

Bur Dubai



Neighbourhood Top Five

- 1 Strolling through Dubai's atmospheric **Bastakia Quarter** (p65) old town, popping into the museums, galleries and souvenir shops and enjoying the traditional architecture, dazzling bougainvillea, narrow car-free lanes and air of tranquillity of bygone years.
- 2 Visiting **Dubai Museum** (p65) for a speedy and entertaining introduction to the city.
- 3 Exploring **Sheikh Saeed al-Maktoum House** (p66), with its rare collection of photos of early Dubai.
- 4 Wandering along the waterfront **Shindagha Heritage Area** (p66) at sunset and enjoying a drink overlooking the Creek.
- 5 Bartering for souvenirs at the lively **Bur Dubai Souq** (p66) before exploring the surrounding bustling streets.

Lonely Planet's Top Tip

Consider hiring an *abra* to do the same trip as the cruise companies – but you'll be at water level, with the wind in your hair and surrounded by swirling seagulls. It's a more-interesting experience, especially if the boat captain speaks a little English or you speak Urdu, Hindi or Arabic – you might learn a lot more about the Creek and those who work on it. *Abras* can be hired from *abra* stations along the Creek for around Dh100 an hour.

Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Peppercrab (p67)
- ➔ Asha's (p69)
- ➔ Awtar (p69)
- ➔ Lemongrass (p69)

For reviews, see p67 ➔

Best Places to Drink

- ➔ Cooz (p72)
- ➔ Old Vic (p72)
- ➔ Red Lounge (p72)

For reviews, see p72 ➔

Best Museums

- ➔ Dubai Museum (p65)
- ➔ Sheikh Saeed al-Maktoum House (p66)
- ➔ Traditional Architecture Museum (p66)

For reviews, see p65 ➔

Explore Bur Dubai

Bur Dubai was the first part of the city to be settled and, in many ways, is the antithesis of the shiny new high-rise areas with their sophisticated hotels and glitzy sights. The streets here bustle with life, activity and, above all, people.

The oldest areas along the waterfront are the most appealing. Near the mouth of the Creek, quiet Shindagha is filled with historic buildings and is great for a waterfront stroll. South of here is the vibrant Bur Dubai Souq district; it's also the place to catch *abras* (water taxis) and water buses to stops along the Creek. Further on are Dubai Museum and the charming, car-free Bastakia Quarter with its restored courtyard houses and wind towers. From here, Al-Seef Rd leads south along the waterfront to Umm Hurair, home to most foreign consulates.

Away from the Creek, Bur Dubai becomes rather nondescript, if not without its highlights. The Mankhool district is stacked with inexpensive hotel apartments, quirky nightlife, good restaurants and an upmarket mall (BurJuman Centre). South of the mall, across Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Rd, Karama is a hive of activity and has a real community feel due to its mostly Filipino and Indian population. It's great for bargain shopping and ethnic eateries serving princely meals at paupers' prices. South of Za'abeel Rd, sprawling Oud Metha is easily recognised by the eye-catching Egyptian-themed Wafi Mall and pyramid-shaped Raffles hotel.

Local Life

➔ **Creekside view** Sip a creamy avocado smoothie (laced with honey and milk) at one of the waterfront cafes and watch the traditional wooden *abras* crossing the Creek.

➔ **Vegetarian dining** Bur Dubai has the highest concentration of Indian vegetarian restaurants in Dubai, to cater to the large Indian population. Join them for lunch (many local restaurants are closed in the evening).

➔ **Ethnic shopping** Check out the traditional Punjabi dress of long tunics and baggy trousers in brightly coloured silk or cotton at the local clothing stores.

Getting There & Away

➔ **Metro** The most convenient metro stops are the Red Line's Khalid bin al-Waleed (for BurJuman Centre), Al Karama and Al Jafliya. The Green Line travels south to Dubai Healthcare City and stops at Al Fahidi.

➔ **Boat** You can hop across the Creek to Deira via *abra* from several spots along the Creek, including the Dubai Old Souq Abra & Water Bus Station, just beyond the Bur Dubai Souq.