

Behind Closed Doors

Elite travelers choose the exclusive luxury and convenience of the VIP Terminal in Abu Dhabi. BY LISA MATTE

Despite the growing array of fine-dining and high-end shopping establishments in airport terminals worldwide, most frequent travelers — especially those whose routine trips involve long-haul journeys — appreciate the comfort and exclusivity of an airport lounge.

But given the choice of what's behind door No. 1 (common-area shopping and dining), door No. 2 (insider airport lounges) or door No. 3 (the mystery option), travelers in the know will choose door No. 3 and, by doing so, gain entry to a world few will experience: the airport VIP lounge.

Operated by Pearl Assist, the VIP Terminal at Abu Dhabi International Airport offers an abundance of perks and services reserved for elite travelers — arriving, departing or transiting. The 9,945-square-foot dedicated facility, located adjacent to the airport's main terminals, features eight private sitting areas or *Majlis*. Boasting a décor that brings together the best of Arabian and European design elements, seven of the eight individual *Majlis* are named for a scenic region of the United Arab Emirates: Amwaj, Bihar, Al Waha, Al Rawda, Murooj, Rawabi and Sahara. The eighth, EMC Mercedes-Benz *Majlis*, showcases the partnership between the VIP Terminal and the luxury automobile company. On-site facilities include state-of-the-art rain showers with luxury toiletries, business assistance including printing capability and a smokers' lounge.

Guests departing from Abu Dhabi International Airport enter the VIP Terminal via a private road to find dedicated check-in and immigration within the terminal. Service agents handle airport formalities and baggage check-in. When it's time to board, a private limousine transports guests to the aircraft.

A driver greets arriving guests at the aircraft for transport via private limousine to the VIP Terminal, where they relax in a *Majlis* while dedicated service agents collect their luggage and ready it for transport to their final destination.

Guests in transit are also met at their aircraft and chauffeured to the VIP Terminal, where they relax between flights while service agents confirm connection formalities and arrange private transfer to their connecting flight at boarding time.

Optional services include floral bouquets for arriving or departing guests and luggage transfers to and from a guest's final destination in the United Arab Emirates.

Of course, all this comfort and convenience comes at a price. Arriving and departing guests may reserve Royal *Majlis* private seating at a cost of about \$545 for up to two guests (plus about \$95 per person for additional guests). *Majlis* are available for up to two transiting guests for about \$820 (plus about \$135 per person for additional guests).



COMFORT AND CONVENIENCE: Abu Dhabi's VIP lounge (top); and guests arriving at their aircraft via private limousine (bottom)

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The VIP Terminal Abu Dhabi
 vipterminalabudhabi.com