

# Monocle 25/25

## Dubai

### UAE

Dubai has positioned itself as the liberal, tax-free transit lounge between Europe and Asia. After several slow years following the financial crisis, the city is back in business and attracts visitors as diverse as Lebanese entrepreneurs, moneyed Saudi princes and sunburnt British tourists with a penchant for partying. The first city in the GCC to build an urban rail network, Dubai is home to a number of the Gulf's finest hotels including the landmark Burj Al Arab and Burj Khalifa. The best time to visit is between October and May – unless you enjoy 40C heat.

### Essentials

- 01 It is prohibited to chew gum or carry takeaway food or drinks on the metro.
- 02 Don't photograph local women unless you have permission.
- 03 Friday/Saturday is the weekend. Don't plan on doing any business on a Friday: it's a day for rest and prayer.
- 04 When introduced to a Muslim woman, wait for her to offer her hand. Some prefer not to.
- 05 Don't reject an offer of tea or coffee and always have more than one cup.

### Guide/Info

#### Hotels

##### Independent and easy

**Bonnington**  
Jumeirah Lakes Towers  
+971 (0)4 356 0000  
[bonningtontower.com](http://bonningtontower.com)

##### Dependable chain

**The Address Downtown Dubai**  
Mohammed Bin Rashid Boulevard  
+971 (0)4 436 8888  
[theaddress.com](http://theaddress.com)

##### Premium

**Zabeel Saray**  
The Palm Jumeirah  
+971 (0)4 453 0000  
[jumeirah.com](http://jumeirah.com)

#### Dining

##### Fast breakfast

**Baker & Spice**  
Marina Promenade  
+971 (0)4 362 4686  
[bakerandspiceme.com](http://bakerandspiceme.com)

##### Business breakfast

**La Serre**  
Vida Downtown Dubai  
+971 (0)4 428 6966  
[laserre.ae](http://laserre.ae)

##### Mid-morning coffee

**The Magazine Shop**  
Gate Village, DIFC  
+971 (0)56 432 9761

##### Working lunch with colleagues

**Café Belge**  
Ritz Carlton, DIFC  
+971 (0)4 372 2323  
[ritzcarlton.com](http://ritzcarlton.com)

##### Need-to-impress-clients lunch

**La Petite Maison**  
Gate Village, DIFC  
+971 (0)4 439 0505  
[lpmDubai.ae](http://lpmDubai.ae)

##### Lunch on your own

**Tom & Serg**  
Al-Joud Centre,  
Al Quoz 1  
+971 (0)56 474 6812  
[tomandserg.com](http://tomandserg.com)

##### Afternoon tea

**Sahn Eddar**  
Burj Al Arab  
+971 (0)4 301 7600  
[burj-al-arab.com](http://burj-al-arab.com)

##### Dinner with colleagues

**Al Nafoorah**  
Emirates Towers  
+971 (0)4 319 8088  
[jumeirah.com](http://jumeirah.com)

##### Private dinner

**Zuma**  
Gate Village, DIFC  
+971 (0)4 425 56603  
[zumarestaurant.com](http://zumarestaurant.com)

##### Big dinner with partner/clients

**Nobu**  
Atlantis, Palm Jumeirah  
+971 (0)4 426 0760  
[noburestaurants.com](http://noburestaurants.com)

##### Drink after dinner

**Mercury Lounge**  
Four Seasons,  
Jumeirah Beach Road  
+971 (0)4 270 7777  
[fourseasons.com](http://fourseasons.com)

##### Late bite

**Zaroob**  
Sheikh Zayed Road  
+971 (0)4 327 6060  
[zaroob.net](http://zaroob.net)

##### On the tiles

**40 Kong**  
The H Dubai,  
1 Sheikh Zayed Road  
+971 (0)4 355 8896  
[40kong.com](http://40kong.com)

#### Reading

##### Bookshop

**Kinokuniya**  
The Dubai Mall  
+971 (0)4 434 0111  
[kinokuniya.com](http://kinokuniya.com)

#### Thank yous

##### Dates and delicacies

**Bateel**  
The Dubai Mall  
+971 (0)4 339 9819  
[bateel.ae](http://bateel.ae)

#### Shopping

##### Something you can't get anywhere else

Salt and pepper shakers shaped like the locals  
Souk Madinat Jumeirah,  
6 Al Sufouh Road  
+971 (0)4 366 8888

##### Lost luggage – where to buy shirts, socks and underwear

**Bloomingdale's**  
The Dubai Mall  
+971 (0)4 350 5333  
[bloomingdales.com](http://bloomingdales.com)

##### Something for the kids

**Camel dolls by The Camel Company**  
The Dubai Mall  
+971 (0)4 330 8117  
[thedubaimall.com](http://thedubaimall.com)

##### Something for someone you love

Classic and very rare timepieces, including ROLEXes first made for the UAE military's top brass  
**Momentum, The Gate Building, DIFC**  
+971 (0)4 327 4320  
[momentum-dubai.com](http://momentum-dubai.com)

##### Something for yourself

Suits from Dubai's oldest tailoring dynasty, the Parmar family  
**Bespoke, DIFC, The Gate**  
+971 (0)4 363 7237  
[bespoke.ae](http://bespoke.ae)

#### Two-hour tour

- 01 **Alserkal Avenue**  
Host to many galleries showing provocative work from Iran and the rest of the Arab world.  
[alserkalavenue.ae](http://alserkalavenue.ae)
- 02 **Al Fahidi Historical Neighbourhood**  
Peaceful warren of old courtyard houses and wind towers.  
[dubaiculture.gov.ae](http://dubaiculture.gov.ae)
- 03 **Aerial city tour: Seawings, Jebel Ali**  
The only way to get your head around Dubai is from the sky.  
[seawings.ae](http://seawings.ae)

#### Transport

Opt for taxis rather than renting cars. Some hotels provide guests with transport to and from the airport in addition to their own limousine services. Use the metro if possible, especially in the gridlocked rush hour.

#### Fitness

##### Good gym

**U Energy**  
Gate Village, DIFC  
+971 (0)4 422 8721  
[uenergy.me](http://uenergy.me)

##### Alternative diversion

**Ski Dubai**  
Indoor ski/snowboard piste in Mall of the Emirates, with penguins.  
+971 800 534 7873  
[theplaymania.com](http://theplaymania.com)

