

**FARA SUBMISSION DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE
AND TOURISM (DCT) – ABU DHABI**

**SUPPLEMENTAL PERIOD: APRIL 1 TO SEPTEMBER
30, 2025**

The enclosed articles are those that Ogilvy successfully placed on behalf of the DCT of Abu Dhabi in various U.S. media outlets.

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The Best Time to Go to Abu Dhabi to See the Sights and Enjoy Temperate Weather



READER'S DIGEST



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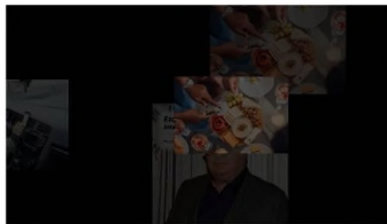


Abu Dhabi is an up-and-coming destination that deserves a spot on your radar for your next family vacation

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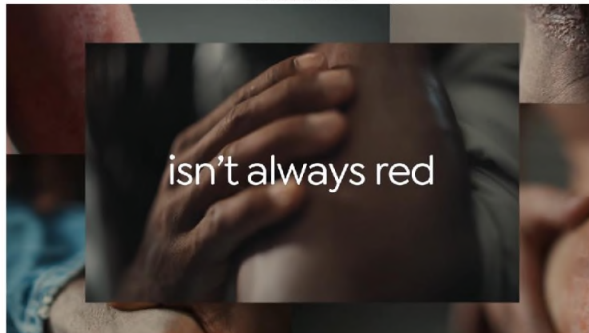
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When I told people my family of four was headed to Abu Dhabi for [spring break](#), the most common reaction was curiosity. Where is Abu Dhabi on the map? Is it safe? Is it a good destination for families? When is the **best time to go to Abu Dhabi**? And how many days should you spend in Abu Dhabi?

After spending five fabulous days in the capital of the United Arab Emirates, I'm able to answer all those questions, as well as share more details about my family's once-in-a-lifetime vacation and explain why you should add Abu Dhabi to your [vacation bucket list](#) too.

Read on to learn about Abu Dhabi as a travel destination, including when is the best time to go.

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Where is Abu Dhabi?

Abu Dhabi is one of the seven United Arab Emirates (UAE) states; the UAE borders Oman on its east and Saudi Arabia to its south. It's comprised of a series of islands and peninsulas on the Persian Gulf and measures about 26,000 square miles. Roughly the size of Maine, it has a population of 3.8 million, including a substantial number of global expats.

Is Abu Dhabi safe?

In a word: very. In fact, Abu Dhabi was ranked as the safest city in the world in 2024, for the second consecutive year by Numbeo, which compiled its list from online surveys. The surveys ask about general perception of crime levels, perceived safety during day and night, concerns about specific crimes, and severity of property and violent crimes. No U.S. city even cracked the top 80 on 2024's list.

My own experience matches the survey. My family and I felt very safe the entire time we were there. We saw no people living on the streets or asking for money, and there were no hustlers offering their services as guides or trying to sell trinkets outside of the main tourist attractions.

We stayed at the Fairmont Bab Al Bahr, and my children and I took nightly strolls on the resort's small beach. We always felt safe, even as we waded into the warm tranquil waters of the Persian Gulf by moonlight. I also felt secure as a woman,

though there was a time or two when guides or hotel workers addressed my husband instead of me, which made me aware of the culture's patriarchal nature. But I never felt threatened, nor was I leered at.

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While Arabic is the national language of the UAE, everyone we encountered spoke fluent English.

Is Abu Dhabi a good destination for families?



READER'S DIGEST

When the Abu Dhabi tourism board initially approached me (as an editor for *Reader's Digest*) about traveling to the country with my family, my first question was: "What is there to do with kids?" While my two kids, 11 and 10 years old, are good travelers—having visited [Yellowstone](#) and [London](#), to name a few of our favorite past vacations—my younger child, in particular, needs *a lot* of activity to keep her occupied and happy.

We were able to tailor an itinerary to suit her needs while keeping the rest of the family happy too. We even snuck in a healthy dose of culture and educational activities.

A few of our many highlights:

- **An afternoon tour of the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque.** One of the largest mosques in the world, the marble edifice took 11 years to build and was completed in 2007. Featuring 82 domes, three giant chandeliers that combined are made of nearly 40 million red, green and yellow Swarovski crystals, and the world's largest hand-knotted carpet, the mosque can hold up to 41,000 worshippers. It stands as a proud ambassador of the Islamic faith and welcomes visitors daily.
- **A day at Yas Island, aka Entertainment Island.** The UAE was founded in 1971, and one of the advantages of being a more recently developed country is that its cities are very well planned out—to wit, Yas Island. It's home to four theme parks (which are largely indoors so they can be enjoyed year-round), theaters, marinas and more. My family loved Seaworld Yas Island, where we took in a dolphin show, petted sting rays, strolled past a shark tank and rode the awesome Manta roller coaster, which had only a short line the day we visited. I was not surprised to learn that Disney chose Yas Island for its [newest theme park](#). It will fit right in!
- **A visit to Saadiyat Island (Arabic for "Island of Happiness).** This island is home to four museums and counting—Guggenheim Abu Dhabi is set to open in 2026. My visit coincided with the debut of teamLab Phenomena Abu

Dhabi, which is labeled as a 4-acre multisensory art experience. It's hard to describe, but it's similar to a Frameless experience, where you walk through art projections, with the added element of different types of flooring (think small hills and valleys, and trampoline-like tiles) and dry and wet areas (be prepared to take off your shoes!). While my kids weren't able to attend with me, I know they would have been happy to spend hours here.

- **A trip to the Louvre Abu Dhabi.** Also on Saadiyat Island, the famed museum opened this branch in 2017. As part of a \$540 million deal with the iconic French museum, the original Louvre loans part of its collection to the Abu Dhabi location. It's worth a visit to see the stunning indoor-outdoor domed building and plaza that incorporates the waters of the Persian Gulf into its design.
- **Dune riding in the Al Danah desert.** I'll never forget the look of pure joy on my kids' faces as our skilled driver zoomed us up and down the sand dunes in a Toyota Land Cruiser. They loved it so much that they declared it the best part of our trip. This was followed by a buffet dinner of chicken and lamb shish kebabs in a camp setting with tents for shade and entertainment including a belly dancer and a fire dancer. We left sweaty, sandy and thoroughly amazed.
- **A morning at the Emirates Park Zoo.** We were treated to a private breakfast with sea lions. The trainers took the playful animals through a private performance just for us. We got up close with the adorable creatures while they did headstands, played with balls and posed for photos with us. In a separate activity, we fed giraffes their breakfast—I'll always remember how gently the giraffe lapped up a romaine leaf directly from my hand.
- **A tour of Abu Dhabi Cultural Foundation.** This plaza is home to Qasr Al Hosn, a fort built in the 1760s and the oldest stone building in Abu Dhabi. With its turrets and waterfront location, it reminded us of St. Augustine, Florida's Castillo de San Marcos, built a century earlier. I also recommend a tour of the House of Artisans to learn about weaving, basket-making and other traditional crafts of the area in a hands-on environment. We also popped into the Children's Library, where the kids got to make their own woven bookmark and climbed on sand dunes made of pillows. (All are part of the Abu Dhabi Cultural Foundation.)

What's the food like in Abu Dhabi?

My son is a picky eater and has been known to subsist on bread and water when we travel, so this question was top of mind for me as I decided whether traveling to Abu Dhabi was right for my family. Fortunately, everywhere we went, the food was fresh and delicious, and most restaurants either offered a kids' menu or were willing to make accommodations for picky palates.



Much of the food is Lebanese-inspired—I was happy to indulge in hummus, baba ghanoush, tabbouleh and the aforementioned shish kebabs of chicken and lamb on a near-daily basis. (My son was satisfied with chicken skewers with french fries.) Note that as Abu Dhabi is a Muslim country, you won't find pork on the menu anywhere.

One of our most memorable meals was lunch at Erth Al Hosn, on the Abu Dhabi Cultural Foundation plaza. The restaurant, with its sand and desert hues and in-ground seating, looks like it would be at home on Luke Skywalker's native Tatooine. The menu features Emirati cuisine and flavors—we enjoyed a kale salad with grapefruit and avocado, cauliflower tabbouleh, grouper with potatoes, short ribs and ghee chicken.

The country is also home to outposts of upscale restaurants with world-famous names, including Fouquet's and Frangipani. We had the pleasure of eating at Zuma and Hakkasan, two London-based restaurants serving Japanese and Chinese fusion, respectively. Surprisingly, though my son is picky, he enjoys sushi—our dinner of hamachi, rolls and sushi at Zuma was a favorite all around. At Hakkasan, the server offered to have the chef make fried rice and noodle dishes kid-friendly with less spice, while my husband and I enjoyed a rainbow-colored assortment of dim sum, Peking duck and Wagyu beef.

Where's the best place to stay in Abu Dhabi?



READER'S DIGEST

Similar to the restaurants, you'll find many familiar names when it comes to lodging in Abu Dhabi. We stayed at the family-friendly [Fairmont Bab Al Bahr](#). It has a kids club for children 8 and younger, a large pool with a maximum depth of about six feet that has several shallow areas made for kids and a small beach area.

The Fairmont has several restaurants, including Marco's Italian and Cafe Sushi, serving sushi on a conveyor belt, plus you can upgrade to club level, which offers a complimentary buffet breakfast, tea time and happy hour, all with snacks and beverages.

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A more budget-friendly option for families is the [Crowne Plaza Abu Dhabi Yas Island](#). It's located near all the amusement parks, is 10 minutes from the airport and has a large pool and golf course.

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Or for the ultimate in luxury, opt for a stay in the [Emirates Palace Mandarin Oriental](#). Housed in an opulent landmark building, the property has impressive fountains, gardens and a stunning design, which includes 114 gold domes, more than 1,000 chandeliers, and metallic and glass mosaics. It's home to Hakassan and 10 other restaurants.

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How many days is enough in Abu Dhabi?

My family spent five full days in Abu Dhabi, which was just about right. If we had an extra day, I would have enjoyed having one full day of leisure where we could lounge by the pool at the Fairmont. The downtime would have helped us refuel for all our other adventures. That said, there wasn't an experience that we missed out on during our time there.

When is the best time to go to Abu Dhabi?

We visited in mid-April, when the average temperatures ranges from 72 to 93 degrees Fahrenheit. However, on the day we arrived, the temperature topped 104 degrees Fahrenheit, and it was *hot* to the point of being unbearable when not in the shade as we toured the mosque. Fortunately, the temperatures dropped down to a more manageable average in the 90s for the rest of the trip.

That said, the best time of year to go is anytime but the summer, when temps soar to 107 and trips to the desert are made nearly impossible. In the winter, temperatures range from the low 60s to the high 70s. You'll also want to avoid traveling to Abu Dhabi during Ramadan, when many residents are fasting during the day and the atmosphere is more subdued.

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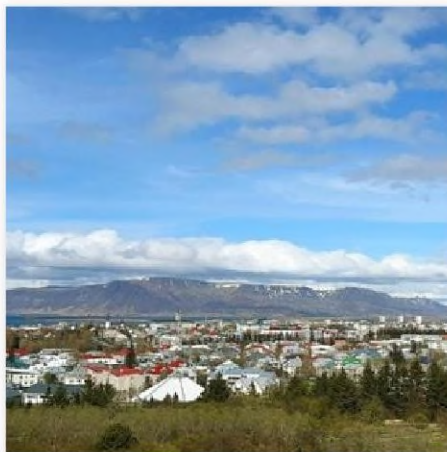
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Sources:

- [Experience Abu Dhabi](#)
- [Numbeo](#): "Safety Index by Country 2024"



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This Underrated Middle Eastern City Has Opulent Hotels, World-class Art, and Stunning Persian Gulf Views

From hotels to viral chocolate, this is what you need to know about Abu Dhabi before booking a plane ticket.

By **Susmita Baral** | Published on April 19, 2025



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Best Hotels

Things to Do

Best Restaurants

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Woman inside of Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque in Abu Dhabi.

Credit: Buena Vista Images/Getty Images

TOP 5 CAN'T MISS

Visit the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque, which is open to travelers of all faiths.

Dine at Erth, the first Emirati restaurant to earn a Michelin star.

Explore the world-class art scene at the Louvre Abu Dhabi.

Take a day trip to Al Ain, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Try to score the iconic "viral Dubai chocolate bar" from the original source, Fix Dessert Chocolatier.

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enthusiasts, and leisure travelers alike — there's truly something for everyone.

"As the capital of the UAE, the destination beats to a different rhythm than its neighboring state of Dubai. Abu Dhabi is the financial and cultural hub of the UAE and without a doubt the backbone of the country," [Mo Noubani](#), a director at [Travel Box International](#) and a *Travel + Leisure* A-list advisor, told T+L. "The pace feels different than in Dubai and can be perceived to be less glitzy. This isn't to say [it's] less luxurious than Dubai. Abu Dhabi's opulent and over-the-top experiences are abundant throughout the city and are showcased in a more conservative manner than seen in Dubai."

The emirate has experienced significant growth in tourism in recent years: in 2024, it welcomed more than [4.8 million visitors](#), up 26 percent from 2023 and a substantial increase from previous years.



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"Abu Dhabi offers an array of world-class sites and experiences unique to its location," Noubani said. "The destination's rich heritage, cultural offerings, architecturally stunning sites, beautiful beaches,

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BEST HOTELS

Emirates Palace Mandarin Oriental



Courtyard outside of Emirates Palace Mandarin Oriental.
Credit: Courtesy of Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi

[Emirates Palace Mandarin Oriental](#) is considered one of the most prestigious hotels in Abu Dhabi, combining opulent architecture with contemporary elegance. Located along the stunning Corniche, this iconic hotel has exceptional views of the Persian Gulf. Guests can enjoy a variety of amenities, including multiple outdoor swimming pools, access to a private world-class dining like [Hakkasan](#), a Michelin-starred Chinese dining modern Cantonese cuisine under chef Ho Chee Boon, and

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Exterior of Anantara Eastern Mangroves Abu Dhabi Hotel.
Credit: Courtesy of Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi

[Anantara Eastern Mangroves Abu Dhabi Hotel](#) is a luxury resort located along the serene mangroves, offering a peaceful escape while still being close to the action of the downtown. Guests can enjoy kayaking, paddle boarding, and boat tours in the mangroves, providing unique nature experiences.

The St. Regis Saadiyat Island Resort, Abu Dhabi

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Guest room in The St. Regis Saadiyat Island Resort, Abu Dhabi.
Credit: Courtesy of Marriott

This resort sits on the pristine beaches of Saadiyat Island, just 10 minutes from the center of the emirate, with views of the Persian Gulf. St. Regis hotels are famous for creating the Bloody Mary and [The St. Regis Saadiyat Island Resort, Abu Dhabi](#) has the "Arabian Snapper," which is a local take on the drink. (Spoiler: it's infused with za'atar.) This spring, the property is welcoming an outpost of Café Ginori, which will bring a taste of Italy to the resort.

Things to Do

There's no shortage of activities in Abu Dhabi. Visitors can relax on pristine beaches; explore the thrilling attractions of Yas Island; head into the stunning dunes for sandboarding, dune bashing, camel rides, and an unforgettable sunset; and visit [Ferrari World](#) or the newly opened [teamLab Abu Dhabi](#). Still, here are some standout things to experience

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Architecture of Grand Zayed Mosque.

Credit: Susmita Baral/Travel + Leisure

The [Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque](#) is a masterpiece of Islamic architecture, showcasing intricate craftsmanship and grandiose design with 82 domes, reflective pools, and marble-clad courtyards. Visitors can marvel at its stunning chandeliers adorned with millions of Swarovski crystals and the world's largest hand-knotted carpet. Open to people of all faiths, travelers should abide by the modest dress code, which is outlined on its website when you purchase tickets.

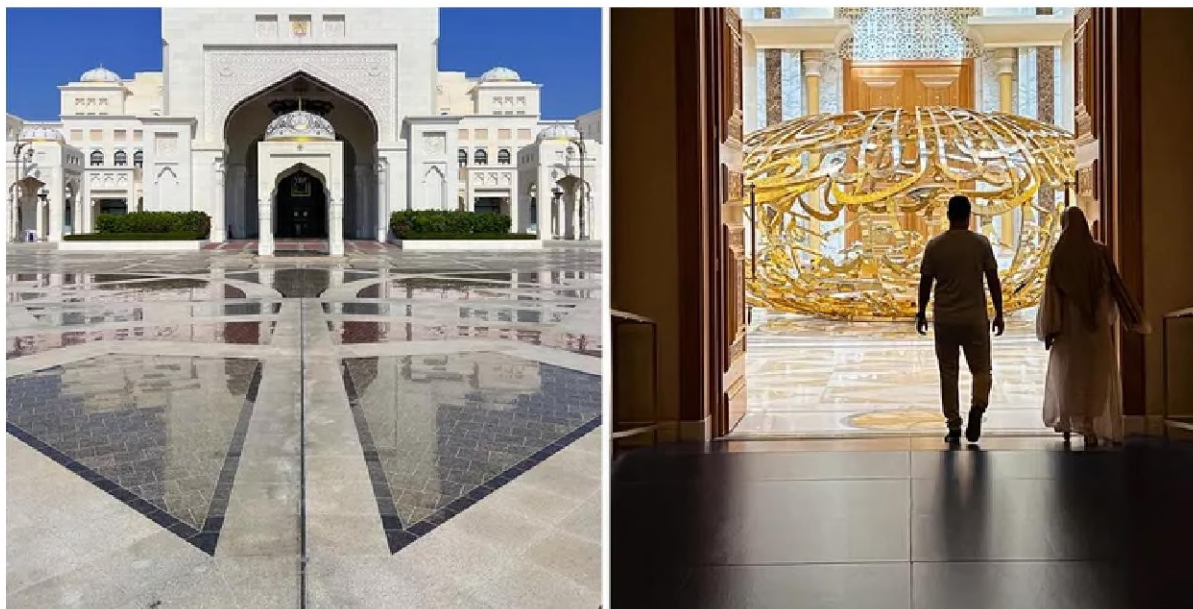
Qasr Al Watan

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Architecture of Qasr Al Watan.
Credit: Susmita Baral/Travel + Leisure

[Qasr Al Watan](#), the Presidential Palace in Abu Dhabi, is a testament to the UAE's rich cultural heritage and modern achievements. It opened to the public in 2019 and showcases extraordinary architecture, with intricate Arabian designs, towering domes, and sprawling gardens. The majestic Great Hall is so stunning, in fact, that you could get lost in its beauty.

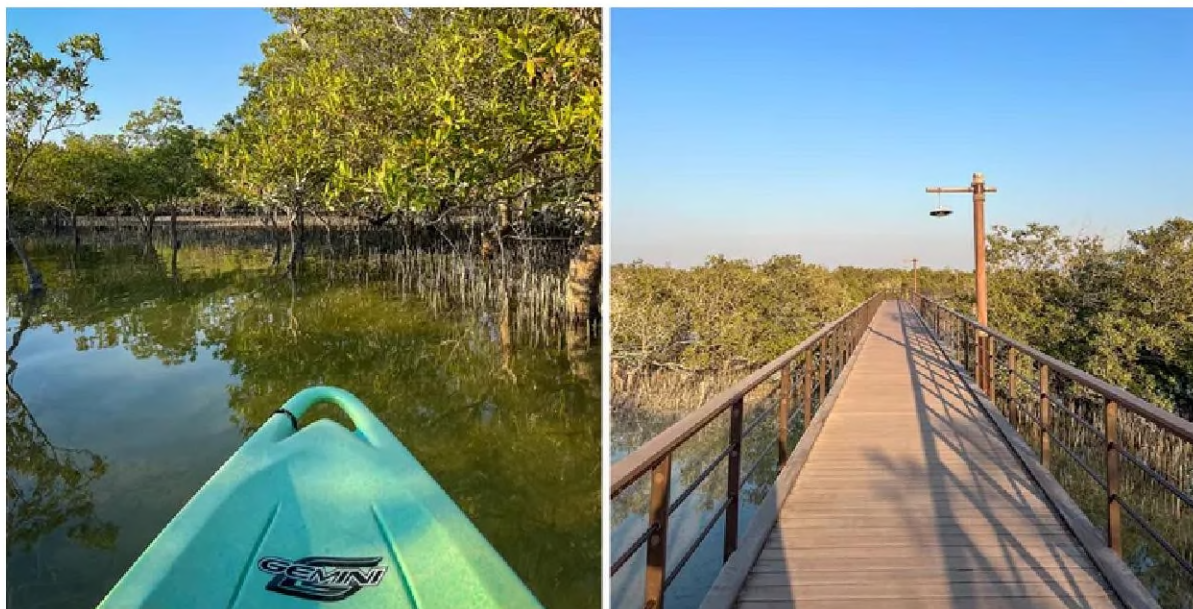
Mangrove National Park

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Views of a mangrove park in Abu Dhabi.
Credit: Susmita Baral/Travel + Leisure

Mangrove National Park gives travelers a unique glimpse into the emirate's unique ecosystem. This protected area is home to dense mangrove forests, waterways, and diverse wildlife, including flamingos, herons, and fish species. Visitors can kayak through the lush mangroves, paddleboard along the calm channels, or enjoy guided eco-tours that highlight the importance of these wetlands in combating climate change.

Louvre Abu Dhabi

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Aerial view of The Louvre Abu Dhabi.

Credit: Courtesy of Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi

Paris' iconic Louvre has an outpost in Abu Dhabi: [Louvre Abu Dhabi](#). It opened in 2017 and blends art, history, and innovation under a stunning dome that creates a "rain of light" effect. The museum has a world-class collection, including works by iconic artists like da Vinci, Monet, and Van Gogh, alongside ancient artifacts. Plan a trip around golden hour to enjoy the sunset from the outdoor space.

Al Ain

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The famous Jahili fort in Al Ain.
Credit: swishippo/Getty Images

This [UNESCO World Heritage Site](#), also known as the "garden city," is located near the Oman border, about 90 minutes outside of Abu Dhabi, making it the perfect day trip. It has historic forts, lush oases, souks, and traditional camel markets—just be sure to reserve your visit to the camel market in advance. While here, travelers can also visit Jebel Hafeet, the only mountain in Abu Dhabi. You can enjoy stunning sunset and sunrise views from its peak, or explore the larger Jebel Hafit Desert Park on foot, by bike, or horseback.

Best Restaurants

The most popular cuisines in Abu Dhabi reflects the emirate's diverse cultural influences, with Middle Eastern and Arab flavors taking center stage.

Traditional dishes like shawarma, falafel, and hummus are widely enjoyed,

spiced dishes such as *machboos* (a rice dish with meat and d *khuzi* (slow-cooked lamb with rice). Additionally, influences

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01 STEWY TAVIUM.



Food from Erth Restaurant.

Credit: Susmita Baral/Travel + Leisure

Some of Noubani's favorites are [Fresh Basil](#), where you dine in pitch darkness; Asian restaurant [Li Jang](#); and [Kopitiam by Chandy's](#) for a Michelin Malaysian meal.

Arva Ahmed, the Dubai-based founder of the food tour company [Frying Pan Adventures](#), told T+L her current picks are [Al Khabbaz](#), which she said is her favorite bakery in the country; the pie shop Al Safwa; and an Indonesian spot called [Rempah](#). If you want to dive deep into Abu Dhabi cuisine, Frying Pan Adventures has a [special walking tour](#) that merges local bites with art. "The

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ice is about uncovering layers of multiculturalism,

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DELIVERED). Pick-up. Orders open at 2 p.m. and 3 p.m., and sell out within minutes, so be ready on your phone a few minutes prior and know exactly what you want.

"All of our bars start with a feeling or memory. Whether it's a childhood dessert, a traditional sweet, or even a scent from a Friday gathering at home, we pull from those moments and try to reimagine them through chocolate," Sarah Hamouda, the founder of Fix Dessert Chocolatier, told T+L. "We don't just recreate traditional desserts in chocolate form; we like to twist them, surprise people, and make them smile." (Hamouda said her favorite right now is the Catch Me If Pecan bar.)

Best Time to Visit

Spring, fall, and winter are the best seasons to visit Abu Dhabi, as summer temperatures can soar up to 120 degrees Fahrenheit. However, budget travelers can score deals between June to September, according to Noubani. "The winter months—December to April—are the best times to visit for the most pleasant weather," he said. "It is more lively, outdoor cafes and restaurants thrive, and it is generally busier."

Noubani advised keeping Ramadan in mind for planning purposes. "During the month of Ramadan, some operators and sites amend their operational hours and services," he said. Ramadan changes annually according to the Islamic calendar, which is based on lunar cycles.

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Camels in the desert of Abu Dhabi.
Credit: NANCY PAUWELS/Getty Images

How to Get There

Visitors can fly in and out of Zayed International Airport (AUH). Etihad Airways, one of two national carriers of the UAE, has direct flights from New York City, Boston, Chicago, and Washington, D.C. Travelers can also consider Dubai International Airport (DXB), which is roughly one and a half hours (about 93 miles) away. Emirates, the other flagship airline of the UAE, has 96 flights a week between Dubai and the U.S.

How to Get Around

Cars are the best way to get around. Travelers can hail a taxi via the [Abu Dhabi taxi app](#) or opt for ride-hailing options like Uber or Dubai-based

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the safest city in the world by [Numbeo](#)." (As a solo female traveler, I never felt unsafe while exploring.)

Local Etiquette and Culture

When traveling to any international destination, it's important to be mindful and respectful of the culture. Noubani noted that English is readily spoken in the country and within the service industry. He also said that all hotels, restaurants, and sites have information in both Arabic and English. "Alcohol is served at resorts and certain supermarkets, and when visiting religious sites, it is important to be mindful of the dress code," he adds. As for tipping, Noubani said gratuity is common (10-15 percent) but never expected.

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Qasr Al-Watan is the presidential palace of the UAE.
(Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi)

Perhaps you, like me, first heard of [Abu Dhabi](#) while watching the second *Sex and the City* movie way back when it premiered in 2010. Rest assured, this isn't a recap of the characters' itinerary (truth be told, most of that movie was filmed in Marrakech. But I digress).

When I visited Abu Dhabi, I went without a hint of trying to relive scenes from the movie and instead kept an open mind. Come to find that yes, you can take a girls' trip to the U.A.E., but it's also kid friendly, and there's so much more to do than shopping (no offense to Carrie Bradshaw and company).

Here are a few ideas to consider if you're visiting Abu Dhabi, including what to do, where to stay, and where to eat.

What to do

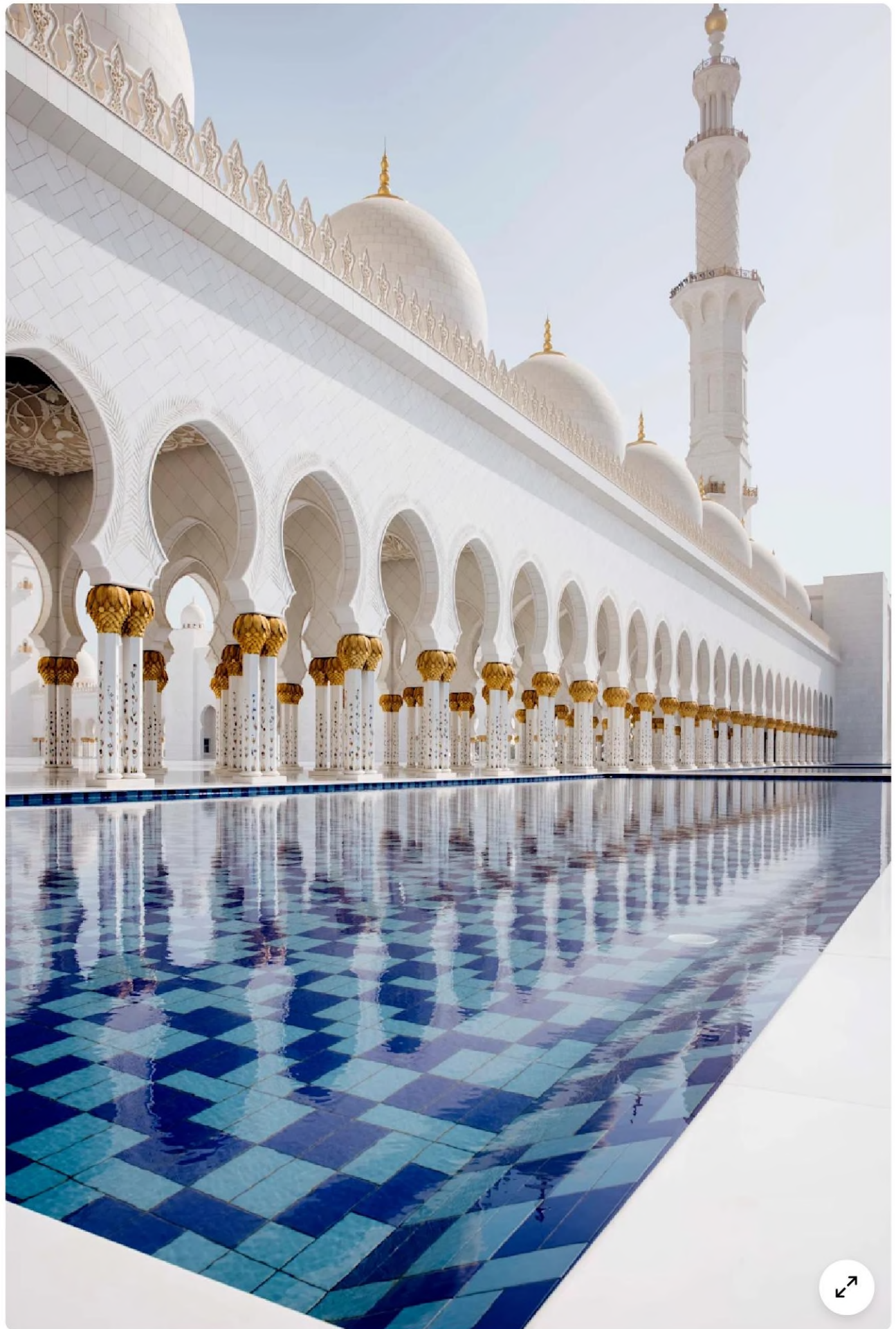
There really is an abundance of things to do in Abu Dhabi, which means that it's important to plan ahead. Getting tickets to exhibits, checking in advance for hours of operation, and booking certain things in advance can go a long way.



teamLab is an international art collective with a location in Abu Dhabi.
(Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi)

teamLab

This interactive art collective showcases a number of different scenes under one roof. There are dry areas and wet areas (yes, that's right) and in some cases, you will remove your shoes. The different rooms on display include Morphing Continuum, Levitation Void, Spontaneous Order in Chaos and more. Get your camera ready — it's a wild walk through some really cool artworks.



The Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque took 11 years to build.
(Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi)

Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque

Admission to the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque is free. The mosque offers 30-45 minute cultural tours to the public (you can also opt for private tours, too) while visiting. Additionally, people can visit without any tour at all and walk around. One thing to be mindful of (in addition to visiting hours), is that there is a dress code. Men and women must wear ankle-length, loose-fitted clothes and women are required to wear a headscarf. There is an opportunity to borrow clothing from the mosque if needed, but it's best to come prepared.



The Abrahamic Family House has a church, a synagogue and a mosque.
(Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi)

Abrahamic Family House

Aligned with the U.A.E.'s history of bringing cultures together and peaceful co-existence, there are three houses of worship on site: a church, a synagogue and a mosque (St. Francis Church, Moses Ben Maimon Synagogue, and Eminence Ahmed El-Tayeb Mosque). Visitors can come experience and learn about each

faith, pray and/or take a guided tour. During your visit, you might even see a wedding happening on site!

Where to stay

There are a range of hotels for every kind of traveler — whether you're looking for a beach or the city for a backdrop.



Rixos Premium Saadiyat Island has private beach access.
(Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi)

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Rixos Premium Saadiyat Island

Overlooking the Arabian Gulf, the all inclusive hotel sits on the beach of Saadiyat Island. There are a variety of guest rooms and villas to choose from — some with private pools. And, the location is a short drive from several Abu Dhabi attractions including those previously mentioned as well as [Emirates Palace](#), [Yas Mall](#) and the [Founders Memorial](#). If all of this and the kids camp isn't enough to convince your family to book a stay: the breakfast buffet will. Every morning,

several different international cuisines are present in food form— ranging from American to Turkish to French to Indian and more. Speaking of food...

Where to eat

Now that you've worked up at appetite seeing the sites and participating in activities Abu Dhabi has to offer, here are some places to dine when you are looking to grab a bite.



Hakkasan has locations in global destinations including London, Doha and Las Vegas.
(Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi)

Hakkasan

Although Hakkasan isn't exclusive to the Middle East (you can find locations globally), this trendy restaurant received a Michelin Star upon its debut in Abu Dhabi. Colorful, delicious and Instagram-worthy dim sum is a must-order upon being seated. But, the menu goes beyond theatrics (and making your social media followers jealous). The range of options cater to all kinds of eaters — gluten-free, vegetarian, vegan and more. From A5 Wagyu beef sirloin to stir-fry black pepper soy bean to Hakka hand pulled noodle, there's something for everyone and every craving.



The Marta Lounge at Fouquet's Abu Dhabi.
(Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi)

Fouquet's

This Parisian brasserie serves French favorites just steps from the [Louvre Abu Dhabi](#). (Hot Tip: stroll through the museum before lunch.) Start with burrata, beef carpaccio or escargot. For mains, choose from a variety of options including salmon, classic beef bourguignon and roasted corn fed chicken breast. Whatever you choose to eat: save room for dessert—whether you're a fan of crème brûlée, tiramisu or profiteroles, you'll find exactly what your sweet tooth is looking for.



Erth Al Hosn is one of the many Erth locations in Abu Dhabi.
(Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi)

Erth Al Hosn

The food at Erth isn't the only element paying homage to Emirati culture — the elegant interior design of the restaurant does, too. But back to the food: the restaurant sources ingredients locally from farms in Abu Dhabi, Hatta, Al Ain and around the other Emirates. They serve unique dishes such as Emirati spiced hasselback potatoes, mini taquito of Emirati shrimps, and El Ferni, a dessert made of Emirai ghee crispy phyllo, Ferni crème, pistachio praline and saffron with Sidr honey and orange blossom sauce. Yum.



Hilary Sheinbaum ✨

Creator

Follow

Hilary Sheinbaum is a journalist, the founder of GoingDry.co, a nonalcoholic event and menu curation company, and the author of three books: The Dry

Challenge (HarperCollins, 2020), A Journal For Bad Days (Simon & Schuster, 2023) and Going Dry (Quarto, Sept. 2024). The New York Times calls "Ms. Sheinbaum, the Dry January M.V.P.," The Wall Street Journal featured her in a front page story, and she's appeared on Good Morning America many times. Her TEDx Talk went live in Oct. 2023.

More from Hilary Sheinbaum



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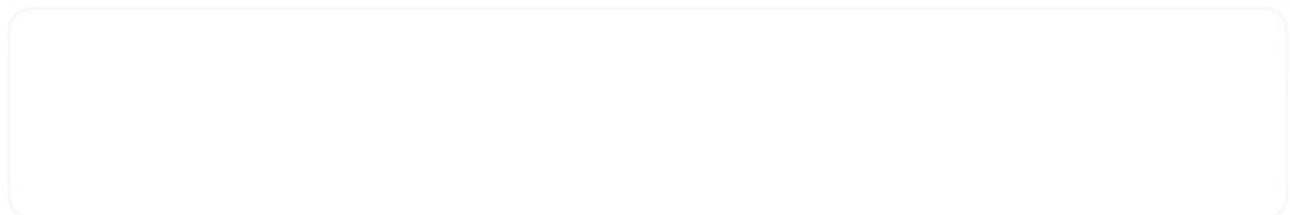
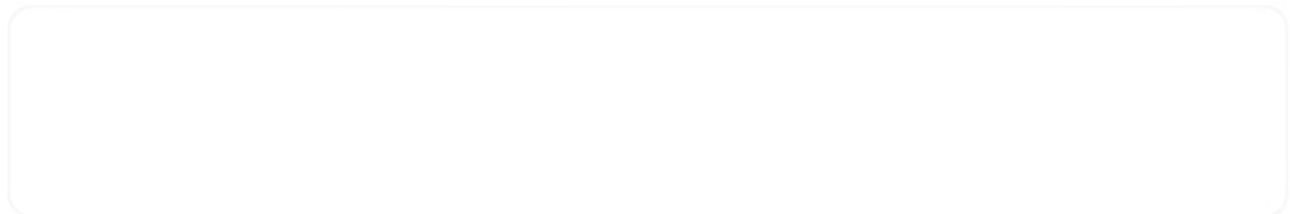
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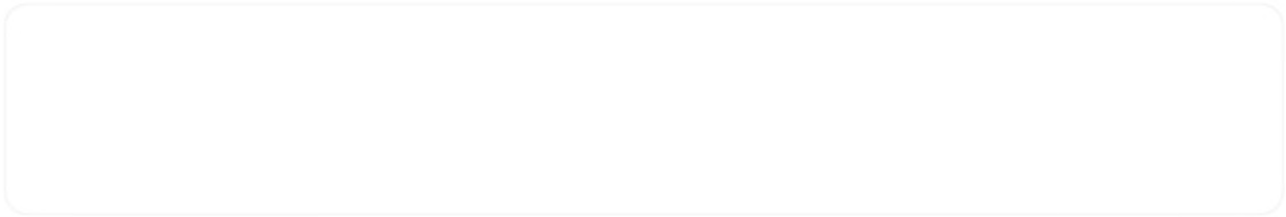
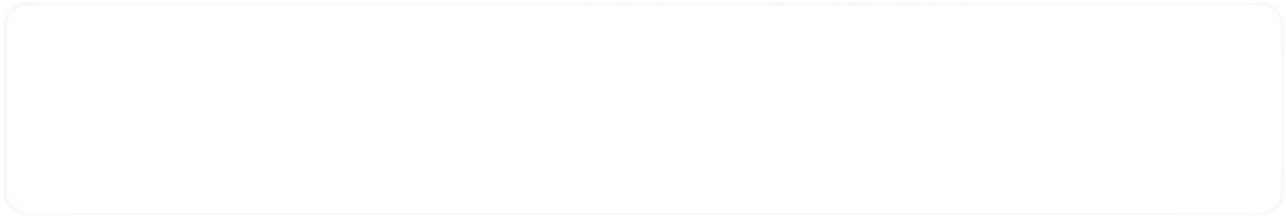
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Why Abu Dhabi Is the Perfect Place to Visit: From Desert Experiences to Mosques and More!



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SOURCE: DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE AND TOURISM - ABU DHABI

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**Jaclyn Roth**

July 28 2025, Published 1:36 a.m. ET

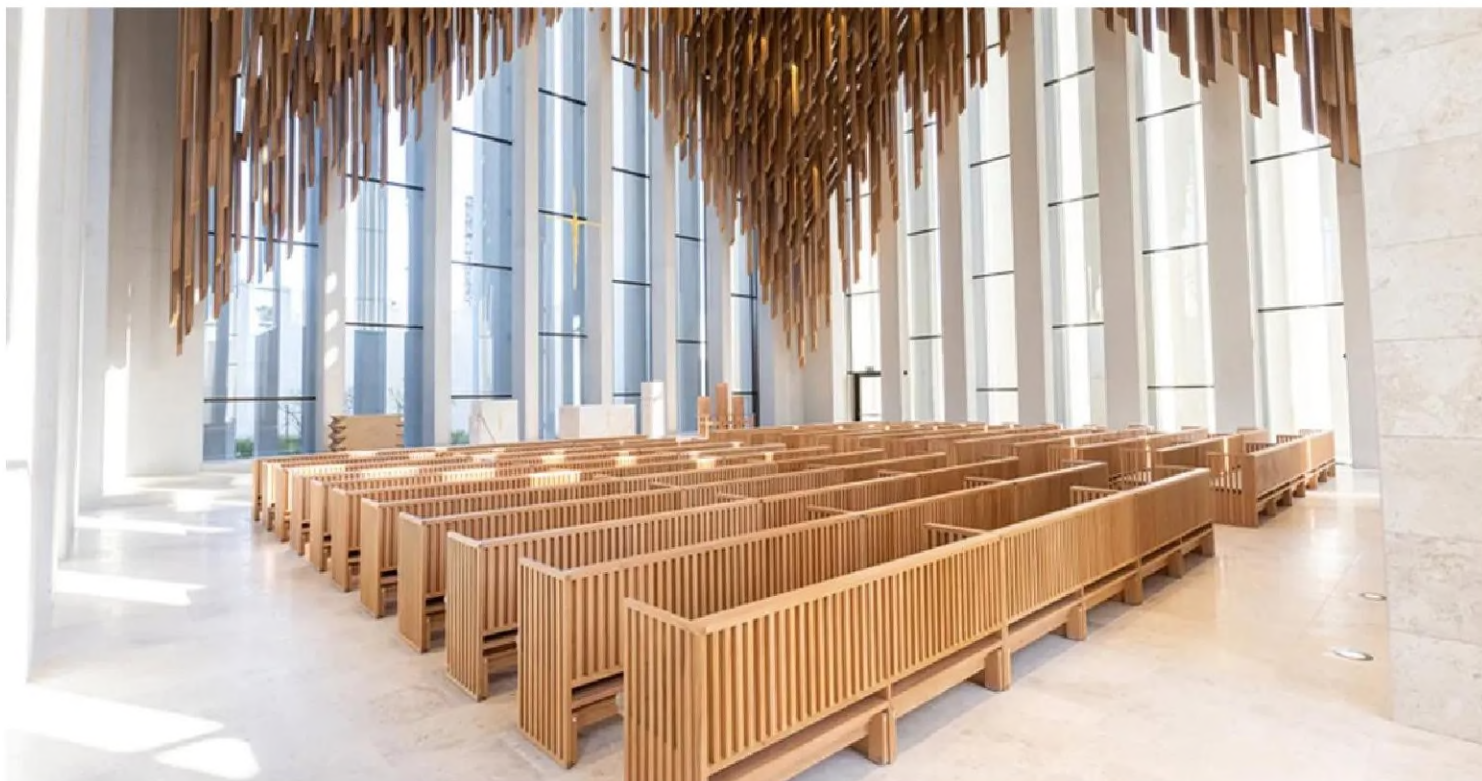


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Abu Dhabi has something for everyone!

Whether you're visiting with your family, a partner or a solo trip, the capital of the United Arab Emirates, which sits off the mainland on an island in the Persian (Arabian) Gulf, is the perfect place to travel to.

The location — which has direct flights from New York City to Abu Dhabi via **Etihad Airways** — offers something for everyone: whether you're chasing thrills, craving calm or looking to reconnect with nature and culture.



The Abraham Family House encompasses a mosque, a church, a synagogue and a Forum to learn and nurture mutual understanding.

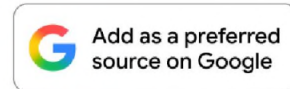
SOURCE: DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE AND TOURISM - ABU DHABI



If you're an adventure lover, then head to the desert for dune bashing, sandboarding or camel riding — or explore the tranquil [Jubail Mangrove Park](#) with a sunrise kayaking session or full moon yoga.

If you want to immerse yourself in the culture, then visit the breathtaking [Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque](#), the country's largest mosque and the key place of worship for daily Islamic prayers.

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The Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque is the country's largest mosque.

SOURCE: DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE AND TOURISM - ABU DHABI

Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan — the Founding Father of the UAE — was the visionary behind the stunning mosque.

"He envisaged the creation of a welcoming and cultural haven that inspires people from all backgrounds," the description reads, per the [Experience Abu Dhabi](#) website. "Even the construction was a cultural collaboration. The grand structure was designed and built by skilled teams from all over the world, including 1,300 female artisans who hand-knotted the main prayer hall's carpet — the world's largest."

Then, make your way over to the [Abrahamic Family House](#), which encompasses a mosque, a church and a synagogue.



The presidential palace at Qasr Al Watan is a must-see.

SOURCE: DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE AND TOURISM - ABU DHABI

Additionally, the presidential palace at [Qasr Al Watan](#) is a must-see. "The Presidential Palace invites the world to share our culture, knowledge and inspiring journey. Qasr Al Watan offers an enriching interactive journey in a contemporary setting that reveals and reflects on governance, knowledge and craftsmanship. Majestic and stunning, immersive and moving, a visit to the presidential palace of the Emirates grants an illuminating view of the region's rich heritage and bright future," the website reads.

[Emirates Palace](#), located on a private beach, is the epitome of luxury in Abu Dhabi, showcasing Arabian hospitality at its finest.



A beachfront Palace with world-class dining, bespoke wellness and exceptional service.

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For those that want to be immersed in the art scene, take a stroll through the [Louvre Abu Dhabi](#), a universal space for culture, art and learning nestled in the heart of [Saadiyat Cultural District](#) – a hub for art, heritage and creativity.

If you want to have an interactive experience, head to [teamLab Phenomena Abu Dhabi](#), which opened in April.



The Louvre Abu Dhabi has a lot to see.

SOURCE: DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE AND TOURISM - ABU DHABI

The multi-sensory museum intersects art, technology and nature and its white façade is made up of myriad panels.

“We came up with this shape that people cannot define, and that’s what makes it curious for people,” **Tony Abi Gebrayel**, managing partner of MZ Architects, the local firm that partnered with teamLab on the exterior architecture, said to [CNN](#).



teamLab Phenomena Abu Dhabi opened in April 2025.

SOURCE: DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE AND TOURISM - ABU DHABI

There's also **Ferrari World Abu Dhabi**, home to the world's fastest rollercoaster, **Yas Marina Circuit** – where F1 legends take to the tracks each year – or the **National Aquarium**, one of the largest aquariums in the Middle East.

If you want some relaxation, **Saadiyat Beach** and the **Abu Dhabi Corniche** offer peaceful moments by the sea.



Yas Mall offers an incredible shopping, dining and entertainment experience.

SOURCE: DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE AND TOURISM - ABU DHABI

Abu Dhabi is having a moment because it has the perfect mix of culture, comfort and connection.

You can explore ancient forts and [UNESCO World Heritage Sites of Al Ain](#) in one day, visit local souks, watch traditional performances and expand your palette with a great meal!

From teamLab Phenomena and the Louvre Abu Dhabi to the [National History Museum](#) and the [Zayed National Museum](#), the city is constantly evolving. The [Saadiyat Cultural District](#) is one of the world's greatest concentrations of cultural institutions, fast becoming the center of global cultural exchange.

The hospitality in Abu Dhabi is top-notch, making you feel at home while discovering something new.

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The hospitality in Abu Dhabi is amazing!

SOURCE: DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE AND TOURISM - ABU DHABI

In Abu Dhabi, culture isn't just something you see — it's something you feel, connect with, and carry with you, which is also why visiting the desert, an integral part of the country, is not

From thrilling dune drives to peaceful camel rides, to stargazing over a traditional Emirati meal, the desert offers space to reset and reflect. Glamping under the stars, trying local cuisine, or simply enjoying the stillness of the dunes — the desert invites you to slow down and find your pace.



There are many museums to visit in Abu Dhabi.

SOURCE: DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE AND TOURISM - ABU DHABI

Abu Dhabi is also a great destination that understands families, which is what inspired their **"Kids Recommended" campaign**, a unique campaign shaped by the voices of over 7,000 children and their parents from across the world including U.S. They asked kids what makes a holiday unforgettable, and the findings were clear: children want more than just rollercoasters — they crave adventure, freedom and shared moments with family.

In the U.S., 97 percent of kids said they want activities they can talk about with their friends, while 95 percent said they're eager to try something completely new. Abu Dhabi delivers on both — whether it's exploring the mangroves by kayak, meeting superheroes at Warner Bros.

fact, 85 percent of kids want role-play-style adventures, and 91 percent said they want to explore somewhere that feels different from home.



The food scene is not to be missed!

SOURCE: DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE AND TOURISM - ABU DHABI

The food scene is also not to be missed. **Erth**, a Michelin-starred restaurant, has an Emirati menu in a space that honors the land's history, while **Al Dhafra** remains a long-standing local favorite for fresh seafood and home-style dishes served with genuine warmth.

Marmellata brings a playful, neighborhood vibe to the city's dining landscape, tucked away in Mina Zayed with its retro interiors and feel-good Italian comfort food.

For international flavours, **SUSHISAMBA** offers skyline views with a bold blend of Japanese, Brazilian, and Peruvian cuisine; **Zuma** delivers modern Japanese elegance in the heart of the city; and **Ryba** invites diners to explore contemporary fine dining.

Whether it's street food or a tasting menu, Abu Dhabi serves up flavour, creativity, and



Abu Dhabi offers many different cuisines.

SOURCE: DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE AND TOURISM - ABU DHABI

If you're looking to paint the town red, Abu Dhabi's nightlife is thriving. From live music to beachfront lounges and rooftop bars, there's plenty of ways to unwind after dark.

Abu Dhabi has been ranked **the safest city in the world** for nine consecutive years, making it perfect for families, solo travelers and groups alike.

There are incredible hotels and places to stay during your visit. Families can choose Yas Island for easy access to theme parks and waterfront fun. While **Saadiyat Island**, home to the iconic **Saadiyat Cultural District**, offers calm and culture, perfect for couples or art lovers.

For those looking for desert luxury, **Qasr Al Sarab Desert Resort** by **Anantara** is a breathtaking retreat surrounded by towering dunes and the tranquillity of the desert. In the city, you'll find elegant stays near the Corniche, such as the **St. Regis Abu Dhabi** or the **Conrad Abu Dhabi Etihad Towers** and properties like the **Shangri-La Qaryat Al Beri** near the Grand Mosque for a more peaceful city escape. From five-star luxury to charming boutique



Travelers can venture to the desert for a unique experience.

SOURCE: DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE AND TOURISM - ABU DHABI

In order to get over to the Middle East, Etihad Airways offers a seamless and comfortable journey from key U.S. cities directly to Abu Dhabi. With flights from key cities like New York, Chicago and Washington, and the newly launched direct service from Atlanta starting this July, it's now even easier for American travelers to experience Abu Dhabi.

The expanded **Zayed International Airport** adds to the seamless arrival experience, offering modern facilities and efficient connections that reflect the hospitality of the city itself.



The hotels are gorgeous in Abu Dhabi.

SOURCE: DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE AND TOURISM - ABU DHABI

Abu Dhabi is a year-round destination, but the most popular time to visit is between October and April. During these months, you'll enjoy mild temperatures, sunny skies and perfect weather for beaches, outdoor adventures and cultural festivals. Summer, meanwhile, is ideal for indoor fun with great seasonal offers on hotels, theme parks and family activities.



There's so much to explore in the country!

SOURCE: DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE AND TOURISM - ABU DHABI

From cultural encounters and world-class attractions to peaceful escapes and adrenaline-pumping adventures, Abu Dhabi offers a range of diverse experiences!

For more information, click [here](#).

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**FARA SUBMISSION DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE
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The enclosed articles are those that Ogilvy successfully placed on behalf of the DCT of Abu Dhabi in various U.S. media outlets.

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READER'S DIGEST



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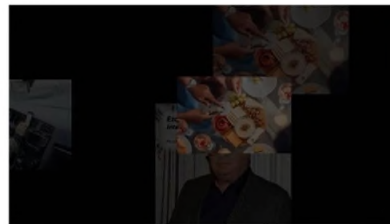


Abu Dhabi is an up-and-coming destination that deserves a spot on your radar for your next family vacation

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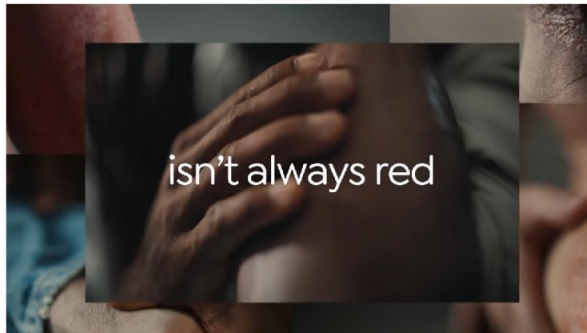
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When I told people my family of four was headed to Abu Dhabi for [spring break](#), the most common reaction was curiosity. Where is Abu Dhabi on the map? Is it safe? Is it a good destination for families? When is the **best time to go to Abu Dhabi**? And how many days should you spend in Abu Dhabi?

After spending five fabulous days in the capital of the United Arab Emirates, I'm able to answer all those questions, as well as share more details about my family's once-in-a-lifetime vacation and explain why you should add Abu Dhabi to your [vacation bucket list](#) too.

Read on to learn about Abu Dhabi as a travel destination, including when is the best time to go.

Get Reader's Digest's [Read Up newsletter](#) for more travel, fun facts, humor, cleaning and tech all week long.

Where is Abu Dhabi?

Abu Dhabi is one of the seven United Arab Emirates (UAE) states; the UAE borders Oman on its east and Saudi Arabia to its south. It's comprised of a series of islands and peninsulas on the Persian Gulf and measures about 26,000 square miles. Roughly the size of Maine, it has a population of 3.8 million, including a substantial number of global expats.

Is Abu Dhabi safe?

In a word: very. In fact, Abu Dhabi was ranked as the safest city in the world in 2024, for the second consecutive year by Numbeo, which compiled its list from online surveys. The surveys ask about general perception of crime levels, perceived safety during day and night, concerns about specific crimes, and severity of property and violent crimes. No U.S. city even cracked the top 80 on 2024's list.

My own experience matches the survey. My family and I felt very safe the entire time we were there. We saw no people living on the streets or asking for money, and there were no hustlers offering their services as guides or trying to sell trinkets outside of the main tourist attractions.

We stayed at the Fairmont Bab Al Bahr, and my children and I took nightly strolls on the resort's small beach. We always felt safe, even as we waded into the warm tranquil waters of the Persian Gulf by moonlight. I also felt secure as a woman,

though there was a time or two when guides or hotel workers addressed my husband instead of me, which made me aware of the culture's patriarchal nature. But I never felt threatened, nor was I leered at.

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While Arabic is the national language of the UAE, everyone we encountered spoke fluent English.

Is Abu Dhabi a good destination for families?



READER'S DIGEST

When the Abu Dhabi tourism board initially approached me (as an editor for *Reader's Digest*) about traveling to the country with my family, my first question was: "What is there to do with kids?" While my two kids, 11 and 10 years old, are good travelers—having visited [Yellowstone](#) and [London](#), to name a few of our favorite past vacations—my younger child, in particular, needs *a lot* of activity to keep her occupied and happy.

We were able to tailor an itinerary to suit her needs while keeping the rest of the family happy too. We even snuck in a healthy dose of culture and educational activities.

A few of our many highlights:

- **An afternoon tour of the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque.** One of the largest mosques in the world, the marble edifice took 11 years to build and was completed in 2007. Featuring 82 domes, three giant chandeliers that combined are made of nearly 40 million red, green and yellow Swarovski crystals, and the world's largest hand-knotted carpet, the mosque can hold up to 41,000 worshippers. It stands as a proud ambassador of the Islamic faith and welcomes visitors daily.
- **A day at Yas Island, aka Entertainment Island.** The UAE was founded in 1971, and one of the advantages of being a more recently developed country is that its cities are very well planned out—to wit, Yas Island. It's home to four theme parks (which are largely indoors so they can be enjoyed year-round), theaters, marinas and more. My family loved Seaworld Yas Island, where we took in a dolphin show, petted sting rays, strolled past a shark tank and rode the awesome Manta roller coaster, which had only a short line the day we visited. I was not surprised to learn that Disney chose Yas Island for its [newest theme park](#). It will fit right in!
- **A visit to Saadiyat Island (Arabic for "Island of Happiness).** This island is home to four museums and counting—Guggenheim Abu Dhabi is set to open in 2026. My visit coincided with the debut of teamLab Phenomena Abu

Dhabi, which is labeled as a 4-acre multisensory art experience. It's hard to describe, but it's similar to a Frameless experience, where you walk through art projections, with the added element of different types of flooring (think small hills and valleys, and trampoline-like tiles) and dry and wet areas (be prepared to take off your shoes!). While my kids weren't able to attend with me, I know they would have been happy to spend hours here.

- **A trip to the Louvre Abu Dhabi.** Also on Saadiyat Island, the famed museum opened this branch in 2017. As part of a \$540 million deal with the iconic French museum, the original Louvre loans part of its collection to the Abu Dhabi location. It's worth a visit to see the stunning indoor-outdoor domed building and plaza that incorporates the waters of the Persian Gulf into its design.
- **Dune riding in the Al Danah desert.** I'll never forget the look of pure joy on my kids' faces as our skilled driver zoomed us up and down the sand dunes in a Toyota Land Cruiser. They loved it so much that they declared it the best part of our trip. This was followed by a buffet dinner of chicken and lamb shish kebabs in a camp setting with tents for shade and entertainment including a belly dancer and a fire dancer. We left sweaty, sandy and thoroughly amazed.
- **A morning at the Emirates Park Zoo.** We were treated to a private breakfast with sea lions. The trainers took the playful animals through a private performance just for us. We got up close with the adorable creatures while they did headstands, played with balls and posed for photos with us. In a separate activity, we fed giraffes their breakfast—I'll always remember how gently the giraffe lapped up a romaine leaf directly from my hand.
- **A tour of Abu Dhabi Cultural Foundation.** This plaza is home to Qasr Al Hosn, a fort built in the 1760s and the oldest stone building in Abu Dhabi. With its turrets and waterfront location, it reminded us of St. Augustine, Florida's Castillo de San Marcos, built a century earlier. I also recommend a tour of the House of Artisans to learn about weaving, basket-making and other traditional crafts of the area in a hands-on environment. We also popped into the Children's Library, where the kids got to make their own woven bookmark and climbed on sand dunes made of pillows. (All are part of the Abu Dhabi Cultural Foundation.)

What's the food like in Abu Dhabi?

My son is a picky eater and has been known to subsist on bread and water when we travel, so this question was top of mind for me as I decided whether traveling to Abu Dhabi was right for my family. Fortunately, everywhere we went, the food was fresh and delicious, and most restaurants either offered a kids' menu or were willing to make accommodations for picky palates.



Much of the food is Lebanese-inspired—I was happy to indulge in hummus, baba ghanoush, tabbouleh and the aforementioned shish kebabs of chicken and lamb on a near-daily basis. (My son was satisfied with chicken skewers with french fries.) Note that as Abu Dhabi is a Muslim country, you won't find pork on the menu anywhere.

One of our most memorable meals was lunch at Erth Al Hosn, on the Abu Dhabi Cultural Foundation plaza. The restaurant, with its sand and desert hues and in-ground seating, looks like it would be at home on Luke Skywalker's native Tatooine. The menu features Emirati cuisine and flavors—we enjoyed a kale salad with grapefruit and avocado, cauliflower tabbouleh, grouper with potatoes, short ribs and ghee chicken.

The country is also home to outposts of upscale restaurants with world-famous names, including Fouquet's and Frangipani. We had the pleasure of eating at Zuma and Hakkasan, two London-based restaurants serving Japanese and Chinese fusion, respectively. Surprisingly, though my son is picky, he enjoys sushi—our dinner of hamachi, rolls and sushi at Zuma was a favorite all around. At Hakkasan, the server offered to have the chef make fried rice and noodle dishes kid-friendly with less spice, while my husband and I enjoyed a rainbow-colored assortment of dim sum, Peking duck and Wagyu beef.

Where's the best place to stay in Abu Dhabi?



READER'S DIGEST

Similar to the restaurants, you'll find many familiar names when it comes to lodging in Abu Dhabi. We stayed at the family-friendly [Fairmont Bab Al Bahr](#). It has a kids club for children 8 and younger, a large pool with a maximum depth of about six feet that has several shallow areas made for kids and a small beach area.

The Fairmont has several restaurants, including Marco's Italian and Cafe Sushi, serving sushi on a conveyor belt, plus you can upgrade to club level, which offers a complimentary buffet breakfast, tea time and happy hour, all with snacks and beverages.

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A more budget-friendly option for families is the [Crowne Plaza Abu Dhabi Yas Island](#). It's located near all the amusement parks, is 10 minutes from the airport and has a large pool and golf course.

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Or for the ultimate in luxury, opt for a stay in the [Emirates Palace Mandarin Oriental](#). Housed in an opulent landmark building, the property has impressive fountains, gardens and a stunning design, which includes 114 gold domes, more than 1,000 chandeliers, and metallic and glass mosaics. It's home to Hakassan and 10 other restaurants.

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How many days is enough in Abu Dhabi?

My family spent five full days in Abu Dhabi, which was just about right. If we had an extra day, I would have enjoyed having one full day of leisure where we could lounge by the pool at the Fairmont. The downtime would have helped us refuel for all our other adventures. That said, there wasn't an experience that we missed out on during our time there.

When is the best time to go to Abu Dhabi?

We visited in mid-April, when the average temperatures ranges from 72 to 93 degrees Fahrenheit. However, on the day we arrived, the temperature topped 104 degrees Fahrenheit, and it was *hot* to the point of being unbearable when not in the shade as we toured the mosque. Fortunately, the temperatures dropped down to a more manageable average in the 90s for the rest of the trip.

That said, the best time of year to go is anytime but the summer, when temps soar to 107 and trips to the desert are made nearly impossible. In the winter, temperatures range from the low 60s to the high 70s. You'll also want to avoid traveling to Abu Dhabi during Ramadan, when many residents are fasting during the day and the atmosphere is more subdued.

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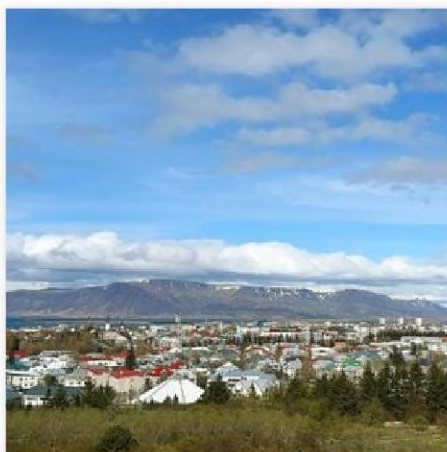
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Sources:

- [Experience Abu Dhabi](#)
- [Numbeo](#): "Safety Index by Country 2024"



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This Underrated Middle Eastern City Has Opulent Hotels, World-class Art, and Stunning Persian Gulf Views

From hotels to viral chocolate, this is what you need to know about Abu Dhabi before booking a plane ticket.

By **Susmita Baral** | Published on April 19, 2025



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Woman inside of Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque in Abu Dhabi.

Credit: Buena Vista Images/Getty Images

TOP 5 CAN'T MISS

Visit the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque, which is open to travelers of all faiths.

Dine at Erth, the first Emirati restaurant to earn a Michelin star.

Explore the world-class art scene at the Louvre Abu Dhabi.

Take a day trip to Al Ain, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Try to score the iconic "viral Dubai chocolate bar" from the original source, Fix Dessert Chocolatier.

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enthusiasts, and leisure travelers alike — there's truly something for everyone.

"As the capital of the UAE, the destination beats to a different rhythm than its neighboring state of Dubai. Abu Dhabi is the financial and cultural hub of the UAE and without a doubt the backbone of the country," [Mo Noubani](#), a director at [Travel Box International](#) and a *Travel + Leisure* A-list advisor, told T+L. "The pace feels different than in Dubai and can be perceived to be less glitzy. This isn't to say [it's] less luxurious than Dubai. Abu Dhabi's opulent and over-the-top experiences are abundant throughout the city and are showcased in a more conservative manner than seen in Dubai."

The emirate has experienced significant growth in tourism in recent years: in 2024, it welcomed more than [4.8 million visitors](#), up 26 percent from 2023 and a substantial increase from previous years.



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"Abu Dhabi offers an array of world-class sites and experiences unique to its location," Noubani said. "The destination's rich heritage, cultural offerings, architecturally stunning sites, beautiful beaches,

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BEST HOTELS

Emirates Palace Mandarin Oriental



Courtyard outside of Emirates Palace Mandarin Oriental.

Credit: Courtesy of Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi

[Emirates Palace Mandarin Oriental](#) is considered one of the most prestigious hotels in Abu Dhabi, combining opulent architecture with contemporary elegance. Located along the stunning Corniche, this iconic hotel has exceptional views of the Persian Gulf. Guests can enjoy a variety of amenities, including multiple outdoor swimming pools, access to a private world-class dining like [Hakkasan](#), a Michelin-starred Chinese dining modern Cantonese cuisine under chef Ho Chee Boon, and

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Exterior of Anantara Eastern Mangroves Abu Dhabi Hotel.

Credit: Courtesy of Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi

[Anantara Eastern Mangroves Abu Dhabi Hotel](#) is a luxury resort located along the serene mangroves, offering a peaceful escape while still being close to the action of the downtown. Guests can enjoy kayaking, paddle boarding, and boat tours in the mangroves, providing unique nature experiences.

The St. Regis Saadiyat Island Resort, Abu Dhabi

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Guest room in The St. Regis Saadiyat Island Resort, Abu Dhabi.
Credit: Courtesy of Marriott

This resort sits on the pristine beaches of Saadiyat Island, just 10 minutes from the center of the emirate, with views of the Persian Gulf. St. Regis hotels are famous for creating the Bloody Mary and [The St. Regis Saadiyat Island Resort, Abu Dhabi](#) has the "Arabian Snapper," which is a local take on the drink. (Spoiler: it's infused with za'atar.) This spring, the property is welcoming an outpost of Café Ginori, which will bring a taste of Italy to the resort.

Things to Do

There's no shortage of activities in Abu Dhabi. Visitors can relax on pristine beaches; explore the thrilling attractions of Yas Island; head into the stunning dunes for sandboarding, dune bashing, camel rides, and an unforgettable sunset; and visit [Ferrari World](#) or the newly opened [teamLab Abu Dhabi](#). Still, here are some standout things to experience

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Architecture of Grand Zayed Mosque.

Credit: Susmita Baral/Travel + Leisure

The [Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque](#) is a masterpiece of Islamic architecture, showcasing intricate craftsmanship and grandiose design with 82 domes, reflective pools, and marble-clad courtyards. Visitors can marvel at its stunning chandeliers adorned with millions of Swarovski crystals and the world's largest hand-knotted carpet. Open to people of all faiths, travelers should abide by the modest dress code, which is outlined on its website when you purchase tickets.

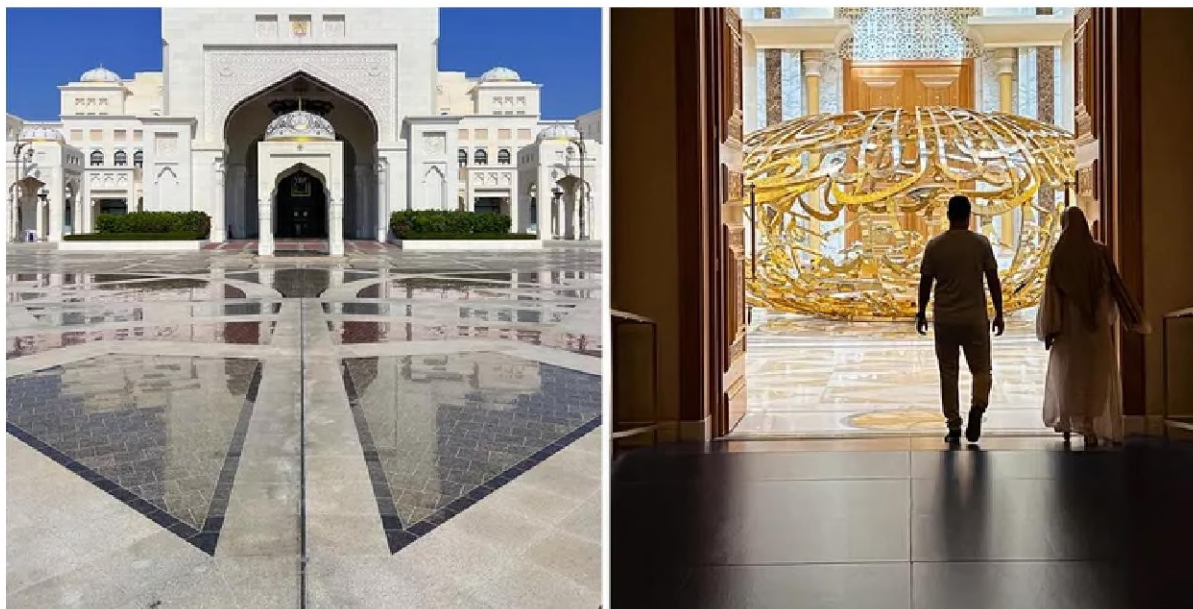
Qasr Al Watan

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Architecture of Qasr Al Watan.
Credit: Susmita Baral/Travel + Leisure

[Qasr Al Watan](#), the Presidential Palace in Abu Dhabi, is a testament to the UAE's rich cultural heritage and modern achievements. It opened to the public in 2019 and showcases extraordinary architecture, with intricate Arabian designs, towering domes, and sprawling gardens. The majestic Great Hall is so stunning, in fact, that you could get lost in its beauty.

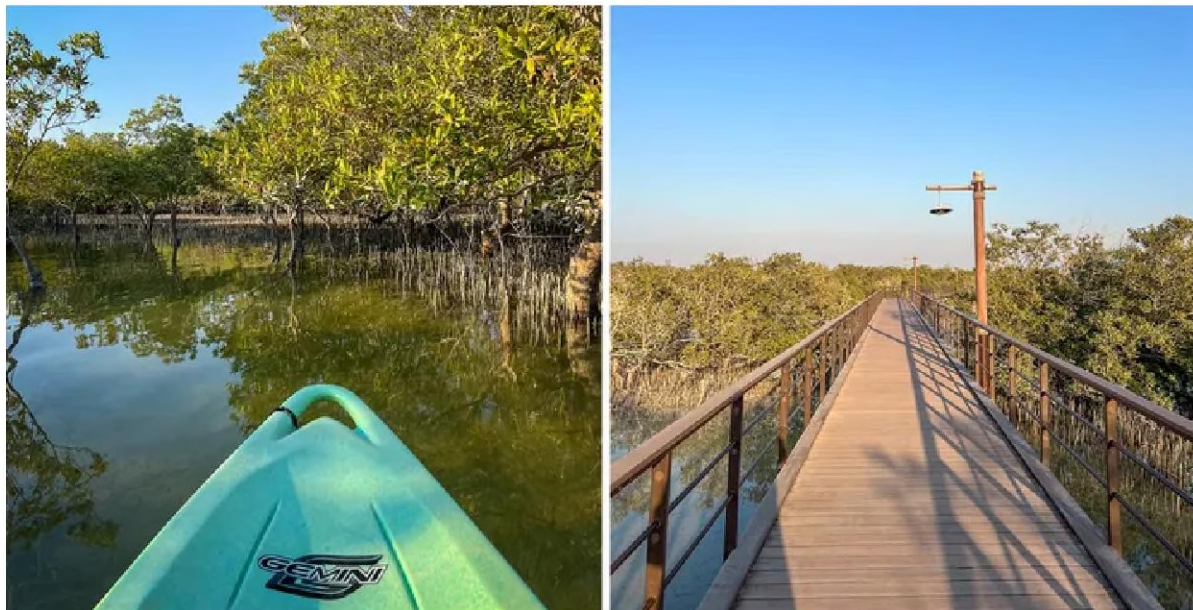
Mangrove National Park

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Views of a mangrove park in Abu Dhabi.
Credit: Susmita Baral/Travel + Leisure

Mangrove National Park gives travelers a unique glimpse into the emirate's unique ecosystem. This protected area is home to dense mangrove forests, waterways, and diverse wildlife, including flamingos, herons, and fish species. Visitors can kayak through the lush mangroves, paddleboard along the calm channels, or enjoy guided eco-tours that highlight the importance of these wetlands in combating climate change.

Louvre Abu Dhabi

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