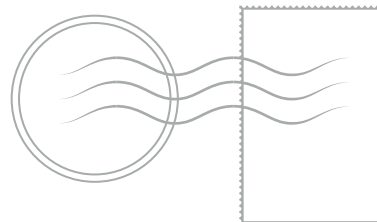


DESTINATIONS

MIDDLE EAST | RAS AL KHAIMAH

POSTCARD

Ras Al Khaimah



What's it like flying over a mountain on the world's longest zipline? Juliet Dennis tackles the Jebel Jais Flight

The trembling started in my knees. Gradually my whole body began to shake, and I felt the blood pumping round my body as the adrenaline kicked in.

The last time I felt this nervous was almost a decade ago, in a hospital waiting room, preparing to give birth to my twins by C-section. Even my voice sounded squeaky, despite my vain attempts to remain calm.

Standing in the queue with other members of the travel trade during The Specialist Travel Association's (Aito) conference in Ras Al Khaimah, the view over the United Arab Emirates' highest mountain, Jebel Jais, was stunning.

But for staff at the zipwire – the world's longest, at more than 1.7 miles – it was business as usual. After a pep talk about the dos and don'ts, they strapped me into a harness next to Kate Kenward, former executive director of Aito. We were then left dangling in mid-air like puppets on strings.

Below us there was a small platform, then nothing but a sharp drop to the vast mountain valley below. Fortunately there was little time to think – we were off!

The take-off was by far the scariest part – the sensation of being 'thrown' into the air, arms tucked behind me, cool air slapping my cheeks, and my stomach still back on the platform.

Naturally, I screamed, but shock soon turned to enjoyment. How exhilarating to be soaring above the mountains like Superman. Within seconds, I even got used to the speed, and was able to take in the views and the tiny specs of human beings below.

It was only as I approached the end of the first leg of the zipline that I realised how fast I was travelling – and thought, with sudden horror, I was going to hit the platform ahead. But with a sudden jolt upwards – designed to slow zipliners down – I came to a halt at the feet of the staff.

The second leg was a breeze after that. Instead of lying flat, I sat up and whizzed down the mountain.

This was an adrenaline junkie's dream, but even for the less adventure-crazed among us, it was fun.

My only question was: when can I do it again? **TW**



BOOK IT

Prices for the Jebel Jais Flight start at about £148. Jebel Jais Tours offers free shuttles to the mountain in summer (£4 in peak season). Three nights' B&B in a garden-view room at the five-star Hilton Al Hamra Beach & Golf Resort starts at £459 with Gold Medal, including Gulf Air flights from Heathrow, and valid September 8-30. goldmedal.co.uk



TOP: Juliet and Kate Kenward await take-off

ABOVE: Juliet tries to fake a smile