



TRIP GLOBAL

4 Days in Dubai: A Day-by-Day Itinerary

Dubai, United Arab Emirates · January · 4 days

Tailored for families with children - includes child-friendly activities, interactive experiences, and family-appropriate options

Four days in Dubai with kids, mixing the Dubai Mall and Burj Khalifa with the old souks and a full day in the desert. Look forward to the sunset dune drive at Al Marmoom and an easy beach finish.

Open the interactive trip: live map, photos and links

Before you go:

Get a United Arab Emirates eSIM: data on landing

What this trip might cost, per person for 4 days, flights extra:

Budget \$380 · Mid-range \$710 · Comfort \$1,200

Opening hours, prices and transport change. Please double-check bookings and times before you go.

YOUR TRIP AT A GLANCE

1

DAY 1

Dubai Mall and Burj Khalifa

Downtown Dubai · 4 nights

2

DAY 2

Al Fahidi, the Spice Souk and Gold Souk

3

DAY 3

Al Marmoom Desert Safari

4

DAY 4

Jumeirah Beach and Burj Park

?

AFTER THE LAST DAY

Before you go: Dubai

Dubai Mall and Burj Khalifa

Arrival day: an easy start close to your stay

Sunrise 7:06 AM

Golden hour 5:17 PM

Sunset 5:51 PM

Your base for 4 nights: Downtown Dubai

Spend the day at Dubai Mall and Souk Al Bahar, go up Burj Khalifa At The Top, then have dinner at Khan Murjan.

GO

12:00 PM · 45 minutes

Dubai International Airport to Downtown Dubai

Take a taxi or Uber from Terminal 1 or 3 to your hotel in Downtown Dubai (20-30 km, 30-45 minutes depending on traffic). Cost is around 50-80 AED by taxi meter or 40-60 AED by Uber.

- Ride-sharing (Uber/Careem) · 25-35 minutes · \$15-25 per ride
- Airport taxi · 25-35 minutes · \$20-30 fixed rate
- Hotel transfer (if booked) · 25-35 minutes · \$25-40 per vehicle

[Book a transfer](#)

1



2:00 PM · 1 hour

Dubai Mall

Free · Open 10 AM-10 PM

Stretch your legs in the ground floor atrium and window-shop the entry hall without diving into the crowds. Kids love the central fountain area and spotting the aquarium tanks. 5-minute walk from most Downtown hotels.

Insider tip: Skip the upper floors today and use the restrooms near the main atrium before heading to the tower.

[Open in Google Maps >](#)

2



3:15 PM · 45 minutes

Souk Al Bahar

Free

This covered traditional market sits right next to the Dubai Mall with rugs, textiles, and souvenirs in a much quieter setting than the Old Town souks. A good warm-up for tomorrow's deeper dive. 2-minute walk from Dubai Mall.

Insider tip: Browse the rug and spice stalls on the upper level; vendors are used to families and less pushy than downtown.

[Open in Google Maps >](#)

DAY 1: DUBAI MALL AND BURJ KHALIFA (CONTINUED)

3



4:45 PM · 2 hours

[Book ahead](#)

Burj Khalifa At The Top

\$41 per person standard, \$51 with prime hours · Open 12 PM-11 PM (last entry 10 PM)

Take the lift to the 124th floor (or 148th for At The Top Lounge if you've booked it) and watch the city light up at sunset. Golden hour starts around 5:17 PM and lasts about 20 minutes. The view spans the Palm Jumeirah, the creek, and the desert beyond. Direct access from Dubai Mall.

Insider tip: Arrive by 4:45 PM to beat the evening rush and secure a spot at the glass for sunset. Book timed tickets online (124th floor around 200 AED per adult, 160 AED per child; slightly less if booked ahead).

[Book tickets](#)

[Open in Google Maps >](#)

4

7:00 PM · 1.5 hours

Khan Murjan Restaurant

\$22-41 per person for dinner · Open 5 PM-11:30 PM

Back on ground level in the Dubai Mall basement, this casual spot serves Levantine grills and mezze in a souk-style setting. Kids enjoy the wood-fired bread and simple kebabs. A short walk from the Burj Khalifa lift exit.

Insider tip: Order the za'atar chicken and hummus. No booking needed; arrive after 6:30 PM to avoid the lunch crowd spillover.

[Open in Google Maps >](#)

5



8:30 PM · 30 minutes

Downtown Dubai Promenade Evening Stroll

Free

Take a gentle walk along the waterfront path beside Burj Lake, lit up softly at night. The tower is floodlit, the air is cool, and kids can blow off steam before bed. 5-minute walk from Khan Murjan.

Insider tip: Head to the northern end of the promenade near the fire fountain for the clearest unobstructed view of the lit-up Burj Khalifa.

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If you land early (optional, close to your stay, before the plan above)

Al Fahidi Historical District: Narrow lanes, heritage houses, and a museum in a restored 1920s fort. 10 minutes by taxi from Downtown Dubai; peaceful in early morning.

Al Seef Waterfront: Restored traditional seafront promenade with heritage shops and cafes. 8 minutes by taxi; good for a quiet coffee before the day warms up.

[Open Day 1 as a route in Google Maps](#)

Where to stay in Downtown Dubai

Book accommodation in the Downtown Dubai core, within 5 minutes of the Dubai Mall or Burj Khalifa metro station. Easy walk to the tower, restaurants, and a quick ride to souks or the beach.

Rove Downtown Dubai

Budget · Hotel · \$

Budget-smart, clean, and ten minutes to Old Town via taxi. Good base for families.

[Book now](#)

[Google Maps >](#)

Rove Downtown

Budget · Hotel · \$

Budget-friendly, walkable to metro and taxis. No frills but clean rooms, good for families watching costs.

[Book now](#)

[Google Maps >](#)

Novotel Downtown Dubai

Mid-range · Hotel · \$\$

Walking distance to Burj Khalifa. Rooftop pool, family rooms, good breakfast buffet included.

[Book now](#)

[Google Maps >](#)

ibis Styles Dubai Downtown

Mid-range · Hotel · \$\$

Budget-friendly, near metro. Simple rooms, friendly staff, walking distance to fountains and souk.

[Book now](#)

[Google Maps >](#)

Pullman Dubai Downtown

Mid-range · Hotel · \$\$

Walking distance to souks and Burj Khalifa. Rooftop pool and family-friendly rooms.

[Book now](#)

[Google Maps >](#)

XVA Art Hotel

Mid-range · Guesthouse · \$\$

In Al Fahidi Historical District. Unique restored courtyard, quiet refuge from souk buzz.

[Book now](#)

[Google Maps >](#)

[All stays in Downtown Dubai](#)

[Holiday rentals](#)

Where to eat

Al Mallah

Lebanese · Lunch · \$

Casual spot near Old Town. Shawarma wraps and grilled chicken. Quick, filling, kid-friendly.

[Google Maps >](#)

Nusret Steakhouse

Turkish Steakhouse · Dinner · \$\$\$

Downtown Dubai. Theatric salt-bae cuts, sea bass, views. Pricey but worth the occasion meal.

[Google Maps >](#)

DAY 1: DUBAI MALL AND BURJ KHALIFA (CONTINUED)

TOURS & DAY TRIPS FROM DUBAI

4-5 HOURS

Desert Safari at Sunset

Dune bashing, camel rides, and a traditional camp dinner with live shows keep kids entertained, and the sunset is genuinely spectacular.

[Book now](#)

2-3 HOURS

Burj Khalifa at Sunset with Fast-Track Entry

Skip the ground-floor queues and head straight up to watch the city transform at dusk, then stay as the lights come on.

[Book now](#)

2 HOURS

Gold Souk Walking Tour

A guide cuts through the maze, explains haggling and the crazy varieties of gold, and you avoid the tourist trap shops.

[Book now](#)

2 HOURS

Spice Souk and Textile Souk Tour

The smells alone are worth it, and you'll learn which vendors offer real quality versus tourist markup.

[Book now](#)

FULL DAY

Beach Club Day Pass

Avoids the crowded public beaches, gives kids a pool and calm water, and includes loungers and shade.

[Book now](#)

Al Fahidi, the Spice Souk and Gold Souk

Sunrise 7:06 AM

Golden hour 5:17 PM

Sunset 5:51 PM

Sleep in Downtown Dubai · night 2 of 4

Walk through the old lanes of Al Fahidi, browse the Spice Souk and Gold Souk, and stop at Al Reef Bakery for a snack.

1



9:00 AM · 1 hour 30 minutes

Al Fahidi Historical District

Free

Wander the narrow lanes and wind towers of Dubai's 1800s merchant quarter, now restored with cafes and galleries. Kids enjoy spotting the traditional architecture and peeking into courtyards. A 12-minute taxi ride from Downtown Dubai.

Insider tip: Start early to avoid the midday heat and tour groups. The pearl museum and coffee museum charge entry; skip them and just walk the streets.

[Open in Google Maps >](#)

2



10:45 AM · 1 hour

Spice Souk

Free · Open 9 AM-1 PM, 4 PM-9 PM

A sensory blast of cardamom, saffron, cumin and dried flowers piled high in wooden stalls. Kids love the colours and smells; haggling is expected and part of the fun. A 5-minute walk from Al Fahidi.

Insider tip: Go mid-morning before the afternoon crush. Buy small quantities (100g) to try at home; vendors are friendly but won't budge much on prices.

[Open in Google Maps >](#)

3



12:00 PM · 1 hour

Gold Souk

Free · Open 9 AM-1 PM, 4 PM-9 PM

Thousands of gold shops glittering with necklaces, bracelets and bangles. Window-shop or buy if you're keen; prices are by weight and fair. Adjacent to the spice souk, a 1-minute walk.

Insider tip: Bargain gently and ask for a certificate of authenticity if you buy. Many shops close 1-4 PM for lunch; morning is better.

[Open in Google Maps >](#)

4

1:15 PM · 45 minutes

Al Reef Bakery

\$5-11 per person for pastries · Open 6 AM-9 PM

A local institution near the souks since 1988, famous for freshly baked Arabian bread, shawarma and pastries. Grab lunch here; it's cheap, quick and authentic. A 7-minute walk from the gold souk.

Insider tip: Order the chicken shawarma wrap (around 15 AED) and fresh-squeezed mango juice. Eat standing or at a plastic table; it's all about the food.

[Open in Google Maps >](#)

5



2:30 PM · 1 hour

Dubai Museum

\$4 per person · Open 9 AM-9 PM (closed Fridays 1-2 PM)

Small but worthwhile: recreated pearl-diving boats, Bedouin homes and vintage photos showing Dubai's transformation. Kids get a sense of the city's past in an hour. A 10-minute walk from Al Reef Bakery.

Insider tip: Entry is 15 AED per adult, 5 AED per child. The basement has the best exhibits; the upper floors are less interesting.

[Book tickets](#)

[Open in Google Maps >](#)

6



5:00 PM · 1 hour

Dubai Creek Park viewpoint

Free

Head to the north side of the creek to watch the sunset over the water and the old dhow boats. The light turns golden around 5:17 PM. A 8-minute taxi ride from the museum.

Insider tip: Stand near the creek boardwalk by the Heritage Village entrance. Bring a camera; the reflections are lovely. Skip the park entry fee (25 AED) and just walk the free boardwalk.

[Open in Google Maps >](#)

7



6:30 PM · 1 hour 15 minutes

Al Mallah

\$16-27 per person for dinner · Open 6 PM-10 PM

A no-frills Lebanese spot popular with locals on the creek side, known for grilled meat, hummus and fresh juices. Dinner here caps the Old Town experience. A 5-minute taxi from the viewpoint.

Insider tip: Order the lamb kebab and garlic sauce with pita (around 40 AED per person). It's casual; kids are welcome. Book ahead if you go at 7 PM on weekends.

[Open in Google Maps >](#)

[Open Day 2 as a route in Google Maps](#)

DAY 2: AL FAHIDI, THE SPICE SOUK AND GOLD SOUK (CONTINUED)

Where to eat

Al Mallah

Lebanese · Breakfast · \$

Casual spot near the souks. Order shawarma and fresh juice to fuel up early.

[Google Maps >](#)

Arabian Tea House Restaurant & Café

Emirati · Lunch · \$\$

Inside Al Fahidi Fort courtyard. Kids love the setting, try the machboos rice and umm ali.

[Google Maps >](#)

Zaroob

Levantine Street Food · Dinner · \$

Fun, casual vibe. Grab manakish flatbreads and falafel wraps before heading back Downtown.

[Google Maps >](#)

Al Marmoom Desert Safari

Sunrise 7:06 AM

Golden hour 5:17 PM

Sunset 5:51 PM

Sleep in Downtown Dubai · night 3 of 4

Head out to the reserve for the safari, have lunch and a rest at the Bedouin camp, then ride the dunes at sunset.

GO

8:00 AM · 1 hour (travel)

Taxi to Al Marmoom Desert Conservation Reserve

Drive 45 minutes southeast to the reserve's entrance. This is where your safari starts, so arrive by 8:30 AM to meet your guide and avoid the heat. Cost is roughly 60-80 AED each way by Uber.

- Ride-sharing (Uber/Careem) · 40-50 minutes · \$20-30 per ride
- Organized tour pickup · included in safari · included in safari cost
- Rental car · self-drive, 45 minutes · \$40-60 for the day

[Book a transfer](#)

1



8:30 AM · 4 hours

[Book ahead](#)

Al Marmoom Desert Conservation Reserve Safari

\$54-82 per person (includes dunes, lunch, suns · Open 8 AM-6:30 PM)

Ride in an open 4x4 with a guide to spot Arabian oryx, gazelle, and desert birds. You'll learn about Bedouin heritage and stop at a traditional camp for photos and camel rides. The reserve protects native wildlife and offers a more authentic desert than the dune-bash tourism spots.

Insider tip: Bring a hat, sunscreen, and water. Kids under 10 often ride free or discounted on camels.

[Book tickets](#)
[Open in Google Maps >](#)

2

12:30 PM · 1.5 hours

Bedouin Camp lunch and rest

Included in safari cost

After the morning drive, eat a light lunch (grilled chicken, rice, fresh bread) at the camp restaurant and rest in the shade. This break gives kids energy before the sunset ride. It's included in most safari packages.

Insider tip: Ask the staff to keep drinks cold; the midday heat is intense even in January.

[Open in Google Maps >](#)

3

4:30 PM · 2 hours

Sunset 4x4 dune drive at Al Marmoom

Included in safari cost

Return to the dunes at 4:30 PM for the second safari leg. Your guide will drive across high sand dunes as the light turns golden and red. You'll stop on a ridge for photos and watch the sun sink behind the horizon. This is the day's best moment for family photos.

Insider tip: Wear layers; desert temperature drops fast after sunset. Bring a camera with a charged battery.

[Open in Google Maps >](#)

DAY 3: AL MARMOOM DESERT SAFARI (CONTINUED)

GO

6:30 PM · 1 hour (travel)

Taxi back to Downtown Dubai

After sunset (around 6:30 PM), your safari ends and a taxi takes you back to the base. Journey is 45 minutes and costs 60-80 AED. You'll arrive around 7:30 PM, in time for a late dinner.

- Ride-sharing (Uber/Careem) · 40-50 minutes · \$20-30 per ride
- Hotel shuttle or tour return · 40-50 minutes · may be included

[Book a transfer](#)

[Open Day 3 as a route in Google Maps](#)

Where to eat

Al Mallah

Lebanese · Breakfast · \$

Casual spot near your hotel. Order the shawarma wrap and fresh juice before heading out.

[Google Maps >](#)

Al Reef Bakery

Middle Eastern · Lunch · \$

Quick lunch in Deira. Grab chicken shawarma and hummus before your safari pickup.

[Google Maps >](#)

Arabian Tea House Restaurant

Emirati · Dinner · \$\$

Back in Old Town post-safari. Try machboos (spiced rice with meat) and camel kebabs. Kids love it.

[Google Maps >](#)

Jumeirah Beach and Burj Park

Sunrise 7:06 AM

Golden hour 5:17 PM

Sunset 5:51 PM

Sleep in Downtown Dubai · night 4 of 4

A slow last day on the sand at Jumeirah Beach, then The Beach at Burj Park before you head home.

1

8:30 AM · 2 hours

Jumeirah Beach

Free

Soft sand, clear waters, and a long stretch that's less crowded in January. Families love it for paddling and building sandcastles. A 12-minute ride from Downtown Dubai via taxi.

Insider tip: Arrive by 8:30 AM to avoid crowds and catch the warmest sun. Bring reef shoes for sharp shells.

[Open in Google Maps >](#)

2

7:00 PM · 1 hour

The Beach at Burj Park

Free

Free beach strip with views of Burj Khalifa lit up at night. Calm water, shallow entry, and a relaxed vibe for an evening paddle or stroll. Right next to The Dubai Mall; 2-minute walk.

Insider tip: Come after sunset to see Burj Khalifa illuminated. Sunset at 5:51 PM means golden hour light fades by 6:15 PM; it's fully lit and stunning by 7:30 PM.

[Open in Google Maps >](#)

[Open Day 4 as a route in Google Maps](#)

Where to eat

Bu Qtair

Seafood · Lunch · \$\$

Casual beachfront shack. Order the hammour (grouper) grilled whole, eat with your hands.

[Google Maps >](#)

Zaroob

Levantine · Dinner · \$\$

Fast-casual spot near The Beach at JBR. Manakish and grilled chicken shawarma, quick and filling.

[Google Maps >](#)

What's the best desert safari experience for kids?

Book an evening safari (4-5 hours, roughly 250-350 AED per person): you get dune bashing, camel rides, and a sunset barbecue with traditional entertainment. Kids handle it well because it's not too long. Skip the morning safaris for your group.

Do I need to book Burj Khalifa tickets in advance?

Yes. January is peak season and sunset slots sell out by early afternoon. Book online 2-3 days ahead, aim for the 6:30-7pm slot (stays light for photos and the night view is dramatic). It costs around \$41 per ticket online, 20% more at the gate.

Are the souks family-friendly and how long should I spend there?

Yes, they're safe and kids enjoy the chaos and colours. Plan 2-3 hours: Gold Souk first (smaller, more focused), then Spice Souk (smellier, busier, but quicker to walk through). Bargain lightly on souvenirs but expect fixed prices in established shops.

What's the best beach for families in January?

Umm Suqeim Beach is quieter than Jumeirah Beach Park, easier to park, and families actually use it without crowds. Water is cool (22-23°C / 72-73°F) but fine for kids. Bring shade or rent a beach umbrella for \$5-8.

What's the weather like in Dubai in January?

Daytime highs around 25°C (77°F), evenings drop to 15°C (59°F). Pack light layers, sunscreen, and a light jacket for evenings and air-conditioned spaces.

Do people speak English in Dubai?

Spoken here: Arabic. English is widely spoken in hotels, restaurants, and tourist areas, but less common in traditional souks and older neighbourhoods.

Useful phrases:

- Marhaba (MAR-ha-ba): Hello
- Shukran (SHOO-kran): Thank you
- Aafak (ah-AHF-ak): Excuse me
- Kam (kam): How much
- Naam (nahm): Yes

Is Dubai safe for visitors?

Dubai is very safe. The main thing: dress modestly in public, especially in older areas and souks (cover shoulders and knees).

What's the emergency number in United Arab Emirates?

Police 999, ambulance 998, fire 997.

Do you tip in United Arab Emirates?

Tipping isn't expected but is appreciated. Round up restaurant bills or add 10% for good service. Taxi drivers don't expect tips, though rounding up to the nearest dirham is common.

What do only locals know about Dubai?

- Souks close mid-afternoon (around 2-4pm) and reopen at sunset, so plan your visit accordingly or go early morning.
- Haggling is normal in souks but not in malls, and shopkeepers expect a bit of back-and-forth on textiles and spices.
- Most beaches have paid parking (around 5-10 AED) and lifeguards, but they get packed by mid-morning in January.
- Visit the Burj Khalifa just before sunset (around 4:30-5:30pm in January) so you see the city light up as you're inside.