

DUBAI

ENCOUNTER

OLIVIA POZZAN
LARA DUNSTON & TERRY CARTER

Dubai Encounter

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Australia Head Office, Locked Bag 1, Footscray,
Vic 3011
☎ 03 8379 8000 fax 03 8379 8111
talk2us@lonelyplanet.com.au

USA 150 Linden St, Oakland, CA 94607
☎ 510 893 8555
toll free 800 275 8555
fax 510 893 8572
info@lonelyplanet.com

UK 2nd fl, 186 City Rd
London EC1V 2NT
☎ 020 7106 2100 fax 020 7106 2101
go@lonelyplanet.co.uk

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Colour-Coding & Maps

Colour-coding is used for symbols on maps and in the text that they relate to (eg all eating venues on the maps and in the text are given a green fork symbol). Each neighbourhood also gets its own colour, and this is used down the edge of the page and throughout that neighbourhood section.

Shaded yellow areas on the maps denote 'areas of interest' – for their historical significance, their attractive architecture or their great bars and restaurants. We encourage you to head to these areas and just start exploring!

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OLIVIA POZZAN

As veterinarian for the Crown Prince of the UAE, Olivia Pozzan lived in the oasis town of Al Ain for over eight years. As well as frequent shopping and dining forays to Dubai, she explored the entire country, led a caving expedition for the Crown Prince (published in *Emirates: A Natural History*), represented the country in the Eco-Challenge Adventure Race, wrote regular articles for local publications, and even landed a role as an extra on a Dubai movie-set (*Dubai* by Rory Quintos). Although appreciating Dubai's magnificent modern transformation, Olivia retains a soft spot for the heart of 'old' Dubai along the Creek – with its lively souqs, *abras* and *sheesha* cafés. But it is the silent, shifting sea of sand spreading out from the city – the magical Arabian desert – that especially fills her with wonder.



After leaving the UAE, Olivia returned to Australia where she writes for Lonely Planet – when not vetting or soaking up the Queensland sun.

OLIVIA'S THANKS

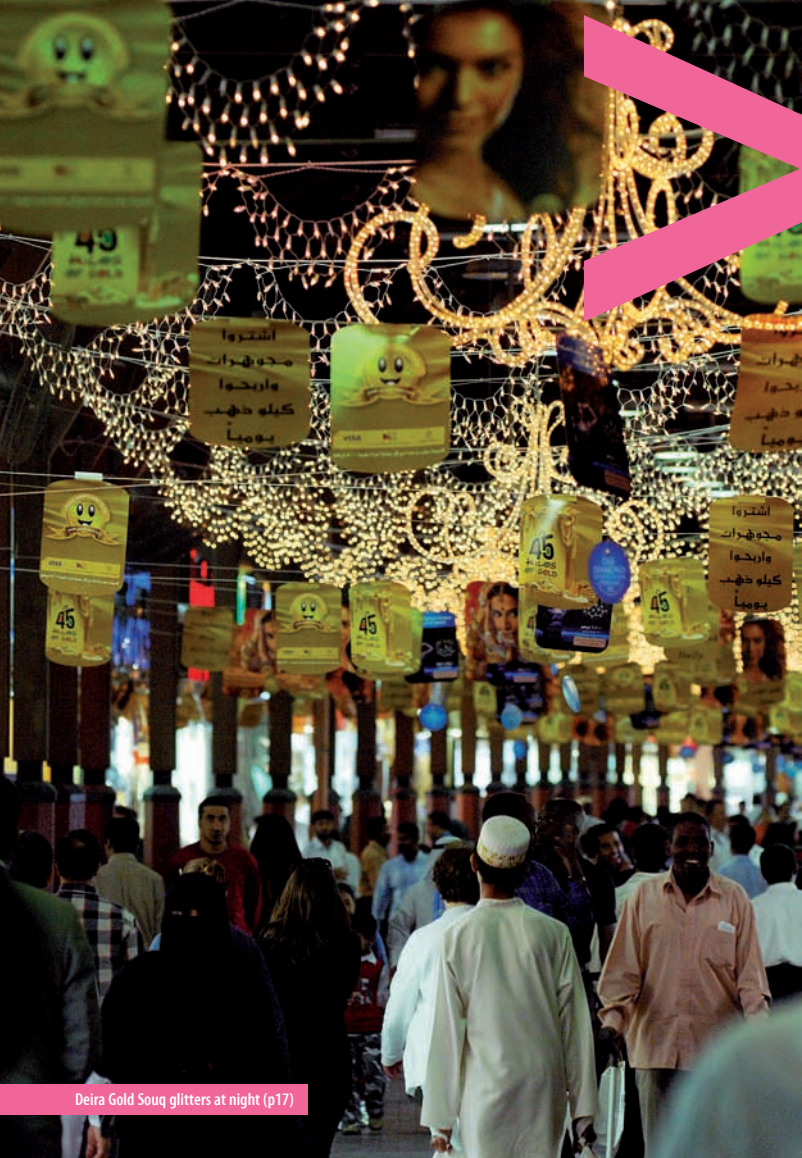
Special thanks go to many old friends in the UAE who helped with my research. *Shukran* to Pat, Maria, Suzanne, Alex, Sylvia, Leyla and William; Joe for a memorable hike; Mark for many fine dinners; and Sammy, the wonder cat.

THE PHOTOGRAPHER

Terry Carter studied photography at university and hasn't put down a camera since. He loves shooting in the Middle East where the light, places and people are a constant joy.

Our Readers Many thanks to the travellers who wrote to us with helpful hints, useful advice and interesting anecdotes, especially James Tod.

Cover photograph Camel and keeper beneath high-rises, Dubai Marina, Christian Aslund/LPI **Internal photographs** Olivia Pozzan p51; Brian Groggin p89; Balloon Adventures Dubai LLC p22. All other photographs by Lonely Planet Images, and by Terry Carter except Michael Coyne p6; Mark Daffey p26, p28, p80; Holger Leue p23; Clint Lucas p27; Neil Setchfield p41; Wayne Walton p12; Phil Weymouth p6, p17, p32, p115, p116; Tony Wheeler p71. All images are copyright of the photographers unless otherwise indicated. Many of the images in this guide are available for licensing from **Lonely Planet Images**: www.lonelyplanetimages.com.



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Deira Gold Souq glitters at night (p17)

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THIS IS DUBAI

Multicultural, materialistic and moving forward at a pace like no other city, Dubai is the little city-state that could. From sleepy trading port to skyscraper central, the city lives for attention and achieves it by being the very model of a tolerant Arab state in a rickety region.

As recently as 10 years ago, Dubai was considered a hardship posting for Western expats. Today they're dropping deposits on properties, keen to take part in one of the most fascinating ant farms on the planet. While this exotic destination has long been known for its Gold Souq, it's as if there were a gold rush in town, with people flocking here to make their fortunes and live the five-star lifestyle.

This is exactly what Dubai's savvy rulers envisaged when they turned their attention away from counting oil revenue to diversifying their interests to ensure that this Middle East metropolis didn't slip back into the sand. Now led by the enigmatic Sheikh Mohammed, a hard taskmaster who isn't fond of hearing *la* (no), this is a first-class tourist destination, known for its sun, sand and shopping.

While this leads many to either love or loathe Dubai, there's a fair chance that those who disparage the place as being superficial haven't left the bar of their beach resort. Head to the Heritage Village, site of Dubai's original fishing villages, where Emiratis enthusiastically practise their songs, dance and traditions, and you'll see beyond the mall culture. Spend time by the Creek, watching the *dhow* (traditional sailing vessel) traffic and the *abras* (water taxis) weave along the waterway while smoking some *sheesha* (water pipe) and you'll slip back in time. Wander the lanes of the Bastakiya Quarter or explore the multicultural neighbourhoods of Karama or Satwa and you'll experience a pleasant change from the five-star foyers. Head to the desert to see Bedouin tents and traditional practices, and you'll get a better idea of where this culture originated. Whatever you decide to do, you'll find Dubai a fascinating experiment and a city-state like no other on the planet.

Top left Streetside tailors at a local bazaar **Bottom left** Spectacular skyline dining along Dubai Creek (p116)