

THE ANSWER

Take the Metro Red Line - 5-7.50 AED, ~25 min to Downtown/Burj Khalifa. Stations at Terminal 1 and Terminal 3 ONLY (T2 has none). Clean, air-conditioned, faster than any car at rush hour.

Landing late or off the metro line? Cream RTA taxis at the rank are metered, honest, 24/7 - 25 AED airport flagfall, 50-70 AED to Downtown.

EVERY WAY OUT - REAL PRICES

Metro Red Line ***BEST FOR MOST***

5-7.50 AED

~25 min to Burj Khalifa/Dubai Mall, direct down Sheikh Zayed Rd. T1 & T3 only. ~05:00-midnight (Fri to 01:00, Sun from 08:00).

RTA taxi (cream, official rank)

50-70 AED

25 AED airport flagfall, then meter. Downtown ~50-70, Marina ~80-100. Metered by law - no haggling, 24/7, honest.

Careem / Uber

50-90 AED

Upfront price before booking. Usually similar to the RTA taxi; spikes at rush hour and event nights.

From Terminal 2 (no metro)

Taxi/bus only

T2 (flydubai etc.) has no station. Metered taxi, or a bus to the nearest Red Line station if light on bags.

THE TRAPS - WALK PAST THESE

The unofficial 'taxi' inside arrivals

Men approaching inside the terminal quote 200-300 AED for a 60 AED trip. Licensed RTA taxis never tout inside. Follow 'Taxi' signs to the official rank - cream cars, roof light, meter on.

The T2 metro assumption

Terminal 2 has NO metro station - travelers follow old blog advice and wander hunting for one. Taxi or bus from T2; don't burn an hour looking.

The Red ticket vs Silver card tax

The paper Red Nol ticket costs 2 AED on issue AND charges higher per-trip fares. Staying more than a day? Silver card (25 AED, 19 AED credit) is cheaper per ride.

The midnight metro cutoff

Metro stops ~midnight (01:00 Fri). Arrive 00:30 and it's taxis only - exactly when queues form. Late landing = straight to the RTA rank or Careem.

KNOW BEFORE YOU WALK

- Nol Silver card: 25 AED (19 credit); keep ≥ 7.50 AED balance to enter. Daily cap ~14 AED.
- Gold Class metro cabin costs double - regular Silver class is fine and spotless.
- Rush hour (07:00-09:30, 17:00-19:30): metro beats Sheikh Zayed Road traffic easily.
- The 25 AED airport taxi flagfall is official, not a scam - the meter is the honest default here.