

GETAWAY

TRAVEL NEWS

LATEST TRAVEL ADVICE, OFFERS AND NEWS

**AFRICAN ADVENTURES AWAIT**  
DREAMLINER flights from Manchester to Ethiopia's capital Addis Ababa will start on December 1.

The four-times-a-week service with award-winning Ethiopian Airlines will unlock connections to more than 58 countries across the African continent, and complements the Heathrow route which started in 1973.

Initially the new flights will go via Brussels, and the state-of-the-art Boeing 787 will offer business and economy cabins, with return fares starting at £499.

See [ethiopianairlines.com](http://ethiopianairlines.com) and [manchesterairport.co.uk](http://manchesterairport.co.uk) for more.

**LODGES ARE CENTER OF ATTENTION**  
NEW two-storey timber and stone lakeside Waterside Lodges are now open at Center Parcs' Elveden Forest site in Suffolk.

Ideal for wildlife spotting, the accommodation features open-plan living areas, three bedrooms and decking for dining, relaxing and stargazing.

Family breaks in the lodges start from £1,999.

Visit [centerparcs.co.uk](http://centerparcs.co.uk)



**A BLOOMING BRILLIANT TRIP**  
WITH the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) flower shows in full swing, RHS Chatsworth is just around the corner (June 6-10).

HF Holidays has a trip which includes a day at the RHS Chatsworth Flower Show, set in the stunning grounds of Chatsworth House.

There is also a visit to two of Derbyshire's renowned gardens.

First up is Renishaw, home of the Sitwell family, with classical Italianate gardens, woodlands and park. In the afternoon it's off to Hardwick Hall to discover the links to Chatsworth House.

A three-night stay (June 8-11) costs from £399 per person. It includes full-board, en-suite accommodation at Peveril of the Peak, the services of an HF Holidays' leader, transport to and from gardens and all garden admissions costs. There is a separate admission fee for stately homes/houses.

To book visit [hfholidays.co.uk](http://hfholidays.co.uk) or call 0345 470 8558.

# Keep PALM and carry on

**ADRIAN CAFFERY** enjoys a bird's-eye view of a destination where records are made to be broken

THE soundtrack to my whistle-stop trip to Dubai was the annoyingly catchy Everything Is Awesome from The Lego Movie.

I couldn't get the tune out of my head because from the moment I boarded the plane to when I returned to Blighty everything was, well, you know, AWESOME! Here are some of the reasons why:

- We flew on the world's biggest passenger plane with the "world's best economy class";
- We stayed on the world's biggest man-made island, shaped like a palm tree;
- Our opulent hotel featured the Middle East's biggest spa, plus views to the world's biggest ferris wheel;
- Our seaplane flight gave us views of the world's tallest building and world's largest 'picture frame'; and
- We admired the world's heaviest gold ring in the markets.

We stayed for two nights at Jumeirah Zabeel Saray, a hotel on The Palm Jumeirah, a true wonder of modern engineering.

Opened in 2006, at a cost of £12bn, and stretching three miles into the Arabian Gulf, it doubled the length of Dubai's coastline at a stroke.

The road from the mainland is the 'trunk', eight 'fronds' either side are home to luxury villas, and the outer crescents are filled with five-star hotels.

The only place to appreciate the size of The Palm Jumeirah is from the air and we were lucky enough to buckle up for a 20-minute seaplane flight over the city.

Taking off from Dubai Creek, the lifeblood of old Dubai, we also got a bird's-eye view of The World, a project even more fanciful than The Palm.

It's a vast collection of artificial islands in the approximate shape of a map of the world, although so far only a few have been developed.

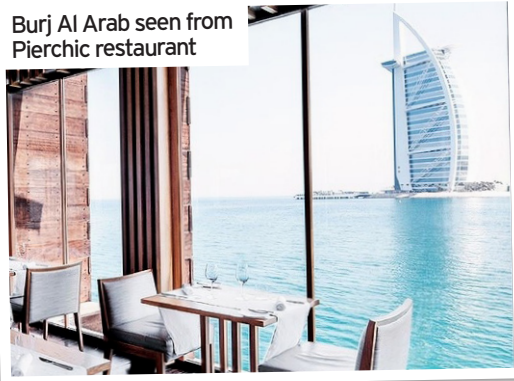
Then we flew over the iconic Burj Al Arab, a 'seven-star' hotel on its own man-made island that's shaped like a billowing sail, with curves in all the right places.

At 321m, it is higher than the Eiffel Tower and until 2007 it was the tallest hotel in the world. Its helipad and restaurant seem suspended in mid-air.

Flying at an altitude of around



The Najmat Taiba ring



450m, we were still nearly 400m below the tip of the Burj Khalifa, easily the world's tallest building with 160 floors.

Its needle-like outline soars high above the many other skyscrapers in Downtown Dubai, acting as a symbol of the city's towering ambitions.

We also flew over the world renowned QE2 cruise ship which will soon re-open its doors as a floating entertainment and hotel destination.

Finally, we swooped around the golden Dubai Frame, the city's newest attraction, which is 150m high and 93m wide, with a glass walkway on top.

The plane landed parallel to the beautifully manicured Dubai Creek

Golf Club with its huge, modernist club house inspired by the sails of a traditional boat.

After our flight we took the short taxi ride to the gold souk in Deira which, with 100 shops, gives even Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter a run for its money.

Amid all the bling you can't miss the Najmat Taiba (Star of Taiba) ring, which weighs 63kg and is made up of 58kg of 21 carat gold and 5kg of precious stones.

Too big for even the BFG's fingers, if Dubai ever produced a world champion heavyweight boxer, I can imagine him using the ring as his belt.

Not far from the souk is the Sheikh Mohammed Centre for Cultural Understanding, most useful in a place where 90% of the population are ex-pats.

We joined visitors of many different nationalities for a traditional buffet lunch while our host fielded questions about Emirati culture, customs and religion.

At the end of a busy day it was nice to return to the luxurious Jumeirah Zabeel Saray hotel, which



The Palm Jumeirah seen from Seawings tour, below, and one of the company's planes by Dubai Creek Golf Club, right



The Jumeriah Zabeel Saray hotel and, right, its spa



NEED TO KNOW

■ **JUMEIRAH ZABEEL SARAY:** Rooms start at approx £240 per room on a bed and breakfast basis. Visit [jumeirah.com/en/resorts/dubai/](http://jumeirah.com/en/resorts/dubai/)

■ **PIERCHIC:** A three-course sunset dinner costs approx £80. Visit [pierchic.com](http://pierchic.com)

■ **LA PERLE:** Tickets start from

£82. Visit [laperle.com](http://laperle.com) or email [boxoffice@laperle.com](mailto:boxoffice@laperle.com)

■ **SEAWINGS:** Flights over Dubai start at approx £225 per person. Visit [seawings.ae](http://seawings.ae)

■ For more information on Dubai see [visitdubai.com/en-uk](http://visitdubai.com/en-uk)

■ For more on the SMCCU visit [cultures.ae](http://cultures.ae)

than five motorcycle stunt riders in a 'Globe of Death'.

After the show we made tracks for the coast, where the ultimate in romantic meals awaited us at Dubai's premier seafood and Mediterranean restaurant.

Pierchic is at the end of its own lengthy wooden pier and offers close up views of the Burj Al Arab hotel, which come nightfall glows every colour of the rainbow.

Perhaps it was the views (or the fancy cocktails) but it genuinely felt like I was having the best meal of my life (apart from all those cooked by my wife, of course).

It was the perfect end to a couple of eye-popping days in Dubai, days in which we'd barely scratched the surface of what it has to offer. There is so much more to discover in the city of Guinness World Records.

LATE BREAKS

LAST-MINUTE DEALS ON HOLIDAYS

**ALL ABOARD FOR EUROPE**  
IGLU CRUISE ([iglcruise.com](http://iglcruise.com); 0203 733 5557) offers a 14-night voyage onboard MSC Cruises' Magnifica from £901 per person (full board) sailing from Southampton on June 25.

The trip includes an overnight onboard in Amsterdam and stop-offs in Le Havre, Porto, Lisbon, Cadiz, Malaga, La Coruna and Hamburg.

Or head to the Mediterranean on a seven-night fly cruise onboard Marella Cruises' Thomson Dream from just £774 per person (full board) flying from Bournemouth on July 3.

The trip includes all tips and exclusive discounts and stop-offs in Palma, Trapani, Sorrento, Rome, Ajaccio and Palamos.