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## MGM Mirage joins Pearl Dubai

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MGM Mirage, the Las Vegas leisure operator, will run three hotels on a multibillion-dirham development close to Palm Jumeirah in Dubai.

The developer of the Dubai Pearl project, Pearl Dubai, said it would bankroll and build a 250-room Bellagio hotel, a 350-room MGM Grand hotel, and a Skylofts hotel, while MGM Mirage Hospitality would manage the properties. Gordon Absher, a spokesman for MGM Mirage, said: "While our company is well known for operating luxury casino resorts in Las Vegas, what people forget is that beyond the casinos lie some of the best, most luxurious resorts in the world.

"So we're taking that aspect of our experience and we're now carrying it other parts of the world – without the casino."

The announcement comes amid a downturn in global tourism that has forced Dubai's luxury hotels to cut their rates to attract tourists.

"Our alliance with MGM Mirage reflects our commitment to forging world-class partnerships with premium brands that are renowned for their operational excellence," said Abdul Majeed Ismail al Fahim, the chairman of Pearl Dubai.

The project was originally valued at Dh9 billion (US\$2.5bn), but now carries a price tag of Dh15bn.

"The project's entertainment elements will help complete the vision of making the Dubai Pearl a true landmark that will deliver an unforgettable experience through its diverse components and unmatched services," said Mr al Fahim.

Pearl Dubai paid Dh100m for an island at Nakheel's The World, a development off the coast of Dubai, last October. A significant part of it will be developed for the exclusive use of residents at Dubai Pearl.

Dubai World, a government investment company, has a 9.5 per cent stake in MGM Mirage, and is building an \$8.5bn (Dh31bn) entertainment complex in Las Vegas.

The Dubai Pearl-MGM Mirage venture follows a Dh1bn partnership deal signed last year with French crystal company, Baccarat, for the Baccarat Hotel and Residences at Dubai Pearl.

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A model of the Dubai Pearl development, which will soon have a portfolio of Las Vegas hotels. [Jeff Topping / The National](#)