



The green oasis of Al Barari lies in the desert just outside Dubai





Greening the Dubai desert

Vegetation and water provide natural cooling solutions for man-made residential oasis

Arabic family life, which emphasises communities, story-telling and human interaction, was the inspiration for Al Barari, a residential development which sees communities linked by gardens, pathways and watercourses.

Developers were the Zaal family who felt these traditions were being lost amidst the surge in the popularity and availability of high-rise living.

"We looked hard across Dubai to find a place for our family to settle down after travelling the world," said landscape designer Kamelia Zaal.

"But we couldn't find anywhere. So we decided to create our own – and we knew there would be other like-minded people searching for the same sort of lifestyle."

Literally meaning "wilderness" Al Barari occupies an area of more than 4,000,000m² with 80% green space enveloping 189 villas. Themed gardens all interconnect and more than 16km of linked lakes, pools streams, cascades and waterways make it resemble a botanical gardens rather than a residential development.

"Everywhere people with influence created green spaces," said Kamelia Zaal. "There is Hyde Park in London, New York's Central Park – we feel that this is the green heart of Dubai."

Godwin Austen Johnson provided the original concept with Woods Bagot undertaking the masterplan. Architects 10design working closely with the Zaal family on finally realising the vision.