

align. Baker students greatly enjoyed their experience in the “Manhattan of the Middle East” and received a better understanding of the rapid rise to prominence of the city built in the desert.

DUBAI: EXPOSITION 2020

Author: Jennifer Spritzer

Dubai will have the honor of hosting Expo 2020 from October 20, 2020 through April 10, 2021. This universal exposition is designed to showcase the achievements of the United Arab Emirates as well as other nations. The theme of Expo 2020 is “Connecting Minds, Creating the Future,” placing an emphasis on how opportunity, mobility, and sustainability affect humanity worldwide (Expo 2020, 2018).

The economic impact of hosting a universal exposition is huge, with job creation, technological innovations, real estate, and tourism all benefiting. According to a study by Oxford Economics, Expo 2020 will create over 277,000 jobs, with many potentially becoming permanent due to the expanded economy following the exposition (Al Nisr, 2013). Expo 2020 is also expected to add approximately \$40 billion USD into the area’s economy and attract 25 million tourists during its six-month run. In preparation for this surge of tourism, the United Arab Emirates has been working nonstop to create and improve real estate to support and amaze these visitors, as well as showcase the sub-themes around which this exposition is based.

To support this demand for new and quickly built real estate, the nation has created new construction materials and technologies. In keeping with the theme of sustainability, the UAE has implemented strict new construction standards, such as the use of green concrete, which is produced without releasing or creating CO₂. The emirate has also implemented the use of three ‘quick-fix’ sustainable solutions in buildings: insulation, solar heating, and LED lighting. One impressive project is the creation of the world’s largest concentrated solar power project, which is expected to generate 1000 megawatts of power by 2020 and 5000 megawatts by 2030 (Nagraj, 2016). The Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Solar Park will reduce carbon emissions by 6.5 million tons annually as part of the emirate’s goal of increasing the share of clean energy in Dubai’s power output to 7 percent by 2020, 25 percent by 2030, and 75 percent by 2050 (The Associated Press, 2017). Last September, the consortium comprised of Shanghai Electric and Saudi Arabia’s ACWA was awarded a \$3.9 billion contract to build and run the power plant.

In addition to ramped up construction and sustainability efforts, Dubai is also creating impressive showcases of real estate and architecture. In true Dubai fashion, the emirate is building the world’s largest commercial tower named “Burj 2020” in Jumeirah Lake Towers. The 115-story tower will house a retail mall, grade A offices, a 5-star hotel, restaurants, health spas, conference facilities, 237 residences, and a 360-degree observation deck on the top floor (ProTenders, 2018). This project is being developed by Dubai Multi Commodities Centre (DMCC) as part of the 4.2 million square feet (1.3 million square meters) planned Burj 2020 District.

Many existing hotels are also being improved or expanded in anticipation of Expo 2020, and new luxury hotels are set to be completed in time for the exposition. The Jumeirah Group is making changes to its luxury hotels prior to the exposition, such as the recently completed over-the-sea terrace and completely updated interiors in the iconic Burj Al Arab. The terrace was constructed in pieces in Finland and shipped to Dubai by boat. It extends the reach of the Burj Al Arab by approximately 330 feet into the Persian Gulf, allowing guests to enjoy pool and cabana amenities onsite as well as at other luxury hotels on Jumeirah Beach. With the addition of the terrace, guests of the Burj Al Arab can now enjoy a freshwater pool or saltwater infinity pool as well as butler-serviced air-conditioned cabanas at the comfort of their own hotel.

As of September 2016, the value of active hospitality projects in the United Arab Emirates was \$71.6 billion, with 543 developments currently under construction (The First Group, 2017). The government’s projections for the influx of tourism stated that Dubai will need an additional 40,000 hotel rooms by the exposition, in addition to the 100,000 plus existing hotel rooms. Kerzner International is building The Royal Atlantis, a stunning hotel and residential project



set to be completed this year. Located next to Atlantis The Palm, this resort will include 800 hotel rooms and suites, 250 luxury apartments, and luxury amenities such as infinity pools, gyms, and private gardens. The building will be 46 stories tall. In addition to including even more luxury amenities than Atlantis The Palm, The Royal Atlantis features a masterful display of architectural design.

Over the years, world expositions have demonstrated impressive feats in the areas of technology and real estate. Dubai is certainly not looking to disappoint with Expo 2020. It is clear that we can expect to see bigger and better showcases of innovation in construction materials, new projects, and architecture as we move towards 2020, and the United Arab Emirates will undoubtedly astonish the world with its undertakings.

WORKS CITED

Al Nisr Publishing LLC. (2013, May 09). Dubai Expo 2020 would support 277,000 jobs. Retrieved February 20, 2018, from <http://gulfnews.com>

Expo2020. (2018). A better world together. Retrieved February 10, 2018, from <https://www.expo2020dubai.com>

Nagraj, A. (2016, June 05). Dubai launches world's largest concentrated solar power project. Retrieved February 20, 2018, from <http://gulfbusiness.com>

ProTenders Inc. (2018, January 18). Burj 2020. Retrieved February 20, 2018, from <https://www.protenders.com>

The Associated Press. (2017, September 17). Dubai Awards \$3.9 Billion Solar Energy Contract to Shanghai Electric, ACWA Power. Retrieved February 20, 2018, from <http://fortune.com>

The First Group. (2017, March 10). Dubai hospitality sector 'on a roll' as Expo countdown continues. Retrieved February 20, 2018, from <https://www.thefirstgroup.com>

