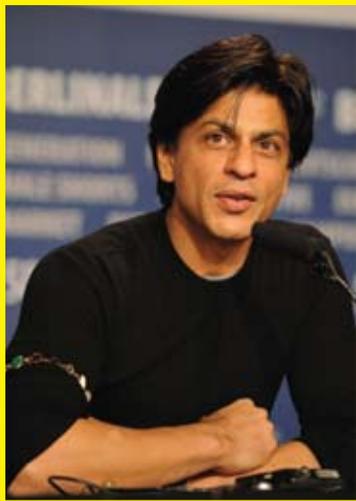


Desert *magic*

From a Donald Trump Tower, Brad Pitt eco-friendly hotel, Armani resort, Versace Palazzo, Tiger Woods' designed golf resort and Michael Schumacher Business Avenue...Dubai's real estate is seeing celebrities flock to the region to get a foothold into this burgeoning space. For those who want to join the realty party, **Abid Mohammed** helps prepare a shopping list for the rich and famous and the aspiring.





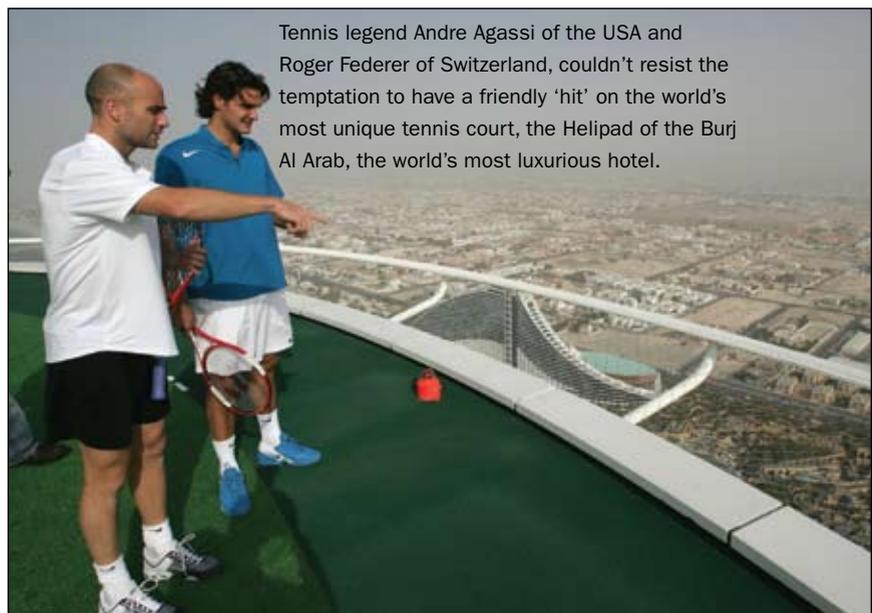
A spectacular view of the Sheikh Zayed road in the evening.



Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai looks at the Dubai Gold Cup



Roger Federer of Switzerland lifts the trophy at the Dubai Duty Free Men's Open Tennis Championships



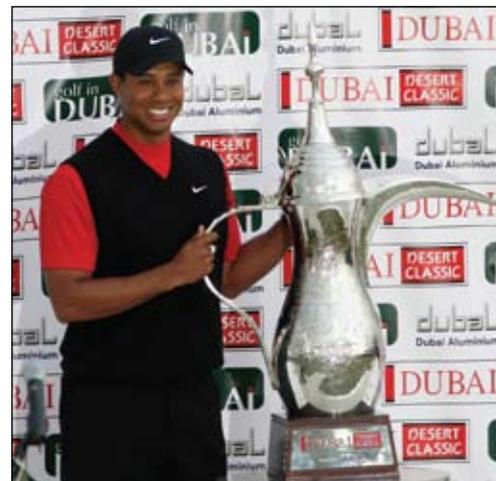
Tennis legend Andre Agassi of the USA and Roger Federer of Switzerland, couldn't resist the temptation to have a friendly 'hit' on the world's most unique tennis court, the Helipad of the Burj Al Arab, the world's most luxurious hotel.



Andrew Flintoff of England appeals loudly as he traps golfer Ernie Els of South Africa LBW, Flintoff is assisted in the field by sporting legends Jon Smit Captain of the South Africa Rugby team (far left) and Martina Navratilova of the USA the tennis player, during the opening day of the Els Course at Dubai Sports City in Dubai, United Arab Emirates



Italian jockey Frankie Dettori celebrates after winning the world's richest horse race, the US\$6,000,000 Dubai World Cup.



Tiger Woods of the USA with the winners trophy after the final round of the Dubai Desert Classic on the Majlis Course held at the Emirates Golf Club, Dubai.



Nakheel CEO Chris O'Donnell, Donald Trump and His Excellency Sultan Ahmed bin Sulayem

The world now knows that Dubai is synonymous with words like visionary, brilliant, extraordinary, spectacular, magnificent, incredible, dramatic and so on. Who would have believed that a desert country the size of UAE would make an undeniable mark on the world map for its real estate development? The visionary rulers of the UAE have today transformed the once oil-dependent country into a major tourist and investor hub.

Consider this, the GCC has real estate projects worth approximately \$2.4 trillion (AED 120 trillion) in the pipeline and a hefty one third of them are in Dubai itself. Dubai attracts the bold and the beautiful.

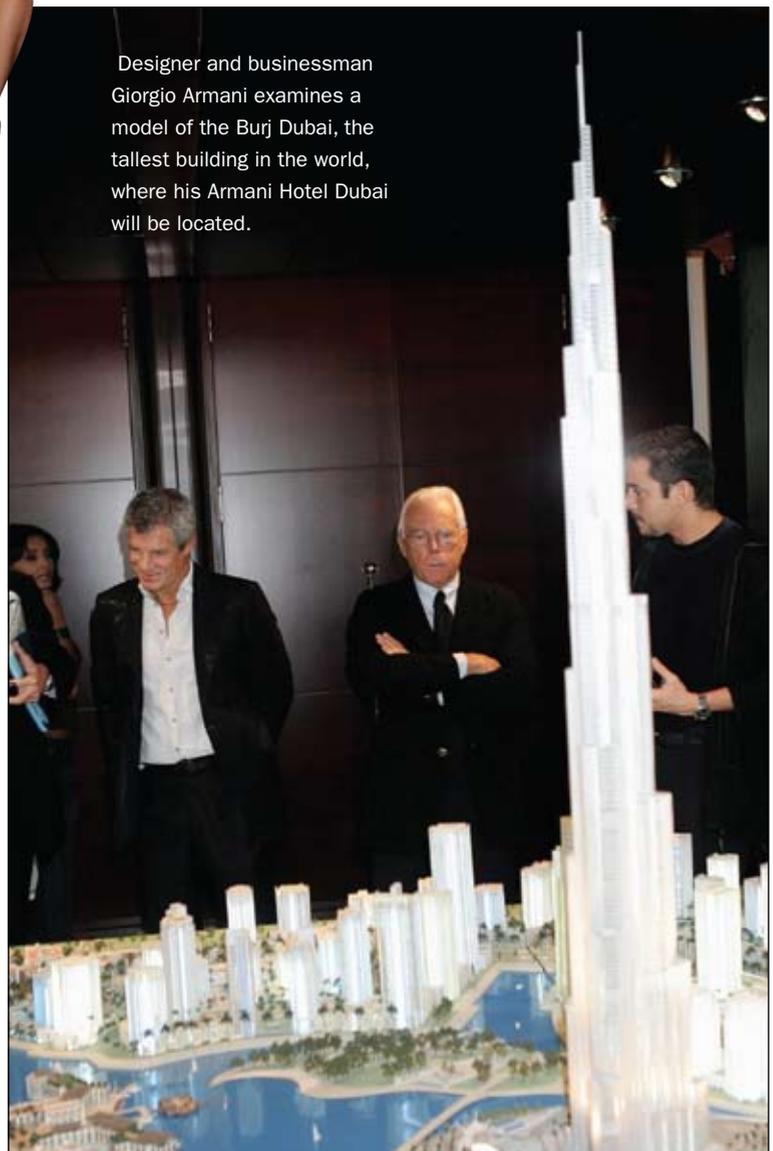
Little wonder then that international celebrities like Brad Pitt, Donald Trump, Giorgio Armani, Versace, Tiger Woods, Greg Norman, Boris Becker, Michael Schumacher, Nikki Lauder and even Indian film celebrities like Shah Rukh Khan, Aishwarya Rai-Bachchan and Abhishek Bachchan want a piece of the real estate pie here.

Real estate developers, to woo this swish set and their ilk, are offering a Bentley or BMW with every apartment. For the super lucky, there's a gift-wrapped – hold your breath –private jet or private island in the Caribbean! Buyers enter a lucky draw and win these extraordinary gifts, which make owning a property in Dubai all the more exciting.

Seeing the incredible pace of tourism in the region, Donald Trump has entered into a joint venture with the Emirates premier property developer Al Nakheel Properties. The Trump Organisation and Al Nakheel (who are building The Palm Jumeirah) will build a US\$400 million tulip-shaped The Palm Trump International Hotel and Tower. This apartment hotel will have 500 (one, two and three bedroom) sea view apartments and penthouses. To be built on the trunk of the Palm Jumeirah, the project will also see signature roof top restaurants, hip bars, luxurious spa and



Above: A lego replica of the Trump International Hotel & Tower Dubai
Left: Donald Trump Jr. and wife Vanessa Trump



Designer and businessman Giorgio Armani examines a model of the Burj Dubai, the tallest building in the world, where his Armani Hotel Dubai will be located.



A landmark project is the Palazzo Versace Hotel (sprawled over 130,000 sq.mt.) that is being developed by Emirates Sunland Group. On completion the hotel will have 215 suites, restaurants and spas, and 169 exclusive condos, all done up from Versace Home Collection.



The world will see yet another first in Dubai – The Tiger Woods Dubai, a golf course and resort designed by Woods himself. Located in DubaiLand (expected to be the region's largest tourism, leisure, entertainment and lifestyle destination), the project is being developed by Tatweer, a member of Dubai Holding. Sprawled across 55 million sq ft, it will see a golf course called Al Ruwaya, a professionally-staffed golf academy, a 60,000 sq. ft clubhouse with premium facilities, a fancy spa, 22 palaces, 75 mansions, 100 luxury villas and community service facilities. According to Tatweer, the course will be open by September 2009 and will include 197 residences.



The Palm Trump International Hotel and Tower will comprise nearly 400 apartments and a similar number of hotel rooms. The total land area is over 45,000 sq. mts. with a built-up area of a quarter million sq. mts, including parking for 1200 cars. The structure will be made of stainless steel and glass and when complete, it will be the tallest structure on the Palm at 275 meters.



Hollywood icon Brad Pitt will assist Zabeel Properties in setting up an 800-room environmental-friendly 5-star hotel and resort. Zabeel has roped in contemporary LA-architecture firm Graft in this project.



Aishwarya Rai-Bachchan and her husband, Abhishek, have recently acquired a villa at the prestigious Sanctuary Falls, a resort-style villa community within Jumeirah Golf Estates being developed by Shaikh Holdings. Sanctuary Falls is a collection of 96 resort-style villa communities and overlooks the Earth golf course designed by Greg Norman. The community features five and six bedroom villas, ranging from 5,600 to 10,600 square feet, with villa prices ranging from US\$4-10 million.

health clubs and exquisite boutiques. World Islands is also an Al Nakheel project.

Spoiling people with many choices is Dubai's way of raising its own bar. Hollywood heartthrob Brad Pitt has been roped in by the region's leading developer Zabeel Properties to design an environment-friendly 800-room luxury hotel. Pitt will work with Graft, an architecture firm based in Los Angeles known for its innovative works, to design his first dream property project. Passionate about architecture, Pitt promises his hotel will not only be a stunning piece of architecture but will also be a major attraction. The hotel is expected to host award ceremonies and celebrity events.

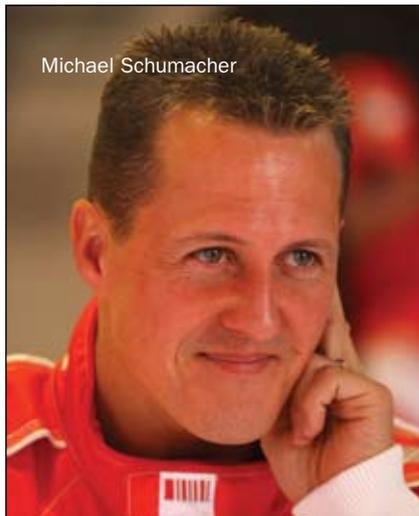
Dubai's fashion statement just got spectacular. Designer Giorgio Armani's company, Giorgio Armani S.P.A. and the region's leading developer, Emaar Properties will invest US\$3 billion to develop over 30 branded Armani Hotels and Resorts around the world. The first Armani hotel is expected to be launched this year in Milan. The second Armani Hotel Dubai will be a part of Burj Dubai and see 160 rooms, suites, restaurants and clubs. Burj Dubai will also offer 144 plush residential apartments fully furnished from the Armani Casa home furnishing collections.

Another landmark project is the Palazzo Versace Hotel (sprawled over 130,000 sq.mt.) that is being developed by Emirates Sunland Group. On completion the hotel will have 215 suites, restaurants and spas, and 169 exclusive condos, all done up from Versace Home Collection. Last May, London's Harrods dedicated three windows for six weeks to showcase a model of this luxury lifestyle resort.

If celebrities are flocking here, sports stars too are staking their claim on Dubai's turf. Wimbledon champion Boris Becker, golfers Greg Norman and Tiger Woods have pledged their support and reputations to help Dubai property agents. How else can one explain the sale of 70 golf villas (attached to a Greg Norman designed and endorsed golf course) with a price tag of \$4-8 million each being sold out within a week!

For those sporting encounters, Dubai will get its first golf course resort designed by none other than Tiger Woods. The spectacular Tiger Woods-designed Al Ruwaya Golf Course aims to be one of the most exclusive and elegant lifestyle destinations ever. The project, part of Dubai holding company Tatweer, hopes to be complete by end 2009. The project is strategically located in DubaiLand, an ambitious tourism and entertainment destination in the Emirate.

Another UAE-based real estate developer, Alternative Capital Invest (ACI), recognises the power that celebrities have on the value of property. It has been branding its projects with



Michael Schumacher



Pamela Anderson



Boris Becker



Generous soccer star David Beckham has given his in-laws a gift worth over £8 million. Beckham and wife Victoria handed over their Dubai holiday home to Tony and Jackie Adams and told them to treat the property as their own, although he and the Spice Girl will still technically own the mansion.

legendary sport champions like Boris Becker, Michael Schumacher and Nikki Lauder. ACI's projects include Michael Schumacher Business Avenue (this 29-storey tower provides you office space in Dubai's prime Business Bay area), The Boris Becker Tower and the Nikki Lauder Twin Towers.

Dubai regularly attracts Indian film stars or Bollywood celebrities with several owning luxurious apartments here. Superstar Shah Rukh Khan owns a villa in Palm Jumeirah and is believed to be planning to move his family to Dubai.

Bollywood's star couple Abhishek and Aishwarya Rai Bachchan bought a place in Sanctuary Falls (a 96-villa double-gated community home). According to the developers, the places here range from AED 15-35 million. "We saw the Sanctuary Falls project and the facilities and just knew that we had to be part of it. I don't think we chose the place, I believe a place chooses you," said Abhishek. "Dubai is special to us not just as a place where we enjoy great warmth and generosity from people but it's become a remarkable city and one that's so close to home," added the actor.

Indian film production houses too are eyeing the real estate market here. A leading Bollywood banner, Yash Raj Films is reported to have invested millions of dollars in a joint venture with Dubai Infinity Holding (DIH) to create an exclusive entertainment district.

The Yash Raj Films Entertainment District will be the first of its kind in the region – theme park attractions, a movie palace, unique hotel concepts and Indian genre entertainment concepts. Naturally, the themes will revolve around the YRF banner. Indian cinema has a tremendous following in the region and trade analysts believe Bollywood films gross higher than westerns here.

Despite manifold increase in real estate development in Dubai, prices are relatively stable. A driving force behind Dubai's billion-dollar real estate industry is the investment of multi-national companies, industrial houses and HNIs (high networth individuals). Political stability, excellent infrastructure, strategic location between the east and west and unparalleled development have made Dubai a favourite among realty investors across the world. Dubai continues to offer profitable returns making it a much sought after destination on the real estate world map.

The country as a whole offers a gamut of options to explore. Be it sand dunes, pristine beaches, rugged mountains, ancient villages to lush-green parks or swanky shopping malls. Dubai offers all that and more. The highest building in the world, The Burj Tower (at 188 storeys), will house the 7-star Al-Burj Hotel. Plans are on for massive themed parks, resorts, shopping mall and an airport bigger than Heathrow. With Dubai, it only gets better. 🍷