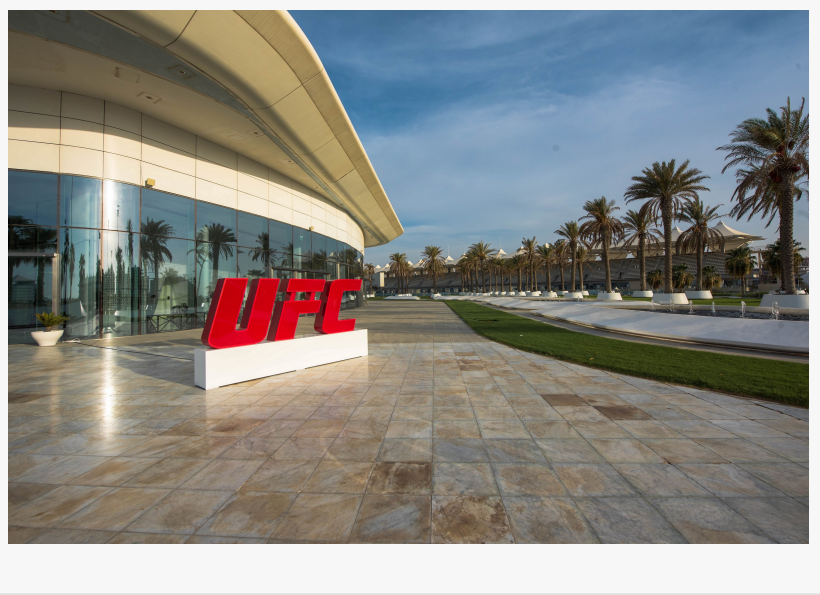


Yas Island 'Safe Zone' now in place for UFC Fight Island

Yas Island now locked off as a 'safe zone' strictly for UFC personnel, event staff, and Yas Island employees until end of July

ABU DHABI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES, July 6, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- World-class, international sport took a step closer to a triumphant return to the UAE this week as the 'safe zone' for UFC Fight Island™ has now been secured, with an 11km stretch of Abu Dhabi's Yas Island locked off to the public as a safety precaution for international guests and the Abu Dhabi community.



The 'safe zone' on Yas Island will be in place for the entirety of UFC Fight Island, which will run from July 11 - 26, and will house more than 2,500 people for four events including one Pay Per View - UFC® 251 - and three ESPN Fight Nights.

Organized and implemented by the Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi (DCT Abu Dhabi) to navigate the new global health and safety landscape brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, the 'safe zone' represents an innovative approach to ensuring the safe return of UFC to Abu Dhabi, and also paves the way for further high-profile events heading for UAE shores later in the year.

The safety measures and processes in place for UFC Fight Island™ are extensive: all Abu Dhabi-based event staff have been in 14-day hotel room quarantine since June 19 and have all had three COVID-19 tests during this period. While they have been in isolation, a 740-strong crew has been constructing the venue and competition area, which is now complete. The set-up crew has now left the zone, and the area was cordoned off by Abu Dhabi Police with a full sanitization of the zone is now underway, ready for staff to enter.

These measures were implemented to ensure the health and safety of all individuals within the

safety zone, as all those quarantining within the area will be required to receive three negative tests in order to move around the area. Only UFC fighters and personnel, who will undertake COVID-19 tests on take-off, landing, 48hrs after arrival and pre-fight, will be permitted to enter the 'safe zone' in July.

All bouts will take place at Flash Forum, a multi-purpose indoor venue which has been adapted to suit UFC's needs, whilst adhering to COVID-19 precautionary measures. Innovative 'mist tunnels' - 1.5m passageways on entry to the venue - have been added to sanitize everyone entering, with the mist killing 99% of surface bacteria. Sanitization stations are also included in every room, in every venue and communal areas have been removed. There will also be no crowd and masks will be compulsory at all times.

The famous Octagon also has its own safety measures. The Octagon, which is housed in a state-of-the-art, air-conditioned indoor arena within the zone, will be sanitized between all fights and be subjected to deep cleaning each evening. Another Octagon has also been constructed at Yas Beach for the fighters' enjoyment, and this will also undergo the same sanitization measures.

"Over the past two weeks, we've been very busy building a safe and secure zone to bring UFC back to Abu Dhabi and, in turn, kick-start international sport and entertainment events again," said HE Ali Al Shaiba, Executive Director of Tourism and Marketing at DCT Abu Dhabi. "The area of the 'safe zone' aims to ensure we can provide a secure environment to host elite sport, but also protect our wider Abu Dhabi community.

"This event is important to us for many reasons as it allows us to begin the process of bringing back sports and tourism to Abu Dhabi. It signals our readiness to once again host international events and provides us with a learning opportunity to improve and adapt, and efficiently prepare for the scheduled events ahead of us this year.

"I would like to also extend my gratitude to the 1,678 Abu Dhabi event staff who have spent 14 days in hotel room isolation as part of our safety protocol. Their passion and commitment to this event represent our eagerness as a community to bring our much-loved events and tourists back to Abu Dhabi, safely and securely."

UFC will hold four events on Yas Island, including one Pay Per View - UFC® 251 - and three Fight Nights. The action-packed schedule begins with UFC® 251 at 2 am local time (18:00 ET) on Sunday, July 12, and will be followed with successive ESPN Fight Night events to be held on Thursday, July 16 from 3 am local time (19:00 ET); Sunday, July 19 from 1 am local time (17:00 ET); and Sunday, July 26 from 1 am local time (17:00 ET).

UFC events are broadcast in 175 countries in 40 different languages and reach approximately one billion TV households.

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