



The greatest all-watersports event in the area is set to make a splash in the emirate. The inaugural Al Gharbia Watersports Festival being staged in Mirfa – the first of its kind to be held in the region – is destined to be the wettest and wildest nine days in UAE history.

Thousands of visitors are expected to flock to the spectacular event which runs from 1st-9th May. They will see a packed programme of competitions including an international kiteboarding championship, surf ski kayak race, beach volleyball and beach football.

The festival will also offer night camp activities accompanied by live music in addition to a traditional souk.

And for those interested in learning more about kiteboarding or kayaking, the festival will have professional trainers offering free training sessions on-ground during weekdays.

There is also set to be a special water photography competition as well as music concerts and festive food stations.

The main aim of the event is to encourage the social, cultural and sporting activities among residents of Al Gharbia and the UAE, and to support local athletes, especially the region's younger generation.

One of the biggest sporting events to hit the area, the festival is organised by the Western Region Development Council – the leading body responsible for promoting Al Gharbia. It is also being supported by the Abu Dhabi Tourist Authority, Sports Council and Abu Dhabi Motor Club, as well as the Al Gharbia Water Sports Festival itself.

ADMC is the organising party of the Festival. General manager Abdullah Butti Al Qubaisi said: "The event underscores our commitment to the emirate and provides us with an excellent opportunity to strengthen relations with our fellow Emiratis in Al Gharbia."

Located just 90 minutes from Abu Dhabi airport, Al Gharbia is one of the region's bestkept secrets. Situated in the Western region of Abu Dhabi it covers some 71 percent of the entire country and boasts some of the most spectacular scenery in the region, from undulating deserts (including the world's largest sand desert in the northern part of the Empty Quarter), the nature reserve at Sir Bani Yas island, and 350 kilometres of spectacular coastline.

"We are pleased to initiate this new upbeat and unique Festival and we hope it will encourage UAE citizens and residents alike to attend and compete," explained HE Mohamed Bin Azzan Al Mazrouei, director general of the WRDC.

The full programme of events will be on the website at www.algharbiafestivals.com.

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