

# ABU DHABI RISING

Watch out Dubai. UAE's "other city" is now becoming the next big thing.

By Christina Fernandes



**IT'S NOT A DREAM.** St. Regis' property on Saadiyat Island is the ultimate luxurious escape. Apart from five-star amenities, there is so much more you can explore around the island, which is just 500m from the coast of Abu Dhabi.



## Eid Mubarak

*This is the greeting that Muslims say to one another during the Eid Al Fitr, or the end of Ramadan. The celebration will be observed on July 28, during which Muslims break their fasting and give alms to the poor.*

**FROM FOOD TO FASHION. (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP)** Japanese restaurant Zuma; millefeuille with chantilly and strawberry sauce from Armani Caffè; fashion giant LC Waikiki's latest fashion offerings; Bentley Bistro's lemon and parsley crusted rack of lamb

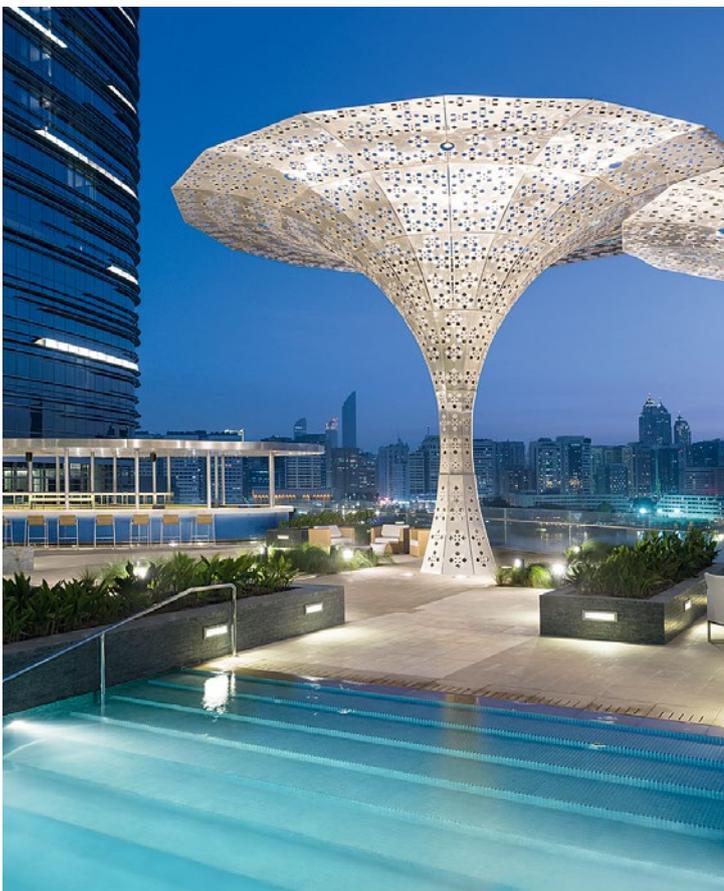
**A**bu Dhabi has long demonstrated that it gets what it wants. When the powers that decided to make this fair city a cultural hotspot in the region, they set to the task with zeal. A renowned art fair, a Guggenheim, and a Louvre later, they have proven to even the staunchest sceptic that they don't mess around. So now that the UAE's capital homed in on giving the country's largest city, its neighbor Dubai, a run for its reputation as queen of leisure and pleasure, it should come as no surprise that impressive new shopping, eating, and partying venues has begun popping up across town.

The hearts of Abu Dhabi's epicureans began beating faster at the opening of Marayah Island's new high-end mall, **The Galleria – Sowwah Square**. Whether it's Southeast Asian cuisine at

**Lemongrass** or chic treats at the **Armani Caffè**, gourmands should feel right at home. Award-winning Japanese restaurant **Zuma** has been a popular night spot in Dubai for several years, so when it recently opened in Abu Dhabi, everyone took notice. **Bentley Bistro and Bar**, another venue at The Galleria, brings the best of French comfort food to diners headed for Marayah Island.

The Galleria hosts a wide variety of stores, several of them opening





**ONLY THE BEST. (CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT) Glo Lounge's pretty "globrellas" at Rosewood Hotel light up the night; St. Regis' first foray into Saadiyat Island; La Cava wine bar at Rosewood Hotel; Junior Grand Prix ride at the world's only Ferrari World**

their doors for the first time in the city. One of their more interesting outlets is **The Cobbler**, a traditional shoe repair and retail destination for men. But new names are also opening elsewhere, such as Turkish multicultural fashion brand **LC Waikiki's** new branch at Al Wahda Mall. **Minbart**, a concept store that blends fashion, art, and design, opened recently at Al Raha Beach. Another new shopping venue is the **World Trade Centre Mall**, home to 160 shops and over 20 dining outlets, including premium Italian fashion brand Gaud, which just opened its first outlet in the capital. **Yas Mall** on Yas Island, home of the F1 circuit, is scheduled to open later this year with a whopping 400 shops.

Abu Dhabi hasn't always had a reputation as a party town, but as of late, the city has not only put on an impressive line-up of live gigs (May alone saw Macklemore and Ryan Lewis, Black Sabbath, and Justin Timberlake), but increasingly diverse choices of bars and clubs.

Competition is heating up for the more established places, such as **Ray's Bar** on the 62nd floor of the Jumeirah at Etihad Towers or the **Ornina Lounge** at Al Bandar and newcomers like **Glo Lounge**, located in the **Rosewood Hotel** on Marayah

Island. With its funky "Globrellas" that light up the open-air venue and a 42-meter-long bar (the longest in the city), **Glo** is rapidly becoming the go-to place for a stylish night on the town. Grape bar **La Cava**, which boasts 1,000 different wine labels, is the Rosewood's second hot night spot. If you want to head out of central Abu Dhabi, **Iris**, one of Beirut's hottest nightlife sensations, recently opened a branch on Yas Island.

The selection of night clubs is still picking up in Abu Dhabi, so partygoers were highly pleased when the opening of VIP nightclub **People by Crystal** was announced, which has been securely established in Dubai for some time now. The club is located in The Collection within the **St. Regis Hotel** on Saadiyat Island and is a welcome addition to **Etoiles** at Emirates Palace, and the famous **Monaco Beach Club**.

Visitors to the UAE capital can also look forward to more hotels. The famous St. Regis recently opened its doors on Saadiyat Island, while Marayah Island is home to the new, überstylish Rosewood Hotel. Rotana is also scheduled to open two new hotels in Abu Dhabi this year: the **Centro Capital Centre** as well as the **Capital Centre Arjaan**.

It is good news that Abu Dhabi is applying its usual fervour in establishing itself as a leisure and lifestyle destination. Keep your eyes open for imminent developments—even bigger and better things are sure to come. ■

### A Time For Prayer



*Abu Dhabi is a Muslim city so it's good to be aware of the locals' prayer times. See the list in the Facts and Essential info section of [www.visitabudhabi.ae](http://www.visitabudhabi.ae).*



**For the Kids and Kids at Heart**



Enjoy the area's first and biggest inflatable park which houses the world's longest and highest inflatable water slide when **Aqua Fun** opens in October 2014. Attractions to watch out for are the **Bubble Ball Soccer**, **Sticky Wall**, and **Sumo Suit Wrestling**.



**DUBAI**  
**ABU DHABI**  
**UNITED ARAB EMIRATES**

**MANILA**

**DISTANCE: 4,352 MM MILES**  
**FLIGHT TIME: 9:00 HOURS**

**Philippine Airlines**  
PAL flies between Manila and Abu Dhabi five times weekly. For more information, call PAL reservations office at (+632) 855 8888 or visit [www.philippineairlines.com](http://www.philippineairlines.com).