

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

The “Coastal Loop” is an excellent route for newcomers to the UAE, for when you have visitors from overseas and for people who do not relish the idea of going “off-road”. In fact, a saloon car will be perfectly suitable for the tarmac roads that run along the coastline of eastern UAE.

Here is a gentle exploratory trip for those weekends when you just feel like going on a leisurely drive.

Starting from the red dunes of Sharjah, we will traverse the sharp Hajar Mountains - the highest in the eastern Arabian Peninsula - and then roll south along beaches for 100km before heading back inland in a wide, circular route.

For this trip, I’m driving one of my favorite cars, the Audi A8. And, in this case, it’s the extended L model, which is basically a personal limousine.

This itinerary can be covered in one day, as we did, or you can stay overnight if you prefer to spend more time at the beach or exploring the tracks that lead up into the mountains.



Except for public holidays, the East Coast beaches are usually uncrowded. Some are reserved for families only,

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and many are now enclosed within private resorts. The proposed route follows the coast and many interesting stops will beckon you.

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](#)).

View [GPS device](#) in a larger map



Audi A8 in front of the main mosque at Dibba, where the coastal road begins if you are following a clockwise loop, as proposed in the route.



After the sharp mountains, the emerald blue waters of the UAE's East Coast are a welcome sight.



The family section of the beach at Khorfakkan



A small island, known to expats as Snoopy Island, is within snorkeling distance from the shore.



The coastal road runs along the seashore most of the way, revealing stunning views - but keep your eye firmly on the road as it is not a divided highway and some drivers believe they can stop wherever they please; of course, you can stop at any of the numerous parking areas and simply stroll a few steps to admire the view properly.



Numerous beach resort developments have snatched up beautiful public beaches; however, access from the beachside can rarely be enforced with fences due to the tides. Alternatively, a stay in luxury is certainly not a bad way to spend a weekend.



A lively road, there are numerous stops to interrupt the journey. We like to stop at every opportunity and explore, and I would advise you to do the same: what point is there in driving past everything? Here, the Audi A8 visits streetside fruit stalls on the East Coast.



An interesting stop is at the UAE's oldest mosque - Al Biddiya Mosque - which is dwarfed by a fortified look-out tower, pictured above.



From the coastal road there are many diversions inland, towards the mountains - most of these will lead to an adventure of its own, but we'll save those for another trip for now!



The cornice in Khorfakkan is a busy place, with some very good restaurants.

Please read the original article: [The East Coast Loop - a leisurely drive along the coastline from Dibba to Khor Kelba](#). Published by The National, Sep 23, 2011.

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

Please make sure you read the [Disclaimer](#) and plan your trips with due care.