

Bur Dubai



Neighbourhood Top Five

- ❶ Soaking up Dubai's history on a wander along Dubai Creek from the atmospheric **Al Fahidi Historic District** (p68) to the waterfront Shindagha Historic District. Many of the beautifully restored buildings house small museums that provide further insight into pre-oil times.
- ❷ Visiting **Dubai Museum** (p67) for an entertaining introduction to the city's turbo-evolution.
- ❸ Chowing down with expat workers at Meena Bazaar eateries like **Special Ostadi** (p73).
- ❹ Bargaining for souvenirs at the lively **Bur Dubai Souq** (p69) before exploring the surrounding bustling streets.
- ❺ Keeping tabs on Dubai's music scene with a concert at the **Music Room** (p79).

For more detail of this area, see Map p248 and p252 ➔

Lonely Planet's Top Tip

For an astonishing immersion in Bur Dubai's multiethnic food and culture, book a guided walking tour with local blogger and foodie extraordinaire Arva Ahmed, founder of Dubai's first culinary tour company, Frying Pan Adventures (p71). Enjoy exotic nibbles as she takes you through the bewildering tangle of Bur Dubai's narrow lanes.



Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Special Ostadi (p73)
- ➔ Qbara (p78)
- ➔ Tomo (p78)
- ➔ Jaffer Bhai's (p73)
- ➔ Arabian Tea House (p73)

For reviews, see p71. ➔



Best Places to Drink

- ➔ Music Room (p79)
- ➔ George & Dragon (p78)

For reviews, see p78. ➔



Best Museums

- ➔ Dubai Museum (p67)
- ➔ Sheikh Saeed Al Maktoum House (p70)
- ➔ Traditional Architecture Museum (p70)

For reviews, see p68. ➔

Explore Bur Dubai

Modern Dubai so dominates the city's image that it's easy to forget there was life here before the petro-dollar era. Thankfully, there's Bur Dubai to provide an eye-opening journey into the city's past. It was on the western bank of the Creek where the 800 members of the Al Bu Fasalaha tribe from Abu Dhabi first settled in 1833. Their leader, Maktoum bin Butti, was the founder of the Al Maktoum dynasty that rules Dubai to this day.

Although Bur Dubai stretches from the Creek to the World Trade Centre at the beginning of Sheikh Zayed Road, the neighbourhood's most intriguing area is a conveniently compact section hugging the Creek. Peek into the city's past on a wander around the restored historic districts of Shindagha and Al Fahidi, passing through the atmospheric Bur Dubai Souq along the way. The tangle of narrow lanes in this area teems with local eateries feeding expats from Nepal, India and Pakistan with authentic fare from their homelands. Nirvana for adventurous foodies!

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 the upmarket BurJuman Centre mall. Across Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Road, densely populated Karama has a strong community feel due to its mostly Filipino and Indian population. It's great for bargain shopping and bustling eateries serving princely meals at paupers' prices. East of Za'abeel Road, sprawling Oud Metha is easily recognised by the eye-catching Egyptian-themed Wafi Mall and pyramid-shaped Raffles Hotel.

Local Life

- ➔ **Creekside views** Settle down with a creamy avocado smoothie or a *sheesha* (water pipe) at one of the waterfront cafes and look on as wooden *abras* cross the Creek.
- ➔ **Meat-free munching** Bur Dubai has the city's highest concentration of Indian vegetarian restaurants, many of which are a beehive of activity well into the night.
- ➔ **Shopping adventures** Try on 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 Red and Green Lines intersect at BurJuman, with the latter continuing into historic Bur Dubai before crossing the Creek.
- ➔ **Boat** *Abras* link Bur Dubai to Deira from two stations near the Bur Dubai Souq.