

Al Ain's Top 10



1. Al Ain Oasis

Experience the 'Garden City' of Al Ain with a trip to its largest oasis, also recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, sprawling across 3,000 acres and providing a unique insight into the region's inhabitants, who began taming the desert 4,000 years ago. Enjoy a relaxing afternoon wandering the cool, shaded walkways that wind through around 147,000 date palms, before visiting the on-site Eco-Centre to learn all about the palm plantations and *falaj*, an ancient irrigation system that is still being used up to date.



2. Camel Market

Immerse yourself in the traditional Arabic culture with a visit to Al Ain's famous camel market, the only one remaining in the UAE. Watch traders haggle over camels each morning and get a closer look at the animal signifying the Emirati heritage. For an even more exciting experience, head down to the Al Maqam Track to cheer the camels on as they gallop around a specially made course and marvel at how these creatures reach such high speeds. Races normally take place on weekend mornings, with additional races on public holidays.

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3. Historic Forts

The city of Al Ain is surrounded by picturesque forts. Visitors can walk on glass-floored corridors above the ruins at [Qasr Al Muwaiji](#), overlooking the oasis city's date palm groves. The redeveloped [Al Qattara Fort](#) is home to a brilliant arts centre and gallery, offering modern exhibits and a variety of workshops. One of the largest in the UAE, [Al Jahili Fort](#), also hosts a permanent exhibition on British explorer Wilfred Thesiger - author of *Arabian Sands*, showcasing his travels in the Rub' al Khali desert with Emirati companions in the 1940s and 50s.



4. Authentic Museums

Delve deeper into Emirati culture and heritage with a visit to the city's museums. Visit [Al Ain Palace Museum](#) to learn more about the story of the ruling Al Nahyan family and tour the private rooms and gardens once occupied by the 'Father of the Nation'. Car lovers shouldn't miss the [Al Ain Classic Car Museum](#), featuring the evolution of automobiles in the UAE.

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5. Jebel Hafit

For stunning views of the city, drive, take a cab or, if you have the stamina, cycle up the winding highway to the top of Jebel Hafit, the emirate's highest peak, also a UNESCO World Heritage Site and home to unique archaeological sites and tombs dating back up to 8,000 years. Delve into the history at Hili Archaeological Park or take in the beautiful natural surroundings at the newly opened Jebel Hafit Desert Park, complete with several camping options – from luxury 'glamping' to traditional Bedouin-style tent camping.



6. Green Mubazzarah

At the base of Jebel Hafit is another natural treasure – underwater springs that rise to the surface to irrigate a wide expanse of green. Green Mubazzarah is a popular hotspot for picnics, adventurers trekking up the mountain and campers who can spend the night in tents at the base. Dip your feet in the natural hot springs, relax on the rolling grassy hillsides and splash in the central man-made lake, before treating yourself at one of the thermal baths, spas and eateries in the area. You can even stay overnight in a specialty chalet.

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7. Wadi Adventure

Water sport lovers need to try Wadi Adventure, the region's only man-made white water rafting, kayaking and surf facility built in the foothills of the majestic Jebel Hafit. The adventure park features three white water channels for rafting and kayaking, with an aerial adventure course, 200-meter long zip line, vertical climbing wall and a 14-meter high giant swing. The park also holds two records: the world's largest man-made surf wave standing at 3.3 metres and the world's longest kayaking channel, spanning at 1.7 kilometres.



8. Traditional Souks

Visit one of Al Ain's bustling souks to hunt for local souvenirs such as spices, perfumes, silks, henna, *dallah* (Arabian coffee pots) and observe the traditional way of running a business. Also known as the Central or Old Souk, the Al Ain Souk is a great place to explore, savour the local atmosphere and practise your bargaining skills. Wander the outdoor Souk Al Bawadi, the modern Souk Al Zafarana or look for the traditional handicrafts market that takes place at Souq Al Qattara every Thursday, Friday and Saturday from October to May.

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9. Hili Fun City

For a fun family day out, visit Hili Fun City, the Gulf's first theme park and Al Ain's flagship family entertainment destination. Newly renovated, the park boasts 28 attractions for all ages, an Olympic-sized skating rink, family show amphitheatre and picnic and play areas. An all-inclusive price of AED 60 runs from Wednesday to Saturday and on Mondays and Tuesdays a fee of AED 30 applies for access to the park and 25 attractions. Admission is free for children 0.89 metres (35 inches) and below.



10. Al Ain Zoo

Plan a family trip to Al Ain Zoo, the largest zoo in the Middle East and home to 4,000 animals and 180 different species, 30% of which are endangered. With an emphasis on animal safety and comfort, the zoo ensures that every animal is given enough space to happily roam. Book a safari experience on a Jeep for the ultimate wildlife experience! The park also houses the Sheikh Zayed Desert Learning Centre with five interactive galleries, showcasing earth sciences and the history of the region.

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