

# Al Qana

ABU DHABI'S LATEST  
WATERFRONT DESTINATION





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*Al Qana is a unique waterfront destination bringing a new definition of social dining and entertainment in Abu Dhabi*

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Over the past 50 years, Abu Dhabi and its sister emirates in the UAE have provided the world with an example of how well-planned sustainable investments can bring a country from being a relative outsider to the foreground. A series of national strategic plans, the latest of which runs to 2030, have ensured the emirate has never rested on what it has already achieved.

A prime example of how these national strategic plans have benefitted the emirate can be seen in how it has successfully leveraged its

less-feted natural resources: year-round sun and coastline. In just a few short years, Abu Dhabi has become a sought after destination for Europeans and Asians alike.

Eye-catching attractions such as Ferrari World (the only such Ferrari-branded theme park in the world) and the soon-to-constructed Guggenheim Abu Dhabi, designed by world renowned architect Frank Gehry, have marked the emirate out as one to watch.

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*“By combining luxury and practically guaranteed good weather, Abu Dhabi has created a experience - and generated a new buzz around the Middle East”*

created a experience - and generated a new buzz around the Middle East. This is exemplified by projects like the exclusive Al Qana project, where we recently had the privilege of speaking with Moataz Mashal, the Managing Director of Al Qana’s parent company, Al Barakh International.

**A project which strengthens the social fabric of Abu Dhabi**

When finished towards the end of 2020, the Al Qana project will be a spectacular monument

to the planning which was referenced in the first section. A detailed project conceived by Al Barakh International in partnership with the Abu Dhabi Municipality, it will span over 2.4 kilometres across Abu Dhabi's increasingly recognized waterfront.

The masterplan for the Al Qana project was careful to bring an attention to the finer details not always visible in large scale projects. As Mr. Mashal says: "We have many other exciting features from waterside eateries, yacht marina, first-of-its-kind wellness hub, the UAE's first virtual reality park, kids' action zone, outdoor skatepark, and landscaped community

spaces that are aimed at encouraging social interaction."

It will also feature the largest aquarium in the Middle East, its largest cinema complex, and what one online journal has termed 'a foodie's paradise,' meaning that there'll be plenty to bring in families and young couples from morning to evening. The energy which will be given to this area of Abu Dhabi is already visible from looking at architect drawings of how it will look when finished.

Al Qana will also benefit from being located on the historic Khor Al Maqta and the waterway bordering the mainland, bringing it

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close to the iconic Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque. As Mr. Mashal points out, it compliments the best aspects of this region of Abu Dhabi and even has the potential to bring increased numbers of tourists to the vicinity - already well catered for with an extensive range of 5-star hotels - and improve the experience for them in the process.

This also aligns well with the plans Abu Dhabi Department of Culture and Tourism (DCT Abu Dhabi), as Mr. Mashal explains: "The department is strengthening the emirate's stature as a leading international tourism and cultural destination. With Al Qana, we also want to keep pace with the new requirement of visitors and reflect Abu Dhabi's multicultural society. Al Qana has been conceived to become an integral part of the Abu Dhabi social fabric."

#### Did you know?

Much of Abu Dhabi's growth story can be attributed to dedicated long-term planning, and the implementation of those plans.

#### The fruits of good planning

As the opening section outlined, much of Abu Dhabi's growth story can be attributed to dedicated long-term planning, and the implementation of those plans. Mr. Mashal explained to us that the Al Qana project is an innovative form of development, which may point to a new direction for future developments in the municipality.

He explains: "Al Qana is the first-ever Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) model implemented by the Abu Dhabi Municipality (ADM) and is jointly developed by Al Barakah International Investment. International Construction Contracting Company (ICCC) is the lead contractor in charge of the development of the project."

"In line with the capital's vision for 2030 and Tomorrow 2021 Plan, Al Qana is a destination



that will play a key role in supporting the government to realise its vision of enhancing Abu Dhabi's status as one of the world's most popular destinations for business, leisure, lifestyle and entertainment. Al Qana aims to enhance the quality of life in Abu Dhabi by improving recreational, cultural, sporting and active initiatives."

### Looking towards a post-oil world

Having been a beneficiary of an oil boom over the past half century, Abu Dhabi is now looking to what its local press term a "post-oil" world. The municipality government is currently implementing a range of economic stimuli and incentives, which seek to build a prosperous future for Abu Dhabi and its residents.

They'll want somewhere to live, dine out, relax and socialize. All of that is catered for by the Al Qana project. Mr. Mashal says: "Nowadays, happiness and well-being rankings have become important measures of a city's health, prosperity and success and the UAE aims to become the happiest country in the world. Hence it's important to create spaces that encourage social interaction and provide residents a healthy lifestyle that contributes to their well-being. The Al Qana project, with its unique features, was designed to support this vision."

The ambition of Abu Dhabi is limitless. But just as impressive as its ambition, is its continued determination to put focused strategic plans in place to achieve everything in good time. The Al Qana project is the latest step in that ambition. **BE**

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