

# Palm of plenty

New openings abound at Dubai's Palm Jumeirah this year. **Tamara Hinson** rounds up the latest additions

The recent arrival of Atlantis The Royal brought Dubai's Palm Jumeirah another serving of ultra-luxury, but that's not all that's happening in the city's most exciting culinary, nightlife and leisure hotspot. The area has also become more accessible, with a new monorail station opening late last year in the restaurant-filled The Pointe area. This has made it easier for visitors coming from downtown Dubai and enables those staying at resorts such as Atlantis The Royal to explore areas of the Palm that were often overlooked.

## HOT HOTELS

Several new properties, besides Atlantis The Royal, have recently opened on this man-made marvel. Since late 2022, it's been home to the new 608-room Marriott Resort Palm Jumeirah (the UAE's first Marriott resort). Highlights include its enormous Saray Spa (we're particularly smitten with the thermal suite) and the diverse selection of restaurants. Señor Pico is great for Californian-Mexican fusion cuisine, and it's worth noting that Dubai's first Korean steakhouse, Smoki Moto, will open at the resort by the end of 2023.

There's more fantastic food at Palm West Beach's 608-room Hilton Dubai Palm Jumeirah, which opened in 2022 and where culinary offerings include Trader Vic's and Barfly by Buddha-Bar. Clients who love a few laps of the hotel pool are also in luck – the property's 65-metre long pool is one of Dubai's largest.

For all-out luxury, it's got to be the Taj Exotica Resort & Spa, which opened in ➤

# DESTINATIONS

## MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA | DUBAI



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Palm Jumeirah; Piatti by the Beach at Raffles The Palm Dubai; Marriott Resort Palm Jumeirah; view of Atlantis The Palm from The Pointe

PICTURES: Shutterstock/Tavarius; Tape Agency; Marriott Hotels; Atlantis The Royal/Brandon Barré Photography



2022. As well as being brilliant for pampering (its Jiva Spa specialises in Indian therapies), it's also family-friendly, and younger visitors can hang out in the Popsicle Kids Club. Equally luxurious is Raffles The Palm Dubai. Guests at this beachfront hotel can enjoy butler service, although clients seeking extra privacy should book one of the beachfront villas, which have private pools. And later this spring, Cheval Collection is opening a boutique, all-apartment property on The Palm, its first in the Middle East.

### GASTRONOMIC GAME CHANGERS

Dubai's best restaurants are no longer confined to its hotels. At Peaches & Cream, at the base of the Palm, it's all about casual dining. A brilliant option for lunches and brunches, this recently opened restaurant serves up delicious Mediterranean cuisine in a Palm Springs-style setting. There's more fun at Palm West Beach's new Ristorante Loren, inspired by Sophia Loren and the Italian Riviera; expect delicious pastas and fresh seafood.

Now for an oldie but a goldie. Brunch fans should make a beeline for Nobu Dubai, which recently launched a refreshed version of its Brunch by Nobu, which takes place every Saturday. Additions include Japanese Peruvian fusion dishes and a package which includes free-flowing champagne and caviar trolley. Got a sweet-toothed client? Point them towards Raffles The Palm Dubai's Piatti by the Beach, an Italian restaurant serving up what might just be the world's most delicious desserts.

### ON POINTE

There have never been more reasons to head to the Palm's The Pointe area, just across the water from Atlantis



### ATLANTIS THE ROYAL Dubai

Landing an invite to the 'Grand Reveal' of Atlantis The Royal felt like winning one of Wonka's golden tickets. With Beyoncé topping the bill and Kendall Jenner hosting a tequila party for a gaggle of celebrity guests, the three-day, pre-launch party put the hotel in the headlines before it had even opened. A-listers will be a regular fixture at the curving cantilevered 795-room property that's changed the Palm Jumeirah skyline, attracted by its fancy restaurants (Dinner by Heston Blumenthal among them) and its high-end accommodation, which includes 44 Sky Pool Villas with glass-sided private pools, and four penthouses. Beyoncé stayed in the £80,000-a-night, four-bed Royal Mansion, which boasts a foyer big enough to accommodate two 100-year-old olive trees. I was happy enough in my entry-level £800-a-night Palmscape room, which comes with one king or two queen-sized beds. White marble en suites feature twin sinks, walk-in showers and freestanding tubs, accessorised with gold-coloured back scrubbers. Other Royal touches include gold-coloured toothbrushes, combs and razors, and the thickest bathroom mat I've ever walked on. But it was the view that really stopped me in my tracks – Dubai has never looked so good.

**Book it:** Kenwood Travel offers five nights at Atlantis The Royal on a B&B basis from £1,896 per person, based on two sharing, departing on June 14. The price includes return flights from Gatwick.

[kenwoodtravel.co.uk](http://kenwoodtravel.co.uk)

### REVIEWED BY Sarah Hedley Hymers

The Palm. While the nightly fountain displays – recognised as the world's largest dancing fountains by Guinness World Records – are a big attraction, the area is also quickly shaping up to be Palm Jumeirah's most exciting culinary hotspot. Our favourite venues include the Social Distrikt food hall, opened in 2022, and Yoy, which became the UAE's first Ukrainian restaurant when it opened in early 2023. At the latter, many of the staff are Ukrainian refugees, and the menu pays tribute to the country's cuisine with delicacies such as slow-baked Transcarpathian lamb. ➤



ABOVE: Looking out from The View at The Palm over Palm Jumeirah PICTURE: DTCM

SHOWTIME

Beyoncé’s performance at January’s opening of Atlantis The Royal was a reminder that Dubai knows how to put on a show. Clients who like their food with a side order of frivolity are in the right place. At Atlantis The Palm’s recently opened En Fuego restaurant (famous for its Latin American cuisine), the latest offering is its Vida Del Carnaval Brunch on Saturdays. Expect impromptu parades courtesy of the restaurant’s performers, along with seriously impressive samba dancing and various props to help upgrade those all-important selfies.

Over at The Palm One&Only, the 101 Dining Lounge and Bar’s new sundowner tapas menu is a great option for visitors keen to supercharge their sunsets – dishes are served to a soundtrack of live music (recent performers include DJ Umut and South African band 4TheMusic).

INSTA INSPIRATION

While The View at the Palm on Palm Tower’s 52nd floor (now connected to the Palm’s Pointe area

“Adrenaline junkies can take their selfie skills to new heights on the Dubai Balloon, a hot-air balloon ride above Aquaventure

by a free shuttle bus service) will remain a favourite, there’s now an abundance of additional places to snap those all-important selfies.

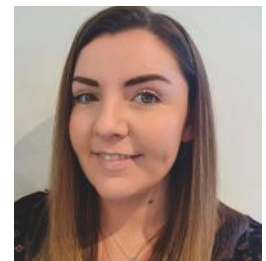
Over at Atlantis The Palm’s White Beach, the return of the legendary Sunkissed Beach Brunch, which takes place on Sundays, provides plenty of opportunities for poolside selfies. And as of March 2023, adrenaline junkies can take their selfie skills to new heights with a ride on the Dubai Balloon, a hot-air balloon ride high above Atlantis The Palm’s Aquaventure water park – offering a whole new perspective on what might just be Dubai’s most exciting destination.

Thirty years ago, critics balked at the idea of building an entire district atop an artificial island shaped like a palm tree. But almost 20 years after construction began, the opening of a slew of exciting new luxury properties and a host of food and entertainment experiences on its palm tree-shaded fronds proves that Palm Jumeirah has become a destination in its own right. **TW**

ASK THE expert

“The Hilton Dubai Palm Jumeirah is in a fantastic location at the base of the Palm, in easy reach of the city itself. Don’t miss Claw BBQ – the hotel’s very cool American-style restaurant. There’s even a rodeo bull! The hotel’s rooftop bar, Barfly by Buddha-Bar Dubai, is my favourite spot for gorgeous sunset views.”

**Deb Wadhams,**  
head of product (East),  
dnata Travel Group



BOOK IT

**Gold Medal** offers a seven-night package at the Hilton Dubai Palm Beach Jumeirah on a dine-around basis, including return flights with Emirates from Heathrow and private transfers. It costs from £1,499 per person, based on two sharing. [goldmedal.co.uk](http://goldmedal.co.uk)