RELOCATE2UAE | LIFESTYLE GUIDE 2026/27

25 Escapes From the UAE

The best holiday destinations for residents of Dubai and Abu Dhabi: flight times, best months, long weekends and the entry rules to check first.

25	9	5	19
escapes	under 4 hours	no flight needed	FAQs answered

Last checked 18 October 2026 | Next review 15 November 2026

Independent. No airline, hotel or tour operator pays to appear in this guide.

relocate2uae.com/holiday-destinations

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Entry requirements, flight routes and seasonal advice can change. Every destination needs current official travel and entry information. Each section below links to the destination's official government portal: check it for your own passport before you book and again before you fly.

Quick answer

The best holiday destinations from the UAE in 2026/27 are Oman, Georgia, Uzbekistan, Egypt and the Maldives for a long weekend, Sri Lanka, the Seychelles, Kenya and Thailand for a week, and Salalah, Georgia's mountains or Europe to escape the summer heat. All of the short-haul options are within about four hours of Dubai or Abu Dhabi. Your visa rights depend on the passport you hold, not your UAE residence, although a UAE residence permit does open extra routes into Georgia, Saudi Arabia and Oman. Most popular destinations now also need an online form, levy or insurance completed before you fly.

2026 travel alert: check your flight on the day. Regional security tensions have caused airspace closures, cancellations and longer routings from UAE airports during 2026. UAE airspace is open, but on 15 and 16 October 2026 flydubai halted flights to AlUla, Red Sea International and most Saudi airports, Emirates cancelled its Saudi departures, Etihad suspended Abu Dhabi to Riyadh and Dammam, and Riyadh airport suspended operations. Some foreign airlines have also paused Dubai services. Book flexible fares, keep airline app alerts on, check your insurance covers disruption, and read your own government's travel advice for both the destination and the region. How flying from the UAE works in 2026.

Key facts at a glance

Question	Short answer
Does my UAE residence visa let me travel visa-free?	Usually not on its own. Your passport decides. UAE residence adds routes into Georgia (90 days for most nationalities), Saudi Arabia (tourist eVisa) and Oman (GCC resident visa for approved professions).
Where can I fly in under four hours?	Oman, Salalah, AlUla, Jordan, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Egypt and the Maldives.
Best long-weekend trip from Dubai or Abu Dhabi?	Oman by road, Tbilisi in Georgia, Baku, AlUla (when flights are running) or a UAE escape such as Hatta or Jebel Jais.
Best summer escape from the UAE heat?	Salalah in the khareef (roughly July to September), Georgia's mountains, Europe, Bali in its dry season, or Kenya for the Great Migration.
Best beach holiday from the UAE?	The Maldives (December to April), Sri Lanka's south coast (December to March), the Seychelles (April to May, October to November), Zanzibar and Mauritius.
Which destinations need something done online before I fly?	The Maldives, Thailand, Indonesia and Bali, the Seychelles, Sri Lanka, Kenya, Mauritius and the UK, plus mandatory insurance for Georgia and Zanzibar.
Longest public holiday break in 2026/27?	Arafat Day and Eid Al Adha, projected for mid-May 2027. National Day (2 and 3 December 2026) gives a five-day break with one day of leave.
How long can I stay outside the UAE?	A standard residence visa is at risk after more than six months (180 days) outside the UAE. Golden Visa holders are exempt.
Is there a single GCC tourist visa yet?	No. The GCC Grand Tours Visa has been approved but had not launched at our 18 October 2026 check.

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All 25 escapes from the UAE at a glance

Short answer: Nine of the 25 escapes are within about four hours of the UAE, eight more are within seven hours, three are long-haul trips for Eid or school breaks, and five need no flight at all.

#	Destination	Flight time from the UAE	Best months	Good for	Before you go
1	Oman: Muscat, wadis and Musandam	About 1h, or drive	October to April	Road trips, wadis, mountains	Visa-free list or GCC resident visa
2	Salalah, Oman	About 2h	July to September (khareef)	Cool, green summer escape	Visa-free list or GCC resident visa
3	AlUla and the Saudi Red Sea	About 2h 30m direct (when operating)	October to March	Desert, archaeology	Saudi tourist eVisa; check flights
4	Jordan: Petra and Wadi Rum	About 3h	March to May, September to November	Ancient sites, desert camps	Jordan Pass or visa by passport
5	Georgia: Tbilisi, Kazbegi, Gudauri	About 3h 15m	May to June, September to October; ski December to March	Mountains, food, wine, snow	Proof of travel insurance
6	Azerbaijan: Baku	About 2h 45m	April to June, September to October	City break, Caspian coast	ASAN e-Visa by passport
7	Uzbekistan: Samarkand, Bukhara	About 3h	April to May, September to October	Silk Road cities	Visa-free list or e-visa
8	Egypt: Cairo, Luxor, Red Sea	About 4h	October to April	Pyramids, museums, diving	Visa on arrival or e-Visa by passport
9	Maldives	About 4h	December to April	Beaches, reefs, honeymoons	IMUGA traveller declaration
10	Sri Lanka	About 4h 30m	December to March (south and west)	Beaches, tea country, wildlife	ETA (free for 40 nationalities)
11	Seychelles	About 4h 30m	April to May, October to November	Beaches, nature, honeymoons	Paid Travel Authorisation
12	Zanzibar, Tanzania	About 5h	June to October, December to February	Beaches, diving, Stone Town	Mandatory Zanzibar insurance
13	Kenya: Maasai Mara and coast	About 5h	July to October (migration)	Safari, beaches	Kenya eTA for every traveller
14	Türkiye: Istanbul, Cappadocia	About 4h 45m	April to June, September to November	Cities, food, history	Visa or e-Visa by passport
15	Thailand	About 6h	November to March	Islands, food, families	TDAC arrival card
16	Mauritius	About 6h 30m	May to December	Lagoons, families, wellness	All-in-One Travel Form
17	Vietnam	About 6h 45m	Varies by region	Ha Long Bay, food, culture	e-Visa or exemption by passport
18	Bali, Indonesia	About 9h	April to October	Wellness, surf, culture	All Indonesia card plus Bali levy
19	Europe in summer	About 6h to 8h	June to September	Cool air, lakes, cities	EES biometrics; UK ETA
20	Japan	About 9h 30m	Late March to April, October to November	Culture, food, cherry blossom	Visa-waiver check by passport
21	Hatta, Dubai	About 1h 30m drive	October to April	Kayaking, biking, cabins	None
22	Jebel Jais, Ras Al Khaimah	About 1h 30m to 2h drive	October to April	Highest peak, cooler air	None

#	Destination	Flight time from the UAE	Best months	Good for	Before you go
23	Fujairah and the east coast	About 1h 30m to 2h drive	October to May	Snorkelling, diving, beaches	None
24	Liwa, Abu Dhabi	About 2h 30m from Abu Dhabi	November to March	Giant dunes, desert camps	None
25	Al Ain and Jebel Hafeet	About 1h 30m from Abu Dhabi or Dubai	October to April	Oases, forts, mountain drive	None

Source check: [ESTIMATE] Flight times are approximate scheduled direct times from Dubai International (DXB) or Zayed International (AUH) and vary by airline, routing and 2026 airspace restrictions. Drive times are approximate and depend on your starting point. "Best months" reflects weather and crowds, not the only months you can go. [OFFICIAL] Entry requirements reflect official portals and recent official notices checked on 18 October 2026.

Pick your holiday style

If you want	Go to
Barefoot beaches and reefs	Maldives, Seychelles, Zanzibar, Mauritius, Sri Lanka's south coast, Thailand's islands
Cool mountain air in summer	Georgia, Salalah during the khareef, Europe, Uzbekistan's spring and autumn
Snow and skiing	Gudauri in Georgia (December to March)
Ancient wonders	Egypt's pyramids and Grand Egyptian Museum, Petra, Samarkand and Bukhara, Hegra at AlUla
Wildlife and safari	Kenya's Maasai Mara, Yala in Sri Lanka, Mnemba Atoll off Zanzibar
Food cities	Istanbul, Bangkok, Tbilisi, Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City, Tokyo
A road trip with no flight	Oman, Hatta, Jebel Jais, Fujairah, Liwa, Al Ain
Wellness and slow travel	Bali, Sri Lanka, the Maldives, Mauritius
Best value	Georgia, Uzbekistan, Sri Lanka, Egypt, Vietnam, an Oman road trip
Honeymoon	Maldives, Seychelles, Mauritius, Bali

The best place to go from the UAE, month by month

Short answer: The UAE's travel calendar runs opposite to Europe's. The Gulf summer is the Indian Ocean and East Africa's best season, while the UAE's own cool months (October to April) are perfect for Oman, Jordan, Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

Month	Top picks	Why
October	Seychelles, Georgia, Oman, Türkiye	Calm seas in the Seychelles; autumn colour and grape harvest in Georgia
November	Oman, Egypt, Jordan, Sri Lanka's west coast	Desert weather turns perfect; Sri Lanka's southwest season begins
December	Maldives, Sri Lanka, Thailand's Andaman coast, Gudauri skiing	Dry season across the Indian Ocean; National Day long weekend

Month	Top picks	Why
January	Maldives, Thailand, southern Vietnam, AlUla	Peak sunshine in South and Southeast Asia; ideal desert temperatures in Saudi Arabia
February	Zanzibar, Kenya, Sri Lanka, Egypt	Hot, dry and clear in East Africa
March	Uzbekistan, Maldives, Jordan	Silk Road cities before the heat; projected Eid Al Fitr break
April	Seychelles, Georgia, Bali, Japan	Calm water in the Seychelles; Bali's dry season starts; cherry blossom in Japan
May	Georgia, Türkiye, Uzbekistan, Sri Lanka's east coast	Wildflowers and mild temperatures; projected Eid Al Adha break
June	Georgia's mountains, Europe, Bali, Kenya	Escape the heat; Bali is dry and sunny
July	Kenya (Great Migration), Salalah, Europe, Georgia	The wildebeest herds typically reach the Maasai Mara; Salalah turns green
August	Kenya, Zanzibar, Salalah, Sri Lanka's east coast	Peak migration and dry season in East Africa
September	Kenya, Bali, Türkiye's coast, the Seychelles late in the month	The Mediterranean is still warm; the migration continues

Source check: [ESTIMATE] Seasonal guidance is general climate knowledge, not an official forecast. Great Migration timing varies year to year.

Plan around the 2026/27 long weekends

Short answer: The confirmed National Day holiday on Wednesday 2 and Thursday 3 December 2026 becomes a five-day break if you take Friday 4 December as leave. Eid Al Adha, projected for mid-May 2027, is usually the longest break of the year.

UAE public holidays apply to both the public and private sectors under Cabinet Resolution No. 27 of 2024. Islamic holidays depend on moon sighting, so the 2027 dates below are projections, confirmed only shortly before each holiday. The Cabinet can also move non-Eid holidays to the start or end of the week.

Holiday	Date	What it gives you	Escape idea
Eid Al Etihad (National Day)	Wednesday 2 and Thursday 3 December 2026 (set in the official calendar)	Take Friday 4 December as leave for five days, Wednesday to Sunday. MOE schools also close on Friday 4 December	Maldives, Sri Lanka or Gudauri's early ski season
New Year's Day	Friday 1 January 2027 (fixed)	Three-day weekend	Oman road trip, Baku or a UAE escape
Eid Al Fitr	Projected around Tuesday 9 to Friday 12 March 2027	A long weekend or more, depending on the moon	Uzbekistan, Jordan or Egypt
Arafat Day and Eid Al Adha	Projected around Saturday 15 to Tuesday 18 May 2027	Usually the longest break of the year	Georgia, Türkiye or Sri Lanka's east coast
Islamic New Year	Projected early June 2027	Possible long weekend	Tbilisi or Baku
Prophet's Birthday	Projected mid-August 2027	Possible long weekend	Salalah in the khareef

Source check: [OFFICIAL] National Day and New Year dates per Cabinet Resolution No. 27 of 2024. [ESTIMATE] 2027 Hijri dates are projections until the UAE Government announces them.

Families get the best trips where public holidays and school holidays overlap. Check term dates in our UAE School Holiday Calendar 2026-2027. Staying home for a big event instead? The UAE Events Calendar shows what is on.

Visas and pre-arrival forms: what UAE residents need to know

Short answer: Your passport decides your visa rules, not your Emirates ID. Two people on the same flight with the same UAE residence can face completely different entry rules. A UAE residence permit only changes the answer for a handful of countries, and in 2026 most popular destinations also require a digital form, levy or insurance before you fly.

Where UAE residence actually helps

Destination	What UAE residents can get	Key condition
Georgia	Visa-free entry for up to 90 days in any 180 days	Residence permit valid on entry and exit; stricter rules for 17 nationalities
Saudi Arabia	Tourist eVisa for GCC residents of all professions	Residence permit typically valid for at least three months
Oman	GCC resident visa on arrival or eVisa, OMR 5, 28 days	Occupation on your Emirates ID must be on the approved list

Pre-arrival forms, levies and insurance (checked 18 October 2026)

Destination	What you must do before arrival	Cost
Maldives	IMUGA Traveller Declaration within 96 hours of arrival, one per traveller	Free
Thailand	Thailand Digital Arrival Card (TDAC) within 72 hours of arrival	Free
Indonesia and Bali	All Indonesia arrival card, plus the Bali tourist levy	Levy IDR 150,000 per person
Seychelles	Travel Authorisation via the Seychelles Electronic Border System	Paid
Sri Lanka	Electronic Travel Authorization (ETA)	Free for 40 nationalities since 25 May 2026
Kenya	Electronic Travel Authorisation (eTA), including infants	Paid
Mauritius	All-in-One Travel Form, carry the QR code	Free
Zanzibar	Government inbound travel insurance from the Zanzibar Insurance Corporation	USD 44 per adult
Georgia	Health and accident insurance of at least 30,000 GEL for the whole stay	Your own policy
United Kingdom	Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA) for most visa-exempt visitors	GBP 20

Use official sites only. Copycat "visa" and "arrival card" websites charge for forms that are free on the government portal. Every link in this guide goes to an official source.

Your 60-second pre-trip checklist

- **Passport validity.** Many destinations want six months left on your passport at entry. Check every family member, especially children, whose passports expire faster.
- **Visa by passport.** Confirm the rule for each passport in your group on the official portal linked in each destination below.
- **Pre-arrival forms.** Complete them inside the right window (for example 96 hours for the Maldives, 72 hours for Thailand). Most need one form per person, children included.
- **Insurance.** Georgia and Zanzibar make insurance an entry condition. Elsewhere, check whether your UAE health plan covers you abroad before assuming it does.
- **Your UAE residence.** Make sure your residence visa is valid for your return and you will not be outside the UAE for more than six months.
- **Travel bans and fines.** Unpaid fines, debts or open cases can lead to a travel ban. Dubai residents can check through the Dubai Police app; Abu Dhabi residents through the Abu Dhabi Judicial Department's Estafser service.
- **Flight status on the day.** Check your airline's app before leaving home. In 2026 schedules can change at short notice.
- **Pets and home.** Book boarding or a sitter early for school holidays and Eid, when spaces sell out.

Short-haul escapes from the UAE: under about four hours

These are the escapes that fit a Thursday-to-Saturday or a three-day public holiday weekend without wrecking the following week.

1. Oman: the road trip on your doorstep

In one line: The easiest escape from the UAE, with wadis, mountains, forts and fjords a drive or a one-hour flight away.

- **Best time:** October to April for northern Oman and Musandam.
- **Getting there:** About an hour by air to Muscat, or roughly five hours by road from Dubai including the border. Musandam is much closer from Ras Al Khaimah and the northern emirates.
- **Wow moment:** Swimming through a narrow gorge into the hidden cave pool at Wadi Shab, or watching dolphins chase your dhow through the fjords of Musandam.
- **Why go:** The Hajar mountains, Nizwa's fort and Friday goat market, Muscat's Mutrah Corniche and souk, Jebel Akhdar's terraced villages and the Musandam fjords.
- **Perfect long weekend:** Day one, drive to Muscat via the coast and watch sunset at Mutrah Corniche. Day two, Wadi Shab and the Bimmah Sinkhole. Day three, Nizwa fort and souk, then home.

Before you fly or drive:

- **Visa-free entry:** Nationals of more than 100 countries can enter Oman without a visa for up to 14 days. This cannot be extended or converted into residence, and conditions such as a hotel booking, return ticket and health insurance can apply.
- **GCC resident visa:** If your passport is not on that list, you can usually get a 28-day GCC resident visa on arrival or as an eVisa for OMR 5, provided the occupation printed on your Emirates ID is on the Royal Oman Police approved list. The list was expanded on 31 July 2026 but still excludes many jobs. Officers check the printed occupation, so update an outdated job title before you travel.
- **Driving:** Confirm your car insurance covers Oman before you reach the border, carry your vehicle registration (Mulkiya), and budget for the UAE exit fee of AED 35 per person at land borders.

Official sources: Royal Oman Police eVisa portal and Oman Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

2. Salalah, Oman: green and cool in the khareef

In one line: The closest genuinely cool, green summer escape to the UAE.

- **Best time:** Roughly July to September, when the khareef (southwest monsoon) brings mist, drizzle and waterfalls.
- **Getting there:** About two hours by air from Dubai or Abu Dhabi. Peak khareef weekends and Islamic holidays sell out early.
- **Wow moment:** Driving through mist into green hills and waterfalls in August, while the rest of the Gulf bakes.
- **Why go:** Wadi Darbat's waterfalls, the blowholes at Al Mughsail, frankincense trees and souks, and temperatures well below the Gulf summer.
- **Perfect long weekend:** Wadi Darbat and Ayn Athum on day one, the Mughsail blowholes and the coast road on day two, Al Baleed and the frankincense souk before flying home.

Before you fly: The same Oman entry rules apply as for northern Oman (see escape 1).

Official source: Royal Oman Police eVisa portal.

3. AlUla and the Red Sea, Saudi Arabia

In one line: Nabataean tombs, desert canyons and stargazing, two and a half hours away when flights are running.

> **Current disruption, 16 October 2026:** flydubai halted its AlUla, Red Sea International, Riyadh and other Saudi services, Emirates cancelled its Saudi departures on 15 October, and Riyadh airport suspended operations to 17 October, with no fixed restart dates. Do not book a short AlUla break until schedules are stable, and use fully flexible fares when you do.

- **Best time:** October to March.
- **Getting there:** About two and a half hours direct when seasonal services operate, or via Riyadh or Jeddah.
- **Wow moment:** Standing in front of the carved tombs of Hegra, Saudi Arabia's first UNESCO World Heritage site, as the sandstone turns gold at sunset.
- **Why go:** Rock art, canyon hikes, hot-air balloons over the oasis, the Old Town and a fast-growing Red Sea coast.
- **Perfect long weekend:** Hegra by day and the Old Town by night, then a canyon hike or balloon flight before flying home.

Before you fly:

- GCC citizens need no visa. Other UAE residents can apply online for the Saudi tourist eVisa as GCC residents, now open to residents of all professions. Your residence permit typically needs at least three months' validity and your passport six months.
- Check your airline and your government's travel advice immediately before booking and again before travelling.

Official source: Saudi eVisa official portal.

4. Jordan: Petra and Wadi Rum

In one line: One of the world's great ancient cities and a Mars-like desert, a three-hour flight away.

- **Best time:** March to May and September to November. Summer is very hot in Petra and Wadi Rum; winter nights are cold.
- **Getting there:** About three hours to Amman, then around three hours by road to Petra. Some travellers fly into Aqaba instead.
- **Wow moment:** Walking the narrow Siq until the Treasury appears, then sleeping under the stars in a Wadi Rum camp.
- **Why go:** Petra, Wadi Rum, floating in the Dead Sea and Amman's food scene.
- **Perfect long weekend:** Fly to Amman and drive to Petra, spend a full day in Petra, then a night in Wadi Rum before driving back.

Before you fly:

- Rules depend on your passport. The Jordan Pass bundles Petra and other site entry fees and, for many nationalities, waives the visa fee if you stay a minimum number of nights. Check the conditions on the official site.

Official source: Official Jordan Pass.

5. Georgia: mountains, wine and Tbilisi's old town

In one line: The best-value mountain escape from the UAE, and the region's closest ski resort.

- **Best time:** May to June and September to October for walking and wine. December to March for skiing at Gudauri.
- **Getting there:** About three hours fifteen minutes to Tbilisi.
- **Wow moment:** The first view of Gergeti Trinity Church below the snowy peak of Mount Kazbek, about three hours' drive from Tbilisi.
- **Why go:** Cobbled old Tbilisi and its sulphur baths, Kakheti's wine cellars, the high Caucasus and generous Georgian food.
- **Perfect long weekend:** Tbilisi old town and sulphur baths, a day trip to Kazbegi along the Georgian Military Highway, and a final day tasting in Kakheti.

Before you fly:

- Georgia's embassy in the UAE states that holders of a UAE residence permit can enter visa-free for 90 days in any 180-day period. The permit must be valid on entry and exit, and your passport needs at least 90 days' validity.
- **Important exception:** citizens of 17 countries, including Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nigeria, Ghana, Ethiopia and Morocco, can only use the UAE residence route with a multiple-entry permit that has at least one year left on entry. Check the full list on the embassy page.
- **Mandatory since 1 January 2026:** every tourist needs health and accident insurance covering the whole stay, with at least 30,000 GEL of cover, in Georgian or English.

Official sources: Embassy of Georgia to the UAE and Georgia consular portal.

6. Azerbaijan: Baku and the Caspian

In one line: A stylish Caspian city break under three hours away, with a mountain side at Gabala.

- **Best time:** April to June and September to October. Summers are hot and winters windy and cold.
- **Getting there:** About two hours forty-five minutes to Baku.
- **Wow moment:** Watching the Flame Towers light up from the Baku Boulevard after a day in the walled Old City.
- **Why go:** The UNESCO-listed Old City, the Heydar Aliyev Centre, the burning hillside at Yanar Dag and day trips to the mud volcanoes of Gobustan.
- **Perfect long weekend:** Old City and the Boulevard on day one, Gobustan and Yanar Dag on day two, the Heydar Aliyev Centre before flying home.

Before you fly: Rules depend on your passport. Many nationalities apply online through the official ASAN e-Visa system before travelling.

Official source: Official ASAN e-Visa.

7. Uzbekistan: the Silk Road, three hours away

In one line: Blue-tiled Silk Road cities linked by fast trains, and some of the warmest welcomes in Asia.

- **Best time:** April to May and September to October. Summers are very hot and winters cold.
- **Getting there:** About three hours to Tashkent or Samarkand.
- **Wow moment:** Walking into the Registan in Samarkand at dusk, surrounded on three sides by madrasas that have stood for centuries.
- **Why go:** Samarkand, Bukhara and walled Khiva, high-speed trains between them, superb bread and plov.
- **Perfect five days:** Tashkent's metro and bazaar, the high-speed train to Samarkand for the Registan and Shah-i-Zinda, then on to Bukhara's old town.

Before you fly:

- Citizens of more than 90 countries, including the UAE, UK, most of the EU and the United States, can enter visa-free for up to 30 days. Others can apply online for an e-visa, typically processed within a few working days.
- Visitors must register their accommodation within three days of arrival. Hotels usually do this and give you a slip. Keep every slip until you leave.

Official sources: Uzbekistan e-visa portal and Ministry of Foreign Affairs visa information.

8. Egypt: pyramids, Tutankhamun and the Red Sea

In one line: The pyramids and the Grand Egyptian Museum are a four-hour flight away, with world-class Red Sea diving as a bonus.

- **Best time:** October to April.
- **Getting there:** About four hours to Cairo. Hurghada, Sharm El Sheikh and Luxor also have direct flights from the UAE.
- **Wow moment:** Seeing Tutankhamun's complete treasure displayed together at the Grand Egyptian Museum, with the pyramids of Giza just outside.
- **Why go:** Giza and Islamic Cairo, a Nile cruise between Luxor and Aswan, and diving at Hurghada and Sharm El Sheikh.
- **Perfect long weekend:** A morning at the pyramids, an afternoon in the Grand Egyptian Museum, then Islamic Cairo and Khan el-Khalili by night.

Before you fly:

- The Grand Egyptian Museum fully opened to the public in November 2025 and sells out on busy days. Book tickets in advance through the museum's official website only.
- Visa rules depend on your passport. Check whether you qualify for an e-Visa or a visa on arrival before you travel.

Official source: Egypt e-Visa portal.

9. Maldives: the classic short-haul luxury escape

In one line: Overwater villas and house reefs four hours from Dubai, with good-value guesthouses as a real alternative to resorts.

- **Best time:** December to April is the dry season. May to October brings the southwest monsoon, lower prices and manta season in some atolls.
- **Getting there:** About four hours to Malé.
- **Wow moment:** Snorkelling alongside feeding manta rays in Baa Atoll, or waking up to reef sharks cruising past your villa steps.
- **Why go:** House reefs, some of the Indian Ocean's best diving, and local-island guesthouses at a fraction of resort prices.
- **Perfect four days:** Seaplane or speedboat to your island, a sunrise snorkel on the house reef, a sandbank picnic and a sunset dolphin cruise.

Before you fly:

- Every nationality receives a free 30-day tourist visa on arrival with a confirmed booking, a return ticket and sufficient funds.
- **Mandatory:** submit the free Traveller Declaration on the official IMUGA portal within 96 hours before arrival. Every traveller needs their own form, including children and babies.
- Budget for the green tax: USD 12 per person per night at resorts and larger hotels, USD 6 at smaller guesthouses on inhabited islands. Children under two are exempt.

Official sources: Maldives Immigration and IMUGA Traveller Declaration.

Mid-haul escapes: four and a half to seven hours

Worth a week, or a long Eid break. Most of these have their best weather during the UAE's spring, winter or summer school holidays.

10. Sri Lanka: temples, tea country and wild coastlines

In one line: Excellent value, very family-friendly, and free to enter for many UAE residents' passports since May 2026.

- **Best time:** December to March for the west and south coasts. April or May to September for the east coast.
- **Getting there:** About four and a half hours to Colombo.
- **Wow moment:** Leaning out of the hill-country train as it crosses the Nine Arch Bridge through emerald tea estates.
- **Why go:** Sigiriya rock fortress, Kandy, leopards at Yala, whales off Mirissa and surf at Arugam Bay.
- **Perfect week:** Sigiriya and Dambulla, Kandy, the train to Ella, a safari at Yala, then beach days on the south coast.

Before you fly:

- An Electronic Travel Authorization (ETA) is required before arrival for all foreign nationals.
- Since 25 May 2026, nationals of 40 countries, including the UAE, UK, India, Australia, the United States and several GCC states, get the 30-day tourist ETA free of charge. Everyone else pays the standard fee.

Official sources: Sri Lanka ETA portal and Department of Immigration and Emigration.

11. Seychelles: granite beaches and giant tortoises

In one line: Some of the world's most beautiful beaches, four and a half hours from the UAE with direct flights from both Dubai and Abu Dhabi.

- **Best time:** April to May and October to November, when the trade winds change and the sea is usually calmest.
- **Getting there:** About four and a half hours to Mahé. Emirates flies from Dubai and Etihad from Abu Dhabi.
- **Wow moment:** Cycling across La Digue to Anse Source d'Argent, where pink granite boulders frame the clearest water you will ever see.
- **Why go:** Vallée de Mai on Praslin (a UNESCO World Heritage site), giant Aldabra tortoises and beaches that feel far from anywhere.
- **Perfect week:** Mahé's market and hiking trails, the ferry to Praslin for Vallée de Mai and Anse Lazio, then two slow days on La Digue.

Before you fly:

- No visa is needed. A free Visitor's Permit is issued on arrival for up to three months.
- **Mandatory:** every traveller must obtain a paid Travel Authorisation before departure through the official Seychelles Electronic Border System or the Seychelles E-Border app.

Official sources: Seychelles Electronic Border System and Seychelles Immigration.

12. Zanzibar: spice island beaches and Stone Town

In one line: White-sand beaches and a UNESCO-listed old town, easy to combine with a mainland Tanzania safari.

- **Best time:** June to October and December to February. March to May is the long rainy season.
- **Getting there:** About five hours direct.
- **Wow moment:** Sailing a traditional dhow at sunset off Nungwi, then eating fresh seafood at the Forodhani Gardens night market.
- **Why go:** Stone Town's streets, spice farms, snorkelling at Mnemba and the east-coast beaches.
- **Perfect week:** Two nights in Stone Town with a spice farm tour, then the east coast for Mnemba snorkelling and beach days.

Before you fly:

- Tanzania requires a visa for many nationalities, available as an e-Visa or on arrival depending on your passport.
- **Mandatory in Zanzibar since October 2024:** buy the government inbound travel insurance from the Zanzibar Insurance Corporation before you travel. It costs USD 44 per adult for up to 92 days, with a reduced child rate. Your own travel insurance does not replace it.
- **Adding a mainland safari?** Mainland Tanzania published its own mandatory inbound insurance regulations on 4 September 2026 (also USD 44 for up to 92 days, through the National Insurance Corporation). No enforcement date had been announced at our check, and the Zanzibar policy is not automatically accepted on the mainland, so a combined trip may need both. Check before you book.

Official sources: Visit Zanzibar insurance portal and Tanzania Immigration e-Visa.

13. Kenya: the Great Migration and the Indian Ocean coast

In one line: Classic safari five hours from the UAE, timed perfectly for the UAE summer holidays.

- **Best time:** July to October for the migration in the Maasai Mara. January to February is also dry and excellent for safari.
- **Getting there:** About five hours to Nairobi.
- **Wow moment:** Watching thousands of wildebeest plunge into the Mara River during the Great Migration.
- **Why go:** The Maasai Mara, elephants beneath Kilimanjaro at Amboseli, and white-sand beaches at Diani and Watamu.
- **Perfect week:** Fly or drive to the Maasai Mara for three nights of game drives, then fly to the coast for beach time at Diani.

Before you fly:

- **Mandatory:** every visitor, including infants and children, needs an approved Electronic Travel Authorisation (eTA) before the journey starts. Kenya's immigration service says applications are processed within three working days, so apply well ahead, on the official portal only.

Official sources: Kenya eTA official portal and Kenya Directorate of Immigration Services.

14. Türkiye: Istanbul, Cappadocia and the Turquoise Coast

In one line: Two continents, world-class food and a hundred balloons at dawn, under five hours away.

- **Best time:** April to June and September to November. Istanbul in winter is atmospheric and quieter.
- **Getting there:** About four hours forty-five minutes to Istanbul.
- **Wow moment:** Drifting over Cappadocia's fairy chimneys at sunrise.
- **Why go:** Istanbul's mosques, bazaars and Bosphorus ferries, Cappadocia's cave hotels and beach towns from Bodrum to Antalya.
- **Perfect week:** Three days in Istanbul, a short domestic flight to Cappadocia for two nights and a balloon flight, then the coast.

Before you fly:

- Rules vary widely by passport. Many nationalities are visa-exempt, some can use an e-Visa and others need a consular visa.
- Only use the official e-Visa site. Copycat sites charge extra.

Official source: Republic of Türkiye official e-Visa.

15. Thailand: temples, street food and island hopping

In one line: Superb for families and very good value, but the visa-free rules changed on 15 September 2026.

- **Best time:** November to March for Bangkok, the north and the Andaman coast (Phuket, Krabi). Koh Samui's wettest months are usually October to December.
- **Getting there:** About six hours to Bangkok, with direct flights to Phuket too.
- **Wow moment:** A longtail boat ride through the limestone karsts of Krabi or Phang Nga Bay.
- **Why go:** Bangkok's temples and food scene, old-city Chiang Mai and islands from Phuket and Krabi to Koh Samui.
- **Perfect week:** Two days of temples and street food in Bangkok, then five on the Andaman coast island hopping from Krabi.

Before you fly:

- **Rules changed on 15 September 2026.** Thailand ended its 60-day visa exemption. Citizens of 60 countries and territories, including the UAE, UK, US, Australia, India and all EU states, now get a 30-day visa-free stay for tourism, which an immigration officer may extend once by up to 30 days.
- **New limit:** visa-exempt entries are capped at two per calendar year for most nationalities. Frequent visitors should plan accordingly.
- Visa on arrival is now limited to Azerbaijan, Belarus and Serbia. If your passport is not on the exemption list, apply for a Thai e-Visa before you fly.
- **Mandatory:** complete the free Thailand Digital Arrival Card (TDAC) within 72 hours before arrival.

Official sources: Thailand Digital Arrival Card and Thai e-Visa.

16. Mauritius: lagoons, mountains and an underwater waterfall

In one line: Calm lagoons, mountain hikes and a warm food culture, ideal for families and honeymooners.

- **Best time:** May to December is cooler and drier. January to March is hotter, with a cyclone risk.
- **Getting there:** About six and a half hours direct.
- **Wow moment:** A helicopter or seaplane flight over Le Morne, where sand currents create the famous "underwater waterfall" illusion.
- **Why go:** Black River Gorges National Park, Chamarel's seven-coloured earth and a mix of Creole, Indian, Chinese and French food.
- **Perfect week:** Lagoon days on the east coast, a catamaran to Île aux Cerfs, then the southwest for Le Morne and Chamarel.

Before you fly:

- Many passports, including the UAE's, are visa-free. Others get a visa on arrival or must apply in advance, depending on nationality.
- **Mandatory:** every traveller must complete the free Mauritius All-in-One Travel Form before arrival and carry the QR code.
- Carry a return ticket, your hotel booking and proof of funds.

Official source: Mauritius Passport and Immigration Office.

17. Vietnam: Ha Long Bay, lantern towns and street food

In one line: Some of the best street food on earth and a huge variety of landscapes, with an e-Visa open to every nationality.

- **Best time:** It depends on the region. The south is best from December to April; the north from October to December and March to April.
- **Getting there:** About six hours forty-five minutes to Hanoi or Ho Chi Minh City.
- **Wow moment:** Waking up on an overnight cruise among the limestone islands of Ha Long Bay.
- **Why go:** Hanoi's old quarter, Hoi An's lantern-lit streets, the Mekong Delta and Phu Quoc's beaches.
- **Perfect ten days:** Hanoi and Ha Long Bay, a flight to Da Nang for Hoi An, then Ho Chi Minh City or Phu Quoc to finish.

Before you fly:

- Vietnam's e-Visa is open to all nationalities, for up to 90 days, single or multiple entry.
- Some passports, including the UK and much of the EU, are visa-exempt for up to 45 days. The US, Canada, Australia and India are not on the exemption list.
- Phu Quoc Island allows visa-free stays of up to 30 days for visitors arriving directly from abroad and staying on the island.
- Ho Chi Minh City's airport has piloted a digital arrival card since April 2026. Check before flying into SGN.

Official source: Vietnam e-Visa (Immigration Department).

Long-haul escapes for Eid and school holidays

These need at least five nights to justify the flight. Save them for Eid Al Adha, the winter break or the summer holidays.

18. Bali, Indonesia: rice terraces, temples and wellness

In one line: Yoga, surf and rice terraces at every budget, best during the UAE summer.

- **Best time:** April to October is the dry season.
- **Getting there:** About nine hours.
- **Wow moment:** Hiking Mount Batur in the dark to watch the sun rise over the crater lake.
- **Why go:** Ubud's rice terraces and temples, surf at Uluwatu and Canggu, and wellness retreats.
- **Perfect ten days:** Ubud for culture and rice terraces, the Mount Batur sunrise, then Uluwatu's clifftop beaches and temple.

Before you fly:

- Many nationalities can buy a Visa on Arrival or apply online for an e-VOA. The fee is IDR 500,000 for a 30-day stay, extendable once.
- **Mandatory:** complete the free All Indonesia arrival card shortly before arrival.
- **Mandatory in Bali:** pay the tourist levy of IDR 150,000 per person, children included, through the official Love Bali portal or on arrival.

Official sources: Indonesia e-Visa and Love Bali levy portal.

19. Europe in the summer

In one line: Swapping 45°C for an alpine lake you can actually swim in, but allow extra time for Europe's new border systems.

- **Best time:** June to September for the mountains and lakes; May and October for cities with fewer crowds.
- **Getting there:** About six to eight hours to most European capitals.
- **Wow moment:** Your first swim in a cold, clear alpine lake in July.

What changed in 2026:

- **EES is live.** The EU's Entry/Exit System has been fully operational across all Schengen countries since 10 April 2026. Non-EU travellers have their fingerprints (from age 12) and a facial image recorded at the first crossing, replacing passport stamps. Allow extra time at the border.
- **ETIAS is not open yet.** The EU has said ETIAS, the travel authorisation for visa-exempt travellers, will start in the last quarter of 2026 with the date announced in advance, but at our 18 October 2026 check applications had not opened and reports suggest it may slip into 2027. When it launches it is expected to cost EUR 20 and last three years. **Do not apply anywhere until the official EU portal opens.**
- **UK ETA:** most visa-exempt visitors to the UK need an Electronic Travel Authorisation, which has cost GBP 20 since 8 April 2026.
- **Schengen and UK visas:** if your passport needs one, apply early. Summer appointments in the UAE book up fast.

Official sources: Travel to Europe (EES and ETIAS) and GOV.UK ETA.

20. Japan: the bucket-list long-haul

In one line: A once-in-a-decade trip for a long Eid or school break, with cherry blossom in spring and autumn colour in November.

- **Best time:** Late March to April for cherry blossom, October to November for autumn colour. Summer is hot and humid.
- **Getting there:** About nine and a half hours to Tokyo.
- **Wow moment:** Kyoto's temples in autumn colour, or a bullet train past Mount Fuji.
- **Timing tip:** Eid Al Fitr 2027 is projected for early March, usually a little early for Tokyo's cherry blossom, which tends to peak in late March or early April.

Before you fly: Japan's visa waiver depends on your passport. Check eligibility with Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Official source: Japan MOFA visa information.

UAE escapes with no flight needed

Sometimes the best holiday is a two-hour drive, and in 2026 it is the smart choice when flights are expensive or schedules uncertain. All five work best from October to April.

21. Hatta, Dubai

Kayaking on the dam, mountain-bike trails, the Hatta Heritage Village and mountain cabins and glamping, about 90 minutes from Dubai. Visit Dubai

22. Jebel Jais, Ras Al Khaimah

The UAE's highest peak, typically several degrees cooler than the coast, with hiking trails, viewpoints and adventure activities, plus beach resorts below. Visit Ras Al Khaimah

23. Fujairah and the east coast

Snorkelling and diving around Snoopy Island, quieter beaches on the Gulf of Oman and a slower pace, about 90 minutes to two hours from Dubai.

24. Liwa, Abu Dhabi

The towering dunes of the Empty Quarter at the edge of the Rub' al Khali, with desert resorts and camps. Best from November to March. Visit Abu Dhabi

25. Al Ain and Jebel Hafeet

UNESCO-listed oases, forts and museums, and the winding drive up Jebel Hafeet, the UAE's second-highest peak.

City staycation bonus: Saadiyat and Yas islands in Abu Dhabi combine beaches, theme parks and the cultural district around Louvre Abu Dhabi.

Travelling with children? See Things to Do With Kids in the UAE, and the UAE Discounts & Savings Guide for memberships and offers that cut staycation costs. Driving to the mountains or Oman? Our UAE Driving and Vehicle Guide covers insurance and rental basics.

Best-value escapes from the UAE

Short answer: Georgia, Uzbekistan, Sri Lanka, Egypt, Vietnam, Azerbaijan and an Oman road trip usually give UAE residents the most holiday for their money, because flights are short and daily costs on the ground are low.

- **Travel outside the school holidays.** Fares from the UAE spike around Eid, National Day and school breaks. A Tuesday departure in a non-holiday week is often far cheaper.
- **Check all five airports.** Dubai International (DXB), Zayed International (AUH), Sharjah (SHJ), Dubai World Central (DWC) and Ras Al Khaimah (RKT) can have very different fares for the same destination.
- **Mix carriers.** Low-cost flydubai and Air Arabia cover many short-haul routes; compare against Emirates and Etihad sales.
- **Choose the shoulder season.** The Maldives in May and October, or Georgia in early June, can cost much less than peak months with good weather.
- **Drive.** Oman, Hatta, Jebel Jais and Fujairah cost nothing to reach beyond fuel and, for Oman, the border fees.

12 bucket-list experiences within ten hours of home

1. Snorkel with manta rays in the Maldives.
2. Watch the Great Migration cross the Mara River in Kenya.
3. Float over Cappadocia in a hot-air balloon at dawn.
4. Stand in the Registan in Samarkand at dusk.
5. See Tutankhamun's full treasure at the Grand Egyptian Museum.
6. Cross the Nine Arch Bridge by train in Sri Lanka's tea country.
7. Sleep on a boat in Ha Long Bay, Vietnam.
8. Walk the Siq to Petra's Treasury in Jordan.
9. Hike to Gergeti Trinity Church below Mount Kazbek in Georgia.
10. Meet giant tortoises and swim at Anse Source d'Argent in the Seychelles.
11. Watch Salalah turn green in the khareef while the Gulf bakes.
12. Climb Mount Batur for sunrise in Bali.

Flying from the UAE in 2026

Short answer: UAE airspace is open and the main airports are operating, but 2026 has brought regional airspace closures, cancellations and longer routings, especially on Gulf and Levant routes. Check your flight on the day and book flexible fares where you can.

Airports and airlines

Airport	Main airlines
Dubai International (DXB)	Emirates, flydubai and most foreign carriers
Zayed International, Abu Dhabi (AUH)	Etihad Airways, Air Arabia Abu Dhabi
Sharjah International (SHJ)	Air Arabia
Dubai World Central (DWC)	Low-cost and some seasonal services
Ras Al Khaimah International (RKT)	Air Arabia and selected carriers

- **Full-service:** Emirates from Dubai and Etihad Airways from Abu Dhabi.
- **Low-cost:** flydubai from Dubai and Air Arabia from Sharjah, Abu Dhabi and Ras Al Khaimah.
- Getting to the airport by Metro or bus? See our UAE Public Transport Guide.

Disruption in 2026: what to do

- **Check before you leave home.** Confirm every flight, including connections, in the airline's app on the day.
- **Arrive early.** During disruption, flydubai has advised arriving four hours before departure from DXB.
- **Book flexibly.** Choose fares that allow free changes, especially for Saudi Arabia and other regional routes.
- **Read your policy.** Check that your travel insurance covers cancellations and delays linked to conflict or airspace closures. Many policies exclude them.
- **Follow official advice.** Read your own government's travel advice for your destination, and follow UAE authority alerts.

> **Source check:** [REPORTED] Route suspensions reflect airline and airport notices reported on 11 September and 16 October 2026. Schedules can change daily.

Insurance, children, pets and sport

Travel insurance: the part people skip

- **Check your UAE health plan's geographic scope.** Some plans cover emergencies worldwide, some only regionally and some not at all abroad.
- **Travel insurance is different from health insurance.** It usually adds cancellation, delays, baggage and repatriation.
- **Two destinations make insurance an entry condition:** Georgia (at least 30,000 GEL of cover) and Zanzibar (the government policy, USD 44). Mainland Tanzania has published similar rules.
- **Check conflict exclusions.** In 2026, disruption cover is worth reading closely.
- Reviewing cover that works in the UAE and abroad? Our health insurance partner Pacific Prime compares international plans. *Pacific Prime is a Relocate2UAE partner.* More on UAE health cover in our UAE Healthcare Guide.

Travelling with children

- **One form per child.** The Maldives needs a separate IMUGA declaration for every traveller, and Kenya's eTA applies to infants too.
- **Children pay levies.** Bali's levy applies per person, and Zanzibar's insurance has a child rate.
- **Passports expire faster.** Check children's passports first, and remember many countries want six months' validity.
- **One parent travelling alone?** Some countries and airlines ask for a consent letter from the other parent. Carry a signed letter and a copy of their passport.
- **Time it with term dates.** Use the UAE School Holiday Calendar to find the overlap with public holidays.

Pets while you travel

Boarding kennels and pet sitters fill up fast over Eid, National Day and the school holidays, so book as soon as your dates are fixed. Our UAE Pet Relocation Guide covers pet services, vets and typical boarding costs.

Travelling for sport

Planning a trip around a race, a match or a tournament? Our partner ES Sport arranges sport travel and sporting experiences. *ES Sport is a Relocate2UAE partner.* For sport at home, see the UAE Sports & Recreation Guide.

Protect your UAE residency while you travel

Short answer: A standard UAE residence visa is at risk if you stay outside the country for more than six months (180 days). Golden Visa holders are exempt. If you are stuck abroad for a valid reason, you can apply for a return permit, but approval is discretionary.

- **The six-month rule.** Stays of more than 180 days outside the UAE can cancel a standard residence visa. Golden Visa holders are exempt. If you hold another long-term visa, check its rules in our UAE Visa & Immigration Guide.
- **If you get stuck abroad.** The Federal Authority for Identity, Citizenship, Customs and Ports Security (ICP) offers a permit for residents who have been outside the UAE for more than 180 days for a valid reason, such as study, work or medical treatment. You apply from outside the UAE and approval is at ICP's discretion. Dubai residents apply through GDRFA Dubai.
- **Renew before you go.** If your visa or Emirates ID is due for renewal while you are away, sort it before you leave. Travelling on a lapsed or in-process residence can complicate re-entry.
- **Long summers abroad.** Families spending the whole summer away should count the days carefully, especially if one parent stays behind.

If your situation is not straightforward, an immigration specialist such as our partner Davidson & Co. would be worth speaking to before you travel.

Official sources: ICP smart services and GDRFA Dubai. More detail in our UAE Visa & Immigration Guide.

Common mistakes UAE residents make when booking a holiday

- Assuming a UAE residence visa means visa-free travel, when the passport decides

- Forgetting a pre-arrival form, such as the Maldives IMUGA declaration or Thailand's TDAC, and being refused boarding
- Filling in "official" forms on copycat websites that charge for free services
- Booking Zanzibar without the mandatory government insurance
- Driving into Oman without checking the occupation on your Emirates ID or your car insurance
- Booking non-refundable fares on regional routes during 2026 disruption
- Leaving children's passports too close to expiry
- Spending more than six months outside the UAE on a standard residence visa
- Booking Eid trips on projected dates without a flexible option if the moon sighting moves the holiday
- Applying for ETIAS before the official EU portal has opened

Frequently asked questions

What are the best holiday destinations from the UAE?

For a long weekend: Oman, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Egypt and the Maldives, all within about four hours. For a week: Sri Lanka, the Seychelles, Kenya, Thailand and Mauritius. For a summer escape from the heat: Salalah, Georgia's mountains, Europe and Bali. With no flight: Hatta, Jebel Jais, Fujairah, Liwa and Al Ain.

Does my UAE residence visa let me travel visa-free?

Usually not on its own: your passport decides. A few countries give UAE residents extra routes, including Georgia (90 days in 180 for most nationalities), Saudi Arabia (tourist eVisa for GCC residents) and Oman (a GCC resident visa for approved professions). Always check the official portal for your passport.

Where can I travel from the UAE without a visa?

It depends entirely on your passport. For many residents the easiest options are the Maldives and the Seychelles (visa or permit on arrival for every nationality, though both need online forms), Georgia (visa-free with UAE residence for most nationalities) and Oman. Check your own passport on each destination's official portal.

What are the best long weekend trips from Dubai and Abu Dhabi?

Oman by road, Tbilisi, Baku and a UAE escape such as Hatta or Jebel Jais work well for three days. AlUla is excellent when flights are running. With four or five days, the Maldives, Uzbekistan, Egypt, Jordan and Sri Lanka are all within about four and a half hours.

Where can I fly from the UAE in under four hours?

Muscat (about one hour), Salalah (about two hours), AlUla (about two and a half hours direct when operating), Baku (about two hours forty-five minutes), Amman, Tashkent and Samarkand (about three hours), Tbilisi (about three hours fifteen minutes), Cairo and Malé (about four hours).

Where should I go in summer to escape the UAE heat?

Salalah during the khareef (roughly July to September), Georgia's mountains, Europe's lakes and Alps, Bali in its dry season and Kenya for the Great Migration. Salalah is the closest, at about two hours by air.

Where should I travel from the UAE in December?

The Maldives, Sri Lanka's south and west coasts, Thailand's Andaman coast and, for snow, Gudauri in Georgia. December is also perfect for Oman, Jordan and Egypt. The National Day holiday on 2 and 3 December 2026 gives a five-day break with one day of leave.

Which destinations need something done online before I fly?

In 2026: the Maldives (IMUGA declaration), Thailand (TDAC), Indonesia and Bali (All Indonesia card and Bali levy), the Seychelles (Travel Authorisation), Sri Lanka (ETA), Kenya (eTA), Mauritius (All-in-One Travel Form), the UK (ETA), Zanzibar (mandatory insurance) and Georgia (proof of insurance).

Which UAE public holiday gives the longest break in 2026/27?

Arafat Day and Eid Al Adha, projected for around 15 to 18 May 2027, usually give the longest run of days off. Eid Al Fitr, projected around 9 to 12 March 2027, is next. National Day, 2 and 3 December 2026, is set in the official calendar and gives a five-day window with Friday as leave.

Can UAE residents get a visa on arrival in Oman?

Yes, if the occupation on your Emirates ID is on the Royal Oman Police approved list. The GCC resident visa costs OMR 5 for 28 days, on arrival or as an eVisa. Nationals of more than 100 countries can also enter visa-free for up to 14 days.

Do UAE residents need a visa for Georgia?

Most do not. Georgia allows UAE residence permit holders to enter visa-free for 90 days in any 180 days. Citizens of 17 countries, including Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nigeria, need a multiple-entry UAE permit with at least a year left. Since January 2026 every tourist must also carry travel insurance.

Is the GCC unified tourist visa available yet?

Not at our 18 October 2026 check. The GCC Grand Tours Visa has been approved, and GCC officials said in September 2026 that it would launch soon, but no application process has opened. It is aimed mainly at visitors to the region rather than UAE residents.

Is it worth flying somewhere for just three days?

Yes, if the flight is short. Anything up to about four hours works for a Thursday-to-Saturday trip without wrecking the following week. Long-haul destinations such as Bali, Thailand and Japan need at least five nights to justify the travel time.

What is the khareef and when is it?

The khareef is the southwest monsoon that turns Salalah, in southern Oman, green and misty from roughly July to September, with temperatures well below the Gulf summer. It is the closest genuinely cool, green summer escape to the UAE.

Do I need travel insurance as a UAE resident?

It is compulsory for some destinations: Zanzibar requires the government policy and Georgia requires proof of insurance on entry. Elsewhere, your UAE health insurance may not cover you abroad, so a travel policy is worth having for medical cover, cancellation and delays. Check its conflict and disruption exclusions.

Can I stay outside the UAE all summer?

Most residents can, as long as they stay under six months (180 days) outside the UAE, which protects a standard residence visa. Golden Visa holders are exempt from the six-month rule. Make sure your visa and Emirates ID will not expire while you are away.

Can I travel while my UAE visa renewal is pending?

It is risky. If your residence is due for renewal while you are away, renew before you leave. Travelling on a lapsed or in-process residence can complicate re-entry. If in doubt, speak to an immigration specialist before booking.

Are flights from the UAE affected in 2026?

UAE airspace is open, but regional tensions have caused cancellations and longer routings during 2026. In mid-October 2026 most UAE flights to Saudi Arabia were suspended or cancelled. Check your airline's app on the day of travel and book flexible fares.

What are the cheapest holiday destinations from Dubai?

Georgia, Uzbekistan, Sri Lanka, Egypt, Azerbaijan and Vietnam usually offer the best value, with short flights and low daily costs. An Oman road trip or a UAE escape such as Hatta costs even less. Avoid Eid and school holiday peaks if price matters most.

Related Relocate2UAE guides

- UAE School Holiday Calendar 2026-2027: term dates and breaks to plan trips around
- UAE Events Calendar: what is on across the emirates if you stay home
- UAE Visa & Immigration Guide: residence visas, Golden Visa and the rules that protect your status while you travel
- Things to Do With Kids in the UAE: family days out across the seven emirates
- UAE Discounts & Savings Guide: memberships that cut travel and staycation costs
- UAE Healthcare Guide: what your health insurance covers
- UAE Public Transport Guide: getting to and from the airports
- UAE Pet Relocation Guide: vets, boarding and pet services
- UAE Sports & Recreation Guide: sport and activities at home
- UAE Culture & Customs Guide: public holidays, Ramadan and local etiquette

How we checked this guide

Every entry rule in this guide was checked on 18 October 2026 against the official government portal linked in its section, against official notices from embassies and ministries, or, where an official page could not be accessed, against at least two consistent recent reports. Flight times are approximate, seasonal advice is general climate guidance, and 2027 holiday dates are projections until the UAE Government confirms them. Airline disruption reflects notices reported up to 16 October 2026.

Spotted something out of date? Tell us at info@relocate2uae.com and we will check it.

Disclaimer

This guide is general information for UAE residents. It is not legal, immigration, insurance or travel advice. Entry rules, fees, flight schedules and security conditions change, sometimes without notice, and depend on your nationality and circumstances. Always confirm requirements with the relevant embassy, the official government portal and your airline before you book and before you travel, and read your own government's travel advice. Where your UAE residence status is in doubt, an immigration specialist such as our partner Davidson & Co. would be worth speaking to. Relocate2UAE is not a travel agent and does not sell flights, visas or holidays, and accepts no liability for any loss arising from reliance on this guide. Where we mention a partner, we say so. Photographs are illustrative.

Last checked 18 October 2026. Next scheduled review 15 November 2026.