5) in Bur Dubai; and on Rd 14 (Map pp54–5) in Deira, near Al-Khaleej Hotel.

If you are changing more than US\$250 it might pay to do a little shopping around. Moneychangers sometimes have better rates than banks, and some don't charge a commission. The problem with moneychangers is that some of them either will not take travellers cheques

or will take one type only. Some places will only exchange travellers cheques if you can produce your original purchase receipt. If you don't have the receipt, try asking for the manager.

Currencies of neighbouring countries are all recognised and easily changed with the exception of the Yemeni rial. American Express (Amex) is represented in Dubai by [Kanoo Travel](#) (Map pp64–5; ☎ 336 5000; Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Rd, Karama; ☎ 8.30am–5pm Sat–Thu). The office is on the 1st floor of the Hermitage Building, next to the main post office.

NEWSPAPERS & MAGAZINES

English-language newspapers in Dubai include the free *7 Days* (www.7days.ae – amusingly published six days a week), the government-owned and infuriatingly obsequious *Emirates Business 24/7* (www.business24-7.ae), the high-design weekly tabloid *Xpress* (www.xpress4me.com), and the long-established dailies (*Gulf News*, *Khaleej Times* and *Gulf Today*). At the time of writing, the Abu Dhabi government was preparing to launch *The Nation*, the region's most ambitious English-language daily newspaper to date, with a staff of around 180 journalists. For more on the local media, see p37.

International newspapers and news magazines such as the *International Herald Tribune* and *The Economist* are fairly easy to find, though expensive and sometimes several days or a week out of date. *The Times* is the first UK newspaper to print a daily Dubai edition and the *Financial Times* publishes a Middle East edition.

Many shops also sell Indian newspapers such as *Malayalam Manorama* and the *Times of India*. The Arabic dailies are *Al-Bayan* (published in Dubai), *Al-Khaleej* and *Al-Ittihad* (both published in Abu Dhabi). Foreign newspapers are available in larger bookshops and hotels as well as Spinneys and Choithrams supermarkets. *Time Out Dubai* is produced weekly and has detailed listings and stories on upcoming events. It costs Dh5, although you'll find it free in Dubai's better hotel rooms. *What's On* is the other listings monthly and costs Dh10, although it's a lot tamer than the competition.

ORGANISED TOURS

Creek Cruises

Bateaux Dubai Cruises (Map pp64–5; ☎ 399 4994; Al-Seef Rd, opposite British Embassy, Bur Dubai Creek;

GETTING YOUR GOAT *Matthew Lee*

While researching this book, I was almost arrested for taking a photograph of a goat. It was Eid-al-Adha, a festival traditionally marked in Pakistan by the sacrificing of a goat, and the butcher's shop on Al-Musallah Rd was heaving. There were at least 10 goats in the tiny shop, and another five animals and their owners were queuing outside. Even in Bur Dubai this wasn't an everyday sight, so I instinctively pulled my mobile phone out my pocket to take a snapshot. Within seconds a policeman was threatening to arrest me. After demanding to know my nationality, the purpose of my visit to Dubai and the reason why I was taking a photograph of a goat, he announced that he would be taking me to the station for taking an 'illegal photo'. But it was my lucky day. After talking to one of his colleagues, he suddenly changed his mind; he'd let me go free if I deleted the photo from my phone, apologised to the goat concerned (he didn't seem too concerned about an apology for the goat-owner), and promised never to take a photograph of a goat ever again. Chances are this won't happen to you. But it's worth bearing in mind that people in Dubai can be very sensitive about tourists taking photographs.

dinner cruise with 4-course set menu Dh175) Dinner cruises on an elegant boat with a stylish contemporary design and floor-to-ceiling glass windows.

Danat Dubai Cruises (Map pp64–5; ☎ 351 1117; opposite British Embassy, Bur Dubai Creek; dinner cruise Dh175) Boarding at 8pm, the licensed two-hour dinner cruise sails by the historical waterfront.

Tour Dubai (Map pp54–5; ☎ 336 8407; www.tour-dubai.com; tour Dh45, dinner cruise Dh200; 🕒 tours 11.30am, 1.30pm, 3.30pm, 5.30pm, dinner cruise 8.30–10.30pm) Departs in front of Radisson SAS, Deira. Succinct one-hour guided *dhow* tours of Dubai Creek. Plenty of scheduled cruise times mean you get a good intro to sights at your convenience. The licensed dinner cruise with belly dancer is popular.

Bus Tours

Big Bus Company (Map pp64–5; ☎ 340 7709; www.bigbus.co.uk; Wafi City Mall, Bur Dubai; adult/child/family Dh175/100/450, discounts on online bookings) One of Dubai's most surreal sights is that of the Big Bus Company's open-topped London double-decker buses playing a red city route (every 20 minutes) and blue beach route (every half hour) from 9am to 5pm every day. The 24-hour ticket allows you to get off and back on at any one of 23 well-positioned stops (maps and stops online) and includes free entry to the Dubai Museum (p61), Sheikh Saeed al-Maktoum House (p66) and a Wafi City discount card. There's a running commentary in English.

Wonder Bus Tours (Map pp62–3; ☎ 359 5656; www.wonderbusdubai.com; BurJuman Centre, cr Khalid bin al-Waleed (Bank St) & Trade Centre Rds, Bur Dubai; adult/child/family Dh115/75/350) Twice a day (11am and 3pm) this amphibious bus drives down to the Creek, plunges into the water, cruises for an hour, and then drives back onto land and returns to the BurJuman Centre.

City Tours

Arabian Adventures (Map p52; ☎ 303 4888; www.arabian-adventures.com; Emirates Holidays Bldg, Interchange

No 2, Sheikh Zayed Rd; city tours adult/child 2–12 yrs Dh135/70) Arabian Adventures operates daily half-day city tours. From Tuesday to Thursday and on Sundays, it also runs a fascinating Al-Jadeedah tour (Dhs425), which covers the sites of Dubai's most audacious future megaprojects, before high tea at the Burj Al Arab.

Lama Tours (Map pp64–5; ☎ 334 4330; www.lama.ae; Al-Sayegh Building, Suite No 202/203, Oud Metha Rd; adult/child Dh120/70) As well as the usual city tours, Lama arranges shopping tours, although whether you really need a guide to show you round Deira City Centre and BurJuman is another matter entirely.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Dubai loves technology, so memory cards, batteries and other accessories for digital cameras are available everywhere. The best range and prices are usually found at Carrefour (p92) or Plug-Ins (p94). The UAE uses the PAL video system and all imaginable accessories are available from Carrefour and Plug-Ins.

If you take photographs of government offices and military areas, you will arouse suspicion and could get into trouble. You should also be wary of photographing people without their permission (see boxed text, above), especially covered women.

The best spots for photography tend to be near the Creek, where you can capture *dhow*s, *abras*, historical buildings and Dubai's most colourful city scenes. Lonely Planet's *Urban Travel Photography* by Richard I'Anson will help you get the best results.

POST

Emirates Post is the UAE's official postal service. There are post boxes at most of the major shopping centres. There are also a number of fax and postal agencies dotted along the small streets in Bur Dubai and Deira. Prices

are similar to those in Western countries; a small letter to Europe, for example, costs Dh3.50, while a postcard costs Dh2.50 and a 500g parcel costs Dh31.50. Expect the price to double if you send by registered post.

Major post offices:

Al-Musallah Post Office (Map pp62–3; 🕒 8am–2pm Sat–Thu, 5–9pm Fri) At Al-Fahidi Roundabout in Bur Dubai.

Al-Rigga Post Office (Map pp56–7; 🕒 8am–8pm Sat–Thu, 5–9pm Fri) Near the Clock Tower Roundabout.

Main Post Office (Map pp64–5; Za'abeel Rd; 🕒 8am–8pm Sat–Thu, 5–9pm Fri) On Bur Dubai side of the Creek in Karama.

Satwa Post Office (Map pp76–7; Al-Satwa Rd; 🕒 8am–8pm Sat–Thu, 5–9pm Fri)

Mail generally takes about a week to 10 days to Europe or the USA and eight to 15 days to Australia. If you need to send something in a hurry, it's best to use one of the following courier agencies:

Aramex (☎ 600 544 000)

DHL (☎ 800 4004)

FedEx (☎ 800 4050)

RADIO

The quality of radio programming is improving in Dubai (especially talk radio), but it's generally a cringe-worthy and ad-saturated affair wherever you point the dial.

Channel 4 FM (104.8) Contemporary Top 40.

Dubai Eye FM (103.8) News, talk and sport.

Dubai FM (92) Classic hits from the '80s, '90s etc, as well as dance and lounge on weekends.

Emirates 1 FM (100.5 and 104.1) Popular music.

Emirates 2 FM (90.5 and 98.5) Eclectic programming.

It's worth searching through the dial, as there are stations playing Hindi, Arabic and Indian regional music, and stations where you can hear recitations of the Quran – very soothing when you're stuck in Dubai's horrific traffic.

RELOCATING

If you like Dubai so much you don't want to leave, you may not have to. In most cases, relocating to Dubai is easy. To secure a three-year residency permit, you need either an employer to sponsor you (see Work, p192), a spouse with a job who can sponsor you, or ownership of freehold property, which comes with a renewable residency permit.

It seems almost inconceivable that 20 years ago foreign workers in Dubai were eligible for a 'hardship allowance' – financial compensation for having to live in a boring, conservative and unbearably hot place. Back then, working hours were short and salaries were high. Today some people will accept a drop in salary to experience the much-feted 'Dubai dream', despite the fact that inflation is on the rise, rents are higher than they've ever been and wages haven't increased in years (and are now on a par with salaries in the West). For many, these conditions are offset by the fact that the salary is tax free, and that myriad perks are still considered standard in many expat packages, such as a relocation allowance, annual plane tickets home, housing, health insurance, kids' education allowance, long paid holidays, and generous gratuity payments for when you decide you've had enough. Still, veteran expats are often heard grumbling that things ain't like they used to be.

These days many people are moving to Dubai for reasons that are less to do with financial reward, and more to do with job satisfaction and being part of the exciting developments that are taking place in the region. The opportunities for career progression are fantastic. Competition exists, but it's nowhere near as tough as it is back home. Whereas the expat of the oil-boom days was in his or her 40s or 50s, white, middle class, and more than likely worked in oil, gas, petroleum, construction, nursing, teaching or foreign relations, times have changed. The new expats come in all ages, races, nationalities and classes, and the work itself is more glamorous, with the most coveted opportunities being in tourism, hospitality, marketing, PR and advertising, real-estate development, project management, architecture, interior design, fashion and entertainment. While the opportunities are fantastic, the work culture can be intense. Late nights and weekends in the office are commonplace and it can be tricky achieving the right life balance.

While Dubai may not be as culturally active as many other cities (there's very little theatre, live music and quality cinema), it's easier to get noticed if you are a budding playwright, actor, musician or film director. The opportunities to travel from Dubai are fantastic, with the Indian subcontinent, Eastern Europe, East Africa and all of the Middle East accessible within a few hours' flying time. And then there's the affordable

fine dining, the beaches, the desert trips at weekends, the inspiring multiculturalism and the chance to learn about the Arab World and Islam.

For a detailed guide to relocating to the Gulf, see Lonely Planet's *Oman, UAE & Arabian Peninsula* guide. For information on long-term rentals, see p150.

SAFETY

On the whole, Dubai is a very safe city, but you should exercise the same sort of caution with your personal safety as you would anywhere. Due to Dubai's location at the heart of the Gulf, the US Department of State and British Foreign Office both warn travellers of a general threat from terrorism.

One very real danger in Dubai is bad driving. We also don't recommend that you swim, water-ski or jet-ski in the Creek. The tides in the Gulf are not strong enough to flush the Creek out on a regular basis, so it is not a clean waterway, despite what the tourist authorities might tell you. Also, be careful when swimming in the open sea. Despite the small surf, currents can be very strong and drownings are not uncommon.

SMOKING

At the start of 2008, Dubai Municipality extended its smoking ban to cover most public places, with the exception of nightclubs and bars. Most shopping malls, hotels, restaurants and cafés have designated smoking areas, and most hotels have designated smoking rooms. The fine for lighting up in a non-smoking area is typically between Dh500 and Dh1000.

While smoking is not particularly prevalent among UAE nationals, the large expat communities from India, Pakistan, Lebanon and Egypt tend to be fond of their cigarettes. The relatively low cost of cigarettes (around Dh7 for a packet of 20) often entices European smokers to stock up before heading home. Although smoking – of cigarettes and *sheesha* – is still seen as a male activity in some quarters, women smokers should have no qualms about lighting up.

Many people who don't smoke cigarettes do smoke *sheesha* (water pipes filled with scented or fruit-flavoured tobacco). There are *sheesha* cafes all over Dubai and these are great places in which to strike up a conversation with local people.

TELEPHONE

The UAE has an efficient and modern telecommunications system. Until 2007, **Etisalat** (Map pp54–5; cnr Baniyas & Omar ibn al-Khattab Rds; ☎ 24hr) had monopolised the industry. The much-heralded advent of a competitor, **Du** (Map pp76–7; Jumeirah Centre, Jumeirah Rd; ☎ 10am–10pm), turned out to be an anticlimax. The government owns the majority stake in both companies and their tariffs are almost identical.

Coin phones have almost been completely taken over by cardphones. Phonecards are available in various denominations from grocery stores, supermarkets and petrol stations – do not buy them from street vendors. Note that there are two phonecards, one for cardphones and one for mobile phones operating on the Wasel GSM service.

To phone another country from the UAE, dial ☎ 00 followed by the country code. If you want to call the UAE, the country code is ☎ 971. The area code for Dubai is ☎ 04, though if you are calling from outside the UAE you drop the zero.

Directory enquiries (☎ 181)

International directory assistance (☎ 151)

Faxes

Most typing and photocopying shops also have fax machines you can use. You'll find the highest concentration of these just north of the Clock Tower Roundabout on Abu Baker al-Siddiq Rd in Deira (North).

Mobile Phone

Mobile numbers begin with either 050 (Etisalat) or 055 (Du). If you don't have a worldwide roaming service and want to use your mobile phone in Dubai, you can buy a prepaid SIM card from Etisalat, Dubai Duty Free or one of Dubai's myriad mobile phone shops. This excellent-value Ahlan Visitor's Mobile Package lasts 90 days, costs Dh90 and includes Dh35 of credit. Domestic calls cost Dh0.50 a minute and international calls are priced at Dh2.50 a minute. Recharge cards are available for purchase from grocery stores, supermarkets and petrol stations – once again, do not buy them from street vendors.

TIME

Dubai is four hours ahead of GMT. The time does not change during the summer. Not taking

daylight saving into account, when it's noon in Dubai, the time elsewhere is as follows:

City	Time
Auckland	8pm
London	8am
Los Angeles	midnight
New York	3am
Paris & Rome	9am
Perth & Hong Kong	4pm
Sydney	6pm

TIPPING

Service charges are often included in restaurant bills. If not, 10% is usually sufficient. However, tips in Dubai don't always reach the pockets of the person who served you. See p105 for more information.

TOILETS

The best advice is to go when you can. The very few public toilets on the streets are usually only for men. Public toilets in shopping centres, museums, restaurants and hotels are Western style and are generally well maintained. On an excursion outside Dubai you might have to contend with 'hole in the ground' loos at the back of restaurants or petrol stations.

TOURIST INFORMATION

Local Tourist Offices

The **Department of Tourism & Commerce Marketing** (DTCM; ☎ 223 0000; www.dubaitourism.ae) is the official tourism board of the Dubai government. It is also the sole regulating, planning and licensing authority for the tourist industry in Dubai. It has three main welcome bureaus you can call for information or for help in booking hotels, tours and car hire: the airport arrivals area (just after customs, on your left), Baniyas Sq and way down Sheikh Zayed Rd on the way to Abu Dhabi (around 40km out of Dubai). There are also smaller information desks at all the major shopping malls.

Airport (Map pp56–7; ☎ 224 5252/224 4098; ☎ 24hr)

Baniyas Sq (Map pp54–5; ☎ 228 5000; Baniyas Sq; ☎ 9am–9pm Sat–Thu, 3–9pm Fri)

Sheikh Zayed Rd (☎ 883 3397; Sheikh Zayed Rd; ☎ 9am–9pm Sat–Thu, 3–9pm Fri)

Dubai National Travel & Tourist Authority (DNATA), part of the Emirates Group, is the

quasi-official travel agency in Dubai; it has a monopoly on travel services at a wholesale level. The **DNATA head office** (Map pp56–7; ☎ 295 1111; Al-Maktoum Rd, Deira) is at the DNATA Airline Centre. There are other branches opening around the city.

TRAVELLERS WITH DISABILITIES

Dubai has made a big effort in recent years to improve its services for physically challenged people. Most major hotels can cater to the needs of wheelchair users and the **Department of Tourism & Commerce Marketing** (DTCM; ☎ 223 0000; www.dubaitourism.co.ae) has a highly detailed list of facilities for disabled people at dozens of hotels, which it will fax to you on request. The DTCM website includes a Special Needs section, which contains information on wheelchair-accessible parks, heritage sites, cinemas and malls. All the major shopping centres have wheelchair access, but ramps in car parks and into most buildings in the city are few and far between. The airport is particularly well equipped, with a quick check-in and porters, and most parking areas in town contain spaces for disabled drivers.

You can order taxis that are equipped to carry wheelchairs from **Dubai Transport** (☎ 208 0808). The airport has facilities for the disabled, including low check-in counters, lounges and carts, but things get more difficult once you are out of the airport even though many hotels in Dubai now claim that they are disabled-friendly. Dubai Museum has ramps; however, other tourist attractions are difficult places for disabled visitors to get around on their own.

VISAS

To visit Dubai your passport must have at least six months validity from your date of arrival. Visit visas valid for 60 days are available on arrival in the UAE at approved ports of entry, including all airports and ports, for citizens of most developed countries. These include all Western European countries (except Malta and Cyprus), Australia, Brunei, Canada, Hong Kong, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore, South Korea and the USA. Tourist visas are valid for 60 days despite the fact that the stamp on your passport, which is in Arabic, says it is valid for 30 days. No fee is charged for tourist visas. If you overstay on your visa, you will be fined Dh100 for each day over.

VIS-À-VIS OMAN

Coming from Dubai, many nationalities can enter Oman without visa charges if they have tourist visas or entry stamps issued by Dubai authorities. They are also free to depart for, or return from, a third destination through land or air facilities in either country.

If you are visiting Oman on a tourist visa, these same nationalities can enter the UAE by land, air or sea without visa charges.

It is not possible to enter with an Israeli passport, although following a change in policy you can now enter Dubai with an Israeli stamp in a non-Israeli passport. Don't worry if you have a Jewish-sounding name. This is not an issue at all.

Citizens of the other Gulf Cooperative Council (GCC) countries do not need visas to enter the UAE, and can stay pretty much as long as they want. For citizens of other countries, a transit or tourist visa must be arranged through a sponsor. This can be a hotel, a company or a resident of the UAE. Most hotels charge a fee of around Dh200 for arranging a visa.

Visa Extensions

Visit visas can be extended once for 30 days by the [Department of Immigration and Naturalisation](#) (Map pp62-3; ☎ 398 1010; Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Rd), near the Za'abeel Roundabout, for Dh500 and a fair amount of paperwork. You may be asked to provide proof of funds. It's much easier, and usually cheaper, to leave the country for a few hours and head back for a new stamp. People have been known to stay in Dubai for a year or more simply by flying out to Bahrain, Doha, Muscat or Kish (an island off the Iranian coast) every two months and picking up a new visa on their return at a total cost of about Dh400 per trip.

Visas can only be extended in the city or emirate you arrived in, so if you landed in Sharjah, you can't get your visa extended in Dubai.

WOMEN TRAVELLERS

Attitudes Towards Women

In general, Dubai is one of the best Middle East destinations for women travellers. Checking into hotels is not usually a problem, but unaccompanied women might want to

think twice about taking a room in some of the budget hotels in Deira and Bur Dubai.

Although things might be better in Dubai than other parts of the Gulf, it does not mean that some of the problems that accompany travel in the Middle East will not arise here as well, such as unwanted male attention and long, lewd stares, especially on public beaches. Try not to be intimidated; it helps to retain a sense of humour.

Safety Precautions

Dubai is a relatively liberal place and people here are used to Western women. While it is liberal, do yourself a favour and wear more than a skimpy tank top to places like shopping malls where Emiratis will be present. While they're too good a host to actually say anything, most Emiratis find this disrespectful. When it comes to beach parties and night-clubs almost anything goes, but take a taxi there and back. Keep in mind also that many of Dubai's bars and clubs (even some five-star hotels) have 'working women' operating in them.

If you travel outside Dubai, keep in mind that everywhere else in the UAE is far more conservative. Apply common sense – don't wear tight and revealing clothes that are just going to make your life difficult. It's sensible to sit in the back seat of taxis. You'll find that you'll often be asked to take the front seat in buses or be asked to sit next to other women. This is so you can avoid the embarrassment of men's stares.

In banks, Etisalat offices, post offices and libraries there are usually separate sections or windows for women – great when there's a queue – so take advantage of it. In small Arab and Indo-Pakistani restaurants you will often be ushered into the 'family room'. You don't have to sit here, but the room is there to save you from being stared at by men.

WORK

You can pre-arrange work in the UAE, but if you enter the country on a visit visa and then find work, you will have to leave the country for one day and re-enter under your employer's sponsorship.

If you have arranged to work in Dubai you will enter the country on a visit visa sponsored by your employer while your residence visa is processed. This process involves a blood test for HIV/AIDS and lots of

paperwork. Those on a residence visa who are sponsored by a spouse who is in turn sponsored by an employer are not officially permitted to work. This rule is often broken, and it is possible to find work in the public or private sector. If you are in this situation, remember that your spouse, and not the company you work for, is your sponsor. One effect of this is that you may only be able to apply for a tourist visa to another Gulf Arab country with a consent letter from your spouse. In some cases you will need to be accompanied by your spouse, who has company sponsorship. Similarly, if you want to apply for a driving licence, you will also need a consent letter from your spouse.

If you obtain your residence visa through an employer and then quit because you've found something better, you may find yourself under a six-month ban from working in the UAE. This rule is designed to stop people from job hopping.

If you are employed in Dubai and have any work-related problems, you can call the [Ministry of Labour Helpline](#) (☎ 800 665) for advice.

Finding Work

While plenty of people turn up in Dubai on a visit visa, decide they like the look of the place and then scout around for a job, this

isn't really the most effective way to go about it. Firstly, most employees are on a contract that's generally for three years. Secondly, there are a lot of sums to be done before you can really figure out whether the amount you're offered is going to make financial sense. Things such as a housing allowance, medical coverage, holidays and schooling (for those with kids) have to be taken into account before you can decide.

Target who you want to work with and try to set up meetings before you arrive. Email and follow up with a phone call or two. Employers in Dubai are very fond of people with qualifications. However, it's of little consequence which higher learning establishment you attended – it's of lesser importance than the paper it's written on. Teachers, nurses and those in engineering are highly valued in Dubai and are well paid.

The *Khaleej Times* and the *Gulf News* publish employment supplements several times a week. When you find a job, you will be offered an employment contract in Arabic and English. Get the one in Arabic translated before you sign it.

[Business Aid Centre](#) (☎ 337 5747; www.bacdubai.com; PO Box 8743, Dubai)

[SOS Recruitment Consultants](#) (☎ 396 5600; www.sos.co.ae; PO Box 6948, Dubai)

LANGUAGE



Arabic is the official language of the UAE, but English is also widely understood. Despite the prevalence of English, you'll find that locals appreciate travellers trying to speak Arabic, no matter how muddled you may think you sound. Learn a few key Arabic phrases before you go. Write them down on pieces of paper and stick them on the fridge, by the bed or even on the computer – anywhere that you'll see them often. A good way to start learning is through Lonely Planet's compact but comprehensive *Middle East Phrasebook*. It covers the predominant languages and Arabic dialects of the region and includes script throughout.

SOCIAL

Meeting People

Hello/Welcome.

marhaba

Peace be upon you.

al-salaam alaykum

Peace be upon you. (response)

wa alaykum e-salaam

How are you?

kay fahlak?

Good, thanks.

zein, shukran

Goodbye.

ff man ullah or ma'al salaama

Goodbye. (response)

(to a man) *alla ysalma*

(to a woman) *alla ysalma*

Goodbye.

(to a man) *hayyaakallah*

(to a woman) *hayyachallah*

Goodbye. (response)

(to a man) *alla yhai'eech*

(to a woman) *alla yhai'eech*

Please.

(to a man) *min fadhla*

(to a woman) *min fadhlich*

Thank you (very much).

shukran (jazeeelan)

You're welcome.

al-afu

Excuse me.

(to a man) *lau tismah*

(to a woman) *lau tismahin*

Yes.

na'am

No.

la'

If God is willing.

insha'allah

Do you speak English?

titkallam ingleezi?

Do you understand (me)?

hal bitifhaam (alay)?

I understand.

(by a man) *ana fahim*

(by a woman) *ana fahma*

I don't understand.

(by a man) *ana mu fahim*

(by a woman) *ana mu fahma*

Could you please ...?

mumkin min fadhla ...?

repeat that *a'id hatha*

speak more slowly *takalam shwai shwai*

write it down *iktba lee*

Going Out

What's on ...?

maza yahdos ...?

locally *mahaleeyan*

this weekend *fee nihayet hatha*

alesboo'a

today *al-yom*

tonight *al-layla*

Where are the places to eat?

wayn el mahalat al-aaki?

PRACTICAL

Question Words

Who? *mnu?*

What? *shu?*

When? *mata?*

Where? *wayn?*

How? *chayf?*

How many? *cham?*

Numbers & Amounts

0 *sifr*

1 *wahid*

2 *ithneen*

3

thalatha

4

arba'a

5

khamisa

6

sitta

7

sab'a

8

thimania

9

tis'a

10

ashra

11

hda'ash

12

thna'ash

13

thalaththa'ash

14

arba'ata'ash

15

khamista'ash

16

sitta'ash

17

sabi'ta'ash

18

thimanta'ash

19

tisi'ta'ash

20

'ishreen

21

wahid wa 'ishreen

22

ithneen wa 'ishreen

23

thalatha wa 'ishreen

30

thalathneen

40

arbi'een

50

khamseen

60

sitteen

70

saba'een

80

thimaneen

90

tis'een

100

imia

101

imia wahid

102

imia wa-ithneen

103

imia wa-thalatha

200

imiatain

300

thalatha imia

1000

alf

2000

alfayn

3000

thalath-alaf

Days

Monday

yom al-ithneen

Tuesday

yom al-thalath

Wednesday

yom al-arba'

Thursday

yom al-khamis

Friday

yom al-jama'a

Saturday

yom as-sabt

Sunday

yom al-had

Banking

I want to ...

ana areed an ...

cash a cheque

asref el-chek

change money

asref beezat

change some travellers cheques

asref chekat siyaheeya

Where's the nearest ...?

wayn aghrab ...?

automatic teller machine (ATM)

alet saref/sarraf alee

foreign exchange office

maktab al-serafa

Post

Where is the post office?

wayn maktab el-bareed?

I want to send a ...

ana areed an arsell an ...

fax *faks*

parcel *barsell/ta'rd*

postcard *beetaga bareediya/kart*

I want to buy ...

ana areed an ashtaree ...

an aerogram *reesala jaweeya*

an envelope *zaref*

a stamp *tab'eh bareed*

Phones & Mobiles

I want to buy a (phone card).

ana areed ashtaree (beetaget hatef/

kart telefon)

I want to make a call (to ...)

ana areed an atsell (bee ...)

I want to make a reverse-charge/collect call.

ana areed tahweel kulfet al-mukalama ila

al-mutagee

Where can I find a/an ...?

wayn mumkin an ajed ...?

I'd like a/an ...

ana areed ...

adaptor plug

maakhaz tawseel

charger for my phone

shahen leel hatef

mobile/cell phone for hire

mobail ('mobile') leel ajar

prepaid mobile/cell phone

mobail moos baq aldaf'

SIM card for your network

seem kart lee shabaket al-itsalaat

Internet

Where's the local internet café?

wayn magha al-internet?

I'd like to ...

ana abga an ...

check my email

chayk al-emayl malee

get online

ahsaal ala khat internet

Transport

When does the ... leave?

mata yamshi ...

When does the ... arrive?

mata yusal ... (m)

boat **il-markab**
train **il-qittar**

mata tusal ... (f)

bus **il-bas**
plane **il-tayara**

What time's the ... bus?

mata ... bas?

first **awal**
last **akhar**

What time's the next bus?

mata il-bas al-thani?

Are you free? (taxi)

anta fathee?

Please put the meter on.

lau samaht shagal al-addad

How much is it to ...?

bcham la ...?

Please take me to (this address).

lau samaht wasalni la (hadha elonwan)

FOOD

Can you recommend a ...

mumkin an tansahanee ala ...?

bar/pub **baar**
café **magha**
restaurant **mata'am**

Is service/cover charge included in the bill?

hal al-fattoora tashmole al-khadma aidan?

breakfast

lunch

dinner

snack

eat

drink

futtoor

ghadha

asha

akal khafif

kol

ishrab

For more detailed information on eating and dining out, see p104.

EMERGENCIES

It's an emergency!

halet isa'af!

Could you please help me/us?

mumkin an toosaadnee min fadhak?

Call the (police/a doctor/an ambulance)!

etasell bil (shurta/tabeeb/sayyaret al-isa'af)!

Where's the police station?

wayn marekaz al-shurta?

HEALTH

Where's the nearest ...?

wayn aghrab ...?

chemist (night) **saydalee (laylee)**
dentist **tabeeb asnan**
doctor **tabeeb**
hospital **mustashfa**

I have (a) ...

ana andee ...

diarrhoea **is-haal**
fever **sukhoona**
headache **suda or waja' ras**
pain **alam/waja'**

GLOSSARY

This glossary contains a list of terms you may hear on your travels through Dubai. For food terms you'll commonly find in the city, check out the Lebanese Food Lingo 101 (p111) and Farsi Food (p108) boxed texts.

abaya – woman's full-length black robe

abra – small, flat-decked boat; water taxi

adhan – call to prayer

agal – headropes used to hold a *gutra* in place

al-housh – courtyard

areesh – palm fronds used to construct houses

asr – mid-afternoon

attar – perfume

ayyalah – Bedouin dance

azan – call to prayer

baiti – romantic Arabic poetry style

barasti – traditional Gulf method of building palm-leaf

houses; house built with palm leaves

barjeel – wind-tower; architectural feature of *masayf*

houses designed to keep the house cool

bateel – young shoot of date-palm plant

burj – tower

burqa – head scarf

dabar – cheap eatery

dosa – flat grilled bread

dhuhr – noon

dhow – traditional sailing vessel of the Gulf

dishdasha – man's shirt-dress

fajr – dawn

falaj – traditional irrigation channel

ghatic – large tree like a weeping willow

gurdwara – Sikh place of worship

gutra – white headcloth

habban – Arabian bagpipes

haj – Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca

halal – meat from animals killed according to Islamic law

hammad – bathhouse

hammadour – common species of fish in Gulf waters

haram – forbidden by Islamic law

hawala – written order of payment

Hejira – meaning 'flight' the Islamic calendar is called

the Hejira calendar

imam – prayer leader, Muslim cleric

isha'a – twilight

jasr – drum covered with goatskin, which is slung

around the neck and hit with sticks

jebel – hill, mountain

kandoura – casual shirt-dress worn by men and women

khaleeji – traditional Gulf-style music

khanjar – traditional curved dagger

khorr – inlet or creek

liwa – traditional dance performed to a rapid tempo and loud drumbeat; it is usually sung in Swahili and most likely brought to the Gulf by East African slaves

luban – frankincense

maghrib – sunset

majlis – formal meeting room or reception area

Majlis, The – parliament

mandir – temple

manior – percussion instrument of a belt decorated

with dried goat hooves

masayf – traditional summer house incorporating a

barjeel

masgouf – fish dish

mashait – traditional winter house incorporating a

courtyard

masjid – mosque

mathaf – museum

mihrab – niche in a mosque indicating the direction

of Mecca

mimzar – oboe-like instrument

mina – port

muezzin – mosque official who sings the *azan*

mullah – Muslim scholar, teacher or religious leader

nabati – Arabic vernacular poetry

oud – wooden Arabian lute; also the wood used to

burn with frankincense

qibla – the direction of Mecca, indicated in a mosque

by the *mihrab*

Ramadan – Muslim month of fasting

sabkha – salt-crust coastal plain

saruj – clay and manure building material mix

shayla – black veil

sheesha – tall, glass-bottomed smoking implement;

also called a water pipe or hubbly-bubbly

sheikh – venerated religious scholar, tribal chief, ruler

or elderly man worthy of respect

sheikha – daughter of a *sheikh*

tafila – prose-style Arabic poetry

talli – ancient Nubian art

tamboura – harplike instrument with five horse-gut

strings that are plucked with sheep horns

tolah – a measure of perfume; 12mL or 12g

Trucial States – former name of the United Arab Emir-

ates; also called Trucial Coast and Trucial sheikhdoms

umrah – little pilgrimage

wasta – influence gained by connections in high places

wind-tower – *barjeel*; architectural feature of *masayf*

houses designed to keep the house cool

wudu – practice of ritual washing before daily prayer

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