



ABU DHABI AIRPORTS ALL GEARED UP FOR F1 FANS DELUGE

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As the Formula 1 Etihad Airways Abu Dhabi Grand Prix approaches, Abu Dhabi Airports (ADA) is ready for one of the busiest periods of its year.

Extra passenger and aircraft traffic are expected at Abu Dhabi International Airport between today and Monday and preparations have been made to ensure all visitors experience a smooth arrival and departure.

"With the Smart Travel system in place, passengers will be able to move through airport processing easily and quickly," ADA said. "First-time visitors will be registered for Smart Travel and given a sticker on their passport upon successful completion so that they can then proceed directly to the Smart Travel gates upon departure."

ADA has put in place a raft of measures to ensure the many thousands of fans expected enjoy the whole race experience, from arrival to departure.

"Over the Grand Prix weekend we'll see 60,000 people from more than 170 countries soaking up

the history, technology, glamour, bravery and skills associated with Formula 1," Al Tareq Al Ameri, the chief executive of Yas Marina Circuit, where the race is held, told One Coast website this month.

"Ever since we hosted the first day-night Grand Prix in 2009, we have seen incredible scenes unfold at Yas Marina Circuit – and I'm sure this year will be no different. We predict that we will once again sell out, especially with the After-Race Concerts line-up we have this year, its set to be a fun-filled, action packed weekend!"

The Grand Prix in 2015 saw the sell-out event hit record numbers of overseas visitors to the circuit, according to Rasgaira Events Consultancy. Of these almost half came from Britain, said Mr Al Ameri.

"The United Kingdom is a very important market for the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, as around 40 per cent of overseas visitors travel from there," he said.

ADA has put additional staff in place across many departments at peak times over the race period, including at customs and the duty free and food and beverage outlets.

Television screens in the airport will be showing the race live and duty free outlets will be offering special promotions and giveaways.

At Al Bateen Executive Airport, fans arriving by private jet for race weekend will have landing charges waived, be given free parking for three days, and can take advantage of special jet cleaning packages, ADA said.

"As F1 week is one of the busiest periods of the year at Abu Dhabi International Airport and Al Bateen Executive Airport, we work very closely with all stakeholders to ensure that these few days pass as smoothly as possible," said Mohammed Al Katheeri, the acting chief operations officer for Abu Dhabi Airports.

"We aim to provide the best possible service and the warm Arabian hospitality that we are known for, to ensure that all travellers start and finish their trip happy and relaxed."

Taking place on November 25, 26 and 27, the Formula 1 Etihad Airways Abu Dhabi Grand Prix is the Middle East's biggest international sporting event and the final race of the 2016 F1 season.

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23 NOVEMBER 2016

SOURCE: THE NATIONAL

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