What to check before booking a desert safari with dune buggy in Dubai

Safety standards and vehicle condition

When you consider a desert safari that includes dune buggy riding, the first thing to look into is how the operator maintains their vehicles. Dune buggies take a lot of punishment over rocky terrain and loose sand, so regular servicing is essential. Check whether the company publishes any information about their maintenance schedule or safety inspections. A reputable operator will be open about the age of their fleet and the checks carried out between tours. If the buggies look battered or the tyres are worn smooth, that is a red flag. You are not just paying for a thrill, you are trusting a machine with your safety.

Another point is the safety briefing. A good operator will run through the controls, the terrain you will cover, and what to do in an emergency before you set off. If the briefing feels rushed or is skipped entirely, consider that a warning. You should also ask about the condition of the safety gear. Helmets, goggles, and gloves should be provided and should fit properly. If they hand you a helmet that is cracked or a pair of goggles that are scratched to the point of being useless, walk away.

Insurance and liability coverage

Before you hand over any money, find out what insurance is included in the package. Some desert safari deals include basic third-party liability, but that may not cover damage to the buggy or injury to you if you roll it. Ask specifically whether the insurance covers the driver and passengers for medical expenses and vehicle damage. If the operator is vague or says “you are covered” without showing you a policy document, press for a written explanation. It is worth confirming with whichever business you choose whether you need to take out your own travel insurance that covers off-road activities. A small upfront question can save you a large bill later.

Tour routes and duration

Not all desert safari experiences are the same length or cover the same ground. Some tours last a couple of hours and stick to the dunes close to the city, while others go deep into the desert and run for half a day or more. Think about what you want. If you are looking for a quick adrenaline hit, a shorter route may be fine. If you want to see the landscape and get value for money, a longer tour that includes stops at viewpoints might suit you better. Check the itinerary carefully. Does it include time for photography, a break for refreshments, or a chance to watch

the sunset? Some operators bundle a dune buggy ride with a camel ride or a barbecue dinner. Make sure you are comparing like with like when you look at prices.

View the location on Google Maps

Also ask about the specific area you will be driving in. The desert around Dubai has different types of terrain, high dunes, flat sabkha plains, and rocky patches. Some routes are more challenging than others. If you are a beginner, you may prefer a route that sticks to gentler dunes. If you have experience, you might want something more technical. A good operator will ask about your skill level and match the route accordingly.



Driver requirements and age limits

Dune buggy operators in Dubai typically have age and licence requirements. Most require drivers to be at least 16 or 18 years old, and some ask for a valid driving licence. Passengers usually have a lower minimum age, but it varies. Check these rules before you book, especially if you are planning the trip with younger children. If you book a buggy for two people, confirm that the passenger seat is available and that the buggy is designed for a passenger. Some models are single-seaters only.

You should also ask about the condition of the driving area. Is the route marked or guided? Most reputable operators run a lead guide who sets the pace and keeps everyone together. If

you are told you can drive off on your own, be cautious. Going solo in the desert without a guide is risky, getting stuck or lost is a real possibility.

What is included in the price

Prices for desert safari dune buggy experiences vary widely. A low price might look attractive, but check what is actually included. Some packages cover only the buggy ride, while others include transfers from your hotel, safety gear, a guide, and refreshments. Read the small print. Does the price include the dune buggy rental for a set time, or is it per lap? Some operators charge extra for a second rider or for insurance upgrades. Ask about fuel, is the buggy handed over with a full tank, or do you pay for what you use? If the deal includes transfers, confirm the pick-up and drop-off points and times. A cheap deal that does not include transfers may end up costing more once you add a taxi.

If you are comparing options, a useful resource is buggyrentaldubai.com, which lists various operators and their packages side by side. This can help you spot what is included and what is not before you commit.



Reputation and reviews

Online reviews can tell you a lot about an operator, but you need to read them with a critical eye. Look for recent reviews that mention the dune buggy experience specifically, not just the desert safari overall. Pay attention to comments about vehicle condition, guide behaviour, and whether the tour ran on time. A handful of bad reviews is normal, but if many people mention the same problem, broken buggies, rude staff, or hidden fees, take it seriously. Check multiple platforms, not just the company's own website. Social media groups and forums for Dubai visitors often have honest, detailed accounts.

Also consider how the operator responds to negative reviews. A company that replies politely and offers to fix the issue shows they care about their reputation. One that ignores complaints or argues with customers is a warning sign. It is worth confirming with whichever business you choose that their reputation matches what you expect.

Cancellation and refund policies

Weather in Dubai can be unpredictable, especially in summer when sandstorms or extreme heat may cause tours to be cancelled. Before you book, read the cancellation policy. Can you get a full refund if the operator cancels? What if you need to cancel for personal reasons? Some companies offer a partial refund or a credit for a future date. Others keep your money no matter what. If the policy seems unfair, ask for clarification or look elsewhere. A flexible policy is a sign of a confident operator who values customer goodwill.

For a broader view of what to expect and how to compare packages, buggyrentaldubai.com is a good starting point. It aggregates information from multiple providers so you can see the options without visiting each site individually.



One local option is Desert Safari Dubai - Dune Buggy Dubai, located at Al Falea St - Marsa Dubai - Dubai - United Arab Emirates.