



A Guide to Dubai's Malls

Not just for shopping, Dubai's mega-malls offer activities galore. There's no better city than Dubai to find that perfect dress, exquisitely tailored suit or quirky memento. With an amazing network of malls in close proximity, you're sure to find what you're searching for. Most malls stay open until midnight, with hours extended even further during January's celebrated month-long retail festival. Here's our pick of Dubai's best malls for a little retail therapy.

The Dubai Mall | Ice-rink, aquarium, and luxury shopping

<http://dubaimall.com>

The world's largest mall, Dubai Mall has everything from clothing to shoes, souvenirs to entertainment and food all under one massive roof. There is also an Olympic-sized ice-skating rink, and the awesome Dubai Aquarium. Not to mention the 1000-plus retailers, which include high-street favourites such as Topshop, Zara and COS, and department stores Bloomingdale's and Galeries Lafayette. Luxury labels find their home in Fashion Avenue – a glossy section dedicated to high-end designers such as Chanel, Lanvin and Burberry, with the nearby Level Shoe District boasting 96,000 square feet of retail space and brands such as Nicholas Kirkwood, Saint Laurent Paris and Dior.

Mall of the Emirates | Ski slopes, penguins, and department stores

<http://malloftheemirates.com>

The city's second most-visited mall and celebrating its 10-year anniversary in 2015, Mall of the Emirates is much more than just a shopping centre. Home to the Ski Dubai slopes (which includes a colony of penguins), Magic Planet indoor entertainment centre to keep children happy, and Dubai Community Theatre and Art Centre for local and international performances, there's always something to do or see. Add in anchor department stores Harvey Nichols, Marks & Spencer, Centrepunkt and Debenhams, and the ultra-chic Fashion Dome for designer finds, for a memorable family day out.

Mercato Mall | Italian village-themed shopping mall

<http://mercatoshoppingmall.com>

Dubai's original themed mall, Mercato Mall mimics the sights and feel of a Renaissance-era Italian village for a fashionable day out with the girls. European-style archways and cobbled streets lead to open plazas. The covered central court complete with Italian countryside mural is the perfect place to sip an espresso (with a side of biscotti, of course) post-shop. Fashion dominates, with shoppers able to choose from international retailers such as Laura Ashley and Jack Wills and local boutiques including Zinzin. Peckish? There's a wealth of bakeries and confectioners to choose from, with Cakery Epicerie by Stephane Glacier a favourite with locals for a quick pick-me-up treat and Alison Nelson's Chocolate Bar the perfect option for a sneaky truffle and the city's creamiest hot chocolate.

Ibn Battuta | The world's largest themed mall

<http://ibnbattutamall.com>

Known for its exaggerated decor, Ibn Battuta Mall celebrates the travels of the Moroccan traveller of the same name. Each section of mall is named after one of countries he docked at during his travels in the 12th century. Egypt, Persia and Andalusia Courts are among the destinations featured, each decorated in idiosyncratic style – think elaborate tiling, a gigantic golden elephant, a high ceiling painted to resemble blue skies, and China's lush outdoor tea gardens. The centrepiece – an Eastern-style ship rolling through a fountain – finishes off the mall's over-the-top appeal, making it a fun-filled destination for adults and children alike. Interior design aside, Ibn Battuta is a treasure trove of fashion, lifestyle and sporting shops, with regular mall-wide in-store promotions and celebrations.

Wafi Mall | Authentic Arabian shopping

<http://wafi.com>

Housed in an instantly-recognisable pyramid-shaped tower, the iconic Wafi Mall specialises in quality Arabian goods, for an opulent shopping experience. A mall frequented by locals and Emiratis, visitors can immerse themselves in an Arabic shopping experience with Middle Eastern fashion boutiques offering the latest in male traditional dress, and burqas and abayas, perfect for wearing to visit one of Dubai's beautiful mosques. Or head to Salam, the UAE's independent department store, for household buys.

Dubai Marina Mall | International fashion and dining

<http://dubaimarinamall.com>

Sitting on the shores of the marina, Dubai Marina Mall offers a casual family shopping experience, with its variety of international retailers and an emphasis on affordable high-street fashion and beauty services in a relaxed atmosphere. There's plenty of choice for lunch, with options including Indian, Italian, Lebanese and bistro, all with outdoor al fresco seating along the water's edge and multiple coffee shops beneath the high-ceiling of the Dome at the heart of the mall. Or wander next door to the attached Pier 7 tower, which offers seven exciting new dining concepts, each with breezy terrace seating.

Dubai Outlet Mall | Designer bargain-hunting

<http://dubaioutletmall.com>

It might be a 30-minute or so drive from the CBD, but this the outlet mall is worth the trip for any dedicated bargain hunter. Here, sales run year-round, with plenty of bargains to be found from designer labels such as Diane von Furstenberg, Burberry and Marc Jacobs, homewares, electronics and perfumes. Prices are often slashed to 70% of the normal ticketed price.