

# UAE Update: From Pearling Industry to Oil Industry to Tourism Industry

by Geir Sør-Reime

Last month we brought back a 2015 study by Geir Sør-Reime of the postal history of various members of the United Arab Emirates. We published it just a few days before the U.S. attack on Iran and subsequent attacks by Iran on neighboring states, including members of the UAE.

With everything that is going now on in and around the Persian Gulf, at my request Geir was good enough to rush us with this update. JFD.



The recent Israeli-U.S. attacks on Iran and the Irani counterattacks have spread the conflict to neighboring countries like Lebanon, Syria, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Saudi-Arabia, Oman and the United Arab Emirates where Israeli and U.S. bases and properties have been targeted. The conflict has interrupted the air traffic on the busy airports of Dubai and Abu Dhabi in the Emirates and the other airports in the Middle East. Oil exports from the Gulf have also been halted and could result in a worldwide energy crisis if the conflict drags on.

Relations between the Emirates and Iran have been tense through the centuries, for instance, in November 1971, when Britain had left the Emirates, Iranian troops landed on the small islands Greater and Lesser Tunb northwest of Ras al Khaima town and held by Ras al Khaima, but claimed by Iran. The Iranian occupation of these islands convinced Ras al Khaima to join the UAE.

More recently, UAE and Iran are each supporting one of the warring factions in Yemen, UAE the breakaway southerners and Iran the northern Houthis. Despite this, there is a free trade agreement between UAE and Iran. The Iranian President has also now stated that Iran recognizes all international borders in the area.

The UAE recognized Israel in August 2020 and entered into a peace agreement with Israel, normalizing relations between them.

Here, we will look closer at the Emirates and their transformation from a pearling, fishing and agriculture economy via an oil boom to a very diversified economy where oil and natural gas and tourism still are important, but where wholesale and retail trade, repair services, real estate business, construction and manufacturing are growing. The Emirates also export aluminium and aluminium products, and precious stones and metals.

Until the 1950s the economy was based on nomadic farming, date plant cultivation, fishing, pearling and seafaring.

Extraction of crude oil and natural gas started in 1962 after a series of undersea oil surveys finally found oil in 1958. Today, there are operating oilfields in Abu Dhabi, Dubai and Sharjah. The oil reserves are around 92 billion barrels in Abu Dhabi, 4 billion in Dubai and 1.5 billion in Sharjah. There have been unsuccessful drillings for oil in Ras al Khaima. UAE produces an average of 2.9 billion barrels of oil daily.

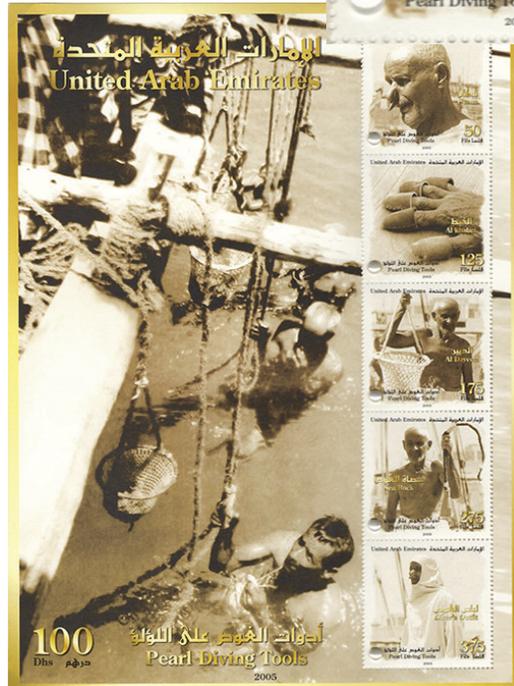
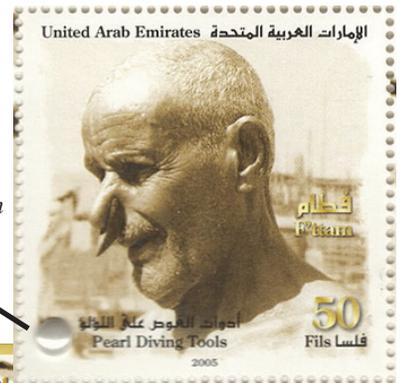
Tourism is a growth sector for the whole UAE economy with Dubai as the top tourism destination in the Middle East.

Top tourist attractions are the Burj Khalifa, the tallest tower in the world, The World archipelago and Palm Jumeirah also in Dubai, Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque and Yas Marina Circuit in Abu Dhabi, and Al Hajar Mountains in Fujeira. A Wynn gambling casino on Wynn in Ras al Khaima and a Disneyland in Abu Dhabi are in progress. Most tourists also are shoppers and in Dubai there is even a Shopping Festival.

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Collectors have known about these states for decades, with their prolific stamp issuing policies, as covered by Geir in his afore-mentioned 2015 series of articles. Following is a new sampling of stamps from Geir, related to his new article. JFD.

UAE 2005 Pearl diving SS with real pearls, pointer



## Pearls



UAE 2005 Pearl diving Sc.824-28, without pearls



UAE 2016 pearl

## Aluminium



UAE 2010 Emirates Aluminium

## Dates



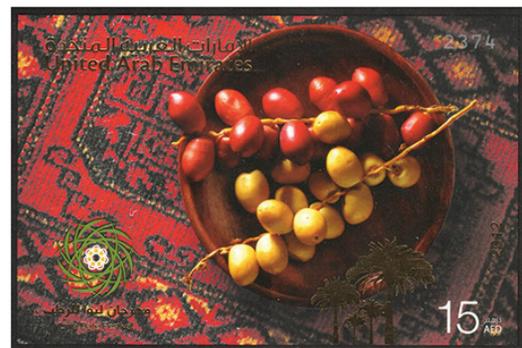
UAE 1987 dates Sc.245-46



UAE 1996 dates Sc. 538



UAE 2008 date varieties Sc.935-36



UAE 2012 dates

# Tourism



UAE 1988 6th anniversary of Abu Dhabi international airport Sc.255-58



UAE 1988 tourism Sc.621-22



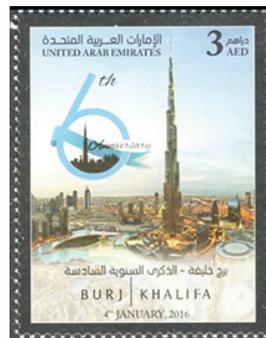
UAE 2005 Dubai Shopping Festival Sc.793-96



UAE 2008 Dubai Duty Free 25 years



UAE 2010 Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque



UAE 2016 Burj Khalifa



UAE 2017 Burj Khalifa

# Oil



Dubai 1966 Oil exploration  
Scott Unlisted



Dubai 1966 offshore rigs Scott  
Unlisted



Abu Dhabi 1964 oil rig Sc. 11



Sharjah 1964 off-shore oil rig Sc. C22



Ras al Khaima 1971 oil rig Scott Unlisted



UAE 1975 oil drilling and production rigs Sc. 43-46



UAR 1984 Abu Dhabi oil refinery and Sharjah oil rig Sc.193, 195



UAE 1987 25th anniversary of 1st shipment of crude oil  
from Abu Dhabi Sc. 241-44



UAE 2012 50th anniversary of first shipment of oil