

Open doors. Open minds. الأبواب مفتوحة. العقول متفتحة.

Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum
Centre for Cultural Understanding

مركز الشيخ محمد بن راشد آل مكتوم
للتواصل الحضاري

UAE Cultural Intelligence

ذكاء الإمارات الحضاري

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Dubai Culture للثقافة

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Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Global Initiatives

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About Us



Dubai is a uniquely modern and cosmopolitan city and the United Arab Emirates is home to families from all over the world, each with their own distinctive culture.

Expatriates and UAE nationals are neighbours; however they can also be strangers.
His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, saw the need to reach out and educate expatriates in the traditions and customs of the UAE.

His vision led to the creation of The Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Centre for Cultural Understanding in 1998. In 2015, the SMCCU was honoured to become a member of The Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Global Initiatives and continues to be a bridge between the many different nationalities living, working and visiting the UAE through its award-winning programs.

Located in a beautifully restored wind tower house in the Al Fahidi Historical Neighbourhood in Bur Dubai, the centre offers a range of activities, from traditional cuisine to conversations with local Emiratis.

Cultural Activities Indoors





Cultural Meals:

Enjoy traditional Emirati cuisine and conversation in our interactive cultural experiences hosted by our Emirati presenters inside the traditional houses of Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Centre for Cultural Understanding, located in one of Dubai's oldest communities, Al Fahidi Historical Neighbourhood.

CULTURAL BREAKFAST

Schedule: Sunday, Monday and Wednesday at 9:00am
Duration: 90 minutes.

CULTURAL BRUNCH

Schedule: Every Saturday at 10:30am
Duration: 90 minutes.

CULTURAL LUNCH

Schedule: Sunday to Thursday at 1:00pm
Duration: 90 minutes.

EMIRATI FUALA

Schedule: Program is available upon request
Duration: 90 minutes.

CULTURAL DINNER

Schedule: Every Tuesday at 6:30pm
Duration: 90 minutes.

DINNER UNDER THE STARS

Schedule: Seasonal
Duration: 90 minutes.

Cultural Activities Outdoors



Heritage Tour, Dagger Museum and Mosque Visit:

Join a guided walking tour through the unique narrow sikkas and beautiful wind tower residences along the Dubai Creek as you learn the history and culture of Dubai and the UAE. Visit inside Diwan Mosque and head back inside the historical house for a Q&A session served over coffee and dates.

Schedule: Sunday, Tuesday & Thursday at 10:30am, Saturday at 9:00am
Duration: 90 minutes.

Creekside Walking Tour:

This tour includes a walk through the Al Fahidi Historical Neighbourhood and a visit to the Diwan Mosque and Textile Souq. Guests then board an abra boat, and journey across Dubai Creek to Deira to visit the Gold Souk and Spice Souk. Head back to the cultural house majlis of SMCCU for a cultural discovery Q&A session while enjoying Arabic coffee and dates.

Schedule: Seasonal from October till March
Duration: 3 hours

Cultural Activities Heritage Express





Heritage Express:

Heritage Express is a unique and authentic product that will educate visitors to the UAE about Emirati people and their customs and culture through a fun, informative, sensory experience on a heritage trolley.

The trolley takes visitors around the historical areas and Jumeirah Mosque to showcase important heritage sites.

Program 1: Culture on Wheels

Enjoy an authentic interactive experience onboard the Heritage Express trolley as we visit culturally historic spots with a professional Emirati guide. Plenty of fun, interesting stories, photographs and life-time memories.
Schedule: Daily at 10:30am, 2:30pm, & 4:00pm
Prior booking is required.

Program 2: Culture on Wheels & Emirati Hospitality Experience

Join us for a culturally intrinsic ride around the city's oldest neighbourhoods in our trademark traditional trolley followed by an immersive cultural meal of your choice.

BREAKFAST

Schedule: Sunday, Monday & Wednesday at 9:00am
Prior booking is required.

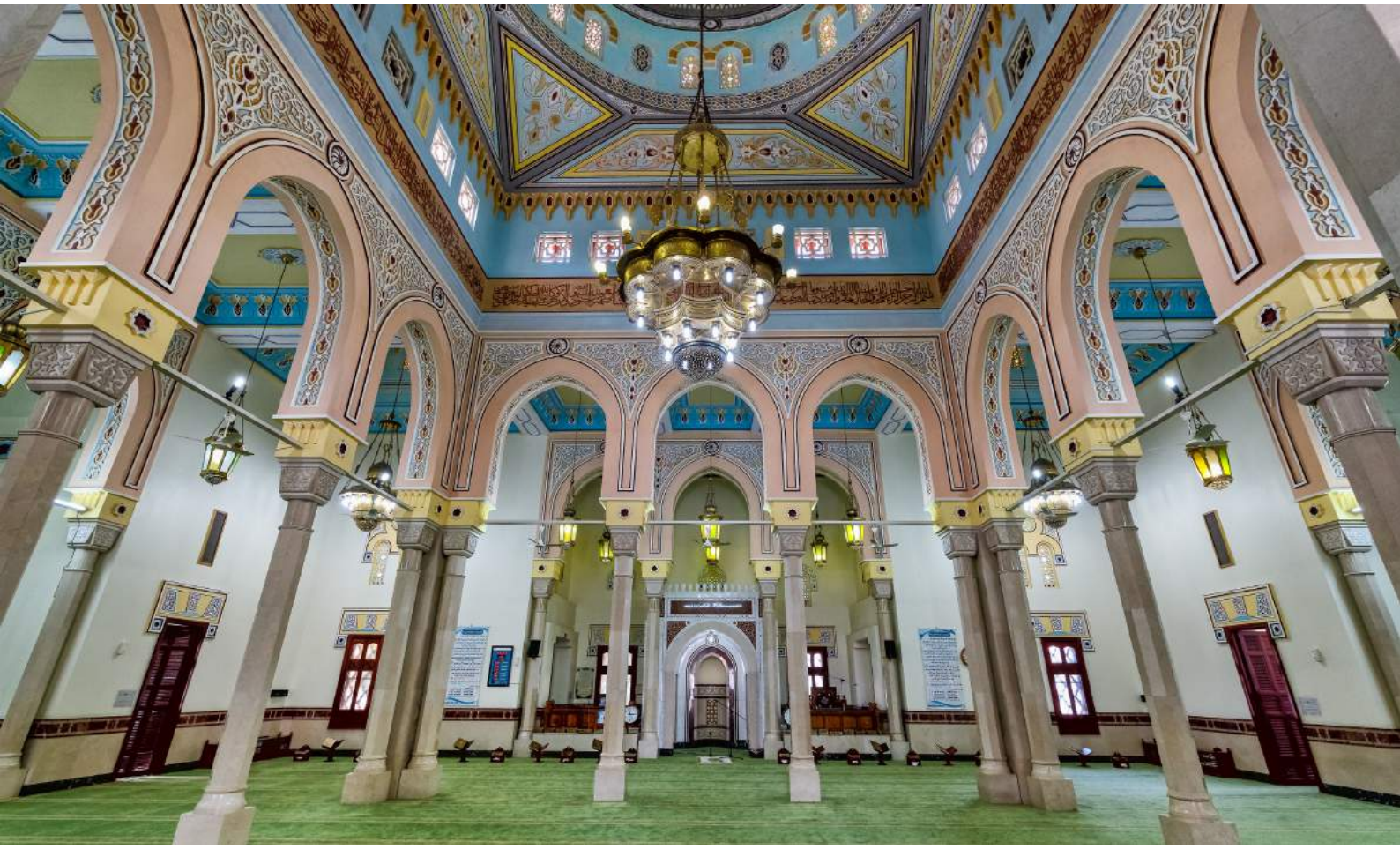
LUNCH

Schedule: Sunday to Thursday at 10:30am & 1:00pm
Prior booking is required.

DINNER

Schedule: Every Tuesday at 4:00pm
Prior booking is required.

Jumeirah Mosque Visit



Join us for a visit at the iconic Jumeirah Mosque, one of the few mosques in Dubai which are open to non-Muslims. Register at our majlis across the mosque and enjoy an authentic light breakfast with Arabic coffee and tea. Head towards the fountain outside where our presenter will demonstrate and explain the 'wudu' – cleansing process before prayers, followed by a visit inside the mosque to learn about the religion and culture of Emiratis and have all your questions answered. Modest clothing is preferred, traditional dresses can be borrowed from the Mosque.

Schedule: Daily at 10:00am and 2:00pm except Fridays
Duration: 1 hour 15 minutes

Cooperate Activities





Private Cultural Meals:

Our private programs are held inside a traditional wind tower house where guests can enjoy authentic Emirati cuisine followed by a Q&A session on everything you want to know about Dubai and the UAE history, culture and traditions. Content can be tailored to your group's specific needs, making it an ideal setting for business delegations, employees, academic institutions, families and visiting friends.

Minimum of 10 persons
Duration: 90 minutes.
Prior booking is required.

Private Heritage Tour, Dagger Museum & Mosque Visit:

Join a guided walking tour through the unique narrow sikkas and beautiful wind tower residences along the Dubai Creek as you learn the history and culture of Dubai and the UAE. Visit inside Diwan Masjid and head back inside the historical house for a Q&A session served over coffee and dates.

Minimum of 10 persons
Duration: 90 minutes.
Prior booking is required.

Cooperate Activities





Creekside Walking Tour:

This tour includes a walk through the Al Fahidi Historical Neighbourhood and a visit to the Diwan Mosque and Textile Souq. Guests then board an abra boat, and journey across Dubai Creek to Deira to visit the Gold Souk and Spice Souk. Head back to the cultural house majlis of SMCCU house for a cultural discovery Q&A session while enjoying Arabic coffee and dates.

Minimum of 10 persons
Duration: 3 hours.
Prior booking is required.

Corporate Inductions:

In a country made up of over 200 nationalities, cultural understanding and awareness is crucial for both private and governmental organisations operating in the UAE. Our corporate programs provide greater understanding of the UAE culture and employee integration, trusted by over 150 companies across the region. Equip your employees with the proper business etiquette and cultural sensitivity in an engaging environment hosted by our Emirati presenters. Learn how to conduct business with Emiratis and enhance the productivity of your organization. The presentation can be customized and topics can be tailored to suit the company's requirements.

For bookings and inquries contact us at openminds@cultures.ae

Cultural Intelligence





In today's global society and economy, people work and live side by side with others from a variety of cultural backgrounds on a daily basis. Success in these situations requires a unique set of skills known as Cultural Intelligence. It is sometimes dismissed as a set of elusive, soft skills that cannot be measured or taught. But that is not the case. These skills can be developed, and a number of intercultural models and inventories exist that can help.

The necessity around Diversity, Equity and Inclusion creates the increased necessity for Cultural Intelligence.

SMCCU has partnered with the leading organization for Cultural intelligence in the United States, the Cultural Intelligence Centre.

The partnership represents a strategic relationship between SMCCU and CQC, which will offer certified Cultural Intelligence training in the UAE to support growth of global values, intercultural communication and innovation. This allows SMCCU to expand our depth in training and offer a wider range of expertise in our field.

Our CQ programs include programs that are relevant to individuals, the corporate sector and the education sector (students as well as faculty).

UAE CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE

ذكاء الإمارات الحضاري

For bookings and inquries contact us at cq@cultures.ae

Education Programs





Schools and Universities:

The educational programs for schools and universities across the UAE and all over the world are tailored made to meet the needs of your audience and are delivered by our Emirati presenters in a stimulating and interactive cultural environment.

All school's program contents are inspired by the learning outcomes of the UAE National Education and Social Studies Curriculum of the Ministry of Education in order to support schools' teaching in this crucial subject.

Cultural Induction for Educators:

This popular SMCCU's Cultural Induction Programme has been designed by a team of experts especially for teachers and educators working in the UAE. The participants will have the opportunity to gain awareness about the culture and the traditions of the Emirates, of the benefits of living and working in the UAE and of the role of the teachers in the UAE community through an authentic Emirati experience.

For bookings and inquries contact us at education@cultures.ae

Ramadan Iftar Program



Our Ramadan Iftars take place in the wind-tower house in the heart of Al Fahidi Historical Neighbourhood, the historical Emirati neighborhood. Your evening begins with the Athan (the call to prayer) followed by the breaking of the fast with your Emirati hosts. Enjoy Arabic coffee and dates and then take a moment to watch your hosts pray, before a delicious array of Emirati dishes are served for Iftar. During the event, you are invited to ask any questions you may have about Ramadan, the culture of the UAE. After Iftar, join us for a visit to the Diwan Mosque, before returning to SMCCU house for dessert and tea. There will also be a designated kids area with fun activities.

Prior booking is required for private and public bookings.

Cultural Events



Our non-profit organization has been recognized as an expert in Emirati culture, tradition, and the traditional arts. As such, we host special events for private and public organizations which showcase these traditions in a fun yet educational unique experience. From authentic cultural themes, to traditional food and educational seminars on Emirati and Islamic history, our staff are eager to tailor presentations for specific events ensuring satisfaction and success.

SMCCU has participated in the Arabian Travel Market, Dubai Food Festival and many other regional events.

From the speaking engagements at the World CEO Forum and JAFZA, to private cultural events, the SMCCU is keen to promote mutual understanding and cooperation in the region through fun, engaging and entertaining events.

Our most popular hosted events are for UAE National Day. We have curated cultural events for the Dubai Mall, Souq Al Bahar, Expo2020 and Kings School amongst other reputable organizations.

At our traditional wind tower house in the beautiful Al Fahidi Historical Neighbourhood, the SMCCU holds private events that are tailored to the needs of your organization. These events aim to showcase the traditional customs and culture of the people of the UAE by demonstrating handicrafts and traditional arts that are still a significant part of preserving the rich heritage of the Emirati people.

For Cooperate Bookings & Events:
Annual public celebrations
Authentic Cultural Theme
Traditional food and educational seminars on Emirati and Islamic history
In-house and external private cultural events
Speaking engagements for organizations

For bookings and inquries contact us at opendminds@cultures.ae

Reach out!

For Public Bookings : smccu@cultures.ae
For Cooperate Bookings : openminds@cultures.ae
For Education : education@cultures.ae
For Cultural Intelligence Bookings : cq@cultures.ae

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