

TRAVEL AND HOSPITALITY

Mandarin Oriental enhances cultural programming with commemoration from Emirati artist

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A new gallery will grace the entrance of the Mandarin Oriental Jumeira, Dubai during the month of Ramadan. Image credit: Mandarin Oriental

By AMIRAH KEATON

Hospitality brand Mandarin Oriental is spotlighting regional pride and community during Ramadan.

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A new gallery will grace the entrance of the group's U.A.E.-based hotel space through the end of the monthlong observance. Artistic programming aside, the **Mandarin Oriental Jumeira, Dubai**'s occasion-specific amenities signal a high level of respect for tradition, capturing the essence of a hospitable stay for those that partake by way of accommodations that aim to foster familial bonding and reflection during the global occasion.

"I do believe that if [luxury brands] are going to get engaged in the celebration of religious holidays, [they] should be equitable and respectful in celebrating the major holidays of all major religions," said Milton Pedraza, CEO of **Luxury Institute**, New York.

Mr. Pedraza is not affiliated with Mandarin Oriental, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

The Artist's Way

Mandarin Oriental Jumeira, Dubai is inviting guests to celebrate Ramadan on-site.

One of the urban resort's most compelling attractions is a new art exhibition, culled together courtesy of Emirati artist Yasmin Al Mulla.

Unveiling , a bespoke space that brings guests together for both Iftar and Suhoor whilst paying homage to the incredibly rich heritage of the UAE. [#MandarinOrientalDubai](#) [#Ramadan](#) [#RamadanKareem](#) [#ImAFan](#) [#TheMajlisByMO](#) pic.twitter.com/loq8BdMz8y

Mandarin Oriental Jumeira (@mo_jumeira) **March 23, 2023**

Through her work, Ms. Al Mulla seeks to highlight the role that spaces symbolic of connection such as mosques have played in her upbringing via a mixed-medium presentation.

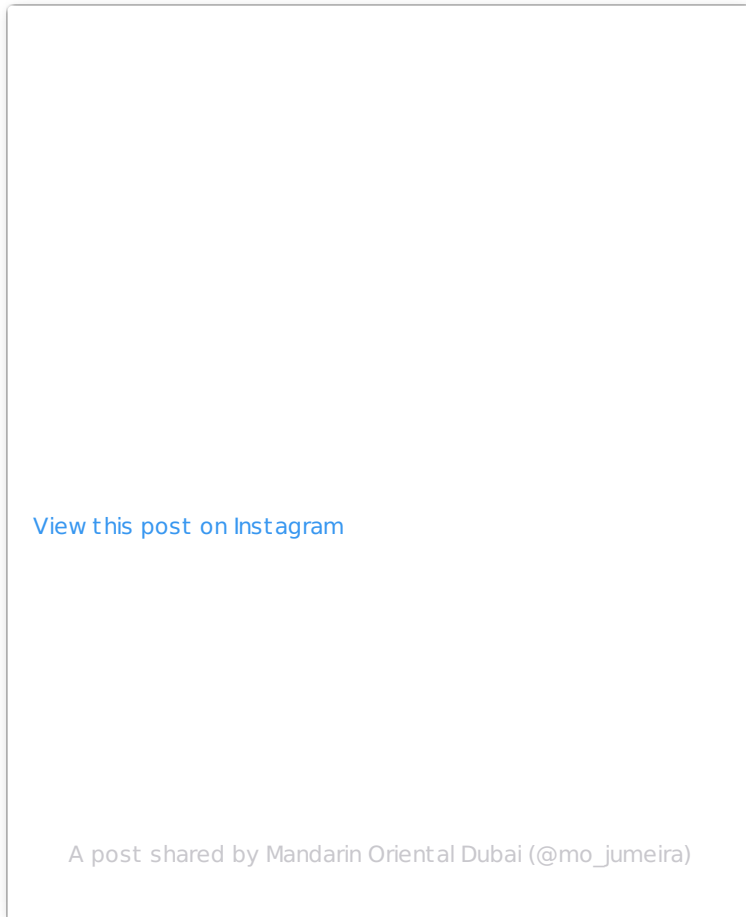
As showcased in a new clip out this month, the artist uses the platform to interpret a series of religious structures, each representing one of her homeland's seven Emirates

"This year, Ramadan has brought me together with Mandarin Oriental," Ms. Al Mulla says, in the video.

"I wanted to create a space that combined traditional craftsmanship and storytelling," she says. "The goal is to bring the community together and celebrate Emirati art, culture and heritage."

At the front end of the 1-minute selection, she makes clear a major source of inspiration.

"My late father used to visit 30 different mosques during Ramadan to perform Taraweeh prayers," she says.



"This inspired me to design a project that celebrates the power of exploration and discovery."

Detailing the Seven Stories of Emirates" exhibition in Arabic, viewers watch as the artist sketches with precision, sifts through color swatches and applies a gold-toned substance to canvas.

In a final walkthrough scene, Ms. Al Mulla sees her commemoration come to life.

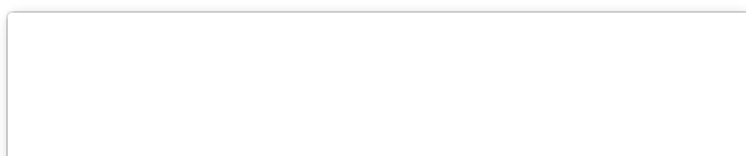
"The aim is to rekindle the most cherished memories of Ramadan," Ms. Al Mulla says.

Special accommodations

A sacred observance with millions of practicing members based in the region, the annual occurrence marks a period of prayer and reflection for Muslims.

The hotel brand's boutique approach to alignment with the ninth month of the Islamic calendar is on display amid a new service offering.

"The Majlis by Mandarin Oriental is a unique space that brings guests together for Iftar and Suhoor while honoring the legacy and essence of the U.A.E."



[View this post on Instagram](#)

A post shared by Mandarin Oriental Dubai (@mo_jumeira)

Here, the artist speaks to the hotel's overarching series, aptly titled "The Majlis," of which her gallery is a part.

The term translates to what is commonly known as a "sitting room" put simply, "majlis" represents a gathering area intended for individuals to socialize, learn and listen.

Dressed in fine attire and often enjoying light refreshments and coffee, guests chat about a range of topics, from the news of the day to family history. Present across various Western Asian jurisdictions such as Saudi Arabia, Oman and Qatar, these immersive experiences are a fixture of Emirati culture.

The U.A.E.'s Mandarin Oriental has now provided evidence of an embrace of the concept.

[View this post on Instagram](#)

A post shared by Mandarin Oriental Dubai (@mo_jumeira)

In support of daily rituals, the luxury hosts offer everything from exclusive dining options during the hours one would break the day's fast each day during Ramadan, the hotel's Iftar at the Majlis operation presents top-notch Middle Eastern mezze and music from sundown to 9 p.m., while from 10 p.m. to 2 a.m., Suhoor at The Majlis enhances the beachside escape with traditional dishes, local sweets and shisha.

Spas are made available for relaxation and spiritual rejuvenation and, as always, views of the Gulf offer an ambiance of peace from guests' private balconies.

Especially as the religious holiday enters luxury's focus ([see story](#)) with a particular voracity, with peers attempting to serve this cohort of consumers ([see story](#)), the activation serves as a solid example of authentic engagement in the space, placing values relevant to the holiday at the forefront.

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