



PARK LIFE

Bollywood Parks

Even if you're not familiar with the multimillion dirham entertainment industry of Bollywood, you'll enjoy the display on offer at this park. Outside of the grand film sets in Mumbai, there isn't a space like this anywhere in the world, where the biggest movie stars and their cinematic endeavours come to life.

Bollywood Parks is themed around nine of the Indian movie industry's most popular films:

Rock On!!, *Don*, *Lagaan*, *Sholay*, *Dabangg*, *Mughal-e-Azam*, *Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara*, *RA.One* and *Krrish*. A sculpture of three dancing hands sits at the regal white, palatial entrance and Hindi pop tunes welcome you into the park, where there is plenty to explore...

The rides

There are six rides at Bollywood Parks, all built with the purpose of transporting you

The roller coasters are hooked on and the musicals have been rehearsed; **Shitika Anand** takes a tour of Dubai Parks And Resorts

to the action-filled world of six of the most popular movies from Mumbai. The rides here aren't about the sharp drops; they're more about getting behind-the-scenes with India's superheros – *Krish* and *Ra.One* – or taking on Bollywood's most notorious villain, *Gabbar*, at *Sholay*'s Ramghat station. Can you handle him?

The food

The Juhu Juice Bus parked at Mumbai Chowk serves fresh sugar cane juice and coconut water. There's also a chaat corner, a Spicy Dhaba and other pop-up stalls selling street

food. For something high-end, there's Mughal-E-Azam, the park's only fine-dining restaurant.

The performances

There are five zones in the theme park, with each section hosting its own pop-up, ten-minute choreographed dance routines to Bollywood songs, performed all day. But the jewel of the park is the Rajmahal Theatre, a state-of-the-art indoor arena that can seat 850 people. It will host the region's first Broadway-style, Bollywood-themed musical, *Jaan-e-Jigar*. The 120-minute show will include drama, romance, action and comedy. What else would you expect from Bollywood? The music includes hits from Bollywood movies, as well as original tracks.

The nightlife

You can enter Rock On, a lounge with live music, and quite literally rock on, without having to buy a ticket for Bollywood Parks. *Dhs285 (adults) Dhs250 (kids aged three to 11). Daily noon-8pm; Rock On daily 2pm-2am. Rajmahal Theatre tickets sold separately. Opens Tue Nov 15. www.bollywoodparksdubai.com.*



Riverland Dubai

Connecting the three theme parks, Lapita Hotel and a waterpark, Riverland Dubai is where you need to start your Dubai Parks And Resorts adventure. You have to pass through here to get to any of the theme parks, and best of all, it's free of charge. Stop off to refuel before hopping into the roller coasters at LEGOLAND, taking your front row seats at the region's first home-grown Bollywood musical, or even getting a photo taken with Princess Fiona and Shrek at motiongate Dubai's DreamWorks.

India Gate

Before you set foot into the world of Bollywood, there's a collection of food and beverage outlets at the entrance to Bollywood Parks. India Gate might not have the physical similarities to the structure with the same name that stands proud in New Delhi, but this is a foodie delight, with restaurants including Maharaja, Bol Gappa, Wok Chi and Barbecue Delights. This part of Riverland Dubai has

been designed to mimic 1930s India with its vibrant colours and flavours. And to help relax your theme park-weary feet (this is going to be a legitimate concern in the coming months; you heard it here first), this section has an express reflexology centre. Feet First offers de-stress massages, and deep-tissue reflexology to revive your tired feet.

The Boardwalk

Relive the heady days of 1950s America at The Boardwalk, which neighbours motiongate Dubai. Reminiscent of the *Sunset Boulevard* and *East of Eden* era, this zone is home to a range of casual diner-style eateries. Expect the likes of Tortilla, Shake Shack and Ella's Creamery glittering along The Boardwalk. British celebrity chef Tom Aikens is also due to open his second casual dining restaurant, Tom's Kitchen Deli, in this part of the theme park. If your sugar levels are low after all the adrenaline-fuelled rides, head to Fuzziwigs Candy Factory, which stocks more than 500 varieties of sweets, vintage treats and

fudge. Just remember to comb your hair back and pop that collar à la James Dean when strutting along this nostalgia-filled pavement.

The French Village

Postpone your plans to visit the south of France, as you can find it in the form of a quaint village at Riverland Dubai. From the cobbled streets and buildings with exposed bricks to the bougainvillea creepers along the structures, every little detail has been thought out extensively at The French Village, making it the most handsome section of Riverland Dubai. The “town square” has a working water wheel, making it a great spot to give those selfie sticks a workout. Traditional French music acts as the soundtrack for this part of the park, to keep you entertained while you visit The Bagel Bar Coffee House, Le Pain Quotidien, Leopold’s of London and Pascal Tepper. Aside from the medieval Mediterranean-style outdoor dining scene, The French Village also houses a Dubai Duty Free shop, Boots Pharmacy, I Love Dubai and Gallery One.

The Peninsula

Taking a leaf out of the architecture books of the early 19th century, is the island in the middle of Riverland Dubai known as The Peninsula. This spot meanders around the river, with plenty of al fresco drinking and dining options. Being the only licensed spot at Dubai Parks And Resorts, The Peninsula is where you’ll find The Irish Village, Katsuya by Starck, Parle, Big Chefs and Ecco Pizza & Pasta. This area also has an open space similar to an amphitheatre for outdoor concerts and festivals. Over the summer months, a large indoor multipurpose venue will host parties, meetings and weddings.



Katsuya by Starck

The river

The kilometre-long, six-metre-deep river that runs through the middle of Dubai Parks And Resorts is arguably the main attraction of Riverland Dubai. As it meanders through the park, it offers access to all the food, beverage, retail and entertainment outlets. Expect soon-to-launch boat rides to take you on the river, with views of the French Riviera-style architecture, Las Vegas-inspired strip, and the Island Plaza. The river also features floral gardens, two pedestrian bridges and entertainment along its banks. Stop by here for the street jugglers, abra rides or to feed the fish. Each park entrance is marked with a significant park icon: LEGOLAND has a fort made of, well, LEGO; Bollywood Parks has a metal sculpture of dancing hands, and motiongate Dubai has a camera reel; all of which can be seen from the abras. *Free. Open Sun-Wed 10am-11pm; Thu-Sat 10am-midnight.*



LEGOLAND Dubai

LEGOLAND Dubai is vast. It’s also the stuff of almost every child’s dream. With LEGO structures saying “hi” from every corner of this 30 million square foot theme park, even adults are promised an “awesome” time. Following the success of LEGOLAND parks in Europe, the US and Asia, the UAE is the first country in the region to get an official park. There are 40 LEGO-themed attractions in the six zones, and a total of 60 million LEGO bricks used across them; so leave all your inhibitions at home and wear comfortable shoes, as things are about to get childishly fun in here.

Adventure

For curious minds, this area of the park is inspired by the ancient temple ruins, where

you can embark on exciting treasure hunts, and help find Pharaohs’ stolen treasure chests. There’s also a submarine where you can dodge the water blasts on Wave Racers, or sit on the Beetle Bounce and launch 15 feet up.

Factory

Even though restaurants and cafés are dotted throughout the park, the Factory is located at the very entrance of LEGOLAND, and has a café with bites for every palate. This zone is also home to the largest LEGO shop in the Middle East, from where you can pick up souvenirs and snap family photos.

Imagination

As the name suggests, this section of LEGOLAND is where you need to let your

imagination run free. There’s a giant Albert Einstein head to welcome you at the Master Builder Academy. Leave the kids here under the supervision of LEGO professionals who will help them build their own models, or take them with you to check out the Technic Twister ride. You can get the 4D cinema experience here with a screening of *The Lego Movie 4D The New Adventure*. The 12-and-a-half-minute show is exclusive to the UAE, and combines 3D computer animation with real-world effects such as wind, water and fog, and it’s set after the events of the hit blockbuster movie.

Kingdoms

This zone houses the theme park’s biggest and most thrilling ride, The Dragon coaster. At 16 metres high, it reaches speeds of up to 60 kilometres per hour and weaves through the LEGOLAND Castle. Aside from getting some of the best views of the park here, there are

also medieval characters made entirely of LEGO dotted all along the ride who are there to distract you – or keep you entertained. For those not tall enough to enjoy this ride, there is Dragon’s Apprentice nearby, which will look after the smaller kids around the park. This zone is also where you’ll find Granny’s Apple Fries – a great stopover if you’re feeling parched and exhausted from all the shrieking.

Lego City

This part of LEGOLAND encourages kids to ride around in a LEGO car and earn their license. There are mini electric cars to cruise around in at this Driving School, as well as other big city essentials like a fire station, an airport, and a sea harbour. Be part of a sea crew at the Ship Yard, fly a plane at the airport, steer a boat and even work to save a “burning building” at the Fire Station. This zone is great for the entire family.



Coming soon!

motiongate Dubai

This is certainly one of the most exciting theme parks and it’ll open on Thursday December. Leaning on the huge movie-powers of DreamWorks, Sony Pictures Studios and Lionsgate, it will deliver a massive mix of family entertainment. Expect to see five major zones with all sorts of rides and experiences, inspired by *The Smurfs*, *Shrek*, *Kung Fu Panda* and *Ghostbusters*, *The Hunger Games*, *The Green Hornet* and *Zombieland*. DreamWorks Zone in particular is entirely indoors and will feature 12 attractions from the Hollywood animated-movie powerhouses.

From Dhs280 for a day pass. Opens Thu Dec 15, www.motiongatedubai.com.

Miniland

This indoor space is a playground for LEGO enthusiasts. Yes, even the adult kind. Miniland is where you’ll find mini replicas of the UAE’s biggest (and future) landmarks, including Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque, Ain Dubai, Princess Tower, the Burj Al Arab and the Burj Khalifa (which took two years to build). There are more than 20 million LEGO bricks in this space, so don’t start counting how many blocks are in the Taj Mahal. There is also a ten-metre-long play table here, with white LEGO bricks, where visitors can build their own city.

Dhs295 (adults), Dhs250 (kids aged three to 11). Children under three go free. Dhs765 (annual pass for unlimited visits). Open daily 10am-6pm. www.legoland.com/dubai.

Dubai Parks And Resorts, Sheikh Zayed Road, opposite Palm Jebel Ali, www.dubaiparksandresorts.com.

