



**Press Information,
December 2006**

Pioneering London to Dubai airship adventure reaches Greece

- World's largest commercial airship arrives in Athens -**
- The Spirit of Dubai flies over iconic landmarks of the city
where western civilization began -**

27 December 2006

The "Spirit of Dubai", one of the largest commercial airships in the world, has arrived in Athens on its unique journey from London to Dubai which began a few weeks ago. The airship is flying over many of the world's famous landmarks, including the Acropolis and Parthenon in Athens today (27 December 2006), before reaching the world's newest landmark, The Palm Jumeirah in Dubai. This epic journey marks the opening of The Palm Jumeirah, the world's largest manmade island which is visible from space.

After flying down the River Thames in London and over landmarks including Big Ben and Buckingham Palace, the Spirit of Dubai flew over the White Cliffs of Dover, crossed the English Channel, then flew to Paris taking in the Eiffel Tower and The Palace of Versailles. The airship continued its journey through France and into Italy visiting the Leaning Tower of Pisa before arriving in Rome, where it flew over the Colosseum. The most recent leg of the airship's journey sees it arrive in Athens, having flown across the Ionian Sea.

After the visit to Athens, The Spirit of Dubai will continue its journey taking in the Pyramids of Cairo before arriving in Dubai in the New Year.

Manal Shaheen, Nakheel Director, said: "Athens is a monumental point in our journey. It is the city where Western civilization began and our journey now takes us from some of the world's oldest landmarks such as The Acropolis to the world's newest landmark - The Palm Jumeriah. Much has changed since Athens was built, although the drive to push boundaries and celebrate architecture remains the same thousands of years on."

"The journey of the airship sums up the pioneering spirit of Dubai and the journey Nakheel has undergone in creating The Palm Jumeirah. Land reclamation on this size and scale, and with the complex shape of a palm tree, has never been attempted let alone achieved. The project has involved constant innovation and has overcome a number of unprecedented challenges to create construction history."



“Little more than five years ago, Nakheel laid the first grain of sand in the Arabian Gulf and by the end of this year we will be welcoming our very first residents. We are delighted to visit the wonderful city of Athens as part of our journey.”

The Spirit of Dubai will operate at around 1,500 to 3,000 feet with a cruising speed of around 30 to 50 mph - the airship can reach speeds of up to 70 mph (or faster, with a tailwind!). While cruising at 30 knots The Spirit of Dubai airship consumes 8 gallons (48 lbs) of fuel per hour. During a week of operations The Spirit of Dubai will consume less fuel than a 767 uses to simply move away from its gate to a runway!

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