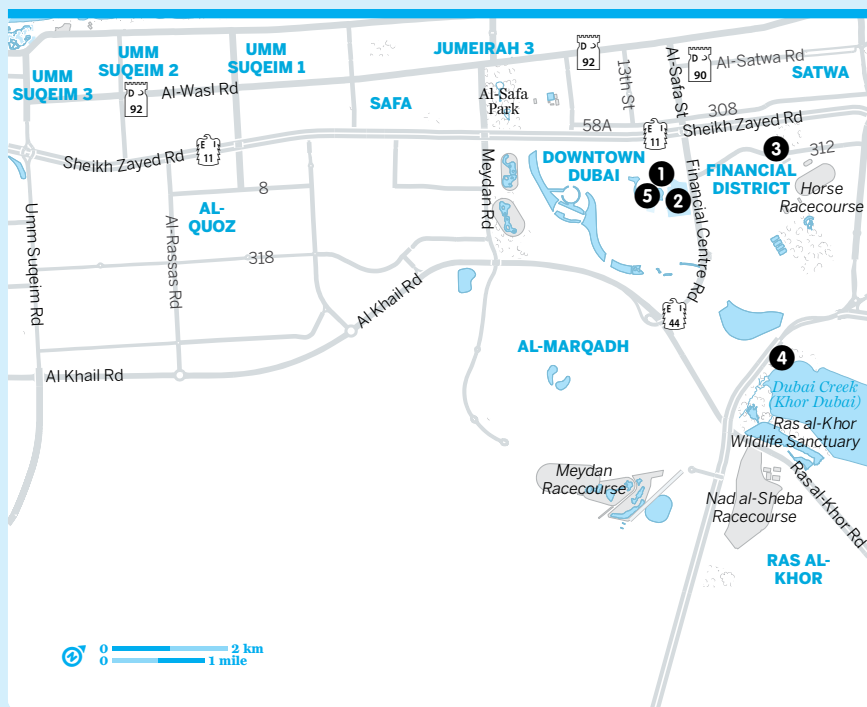


Sheikh Zayed Road & Around

DOWNTOWN DUBAI | AL-QUOZ | FINANCIAL DISTRICT

Neighbourhood Top Five

- 1 Gazing skywards at the extraordinary, elegantly tapered **Burj Khalifa** (p79), Dubai's most famous landmark. Soaring upwards for a staggering 828m, it's the world's tallest man-made structure – take the elevator to the top for incredible panoramic views.
- 2 Shopping at the mother of all malls: **Dubai Mall** (p79), with a record-breaking 1200 shops.
- 3 Checking out the superb Middle Eastern artwork at **Gate Village** in the Financial Centre (p82).
- 4 Spotting flocks of migratory birds at **Ras al-Khor Wildlife Sanctuary** (p80).
- 5 Wondering at beautifully choreographed dancing fountains at **Dubai Fountain** (p79), from a restaurant vantage point.



Lonely Planet's Top Tip

If you're driving to Dubai Mall, be sure to collect a free ticket at the entrance. The ticket states on which level you are parked, making it easier to find your way back to your car. However, in a worst-case scenario (weighed down with shopping, screaming toddler in tow and dying for the loo), never fear – there are cameras above every parking space, so attendants should be able to help you find your car.

Best Places to Eat

- Asado (p83)
- Baker & Spice (p83)
- Ivy (p84)

For reviews, see p83 ➔

Best Places to Drink

- Calabar (p86)
- Ikandy (p86)
- Neos (p86)

For reviews, see p86 ➔

Best Art Galleries

- Gallery Isabelle Van Den Eynde (p80)
- Third Line (p81)
- Cuadro (p82)

For reviews, see p79 ➔

Explore Sheikh Zayed Road & Around

'Who wants to explore a vast 10-lane highway?', you may ask. And, certainly, the name 'Sheikh Zayed Rd' hardly has an appealing ring to it. Yet this road lies at the very heart of Dubai's extraordinary meteoric development, and is flanked by gleaming modern skyscrapers, including several of the city's iconic modern landmarks. The pinnacle is the Burj Khalifa, the tallest structure in the world, and it's at the epicentre of Downtown Dubai's most tantalising tourist sights – Dubai Mall, Dubai Fountain and Souq al-Bahar. Plan your Burj Khalifa visit to coincide with the dancing fountain display from 7pm each night.

North of here, the Financial District is anchored by the Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC), which also doesn't instantly shout out 'tourism'. However, as well as being home to the stock exchange and banks, this is where you'll find Gate Village, with its excellent world-class art galleries and several fine restaurants. Other notable buildings include the World Trade Centre (a 1979 building that looks prehistoric alongside its futuristic cohorts) and the strikingly beautiful Jumeirah Emirates Towers.

South of Downtown Dubai, Sheikh Zayed Rd bisects gritty, industrial-flavoured Al-Quoz, which has some of the city's most exciting cutting-edge galleries. Art aficionados should definitely explore this area, but head here before mid-morning heat sets in, and plan your route because there's precious little shade.

Local Life

➔ **Friday shopping** You may occasionally wonder where all the local Emiratis are, particularly if you're staying in Bur Dubai, Deira, or at a tourist complex or beach hotel. But you'll see hundreds of local families at Dubai Mall on a Friday evening (the later the better – it's open to midnight).

➔ **Business lunch** Head for the DIFC around lunchtime and take your pick of several excellent restaurants, dining among Emirati businessmen, fiercely fashionable corporate staff and fresh-faced financial whiz kids.

➔ **Art event** Don the smock-and-beret look and head for one of the Gate Village Art Nights, a hip monthly event attracting who's who in the local art world.

Getting There & Away

➔ **Metro** The Dubai metro Red Line conveniently runs along the entire length of Sheikh Zayed Rd. Major stations are World Trade Centre, Financial Centre, Burj Khalifa/Dubai Mall, Al-Quoz and First Gulf Bank.