

THE ULTIMATE DESTINATION GUIDE

Abu Dhabi

Timing, entry, stays, experiences and budgets for 2026–27

2026–27 EDITION

CURATED BY TRIPSTOR

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This guide starts with safety, entry and timing, then moves through transport, places to stay, culture, experiences, food, shopping, health, packing and budgets. Read the first pages before you commit to dates. Check [the Abu Dhabi guide](#) for the full picture, and [browse holiday packages](#) once your entry and timing are confirmed.

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WELCOME

Why Abu Dhabi, and what to check first

A calm, well-organised emirate with museums, coast and desert

Abu Dhabi is a calm, well-organised emirate where museums, a clean coastline and desert landscapes sit within reach of one another. For travellers from India, the sensible starting point is the paperwork and the current situation rather than the itinerary. Flight disruption in 2026 has affected some international routes, and official advisories conflict, so check them before you book. [Read the destination overview](#) and then return to the checks below.

✓ Check advisories first

Look at current guidance from the UK government, the Indian Embassy and your own insurer. Sources disagree on the travel advice level, so treat any single claim as provisional.

✓ Confirm entry before you fly

An Indian passport alone does not allow visa-free entry. Visa-on-arrival eligibility changed in 2026, so confirm the document rules with the immigration authority before departure.

✓ Plan around the heat

Summers are very hot and humid. Many visitors find the cooler months from October to March more comfortable, and outdoor plans work best early morning or in the evening.

✓ Allow for fees

Hotel bills can include tourism and municipality charges on top of the room rate. Ask for a fully inclusive quote so the total is clear before you commit.

The pages that follow move from timing and transport to stays, culture and budgets. Where a figure is unverified, we say so. When you are ready to compare options, [speak with a travel adviser about an Abu Dhabi package](#).

READ FIRST

Disruption, advisories and insurance

Conflicting advice; verify before booking

The UAE has had serious regional disruption in 2026. The Indian Embassy reported in March that airspace and scheduled flights were temporarily suspended, and a later Dubai consulate notice said scheduled commercial flights were not operating. A travel-site update from 12 October says UAE airports remain operational, though some international routes are disrupted. Schedules can change at short notice, so check often.

Before you book

✓ Check GOV.UK directly

The sources we reviewed give conflicting wording. One says the FCDO does not advise against travel to the UAE, while GOV.UK pages carry a banner advising against all but essential travel. Confirm the current level on the official page yourself.

✓ Ask your insurer

FCDO notes that insurance could be invalidated if you travel against its advice. Ask how your policy treats advisories before paying for flights or stays.

✓ Confirm your flights

Etihad cancelled selected routes to Saudi cities on 11 to 13 October. Check each sector with your airline before departure.

✓ Verify Embassy contacts

Helpline numbers reported in March have not been confirmed on the Embassy's own site. Verify them there before relying on them.

 READ FIRST

Disruption, advisories and insurance continued

Conflicting advice; verify before booking

If you are told to shelter, reported guidance identifies the greatest risk as falling debris caused by intercepts. Follow local authority instructions, keep your phone charged and carry copies of your documents. We could not retrieve a current tourist advisory from the Indian government, so treat this section as a prompt to check rather than a final answer. Review your options on our [current packages](#) page once the advice is settled.

 ENTRY

Visa on arrival and tourist visas

An Indian passport alone does not give visa-free entry

Who qualifies for arrival visas

An Indian passport alone does not give visa-free entry. ICP says visa on arrival is limited to ordinary passport holders and family members with a valid visa, residence permit or US Green Card from the US, EU or UK, or a residence permit from Japan, South Korea, Australia, Canada, Singapore or New Zealand. MOFA says the scheme was revised on 25 June 2026. Check the [latest eligibility conditions](#) before you fly.

Reported visa options

14-day visa	Dh100, with one 14-day extension at Dh250	Secondary report, Gulf News
60-day visa	Dh250	Single-entry and non-extendable, per one agent site
Sterling check	AED 100 is about INR 2,584	At INR 25.84 per AED on 16 Oct 2026; banks add margin

Documents that need care

Secondary reports say a UK-only visa or residence permit no longer qualifies from July 2026, and ICP advises checking current conditions. If your only qualifying document is British, do not rely on arrival and arrange your visa in advance. Ignore claims of a free 30-day visa on arrival for Indians, as they conflict with ICP and MOFA reporting.

Everyone else: arrange in advance

Most Indian travellers should arrange a tourist visa before departure. One agent source says this is done through a UAE airline, hotel or licensed agent. Six months of passport validity is widely cited but unconfirmed here. Compare [holiday packages](#) carefully and confirm what each provider includes.

 ENTRY

Visa on arrival and tourist visas continued

An Indian passport alone does not give visa-free entry

Time-limited trade offer

✓ DCT Abu Dhabi initiative

Outlook Traveller reports that from 1 August to 31 October 2026, eligible Indian passport holders may receive a complimentary entry visa with a qualifying holiday booked through participating partners. Treat this as a promotion to verify with the partner, not a standing entitlement.

Customs and prescription-medicine rules are not verified here. Check UAE federal sources before packing regular medication.

TIMING

When to go

Cooler months suit most plans

Abu Dhabi is most comfortable for sightseeing from roughly October to March, and a secondary fare guide also names October to March as the best window. Climate averages from [climate-data.org](#) put January as the coldest month, at about 19.4 °C on average, while August is the hottest, with average daily highs reaching about 40.7 °C. Rain is minimal through the year. The bigger weather question is wind: strong winds, especially in spring, can bring dust and sand storms, so check forecasts before planning desert days. Compare dates on the [Abu Dhabi holiday packages](#) page once your window is set.

TIMING

When to go continued

Cooler months suit most plans

Month by month



- Coolest month on average, well suited to city walks and desert trips.
- Mild days suit the Corniche, museums and outdoor plans.
- Spring winds can bring dust and sand, so check forecasts for desert days.
- Warming quickly, with dust and wind still possible.
- Heat builds. Plan outdoor activity for early morning or evening.
- Hot season. Keep midday for indoor sights.
- Very hot. Outdoor plans work best early or late in the day.
- Hottest month on average, with daily highs near 40 °C.
- Still very hot. Keep heat planning in place.
- Average high around 35 °C, easing as the month goes on.
- Average high around 30 °C, comfortable for most outdoor plans.
- Cooler season returns. Confirm conditions closer to travel.

● Dry season ● Transition ● Wetter season

 TIMING

When to go continued

Cooler months suit most plans

✓ Best window

Plan major outdoor days between October and March where possible.

✓ Heat plan

From May to October, book walks, excursions and desert time for early morning or evening.

✓ Wind check

Spring can bring dust and sand storms. Confirm conditions before desert trips.

Ramadan needs a check. I could not confirm the 2027 dates. My own rough estimate is mid-February to mid-March 2027, so confirm with the official moon-sighting announcement. A secondary source notes that eating and drinking in public during daylight hours is not permitted, so plan meals and visits around fasting hours.

GETTING THERE

Flights and airports

Routes, airlines and checking schedules

Flying in Abu Dhabi's main airport is Zayed International (AUH). Several airlines operate between India and Abu Dhabi. Air India began a Navi Mumbai to Abu Dhabi service on 15 July, alongside Etihad and other carriers. Compare airlines, fare conditions and baggage allowances before you choose a flight.

Check schedules first

Regional disruption in 2026 has affected some international routes. A travel-site update dated 12 October says UAE airports remain operational, but some international routes are disrupted. Schedules can change at short notice, so confirm your flight with the airline a few days before departure. For a complete trip with flights included, see the [Abu Dhabi Holiday Packages](#) page, and read the [Abu Dhabi Guide](#) for the wider plan.

Before you book

✓ Airport arrival

Allow extra time at Zayed International for check-in, security and immigration, especially at busy periods.

✓ Schedule changes

Ask your airline how it will notify you of changes and what options apply if a flight is cancelled.

✓ Refund terms

Read fare rules and refund conditions in writing, and keep your booking reference and contact details handy.

TRANSPORT

Buses, taxis and on-demand rides



Abu Dhabi is straightforward to get around by bus and taxi, though fares and card rules vary by source. Confirm details with Abu Dhabi Mobility before relying on them, and plan your route with the [Abu Dhabi Holiday Packages](#) team if you would like help arranging transfers.

Hafilat bus cards

Bus fares are paid with a Hafilat card, which is loaded at ticket vending machines at Lulu Hypermarket branches. The anonymous card costs AED 10 and, according to the Abu Dhabi government site, is valid for five years. One source says no ID is needed for it. Secondary sources report that city buses do not take cash, so have a card ready before you board.

Airport and intercity buses

✓ Airport bus A1

An unofficial route site lists a 24-hour service from Terminal A at Zayed International to Al Zahiyah for AED 4 flat, every 30 to 60 minutes. Verify the route and fare with Abu Dhabi Mobility before you travel.

✓ Dubai express buses

The same unofficial source quotes AED 25 each way. Treat this figure as unconfirmed and check it with the operator.

 TRANSPORT

Buses, taxis and on-demand rides continued

Taxis and on-demand rides

Taxis are metered. I could not confirm a current tariff, so no fare is quoted here. Use a metered taxi from the rank or an e-hail app, and check the fare on the meter or in the app before you set off. Abu Dhabi Link is an on-demand bus service booked through an app, which can suit short trips where a fixed bus route is awkward.

Abu Dhabi Mobility, formerly the Integrated Transport Centre (ITC), regulates these services. Its current information is the authority to rely on for timetables, card rules and fares.

REGIONS

Where to base yourself

General orientation, not yet verified against official sources

Abu Dhabi is both an emirate and a city, and where you stay shapes how easily you reach museums, beaches, desert and the Grand Mosque. The notes below are general orientation from planning knowledge, not yet checked against official sources. Treat them as a starting point and confirm details with [the destination guide](#) and your hotel before you book. If you are choosing between packaged options, [compare holiday packages](#) and check what each includes.

Common bases and what they suit

✓ City island and Corniche

Central hotels, bus links and the Grand Mosque area make a practical base for a first visit. Waterfront walks are most comfortable in cooler months.

✓ Saadiyat Island

Museums and beach resorts are often grouped here, which suits families and slower days. Check distances and transport before you choose a property.

✓ Yas Island

Theme parks and entertainment venues are the usual reason to stay here. Journeys to the historic centre can take longer than from the city.

✓ Al Ain and Al Dhafra

Inland oasis and desert areas lie beyond the city. Plan these as day trips or overnight stays, and confirm road access and tour arrangements locally.

District boundaries, travel times and the character of each area may change. Ask any hotel or tour operator to confirm the location on a map before you pay a deposit.

 REGIONS

Regional profiles

Island, coast, inland oasis and desert

Abu Dhabi emirate is often grouped into four broad areas: the island city, the coastal strip, inland oases and desert. These are general orientation notes rather than checked material, so confirm boundaries, access and opening times with DCT Abu Dhabi before booking. If you would like the regions arranged for you, [speak with a holiday specialist](#).

REGION	CHARACTER	OFTEN SUITS	CHECK FIRST
City island and Corniche	Hotels, the Grand Mosque area and a waterfront promenade, with bus links across the city	First-time visitors and shorter stays	Bus routes and current hotel fee schedules
Saadiyat Island	Museums and beaches on the island	Culture-focused and beach-focused travellers	Museum opening days and entry arrangements
Yas Island	Theme parks and evening entertainment	Families and groups wanting attractions	Park hours and any newly announced openings
Al Ain	Inland oasis town with gardens and heritage sites	Visitors wanting a slower, greener day trip	Journey time and transport options from the city
Al Dhafra and Liwa	Desert dunes and open landscapes, further from the coast	Desert excursions with a licensed operator	Tour operator credentials and heat-safe timing

Distances and transfer times are not yet verified against official sources. Treat these groupings as a starting point, and avoid planning a single day that moves between the islands, the city and the inland areas.

STAYS

Hotels and resorts

Ask for a fully inclusive quote



Abu Dhabi offers everything from island resorts to city hotels, and the right choice depends on how you plan to move around. Compare the total cost rather than the headline room rate, and keep a written copy of what is included. Browse our [current holiday options](#) if you would like help matching a stay to your dates.

Ask for a fully inclusive quote

Ask each property for the final figure, including its tourism fee, municipality fee, service charge and VAT, in writing. Reported percentages vary between sources, so do not rely on the listed rate alone.

Check the fee schedule

Gulf News reports the tourism fee fell from 6 to 4 per cent of the bill from September 2023, with the municipality fee unchanged. A property portal guide adds a 10 per cent service charge and 5 per cent VAT, which could put the final cost around 18 to 20 per cent above the listed price. This is an estimate, so confirm it with the hotel.

Choose by purpose

Island resorts suit beach days and quiet evenings. City hotels suit museum visits and walks along the Corniche. Inland stays suit desert outings, though journey times can be longer. These are general notes, not verified district guidance.

Plan around the heat

From May to October, look for a room with strong air conditioning and shade for midday rest. Ask about check-in and check-out times, and whether a late departure can be arranged for your flight.

STAYS

Fees and taxes at a glance

Rates change; confirm with the property

A hotel bill in Abu Dhabi is rarely just the room rate. The two main government charges are a tourism fee and a municipality fee. Gulf News reports that from 1 September 2023 the tourism fee fell from 6% to 4% of the bill, while the 4% municipality fee stayed the same. The older Dh15 per room per night municipality fee and the hotel-restaurant fees were removed. Some older guides still quote 6% or 3.5%, and Dubai's Tourism Dirham does not apply in Abu Dhabi.

Fee snapshot

Tourism fee	4% of the bill, reduced from 6% on 1 September 2023	Reported; confirm with DCT Abu Dhabi
Municipality fee	4% of the bill, reported as unchanged	Reported; confirm with the hotel
Service charge and VAT	A property guide adds a 10% service charge and 5% VAT	Secondary source; verify
Combined uplift	Around 18 to 20% above the listed room rate	Planning estimate, not an offer
Old per-room fee	Dh15 per room per night, now removed	Outdated; ignore older quotes

Ask for a fully inclusive quote in writing. It should state the currency, every fee and tax, and whether breakfast and any resort charges are included. Compare like with like before choosing between properties, because a lower headline rate can end up costing more once the charges are added. Until a hotel confirms its figures, treat the uplift above as an estimate. When you are ready to compare options, [browse Abu Dhabi holiday packages](#) and check what each price includes.

CULTURE

Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque



Dress code at the door

The Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque is one of the emirate's signature visits, and its dress code is the most consistent detail across the sources we reviewed. Plan a modest outfit before you leave for the mosque, because staff check it at the entrance. Arrive with time to spare, especially in the hour before sunset and on Friday afternoons, when one guide reports the site is busiest.

✓ Women

Cover ankles, wrists and hair. Loose, full-length clothing that covers the legs works well.

✓ Men

Wear long trousers and a top with sleeves.

✓ Children

One secondary guide says the same rules apply to children. Check before packing for younger travellers.

✓ Shoes

Shoes come off inside, so pack socks you are happy to walk in on polished marble.

CULTURE

Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque continued

Tickets and hours

Fees and hours are unsettled. One recent source says visitors now pay AED 10 (AED 5 with an Emirates ID) and pre-book online, while others describe free entry. Hours also differ between sources. Check the mosque's official booking page before fixing a time, and note that one source says worshippers enter free without a ticket. For wider trip planning, see our [Abu Dhabi holiday packages](#) page.

Dress modestly, move slowly through the courtyards and keep a light layer in your bag for the cooler air inside. A visit here works well as an unhurried morning or late-afternoon outing between other plans.

CULTURE

Heritage, crafts and local life



Abu Dhabi's older character is easiest to find away from the glass towers, in courtyards, forts and craft spaces where daily life moves more slowly. Plan these visits for late afternoon, when the light softens and the heat eases. Many heritage sites are small, so a relaxed half day usually suits better than a packed schedule.

What to look for

✓ Fort courtyards

Sand and coral-toned walls, shaded arcades and watchtowers show traditional Emirati building methods. Check opening days before you go, as hours can change.

✓ Palm-frond weaving

Craftspeople sometimes demonstrate weaving with palm fronds. Ask before photographing anyone at work.

✓ Water channels

Falaj-style channels once carried water to palm gardens. Look for restored examples in heritage settings.

For a guided half day that combines heritage and the city, compare options on the [Abu Dhabi holiday packages](#) page, or begin with the [Abu Dhabi guide](#) to plan your route.

 CULTURE

Heritage, crafts and local life continued

Dress modestly, with shoulders and knees covered, and carry a light layer for air-conditioned interiors. Photography rules and visitor etiquette can differ between sites, so confirm them on official pages before your visit.

EXPERIENCES

Desert dunes and wildlife



Sand, silence and early starts

Beyond the city, the emirate opens into wide desert of rippled dunes, wind-carved ridges and very large skies. It makes a good contrast to the coast and museums. Published sources describe the city's climate well but say little about the desert itself, so treat the points below as planning guidance.

Timing matters

Average daily highs in Abu Dhabi city reach about 40.7 °C in August, according to climate-data.org, so plan outdoor time for early morning or late afternoon from May to October. Spring can bring strong winds, dust and sand storms, so check conditions on the day.

Before you go

✓ Choose a licensed operator

Ask who drives, whether the vehicle suits sand, the return time and how changes are handled. Confirm details in writing.

✓ Expect distant wildlife

Arabian oryx are sometimes seen grazing at a distance. Sightings are never guaranteed, so keep a respectful distance.

 EXPERIENCES

Desert dunes and wildlife continued

Before you go

✓ Pack for wind and sun

Bring a light scarf for sand, closed shoes and layers, since mornings can feel cool while midday is hot.

Pair a desert morning with a slow afternoon back in the city, and compare [desert and city itineraries](#) to see how time is usually split. Check the [destination guide](#) for current travel notes, and confirm every tour directly with the operator.

EXPERIENCES

Kayaking through the mangroves



Paddling at a slower pace

Mangrove channels offer a quieter side of the emirate, a change from city towers and wide boulevards. A guided kayak trip is the easiest way in for most visitors, as the operator usually handles the route, the safety briefing and conditions on the water. Ask what is included before you book, such as life jackets, water and transport from your hotel.

✓ Timing

Early morning or late afternoon suits paddling better than the midday heat. This is a planning note based on the seasonal temperature pattern, not an operator rule.

✓ Clothing

Light, quick-dry layers, a sun hat and footwear that can get wet. A light long-sleeved top gives sun cover on the water.

✓ Safety

Follow the guide's briefing and wear the life jacket provided at all times on the water.

 EXPERIENCES

Kayaking through the mangroves continued

Weather and wind can change the plan on the day, so keep a flexible backup for the afternoon. Confirm cancellation terms and the provider's safety arrangements in writing before paying. For bundled options that combine transfers and activities, compare [Abu Dhabi Holiday Packages](#) and check the inclusions line by line. For wider planning, return to the [Abu Dhabi Guide](#).

EXPERIENCES

Corniche and city walks



The Corniche is one of the easiest places to feel Abu Dhabi at its most relaxed. A long waterfront promenade runs beside clean sand and calm Gulf water, with glass towers rising behind. Mornings suit a slow stroll before the heat builds, and evenings bring softer air and lights along the shore. Many visitors use the Corniche as a simple base for walking, cycling and sitting with a view. For a coordinated plan, you can explore [Abu Dhabi holiday packages](#).

Walks worth planning

✓ Morning promenade

Start early, when joggers and cyclists share the palm-lined path. Carry water and aim to finish before midday in warmer months.

✓ Sunset along the shore

Late afternoon brings gentler light and the skyline reflected on the water. Check opening times for any cafes or attractions you plan to visit.

✓ City centre and mosque area

Plan the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque as a separate visit, with modest dress and current booking rules confirmed on its official page.

 EXPERIENCES

Corniche and city walks continued

Getting around: public buses use Hafilat cards, and the anonymous card costs AED 10 according to official and secondary sources. Metered taxis and on-demand rides suit longer hops, but confirm current tariffs before relying on any quoted fare. Bus and taxi details can change, so check with Abu Dhabi Mobility and DCT Abu Dhabi before you travel.

ROMANCE

Slow evenings for two



Abu Dhabi suits unhurried evenings. The emirate is calm, the Gulf is close, and sunset over the water is easy to plan around. Choose a relaxed pace rather than a packed list, and let the day cool before you head out.

✓ Sunset on the water

Consider a dhow or waterfront cruise for the last hour of light. Confirm the departure point, the length of the trip and what is included before you book.

✓ Dinner with a view

Reserve a waterfront table in advance, especially at weekends. Ask whether outdoor seating is available in the evening.

✓ A quiet walk

Start early on the Corniche, before the heat builds, and finish with coffee nearby.

Dress for the evening, not only the heat. Indoor restaurants and hotel lounges can be cold, so a light layer helps. Dress modestly for mosque visits and public spaces, and check current guidance on public behaviour before you travel. Compare **carefully planned packages** with a travel adviser, or review the **full destination guide** before you finalise dates.

FAMILIES

Days out with children



Abu Dhabi can suit a family pace, with shaded promenades, waterfront museums and early starts before the heat. I did not retrieve sourced material on children's activities, so treat specific attractions, opening times and age rules as details to confirm directly with each venue. Planning around the weather matters most. From May to October, keep outdoor time to early morning and evening, and use the middle of the day for indoor breaks, cool drinks and rest.

✓ Plan around the heat

Start walks and beach time early. Build in a long lunch break and return to the hotel for a rest before the evening cooler hours.

✓ Pack for modest sites

One secondary guide says the mosque dress code applies to children too. Pack a light long-sleeved layer, and socks, because shoes are removed at some sites.

✓ Carry sun and water basics

Hats, sunscreen, refillable bottles and a small first aid kit are sensible for children in hot, bright conditions.

✓ Keep transport simple

Public buses use Hafilat cards. One source reports an anonymous card at AED 10, so confirm current fares with Abu Dhabi Mobility before you rely on them. Check the [Abu Dhabi guide](role:destination) for current planning updates.

 FAMILIES

Days out with children continued

Health needs particular care with children. Confirm that your travel health insurance covers under-age travellers, and check vaccination and medicine guidance with Indian and UAE health authorities before departure. Questions about children's medication should go to a doctor who knows your child. Build a flexible day, leave space for naps and spontaneous stops, and keep one indoor option ready for any hour when the sun is strong. Explore [family-friendly packages](#) with a clear itinerary, and ask the provider to confirm every inclusion in writing.

FOOD

Emirati and Levantine tables



Abu Dhabi's tables blend Emirati home cooking with Levantine dishes that are now common across the city. Meals are often shared from central platters, so it helps to order several dishes for the table rather than one plate each. Menus, opening hours and dish names change, so confirm with each restaurant before planning a meal around it.

A starting menu

EMIRATI

Machboos: spiced rice cooked with meat or fish, often with dried lime

LEVANTINE

Hummus: chickpea purée with tahini, olive oil and warm flatbread

Harees: slow-cooked wheat and meat, soft and mild

Fattoush: crisp bread salad with sumac and fresh herbs

FOOD

Emirati and Levantine tables continued

A starting menu

EMIRATI

Luqaimat: small fried dumplings served with date syrup

LEVANTINE

Mutabbal: smoky aubergine dip with pomegranate seeds

Gahwa: lightly spiced Arabic coffee served in small cups

Ful medames: slow-cooked fava beans, a popular breakfast dish

Ask the kitchen which dishes contain meat, dairy, nuts or seafood, because menus do not always say. Arabic coffee is often offered as a welcome, and dates usually arrive alongside it. You may accept a small cup or decline politely. For curated meal and evening options, see [Abu Dhabi holiday packages](#), and for general planning, the [Abu Dhabi guide](#).

CULTURE

Do and avoid

Public behaviour rules to confirm on official portals

Abu Dhabi is a conservative emirate in public life, and most visitors find it easy to be respectful. These points are general guidance from the sources we checked. Public behaviour, alcohol and photography rules were not verified for this edition, so confirm anything binding on the UAE government portal before you travel. For current mosque timings and booking, see the [Abu Dhabi guide](#).

Do	Avoid
Cover ankles, wrists and hair at the Grand Mosque, with long trousers and sleeved tops for men	Enter mosque grounds in shorts, sleeveless tops or revealing clothing
Remove your shoes where asked and carry socks for mosque visits	Step over worshippers or walk across prayer areas
Ask permission before photographing people, especially women and children	Photograph local families or women without asking
Keep affection discreet in public spaces	Show open affection in streets, malls or mosque grounds
Use your right hand for giving and receiving items and food	Offer food or money with the left hand alone
Eat and drink discreetly during daylight hours in Ramadan	Eat or drink in public during Ramadan daylight, which one secondary source says is not permitted
Check current rules on alcohol and prescription medicines before you arrive	Bring or buy alcohol or regulated medicines without checking first

If a rule seems unclear, ask your hotel or guide before acting. Plans for families and couples are best confirmed with your tour operator, and you can review current packages on [Abu Dhabi holiday packages](#).

SHOPPING

Tourist VAT refund

Fees changed in 2026; check current figures

The Federal Tax Authority says the tourist VAT refund scheme lets eligible visitors request refunds of VAT paid on their local purchases. Keep every tax invoice and ask the retailer whether it participates before you pay. Plan shopping alongside your [Abu Dhabi holiday packages](#), so the paperwork fits your itinerary.

Refund fees before and after July 2026

Administrative fee	15% of VAT	13% of VAT
Fixed fee per claim	AED 4.80	AED 3.60
24-hour cash cap	AED 10,000	AED 35,000

Good to know before you shop

✓ Minimum spend

Purchases must total at least AED 250 from the same retailer, according to a Lexis analysis of the amendments.

✓ Excluded goods

Consumed goods and items that do not leave the country with you are excluded from the scheme.

✓ Older figures

Some pages still quote the earlier AED 4.80 fixed fee. Treat any figure that differs from the Federal Tax Authority as outdated.

 SHOPPING

Tourist VAT refund continued

Fees changed in 2026; check current figures

For a rough sense in rupees, AED 250 is about INR 6,460 at the planning rate of INR 25.84 to the dirham on 16 October 2026. Exchange rates move daily, and banks and cards add margins. Confirm the current fee structure and cash cap on the official tax portal before you travel, and keep your receipts until any refund is settled.

HEALTH

Insurance, medicines and heat

Official health guidance still to be checked

Official health guidance for this emirate has not yet been confirmed for this guide. Vaccination advice, hospital arrangements and prescription rules should be checked with Indian and UAE health authorities before you book. Treat the notes below as questions to ask, not as medical advice.

Insurance before you book

The UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office warns that insurance could be invalidated if you travel against its advice. Because the advisory picture is contested, ask your insurer in writing how it treats government advisories for the UAE and whether cover applies to your dates. A visa checklist from one agent lists valid travel health insurance as a requirement, but that is a secondary claim. Read the [current destination guide](#) for wider context.

Questions for your insurer

✓ Advisory cover

Does the policy still respond if a government advisory changes during your trip?

✓ Medical limits

What are the hospital cover limits, and does the policy include evacuation?

✓ Existing conditions

Are any regular conditions excluded, and what must you declare when you buy?

Medicines and customs

Customs and prescription-medicine rules have not been verified for this guide. Before packing regular medication, review the UAE federal customs and health ministry pages. Where possible, keep medicines in their original containers with prescriptions, and confirm the rules before you leave India.

Heat and daily pacing

HEALTH

Insurance, medicines and heat continued

Official health guidance still to be checked

From May to October, daytime heat is intense. Climate averages for August show a mean near 35 °C and average daily highs around 40 °C. This is a planning note: schedule outdoor activity for early morning or evening, and leave the middle of the day for indoor stops. Air-conditioned interiors can feel cold, so pack a light layer.

Simple daily habits



Early starts

Begin outdoor visits before mid-morning and finish before the afternoon peak.



Indoor breaks

Plan museum visits or shaded stops for the hottest hours.



Spring winds

Strong spring winds can bring dust and sand storms, so check conditions and keep plans flexible.

 PACKING

Packing for heat and mosque visits

Abu Dhabi can be very hot for much of the year, and the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque asks for covered clothing. A small, well-chosen bag works best. Pack light layers for the sun, then add a modest layer for mosque visits. Air-conditioned interiors can feel cold, so keep a light scarf or cardigan in your day bag. Check current dress and entry information before you go, and plan your trip with help from [Abu Dhabi Holiday Packages](#).

Pack for the heat

☐ Lightweight layers

Breathable cotton or linen in light colours suits hot months.

☐ Sun protection

A hat and sunglasses for walks along the Corniche or desert outings.

☐ Water bottle

Carry one on outdoor days and keep it filled.

☐ Early-start plans

Schedule outdoor activity for early morning or evening from May to October.

Pack for the mosque

☐ Women

Ankles, wrists and hair covered. A long-sleeved top and a light scarf work well.

☐ Men

Long trousers and sleeved tops.

☐ Clean socks

You remove your shoes, so pack socks you are comfortable walking in on marble.

☐ Easy-off footwear

Slip-on shoes make the shoe-removal process quicker.

PACKING

Packing for heat and mosque visits continued

Pack for health and documents

☐ Travel insurance

Confirm that your policy covers the UAE and check how it treats travel advisories.

Pack for health and documents

☐ Prescription medicines

Check UAE customs and health ministry rules before packing regular medication. Keep medicines in their original packaging.

Pack for health and documents

☐ Passport and visa papers

Carry copies of your passport and any visa or booking confirmations.

☐ Phone and charger

Save the Indian Embassy contact details from the Embassy's own website.

Rules for clothing, medicines and entry can change. Confirm them on official portals before you pack, and use the [Abu Dhabi Guide](#) for updated planning notes.

 BUDGETS

Planning costs in rupees

Planning estimates, not quotes

Xe's mid-market rate on 16 October 2026 was about AED 1 = INR 25.84, and Wise showed 25.87. The dirham is pegged to the US dollar at 3.6725, so the rate moves with USD to INR. Banks and cards add their own margin. The figures below use INR 25.84 and are for planning only. Check current rates before you exchange money, and compare fees with our [Abu Dhabi holiday packages](#) when you price a trip.

BUDGETS

Planning costs in rupees continued

Planning estimates, not quotes

TRIP STYLE

Visas and transit

TOTAL · USD

15,865–15,865

14-day visa on arrival (AED 100)

2,584

14-day visa extension (AED 250)

6,460

60-day visa (AED 250, single entry)

6,460

Hafilat card (AED 10, one-off)

258

Airport bus A1 per ride (AED 4, unofficial)

103

APPROXIMATE INR

₹15,05,589

to

₹15,05,589

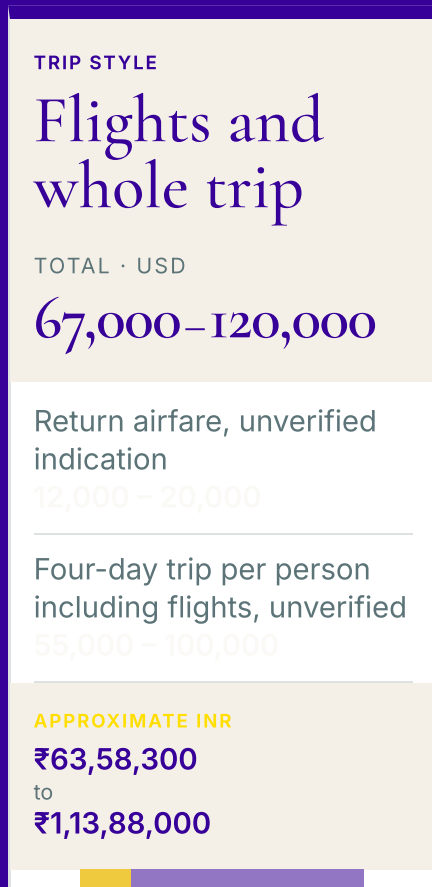
- 14-day visa on arrival (AED 100)
- 14-day visa extension (AED 250)
- 60-day visa (AED 250, single entry)
- Hafilat card (AED 10, one-off)
- Airport bus A1 per ride (AED 4, unofficial)

Bars show the lower-estimate cost mix. USD 1 = INR 94.90 · reference 2026-10-16 · estimates, not quotes.

BUDGETS

Planning costs in rupees continued

Planning estimates, not quotes



Hotel rule of thumb: add roughly 18 to 20 percent to the headline room rate for service charge and VAT, and confirm the fully inclusive figure with the property. Visa fees come from secondary sources. Confirm them on ICP before paying, and check the UK-document rule first. Taxi fares are not quoted here because the only tariff I found is out of date. Use the metered taxi or a booking app and check the current tariff.

CLOSING

Plan with care, travel with ease

Before you book

Abu Dhabi rewards an unhurried pace: an early visit to the mosque while it is cool, a walk along the Corniche, a dhow ride as the light softens. Several details in this guide are still changing, including visa eligibility, travel advisories, fees and opening hours. Treat them as starting points and confirm each one with the official source listed in the sources section before you commit money.

Ask hotels for a fully inclusive quote, check your insurer's position on government advisories, and reconfirm flights close to departure. When you are ready to compare arrangements, you can explore [Abu Dhabi holiday packages](#) or return to the [Abu Dhabi guide](#) for the latest overview. Safe travels, and enjoy the slower side of the Gulf.

PLAN IT WITH
TRIPSTOR

Abu Dhabi Holiday Packages



SOURCES

Sources and verification

This guide draws on official pages where we could reach them and on secondary reports where we could not. Where sources conflict, the text says so rather than choosing one version. Entry rules, safety advisories, hotel fees, tax refund figures and transport fares can change quickly, so confirm them close to travel.

Before you book, check visa eligibility with the Federal Authority for Identity, Citizenship, Customs and Port Security (ICP) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, advisory status on GOV.UK and with your own insurer, hotel fees with DCT Abu Dhabi, refund rules with the Federal Tax Authority, and bus fares with Abu Dhabi Mobility. For a full overview, start with the [Abu Dhabi Guide](#), then compare current options in the [Abu Dhabi Holiday Packages](#).

Source list

S1 March 5, 2026 4:45 PM

The advisory said that the airspace and regular scheduled flight operations continue to be temporarily suspended in view of the exceptional circumstan...

S2 ADVISORY FOR INDIAN NATIONALS STRANDED IN THE UAE - Announcements / Public Advisories / Updates

Suspension of Scheduled Flights Due to the regional situation and restricted airspace, scheduled commercial flights are currently not operating.

S3 FCDO Dubai Travel Advice (Updated 24 July): Does not advise against travel to UAE, but stay alert

H **Habibti in Dubai** Published 26 July 2026
Updated 20 Sept 2026 6 min read FCDO UAE Travel Advice FCDO Dubai travel advice was updated on 24 Jul...

S4 Foreign travel advice

Foreign travel advice United Arab Emirates Warning FCDO advises against all but essential travel to United Arab Emirates.

SOURCES

Sources and verification continued

S5 United Arab Emirates Travel Advisory & Risk Level

Reconsider Travel to the United Arab Emirates due to terrorism and armed conflict.

S6 Latest Travel Updates in UAE: Airport Delays & Flight Status

Travel Updates in UAE: What Travelers Should Know UAE airports remain operational, but regional disruptions are affecting some international routes...

S7 Dubai Visa on Arrival for Indians 2026: Eligibility, Cost And How to Apply

According to the official government website, ICP.GOV "nationals of the Republic of India and their family members, the service is limited to ordinary...

S8 UAE Grants Visa on Arrival to Nationals of Six Countries Residing Outside Their Home Countries

The Authority further clarified that the visa is available for either 14 days or 60 days, depending on the type of visa issued.

S9 UAE Visa on Arrival for Indians 2026

The single biggest change: Indian travelers who hold only a UK visa or UK residence permit are no longer eligible for a visa on arrival.

S10 UAE changes visa rules for Indians: Who can still get visa-on-arrival

The ICP has advised travellers to check the latest eligibility conditions before travelling.

S11 Ask Gulf News: Can Indian citizens get visa on arrival in the UAE?

Visa-on-arrival fees and duration Visitors can choose between two visa types, depending on the length of their stay: • 14-day visa: Dh100, with th...

S12 Abu Dhabi Visa for Indians 2026

- A 60-day category has a fee of AED 250 and is issued as a single-entry, non-extendable visa.

S13 From Guggenheim Abu Dhabi To Harry Potter, What's New In The UAE Capital

From August 1 to October 31, 2026, DCT Abu Dhabi is running a travel trade initiative under which eligible Indian passport holders can receive a compl...

S14 Abu Dhabi climate: Average Temperature by month, Abu Dhabi water temperature

On average, the month of January is considered to be the coldest time of year with temperatures averaging at around 19.4 °C | 66.9 °F.

S15 United Arab Emirates climate: temperature, rain, when to go - Climates to Travel

All year round, but especially in spring, the United Arab Emirates may be affected by strong winds, which can bring dust and sand storms.

S16 Flight Guide & Travel Tips 2026 - Abu Dhabi from India

Best time to visit: October to March.

SOURCES

Sources and verification continued

S17 Transportation

Bus fare is tendered using Hafilat cards, which are loaded at ticket vending machines located at all branches of Lulu Hypermarket. The price of the ca...

S18 Getting Around Abu Dhabi: Taxi Apps, Fares, Buses, Robotaxis and the Train - WOW-ABUDHABI

- ****Anonymous Hafilat card**** – AED 10, no ID needed, good for visitors and anyone who just wants to get moving today.

S19 Hafilat card: How much does Abu Dhabi bus travel cost, and who gets it free?

The Hafilat smart card is provided and managed by Abu Dhabi Mobility (formerly known as the Integrated Transport Centre, or ITC), an entity operating ...

S20 Hafilat Bus Routes 2026: Every Route, Fare, Timing & Stop in Abu Dhabi

Bus A1 runs 24 hours from Zayed International Airport Terminal A to Al Zahiyah Bus Station — AED 4 flat, every 30–60 minutes.

S21 Abu Dhabi to reduce tourism, municipality fee for hotels, restaurants from September 1

The alterations to the government fees affecting hotel establishments entail a lowering of the tourism fee from 6 per cent to 4 per cent of the total ...

S22 Tourism Dirham Fee Abu Dhabi Guide: Rates & Changes

- ****Municipality fee****: 4% of the bill - ****Service charge****: 10% - ****Property service charge****: 10% - ****VAT****: 5% For most visitors, this means the...

S23 Federal Tax Authority - Tourists

The scheme allows eligible tourists to request refunds of VAT incurred on their local purchases.

S24 UAE Tourist VAT Refund Scheme 2026 Fee Changes

11 of 2026 - Administrative fee reduced from 15 per cent to 13 per cent of the VAT amount being refunded
- Fixed fee per refund claim reduced from AED...

S25 News analysis - UAE: Amendments to the Tourist VAT Refund Scheme [Lexis® Middle East]

Refunds apply only to purchases totaling at least AED 250 from the same retailer.

S26 Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque: Visiting Hours, Dress Code and What to See

Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque ## The dress code, plainly Ankles, wrists and hair covered for women; long trousers and sleeved tops for men.

SOURCES

Sources and verification continued

S27 Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque Timings and Opening Hours 2026: Entry Fee, Buggies, Fast Track

Since September 2026 visitors pay AED 10 (AED 5 with an Emirates ID) and pre-book online; worshippers still enter free without a ticket.

S28 Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque Abu Dhabi: Tickets, Dress Code and Visitor Guide 2026

The hour before sunset Busiest period Friday from 4:30pm ## Dress Code: Exactly What to Wear #### 🙏 Women - Full length clothing covering legs to t...

S29 UAE Visa for Indians 2026: Complete Guide

For the standard tourist visa through GDRFA or ICP: - A colour photograph with a plain white background — no shadows, reflections, or glasses - A pas...

S30 1 INR to AED - Indian Rupees to Emirati Dirhams Exchange Rate

Login to view send rates ## INR to AED exchange rates today ### Convert Indian Rupee to Emirati Dirham | inr Indian Rupee INR | aed Emirati Dirham A...

S31 Indian rupees to United Arab Emirates dirhams Exchange Rate. Convert INR/AED - Wise

25.87 INR.

S32 INR to AED — Convert Indian Rupees to UAE Dirhams

The dirham is pegged to the US dollar at 3.6725 — a rate set by the Central Bank of the UAE and unchanged since 1997.

ABU DHABI

See you on the Gulf

Travel with care, and enjoy the Gulf

Abu Dhabi rewards a slower pace. Between the calm courtyards of the Grand Mosque, the Corniche at dusk and the dunes beyond the city, there is room to choose what suits you. Before you book, check the points this guide marks as unresolved: advisories, visa eligibility and current fees. Official sources have the final word, and your insurer's view of travel advice matters too.

Explore the [Abu Dhabi guide](#) for timing, entry and regional detail, or compare [holiday packages](#) when you are ready to plan. Keep copies of your documents, dress modestly for mosque visits, and plan outdoor walks for the cooler hours. The emirate is at its most welcoming when the day has room to breathe.

PLAN IT WITH
TRIPSTOR

Abu Dhabi Guide

