



1 800 422 3727

Dubai in Three Days

Fill your days in Dubai with the sites most worth seeing. Take in the sites of the historic area of Bastakia, browse through Hindu Lane and visit the Center for Cultural Understanding. Get some retail therapy at the Dubai Mall and have fun at the Dubai Aquarium. Explore the Spice Souk and Gold Souk leaving time for more sites and coffee in the Heritage and Diving Village.

Day One:

Hindi Lane 1 Hour

At one end of the Textile Souk you will come across the Hindu Lane, named for the many businesses catering to the huge Hindu Indian enclave living here. You can wander among the stores and find products that have been imported from India or represent the traditions and tastes of the Indian community. Among the goods on offer there are bells, religious statues, coconuts, flowers, jewelry and spices. There is the fascinating Shri Nathje Jayate Hindu Temple also called the Krishna Temple. It is up a small flight of steps and you can spot it by the pile of shoes at the bottom of the steps. Along Hindu Lane is another place of worship, Sikh Gurudaba. Visitors are allowed in these temples but no photos are allowed.

Grand Mosque 30 Minutes

This mosque is certainly not the most beautiful and unfortunately non-Muslims cannot enter. However it is special because the original version of the mosque was the oldest of all the mosques in the UAE. The Grand Mosque was constructed in 1850 and completely rebuilt in 1952 and then again in 1999 using the same style as the original. The mosque was originally an elementary school for study of the Koran. The Grand Mosque is situated close to the Textile Souk and Dubai Museum in the Bur Dubai area. Today it has the tallest minaret in Dubai reaching a height of 70 meters. Visitors can go up the minaret to take photos but not visit inside the main part of the mosque. It can accommodate approximately 1,200 worshipers. It has 45 small domes and 9 larger domes with panels of stained glass. The windows have wooden shutters and the walls are sand colored. Inside there are beautiful blue tile mosques. Five columns line the entrance and are topped by a large inscription from the Koran.

Dubai Museum at Al Fahidi Fort 1 Hr 30 Min

The Dubai Museum is the city's primary museum. It is housed within the historic Al Fahidi Fort which was constructed in 1787 and is the oldest building in the city. The fort was built to defend the city from attacks. For many years the fort was the official residence and work place of Dubai's rulers; it has also functioned as a prison and garrison. In the mid-1800s the fort underwent alterations during the reign of Sheikh Maktoum bin Buti. The fort is square shaped with a central courtyard and towers at three of its corners. The walls were constructed with the traditional coral and mortar. Off the southern wall you can see what remain of the original city walls. The museum presents the traditional UAE way of life from before the discovery of oil. Artifacts on display come from as far back at 3,000 years and as recently as present day. The oldest artifact on display is a 3,000-4,000 year old grave from Al-Qusais. The museum has several dioramas set up to show typical scenes from the traditional way of life. Among the

displays there are ancient weapons, pearl diving equipment, stone engravings, household items, bridal jewelry, precious stones, metal objects, ceramics and even skeletons that were uncovered in Dubai tombs. In the courtyard you can see examples of traditional building in the form of a palm leaf house, an elementary kitchen and a wind tower building. You can see all forms of the traditional UAE fishing boats – the dhow, al abra and the al hourey. A multi-media presentation gives you a basic overview of Dubai's transformation from a simple trading post to a modern city.

Bastakia-Al Bastakiah 2 Hours

Al Bastakiya or Bastakia is a delightful historical quarter of Dubai with many narrow winding lanes, traditional wind tower architecture and old buildings. Bastakiya was renamed the Al Fahidi Historic District in 2012 and is situated on the Bur Dubai side of the Dubai Creek. The neighborhood dates back to the 1890s when the area was settled by merchants from Iran who had come to the Gulf for commerce and were lured by offers of free land. They settled in this area and named the quarter after a town in Iran – Bastak. Today Bastakiya has been restored and the area has become the place to learn about Dubai's traditional culture. There are many art galleries, boutique hotels, cafes, restaurants and several impressive mosques. Some of the most famous buildings in the area include the Al Fahidi Fort which houses the Dubai Museum; Bait Al Wakeel, the city's first office building; Majlis Gallery; XVA Art Gallery for contemporary art and the Sheikh Mohammed Center for Cultural Understanding. At the SMCCU you can learn about the local culture and take a tour of the historic area. As you walk through Bastakiya look out for the wind towers. These tall square towers are a typical feature of the traditional architecture and were used to cool the buildings by funneling fresh air into the rooms of the house below. While in Bastakiya visit the Souk Al Bastakiya which is open on Saturdays and often has street performers and activities for kids. If you are lucky you may be in town for the Bastakiya Art Fair.

Centre for Cultural Understanding 1 - 2 Hours

This is a great place to start if you want to understand the Islamic culture and specifically the culture of the Gulf and the UAE. The center hosts a full calendar of events focused on the local culture, religions, customs and traditions as well as offering a number of regular tours, Arabic lessons and cultural awareness lectures. Dubai is home to a diverse number of cultures mainly because of the high number of foreign workers. The Prime Minister of the UAE and Dubai ruler Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum was the force behind opening the center. He saw the need to nurture understanding between the various communities in Dubai and this led to his vision for the creation of the center. The center was opened in 1998 and is housed in a traditional Wind Tower House in the historic district of Al Fahidi. The motto of the center is "Open Doors. Open Minds." The centre has won several awards of excellence. The center runs tours of the Jumeirah Mosque for all those interested, Muslim and non-Muslim alike. There are Heritage Tours through the Al Fahidi District with experienced and knowledgeable guides. A Creek Tour takes visitors through the Al Bastakiya neighborhood and to the Diwan Mosque, Textile, gold and spice Souq and on an abra boat ride. The tours are always followed by a Q&A session and Arabian tea and coffee with dates. They serve traditional Emirati breakfast and lunch daily where you can get to know the Emirati hosts and talk to them about their culture and traditions.

Day 2

Burj Khalifa Observation Deck 1 - 2 Hours

On the southern end of Sheikh Zayed Road rises the Burj Khalifa but you don't need to be standing near it to see it. The stunning building is the tallest in the world. After five years of construction it reaches 828 meters and looks like a shiny needle. The structure is built around a central core with tiers forming 27 terraces as the building gets narrower and the central core eventually emerges at the top in the spire. It is also the building with the most floors in the world (163 with another 46 levels in the spire); has 57 elevators; the highest mosque in the world; the highest swimming pool in the world and has the world's fastest and highest elevators. When you go up to the Burj Khalifa observation deck you get to ride in one of the super fast elevators. The building is predominantly residential

with the world's first Armani Hotel on the lower levels and the observation deck on the 124th floor. After you wait in a line (probably for longer than you expect) you can take the speedy elevator to the 124th floor. At the Top is an outdoor observation deck; it is 452 meters from the ground. There are telescopes so you can see the city below and the rest of the emirate in the distance. If you buy an At the Top SKY ticket you get a guided tour, jump the queue and get to go to the 148th floor as well. If you'd rather not visit the observation deck there is the At.mosphere restaurant on the 122th floor. You can also enjoy the fountain show at the foot of the building and the 11 hectare park which surrounds the skyscraper.

Dubai Mall 1 - 2 Hours

Dubai Mall is just one of the mind boggling malls in Dubai where you could spend the entire day shopping, dining and enjoying amazing places of entertainment. This is the world's largest mall in terms of total area (1,124,000m²) and it has 1,200 stores including the world's largest candy store. The mall opened in 2008 and since then has set records for the most visited site surpassing many top attractions across the globe. The mall's many attractions include DubaiDino a giant dinosaur skeleton. KidZania is an award winning interactive edutainment venue where kids can dress up as any of 80 roles e.g. surgeons, nurses, mechanic etc. and play as if they are adults in a mini adult world. Reel Cinema is the mall's 22 screen cinema complex. SEGA Republic is a 7060m² complex with 14 attractions and more than 170 games, simulators and virtual experiences. The theme of the whole venue is the SEGA games hedgehog. Kids will also love Big Fun World, a play area for children. At the Emirates A380 Experience you can enter an airplane cockpit for a 30 minute simulation and be a pilot for a while. The mall has a football themed arena called GOAL! The mall's main attraction is the Dubai Ice Rink. Visitors can rent skates and skate on the Olympic size rink. The mall is the site of the Dubai Aquarium and Underground Zoo (separate listing). Here you can see more than 33,000 marine animals through the world's largest viewing panel (32.8 meters by 8.3 meters). Outside the mall is the huge man-made Burj Khalifa Lake where you can see the Dubai Fountains (separate listing) dancing to music and lights. The mall is also at the foot of the Burj Khalifa (separate listing) where you can enjoy the breathtaking views from the observation deck on the 124th floor.

Dubai Fountains 30 - 60 Minutes

The Dubai Fountain show is the world's largest fountain show of its kind. It is located on the 12 hectare man-made Burj Lake outside the Dubai Mall on the Lower Ground Waterfront Promenade. The fountain was devised by the same team which created the Las Vegas fountains outside the Bellagio Hotel. The fountain cost approximately \$218 million to create. The fountains are spread out in the lake covering 274 meters (900ft); they shoot up 152 meters (500ft) in the air which is as high as a 45 floor building. 6,600 lights are used to create the incredible effects with 25 colorful projected images and 83279 liters (22,000 gallons) of water in the air. The fountains "dance" to the sound of classical music, Arabic music and famous internationally loved tunes. Visitors can get an up-close view of the fountains by taking the Dubai Fountain Lake Ride on a traditional Abra. The Abra takes you on to the lake itself while the fountains perform. Otherwise you can watch the show for free from the Fountain Promenade and you can also see the show from as far away as 32km (20 miles) or from any high building in the area.

Dubai Aquarium 2 - 3 Hours

Not to be confused with Dolphin Bay at The Palm where there are only dolphins and activities involving one-on-one encounters with the creatures. This site is located in the Dubai Mall and is home to over 33,000 species of aquatic creatures. There is a huge 10 million liter tank on one level and an underwater zoo on an upper level where people can interact with the animals. A variety of experiences are offered. You can go underwater in a cage and get up-close with the marine animals including 300 sharks and sting rays. You can take a dive (without a cage) down among the sharks. You can even learn to dive and get certified at the aquarium. The aquarium is the proud owner of giant crocodiles 5 meters long. There are daily presentations and feedings. You can see the sting rays, fish, crocodiles and sharks being fed. One of the most thrilling experiences at the aquarium is to walk through the transparent 48 meter long tunnel which goes through the aquarium tank. So you can see all the animals swimming around and overhead. The latest attraction is the UAE Night Creatures. This attraction covers 200m² and is home to

creatures which live in the Arabian Desert environment. In the Underwater Zoo you can see creatures from the Rainforest, Rocky Shore and Living Environment.

Day 3

Dubai Spice Souk 1 - 2 Hours

This market is also called the Grand Souq, Deira Old Souq or Deira Spice Souq as it is located in Deira next to the Gold Souq. The market is a covered group of narrow lanes with many small shops spilling out on to the walkway with sacks of every kind of spice you can imagine. You will smell this market before you reach it from the amazing aroma of the spices drifting in the air. The friendly store owners will give you advice about what to use the spices for. You will also find stores selling other goods like household items, textiles, electronics and even shoes. Although it is traditional to haggle over the prices in the markets it is not necessary when buying small quantities of spices. As this is a real working market which supplies spices and goods to locals it is a great way to get to know the people who live in Dubai and to get a taste (and smell) of their lives. It is also a glimpse into the traditional way of life from the pre-oil era. For other markets you could visit the Fish Souk, Perfume Souq, Electronics Souk or Textile Souk.

Dubai Gold Souk 1 -2 Hours

Shopping in general is one of the top activities for visitors to Dubai and visiting the Dubai markets is another. Dubai is famous for its low cost gold and you can really find bargains here. But even if you have no intention of buying any gold it is great to take a walk through the shiny souq where all that glitters is gold! Enter the Gold Souq market and you will see wall-to-wall gold with over 300 vendors displaying their gold. You can shop with confidence in the Gold Souq and there is strict quality control. If you buy gold from a vendor on the street you don't have the same guarantee. You can buy ready-made gold jewelry here or come with a design and have it made. You can even bring broken jewelry or a precious stone that you want set in a ring. In addition to gold you can find jewelry made of platinum, diamonds and silver. Remember to haggle over the price, get a certificate of authenticity and when leaving the country it is best to wear the jewelry to avoid paying extra tax as you enter your country. For more gold shopping visit the Gold and Diamond Park market.

Heritage House 1 Hour 30 Minutes

The Heritage House is a rare example of traditional Gulf mansion architecture north of the Creek. The structure was built in 1890 and originally owned by a merchant family, it has since been restored to resemble its former mid-20th century style. The house changed hands in 1910 and the new owner, Sheikh Mohammed bin Ahmed bin Dalmouk added to the structure. The Sheikh established the adjacent Al Ahmadiya School which can be visited with the Heritage House. Once again in the 1930s it was sold this time to Ibrahim al Said Abdullah. Today the house museum has been fitted with dioramas in each room depicting scenes from typical traditional life in Dubai before its modernization. You can see mannequins "acting out" scenes from everyday life including praying, studying, doing embroidery, grinding spices and cooking. There is a bride room or al hilja where the bride would prepare for her wedding. It was in this room that the bride would be dressed in beautiful wedding garments and have her skin painted with henna designs. The beautiful house has carved wooden doors and antique furniture. The building was constructed with the traditional materials of coral and gypsum and there are few windows to keep out the harsh sun. The rooms open up to a central courtyard where there is a Bedouin tent and visitors can enjoy a cup of coffee and snacks.

Heritage and Diving Village 1 -2 Hours

The Heritage Village is a recreated traditional Emirate village located next to the Diving Village which highlights the traditional pearl diving trade of Dubai. The site is in the Al Shindagha Historical Neighborhood on the bank of the Dubai Creek. In the Heritage Village thatch roofed mud brick buildings have been erected. Some have the traditional wind tower which was used to ventilate the homes by allowing fresh, cool air to enter through the open tower. In addition there are areas set-up like a traditional Bedouin tent camp. At the site you can learn about the Islamic way of life, Arabic calligraphy, falconry and Arabian architecture. You can see demonstrations of Emirati arts and crafts by women in traditional garb. There are stalls selling the traditional items including pottery, spices and woven goods.

This is a good place to buy authentic souvenirs. You can see camels and donkeys grazing and men smoking shishka or hookah pipes. In the evening the village comes alive as local families come to eat in the restaurants which serve simple and delicious traditional cuisine. During the Dubai Shopping Festival and national holidays there are even more demonstrations like rifle throwing, cooking and desert living. In the Diving Village there are exhibitions of pearl diving artifacts, photos of the heyday of Dubai's pearl industry and exhibits on marine life off the coast of Dubai. From the two villages you can catch a ride across the Creek on a traditional Abra wooden boat. Pearl diving is one of the oldest occupations in this region and it goes back to before diving equipment was invented. Divers would often risk their lives to reach the precious pearls. The pearl diving season would last for 6 months from April. In the Diving Village you can see life-size models of the dhow boats and pearl diving boats. The best time to visit is in the late afternoon or in the evening.

Sheikh Saeed Al Maktoum's House 1 Hour

This museum house was the home of Sheikh Saeed Al Maktoum the former ruler of the Emirate (1912-1958) who was the grandfather of the current ruler. The house was once the home of the ruler and the seat of government. It housed political and social organizations. The house is located on Dubai Creek overlooking Shindagha. The house was originally constructed in 1896 and is one of only a few of the traditional courtyard homes left in Dubai and a registered national monument. It was built in the Arabian style using traditional techniques including the use of coral, lime and plaster for the walls. It has four traditional wind towers which would ventilate the home by allowing fresh air to enter. There are examples of Islamic art and building decoration. The house has magnificent high vaulted beamed ceilings, arched doorways, intricate carvings and trellis screens. It has two levels where you can see the original meeting rooms, living rooms, store rooms and kitchen on the ground floor all of which open up to the central courtyard. On the upper level there were the bedrooms with balconies overlooking the Creek. The building has been completely restored to its original glory and today houses a museum which covers the cultural, political and social history of Dubai. The museum holds a collection of rare historic photos of Dubai, paintings, lithographs, coins, stamps, art and documents which record the history of the city.

Source: Visitacity

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