

Every month a new trip will be uploaded to this site: enjoy!

*If you want to know what the falcon sees as he skims effortlessly over dune-tops and immediately follow that by creating your own insane roller-coaster ride, skimming the dune crest and dropping several hundred feet down to ground level in a breathtaking but controlled skid, then keep reading.*

I was test riding the new Yamaha Raptor 700R and so lack of power was not my concern - riding the edge while trying to avoid being thrown off was. When on what are termed "technical" dunes, the stress is intense, and I could hardly blink from the concentration I was exerting. I would advise you to take the same approach at the Salamat dunes, an area of enormous dunes on the western outskirts of Al Ain, behind its airport.

Download the KML file for your GPS by clicking [here](#). Once downloaded, you can import the file into your GPS device and take it on the road, or double-click that file and it will open automatically in Google Earth if you have that installed (all adventurers should! [Google Earth](#)).

And here is an interactive map of the route.

View [Salamat](#) in a larger map



At the technical level offered by the Salamat dunes, safety gear is a must on a quad : helmet, chest and back protector, gloves, boots, at the minimum. I had forgotten my gloves and very almost paid the price for it as I came over a tight crest. Crossing over at a 45-degree angle, I landed the front tyre a little harder than expected on the other side, and my downhill hand slipped, launching my body forward and very closely tipping me over. It was close, but luckily I escaped from punishment for my mistake – had I been wearing gloves, my hand might not have slipped.

It is the little things that count when pushing hard over “technical” terrain. Shifting the rider’s weight from

one footrest to the other, swinging the hips out a few inches, aiming the wheel just over the crest, giving petrol at the precise split-second to spin the rear around – and indeed it is that precision in execution that makes a hardcore ride an intensely fun experience.



If you ride in the weekend evening, I would advise you not to engage in any racing with the local boyz as they'll bury you in rooster tails. If you thought you were a good rider, think again – these guys have been riding these dunes fearlessly since they first learnt to sit upright. Friday mornings are excellent if you prefer a solitary ride for your group.



[Click here for larger photo.](#)

And if you are about to give Salamat a go, you are an experienced rider and therefore do not need further directions or instructions – ride hard, and stay safe.

Please read the original article: [Quad bike delight on the dunes of Salamat, Al Ain](#). Published by The National, Mar 23, 2012.

Or view a pdf file of the original article [here](#), as published in The National.

Please read my disclaimer [here](#).