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Dubai Tour countdown - Stage 3 and 4 in focus

*The Westin Stage is the hardest of the third Dubai Tour with a final climb in Hatta.
The Business Bay Stage runs entirely in downtown, through many of Dubai's iconic spots*

Dubai, 21 January 2016 – Last week we explored the first two days of the next Dubai Tour, both suited to the sprinters. Today we put the last two stages of the 2016 edition under the spotlight. On February 5th the peloton will ride toward the desert, 172km on a course which replicates almost entirely the inaugural edition stage, with the addition of the Hatta Dam final climb, already experienced in 2015. It's a medium mountain stage, won last year by the German puncheur John Degenkolb (also a winner of the 2015 Milano-Sanremo and Paris-Roubaix races), ahead of the Spanish riders Valverde and Lobato. The following day, February 6th, the riders will face the Business Bay Stage, the final stage, a sort of a classic: 137km through the Old and New Town touching some of the world famous Dubai landmarks with a final sprint next to Bay Avenue, a retail promenade part of the Business Bay complex, a landmark project of the government real estate company [Dubai Properties](#).



STAGE 3 *The Westin Stage (172km)*

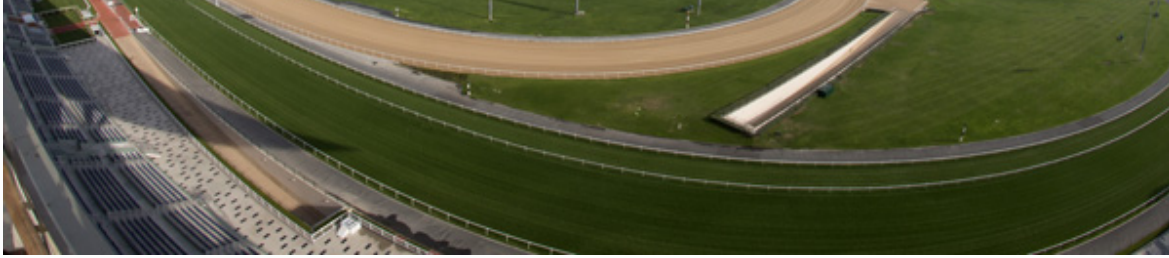
The Westin Stage is characterized by long stretches in the desert crossing the two neighboring Emirates of Sharjah and Ras-al-Khaimah. Once it has left the last buildings in Dubai, the peloton will reach Lahbab, a small village on the highway. Due to its desert location, the main local activities are the camel breeding and the wild safari adventure on the sand dunes. The riders will then pass through the towns of Al Madam and Al Malahia. The latter, situated in Sharjah Emirate, is a popular tourist spot in the Al Faya Desert, famous for dune-bashing or for setting up a camp under the stars.



On the road to Hatta the peloton will face the Hajar Mountains. Those mountains are an important eco region, being the only habitat above 2,000m elevation in the area. Unlike the rest of the Arabian peninsula, they host plant life and are home to a number of endemic species. Here the riders will face two climbs, an easy one followed by a second with peaks of 11% gradient and a fast and challenging downhill. The peloton will then move to Hatta, a popular Heritage Village which includes two prominent military towers from the 18th century and the Juma mosque (built in 1780). Hatta is an exclave of Dubai on the Omani border, famous for the fresh water spring (sources for the Crystal and Jeema mineral waters), the lake of emerald green rainwater of the dam and the rock pools formed by waterfalls (to visit them you need to cross the Oman border).

The last three kilometres are the hardest part of this stage: a continuous ascent up to face the final climb that leads to the dam: a short stretch with inclination from 12% to 17%: roughly 200 meters, probably decisive for the general classification.





STAGE 4 Business Bay Stage (137km)

The design and route of Stage 4 has been changed to make for the most exciting racing in the best scenery Dubai has to offer! The Business Bay Stage starts in the direction of the great [Meydan Racecourse](#), a horse racing facility able to accommodate over 60,000 spectators in a one mile long grandstand. Racing season starts in November and reaches its peak in March with the elite Dubai World Cup, the world's richest horse race, with a prize of a dizzying US\$10 million. After passing the racecourse the race then will reach and cross [Mushrif Central Park](#) – an artificial desert like park of 5.25sqkm (1,300 acres) with many facilities including swimming pools, fountains, lakes and children's play areas as well as train, camel and pony rides – and then the route moves to the beaches of the Al Mamzar Beach Park recreational area.



The race then runs through Deira, Dubai's historic commercial centre, Al Maktoum Bridge, the entire Old Town – Dubai spice and Gold Souks included – and over the Dubai Creek (this saltwater creek used to be the centre for the fishing and pearling industry) close to Port Rashid, the Dubai Cruise Terminal. From there the race enters the Jumeirah Road past the Union House Flag, birthplace of the United Arab Emirates on 2 December 1971. Here the rulers of each emirate signed the treaty creating the Arab world's first federation. Once past this location, there's a u-turn at the [Burj-al-Arab](#) (literally Tower of the Arabs, the world famous sail-shaped luxury hotel built on an artificial island) to go back to Jumeirah Road and reach the Business Bay complex which is the finishing point and the last sprint of the 2016 Dubai Tour.



