

The Family Experience



THE MALL OF DILMUNIA IS SET TO BECOME BAHRAIN'S PREMIER RETAIL AND ENTERTAINMENT EXPERIENCE WHEN IT OPENS IN 2019. RLI TALKS TO SHK MOHAMMED BIN DUAIJ AL KHALIFA, CEO OF DILMUNIA MALL DEVELOPMENT COMPANY TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS SUPERB NEW FAMILY-ORIENTED DESTINATION PROJECT.

Situated in Bahrain and developed by Dilmunia Mall Development Company, The Mall of Dilmunia represents a balanced modernistic and futuristic architecture that creates an exciting family-oriented universe within it. The mall will include retailers from across the MENA region that are yet to enter the Bahraini market and aims to provide a quality entertainment, leisure and retail destination, adding value to the island's tenants and guests.

The Chairman of Mall of Dilmunia, Shk Khalid bin Mohamed Al Khalifa said: "Under the vision of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and His Royal Highness Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa, the Prime Minister and His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Premier, the Kingdom of Bahrain is historically and culturally rooted in family values and therefore is to be developed as an island for family tourism. Mall of Dilmunia has been conceptualised with this vision in mind, to bring families together and allow them to bond through a comprehensive solution, thus making it a family destination."

This is a unique mall concept located in the heart of Dilmunia Island, within the Muharraq Governorate. It is the first of its kind in the Kingdom of Bahrain and is set to become a dominant, highly attractive destination. Its total built-up area, including spacious car parking, is 125,000sq m with a gross leasable area of 47,300sq m. To date, there has been considerable interest from retailers and renowned food and beverage

outlets across the MENA region.

Construction commenced in April 2017 and the 30-month development project is scheduled to open by October 2019.

"The mall has been designed with the purpose of serving families," explains Shk Mohammed bin Duaij Al Khalifa, CEO of Dilmunia Mall Development Company. "Looking at the region's demographics, we took note of the age groups of young parents and the span of ages of their children. With this in mind, we devised a vision that would ensure that every member of the family would be catered for and entertained."

Indeed, the new Mall of Dilmunia will provide fun and educational entertainment facilities for children and teenagers, while young adults and parents sample its rooftop cafes, delicious food and beverage outlets, or enjoy live music within the two large atriums designed for events. This impressive development overlooks the Dilmunia grand canal and a lush garden landscape that is complemented by greenery within the mall. The main familial entertainment centres will include a spectacular three-storey-high cylindrical aquarium with aquatic life that will mesmerize visitors from each level, and a large state-of-the-art indoor ice rink built on the first floor.

The design of the mall and its core elements has been created in such a way as to ensure that all tenants are positioned to maximise exposure and increase footfall. Leasing is progressing well, says Shk Mohammed. "We are continuing our journey of exploring new brands and new concepts,



as well as well-known international retailers to really excite the Bahraini consumer, who is looking for a retail and entertainment destination where they can spend the day, relax and enjoy a wonderful family meal."

The Mall of Dilmunia looks set to redefine the shopping experience in Bahrain by adding urbanity to the retail experience through the development of a Boulevard that will provide visitors with the illusion that they are outdoors within a vibrant European cityscape, whilst an open-air sky terrace will allow them to take in a breathtaking view of the island of Muharraq. The terrace is to also include a beautifully designed mosque, representing Islamic family values, culture and lifestyle.

In addition to the retail and entertainment components and the F&B offer, the atmosphere provided by The Mall of Dilmunia provides a key driver behind the anticipated success of this innovative project. So how will the Developer ensure that the mall remains innovative and relevant and from where does it draw inspiration?

"What makes this mall different is the architecture, with all the new features that await our visitors, along with the different entertainment spread out all over the mall. We would like to keep some surprises for the opening," explains Shk Mohammed.

And how will the mall engage the increasing importance of online retailing and channels such as Twitter, Facebook and so on?

"We have established a strategy that will ensure that we engage with our customers on social media, of course this is currently a work in progress. In the meantime, we are targeting the retailers, but there are also plans to have our own applications to provide customers with a unique experience," he says.

Of course, life is full of challenges and retail more so! There is a new development emerging close to The Mall of Dilmunia that is set to become the largest shopping mall in Bahrain, it is exciting to see this progress and to work alongside it, says Shk Mohammed – rather than seeing the new mall as competition, he believes that the two projects will complement each other well.

"The real challenge lies in making sure that we complete on schedule and that the retailers share our excitement and enthusiasm to make The Mall of Dilmunia a leading destination experience," he smiles.

