

Dubai Fitness Challenge returns to energise the city with a 30-day calendar of active events, wellness programmes and virtual sessions

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The city is ready to spring into action for Dubai Fitness Challenge (DFC) 2020, promising to energise the residents and visitors like never before from October 30 to November 28, 2020. Launched in 2017 by His Highness Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Dubai Crown Prince and Chairman of The Executive Council of Dubai, the fourth edition of the citywide fitness movement is all set to strengthen the spirit of the whole community and empower everyone to commit to 30 minutes of activity for 30 days.

This year's action-packed calendar of virtual and physical events was announced at a virtual press conference today, delivering on DFC's promise to encourage an all-inclusive participation. The session was led by **His Excellency Saeed Hareb, General Secretary of Dubai Sports Council (DSC)** and **Ahmed Al Khaja, CEO of Dubai Festivals and Retail Establishment (DFRE)**.

A diverse range of easily accessible fitness and wellness activities, complemented by a robust programme of virtual sessions, will offer even more flexibility this year, ensuring every individual can stay connected and motivated throughout the month – wherever they are, whenever they like; whether at home or in safe, socially distanced settings. This year's programme is calling on participants to discover "What's Your 30?" and embrace an active lifestyle that best fits their unique preferences – regardless of age, ability, interest, fitness level. It will also give participants the opportunity to embark on a holistic journey, with a renewed focus on instilling wellness-focused habits that have the potential to transform into sustained lifestyle shifts.

Public health and safety will remain paramount throughout the Challenge, with all physical events strictly following Dubai government guidelines, including social distancing guidelines, safety precautions and hygiene and sanitisation requirements.

Taking the citywide movement to families, friends, colleagues and communities, DFC once again promises to make fitness easy and accessible to all – from young adults, teenagers, families, older residents and people of determination, to businesses, schools and beyond. To truly make fitness part of daily life, convenience and proximity will once again be key as DFC widens its physical footprint to reach residential areas and business communities across the city, while maintaining strict safety and hygiene regulations, social distancing guidelines and sanitisation requirements. Removing all barriers to fitness and wellbeing, DFC 2020 will feature **three dedicated Fitness Villages, ten community-centric Fitness Hubs**, more than **200 virtual sessions** and over **2,000 classes** taking place **across 150 locations** throughout the month. The action-packed calendar will also feature flagship programmes, including the biggest citywide fun run with **Dubai Run**.

Speaking at the press conference, **His Excellency Saeed Hareb, Secretary General of Dubai Sports Council**, said: "I would like to extend my gratitude and thanks to His Highness Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai and Chairman of The Executive Council of Dubai, for his visionary leadership, and for launching and sponsoring this pioneering initiative, which has become one of the most anticipated events on our calendar. I would like to congratulate all the members of the community on the launch of the 4th edition of Dubai Fitness Challenge 30x30, which provides a model for a healthy and happy lifestyle. We are fortunate that our wise leadership encourages us to make sport and physical activity a part of our daily lifestyle".

He added: "Embracing such a lifestyle not only improves our health and increases our happiness levels, but also contributes to the strengthening of bonds between different segments of the community. For us, sports is an essential activity at all times, but it has become even more important in this period of COVID-19. Exercising and staying fit strengthens your immune system and a strong immune system is your best defence against illness, being physically active also increases an individual's overall sense of wellbeing and leads to an increase in happiness, that is why we launched the "Be Fit, Be Safe" campaign earlier in the year. In the early days of the lockdown, the community embraced the initiative in big numbers and more than 30 top international sports stars joined us in spreading the message about the importance of physical activity and staying safe during this period. We organised the world's first "Home Marathon" and a number of other unique events as part of the "Be Fit, Be Safe" initiative, and this fourth edition of Dubai Fitness Challenge 30x30 will present a number of innovative new activities and events to support the community in meeting their health and physical activity goals, and embrace an active lifestyle. Dubai Sports Council is really proud to partner with the Department of Tourism & Commerce Marketing (Dubai Tourism) for this very important edition of Dubai Fitness Challenge, and together we hope to achieve the goals of Dubai as a city of sport, happiness and physical activity".

The vast number of citywide events and activations continues to grow as the Challenge's start date approaches, **Ahmed Al Khaja, CEO of Dubai Festivals and Retail Establishment (DFRE)** said: "In 2020, we have seen global attitudes towards physical activity change, with more and more people realising the importance of fitness and its imperative role in promoting healthy well-being. This importance has long been underscored by the ongoing success of the Dubai Fitness Challenge, which has grown from strength to strength in the past three years. What started out as an aspirational vision by His Highness Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Dubai Crown Prince and Chairman of The Executive Council of Dubai in 2017, has today become the only multi-activity, citywide fitness movement to date. The

Challenge remains more crucial than ever in continuing to instill healthier and happier lifestyles and ultimately create a community that is united in spirit and highly motivated to reach their potential.

In our quest to ensure that every individual has the opportunity to complete their 30 minutes of physical activity for the 30 days, agility and innovation have been paramount for us. With public health and safety remaining a top priority throughout all events, we have worked tirelessly with our partners and global industry leaders to dial up the strength of our digital ecosystem and deliver a hybrid mix of virtual and physical events. By adopting this approach, we are leveraging new technologies to innovate how the DFC programme is virtually curated and packaged, bringing added flexibility and remote access to ensure anyone, anytime, anywhere can stay connected and motivated throughout the month. This is our opportunity to set new goals, to take charge of our well-being and regain a sense of control during this time of great uncertainty. Together, we can inspire each other to renew our focus on our mind, body, and spirit, tackle new challenges and take conscious steps towards leading a healthier and happier lifestyle."

Taking DFC's commitment to transform the city into an active outdoor playground one step further, the **Dubai Run** will see the entire city become a personalised running track for all ages, abilities and fitness levels. On 27 November, the biggest, free-to-enter, citywide fun run will welcome residents and visitors to celebrate their new personal best. Participants can run, jog or walk along their preferred route, distance, location and starting time. To help runners put their best foot forward, six 28-day training programmes have been specially curated by some of the region's leading professional coaches and athletes, including Manal Rostom, Tania Lolla Kaddoura, Abdullah bin Hajjar, Luke Mathews, Lee Ryan and Luke Gaffney. The plans will be free to access on the DFC website, featuring a variety of step-by-step fitness guides for all levels across 2km, 5km and 10km distances. The event will also see a special partnership with Dubai Cares' Education Uninterrupted fundraising campaign, to support students whose lives have been disrupted by this year's challenges.

New in 2020 will also be a programme of free, weekly guided **Dubai Running Tours**, providing a unique, on-foot perspective of iconic sights across the city. Organised in partnership with Arabian Adventures and sports brand ASICS, the tours will be available throughout the 30 days of the Challenge. Participants can choose from three different routes with varying difficulty levels - a 5km fun run around Burj Lake in Downtown Dubai; an advanced 10km beach run along Kite Beach; and an exciting, self-guided, 3km 'treasure hunt' style quest in the Dubai Creek area, available for free on the *Questo* city explorer mobile game.

Three exciting, themed **Fitness Villages**, located at Kite Beach, Al Khawaneej, and Dubai Festival City Mall will complement ten community-centric **Fitness Hubs** across Gate Avenue, Hamdan Sport Complex, DMCC, Zabeel Ladies Club, Sustainable City, Dubai Police Officers Club, Dubai Sport Council, and Dubai Sport City, The Outlet Village and Hatta to spark the active spirit across Dubai and enhance accessibility to a variety of workout locations. Registration is essential prior to all sessions and activities on www.dubaifitnesschallenge.com

The **DP World Fitness Village Kite Beach** will offer a variety of outdoor activities within a safe, socially distanced, and open-air setting. A diverse range of family-fun activities will be spread across sixteen, distinct zones – each created to provide a unique fitness experience set against the picturesque Arabian Sea. With extended opening hours for the 30 days from 2pm to 11pm from Sundays to Thursdays and 7am to 11pm on Fridays and Saturdays, the zones include the main stage for daily programming, a burn camp for group sessions, a beach football pitch, dedicated kids play area, the rebounder zone, a combat club zone for coaching sessions, watershed and obstacles with free equipment, a holistic health and wellbeing space in the astral zone, a fun mirror room for women only, a basketball half court, a spin station, and a multi-purpose zone which will feature a line-up of group exercises and instructor-led fitness sessions. Global fitness brand, Under Armour, will also be present at the Village, inviting athletes of all abilities to test their agility, speed, strength, mobility and cardio with the Under Armour Functional Fitness Challenge.

The **Emirates NBD Fitness Village Al Khawaneej** will welcome everyone to enjoy a workout in the park, with a focus on cycling and kids/family-oriented activities. Open to visitors every day, from 4pm to 11pm from Saturdays to Wednesdays and 4pm to midnight on Thursdays and Fridays, the outdoor areas of the park will be transformed into five distinct zones, including a cycle hub, a community stage, a family box, a dedicated women's pavilion and a kids play area.

The **Mai Dubai Fitness Village Festival City Mall** will be the newest adventure spot for the whole family, welcoming DFC participants from 6 November 2020. The centrepiece of the Village will be The Arch, a giant state-of-the-art multi-purpose iconic venue. The attraction will host four thrilling activities - a climbing wall, zip line, bag jump and quick flight - in addition to four exciting activity zones with football, basketball, pump track and a workout stage.

Recognising the importance of fostering a virtual support network to encourage the whole city to keep moving wherever they are, whenever they can, DFC 2020 will place an elevated focus on at-home sessions with the return of its “**Find Your 30**” virtual content hub. The free-to-access, one-stop destination will be hosted on the DFC website, allowing participants to unlock a wide range of premium fitness content for all ages and abilities and access trusted information to craft their individualised fitness programme. Workout videos, 30-day exercise programmes, discipline challenges, podcasts, healthy recipes, health and wellness articles and vlogs, workout graphics, educational videos for children, and loads more, will be sourced from leading experts in the fitness and health industry. The hub will also provide easy access to DFC events and sessions, ensuring seamless digital integration for participants to navigate their personal fitness journeys both during the Challenge and beyond.

The hub will also feature “**Etisalat City is a Gym**”, a virtual map of Dubai spanning 30 different locations across the city. Each location will feature unique workouts that have been curated in partnership with leading fitness instructors, allowing individuals and groups to work out for free without any equipment. Upon arrival at each location, participants will be able to scan a QR code with their mobile device to access an easy-to-follow workout that will be unique to that place.

For the first time, DFC participants will also be able to benefit from free, 30-day access to **leading global fitness apps**. Whether you’re looking for HIIT-centric programmes, running-themed apps, at-home bodyweight workouts, or yoga and meditation sessions, DFC app partners including Fitbit Premium, NEOU, Steppi, Sworkit, Daily Burn, FIIT and Les Mills on Demand will be on hand to help guide users along the path to better health and wellness.

Giving DFC participants even more reason to stay charged and smash their goals, fitness venues and professionals across Dubai will also offer more than **200 virtual sessions** on the DFC website and over **2,000 classes** throughout the month. The city’s burgeoning health and wellness industry will also be actively involved with free check-ups, information sessions, classes and much more throughout the 30 days.

For even more exciting reasons to celebrate a spectacular opening weekend, residents and visitors can bag a bargain on leading brands exclusively at The Dubai Mall with the first-ever DFC Mega Sale. From 29-31 October, mall shoppers can save big with up to 90% off on sports, health and wellness brands, and snap up amazing offers with up to 75% off on fashion, beauty, accessories and more. Sensational sales will continue throughout the Challenge, promising incredible deals and discounts for everyone.

With only a few more days to go, all of the city is reminded to register and commit to 30 minutes of activity for 30 days during DFC 2020 and kick-start their personal commitment to fitness and a healthy lifestyle. Participants can register and access full details on www.dubaifitnesschallenge.com.

Health and safety of the city’s people remains DFC’s top priority. All events and activities will be held in accordance with the Dubai Government health and safety guidelines.

The entities helping DFC strengthen the spirit of the community this year include organisers Dubai Tourism and Dubai Sports Council; presenting partners DP World, Emirates NBD and Mai Dubai; association partners Dubai Chamber, Dubai Festival City, Dubai Municipality, Emirates, Fitbit, Etisalat and Shamal – Kite Beach; official partners Arabian Radio Network (ARN), Aster Hospitals and Clinics, Barakat, Daman, IMG World of Adventures, Shield ME and Talabat; and government partners Event Security Committee, Dubai Health Authority, Dubai Knowledge and Human Development Authority, Dubai Police, Ministry of Education, Roads & Transport Authority and Smart Police Station.