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Dubai Mall adopts Alipay as inbound Chinese tourism grows

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Inside Dubai Mall. Image credit: Dubai Mall

By STAFF REPORTS

The Dubai Mall is making it easier for Chinese tourists to spend at its property with the acceptance of mobile payment platform Alipay.

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Now, consumers will be able to use Ant Financial's Alipay to pay for shopping, dining and entertainment. The acceptance of Alipay follows other moves by the shopping center to make itself more hospitable to Chinese travelers.

Alipay integration

China is the fifth largest source of travel to Dubai, with more than 764,000 visitors from the Asian nation journeying to the United Arab Emirates city in 2017. The number of Chinese tourists in Dubai last year was up 41 percent year-over-year, according to data from The Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing in Dubai.

Chinese consumers are more apt to spend while abroad if they can use the mobile payment options they are familiar with back home.

Through a partnership with Alipay, the Dubai Mall will enable Chinese consumers to find stores via the application's Discover feature. When it is time to pay, they can complete their transaction in renminbi via Alipay with cashiers.



The Dubai Mall is now accepting Alipay. Image credit: The Dubai Mall

Owned by Emaar Properties, the Dubai Mall features luxury stores, including anchors Galeries Lafayette and Bloomingdale's. In addition to shopping, the mall features attractions such as an aquarium and an ice rink.

In addition to the introduction of Alipay, the Dubai Mall has looked to make its property welcoming to tourists through multilingual staff and Chinese language guides.

Other retail venues in the Middle East have rolled out Alipay. For instance, Qatar Airways similarly worked with digital financial services company Wirecard to offer Alipay as a payment option at select duty-free stores.

The partnership will allow customers, particularly Chinese travelers who are heavy luxury consumers, to purchase items from select stores at Hamad International Airport through Alipay. Alipay is the mobile payment option provided by Chinese ecommerce and retail giant Alibaba ([see story](#)).