

DUBAI TOP 10 BEACH CLUBS

CLUB JOUMANA



Club Joumana: Make sure you get to Joumana early at the weekends, as they sometimes have to turn people away by 10am. As well as the typical facilities, Joumana offers three extra selling points: super-friendly staff, unbroken peace (due to its Jebel Ali location) and close proximity to a par-36, nine-hole golf course.

Next to Jebel Ali Free Zone, off Sheikh Zayed Road (04 883 6000; www.jebelali-international.com).

Rates: Day pass: Sun-Wed Dhs150; Thu-Sat Dhs300. Includes lunch. Annual membership: Dhs16,000, including 20 per cent off food and drinks at all the hotel's outlets, 5 per cent discount in the beach shop and 10 per cent off treatments at the spa.

SHORESIDE



Shoreside: We heard whispers about Shoreside and couldn't believe our ears. A new beach club? With a bar? In Jumeirah 3? But that strip hasn't changed for years! Our cries were sharply silenced as we walked in. Dotted with incredibly relaxed-looking people – several sporting fetching sun hats – the place screams chic, though it's not all about reclining on beanbags and sipping drinks in an ever-so-sophisticated fashion. There are also extreme sports on offer, including kneeboarding (easier than it sounds), an incredibly huge aquabike and regular events (there was a very cool corporate do going on when we visited). Best of all? If you can't afford a day pass, simply head to the bar and restaurant for free after 5pm. Shoreside: the name surely speaks for itself. Anyone for a sundowner?

To the right of Dubai Ladies Club, Jumeirah Beach Road (04 344 6705, www.shoreside.ae).

Rates: Day pass: Sun-Thu Dhs150, including food and drink up to Dhs50; Fri-Sat: Dhs250, including food and drink up to Dhs100. One-week pass: Dhs750, including food and drink up to Dhs150. Two-week pass: Dhs1,050, including food and drink up to Dhs150. Month pass: Dhs1,500. Beach facilities after 5pm: Dhs50. Restaurant access is free.

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AL SAHAL BEACH CLUB



Al Shalal Beach Club: Al Shalal is situated on the Palm Jumeirah and shares the island's same gutsy ambition. Aiming to be the city's most personalised boutique club, it offers special events for members, at which they can 'meet and receive guidance from celebrity and lifestyle gurus' – joining Al Shalal, it seems, could make you a new and improved human being. What's more, Gusto, its Mediterranean restaurant, also sounds pretty good, as does the infinity pool.

Palm Jumeirah, between Shoreline Apartment buildings Al Nabat and Al Haseer (that's buildings 7 and 8). (04 430 9466; www.ifa-hotelsresorts.com).

Rates: Day pass Dhs150 (including gym); Dhs100 (excluding gym). Week pass: Dhs500 (excluding gym). Month pass: Dhs1,600 (excluding gym). Access to pool bar is free, open daily 11am-10pm.

DUBAI MARINE BEACH CLUB



Dubai Marine Beach Club: Dubai Marine Beach Club is like a little beach village. It boasts shops, varied al-fresco restaurants and bars, and a spa. The pool and beach, on the other hand, are a little smaller than those in Dubai's actual Marina area (your Habtoors and your Pavilions), but that makes it feel more exclusive to us, like a real club.

Opposite Jumeirah Mosque, Beach Road (04 346 1111; www.dxbmarine.com).

Rates: Day pass: Dhs175 (including lunch). Week pass: Dhs600 (excluding lunch). Month pass: Dhs2,000 (excluding lunch). Annual membership: Dhs11,800 (includes 10-15 per cent off restaurants and bars, except Boudoir, 10-15 per cent off spa treatments, 20 per cent off salon, excluding lunch). Beach bar is open daily 12.30pm-3.30pm; 7pm-9pm.

CLUB MINA



Club Mina: This is the behemoth of Dubai's beach club scene. You get access to five pools (one of which is possibly Dubai's most inviting infinity pool), a whole raft of watersports, a health club, personal training and fitness coaching. But, this being a beach club, the biggest draw is the vast stretch of sand – the longest private beach in Jumeirah, at 1.2km. Plus, you have Dubai's original and best beach bar, Barasti, at the end of your sunbed.

Le Méridien Mina Seyahi Beach Resort & Marina, Al Sufouh Road (04 399 3333; www.lemeridien-minaseyahi.com).

Rates: Day pass: Sun-Thurs Dhs175; Fri-Sat Dhs250. Annual membership: Dhs26,000, includes 25 per cent discount in hotel restaurants. Barasti beach bar: free, open daily 11am-2am.

AL JAZIRA BEACH CLUB



Golden Tulip Al Jazira Beach Club: Head towards the unique-looking bungalows (they have more than one floor, but never mind) and you'll spot a small shack out on the beach, no doubt surrounded by bronzed watersport junkies shooting the breeze, as Bob the club dog trots through their legs. Jazira is the spot for real beach bums – the ones who live for the weekends, when they can hit the sand and water. Bonded by that passion, there's a real community vibe, although they'll still welcome new members. Note: the gym, spa and health club are 5km from the beach in the main Golden Tulip hotel.

Golden Tulip Resort, Al Ghantoot (02 562 9100; www.goldentulip.com).

Rates: Day pass: Dhs100, includes access to gym and sauna. Six-month membership: Dhs1,500, includes 20 per cent off watersports. Annual membership: Dhs2,500, with 20 per cent off watersports.

HILTON DUBAI JUMEIRAH



Hilton Dubai Jumeirah: With lush landscaped gardens and a large pool complete with swim-up bar (including kitsch underwater bar stools), you can almost envision a slighted aged Cliff Richard walking around the Hilton, muttering something about a summer holiday. Family-friendly and good for couples looking to relax, it houses one of Dubai's best beach bars in Bice.

The Walk at JBR, Dubai Marina (04 399 1111; www.hilton.co.uk/dubaijumeirah).

Rates: Day pass: Sun-Wed Dhs180; Thu-Sat Dhs250. Week pass: Dhs950. Two-week pass: Dhs1,850. Monthly pass: Dhs2,900. Six-month membership: Dhs12,500 (includes five spa treatments). Annual membership: Dhs18,000 (includes seven treatments, 15 per cent discount at hotel restaurants excluding Bice and Bice bar, 10 per cent off the lobby shop, 10 per cent off watersports).

HABTOOR GRAND RESORT & SPA



Habtoor Grand Resort & Spa: What makes the Habtoor Grand's club unique for us is the huge distance between the hotel, the watersports hut and the ocean. Rarely in Dubai do we experience such an unspoilt stretch of sand: after paying for our wakeboard, windsurfing or paragliding session (watersports are not included in the membership fee), it's a beautiful walk to reach the awaiting bobbing boat. The facilities are numerous and the complex is sprawling enough to keep anyone entertained during repeated weekend visits.

Dubai Marina, Al Sufouh Road (04 399 5000; www.grandjumeirah.habtoorhotels.com).

Rates: Day pass: Sun-Thu Dhs200; Fri-Sat Dhs225. Annual membership: Dhs20,000, includes 20 per cent discount off Elixis Spa treatments. Watersports not included: call Nautica 92 on 050 426 2415 for info.

SHERATON JUMEIRAH BEACH



Sheraton Jumeirah Beach Resort & Towers: The Sheraton keeps it simple. Pay for a day pass and you'll get access to a pool (there's an extra one for splashy kids, thank goodness) and the beach. The annual or six-month membership options, meanwhile, get you access to the sporty facilities. But the real boon with the Sheraton is the price. While it may be one of the older resorts in the hard-and-fast-upcoming Marina area, the beach club is also one of the cheapest in Dubai.

The Walk at JBR, Dubai Marina (04 399 5533; www.starwoodhotels.com).

Rates: Day pass: Sun-Thu Dhs100; Fri-Sat Dhs180. Six-month membership: Dhs9,500; Annual membership: Dhs14,500 (both include 20 per cent discount at all hotel restaurants).

PAVILION MARINA & SPORTS CLUB



Pavilion Marina & Sports Club: The beach complex at Jumeirah Beach Hotel is like a mini empire – keep walking and you'll find endless pools, restaurants and bars. If you can afford the annual membership, not only do you get access to the sports courts, beach, gym (including sauna, massaging hot tub, steam room and plunge pool), classes (yoga, karate, balance) and discounts on spa treatments, but you also receive 20 per cent off all Jumeirah restaurants too: keys to an even bigger empire.

Jumeirah Beach Hotel (04 348 0000; www.jumeirahbeach.com).

Rates: Day pass: Dhs250, includes access to three adult pools. Annual membership: Dhs49,500 (second year Dhs24,750), includes 20 per cent off at all Jumeirah group restaurants. Pool bar and Ocean Blue Restaurant bar open to public daily from 6.30pm. Chill-out nights are hosted on Thursday and Friday each week, including shisha and drinks on the beach.