

This occasional series offers a personal view of life in Abu Dhabi in list form – five aspects of Abu Dhabi per list. This month: favourite buildings. In any city there's a lot of anonymous blocks, uninspiring construction and architectural ideas that didn't work. But Abu Dhabi has a collection of very fine buildings among the undistinguished infill. Feel free to disagree with our choices...

1. **Sheik Zayed Mosque** What can you say? Inspiring, beautiful, soulful; a building with an obvious tradition that feels absolutely contemporary as well.
2. **Le Royal Meridien** A striking piece of modern design, with its elliptical shape and that revolving rooftop restaurant – one of the best viewpoints in town, except that up there you miss the sight of one the best buildings in town.
3. **ADIA headquarters** This is the building that looks like a softly folded ribbon parked on the Corniche. In the fact the architects were after something more Islamic, with a central 'courtyard' in the form of a vertical atrium with wings on either side. The result draws the sea and the green of the gardens into the building.
4. **Sheraton Abu Dhabi Hotel & Resort** Another hotel, but in a completely different style. This one is modestly proportioned, low-rise, sand-finished; it harks back to the desert style, of course, and the fort-like appearance offers a degree of solidity and stability among the numerous very average towers around it.
5. **Bus station** What an engagingly odd building, and what an odd colour to paint it. A triumph of the early application of poured concrete, including some decorative twiddly bits that make it look fashionably deconstructed in parts. Some actual deconstruction is appearing, sadly, and someone needs to get at it with the Polyfilla.

Why no Emirates Palace? Because it's merely large and expensive; it impresses because of its scale, not because it does anything for the heart or mind of the observer. We considered the gatehouse, basically because of the changing illumination at night, but there wasn't room to include it. Also just missing the cut: the cricket stadium, the Hilton Baynunah, and the Cultural Centre.

Agreement or alternative suggestions to [editor@AbuDhabiWeek.com](mailto:editor@AbuDhabiWeek.com)

**We don't expect you to agree with our choices – so email [editor@AbuDhabiWeek.com](mailto:editor@AbuDhabiWeek.com) and let us know why!**

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