

## The first 'Express by Holiday Inn' breaks ground in the UAE

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The construction teams working on the UAE's first 'Express by Holiday Inn' property at Knowledge Village in Dubai have broken ground at the site.

Set to open by Summer 2007, the property will comprise 244 rooms over four floors and will be completely integrated into the attractive design of the strategically located Knowledge Village complex.

Designed to cater for the burgeoning new market of price conscious business and leisure travellers, Express by Holiday Inn Knowledge Village is the first of 20 hotels planned across five GCC countries by the end of 2010.

The properties will be operated on behalf of Ishraq Gulf Real Estate Holding Co., by Hospitality Management Services Middle East Ltd (HMS). Ishraq Gulf Real Estate Holding Co. is the exclusive developer of the Express by Holiday Inn hotels in all GCC countries, except Saudi Arabia.

Sami Al Ansari, Ishraq's Chief Operation Officer, said, 'Naturally we are delighted that the first 'Express' in the region will debut in Dubai - the perfect curtain raiser to a new and exciting lodging concept.'

'The Express by Holiday Inn brand addresses the regional market need for internationally-branded budget accommodation, providing good quality at affordable prices.' explained Michel Augier, Acting Chief Operating Officer, InterContinental Hotels Group, Middle East and Africa. 'With both business and leisure travellers in mind, all future Express by Holiday Inn hotels will be located close to large commercial and business hubs like Knowledge Village in Dubai or in areas of high traffic flow.'

At the flagship property, all rooms come complete with high speed internet connection and satellite TV as well as all the standard amenities expected from a property designed to cater for the busy business traveller. A gym, business centre, bar, lounge and restaurant all add to the wide range of facilities on offer, while landscaped gardens make for a pleasant view and relaxation area for guests enjoying precious down-time.

'The decision to expand Express by Holiday Inn in the Middle East reflects the development of tourism in the region which, to date, has concentrated on iconic upscale projects,' said Augier. 'We have traced the rise and profile of inbound tourists and have identified that the time is right to tap into the more price conscious market which is flourishing around the world.'

Developed by InterContinental Hotels Group, Express by Holiday Inn is the world's largest budget brand and is growing rapidly. Worldwide, there are more than 1,500 Express by Holiday Inn properties with more than 120,000 rooms.

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