How to Choose Your Dubai Dune Buggy and Camel Ride Experience

Planning a desert outing in Dubai

Dubai's desert landscape offers two very different ways to explore it: a fast-paced dune buggy ride across the sand and a slow, traditional camel ride that connects you to the region's Bedouin heritage. Deciding which one suits you, or how to combine both, depends on your appetite for adventure, your comfort level, and the kind of memories you want to bring home. This guide walks through the main considerations so you can make an informed choice.

Start with your group and fitness level

The first thing to consider is who is coming with you. Dune buggies are generally designed for adults and older teenagers. Most vehicles seat two people, with the driver handling the steering and a passenger holding on. Young children may not be allowed on a buggy, or may only be permitted as passengers on certain tours. Camel rides, on the other hand, are accessible to a much wider age range. Young children can sit in front of a rider or with a guide, and older adults with limited mobility often manage a camel ride without difficulty, provided they can mount and dismount with help. If you are travelling with a mixed-age group, a camel trek may be the easiest way to include everyone. If you are with friends or older teenagers who want thrills, a dune buggy is the natural choice.

Decide on the time of day

The desert heat in Dubai is intense, especially between late spring and early autumn. Morning slots, typically starting just after sunrise, offer cooler temperatures and softer light for photography. Evening safaris are popular because they end with sunset views over the dunes, but the heat can still be strong in the late afternoon. For a buggy ride, the cooler hours of early morning or late afternoon are more comfortable and also reduce the risk of overheating. Camel rides, being slower, are often scheduled for sunrise or sunset so that riders can enjoy the changing colours of the sky without the midday sun. Many tours include a stop at a desert camp with refreshments, so factor in how long you want to be outdoors.



Understand the terrain and vehicle options

Not all dune buggies are the same. Some are designed for high-speed runs over relatively flat sand, while others are built for climbing steep dunes and navigating off-road trails. If you want a smooth ride that covers more ground, a two-seater buggy with a powerful engine and good suspension is ideal. If you prefer a more physical experience, some tours offer single-seater buggies where you control every turn. The sand in the Dubai desert can vary from hard-packed to soft, powdery dunes. A good operator will match the vehicle to the conditions. Ask about the type of buggy before booking, especially if you have never driven on sand before. For camel rides, the main variables are the saddle type and the duration. Traditional wooden saddles offer a closer connection to the animal's movement, while padded saddles provide more comfort for longer treks. A short ride around a camp is very different from a two-hour trek into the dunes. If you are new to camels, start with a shorter ride to see how you feel.

View the location on Google Maps

Check safety and comfort features

For a dune buggy, safety starts with the vehicle itself. Look for buggies that have a sturdy roll cage, seat belts, and a helmet or goggles provided. The guide should give a clear briefing on how to handle the controls, how to steer on sand, and what to do if the buggy gets stuck. Some tours offer buggies with automatic transmissions, which are easier for beginners. For a camel ride, comfort depends on the animal's temperament and the handler's skill. A well-trained camel will kneel calmly for mounting and dismounting. The handler should be nearby to help you balance. The camel saddle should be padded and properly fitted. If you feel unstable, ask the handler to adjust the saddle or shorten the stirrups. Always wear closed-toe shoes and long trousers to protect your legs from the sun and from rubbing against the saddle.

Look at the route and scenery

The desert around Dubai is not a uniform sea of sand. Some areas are dominated by tall, red dunes that shift shape with the wind, while others are flatter with patches of gravel and desert wildlife. A good buggy tour will take you through varied terrain, up steep dunes, down into bowls, and across open flats. The sense of speed and the ability to crest a dune and see the landscape unfold in front of you is part of the appeal. For camel rides, the route matters in a different way. A trek that follows a line of dunes offers a more scenic experience than one that loops around a camp. Some tours combine a camel ride with a visit to a desert camp where you can try henna painting, watch traditional performances, or enjoy a meal under the stars. If you are interested in the Bedouin experience, look for a tour that includes a stop at a camp with cultural activities rather than just a ride and return.

Combine both activities in one outing

Many visitors want to experience both a dune buggy and a camel ride on the same trip. The best way to do this is to book a half-day safari that includes both. Typically, the buggy ride comes first, when the morning or late-afternoon light is good and the sand is still cool. After the buggy ride, you can take a short camel ride to a desert camp or simply enjoy a relaxed trek around the dunes. The contrast between the two experiences is part of the appeal. On a buggy, you feel the raw power of the engine and the rush of speed. On a camel, you slow down, take in the silence, and notice details, the tracks of desert beetles, the colour of the sand at sunset, the distant call of a bird. Combining them gives you a fuller picture of the desert. One local option is Quad Biking Dubai | Buggy Dubai | Desert Safari Dubai | Camel Ride Dubai.

What to wear and bring

For a dune buggy, loose clothing that covers your arms and legs is best. The sand can be hot, and the wind carries fine dust. Sunglasses or goggles are essential. A scarf or bandana can protect your mouth and nose from dust on windy days. For a camel ride, long trousers and a lightweight long-sleeved shirt are ideal. A hat with a brim helps shade your face. Sunscreen is a must for both activities. Bring a bottle of water, even if the tour provides drinks. A small bag with a camera or phone is fine, but make sure it is secured so it doesn’t bounce out on the buggy. Most tours provide a helmet for the buggy and a saddle for the camel, but it is worth confirming with whichever business you choose what equipment they supply and what you need to bring yourself.



Timing and booking considerations

Dubai's desert tours are popular, especially during the cooler months from October to April. Booking a few days in advance is advisable. If you are visiting during a holiday period, book even earlier. Some tours offer hotel pickup and drop-off, which saves time and hassle. Check whether the tour includes a guide, insurance, and any fuel or refreshment costs. If you have a specific request, such as a private buggy or a longer camel trek, ask before booking. The best tours balance safety, scenery, and value. Read a few recent reviews to get a sense of how the operator handles logistics. For a first-time visitor, a half-day combination tour is often the most efficient way to sample both activities without feeling rushed.

Respecting the environment

The Dubai desert is a fragile ecosystem. Dune buggies can disturb the sand surface and affect desert wildlife if they stray off designated trails. Choose an operator that follows responsible off-road trail practices and stays within marked areas. During a camel ride, avoid touching or feeding the animals without the handler's permission. Camels have specific dietary needs and can become ill from human food. Also, be mindful of litter. Carry out whatever you bring in, including empty water bottles and snack wrappers. Many desert camps have waste bins, but it

is better to take your rubbish with you. The desert is a shared space, and respecting it ensures that future visitors can enjoy the same experience.

Making the final choice

If you are looking for adrenaline, a dune buggy ride is hard to beat. The feeling of climbing a steep dune and then speeding down the other side is exhilarating. If you prefer a quieter, more reflective experience, a camel ride offers a window into a way of life that has existed in the desert for centuries. For most visitors, the ideal solution is to try both. Start with the buggy to get your heart pumping, then switch to a camel ride to wind down and take in the scenery. The combination gives you the best of what the desert has to offer. For those exploring dubai buggy rides and camel treks, a well-planned half-day tour can cover both without feeling rushed. And for anyone seeking dubai buggy rides specifically, the variety of vehicle types and trail options means you can tailor the experience to your comfort level and skill.



Quad Biking Dubai | Buggy Dubai | Desert Safari Dubai | Camel Ride Dubai is located at 443X+HG - 1 Palm Jumeirah Rd - Nakhlat Jumeira - Dubai - United Arab Emirates, and can be reached at +971 52 440 9525.

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