

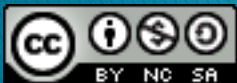
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES: Dubai

*World Regional Geography
by Lew, Hall & Timothy*

Virtual Field Trip

Photos and text by: Alan A. Lew

Photos Taken: April 2008



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Dubai

- ▶ The United Arab Emirates is a federation of seven states on the Arabian Peninsula, bordering Oman and Saudi Arabia. Almost all of the UAE is hot sandy desert with some dry mountains toward the Oman border.
- ▶ Each emirate is ruled by a hereditary Emir. Two of the emirates are oil rich: Abu Dhabi and Dubai. The Emir of Abu Dhabi is always the president of UAE and the Emir of Dubai is always the country's premier.
- ▶ Officially, 20% of the population of the UAE are local Emirati. Unofficially, this has been estimated to be as low as 8% due to the large number of foreign workers in the country. Large cash incentives encourage Emirati to marry one another and to have children to help address this imbalance.
- ▶ Dubai is on the Persian Gulf across from Iran, and is sometimes called the 'Las Vegas' of the Middle East. Socially it is the most liberal of the emirates, which, combined with its oil wealth, has made it a magnate for tourism and investment.



Mall of the Emirates

- ▶ The largest shopping mall in the Middle East, as of 2008. It has 450 retail shops, 70 restaurants and 14 movie screens.



Ski Dubai

- ▶ Ski Dubai is the most famous attraction at the Mall of the Emirates. At 25 stories in height, it was the world's largest indoor ski run in 2008, and the first one in the Middle East.
- ▶ The lift ticket is UAD180 (US\$49) for two hours, and includes skis, boots and outer clothing, but not gloves and hat. Snow play area access is also available.



Two larger malls were under construction in 2008, one of which will have an even larger ski run.



Although they claim five runs, there are really just two options down from the top.

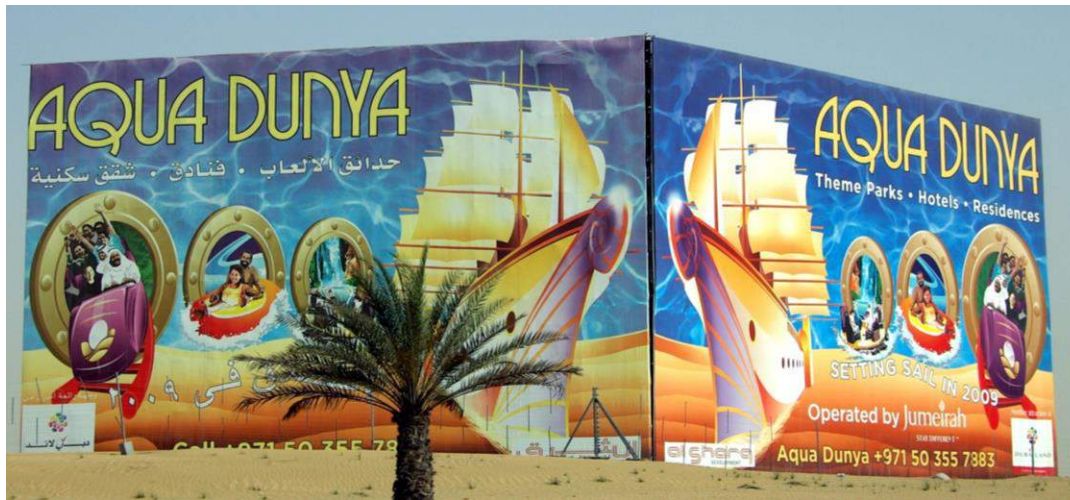


View from the Avalanche Café at the chairlift mid-station of the lower runs (above).



Dubailand

Currently under constructions, Dubailand will be the world's largest theme park. It will contain a mix of amusement parks, entertainment complexes and resorts, attracting 15 million visitors a year by 2010. It will be twice the size of Orlando's Walt Disneyworld when its fourth, and final, phase is completed sometime after 2015.



Advertisements (billboard on the left, and from the newspaper on the right) for phase one theme parks due to open in 2008. Dubailand headquarters is on the left.

Sheikh Zayed Road



Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan was the President of the UAE from 1971 to 2004. This highway is the financial center of Dubai. Note the commuter rail (under construction) that runs through all the photos.



Below is the Burj Dubai (Dubai Tower) in April 2008. As of 12 May 2008, it had reached a height of 636 m (2,087 ft), with more than 160 floors, making the tallest structure in the world. It will open in 2009. The buildings final height is a secret.

The billboard below is of the current UAE Premier (left) and President (right) with the Burj Dubai. The Premier is also the Emir of Dubai.



Sand Storm

The UAE is hazy most all year, but strong wind storms make conditions much worst by kicking up the sand.



Burj al Arab

The Burj Al Arab (Tower of the Arabs) was the world's second tallest hotel (321m; 1053ft) in 2008. (By 2009, Dubai's Rose Tower will probably open as the tallest hotel at 333m). It is designed to resemble the sail of a boat. It is a self-proclaimed seven-star hotels, with rooms starting at US\$1200/night and reaching US\$12,000/night. It is situated on a small artificial island. Note the round heliport at the top of the building.

The neighboring Jumeirah Beach hotel (photo below) starts at only US\$650/night. Dubai's hotels typically have 75% to 85% occupancy rates.



Jumeriah Mosque



The UAE is a Moslem country. Officially 76% of the 4.5 mil people in the UAE are Muslim, 9% are Christian, and 15% are. Unofficial sources claim that 15% are Hindu and 5% are Buddhist. (These %s include both Emirati citizens and expatriate permanent residents.) Dubai is the only emirate with a Hindu Temple and a Sikh Gurdwara (temple), due to the large number of South Asian's who work there.



Most adult Emirati wear traditional Arab dress for men and women, which can be bought at the Mall of America (above), along with Arab caricatures souvenirs (left).

Mosque Tourism

The Jumeirah Mosque is the only one in Dubai that is open to visitors, though on a very restricted basis. Photos, however, are allowed (at bottom of this sign).

Women pray in a separate area, with a separate entrance (below), in the mosque from men, and Muslim wash their hands and feet before entering a mosque (bottom).

Open doors. Open minds.
مركز الشيخ محمد بن راشد آل مكتوم
للتواصل الحضاري

Welcome to Jumeirah Mosque

The Jumeirah Grand Mosque was built by order of His Highness Sheikh Rashid bin Saeed Al Maktoum, the late ruler of Dubai and is one of the largest and most beautiful mosques in Dubai. Construction of the mosque began in 1975 and was completed in 1978. The mosque is built in the Islamic Fatimy style and has a capacity to house 1,200 worshippers.

Mosque Visit Programme

Non-Muslim visitors are welcome to visit the Jumeirah Mosque visit, during the public tours on Saturdays, Sundays, Tuesdays and Thursdays at 10am sharp.

The guided tours have been organised for visitors wanting to learn about the Jumeirah mosque, the religion and culture of the Emirates. In a session, lasting sixty minutes, visitors will have the opportunity to ask questions and discover.

We do appreciate your assistance by observing the following requests:

- Do not enter the mosque unless accompanied by a registered guide from the Sheikh Mohammed Centre for Cultural Understanding.
- Tour companies must not enter the mosque grounds unless accompanied by a guide from the Sheikh Mohammed Centre for Cultural Understanding.
- Conservative dress for both men and women is essential - i.e. no shorts, sleeveless shirts. Women are to cover their hair.
- Please take shoes off before entering the mosque.
- Children under five years are requested not to join the tour.
- Arrive on time (10am) to avoid disappointment, latecomers will not be allowed entry after the tour has commenced.

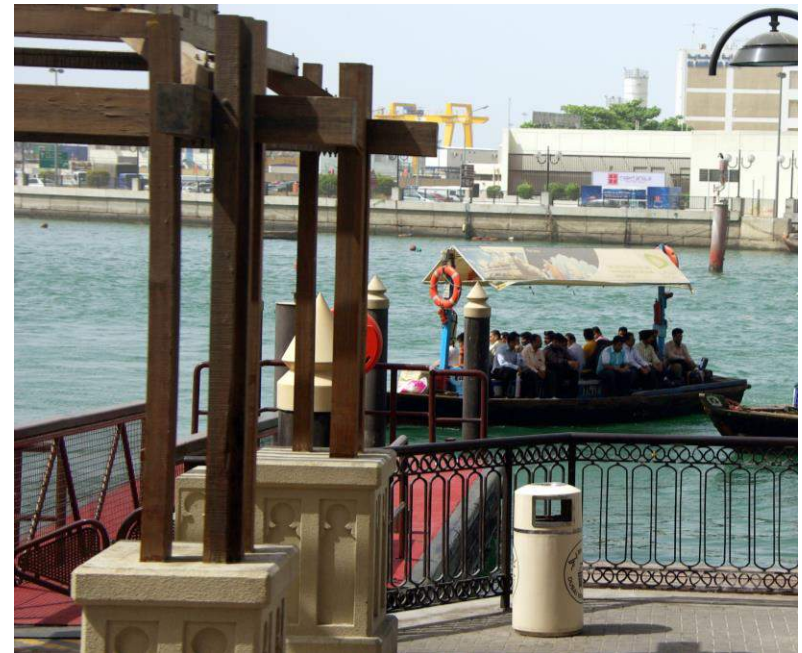
Yes! Photographs and video cameras are allowed



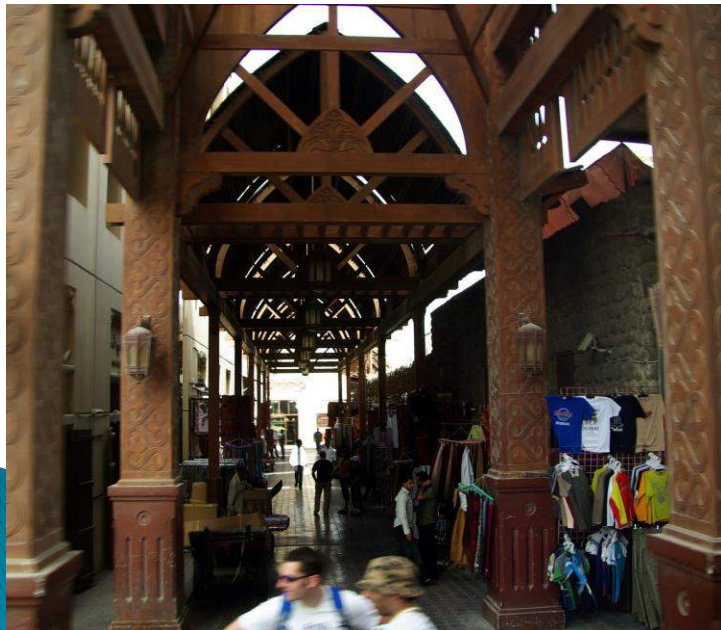
Dubai Creek



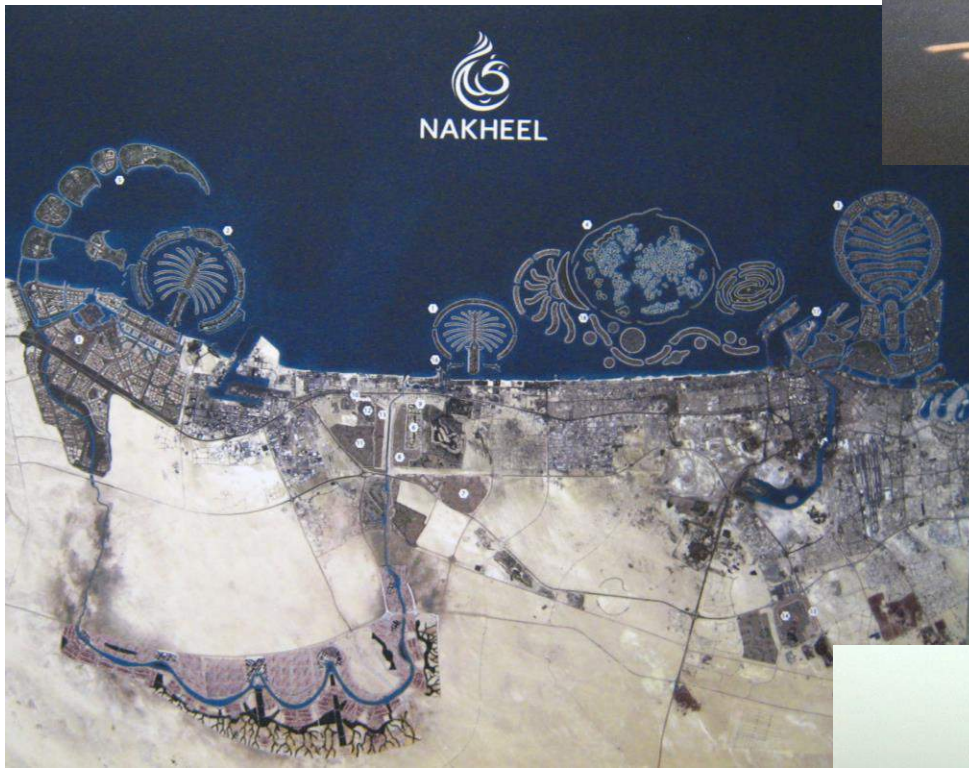
Most of the major cities in the UAE has a “Creek,” which is more like an estuary or inlet of the Persian Gulf. *Khor Dubai* was the center of the original city and is plied by ferries (left and right), tour boats (above right), private boats (above) and commercial ships.



Old Dubai Near the Creek



Reclaiming the Gulf



A Nakheel Group brochure (above) superimposes their planned island communities on a satellite image of Dubai. Of these, only the smallest Palm tree complex is nearing completion.



Dubai was the first Emirate to reclaim land from the Persian Gulf as a way of developing coastal and water access property. Other Emirates are also doing this now, though none has plans as aggressive as Dubai. The construction of islands can be seen off most of Dubai's beaches (below). "The World" is above.



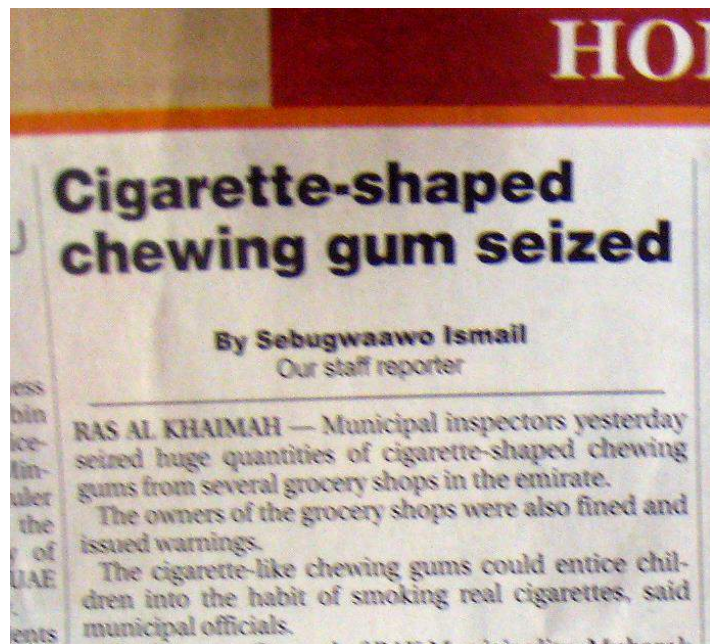
Life in Dubai



Lower and upper class housing (above) and school busses (right). Because of Dubai's multicultural and multinational population, most schools are based on ethnicity and nationality.



Social Issues



Young European expats head to the beach, with South Asian workers behind them (right). There is a general belief that driving laws do not apply to native Emirati, resulting in serious driving violations (above right). The male to female ratio in the UAE is the highest in the world, with 2.7 males for every female in the 15 to 65 age range, due in part to the large number of immigrant workers.



North of Dubai

Dubai's influence spills well beyond the city. The traffic jam at Sharja Emirate is almost constant. Housing for mostly South Asian construction laborers are also far from town. The housing and transportation is provided by the companies that sponsor them.



Abandoned Fishing Village

The residents of this fishing village in Ras al-Khaimah (RAK) Emirate moved to Abu Dhabi after disagreements with the RAK Emir. They still own the property, which includes a unique minaret (right) and wind tower “air conditioners” (below)





Food Landscapes



On The Road



The Emir

One of the many billboard displays of the Emir of Dubai and his two sons (right), and seeing them live at a conference (below). Dozens of live peacocks line the entry to his home in Dubai (bottom right).





The Jumeira Beach Hotel (left) and the Burj al Arab Hotel (right) on Jumeria Beach, in Dubai, UAE.

More photos of Dubai from this series can be found at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/alew/sets>