



## NOTES FOR TRAVELERS

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*Marhaban*—welcome! We are pleased to have you visit NYU Abu Dhabi. Below please find information that will prepare you for your trip and help make your visit an enjoyable and productive one. We look forward to welcoming you to Abu Dhabi.

### **Travel & Accommodation Arrangements**

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Please note that to travel to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) you will need a valid passport, which must be valid for at least six (6) months beyond your return date. Individuals holding only travel documents will not be able to enter the country. UAE law does not prohibit individuals with Israeli stamps in their passports from entering the country.

Individuals traveling on US passports or passports from most EU countries, including the UK, will receive a one-entry tourist visa upon arrival to the UAE. For further information on visas and passports for travel to the UAE please visit: [uae-embassy.org/visas-passports/non-us-citizens](http://uae-embassy.org/visas-passports/non-us-citizens).

Please note that NYUAD has a residence for visitors that you may book (contact Nirvana Travel Agency - [info@ntravel.ae](mailto:info@ntravel.ae)). For travelers staying at the NYUAD Campus Hotel, please be advised that NYU Abu Dhabi is a dry campus. Alcohol is not allowed on campus, and travelers should be mindful of the alcohol policy. There are several hotels in the city that are relatively inexpensive and accessible from NYUAD campus. Here are two hotels, just to name some: Ramada Hotel, Hilton Abu Dhabi.

### **Ground Transportation within the UAE**

Taxi service is relatively inexpensive compared to cities like New York, and drivers are required by law to use their meters. Although numerous in downtown Abu Dhabi, taxis can be sporadic depending on the time of day and traffic conditions. Make sure you use a taxi with silver livery that has its registration clearly displayed. Drivers generally do not speak much English; be sure your driver knows exactly where you wish to go. Cite a landmark, such as a mall, hospital or government building, as your destination, as street names and numbers are rarely used. You can also request taxi service in advance for an additional fee of AED 5. Tipping for taxis is optional, but it is fairly standard to round up the fare to the nearest denomination of AED 5 or 10.

- Trans Ad (silver taxis): 600-535353
  - Al Ghazal (white taxis; more expensive than silver): 02-447-7787
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## **Abu Dhabi**

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The UAE was established in 1971 and is a federation of seven independent Emirates: Abu Dhabi, Ajman, Dubai, Fujairah, Ras Al Khaimah, Sharjah, and Umm Al Quwain. The UAE lies on the southeastern tip of the Arabian Peninsula, bordered by Saudi Arabia to the south and west, the Sultanate of Oman to the southeast, and Qatar to the northwest.

Abu Dhabi is a city of 1.3 million people and is the capital of both the Emirate of Abu Dhabi and the United Arab Emirates. International residents from 120 countries make up 80 percent of the population of the city of Abu Dhabi, and English, Hindi, Malayalam, Urdu, Farsi, Tagalog, and French are spoken as often as Arabic. All signs (road, store, restaurant, etc.) are either in English or in both English and Arabic. It is quite easy to navigate the city using English.

Abu Dhabi has developed a progressive agenda in health care, the arts, economic and environmental sustainability, and educational and human development—with impressive resources supporting the vital talent and infrastructure required to leverage these advantages. Together, this strategic location and forward-looking commitment create a dazzling array of opportunities for learning, research, and innovation in one of the world's next great idea capitals.

The UAE's Constitution guarantees equal rights for both men and women in terms of legal status, honorary titles, education, health and social welfare, and the right to practice professions. The UAE is safe for women traveling on their own. Women, both native-born and expatriate, experience no special restrictions in daily life and are free to drive cars and move about freely without the company of a man.

## **Climate and Time**

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Abu Dhabi's climate is subtropical, with temperatures that vary from moderate in the winter months to very hot in the summer. Sunny blue skies prevail throughout the year and rainfall is infrequent. The weather in Abu Dhabi is most appealing between November and March, in which temperatures range from 56-75° Fahrenheit (13-28° Celsius). The thermometer starts to climb in April, and continues to climb steadily to reach the Emirate's hottest month in August at an average of 115° Fahrenheit (46° Celsius). Humidity can also be very high in the summer months.

The workweek in the UAE is Sunday through Thursday; Friday and Saturday make up the weekend. On Friday mornings, most businesses close to respect religious services; on all other days they typically open early and close late with a break in the afternoon when they are closed.

The UAE is in Greenwich Mean Time plus four hours. Between the second Sunday in March and the first Sunday in November, the UAE is eight hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time (9 AM in New York is 5 PM in the UAE). Between the first Sunday in November and the second Sunday in March, the UAE is nine hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time (9 AM in New York is 6 PM in the UAE).

## **Attire**

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Abu Dhabi is considered conservative but tolerant when it comes to dress code. Given the diverse nature of the population, one can see many different types of dress in Abu Dhabi (e.g., jeans, saris, business suits, dishdashas, and abayas). Visitors are free to wear the same clothes that they would wear at home, but both men and women typically refrain from wearing excessively revealing clothing out of respect for

the local culture and customs. For most of the year, lightweight summer clothing is suitable (though layers are recommended for the well air-conditioned indoors). Warmer clothes are needed during the winter months, especially in the evening.

Travelers visiting the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque in Abu Dhabi should be mindful of the required attire. As the mosque is a place of worship, long, loose fitting, ankle length trousers or skirts for women and men are required. Women must also wear a headscarf. For further clarification, please refer to the “Mosque Manners Dress Code” available at the following link: <http://www.szgmc.ae/en/img/Mosque-Manners.jpg>.

## **Currency and Credit Cards**

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The currency of the UAE is the dirham (abbreviated to Dhs or AED), which is divided into 100 fils. The UAE dirham is fixed to the US dollar at a rate of 3.67 dirham to the dollar. Credit cards, such as Visa, MasterCard, American Express, and Diners Club, are widely accepted in the UAE. Foreign currency of almost any denomination can be exchanged at banks and money exchange bureaus throughout Abu Dhabi. All major hotels will also readily exchange currency for guests. However, ATMs typically provide the best exchange rates (even when factoring in possible currency exchange fees from your home bank).

## **Tipping**

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Restaurant bills may show a charge of 16%, which includes a 10% service charge and 6% tourism fee. In these cases, tipping is not necessary. For bills that do not include a service charge, a 10% tip is customary.

## **Alcohol**

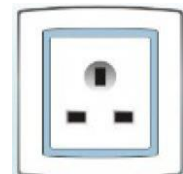
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Alcohol is not served in Abu Dhabi restaurants, unless they are affiliated with tourist hotels. NYUAD will not provide alcohol at official events and will not reimburse for it if travelers choose to purchase it.

## **Electricity and Water**

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The electric supply in Abu Dhabi is 220/240 volts at 50 Hz. British-style square, three-pin sockets are standard. American electric shavers, hair dryers, and electric toothbrushes are known to break with the higher voltage and it is therefore advisable to use a converter. Computers, cell phones, and Blackberries all have voltage converters built into them, but you may need to use physical plug adapters, which are available at grocery and electronics stores.



Tap water in Abu Dhabi has been deemed safe to drink by local environmental groups. However, drinking bottled water is recommended and locally bottled mineral water is readily available.

## **Prescriptions**

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To be cautious, bring a doctor’s note authorizing the use of medication, particularly codeine. Medications should be carried in the original container. Most medications available in the US are also available by a doctor’s prescription through hospitals and pharmacies in the UAE.

## **Photography**

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Politely ask permission, particularly from women, if you would like to photograph them. Do not attempt photographs of government buildings, military installations, ports, and airports. Cameras are banned in public areas designed for women and children only.

## **Safety**

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Abu Dhabi has a crime rate of close to zero, but should you require assistance, NYUAD Public Safety (02-628-7777 or 8-7777 from a campus phone) and the Abu Dhabi Police are available to you 24 hours a day, seven days a week. For any emergency, we recommend calling NYUAD Public Safety as soon as possible. They can assist you with initial response and obtaining necessary local emergency services.

We advise you to be cognizant of your surroundings and personal safety as you travel. Dress appropriately, and respect the cultural mores by avoiding public displays of affection. Most public areas are well-lit at night and most public buildings tend to be relatively safe. Crowds are generally non-threatening and political demonstrations are rare in Abu Dhabi and must have governmental approval.

Drivers can sometimes be erratic and fast. Don't hesitate to ask your taxi driver to slow down if you feel he is driving too aggressively. All vehicle accidents, regardless of severity, must be reported to the police. Cross intersections only at the crosswalk and watch for moving cars even in parking lots.

### **General Safety Tips**

- If you are walking stay on streets where there is pedestrian traffic and always cross at a traffic light, as pedestrian crossings are not always respected by drivers. During evenings, plan a route where streets are well lit.
- Females should not ride in the front of a taxi next to the driver, and women traveling alone should not engage drivers in friendly discussion. It is perfectly acceptable to travel in silence after having given the driver your destination.
- The weather can be very hot in Abu Dhabi; please ensure that you always travel with a bottle of water. (Note: Eating and drinking in public is prohibited during the holy month of Ramadan, which falls around August.)

## **Emergencies**

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For any emergency, we recommend calling NYUAD Public Safety as soon as possible (02-628-7777 or 8-7777 from a campus phone). They can assist you with initial response and obtaining necessary local emergency services.

Should you need to call an emergency number it is important to give your location using landmarks. Hotels post emergency procedures in each room. Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Hospital (SKMC) is a first choice for medical care and Al Noor Hospital is a second.

Emergency phone numbers in Abu Dhabi:

- Fire Department: 997
- Ambulance: 998
- Police: 999