

# DUBAI FALCONCITY RISES

## ONE OF DUBAI'S MOST SURREAL PROJECTS, FALCONCITY PLACES THE WORLD AT YOUR FEET

Already home to one of the most dynamic skylines on the planet, Dubai is busy building its next out-of-this-world project, Falconcity of Wonders, a concrete tribute to the planet's most brilliant civilizations

Great building projects challenge the limits of physics and reinvent space. Intricate detailing can render a structural necessity such as a column into an artistic meditation on the natural beauty of symmetry. Sloping curves on a roof or unexpected corners on a skyscraper can transform a static tall building into an elixir of optical sway and motion. Build enough grand structures, envision an ambitious reinvention of the urban landscape, and a city rises into the trade winds that signals more than 21st-century glitter and evokes more than simple razzle-dazzle: it becomes a city that defines the promise of modernity itself. Like other great world cities – and indeed, perhaps more than others – Dubai has done just that. Already home to one of the most dynamic skylines on the planet, it boasts such iconic buildings as the famous Burj Al Arab Hotel, shaped like a ship's mainsail, the sleek Burj Dubai, or Dubai Tower, predicted to be the tallest structure in the world, as well as the fantastical Palm Islands complex on the coast.

Now comes a building project to once again redefine Dubai, and that in sheer audacity is designed to re-imagine what a built environment is capable of. The Falconcity of Wonders is a \$1.5 billion entertainment space that will include 24 highrises, a five-star hotel, and myriad commercial and residential buildings. Designed by Salem Ahmad Al Moosa Enterprises, Falconcity will be constructed in the shape of a falcon, the United Arab Emirates' appropriately-soaring national symbol.

Dubai has blasted into the global economy with super-growth sectors like its Media City, but its heritage is as a trading capital and Falconcity, says its enthusiastic developer, Salem Al Moosa, is to honor this history by accumulating "a mix of iconic buildings and man-made wonders from different periods of history and from different parts of the world. Through Falconcity I want to educate our children about different civilizations; this will be entertainment and education simultaneously."

Falconcity, only part of the three billion square feet devoted to the larger entertainment project of Dubailand, recreates the full litany of the world's great urban playgrounds and architectural wonders: an expansive version of Manhattan's famed Central Park, a glowing Eiffel Tower, the Leaning Tower of Pisa and an area for the recreation of the magical gondola-filled canals of Venice.

So, too, the ancient world is recast in Dubai's Falconcity:



Salem Al Moosa showing Sheikh Mohammed, Ruler of Dubai, a model of what will be "a mix of man-made wonders from different eras and parts of the world"

replicas and new interpretations of the pyramids of Giza as well as Egypt's Lighthouse in Alexandria, the lost Hanging Gardens of Babylon, the greatest romantic gift in history, India's Taj Mahal, China's Great Wall, and a repertoire of the great ancient structures found in Rome, Athens, and Beirut.

Mr. Al Moosa's ambition of "Only One Visa Required to Travel Around the World" is a lifelong project which he envisioned while still a young businessman eager to help Dubai express its lofty potential. It is an ambition he shares with Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, who proffered his support very early on. Says Mr. Al Moosa: "Our vision is to create a diversified project that celebrates the civilizations of the world and at the same time provides a lifestyle and a tourist destination beyond compare. We have been inspired by Sheikh Al Maktoum's own strategy to build Dubai's global reputation as the region's business, trading, retail, and tourism hub."

Ultimately, however, Falconcity is more than an amazing row of buildings or a unified resort/city for sport, entertainment, business, and living.

Falconcity is being built to express something about the human spirit. "I believe the business world should not be divided by borders and nationalities," explains Mr. Al Moosa, who has put forth a project to reflect how "the world has become so small that you can have breakfast in Dubai, lunch in London, and dinner in New York." Or, make that breakfast on the Great Wall of China, lunch in the pyramids of Egypt, and dinner off a Venetian canal, all the while in Dubai. ■

### DINNER IN THE PARK AND COFFEE BY THE EIFFEL TOWER

► New Yorkers like to cast a wary eye on imitators. There's only one New York. But no city deserves homage more, and with the coming of Falconcity there will be two Central Parks, both garnished with studded skylines and a sense of possibility.

► Equipped with parking, residential spaces, hotels and commercial areas, Falconcity Towers consist of 24 high-rise buildings that will surround Central Park.

► The Dubai Eiffel Tower and the Falcon Elysées will rise taller than the 1889 original emblem of Paris as the worldwide capital of shopping and fashion. The Dubai glass, concrete and steel monument will host boutiques, cafés and offices.

► The Taj Mahal inspires as both a majestic building and a love letter, originally built as a gift from a Mughal emperor to the memory of his favorite wife. In Falconcity, the temple rises again as a five-star luxury hotel; and yet, still a love letter, this time for any guest to give.

► The Great Wall of China is famous for being one of the few man-made structures visible from space. In Falconcity, the Great Wall rises again but not as a barrier to invaders but as an attraction for visitors and a linear park for runners and walkers.

► The Falconcity Theme Park means to set a new standard in all-out fun. It's going to be bigger. It's going to be more exciting. It's going to settle the argument about where families can go to have a blast.

► The Grand Pyramid, built to original scale, will bulge with luxury shops, cafes, and offices – a repurposing of the ancient for decidedly modern needs.

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Falconcity brings together an astonishing number of landmarks that are legacies from the past, and enduring icons of the present. From the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, Lighthouse of Alexandria, Great Wall of China, Pyramids of Egypt, Taj Mahal of India, Leaning Tower of Pisa, to the Eiffel Tower of Paris. As a residential or business address, each wonder is a totally amazing investment!

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