



AL AIN العين

Emirate of Abu Dhabi
Department of Municipal Affairs
Al Ain City Municipality



الإمارة أبوظبي
دائرة الشؤون البلدية
بلدية مدينة العين



دليل مدينة العين

AL AIN CITY GUIDE





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AL AIN CITY

overview



Al Ain, or “the spring” in Arabic, is fed by natural springs originating from the surrounding rocky heights. Also known as the “Oasis City,” Al Ain is enclosed by magnificent red sand dunes and punctuated by an impressive mountain range. The abundance of water from the oasis allows the city to bloom, especially its numerous parks and gardens. “Garden City of the Gulf” is another name given to Al Ain, a city that is a favorite destination for thousands of overseas tourists.

Al Ain seamlessly combines heritage with modernity with the presence of its well-preserved forts, palaces and settlements alongside modern roads, hospitals, residential areas, schools and academic institutions, malls, theme park, ice rink, and the largest wildlife preserve in the Middle East.

Visitors to the city can choose from a large number of facilities and attractions, and will find an atmosphere and culture that feel more traditionally Arabic than can be found in the coastal cities in the UAE.



ENHANCEMENT

of the natural and
built landscapes



An aerial photograph showing a city landscape with a mix of green spaces and urban infrastructure. In the foreground, there are several circular green areas with trees and walkways. A prominent feature is a large, white, dome-shaped structure, possibly a stadium or arena, surrounded by a paved area and some smaller buildings. The background shows a more developed urban area with various buildings and roads, transitioning into a hilly, less developed area with sparse vegetation. A semi-transparent dark green box is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing white text.

Al Ain City has mobilized its efforts and resources to increase green spaces by planting vast areas of forests and palm trees, in addition to various types of plants that adapt to the harsh climate. The city improves the public landscape engineering by cooperating with eminent international consultants in the field of landscape gardening, landscape architecture and garden designs.

ARTS, culture and heritage



Al Ain City is renowned for its archaeological excavations, which have uncovered tombs over 4,000 years old. It is one of the world's oldest continually inhabited settlements. The city stresses the importance of preserving its culture and heritage. It collaborates with governmental as well as private organizations to embody the city's vision of preserving both historical and cultural heritage.









ENVIRONMENTAL best practices

Al Ain City is dedicated to the preservation of the environment through the development of legislation, regulations, and strategies, as well as preparing environmental action plans and establishing environmental institutions. The city is hard at work to protect the environment, preserve natural resources, combat desertification, protect and manage biodiversity, and manage waste.

Conserving the environment for sustainable development remains a top priority for Al Ain.



COMMUNITY

participation and empowerment

Al Ain is one of the main cities in the UAE where various nationalities co-exist and interact peacefully. Regardless of their multiple backgrounds, the development approach that the city is considering is both people-centered and consensus-driven. Thus, the public is given the opportunity and/or responsibility to manage their own resources, define their needs, goals, and aspirations, and make decisions affecting their well-being. This springs from the basic principle that people have the innate capacity to understand and act on their own problems. Essentially, all community members have the opportunity to participate in developing a management strategy that meets their needs and conditions.







HEALTHY lifestyle

Al Ain City seeks to meet the ever growing expectations of the community and ensure a healthy lifestyle by providing equal quality healthcare services to all residents. Focus is given on spreading awareness regarding health risks and hazards, and implementing precautionary measures with the support of the General Authority for Health Services.





STRATEGIC planning





Al Ain is now undergoing a flourishing renaissance with a dedicated “Al Ain Plan 2030.” This development plan will foster Al Ain’s authentic Arab identity, while supporting a continually evolving modern culture.



AL AIN attractions

AIA inOa sis

Al Ain Oasis is in the heart of the city. This impressive oasis is filled with palm plantations, many of which are still working farms. The cool, shady walkways transport you from the heat and noise of the city to a tranquil haven – all you'll hear are birdsong and the rustle of palm fronds. Picnic tables are available at the main entrance, and there is a restaurant in the centre of the plantation.

You are welcome to wander through the plantations, but it's best to stick to the paved areas, which will take you on a relaxing meander through the trees. Farms occasionally have signs welcoming tourists to walk around. The farms have plenty of working examples of the falaj, the UAE's traditional irrigation system, which has been used for centuries to tap into underground wells. There are eight different entrances, some of which have arched gates. Entry is free.

Al Ain Wildlife Park & Resort

Al Ain Wildlife Park and Resort is home to over 4,000 animals; at least 30% of its 180 species are considered endangered. Conservation efforts have been strengthened by partnerships with the San Diego Zoo, Fairchild Tropical Botanical Garden in Miami, and World Association of Zoos & Aquariums. The park covers 900 hectares near the base of Jebel Hafeet. Visitors can see the large animal collection in enclosures that resemble their natural habitats as closely as possible.

Giraffes, zebras and rhinoceroses co-exist in the mixed African exhibit, while wildlife typical of the local region, such as the indigenous Arabian Oryx and sand gazelle also share a habitat. There are plenty of green public spaces ideal for picnics and also playgrounds, a cafeteria and a restaurant for wildlife enthusiasts.

Website: <http://www.awpr.ae/en/Pages/Home.aspx>

GreenMu bazzarah HotS prings

At the bottom of Jebel Hafeet, Abu Dhabi's highest peak, lies one of the UAE's most surprising sights. Green Mubazzarah is a park of undulating rocky terrain that has been landscaped, giving the impression of rolling grassy hillsides with streams, hot springs and waterfalls. Accommodation is available in chalets. Advance reservations are taken.

HiliF unCit y

Hili Fun City is a flagship family entertainment destination that has become a firm favorite since opening in 1985. The Gulf's first theme park, Hili Fun City has been recently renovated. The expansive park now boasts 28 attractions for all ages, a family show amphitheatre for 1,400 people, and picnican dp layar eas.

Website: <http://www.hilifuncity.ae>

JebelHa feet

This towering rocky height, which stands guard over Al Ain and borders Oman, is forged out of craggy limestone that has

been weathered by millions of years. Significant fossil discoveries have been made in the area, which are vital pieces in the jigsaw of the city's ancient history. Over 500 ancient burial tombs dating back 5,000 years have also been found in the foothills of Jebel Hafeet.

Jebel Hafeet, rising 1,240 metres, is the UAE's second highest peak. You can drive, or if you have the stamina, cycle to the top via a winding highway, which edmunds.com (the automotive information online source) described as "among the world's greatest driving roads." Once you reach the top, you'll be rewarded with magnificent views of Al Ain, where you can take a break at the Mercure Jebel Hafeet Hotel near the mountain's peak.



PARKS

and gardens



Al Ain City is adorned with more than 25 recreational parks. There are appointed fenced areas for ladies and children where they can freely practice their preferred sports and various activities such as holding cultural and sports events. Moreover, some traditional parks were transformed into athletic parks and are now well-equipped with sports tools. Additionally, new concepts of fenceless parks were introduced to the public in order to facilitate access to these gardens

from different corners and enhance the aesthetic value of the whole city.

Al Ain Paradise Garden is the newest garden that opened in Al Ain City. It was created in only 90 days to commemorate the spring season. The new garden entered The Guinness Book of World Records for having the most number of hanging flower baskets – a total of 2,500.



HERITAGE

Al Ain National Museum

On the edge of Al Ain Oasis, Al Ain Museum was opened in 1971 and is the showcase for the city's unique heritage and history. It is housed in the same compound as the Sultan Bin Zayed Fort (also known as the Eastern Fort), which was built in 1910 and is very well preserved. Divided into three main sections – archaeology, ethnography and gifts – its presentations illustrate various aspects of life in the UAE, and includes an interesting selection of photographs as well as Bedouin jewellery, musical instruments, weapons, and a reconstruction of a traditional majlis.

The archaeology displays are extensive, and include many artifacts from the nearby Hili Gardens, so it is helpful to visit the museum first. Some of the displays, such as the one from Garn Bint Saud (12 kilometres north of Hili), date back to the first millennium BC.

The gifts section houses an unusual collection of gifts that Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan received during his lifetime. It includes golden swords, silver daggers and a golden palm tree, among others. The labeling on all displays is in English and Arabic.

Website:

<http://www.adach.ae/en/portal/heritage/alain.nationalmuseum.aspx>



Al Ain Palace Museum

Al Ain Palace Museum (also known as the Qasr Al Ain Museum) is near the commercial area on the road to Sinaiyya. Built in 1910, the museum was once the home of the late Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan and was also the hub of the city's political life. The palace was turned into a museum in 1998 and now holds a large collection of material concerning her ulingf amily.

Website:

<http://www.adach.ae/en/portal/heritage/sheikh.zayedpalacemuseum.aspx>

Al Ain University Natural History Museum

For those interested in the UAE's flora and fauna, this museum is a small but informative centre run by the university. It includes a herbarium and collections of various species of animals and birds. A collection of rocks, minerals and fossils is also on display.

Al Jahili Fort

The picturesque Al Jahili Fort is one of the UAE's most historic forts and is the

birthplace of the late Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan. It was erected in 1891 to defend the city and protect precious palm groves. The former headquarters of the Oman Trucial Scouts, the force that protected the mountain passes and kept inter-tribal peace, Al Jahili Fort also served as a residence for the local governor.

It is set in beautifully landscaped gardens, and visitors are encouraged to explore it. It has been carefully restored and now houses a permanent exhibition of the work of British adventurer Sir Wilfred Thesiger (whom the locals affectionately refer to as Mubarak Bin London) and his 1940s crossings of the Rub Al Khali (The Empty Quarter) desert.

Website:

<http://86.96.196.32/en/portal/heritage/opening.of.alahili.fort.aspx>



SPORTS

and recreation

AIA inS portplex

Al Ain's greatest asset is its beautiful setting. Nearly all of the activities available in the Oasis Citycapitalize on the beautiful surroundings.

Aside from motorsports, cricket, soccer, paintball and other attractions, Al Ain Sportplex is home to the 1.4km Al Ain Raceway go-karting track, the largest of its kind in the Middle East.

Website: <http://www.alainsportplex.ae/>

Go-Karting

The state-of-the-art Al Ain Raceway is ranked as one of the world's top three go-karting tracks and is host to major international events such as the Rotax Max Challenge Grand Finals, the biggest annual event on the global karting calendar. The fully floodlit circuit features three distinctive configurations, providing an exhilarating challenge for drivers of all abilities. Open to the public, drivers can hone their skills on top-of-the-line Intrepid brand rental karts. Al Ain Raceway also boasts a restaurant, shisha lounge and meeting rooms equipped with the latest technology and is an ideal venue for team-building and corporate events. Exclusive use of the circuit needs to be booked in advance.

Website: <http://www.alainraceway.com/>



PalmS portsR esort

The Palm Sports Resort has excellent facilities for the equestrian, whether it's learning to ride, looking to take part in competitions or be a spectator at regular races. It also has an 18-hole, all-grass golf course under the shadow of Jebel Hafeet, first-class equestrian facilities and a stunning clubhouse with anex cellentr estaurant.

Website: <http://palmssportresort.com.122.blankserver.com/index.aspx>

Hiking

The areas surrounding Al Ain are perfect for day hikes or long walks. The plantations scattered around the city provide gorgeous, shaded settings for long walks and quiet picnics. More experienced hikers shouldn't miss the Hanging Gardens hike, which showcases some of the most unusual and unexpectedr ockr ormationsan dp lantlif ein t hecou ntry.



SHOPPING

AlAin Ma ll

This bright, modern mall has over 175 stores selling everything from greeting cards to gold jewellery. Anchor stores include Grand Stores, Home Centre and ParisGaller y.

Website: <http://www.alainmall.net/>

AlJim iMa ll

Al Jimi offers hundreds of shopping options with over 70 shops, including Women's Secret, Early Learning Centre, Nine West, Areej and Body Shop.

Website: <http://www.aljimimall.com/>

BawadiMa ll

The largest mall in Al Ain, Bawadi Mall has over 400 shops, representing both international and regional brands, and a range of high street and designer names, a food court and many casual dining outlets. Family entertainment includes a ski village, rollercoaster, an eight-screen cinema and a bowling alley. The Heritage Village features beautiful Islamic architecture and shops selling classic souvenirs like gold, carpets and handicrafts in a traditional souk environment. There are also two outdoor markets: Bawadi and Al Qaws.

Website: <http://www.bawadimall.com>



AL AIN souks

Al Ain Souk

This is the last souk of its kind in the UAE and is an excellent opportunity to see camels up close, and to see and hear the traders discussing the price and merits of their animals. There are some excellent photo opportunities, but be careful where you point your lens and always ask permission first. In the livestock section, watch locals arrive in pickupslad erwit hgoat san d sheep, readyt od o someh ardb argaining. B ep repared to be the object of a certain amount of curiosity, and try not to become too upset with the rough treatment of livestock.

Souk Al Bawadi and Souk Al Qawas

Both of these outdoor markets are attached to the huge Bawadi Mall. Souk Al Qawas features shops of a practical nature set among unique architecture, with over 40 service outlets including banks, money exchanges and travel agents. Souk Al Bawadi has more of a heritage feel, with over 50 shops selling traditional items and souvenirs.

Souk Al Zafarana

Originally meant to be the new home of the city's Old Souk, Al Zafarana is now filled with shops selling everything from fruits and vegetables to shoes and handicrafts. You'll be able to bargain with most of the sellers, so don't be shy when trying to find a great deal. This is also a great place to pick up a variety of dates. Be sure to taste the many different kinds before settling on your favorite.



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Our Vision:

Distinctive municipality and sustainable development for the Oasis City.

رؤيتنا:

بلدية متميزة وتنمية مستدامة لمدينة الواحات.

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