

The Middle East



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Great fun,
fabulous shopping!



Mr. A. Hassan
16, Alex Street,
Downtown
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The Middle East

Tipping

Hotel restaurants add a 10% service charge plus an additional 6% tourism fee, if you are pleased with the service then add 10% to the bill. By law service charges are not added to restaurants and cafés outside of hotels, leave a tip on the table or in the tip "box". Tipping elsewhere is at your discretion. Round up the bill for taxi drivers and Dhs10 for porters is appropriate.

Shopping hours

Daily from 10am to 10pm or later on weekends. Malls open right through but some independent shops can close from 1pm to 4pm in an extended lunch break.

Abu Dhabi

Fast, fascinating and serenely beautiful.

With a 5,000 year history behind it Abu Dhabi is an intriguing mix of a modern and technologically advanced city with a rich cultural history. Skyscrapers, luxury hotels, international entertainment facilities live side by side with camel racing, Dhow sailing, traditional dance, music and ancient Islamic architecture and culture. From desert life to the ultimate in city life Abu Dhabi is opulent, totally entertaining and perfect for a holiday break, the shopping is pretty good too!



Life changing experiences...

Grand Prix Experience Abu Dhabi offers the ultimate in "Big Boys Toys", if it's an adrenalin rush you're looking for then a visit to the fabulous Yas Marina Formula One track is a must. The track offers driving and passenger experiences that tick's every box of the ultimate adventure! Video cameras at the ready!

Ferrari Theme Park The world's largest indoor theme park and a great day out for the whole family, from heart thumping G-force rides to interactive virtual experiences, this park has it all, follow Ferrari's history, see how they're made or book the kids into the Junior Grand Prix with kid-sized perfectly scaled formula one racing cars!

Power Boat Racing Held every year in April/May this spectacular water sport is the formula one of the boating world. Powerboats accelerate faster than most F1 cars and can go from a stand-still to 160km/hour in only 4 seconds and compete at incredible speeds without the use of brakes and gears! An exciting sport to watch, challenging, daring, risky and totally entertaining.

Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque This majestic Mosque is a national landmark and an important architectural treasure for Abu Dhabi. Built using artisans and materials from Turkey, Italy, Morocco,



Facts for the traveller...

Weather

Sunshine, blue skies almost all year round, temperatures between June and September are extremely hot and humid with up to 48°C. Rainfall is almost non-existent.

India, Germany, Iran, China and Greece the mosque is a triumph of global co-operation and extreme beauty. Daily morning and afternoon tours are available.

Desert Safari The deserts of Abu Dhabi are impressive and beautiful with massive dunes rising 300 meters high, enjoy an unforgettable and thrilling drive through these challenging dunes. Sand boarding and sand skiing are also popular sports and equally thrilling, there's plenty of adventure to be had in the desert!

Retail Therapy Shop until you drop if you're a retail addict! Abu Dhabi offers a huge variety of choice, from high end to traditional souks. If it's gold, pearls or diamonds you're looking for this is the place to be, plus all international brands and designer labels are available, plenty of fabulous restaurants and eateries along the way to maintain your shopping energy levels.

Best time to go

From October to May, pleasantly cool in January and February.

Time zone

GMT+4

Transportation

There is an air-conditioned bus system that functions around the city and suburbs, with access from various parts of the city, affordable and accessible. Taxis are reasonably priced and can be flagged from the street or booked by phone.

Did you know?

Abu Dhabi owns 92% of UAE oil, it has the fourth largest oil reserves in the whole world.

Abu Dhabi has the largest population of the seven emirates.

The United Arab Emirates is a constitutional federation of seven Emirates: Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Umm al-Qaiwain, Ra's al-Khaimah and Fujairah.

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Dubai

Extravagant, opulent and amazing...

Ever changing, ever growing, Dubai has taken its place on the map as a premier travel destination for holidays, business, sports and events, you name it Dubai has it. Whether you visit this amazing city for a short break or a relaxing holiday Dubai is one of those places that offers everything for everyone. For all of its glitz and glamour though it does have deep rooted traditions, experience the local songs and dancing with a backdrop of 'dhows' and 'abras' weaving along the waterways. Dubai is simply different, fascinating and like no other city you've ever been to.



Life changing experiences...

Dubai Shopping Festival "The World's best brands at the world's lowest prices"...the festival is an annual shopping entertainment and cultural extravaganza that draws people from all over the world every year during January/February. From fashion shows to street performances, fireworks, films, musicals and of course great shopping, the festival is well worth a visit.

Go to the top! Standing at over 828m high with 160 stories the Burj Khalifa is the tallest building in the world. Take a ticket and the elevator to the 124th floor and see the most amazing panoramic view of Dubai from the "Observation Deck". Simply breathtaking.

Skiing...indoors! The Mall of the Emirates is home to "Ski Dubai", an indoor ski resort that offers a year round ski area of 22,500m² of snow and slopes, great fun for kids and adults alike, if skiing is not your thing the restaurant offers a fabulous view of the slopes, perfectly memorable!

Burj Al Arab Hotel One of the most photographed landmarks in the world, the building soars to 321m and resembles a billowing sail, it has the highest atrium measuring 180m. Said to be the only 7 star hotel in the world



Facts for the traveller...

Weather

Hot dry and quite humid, with temperatures in the summer months from June to September ranging from 35°C to 45°C. Any rain that falls is likely to be during January to

the Burj Al Arab offers extreme luxury with a matching price. Fabulous at night when the lights are on, a sight to be remembered whether you're a guest or not!

Fountains of Dubai Set on the 30 acre Burj Khalifa Lake the dancing fountains shoot water jets as high as 150m, this state of the art fountain has daily performances from 1-1.30pm and every half hour between 7pm and 11pm each night. With classical, arab and international music, 22,000 gallons of airborne water, and 1.5 million lumens of projected light, the show is certainly spectacular!

Golf Lovers With a number of world class golf courses and international golf tournaments, from the PGA tour to Omega classics played throughout the year, Dubai is a great destination for golfing enthusiasts, from 9 to 18 hole courses and par threes, there's something for every level.

March. November to April has quite pleasant weather.

Best time to go

Between December and March.

Time zone

GMT + 4

Currency

UAE Dirham (AED)

Did you know?

Dubai is the second largest member of the United Arab Emirates with the largest population. (UAE).

Almost 80% of Dubai residents are foreigners.

Dubai is the fastest growing city in the world.

Dubai has one of the highest per capita incomes.

In Dubai, there are no taxes on income and there are no personal taxes either.



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i Facts for the traveller...

Shopping hours

Generally hours are 9am to 1pm and 4pm to 9pm or later.

The Dubai Mall hours are Sunday to Wednesday 10 am to 10 pm. Thursday, Friday, Saturday 10am to 12 midnight.

Tipping

Government adds 10% service charge to restaurants, hotels and bars, but feel free to top it up with a few dirham. If there is no service charge add 10-15%. Porters should receive 10Dhs. Taxi drivers do not expect tips but it is good practice to round off the nearest 5Dhs.

Transportation

The local bus network in Dubai is quite good and links most areas, bus stops are air-conditioned with sliding doors.

There is an efficient metro system that covers the city, check out special multi passes for longer stays. Taxis are a fast, efficient and a relatively cost friendly way to get around the city. "Abrams", water taxis, are an interesting way to get across the creek, a pleasant few minutes with great scenery.



Did you know?

Dubai is the world's second largest distributor of bullion. It imports 360 tonnes and re-exports almost all of it.

Since 1833, Dubai has been ruled by the Al Maktoum dynasty.

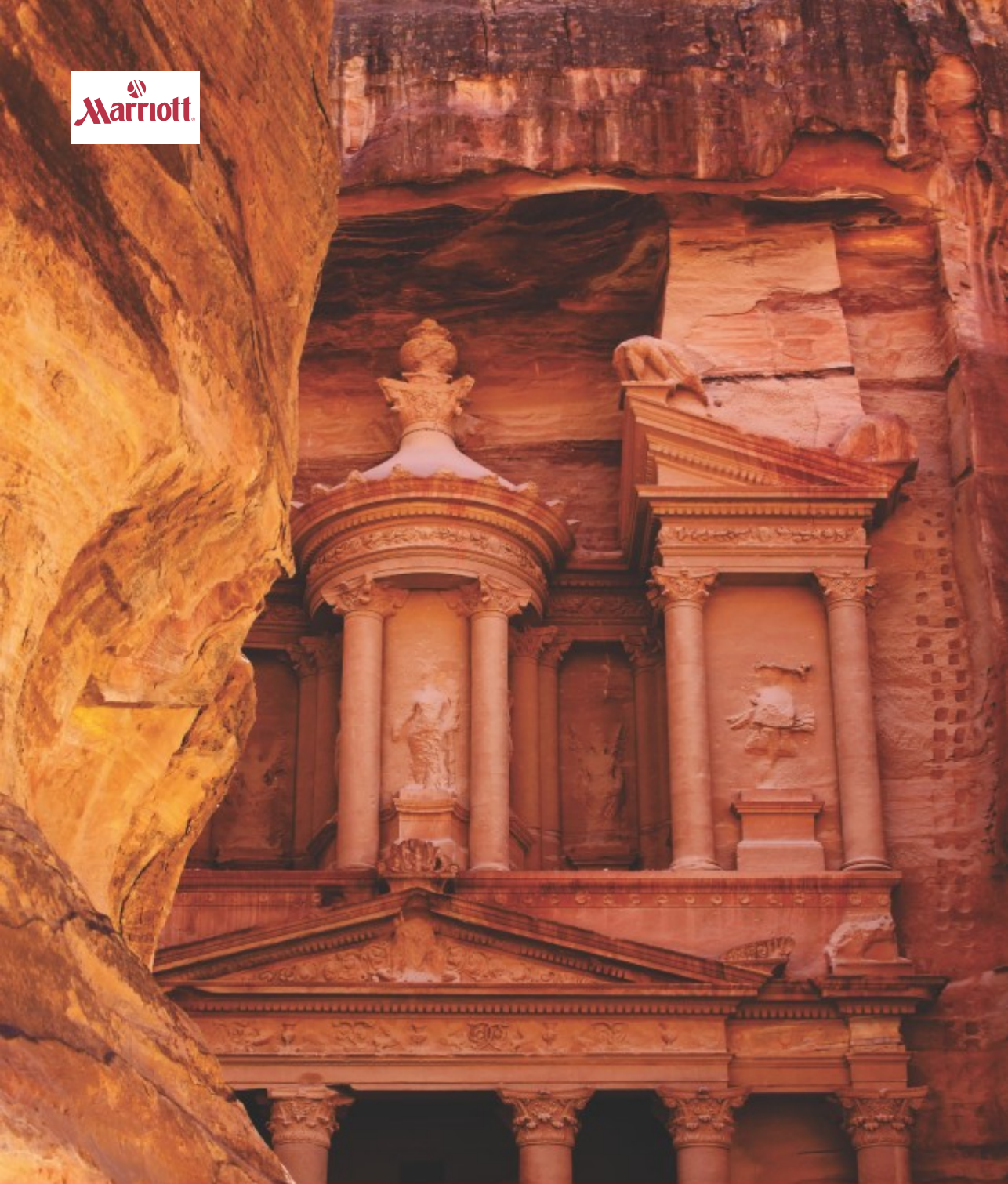
Trade, real estate and financial services provide Dubai with the majority of its revenues.

Revenues from petroleum and natural gas contribute less than 6 percent to the economy of Dubai.

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Top tips

Best time to see Petra, especially for photo taking, is either early to mid-morning or late afternoon when the angled sun highlights and enhances the amazing natural colours of the rocks.

Dead Sea swimming... scratches and scrapes don't go well with heavily salted water, for the men, best you don't shave beforehand!

Transportation

Taxis are the recommended form of transportation, take a Yellow Taxi, negotiate the price or alternatively hire a car and driver for the day. Renting a car is very popular as distances are quite short in Jordan.

Jordan

Simply timeless...

Rich with history and culture Jordan's ancient civilizations have left a unique heritage to be admired and enjoyed by all those who choose to visit. Explore Roman cities, castle ruins from nearly every era, desert citadels, biblical sites, the magical Rift Valley and if that is not enough there's also incredible natural wonders. The warm seas of Aqaba and the modern capital city of Amman will not fail to charm you, nor will the friendly, welcoming Jordanian people, what more could a visitor ask for!



the middle east



Life changing experiences...

Amman A modern city that offers a fascinating mix of old and new. Ultra modern buildings meet the traditional coffee shops and small artisan workshops. Visit the galleries and museums, the Roman Theater, the citadel, there's so much to see and do, take a break and grab a meal at Hashem's, local food that will keep you going!

Petra "A rose-red city, half as old as time". Enter this ancient site through a narrow, 1km long gorge called the Siq and watch the wonders of Petra unfold before you, it has to be seen to be believed. A vast unique city carved into the sheer rock face nearly 2,000 years ago when it served as an important hub for the silk and spice trade routes, it is now, without a doubt, Jordan's most valuable treasure. Take your camera and comfortable shoes, it is one of the world's most special sites.

Wadi Rum A timeless place where weather and winds have carved spectacular vistas of towering cliffs, bold rock formations, canyons, ancient rock drawings and many more treasures. T.E. Lawrence (of Arabia) spent much time here and eloquently described it as "vast, echoing and God-like...". Take the time to visit this unique marvel of nature, it will not disappoint. Hot air ballooning is also available.



Facts for the traveller...

Weather

Mediterranean climate with a hot and dry summer from May to October, July and August are the hottest, driest months with temperatures up to 36°C. Winter months between November and March. January is the coldest month and some areas experience snow.

Best times to go

Spring in April to May and autumn months, September to October.

Time zone

GMT+2 DST+3

The Dead Sea A float in this amazing sea is yet another of Jordan's many highlights for the visitor. At over 400m below sea level, the lowest point on earth, it is the saltiest, most mineral rich and unique body of water in the world. The unusually warm, buoyant waters have attracted visitors since ancient times, King Herod and Cleopatra have both enjoyed the rich, black stimulating mud. Try it for yourself, a wonderful and rejuvenating, effortless float in a warm sea of health giving minerals, absolute heaven! (Watch out for any cuts and scrapes before going in!)

Currency

Jordanian Dinar

Tippling

Expected
Restaurants 10%
Porters US\$2
Round up the taxi fare
(negotiate fare beforehand)

Language

Arabic is the official language, English widely spoken.

Did you know?

Jordanians believe that excessive praise of children brings bad luck, so should be avoided!

The Ain Ghazal site near Amman, is said to have first been inhabited 9,000 years ago.

It is believed that Moses was buried on or near Mt. Nebo of Jordan.

Wadi Rum can get quite cold at night, bring something warm to wear, temperatures can vary from 32°C in the day to 1°C at night.





Lebanon

A land of endless spirit.

This small country spans many cultures and continues to keep all visitors captivated with its mountains, scenic beauty, beaches, shopping, nightlife and more. With Beirut intent on regaining its "Paris of the Orient" title there is always something worth doing, seeing or experiencing in this incredibly resilient and historical city. From Roman ruins, to beach clubs, to skiing in the mountains this country will keep your "holiday list of things to do" full, interesting and totally amazing!



Life changing experiences...

Downtown Beirut Located beside the port and marina this area is full of cafés, restaurants and places to shop, it's also home to many historical sites. The spiritual heart of this walking area is Place de L'Etoile, with the Lebanese parliament located nearby, fine examples of Lebanese Art Deco architecture. Beautifully reconstructed the city is truly a triumph of rejuvenation over disaster, wander the streets and enjoy the atmosphere.

Hamra, West Beirut A hive of activity and a shopaholic's paradise, plenty of shops and shopping malls, boutiques, large chain stores, hotels, restaurants, cafés, cinemas, bars and pubs. Walk around and explore Bliss Street, Hamra Street, Sourati Street and Jeanne d'Arc Street. A vibrant area of Beirut and well worth discovering.

The Corniche Take a walk along Beirut's famous Corniche and do a little people watching, from designer clad teenagers to 'tawla' playing gentleman and fishermen to street vendors it seems the whole of the city passes by at some point. Stop for a coffee along the way, watch the sunset and soak up the atmosphere on this special promenade.

Beirut's National Museum Located on Rue Damas, the former "Green Line" that split the factions during the civil

war, the museum gives you a taste of recent history as well as a good look back across the centuries. Lebanon's rich heritage is on display here, with items from prehistoric settlements, Arab dynasties, the temples of Byblos, Egyptian style statues and Greek influenced artefacts from Roman Empires. A fascinating look at this unique country's history.

Ski Lebanon Only a short drive from Beirut the Lebanese mountains offer fabulous ski resorts with spectacular scenery and views, it's said that this is the only country in the world where one can ski on snow in the morning and swim in the Mediterranean in the afternoon! There are many resorts to choose from, Mzaar and Cedars being the most famous and plenty of après-ski activities too.

Ancient Lebanon Home to many impressive ancient sites, Lebanon has played a key role in the Middle East's long and fascinating history. Visit the temples of Baalbek, home to the most important Roman ruins in the Middle East and a highlight of any visit to Lebanon. Wander the ruins at Byblos, Jbeil, known as the birthplace of the modern alphabet this ancient town has roman remains, a Crusader castle, a beautifully picturesque

harbour and a fabulous fully restored souq worth exploring, truly memorable.



Facts for the traveller...

Weather

Hot dry summers and cold wet winters. From June to August temperatures can be quite high, 30°C and coastal areas tend to be humid, the cooler mountains are a popular destination during the summer months. Winter in the mountains can be wet and cool with an average daytime temperature of 15°C.

Did you know?

The Phoenicians, the ancient Lebanese, were the first to develop an alphabetic script in 1100 B.C.

Byblos is the oldest continuously inhabited city in the world.

Beirut has been destroyed and rebuilt seven times.

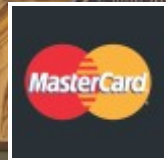


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i Facts for the traveller...

Best time to go

Anytime is a good time to visit Lebanon, summer and winter offer different activities, spring and autumn are the best seasons weather-wise.

Time zone

GMT +2 DST+3

Shopping hours

Mon - Sat: 9/10am to 6/7pm
Shopping Malls stay later and can be open 7 days a week, shops in Hamra stay open later.

Tipping

Average tipping rate in restaurants is 10-15%, porters and taxi drivers appreciate a tip at your discretion.

Currency

Lebanese Pound, locally referred to as the lira, "LL".

Language

Arabic and French are the official languages, English is widely spoken.

Transportation

Bus transportation is a little limited in Beirut, there is a "hail and ride" system for a fixed fare. Taxis and "service" (shared taxis) are the most reliable and convenient way to get around the city and can be hired for trips outside of Beirut.

Did you know?

Lebanon is the only Asian African country that doesn't have a desert.

Lebanon has fifteen rivers, all flowing down from the mountains.

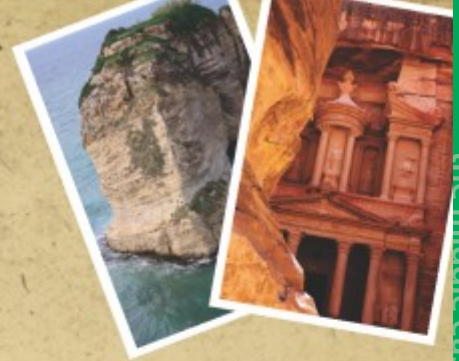
The first law school in the world was built in Lebanon.

Lebanon has 40 daily newspapers.




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