A Green Oasis
Enjoying the great outdoors in Sharjah’s beautiful parks and gardens
My destination is a sanctuary for my soul

Clear blue skies and pristine waters, an exciting encounter with nature’s wonders. A special getaway for fun and recreation, a haven for total relaxation.

Sharjah my destination®
For more information, call 800 80 000 or visit www.sharjahtourism.ae
Welcome to Sharjah

Sharjah is an emirate that mixes the modern and urban with tradition and culture. It is also an emirate full of wonderful green spaces, a place that cherishes the outdoors and celebrates how communal and enriching it is for residents and visitors to come together in the fresh air – to relax, be entertained, stay fit, have fun and enjoy nature.

In this issue, we take a look at some of the wonderful things to do outside in our emirate. From touring iconic cultural sights by bicycle to visiting pioneering parks, to learning about our feathered friends at the new Bird of Prey Centre in Kalba, there’s plenty to do right across the emirate.

We’re also delighted and proud that Sharjah has been named the Capital of Arab Tourism for 2015. This is another prestigious accolade to follow our year as the Capital of Islamic Culture. Plans are already underway for several landmark events to celebrate this, on top of our regular popular events such as the Sharjah Water Festival in December and iconic Sharjah Light Festival in February.

I am honoured to welcome you all to experience everything our emirate has to offer.

Mohamed Ali Al Noman
Chairman

This nineteenth edition of the official magazine of the Sharjah Commerce and Tourism Development Authority highlights the emirate as a unique tourist destination. Future issues of the quarterly magazine will continue to tell Sharjah’s magical story, to explore its secrets and share its treasures.
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Discover Sharjah's incredible abundance of green spaces and public areas.

Wheel-ly Good Fun
A cycle tour of the city is a great way to see Sharjah's best cultural landmarks.

Big Birds
Kalba Bird of Prey Centre has become a popular draw for visitors and a focus for conservation.
One of Sharjah’s shining jewels is the quality of its public spaces. With miles of stunning waterfront pathways, acres of landscaped gardens and a host of facilities to serve the entire community, Sharjah is filled with green oases in which to enjoy the outdoors with the family.
Time: To Breastfeed

السَّبِيعَة: الرِضَاةَ

 Breastfeeding week 2014

www.sbf.ae  06 - 5065552  06 - 5065510
@Shjbabyfriendly  Shjbabyfriendly  Shjbabyfriendly
2014-15 Calendar
A season of world-class festivals in the culture capital.

30 AUG – 30 NOV
Vantage Point Sharjah 2
Heart of Sharjah
- An exhibition of work by UAE-based photographers
- Explores the landscape and life of the emirate of Sharjah
- Organised by Sharjah Art Foundation to encourage cultural engagement

19 – 24 OCT
Sharjah International Children’s Film Festival
Various venues across Sharjah
- The only event of its kind in the region
- Nurturing a love of screen drama among young people
- Fostering creativity in collaboration with learning for children

5 – 15 NOV
Sharjah International Book Fair
Expo Centre
- Literary extravaganza
- Workshops and events

2 DECEMBER
UAE National Day
Various venues across Sharjah
- Celebrations for the 43rd anniversary of the UAE

17 – 20 DEC
Sharjah Water Festival
Khalid Lagoon
- Sharjah’s premier all-action carnival attraction
- Includes the turbo-charged UIM F1H2O Powerboat World Championship, the Sharjah Grand Prix

JAN – FEB 2015
Sharjah Spring Promotions
Various venues across Sharjah
- Popular shopping festival with exciting offers and discounts
- Children’s entertainment
- Cultural exhibitions

JANUARY
Sharjah Festival For Arabic Poetry
Sharjah Cultural Palace
- Hosts talented poets from the UAE and across the region

FEBRUARY
Sharjah Light Festival
Various venues across Sharjah
- Globally renowned festival of light and music
- International artists and displays of technical wizardry
FEBRUARY
Festival Of Traditional Games
Heart of Sharjah
• Celebrating timeless Emirati traditions

MARCH
Sharjah Theatre Days Festival
Various venues across Sharjah
• Annual theatre festival that promotes local troupes

MARCH
Middle East Motor Tuning Show
Expo Centre
• Showcasing the latest trends in car customisation
• Attracts auto enthusiasts from across the Middle East

APRIL
Sharjah Heritage Days Festival
Heart of Sharjah
• Annual celebration of Sharjah’s rich heritage
• Features re-enactments, parading bands, traditional crafts, performers and more

APRIL
Sharjah Exhibition for Children’s Book Illustrations
Expo Centre
• An art exhibition to promote professional illustrators
• Attracts artists from around the world, incorporating different cultures
• Prize money awarded to the best artwork

APRIL
Sharjah Children’s Reading Festival
Expo Centre
• Celebrating the joy of books with young readers
• Special guest appearances and popular characters from the literary world

29 APRIL – 3 MAY
MidEast Watch & Jewellery Show
Expo Centre
• Showcasing the finest watches and jewellery in the region
• Attracts luxury shoppers from the UAE and beyond

JUNE
Ramadan and Summer Shopping Festival
Various venues across Sharjah
• Amazing offers and discounts to attract bargain hunters
• Children’s entertainment and activities
• Special events and shows at popular venues and malls

JULY
Ramadan & Eid Fair
Expo Centre
• A multi-product consumer fair and shopping extravaganza
• Family entertainment
• Opportunity to prepare for Eid festivities
• Raffles and prize draws
Sharjah Water Festival 2014

Bursting onto the shores of Khalid Lagoon with a bang and a splash, this year’s Sharjah Water Festival promises to be bigger and better than ever before with a host of brand new events.
The region’s premier family event is getting a brand new array of headline attractions, with Khalid Lagoon right at the heart of the festival.

Set to be perhaps the biggest new draw is a spectacular, on-water display that involves music and fireworks, choreographed manoeuvres and breathtaking stunts from an international team of professional jet skiers, water skiers, kite flyers and flyboarders.

Like an airshow on the water, this adrenaline-packed production will run throughout Sharjah Water Festival, bringing something never seen before in the UAE to life every afternoon and night and attracting huge crowds to the city’s scenic waterfront. The team behind it – H2O Events – is one of the best in the world, and frequently works on movies which have included the James Bond 007 series. Smaller shows will also take place for daytime visitors.

Another highlight of this year’s celebrations will be a traditional boat rowing race, with up to 15 teams battling it out on Khalid Lagoon for major cash prizes.

There will also be a Heritage Village area within the adjacent Al Majaz Park featuring displays, demonstrations and lots more. Themes span several aspects of the region’s aquatic and marine worlds: from traditional fishing craft and practices to contemporary scuba diving. Food and drink stations will also be available here, as well as the park’s existing facilities.

Finally, children and adults alike will love the amazing sandcastle sculptures that are also set to be a feature of this year’s event – along with the chance to have a go themselves in fun sand-shaping workshops that will run as often as eight times a day, every day.

Now in its eighth edition, Sharjah Water Festival has rightly grown to become a signature event in the UAE’s ‘must do’ calendar, with over 200,000 visitors flocking to attend every year. This year, the festival will culminate in the exciting UIM F1H2O World Championship, Grand Prix of Sharjah, which is one of the most anticipated events on the world’s powerboat racing calendar and will take place in the middle of the festival. Sharjah has once again set the bar for an incredible family extravaganza – this is one festival you just don’t want to miss!

Sharjah Water Festival 2014 will take place on Khalid Lagoon from 17 to 20 December

For more information visit www.swf.ae or call 800 80 000
Following Sharjah’s prestigious year as Capital of Islamic Culture for 2014, the emirate will dive headlong into celebrations for Sharjah’s nomination as the Capital of Arab Tourism for 2015. Another great achievement in Sharjah’s long list of accolades and awards, this distinguished title will involve special events and activities throughout the year 2015. The award is a great opportunity to celebrate Sharjah’s rich diversity as a regional and international tourism destination – especially for cultural heritage and attractions.

Cultural Gems
As a ‘tourism destination with a difference’, Sharjah is already popular. Recent statistics reveal tourists travelling here from all corners of the world to enjoy authentic Arabic cultural experiences – all are within a first-rate infrastructure. Sharjah has luxury hotels and a welcoming, world-class standard of service. Among the major cultural attractions are architectural gems such as Al Noor and King Faisal Mosques, and the uniquely evocative Heart of Sharjah district. Museums are also high on many visitors’ must-see lists, from Sharjah Museum of Islamic Civilization, where some 5,000 artefacts comprehensively explore every aspect of Arab and Islamic culture, to the local focus of Sharjah Heritage Museum and Sharjah Maritime Museum.

Fun In The Sun
Sharjah is, above all, a family destination with many fantastic attractions geared towards entertaining kids and adults alike, such as the new water park at Al Montazah Park. There are also a number of delightful centres that
celebrate the nature of the region, from the immersive Sharjah Aquarium to Arabia’s Wildlife Centre and Children’s Farm, to the recently opened Kalba Bird of Prey Centre.

The East Coast towns of Kalba, Khorfakkan and Dibba Al Hisn offer the perfect escape to tourists. Set against a backdrop of stunning, rugged mountains, you’ll find turquoise seas, rocky bays, golden-sand beaches and serene mangroves. Not to mention a dazzling array of marine life beneath the waves.

**Spectacular Events**

Sharjah has a jam-packed roster of world-class events. From Sharjah Light Festival, which brings to life the iconic architecture across the emirate with incredible sound and light displays, to the Sharjah Water Festival, which is pure entertainment for the family. Another important event are the cultural celebrations of Sharjah Heritage Days. Sharjah is pioneering in it’s vision and visitors come from the entire region to partake in these events.

**Authentic Arabia**

The emirate is also a place where everyday Arab life can be enjoyed, both traditional and contemporary. There are many wonderful souks across the emirate. Highlights include Souk Al Arsah (Courtyard Souk) and among many others, Central Souk. Items from across the Arab region can be purchased, and both are evocative places to wander around.

Then there’s the breathtaking expanse of desert that whispers Sharjah’s ancient history. The golden sand dunes and rocky outcrops of Sharjah’s hinterland are an adventure playground for adrenaline junkies, yet at the same time a peaceful haven in which to absorb Sharjah’s timeless Arabian heritage.

Sharjah is, above all, a family destination with many fantastic attractions geared towards entertaining kids and adults alike.
Leading Islamic Culture In The 21st Century

Sheikh Dr Sultan embraces modern technology in the promotion of cultural exchange.

His Highness Sheikh Dr Sultan bin Mohammad Al Qasimi, UAE Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Sharjah, has been looking to the future and embracing modern technology in the development of Islamic society and culture.

His Highness inaugurated a two-day conference under the theme 'Islamic Civilisation in the 21st Century: Global Perspectives'. The international symposium, which was attended by a number of dignitaries including Dr Obaid Saif Al-Hajiri, Regional Manager of the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and Dr Bjorn Kjerfve, Chancellor of the American University of Sharjah, was held at the AUS campus in collaboration with Sharjah Museums Department. The event explored innovative approaches to education, with emphasis on digital preservation of Islamic manuscripts to enable accessibility in global research. Other aspects of Islamic culture on the agenda included science, art and communication.

In another exploration of the use of modern technology in developing modern society, the forward-thinking Ruler of Sharjah has patronised a conference on the plight of refugee children in the Middle East, for which an initiative entitled #EntaAmanti has been launched on social networking sites. The initiative uses global connectivity to engage and inform the public on this important issue.

Further embracing modern technology and global connectivity, His Highness attended a ceremony at the University of Sharjah (UoS) to launch an educational cooperation programme between UoS and the University of Malaga in Spain. Acknowledging the mutually beneficial importance of cultural and academic exchange, His Highness said, “This new technology will enable the UoS to move forward rapidly in many aspects, which had not been possible in the past because of distance.”
Figures released for the first half of 2014 show that the emirate’s already popular beach hotels and resorts have exceeded expectations, attracting even more guests and filling far more rooms than anticipated.

According to official Sharjah Commerce and Tourism Development Authority statistics, guests at Sharjah’s beach hotel and resort facilities swelled to more than 180,000 during the first half of this year, registering 80% occupancy rates. The increase has been evident across the board, and particularly notable is the large number of international visitors. These have ranged from amateur water sports and leisure enthusiasts to families seeking rest and relaxation on Sharjah’s picturesque shores. Europeans formed the largest segment of guests, followed by GCC tourists.

Factors behind the increase include the numerous cultural, artistic, entertainment and shopping festivals hosted during 2014 in celebration of Sharjah as the Capital of Islamic Culture, not to mention the special promotions offered by major malls and shopping centres since the beginning of the year. All these have added to the emirate’s attractions in the eyes of visitors. In addition, the SCTDA has encouraged hotels to offer special concessional rates to both visitors and residents, which has also undoubtedly helped people to choose Sharjah over other destinations.

It’s also important to remember that Sharjah is the only emirate that offers access to the coasts of both the Arabian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman. This offers visitors a variety of beach types, diving and snorkelling sites, surrounding views and atmospheres – from lively and urban, to laidback and nature-based – to choose between.

Across this geographical spread are a large number of high-end luxury hotels and resorts, all offering top-notch, world-class services and convenient locations.

Visitor figures are likely to continue growing, with new developments such as luxury resort The Chedi Khorfakkan helping increase room availability and choice.

HE Khalid Jasim Al Midfa, Director General of the SCTDA, has said that Sharjah is keen to build more world-class hotel facilities and tourist facilities, all with the highest standards of safety and offering the best possible range of leisure, water sports and recreational activities. This expansion programme will cement the emirate’s status among the top beach tourism destinations in the region.

With the emirate hosting several special events and activities during the second half of the year, including the ever popular Sharjah Water Festival in December, 2014 is likely to be Sharjah’s most successful tourism year ever.
SCTDA Director General Lauds Sharjah’s Indian Ties During Roadshow To Five Major Indian Cities

Following successful tours of Europe and the Gulf, the popular roadshow promoting Sharjah visited India during September. The aim: to help us attract even more visitors from the booming Indian tourism market.

Indian tourists are now a key target for the emirate, and in 2013 Sharjah welcomed more than 123,000 visitors from the country: an eye-catching increase of 41% over the previous year.

The number of Indian visitors is expected to continue growing steeply in the months and years ahead, making it one of Sharjah’s most crucial and promising tourism markets.

The Sharjah India Roadshow was therefore taken to the country’s key cities between 15 and 22 September 2014. It was hosted by Sharjah Commerce and Tourism Development Authority in cooperation with Air Arabia, Sharjah’s flagship airline, and a number of leading players from the local hotel and tourism industry, including Golden Tulip and Copthorne Hotel.

The roadshow began in Mumbai, India’s financial centre and the home of Bollywood, the world’s biggest movie industry. This was followed by New Delhi, the country’s capital and a city known for its rich history, grand mosques and Islamic monuments. The third and fourth stops were Hyderabad and Chennai, before a final call in Bangalore, India’s Silicon Valley.

At each location, the Sharjah delegation held presentations for media and the tourism industry, alongside individual interactions and meetings with industry leaders, investors and government officials.

Sharjah has always enjoyed a special place in the hearts of Indian visitors, thanks to the emirate’s vibrant cultural heritage, colourful calendar of events and excellent shopping for all. Relations between India and Sharjah have always been warm and robust, and go back centuries.

As a result, Sharjah is now home to a large Indian community. This includes students at Sharjah University City, plus numerous professionals attracted by the tremendous support the emirate gives to businesses, investors and individuals from all over the world.

“This is an ideal time for Indians to visit Sharjah,” commented HE Khalid Jasim Al Midfa, Director General of the SCTDA.

He continued: “Our emirate is already known the world over for the celebration of culture, family and tourism festivals, 20 museums, art and culture events, luxurious hotels and beach resorts, diverse landscape and various other tourist attractions. Now we have had the added appeal of being the Islamic Culture Capital for 2014, and – as we head into 2015 – the world’s Arab Tourism Capital.”

Add in the fact that Air Arabia now has a vast daily flight network in place covering the length and breadth of India, and it’s easy to see why the market is being seen as a priority target. The airline currently flies to 13 cities in India: Mumbai, Delhi, Hyderabad, Bangalore, Chennai, Goa, Jaipur, Ahmedabad, Coimbatore, Kochi, Kozhikode, Trivandrum and Nagpur.

The successful and well-received roadshow could well be the start of the next major phase in the relationship between the two nations.
Sharjah recently turned the spotlight on its picturesque East Coast, hosting UN World Tourism Day celebrations in the port city of Khorfakkan.

HE Khalid Jasim Al Midfa, Director General of the SCTDA, led the events on 24 September in the presence of senior government officials and leaders of the tourism industry from across the UAE.

Welcoming these guests, Al Midfa said the choice of Khorfakkan as the venue reflected the massive tourism and development growth the region is witnessing, and the special attention the East Coast has been receiving from the tourism industry.

He stated: “The UAE is amongst the fastest-growing tourism markets anywhere. Perhaps nowhere is this more apparent than here. The new cruise-line industry is bringing nearly 50,000 extra tourists to our emirate alone. The industry is a valuable addition to any country, mainly due to the fact its ‘tourism footprint’ is low and economic opportunity high. Cruises could potentially generate another Dh.16 million for our economy.”

The East Coast is being actively regenerated, with direct support from Sharjah Investment and Development Authority amongst others. The whole region is set to grow significantly as amenities are upgraded and increased. Al Midfa stated that there’s never been a better time to invest in the emirate’s tourism infrastructure, especially in the beautiful Eastern region.

World Tourism Day Celebrations In Khorfakkan

‘SHARJAH MY DESTINATION’ ORIENTATION FOR HOTELS

Representatives from leading hotels in Sharjah recently took part in an orientation programme for the ‘Sharjah My Destination’ initiative.

The aim was to make sure that Sharjah’s tourism professionals are involved and enthused about the emirate’s latest developments and opportunities; and can talk knowledgeably about Sharjah’s many attractions using their own personal experience.

The two-day programme was attended by 45 Sharjah hotel professionals. It included lectures and presentations by industry experts, plus field trips to attractions, museums, and art and cultural centres across the emirate.

HE Khalid Jasim Al Midfa, Director General of the SCTDA, welcomed the programme: “It’s important we develop the skills and expertise of our tourism industry professionals, arming them with knowhow about the latest developments and trends in the industry, as well as new projects coming up in Sharjah.”

He added, “This is one of several such initiatives, aimed at encouraging professional growth and excellence in Sharjah’s tourism sector.”

Tourism industry professionals such as this group play a critical role in promoting a destination and presenting it in a positive light. They’re in direct contact with tourists, and can enrich their knowledge and understanding of Sharjah. This is especially important as the emirate continues to enjoy its title as the Capital of Islamic Culture for 2014, and prepares for celebrations as the Capital of Arab Tourism for 2015.
Expo Centre Sharjah

The world-class events at Sharjah’s leading exhibition venue are a draw for visitors from across the region.

As the host venue for this year’s Ramadan and Eid Festival, Expo Centre Sharjah once again proved its worth as the emirate’s leading facility for big events. Popular and versatile, the Expo Centre has become more than just an exhibition centre, and continues to stage a year-round calendar of first-class events. We’ve taken a look at some of the events that contribute towards making it one of the region’s favourite venues.

Although only inaugurated in its present form in 2002, an Expo Centre has been part of Sharjah’s landscape since the late 1970s.
Countless events, exhibitions and shows have been staged over the decades: pulling in visitors; entertaining residents and building up an experience and expertise that now puts the emirate at the forefront of the economically significant MICE sector (meetings, incentives, conferences and events). The current Expo Centre provides state-of-the-art facilities and services, plus a flexible and welcoming environment, enabling Sharjah to attract major international clients.

**Sharjah Ramadan Festival 2014**
This event, which focused around the Expo Centre, attracted high numbers of tourists as well as Sharjah residents. Bolstered by the emirate’s status as the Capital of Islamic Culture, it was a great success. Several majlis and pavilions were organised inside the great halls of Expo Centre, with activities that included lectures, seminars, art workshops and theatrical performances focusing on Islamic culture.

**Sharjah International Children’s Film Festival**
After its inauguration in 2013, the Sharjah International Children’s Film Festival has now chosen to move to the Expo Centre for 2014. Running over five days from 19 to 24 October, this vibrant and imaginative event is designed to enhance the media literacy of children and young people, fostering and celebrating their creativity. Workshops and talks will take place alongside a hugely popular amateur filmmaking competition, all under the organisation of FUNN - the Sharjah Media and Arts for Youth and Children body that operates under the patronage of Her Highness Sheikha Jawaher bint Mohammed bin Sultan Al Qasimi, Wife of the Ruler of Sharjah.

**Sharjah International Book Fair**
Now in its 33rd year, this major international literature event – the fourth largest in the world – will be back at the venue once again this year, from 5 to 15 November. Incorporating everything from readings to lectures, trade stalls to children’s activities, the sheer diversity of this event alone showcases the Centre’s capabilities – and demonstrates how important it is to Sharjah’s growing reputation as a place where truly global events are always on the agenda.

Expo Centre has become more than just an exhibition centre, and stages a year-round calendar of first-class events.
A Walk In The Park

Sharjah boasts an incredible abundance of green spaces and public areas, from the busy, family-filled waterfront Corniche to the peaceful details of botanical reserves.
Getting out and about in the open air in Sharjah is easy and rewarding, and all about variety. The Municipality maintains over 40 landscaped parks around the city, most of which are free to enter, and all of which provide green spaces, children’s play areas and seating, plus loads more, and we haven’t even included the beaches! Here are four varied offerings to choose from, next time you fancy soaking up some of Sharjah’s great outdoors.

**Al Montazah Park**
Completely new for 2014, the area previously known as Al Jazeera Park is now the
emirate’s leading amusement park, and includes its first purpose-built water park.

Al Montazah covers 126,000 square metres on an island in Khalid Lagoon, at the heart of the city. It has three main sections: a leisure park, a green park and the water park with eight adrenaline rides. Dhs.100 million has been invested by Shurooq to create a fun-packed attraction that will draw visitors from miles around. This truly is a destination the city can be proud of.

The lush green park section includes nature trails, picnic areas, a boating lake and numerous restaurants and cafes, and there’s also an events venue.

The water park, which has already proven a huge hit since opening in March, features four body slides and a range of tube slides, all with exhilarating drops of 15 metres or more. The third part, a 50,000 square metre leisure park, is nearing completion and offers kart racing, mini football pitches and a selection of electronic games. A toy train for children criss-crosses the different areas, making it fun and easy to get around whatever your age.

Islamic Botanical Garden
Also new for 2014, this delightful and informative venue delivers on three counts. It celebrates the region’s respect for natural habitats, it furthers the emirate’s work to protect environmental diversity, and it honours the cultures of the Holy Book of Islam. It’s fascinating for anyone, but particularly botanists, scholars and culture lovers.

The garden features 50 varieties of plants and trees, 30 of which are mentioned in the Holy Quran and 42 in the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him). These include...
Islamic Botanical Garden features 50 varieties of plants and trees, 30 of which are mentioned in the Holy Quran and 42 in the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

Plan Your Visit

Al Montazah Park
Where
Khalid Lagoon

Opening Hours
Saturday to Wednesday: 10:00 to 23:00
Thursday & Friday: 10:00 to 01:00
Water park and leisure park timings vary.

Islamic Botanical Garden
Where
Sharjah Desert Park, Al Dhaid Road

Opening Hours
Sunday to Thursday: 09:00 to 17:30
Friday: 14:00 to 17:30
Saturday: 11:00 to 17:30.
Closed on Tuesdays.

Sharjah National Park
Where
Al Dhaid Road

Opening hours
Weekdays: 14:00 to 18:00
Weekends: all day
Public holidays: 10:00 to 19:00

fig, pomegranate, olive, corn, leek, garlic, onion, lentil, barley, wheat, ginger, pumpkin, saffron, watermelon, tamarind, cedar, vineyards, bananas, cucumbers and basil. Quran verses on display by each plant keep visitors informed as they tour the custom-built greenhouses, admiring the different sights and breathing in the diverse scents.

The Islamic Botanical Garden is located at Sharjah Desert Park on the Al Dhaid Road. This complex is also home to Arabia’s Wildlife Centre and Children’s Farm, as well as Sharjah Natural History and Botanical Museum, so a full day spent here makes for a perfect nature-themed family trip.

Sharjah National Park
This is the emirate’s biggest park, ranging over a spacious and undulating 630,000 square metres. It’s deservedly popular with all kinds of residents, from workers unwinding at the end of the day, families enjoying time together at the weekend and fitness enthusiasts looking for somewhere to jog and exercise. If anywhere encapsulates Sharjah life in the fresh air, it’s the National Park. As well as lawns, trees and flowers, the park is full of unexpected surprises that make exploring endlessly rewarding. For example, look out for the models of Sharjah city’s malls and tourist attractions as you follow the walking tracks. This is also a great place to bring children, as there are numerous play areas to keep them entertained, including a giant slide. Other features include barbecue areas, a duck pond and cycle track.
Al Majaz Waterfront

The vibrant and dynamic Al Majaz Waterfront, along with neighbouring Al Majaz Park, is one of the most modern public gardens in the city of Sharjah, and lies close to Khalid Lagoon. The city’s skyscrapers form one backdrop, while the lagoon – with its spectacular evening fountains – forms the other, perfectly capturing cosmopolitan life. To walk along the promenades of Al Majaz is a way to breathe in not just fresh sea air, but also the spirit of contemporary Sharjah.

From the splash park to the mini golf course, the fountains to the jogging track, play areas to the family train, Al Majaz is full of things to see, do and experience. An ever-changing calendar of events reinforces this, giving reasons to return over and over again. There are also numerous cafes and restaurants overlooking the calm waters of the lagoon, making this a dining destination as well as a recreational one.

Al Majaz Waterfront is one of the most modern public gardens in the city of Sharjah.

Plan Your Visit

Al Majaz Waterfront

Where
Khalid Lagoon

Opening hours
24-hour access
(attributions vary)
Wheel-ly Good Fun

Many of Sharjah’s cultural icons are within cycling distance of each other, and a two-wheeled tour of the city makes for a wonderful day out.

Sharjah is leading the way in getting people out of the car and onto their bikes – the healthiest and most environmentally friendly way of getting around. Thanks to a number of bicycle rental stations across the city, it is now incredibly easy for visitors to explore by bike, and actually a very rewarding and enjoyable way to spend a day. Here’s what you need to know to get in the saddle around Sharjah.

Saddle Up

Unless you have your own bike, the starting point for your day should be the hire centres that have recently sprung up across the city. Byky Bikes – a well-established company with operations in over 100 cities worldwide – offers 24/7 hire from any of its four locations, all for very reasonable rates (starting at just Dhs.15 for 30 minutes). You can find them at Al Khan Lagoon (close to Al Qasba) and three locations around Khalid Lagoon, including Al Majaz Waterfront.

Don’t forget safety gear, including a helmet, and make sure to respect pedestrians and other road users. Take plenty of water too, as cycling is a healthy yet demanding form of exercise, even if you take it relatively easy. It’s also extremely beneficial too, and an excellent aerobic workout!

Cultural Route

We’ve mapped out a route starting from Al Majaz Waterfront and heading north around Khalid Lagoon, past Al Noor Mosque and on to the Central Souk and the heritage sights of the Heart of Sharjah. You could also create your own tour. As this circuit includes stops at a number of cultural sights, it’s effectively a whole day’s tour, but you could obviously omit some of the stops if you’d like to shorten it.

Khalid Lagoon

From Al Majaz, a leisurely loop around Khalid Lagoon enables you to experience one of Sharjah’s most pleasant outdoor spaces in a new light and at a new pace. The city has placed a lot of importance on making its waterfront an accessible, sociable and entertaining heart to the city – and Khalid Lagoon is at the centre of this.

The area is a great place to witness the vibrant and diverse nature of Sharjah’s population. The complete length of the lagoon’s Corniche is about 6.5km, but we recommend heading counter-clockwise, and pausing first at Al Noor Mosque, a short distance from the Al Majaz bike station.
Al Noor Mosque
This is one of the most stunning mosques in the region, and regarded as the most famous in Sharjah – a city with over 600 mosques. A tour of the mosque, run by Sharjah Centre for Cultural Communication, is highly recommended – you can visit as part of a public tour every Monday at 10:00, or enquire about booking a private tour (email info@shjculture.com).

Central Souk
Once you’ve soaked up the mosque’s splendour, carry on past the oasis of date palms at Buhaira Corniche Park until you reach the Central Souk. Comprising six buildings and housing 600 shops, this is both a shopper’s paradise and a photogenic tourist attraction. There are two main sections; one full of electrical goods and modern necessities, the other stocked with traditional jewellery and antiquities.

Heart of Sharjah
Assuming you aren’t too weighed down with purchases, follow Sharjah Creek along Corniche Street to the Heart of Sharjah area, and in particular the Heritage Museum. Here you can explore the emirate’s rich and diverse traditions, from pearling to trade, jewellery to music and much more. The museum costs just Dhs.5 for adults and is free for children.

There’s lots more to see in this historic district of the city, and you can soak up the atmosphere amongst the traditional houses and coral stone alleys. Souk Al Arsah is a must for more shopping, and the Sharjah Art Museum is another unmissable attraction.

Making Tracks
As the rental system works on returning your bike to any of the four drop-off points, you can now either retrace your route, or stop at any of the other locations. We recommend pulling in at one of the many cafes and restaurants along Al Majaz waterfront to watch the evening fountains.

The city has placed a lot of importance on making its waterfront an accessible, sociable and entertaining heart.
On Your Byky...

Byky runs a semi-automated system. If you're a Sharjah resident, it's worth registering ahead – either online at bykystations.com or by calling 800 3330. You can borrow a bike from any location, using SMS to unlock the combination code. Alternatively, you can register at the location's terminal and pay by credit card. If you're part of a group, up to four bikes can be hired at a time on one account. When you've finished your ride, simply return the bicycle to any of the four terminals to avoid being fined. As well as regular bicycles, the company provides single, twin and family bikes for those just wanting to cruise up and down the waterfront.
Big Birds

Kalba Bird of Prey Centre, the latest addition to Sharjah's outstanding range of wildlife attractions, has rapidly established itself as a popular draw for visitors, and an important focus for conservation.
Kalba Bird of Prey Centre is home to more than 50 species, many from the Arabian Gulf region. Its impressive residents include the barn owl, the long-legged buzzard, the short-toed snake eagle and, among others, the lappet faced vulture.

Arabian Tradition
Birds of prey play an important role in Arabian culture and traditions, making Sharjah, with its unparalleled commitment to preserving and celebrating the region’s heritage, the perfect location for such an attraction.

Moreover, the fishing community of Kalba actually lies on one of the globe’s major ‘flyways’ – aerial routes used by multiple species to migrate south when it turns cold, and food becomes scarce.

Built in the rocky Al Ghayl area, the new centre is
As well as entertainment, education and conservation are the centre's main purposes.

within a natural hotspot for hunting birds. Here, the steep mountains and strong sea breezes create the thermals that hunting birds thrive on and provide ideal nesting grounds. Outside the new centre, the area is a great place to spot birds of prey in the wild. At least 10 species breed here, with another 18 regularly visiting. If you're inspired by the centre, it's well worthwhile venturing into the surroundings to attempt your own spot of birdwatching. However do remember to only take photos from a distance and never venture too close.

Edutainment
The facility, which was opened in January 2014 by His Highness Sheikh Dr Sultan bin Mohammad Al Qasimi, UAE Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Sharjah, has already attracted significant numbers of visitors, particularly school groups. It is now the leading centre in the UAE, and – in scale and ambition – a genuine first for the region.

For leisure visitors, the centre stages an hour-long show twice a day. This includes one in the evening: the perfect time to sit in the cool outside and witness these magnificent birds in their natural setting. The centre's staff expertly guide a display of hunting behaviours and breathtaking flying abilities, together with insights and information on their habitats, diets and more. Watching large eagles swoop with their broad wings, and hawks use their long tails to execute tight turns, is an unforgettable experience for all family members.

Conservation
As well as entertainment, education and conservation are the centre’s main purposes. It is managed by the Environment and Protected Areas Authority (EPAA), and aims to extend understanding and appreciation of these species, as well as preserve their habitats and wellbeing for years to come. Lively displays are packed with information on each of the centre's residents, and you can't help but be struck with the majesty of these creatures.

Plan Your Visit
Kalba Bird of Prey Centre

Where
Kalba

Opening Hours
Wednesday to Monday: hours vary
Closed Tuesdays

Cost
Adults: Dhs.50
Children under 12: free
School groups: Dhs.5

Contact
Call: 09 277 0880
Attractions

With more than 20 museums and attractions for all ages and interests, Sharjah is renowned as the region’s cultural capital. For further details, please call: 800 80 000 or visit www.sharjahtourism.ae and www.sharjahmuseums.ae

MUSEUMS

Al Eslah School Museum
06 568 4114
Heritage Area

Al Mahatta Museum
Aviation museum
06 573 3079
Nr. Al Mahatta Park

Archaeology Museum
06 566 5466
www.sharjahmuseums.ae
Nr. Cultural Square

Classic Car Museum
06 558 0222
Al Dhaid Road

Heritage Museum
06 568 0006
Heritage Area

Dr Sultan Al Qasimi Centre of Gulf Studies
Important historical collection of maps, documents and images.
06 558 5855
www.dsqc.ae
University City

Maritime Museum
Insight into how the sea has shaped the region’s history.
06 522 2002
Al Khan

Natural History & Botanical Museum
06 531 1411
Sharjah Desert Park, Al Dhaid Road

Science Museum
06 566 8777
Nr. Cultural Square

HIGHLIGHTS

Al Awadi Field Studies Centre
Adventure tours and campsite.
04 455 8777
www.ecoventureme.com
10km west of Al Dhaid

Arabia’s Wildlife Centre & Children’s Farm
06 531 1999/1127
Sharjah Desert Park, Al Dhaid Road

Discovery Centre
Interactive scientific attraction for all the family.
06 558 6577
Al Dhaid Road

Libraries
06 516 6888
www.shjlib.gov.ae

Sharjah Aquarium
06 528 5288
www.sharjahaquarium.ae
Al Khan

ART GALLERIES

Maraya Art Centre
06 556 6555
www.maraya.ae
Al Qasba

Sharjah Art Foundation
Busy calendar of exhibitions includes the Sharjah Biennial.
06 568 5050
www.sharjahart.org

Sharjah Art Museum
06 568 8222
Arts Area

Sharjah Calligraphy Museum
06 569 4561
Heritage Area

Majlis Al Midfaa
06 568 1738
Heritage Area
(Temporarily Closed)

HERITAGE SITES

Bait Al Naboodah
06 568 1738
Heritage Area
(Temporarily Closed)

Bait Sheikh Saeed Bin Hamed Al Qasimi
09 277 4442
Corniche Road, Kalba
(East Coast)

Dibba Fort
Dibba Al Hisn
(East Coast)

Khorfakkan
Heritage Area
Corniche, Khorfakkan
(East Coast)

Museum Of Islamic Civilization
World-class collection that inspires, educates and entertains all ages of visitor.
06 565 5455
www.sharjahmuseums.ae
Sharjah Creek
LANDMARKS

Al Majaz Waterfront
The city's newest attraction is a stunning hub of world-class dining, family-friendly facilities and performing fountains.
06 552 1552
www.almajaz.ae

Central Souk
Central Souk is the star shopping attraction, but there are a great many other souks throughout the emirate that are enthralling and absorbing destinations in their own right.

Ittihad Square
Next to the Central Souk, this pleasant landscaped area is dominated by the Union Monument with seven oysters (representing the seven emirates) supporting a central pillar crowned with a vast gold pearl.

Al Noor Mosque Tour
An icon of Sharjah, this is the emirate’s first mosque to be opened to non-Muslims with guided tours that include a short film and question and answer session.
06 568 0055
www.shjculture.com

Khalid Lagoon
The lagoon is at the heart of Sharjah life. Boat cruises and walking the corniche are popular. Khalid Lagoon is connected by the Al Qasba canal and at Al Mamzar Lagoon jet skis can be hired.

Cultural Square
Dominated by an inspiring sculpture of the Holy Quran the square is surrounded by majestic architecture.

Kalba Creek (Khor Kalba)
Tidal creek and Arabia’s oldest mangrove forest, this is a crucial conservation area for endangered species of birds and turtles.
Kalba (East Coast)

SPECTATOR SPORTS

Camel Racing
Races take place in the winter months on Thursday and Friday mornings from 07:00.
Nr. Al Dhaid
Football
Football in the UAE is exciting and there are several clubs across Sharjah emirate.
www.uaefa.ae

Sharjah Equestrian & Racing Club
06 531 1155
www.serc.ae
Interchange 6, Al Dhaid Road

Powerboating
Formula 1 powerboat racing comes to Sharjah every year at December’s Sharjah Grand Prix on Khalid Lagoon.
www.f1h2o.com

EVENTS

Sharjah hosts an array of exciting events. Don’t miss February’s Light Festival or December’s Water Festival.
www.sharjahtourism.ae

Flag Island
The seventh tallest flagpole in the world is a symbol of Emirati pride.
Khalid Lagoon

University City
Impressive architecture and educational excellence.
Nr. Sharjah International Airport

Sharjah National Park
National Park is the largest of the emirate’s wonderful parks and is great for all the family.

City Beaches
Sharjah city’s beaches are popular, and for swimming and watersports head to any of the hotel beaches.

Big Red (Desert Dune)
Hire a dune buggy at this huge red dune west of Al Madam.
Fossil Rock (west of Al Dhaid) is another spot to explore the incredible desert landscape.

East Coast
Idyllic land of rugged mountains overlooking golden beaches and clear blue seas.
Dibba Al Hisn, Khorfakkan, Kalba (East Coast)
Leisure
There is so much to see and do in Sharjah no matter whether you want to be active, adventurous or just kick back and relax. For full details on any of these activities, please call: 800 80 000 or visit www.sharjahtourism.ae

AMUSEMENTS
Adventureland
06 531 6363
www.adventureland-sharjah.com
Saalah Centre

Antic’s Land
06 574 6699
www.anticsland.com
Mega Mall

Magic Planet
06 539 6903
www.theplaymania.com
Sharjah City Centre

Sky 24 Sports & Leisure Club
06 556 0005
www.sky24slc.com
Al Durrah Tower

Fun City
06 530 3314
www.funcity.ae
Safeer Mall

Treasure Island
06 556 4666
Al Fardan Center

ARCHERY
Sharjah Golf & Shooting Club
06 548 7777
www.golfandshootingshj.com
Shk Mohammed Bin Zayed Road

Sharjah Equestrian & Racing Club
050 588 0951
www.serc.ae
Interchange 6, Al Dhaid Road

Masrah Al Qasba
300-seat auditorium, English and Arabic theatre and cinema
06 556 0777
www.alqasba.ae

DIVING
7 Seas Divers (PADI)
09 238 7400
www.7seasdivers.com
Khorfakkan (East Coast)

Divers Down (PADI)
09 237 0299
Khorfakkan (East Coast)

Nomad Ocean Adventures (PADI)
00 968 268 36069
www.discovernomad.com
Dibba (East Coast), Oman

Sharjah Wanderers Dive Club (BSAC)
06 566 2105
www.sharjahwanderers.com

FISHING & WATERSPORTS
Noukhada Adventure Company
050 721 8928/02 5581 889
www.noukhada.ae

Ocean Adventures
06 568 0886/050 688 8975
www.oceanadventuresuae.com

Oceanic Khorfakkan
09 238 5111

East Coast
Kalba and Khorfakkan are home to some impressive wildlife, both under the ocean and above it – including some of the world’s rarest birds.
GOLF
Sharjah Wanderers Golf Club
06 558 6239
www.sharjahgolf.com
Samnan, Sharjah

Sharjah Golf & Shooting Club
06 548 7777
www.golfandshootingshj.com
Shk Mohammed Bin Zayed Road

Sharjah Ladies Club
06 506 7822/7777
www.slc.ae
Corniche Road

PAINTBALLING & SHOOTING
Sharjah Golf & Shooting Club
06 548 7777
www.golfandshootingshj.com
Shk Mohammed Bin Zayed Road

Sharjah Ladies Club
Shooting – Ladies Only
06 506 7777
www.slc.ae
Corniche Road

SPAS & SALONS
Altitude The Spa
Women’s Spa
06 557 9997
www.golfandshootingshj.com
Sharjah Golf & Shooting Club

Men’s Spa
06 593 8822
Sharjah Chamber of Commerce & Industry

HORSE RIDING
Sharjah Equestrian & Racing Club
06 531 1155
www.serc.ae
Interchange 6, Al Dhaid Road

ICE SKATING
Sky 24
06 556 0005
Al Durrah Tower

To advertise on this page or in this publication, please contact Sharjah Commerce and Tourism Development Authority
Call: 06 556 6777
Email: mydestination@sharjahtourism.ae
Shopping

An incredible array of traditional markets, restored souks, independent shops and modern malls mean there’s something to suit every pocket in Sharjah. The emirate is particularly renowned for the quality and value of its authentic Arabian souvenirs, from textiles to jewellery, and its craftsmen, who are happy to make bespoke items.

AREAS, MALLS & STORES

Lulu Hypermarket
Department store and supermarket with three branches in Sharjah.
06 565 1133, Al Mubarrah
06 536 7777, Al Nahda
06 533 2220, Ind. Area 4
www.luluhypermarket.com

Al Qasba
Diverse and exciting shopping destination includes AKS Heritage Photo Studio, Banayas Trading Jewellery, Book Mall, Dubai Garden Centre, Extra Extra Mini Mart, Knowledge Hub, Maison De Style.
06 556 0777
www.alqasba.ae
Al Qasba

Al Arab Mall
Spinneys, food court.
06 577 7666
Al Taawun Road, Al Mamzar

Ansar Mall
Full service mall with shopping and dining options.
06 531 3339
www.ansarmall.ae
Al Nahda

Emax
Over 100,000 electronic products.
06 555 1112
King Faisal Road, Abu Shagara

Matajer
Carrefour Market, Beauty Salons, Bank, Opticians, Cafes and Restaurants.
06 597 2700
www.mymatajer.ae
Al Qouz, Al Juraina, Al Khan & Al Mighab

Mega Mall
International brands and entertainment venues including Grand Stores, Paris Gallery, Zara, Mango, Promod, Bhs, La Senza, Antic’s Land.
06 574 2574
www.megamall.ae
King Abdul Aziz Street, Al Bu Danig

Central Souk
Iconic and impressive shopping destination, particularly for jewellery, carpets and authentic Arabian souvenirs.
Khalid Lagoon

Sahara Centre
Fun, food and fashion with over 300 popular brand name stores and services. Adventureland, Debenhams, Grand Cinemas, Home Centre, Marina Exotic Home Interiors, Spinneys, Toys ‘R’ Us.
06 531 6611
www.saharacentre.com
Al Nahda Street

Safeer Mall
Hypermarket, Sharaf DG, Splash, Shoemart, Max, Red Tag, Fitness First, Fun City leisure zone and food court.
06 531 3366
www.safeermall.com
Al Ittihad Road

OTHER SHOPPING PLACES

There are many independent stores and malls throughout the emirate. The major tourist attractions all have very good gift shops. There are also specialist areas for carpets, jewellery, tailoring, textiles, etc.

Sharjah City Centre
06 532 7700
www.sharjahcitycentre.com
SOUKS
Souks and markets all across the emirate are great places to soak up the traditional atmosphere and to pick up a bargain.

Fish, Fruit & Veg Souks
The freshest fish, fruit, vegetables and meat produce.
Buhaira Corniche, near Central Souk, Sharjah.
Also at East Coast fishing harbours of Dibba Al Hisn, Khorfakkan and Kalba.

Plant & Pot Souk
The ceramics here make great souvenirs.
Khalid Lagoon

Souk Al Arsah
The oldest marketplace in the UAE and an essential tourist destination.
Heritage Area

Useful Numbers
The international dialling code for Sharjah is +971 (6)
The local time zone is UTC+4

EMERGENCY
Ambulance
998/999

Traffic
06 538 0442/564 2222

Police/Fire
999/997

Police Headquarters
06 563 1111/3333

HOSPITALS
Al Kuwaiti Hospital
06 524 2111

Al Qassimi Hospital
06 538 6444

Al Zahra Private Hospital
06 561 9999

Central Private Hospital
06 563 9900

Royal Hospital
06 545 2222

Zulekha Hospital
600 524 442

TRANSPORT
Sharjah Roads & Transport Authority – Head Office
06 562 4444/563 3333

Sharjah Roads & Transport Authority – Customer Service
600 52 52 52
www.srta.govae

Restaurant & Cafes
There are international restaurants and cafes throughout the emirate.
Al Qasba and Al Majaz Waterfront are particular hubs with events and entertainment onsite to complement the dining options.
www.alqasba.ae
www.almajaz.ae

AIRPORT
Air Arabia
06 558 0000

Sharjah Airport
06 558 1111
www.sharjahairport.ae

TAXIS
Taxi Booking
600 52 52 52

Citi Taxi
06 533 4444/3550

Emirates Cab
06 539 6666

Sharjah Taxi
06 535 6111

Union Taxi
06 532 5555

INFORMATION
Directory Enquiries
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Information Services
700 017 000

Sharjah Contact Centre
800 80 000

Speaking Clock
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