

RAS AL KHAIMAH DESTINATION FACT SHEET



[Images](#)

A Nature Driven Destination of Sprawling Deserts, Beaches and Stunning Mountain Landscapes

Featured in Time magazine's 'World's Greatest Places of 2022', CNN Travel's 'best destinations to visit in 2023' and Condé Nast Traveler's 'best places to go in Asia 2024', Ras Al Khaimah offers an experience of a lifetime where travellers can feel the Emirate's beating heart across a range of landscapes from the sea and beach, desert and mountain range.

With over 7,000 years of fascinating history, traditions and culture, Ras Al Khaimah promises an authentic and easily accessible Arabian experience. A haven of year-round sunshine, the Emirate features pristine beaches, lush mangrove trees and terracotta dunes, as well as fertile, green oases and the dramatic, awe-inspiring vistas of the majestic Hajar mountains, including the UAE's highest mountain peak – Jebel Jais – where temperatures are around 10 degrees lower than sea level.

Ras Al Khaimah's popularity also comes from the increasing ease of accessibility. Located a few short hours by flight from various key European hubs, the Emirate is just a 45-minute drive from Dubai International Airport. Increasing its airline connectivity with a number of new partnerships, Ras Al Khaimah has been working with leading operators, including FTI Group, one of Germany's leading outbound tour operators, to introduce twice-weekly flights and drive inbound traffic from Munich, one of the fastest-growing source markets for the Emirate, to RAK Airport starting in Q4 2023. Ras Al Khaimah also partnered with Qatar Airways, leveraging the world's leading airline's expansive global network of over 150 destinations to drive daily, direct flights to RAK Airport from 1st November 2023.

MOUNTAIN

The highest mountain in the UAE – Jebel Jais – is known as the adventure hub of the Middle East, offering numerous hiking and mountain biking opportunities for all levels and ages. The mountain is home to the Jais Adventure Park, a gateway to attractions such as **Jais Viewing Deck Park**, located 1,250 metres above sea level to watch the sun rise and set over the mountain range; **Jais Flight**, the world's longest zipline; **Jais Sky Tour**, a series of six exhilarating ziplines stretching 5km; and **Jais Sledder**, the region's longest toboggan ride. The highest restaurant in the UAE – **1484 by Puro** – serves a delectable menu and features an expansive terrace



with awe-inspiring views of the Hajar mountains. The rooftop lounge, **The View by 1484**, offers quick bites and drinks with equally breathtaking views, and can even be exclusively booked for private events and gatherings.

The **Bear Grylls Explorers Camp** made its regional debut on Jebel Jais as the world's first Bear Grylls branded accommodation. The camp offers courses of varying lengths, putting participants face-to-face with some of the toughest terrains in the wilderness. They receive hands-on practical training and extreme survival techniques. The camp also features sixteen recycled and sustainable cabins, the first branded Bear Grylls accommodation in the world, where guests can spend the night and try their hand at mountain biking, hiking and climbing.

Jebel Jais is also home to UAE's highest campsite, **Camp 1770**, boasting scenic mountain views - the perfect camping spot when hiking across the Emirate's numerous mountain trails. Visitors also have the opportunity to experience Emirati cooking from the local mountain tribes and enjoy meditation and yoga.

DESERT & LAND

Those looking to experience Ras Al Khaimah's unique terracotta desert, the **Al Wadi Nature Reserve** boasts the stunning Ritz Carlton resort, offering private villas with breath-taking views, plus desert treks on camels and horseback riding at **Al Wadi Equestrian Center**, private archery lessons and a falcon show. Visitors seeking decadent dining under the stars can enjoy **Sonara Camp**, a luxurious dining and entertainment experience set in the beauty of the Al Wadi desert, with herds of Oryx and Gazelles as dinner companions.

Explorers looking to get a bird's eye view of Ras Al Khaimah can experience **ActionFlight's brand-new hot-air balloon experience** featuring awe-inspiring views of the Emirate's breathtaking natural landscapes. Set afloat in the Al Wadi desert, the 450,000 cubic feet balloon stands at a colossal 34.6m. Guests can marvel at the illuminated desert dunes, majestic Hajar mountains and glistening coastline and - if they're lucky - spot special appearances from the indigenous wildlife.

SEA

With a wide choice of accommodation, from ultra-luxurious beach resorts managed by some of the most notable names in the business to family-friendly and affordable hotels – Ras Al Khaimah offers its visitors the best hospitality. World-class hotels and resorts include properties such as **Waldorf Astoria, Hilton, Rixos, Rotana, Ritz-Carlton, Radisson, and** the world's largest **Hampton Resort by Hilton**. Opened in 2022, **InterContinental Mina Al Arab** offers island living amongst the exquisite landscapes and hospitality of modern Arabia, and **Mövenpick Resort Al Marjan Island**, located on a 300-metre stretch of golden shoreline, is home to the largest floating water park in Ras Al Khaimah.

Anantara Mina Al Arab Ras Al Khaimah Resort is the latest property to join Ras Al Khaimah's beach resort portfolio. Opening its doors in January 2024, the resort has introduced Maldivian-inspired luxury to Ras Al Khaimah, showcasing the emirate's first over water villas with ample living space, an expansive outdoor deck featuring a private plunge pool, views of the Arabian Gulf and the natural mangrove lagoon and a reserved cabana on the villa-only beach.



Situated on a private peninsula with golden sands and natural mangroves, the 174-room resort's setting boasts exclusivity, tranquillity and luxury, featuring lush gardens, an infinity pool and a natural mangrove sanctuary, all with a backdrop of the majestic Hajar mountains and views of the Arabian Gulf.

Banan Beach, a glamping resort located on Al Marjan Island, offers a chilled beach getaway featuring tepee tents located around a central firepit, private chalets, family-friendly attractions and barbeque areas. Additionally, **Longbeach Campground** brings together traditional camping ethos with luxurious amenities and engaging activities — creating an immersive glamping experience.

In addition, the New Year's Eve Fireworks show, taking place annually by the sea on Al Marjan Island, has set Guinness World Records in the past five years, appealing to visitors from across the world.

Recognising the importance of **cruise tourism** - an industry that is expected to grow by 10.4% between 2022 and 2031 - the Authority has been working with RAK Ports to develop the Emirate's burgeoning cruise offering further, with an aim to attract 50 luxury cruise ship calls each season by 2030, and 10,000+ passengers within the next few years.

CULTURE

With a rich history dating back 7,000 years to the Bronze Age, Ras Al Khaimah is dotted with historical sites, including ruins and forts. Four locations – Julfar, Shimal, Al Jazeera Al Hamra and Dhayah – were recognised by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) on its tentative list of Global Heritage Sites. Meanwhile, an immersive trip to **Suwaidi Pearls**, the only pearl farm in the UAE, provides guests a glimpse into the Emirate's pearling industry through experiences such as pearl diving and oyster opening. Guests can also take a trip back in time at the **National Museum of Ras Al Khaimah**.

BALANCED TOURISM

Under the all-encompassing banner of **Balanced Tourism**, Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Development Authority is shaping tourism in the UAE by placing all aspects of sustainability (environment, culture, conservation and liveability) at the center of its investment and development strategy. This approach to sustainability marks a key milestone in its strategy to drive overall sector growth and become the regional leader in sustainable tourism by 2025. The vision underscores the Emirate's leadership in conscious tourism and aligns with its identity as a nature destination with a desire to progress, grow and evolve.

PET FRIENDLY

Ras Al Khaimah is the perfect getaway for exploring the great outdoors with dogs. From spectacular wadi walks and mountain hikes on Jebel Jais to chilled-out beachside cafés, desert adventures and overnight stays in pet-friendly hotels, there are plenty of experiences on offer across its stunning landscapes – the sea, desert and mountains.



MICE

Ras Al Khaimah has made significant strides in strengthening its MICE offering and has successfully positioned itself as one of the fastest-growing destinations in the region.

Major events – such as the first World Travel & Tourism Council **Middle East & North Africa Leaders Forum (WTTC)** and the **Arabian Hotel Investment Conference (AHIC)** – were hosted at the **Al Hamra International Exhibition & Conference Center**. The Emirate has hosted several prestigious international and regional events over the past two years. This includes three consecutive editions of the **Arab Aviation Summit** and the acclaimed annual summit of the **Global Citizen Forum**, bringing together over 400 guests from across 32 countries, leading to a three-year partnership with the Forum to host its annual summit until 2024.

Other prestigious events hosted in the Emirate include **Schweizer Reise-Verband's** (Swiss Travel Association) **World Tourism Forum**, **Lucerne's International Start-up Innovation Summit**, **The Association of Tour Operators and Travel Agents of the Czech Republic (ACCKA)** and **The Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA)**, marking the first time that the not-for-profit travel trade association hosted its Annual Summit in the Middle East.

Ideal for business gatherings and in another Jebel Jais-first, the **Sky Room** is the first-of-its-kind highest meeting room in the UAE, ideal for hosting sky-high meetings against the backdrop of the majestic Hajar Mountain.

SPORTING EVENTS

The Emirate hosts an increasing number of prestigious global sporting events, with over 50 events in the last year, recording a 35% increase in MICE events. In fact, global sports events held in Ras Al Khaimah were televised in more than 180 countries – such as the **Ras Al Khaimah Half Marathon**, the world's fastest half marathon that has been running for 16 editions, as well as the **UAE Cycling Championship** and **the UAE Tour** – all of which play a significant role in boosting sporting tourism in the Emirate. Multiple editions of **Tough Mudder**, **Spartan Ras Al Khaimah Race** and **Desert Warrior Challenge** have also taken place in Ras Al Khaimah, highlighting the growing popularity of the Emirate as a regional sports destination.

Most recently, Ras Al Khaimah staged the prestigious **2023 WMF Minifootball World Cup**, an international football competition held every two years. The tournament took place from 26 October to 4 November 2023, bringing together 32 national teams and over 30,000 of spectators to the Emirate.

Ras Al Khaimah has also played host to leading international golf championships, welcoming the **DP World Tour** (formerly known as the European Tour) for the past few years, where some of the world's biggest golf stars battled it out at the Al Hamra Golf Club.

The Emirate also launched the first ever '**HIGHLANDER**' hiking experience in the GCC. The only certified international hiking association in the world, HIGHLANDER is renowned for its specially curated hiking



experiences. It hosted its second edition in November 2022, bringing 14 kilometres of newly developed hiking trails, including the new HIGHLANDER trail, which stands as the longest-developed hiking trail in the UAE. The Emirate also hosted the 23rd Annual **Gumball 3000** rally, which saw epic supercar superstars tackle a thrilling 20km hill climb on the penultimate stop of its very first route in the Middle East.

UPCOMING ATTRACTIONS

Mountain:

- **Saij, A Mantis Collection Mountain Lodge**, comprising of 70 luxury lodges, will provide a pure mountain retreat that focuses on nature as well as mind, body and soul with guided treks, mindful pursuits and creative experiences (opening 2024)
- **Jais Wings**, calling adventure seekers to take off on a paragliding experience from the top of Jebel Jais, with two options for landing pads near Saraya Islands and Al Rams. It will be the region's first dedicated paragliding site in the GCC (opening 2024)

Beachfront & Land:

- Ras Al Khaimah is also strengthening its hospitality infrastructure with **21 new projects** and an additional **7,000** over the next few years. This indicates a significant 90% growth over the current capacity to meet the rise in demand for accommodation options in the Emirate, as part of its vision to attract 3 million visitors by 2030.
- **Upcoming hotels include:**
 - **Wynn Resorts**, a multi-billion-dollar integrated resort development on Al Marjan Island of almost 250,000 sqm. The brand's signature, high-design opulence will be reflected in its approximately 1,523 lavishly styled rooms, suites and villas. Visitors can look forward to a wide array of entertainment options, a gaming area, 24 dining and lounge experiences, innovative spa and wellness experiences, a high-end shopping esplanade, a state-of-the-art events centre, a theatre hosting a unique production show, and other amenities. (opening 2027).
 - **Sofitel Al Hamra Beach Resort** with 300 rooms (opening 2024).
 - **Rove Al Marjan Island** will expand its mid-scale homegrown UAE brand, Rove Hotels, across the UAE. It will be the first in another emirate and is set to open on the popular development, Al Marjan Island (opening 2024).
 - **Westin Resort** with 257 keys (opening 2024)
 - An additional 300 rooms, under the **Millennium Brand**, are scheduled to take shape in 2025 as part of the **Danah Bay Project on Al Marjan Island**.
 - **Le Meridien Marjan Island Resorts & Spa** will expand Marriott International's portfolio in the UAE with 350 new keys (opening 2026).



- **W Al Marjan Island** is anticipated to mark W Hotels first property in the emirate of Ras Al Khaimah bringing bold design, outstanding service and always-on programming (opening 2027)
- **Nobu Hotels**, the renowned hospitality brand, will feature 300 keys and a signature Nobu Restaurant on Marjan Island.

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About Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Development Authority (RAKTDA)

The Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Development Authority (RAKTDA) was established in May 2011 under the government of Ras Al Khaimah. RAKTDA aims to develop the Emirate's tourism infrastructure and establish Ras Al Khaimah as a world-class destination for leisure and business travel, creating sustainable investment opportunities and enhancing the quality of life for its residents. In order to achieve its goals, the Authority has a government mandate to license, regulate and monitor the Emirate's tourism and hospitality industry.

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