

Visit Saudi



**DISCOVER SAUDI - FROM ARCHEOLOGICAL
ADVENTURES TO WORLD-CLASS FINE DINING**

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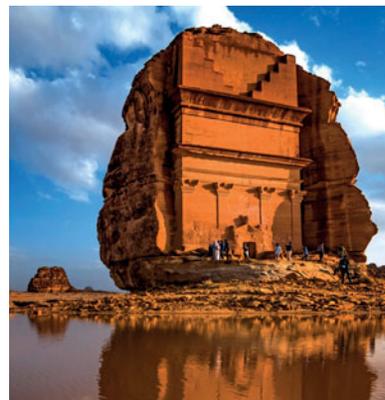
Welcome to a journey
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Visit
Saudi

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VISITING

KS

Magnificent mountain ranges, achitectural wonders and a rich heritage is attracting more and more visitors to Saudi, year on year. Here's why...



AlUla Hegra

Saudi: an introduction

Why Saudi should be on your must-visit list

With its warm summers and temperate winters (cooler mountain areas with their alluring promise of snowfall notwithstanding), fascinating history, astonishing natural landscapes and staggering topography, Saudi Arabia is a fabulous year-round destination.

The expansive country also offers up something for every type of traveller: from intrepid explorers to history buffs, culture fiends, keen al fresco adventurers, entrepreneurs and those who just wish to spend their time relaxing in luxurious surrounds.

AT A GLANCE: A BRIEF HISTORY

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was officially established on 23 September 1930, when under the royal decree of King Abdulaziz Ibn Saud the kingdoms of Najd and Hijaz were merged. That said, the idea of the country as a nation state dates back much further to the Al Saud dynasty, beginning with establishment of Ad Diriyah as the first Saudi state in 1744.

For all its rich history - visitors can view mesmerising rock inscriptions and ancient archaeological cities more than 10,000 years old - the country is currently undergoing a culturally sensitive transformation of epic proportions and is well on the way to establishing itself as forward-thinking, modern travel destination through development projects such as those in AlUla and the inspiring Neom.

The appeal of visiting the previously elusive country is only compounded by the ease with which travellers can navigate their way around and just how safe it is to do so (the country is

ranked third in the world in terms of safety according to the 2019 Global Competitiveness Report.

MAJOR MILESTONES

The Kingdom's recent history has been characterised by a number of landmark moments, noteworthy achievements and progressive decisions that have been celebrated within the country itself and on an international scale.

In 2021, Sarah Attar and Wodjan Ali Seraj Abdulrahim Shahrkhani became the first female Saudi athletes ever to take part in the Olympics with Attar competing in the 800m and Shahrkhani taking part in the judo competition at the London 2012 games.

Four years later in April 2016, Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman and the Royal Court unveiled their future-defining plans for Vision 2030. This ambitious, multi-faceted proposal

for social and economic reform set out to enhance the lives of citizens and both diversify and stimulate the economy with an increased focus on public service sectors and cultural and entertainment opportunities. In addition, the mandate outlined Saudi Arabia's desire to lead the global stage in creating an innovative new model for sustainable living.

Building on this commitment to driving cultural and economic growth, April 2018 saw public cinemas opening in Saudi for the first time in 35 years. Just four years later, the industry is thriving with multiple movie theatres across the country, independent cinemas and plans for the second edition of the Red Sea International Film Festival well underway for the end of the year.

And watershed moments don't get much bigger than when Saudi Arabia opened its borders to international tourists in 2019. The unprecedented move saw visitors from countries



around the world - notably the neighbouring UAE - seizing the opportunity to experience all that the Kingdom had to offer.

In something of a dream come true for KSA-based Formula One fans, the Saudi Arabian Grand Prix took place for the first time in Jeddah in December 2021. The inaugural race saw a who's who of modern driving greats roaring around the Jeddah Corniche Circuit (the longest and fastest street circuit in F1) with Lewis Hamilton emerging as the eventual winner.

As part of the Vision 2030 initiative, the giga-project revelations have kept on coming in recent years. Further plans for the futuristic mega project that is Neom include the construction of Oxagon, a carbon emissions-free, floating-on-the-Red Sea industrial city, as well as the development of Trojena, the GCC's first outdoor ski resort. Significant additions to the Diriyah Gate project meanwhile include the development of Diriyah Square, a global retail hub that will house over 450 international retail brands, as well as a hundred or so traditional-style souks selling local, artisan produce.

In early 2021, the Journey Through Time Masterplan, which will ultimately see AIUla established as a globally-renowned beauty, heritage, art and culture tourism destination was made public. The giga project momentum didn't ease up towards the end of the year either; in November 2021 plans for the Prince Mohammed Bin Salman Non-Profit City, the world's first non-profit city were announced. The sustainability-

focused non-profit area in Riyadh's Irqah neighbourhood will function as a sustainability-focused incubator for youth and volunteer groups, encouraging learning and leadership, and focusing on cultural development.

INCREDIBLE SIGHTS TO SEE

The very fact that Saudi Arabia has six sites on the UNESCO World Heritage list is testament to the natural beauty, cultural diversity and fascinating history of the country and its regional and international significance.

Our advice is to visit as many of these landmarks as you possibly can, potentially beginning with Al Ahsa. As well as historical buildings, extraordinary rock formations and archaeological landmarks suggesting traces of human settlements dating back to the Neolithic period, the impressively verdant Al Ahsa Oasis (the largest self-contained oasis in the world) is home to some 2.5 million date trees and a meandering network of hot and cold springs, wells and canals.

Heading in the direction of Riyadh, there can be no denying its right to a place on this UN-approved list. Sitting at the core of the billion-dollar Diriyah Gate restoration project and regarded as the historic centre of the Ad Diriyah region, Al Turaif was founded in the 15th century. Today remnants of the original Najdi-style architecture remain in place and visitors are able to wander

the sprawling interconnected alleyways lined with mudbrick houses.

Almost a thousand kilometres away in spectacular AIUla, the ancient city of Hegra features an impressive array of preserved ruins and rock formations carved by Nabatean tribes and dating back to the first century BC.

While Hima in Saudi's arid, mountainous southwest might be the most recently crowned UNESCO site, it is certainly a worthy one: situated along an important ancient caravan route the area is home to one of the largest collections of rock art images and inscriptions in the world, many of which depict scenes of everyday life from 7,000-year-old communities.

Sticking with the rock art theme, the Al Hail region in the northwest of the country features two main rock art sites (Jabel Umm Sinman at Jubba and Jabal al-Manjor, and Raat at Shuwaymis) each of which boasts numerous petroglyphs and rock inscriptions representing human and animal figures and scenes spanning thousands of years.

On the eastern shores of the Red Sea, Historic Jeddah (also known as Al Balad and the Gate to Makkah) was established in the seventh century AD and started out as a thriving port hub for traders working their way along the Indian Ocean trade route and pilgrims making the Hajj pilgrimage. Today it is an archeologically-rich, multicultural market place and popular tourist destination well worth visiting.



Riyadh skyline





SOMETHING FOR EVERY TRAVELLER

From sprawling, unspoiled Red Sea beaches that offer the perfect opportunity for lazing and luxuriating (as well as adrenalin-fueled marine adventures), to awe-inspiring archipelagos, KSA has some of the most exquisite coastlines in the world.

The astonishing landscapes certainly aren't limited to the shoreline though. Towering, greenery shrouded hillside valleys hum with wildlife, there are ancient villages and fortresses, geological marvels and dramatic rock formations, as well as sprawling national parks and undulating desert expanses. Alongside all that breathtaking natural beauty, Saudi's major cities reverberate with a buzzy, cosmopolitan vibe that holds international appeal.

CONTEMPORARY COOL: FOOD, FASHION, COFFEE, ART & MORE

Saudi has plenty to offer the travelling foodie, as well as those keen to experience the country's thriving modern cultural scene. While restaurants serving local food provide a fantastic opportunity for visitors to acquaint themselves with the region's

rich (and delicious) culinary history, Saudi is making a distinct mark for itself as a global dining destination. A slew of recent restaurant openings from globally-renowned brands, notably in Jeddah, Riyadh and Khobar but further afield, too (Jason Atherton's Maraya Social in AIUla is worthy of note), as well as a boom in home-grown restaurant concepts mean that there has never been a better time to eat out in KSA.

In addition, the creative scene in Saudi is well and truly flourishing with a combination of independent concept stores, art galleries, live entertainment and local fashion and design boutiques generating a real sense of energy, creativity and possibility.

BIG FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS AND PROJECTS

As you would expect, Saudi Arabia's exciting, innovative plans for the future are nothing short of impressive to the extreme. The launched-in-2016 Vision 2030 'pathway to the future' initiative set out to not only reduce the country's reliance on oil by diversifying its economy, but also shape and transform the cultural and entertainment landscape with a clutch of sustainability-focused mega projects.

THREE NOT-TO-BE-MISSED ANNUAL EVENTS

AIUla Moments

Brilliant news for all future visitors: it has just been confirmed that this event, which comprises of four unique festivals running over a four-month period, will return for the next three years. AIUla Moments offers something for everyone thanks to music and arts focused Winter at Tantora, AIUla Arts which showcases the work of Saudi's most prominent contemporary artists, the health and wellbeing-focused AIUla Wellness Festival, and AIUla Skies, where the focus falls on viewing the region's awesome landscape from the air, be that by hot air balloon, helicopter or vintage plane.



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Jeddah Season

Jeddah Season is set to return with a new identity this year after being postponed since 2019. While exact details are yet to be revealed (information regarding key dates and events will be announced this month), the festival promises to highlight the cultural diversity, international appeal, rich heritage and modern, forward-thinking aspirations of the coastal city.

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Riyadh Season

Part of the countrywide Saudi Seasons movement, this five-month long celebration of the capital and its people begins in

October or November each year and is the biggest festival of its kind in the Middle East with numerous concerts, theatrical performances, art displays, interactive experiences, food stalls, a Winter

Wonderland amusement park and more.

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Explore art
and culture
on page 38



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and mudbrick
houses, page 26



RIYADH
Uncover the
capital on
page 18



Arekah

A breakfast staple in Saudi's mountainous southwest province of Asir, sustaining arekah is perfectly suited to the cooler climate there (not that this has stopped it becoming popular all over the country).

Enjoyed for centuries and regarded as ideal fodder for workers with a long day ahead, in its simplest and potentially most delicious form, arekah features freshly baked bread blended or torn into pieces before being mixed with dates, ghee and honey and warmed through.



Mantu

Originating from the Hejaz region of western Saudi Arabia where Central Asian influences are often felt in the cooking, Turkish-inspired, Saudi-style mantu (or manto/manti) are irresistibly tasty, soft-textured steamed dumplings stuffed with herb-flecked minced lamb, or beef.

Mantu tend to be served in generous platefuls, often finished with buttery, smoky tomato sauce and spoonfuls of shatta (spicy chilli sauce).



Saudi qahwa

No visit to Saudi Arabia could be considered complete without sampling diminutive glass after diminutive glass of qahwa (Saudi coffee). The heady, aromatic drink is a source of huge national pride; enter a Saudi household and you'll undoubtedly be offered qahwa as a sign of generosity and hospitality.

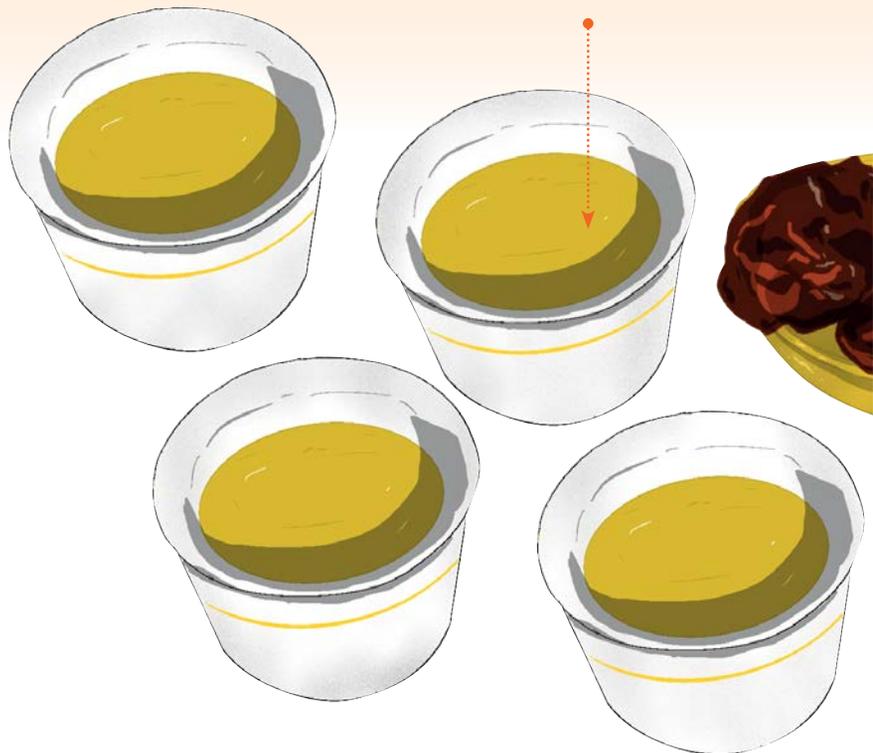
Made from finely ground Arabica coffee beans and infused with cardamom (and sometimes saffron and cloves), qahwa is presented in a traditional coffee pot known as a dallah, and poured with a certain amount of ceremony into tiny, decorative cups called finjan. The vaguely acrid drink is consumed without milk and often served with dates – the natural sweetness of the fruit balances the slight bitterness of the drink beautifully.

While tradition will always reign supreme, Saudi is certainly not immune to the craft coffee revolution, and particularly in the more cosmopolitan cities you'll find world-class coffees made from Arabica beans roasted in small batches, and served with both attention to detail and flair.

Hanini

Saudi cuisine features a host of mouth-watering desserts, from adored Umm Ali to hot, syrup-drenched luqaimat and buttery, crumbly stuffed ma'amoul, but as the weather cools down hanini is the sweet treat that everyone is thinking about. While the ingredients in this traditional dish might be simple, the result of combining roasted brown flour, butter, dates and spices, finishing the mix with honey and more melted butter, is a fabulously tasty one. As any local will tell you, hanini is best served warm accompanied by plenty of Arabic coffee.

While classic hanini is an absolute delight, if you find yourself in Riyadh or Jeddah and fancy trying a modern variation, the hanini at 66Cups is well worth a try (it's served in an Insta-worthy coconut bowl topped with rivets of caramel sauce).



“Scented fluffy rice, vegetables and tender meat combine to form Saudi Arabia’s national dish.”



Sobia

This thirst-quenching sweet drink originated in the Hejaz region and tends to be enjoyed primarily during Ramadan. Traditional sobia preparations see Arabic bread, barley, dried fruit (often raisin or dates), sugar and spices such as cinnamon and cardamom left to soak for a day before being blended, strained to remove any solids, and further sweetened with more sugar. The mixture is then chilled and diluted with water before being served.

Visit a sobia stall and you'll spot a rainbow-like array of different coloured beverages: roselle juice, strawberries and raspberries are often used to imbue the drink with a beautiful pink hue, while tamarind lends it a rich, golden colour.

Kabsa

Scented, fluffy rice, vegetables and tender meat (most often chicken, but sometimes lamb, beef, goat or even camel depending on the region) combine to form what is regarded as Saudi Arabia's national dish. Stemming from the Arabic "kbs" meaning pressed, kabsa sees these ingredients layered (pressed) together in a single pan, allowing a broth heady with kabsa spice mix (exact spices vary but often include cloves, cinnamon, nutmeg, black pepper, loomi, saffron and cardamom) to flavour the rice and meat beautifully.

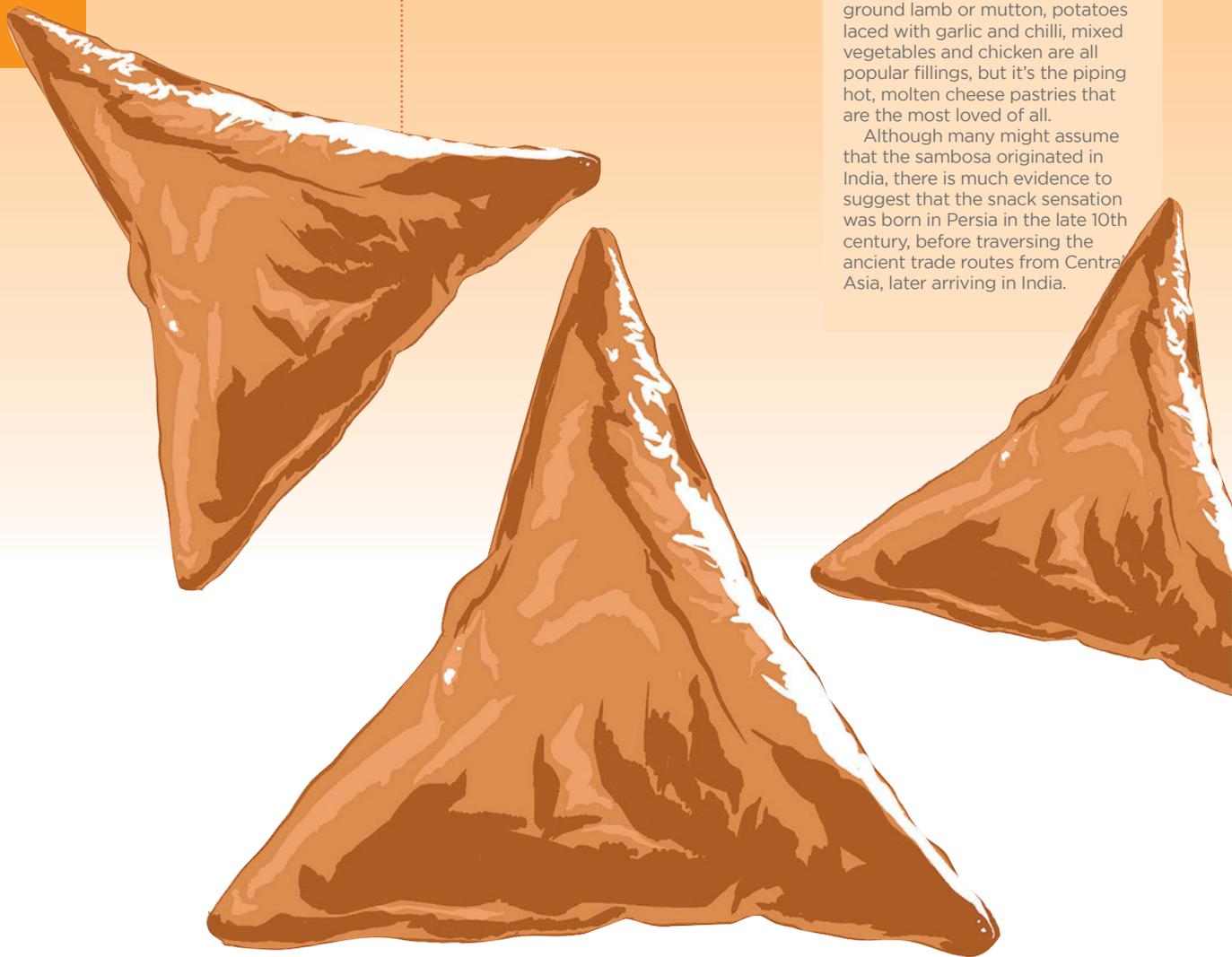
This communal dish is a lunchtime staple and is often served with a spicy tomato dipping sauce known as shatta.

“It’s the piping hot, molten cheese pastries that are most loved of all.”

• Sambosa

Flaky, crunchy, moreish sambosa are popular year-round in Saudi, but really come into their own during Ramadan, when no iftar would be considered complete without a plateful or two. Preparation techniques, shapes, sizes and stuffing ingredients vary from family to family, with each household following their own time-honoured recipe. Spiced ground lamb or mutton, potatoes laced with garlic and chilli, mixed vegetables and chicken are all popular fillings, but it’s the piping hot, molten cheese pastries that are the most loved of all.

Although many might assume that the sambosa originated in India, there is much evidence to suggest that the snack sensation was born in Persia in the late 10th century, before traversing the ancient trade routes from Central Asia, later arriving in India.





Yughmush

Saudi street food at its finest. These little pockets of freshly cooked leavened bread stuffed with piquant tender meat might just be the ideal on-the-go eat. Yughmush are especially popular in Jeddah where as any aficionado will tell you, they should be eaten while the bread is still warm and just starting to soften as the juices from the meat soak through the golden dough.



Sahlab

Thick, creamy, warming and fragrant, sahlab (also known as salep) is an age-old beverage made from ground orchid tubers. Thought to have been invented by the ancient Greeks and Romans, sahlab gained popularity during Ottoman times, steadily making its way across Europe to the Middle East. The now classic Saudi wintertime drink is traditionally topped with chopped nuts (pistachios are popular) and generous dustings of cinnamon.

That said, sahlab is having a bit of a moment of late, with cafes and coffee shops offering their own unique interpretations of the drink and furnishing it with all manner of final flourishes: white chocolate flakes, rose petals and salted caramel included.



As the capital of Saudi Arabia, Riyadh is one of the most important and popular cities in the Kingdom. Attracting both business people and tourists, there are heaps of things to do in Riyadh – from world-class shopping to historical museums and desert adventures. When it comes to food Riyadh is fast becoming a hub for top global names too, with some of the best restaurant brands in the world setting up shop there. The views in the city are spectacular, with an urban landscape that you'll want to snap, plus a short drive away there's the sprawling Saudi Arabian desert. What are you waiting for? It's time to explore.

3-DAY ITINERARY

Day 1 Morning: Uncover the history

Take a stroll into Riyadh's old quarter and learn about the city's past. The historic 150-year-old Al Masmak Fortress has a citadel made from clay and mud and it's an ideal spot to start a tour of the city. Al Masmak, meaning a high, strong and thick building, is the heart of Riyadh's history. In 1902 it was captured by King Abdulaziz, who took control of Riyadh, and from here conquered and united the different regions to make up the modern-day Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. After being an ammunition warehouse and a prison, today it is a museum.

Afternoon: Haggle at the souk

Just up the road from Al Masmak Fortress is the historic Souk Al Zal where you'll find jewellery, spices, textiles, handicrafts and souvenirs, so if you're looking for a gift or keepsake you're in the right place. It's been open since 1901 and is a top place to explore the alleyways and market stalls. It's best to visit at 6pm to see the daily auctions of carpets and antiques and feel the electric atmosphere of the old souk really come to life.

Day 2 Morning: Shop at Riyadh Park Mall

Take a stroll around this mall, which has a wavelike glass roof in one area and an open-air precinct, The Zone, in another. Check out the shops and restaurants or catch a movie at the IMAX cinema if you fancy chilling out in the air-conditioning. There are loads of high streets stores and high-end fashion chains from Abercrombie and Fitch to Coach, plus popular restaurant chains including PF Chang's, SALT and The Cheesecake Factory. There's even the Museum of Illusions to marvel at, or if you're travelling with family, then Magic Planet is a top choice for kids.

Afternoon: Go on a desert safari

You can't visit Saudi Arabia without an adventure in the desert, so while you're in the capital why not book a safari? Hold on to your hats, and your

stomachs, as you hurtle over the dunes and take in an amazing sunset over the sand. There are several companies offering afternoon and evening trips, which include dune bashing, sandboarding, a traditional dinner and stargazing in the super-clear desert skies, before you're dropped back at your hotel for a good night's sleep.

Day 3 Morning: Hike at Wadi Hanifa

If you're into the great outdoors then a hike on Wadi Hanifa will be right up your rocky path. The 120km stretch of rugged terrain just to the east of As Suwaidi is a beautiful location for a hike, with one side of the wadi lined with lush palm trees, plus pretty landscaped gardens to roam around. There are also barbecue and picnic spots if you fancy parking up and cooking your lunch while you're there. Don't forget snacks, comfy shoes and a fully charged smartphone or camera to capture memorable shots.

Afternoon: Check out Al Faisal Museum for Arab Islamic Art

If you are a fan of art there are lots of cultural spots in Riyadh to explore, but this newly re-opened museum in Al Olaya has a large number of free exhibitions scheduled. The current one, *Asfar: Treasures of the King Faisal Center for Research and Studies* runs until February 2023 showcasing nearly 30,000 manuscripts



Sky Bridge

Edge of the world



5-DAY ITINERARY

🕒 Day 1

Morning:

Immerse yourself in history at Saudi National Museum

This huge museum could take you all day – as there are eight halls to explore and soak in the culture of Saudi Arabia. The Kingdom's biggest museum, there are cultural and art exhibitions too, housed in a striking, modern building. The museum is home to intriguing Neolithic rock art, replicas of old buildings in Jeddah, interactive tours and regularly changing displays.

🕒

Afternoon:

Feast on traditional food

Najd Village, in Al Wahah, (www.najdvillage.com) serves traditional Arabian dishes, so if you're after a true taste of the region, make a bee-line here. The setting and food are both authentic, and there's a massive selection of mezze to dive into as well. Named after the Najd region in which Riyadh lies, ingredients are local with a traditional approach to Saudi cuisine.

🕒

Day 2

Morning:

Journey to the Edge of the World

The famous mountains of Jebel Fihrayn – otherwise known as The Edge of the World – is one of the most incredible places to visit. Set around 90-minutes drive away to the outskirts of the city, it stretches 600km as part of the Tuwaiq cliffs. You can take an official tour if you want to drive to the base, and from there you can walk for about half an hour to the peak, which is 300m above sea level. There are also even more challenging hikes for more advanced adventurers.

🕒

Afternoon:

Set up camp under the stars

The Edge of the World is a super popular place to camp, with stunning scenery and a unique place to camp under the stars. Not for amateurs, be sure to have an experienced guide, or someone who knows the area, with you – as well as all safety equipment, warm blankets, fully charged phones and GPS and plenty of food and water.

🕒

Day 3

Morning:

Take a stroll in King Abdullah Park

This former horse-racing track and



Traditional camping under the stars

318,000sqm urban park is set next to the famous Prince Faisal bin Fahd Stadium. It has a 12-metre wide pedestrian area as well as 110m giant laser fountains. There's also a large lake and there are frequent firework displays and festivities as part of a regular entertainment schedule. Take a stroll around the park, have fun on the playgrounds, lay out a picnic or play a ball game with your family for a relaxing day out.

🕒

Afternoon:

Refresh at the spa

The city is home to many a plush spa – with separate facilities for men and women. And with so many outdoor adventures to enjoy, it's time to take a load off your feet and settle in with some full-on relaxation. From massages to facials, hair care and manicures, there's a load to choose from, with top options including the spas in the luxury hotels of the Four Seasons, Ritz-Carlton or Mandarin Oriental if you're looking for high-end pampering.

🕒

Day 4

Morning

Splash the cash at Kingdom Center

The most iconic building in the capital is home to offices, restaurants and the famous Sky Bridge. But before you shoot up to the top of the city's fourth tallest tower, it's time to explore the

high-end boutiques, from Chanel to Prada, inside. On the 77th floor there's King Abdullah Mosque, the highest mosque in the world.

🕒

Afternoon:

Look out from the Sky Bridge

Boasting the highest views of Riyadh (and well beyond), the capital's Sky Bridge on the 99th floor of the Kingdom Center is a must-visit destination in the capital. Head here at sunset for an jaw-dropping display as the sun disappears behind the curvature of the earth, while the dazzling sights light up, and the city comes alive as night falls.

🕒

Day 5

Full day:

Explore Ushaiger Heritage Village

You'll need more than a morning to take in all the sights of this historic area. Bedouins first settled in the area 1,500 years ago, and it was a popular stopping point for pilgrims. Ushaiger means 'little blonde', in reference of the red mountain that overlooks the yellow mud houses. The village is full of narrow lanes and a slower pace of life, and it still has a community of residents. Expect hundreds of mud houses, thick palm groves and the Al Salem museum, housing a collection of artefacts and ceramics.

WHERE TO EAT

Najd Village (Saudi)

Named after the Najd region in which Riyadh lies, Najd Village serves authentic central region cuisine - known as Najdi - so make a bee-line here to sample kabsa, margook and gorsan. The setting and food are both authentic, and there's a massive selection of mezze to dive into as well.

Al Wahah, Riyadh, www.najdvillage.com, (+966 92 003 351)

Al Romansiah (Saudi)

One of the most popular restaurant chains offering superb Saudi food to the masses, Al Romansiah brings you all the traditional dishes. With a particular focus on chicken, the mandi and madfoon dishes are especially pleasing on the palate, which is to be expected considering this is one of the best places for Saudi food in Riyadh. Save room for dessert, as the kunafa is pretty hard to beat.

Various locations including Az Zubair Ibn Al Awam, Ar Rawabi, www.alromansiah.com, (+966 92 000 0144)

Al Saeed Restaurant (Saudi)

Specialising in the wholesome Saudi dish of Zurbian, a kind of Middle Eastern take on lamb (in this case mutton) biryani, Al Saeed is a must-visit when in the capital city. Incredibly popular with locals and expats, it might not be much to look at furnishings-wise but this uncut gem certainly produces the goods when it comes to the food. Simple, effective and one of the best places for Saudi food in Riyadh.

Al Anwar, As Sina'iyah, (+966 011 495 6009)

Ciprani Riyadh (Italian)

Known for its classy set-up, elegant décor and fine Italian food, the Riyadh outpost of this popular Italian brand is a top spot to visit when you're in the mood for a classic dining. The atmosphere is buzzing and service is slick. Don't miss the tasty pasta dishes including the popular gnocchi with gorgonzola, ricotta ravioli or delicious cacio e pepe.

Prince Turki Ibn Abdulaziz Al Awwal Road, Riyadh, www.ciprani.com, (+966 11 277 6700)

BB Social Riyadh (Asian)

This UAE-born restaurant based around baos, bites, barbecue and

bowls made its debut in Riyadh in early 2022, serving up its super-creative and delicious dishes. Look out for favourites including softshell crab bao, wagyu katsu sando and the popular cauliflower popcorn. Not only do they look amazing, they taste banging too.

Panorama Mall, Al Takhasussi Road, Riyadh, (+966 11 215 6000)

Entrecôte Café De Paris (French)

If you're after steak, you're in the right place. This restaurant started in 1930 in Switzerland and serves up striploin, tenderloin or sirloin wagyu with a green salad, fries and the restaurant's signature Café de Paris secret sauce.

King Fahd Road, Al Faisaliah Tower, Riyadh, www.entrecote-cdp.com, (+966 92 001 8998)

LPM Restaurant & Café (French)

Time Out award-winner LPM opened in the Saudi Arabian capital in the summer of 2021. The vibe is buzzing, the décor elegant and the dishes brilliant. From prawns in olive oil to lentil salad and octopus carpaccio - everything you order is totally delicious.

Al Motassem Street, Al Olaya, Riyadh, www.lpmrestaurants.com/Riyadh (+966 92 001 1794)



Riyadh spa hammam Al Faisaliah

Hotel Cartagena (Colombian)

A lively Colombian restaurant based on the fictional Ms Buendia, Hotel Cartagena is decked out in lush green foliage to resemble a rainforest. The food here includes empanadas, asados and ceviches – plus there's live entertainment makes it a fun night out. *U Walk, Al Nakheel, Riyadh, www.hotelcartagenariyadh.com, (+966 92 003 3801)*

Nusr-Et (Turkish)

Famed for his salt-sprinkling Instagram ways, this Turkish steakhouse from chef Nusret Gokce (AKA Salt Bae) has a global following, and the branch in Riyadh is as popular as you'd imagine. Get ready for super-size steaks – one of which is even covered in gold leaf. It's pricey, but what else would you expect from this Insta sensation? *Prince Turki Ibn Abdulaziz Al Awwal Road, UWalk, Riyadh, (+966 11 494 5120)*

ROKA Riyadh (Japanese)

The little sister of world-famous Japanese restaurant Zuma, ROKA has made a name for itself in recent years, with restaurants in London and Dubai. Serving up contemporary Japanese food, the restaurant has a focus on robata, while it also serves sushi, hot

pots, tempura, and more. There's also an elegant outdoor space for al fresco dining in the cooler months. *Prince Muhammad Ibn Abd Al Aziz, As Sulimaniyah, Riyadh, www.rokarestaurant.com, (+966 92 001 2327)*

The Globe (International)

Housed in the swish Mandarin Oriental Hotel, Al Faisaliah Tower, as you would

expect The Globe is a super-swanky restaurant inside a golden ball. It boasts 360-degree views of Riyadh from within the orb, made entirely of glass. There's a modern European menu to enjoy while you take in the view. *Mandarin Oriental Riyadh, Al Olaya, www.mandarinoriental.com/Riyadh, (+966 11 273 2005)*



The Globe

IF YOU ONLY DO ONE THING...

The Edge of the World

Whatever you do, don't miss a trip to The Edge of the World. The scenery is mind-blowing.

NEARBY DESTINATIONS

Diriyah Known for its mud-brick architecture Diriyah is home to a museum, coffee shops and the UNESCO-listed site At-Turaif.

Thadiq An interesting historical town that was established four centuries ago.

TRAVEL TIME

From Dammam

Car: 7h 44m; Plane: 1hr 5m

From Jeddah

Car: 9hr 20m; Plane: 1h 45m



WHERE TO STAY

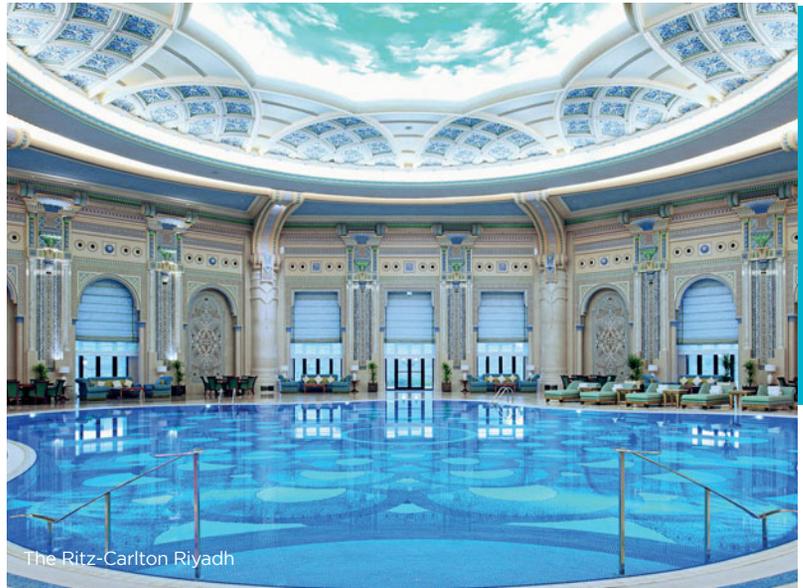
Fairmont Riyadh

This five-star hotel is in the Business Gate complex so is handily located if you're travelling for work, though the luxury accommodation is also popular with leisure travellers as it's close to the airport too. There are 298 guest rooms, all kitted out with swish Le Labo amenities and modern furnishings. Ready to shake off the day? There are separate men's and ladies' spas, while there's also a health club and pool. Restaurants include The 365, The Plaza and Pesto, so get ready to tuck into a range of tasty dishes.

Business Gate Qurtubah Area, Riyadh, www.fairmont.com/riyadh, (+966 11 826 2626)

InterContinental Riyadh

This hotel is handily located in downtown Riyadh, close to the Olaya Towers, King Abdullah Financial District, luxury mall Centria and more, so there's loads going on. With both indoor and outdoor pools, plus a fitness centre, there's plenty of space for relaxation, while there are a range of 274 modern rooms and suites to



The Ritz-Carlton Riyadh

check into. Refuel at all-day dining spot Al Bustan, or chill out and watch the match with a platter of mezze at Al Nakheel Sports Lounge, which is home to a 3mx3m screen. There are two lounges to enjoy a cup of coffee or afternoon tea as well.

King Saud Road, Al Mutamarat, Riyadh, www.ihg.com, (+966 11 465 5000)

Four Seasons Riyadh

This hotel is perched high above the city in the world-famous Kingdom Tower. Interiors offer authentic Saudi designs, while there are a variety of rooms and suites all furnished in a slick, modern style. Accommodation ranges from premium rooms to the luxe two-storey Kingdom Suite, so whatever you're looking for you'll find it here. There's a men-only spa offering a range of treatments, while there's also an outdoor pool. Restaurants include Middle Eastern spot Al Balcon, fine dining at The Grill and global cuisine at Elements. Looking for something extra-special? Book in for dinner for two on the Sky Bridge - the bridge that spans the top of the Kingdom Centre, 300m up in the air.

Kingdom Centre, King Fahd Road, Al Olaya, Riyadh, www.fourseasons.com/Riyadh, (+966 11 211 5000)

Shaza Riyadh

A luxurious hotel inspired by Andalusia in Spain, this hotel promises a mix of tradition and modernity when it comes to décor and feel. The

interiors are designed to be calming and relaxing, and there are a range of rooms and one-, two- or three-bedroom suites for business travellers and families, with views of the city or over the hotel gardens. It's home to Afiya Spa and Wellness Centre, a Moroccan Hammam, a ladies-only spa and gym, indoor and outdoor pools and more. Restaurants include Levant cooking at MeNa and international dining at Midan.

Eastern Ring Branch Road, Al Jazirah, Riyadh, www.shazahotels.com, (+966 11 834 9020)

The Ritz-Carlton Riyadh

This famous luxury hotel near the Diplomatic Quarter has 492 plush rooms and suites, plus a selection of top restaurants for a decadent stay in the Saudi Arabian capital. Plus if you're after some greenery, the landscaped gardens, featuring 600-year-old olive trees, are a charming place to take a stroll. There's a massive indoor pool with floor-to-ceiling windows and gentlemen-only spa, too. Restaurants include Al Orjouan for international dishes, modern Italian restaurant Azzurro and trendy Chinese spot Hong. There's also Turquoise Cigar Lounge, as well as a dessert café and a lounge for afternoon tea. There's even a bowling alley at Strike, a sports lounge that has billiards too, for when you want to relax and unwind with some friendly competition.

AlHada Area, Mekkah Road, Riyadh, www.ritzcarlton.com, (+96611 892 8020)

DIRIYAH

Winding alleyways and mud-brick architecture are at the heart of this intriguing city, which was the original home of the Saudi royal family



Diriyah is one of the most culturally important places in Saudi Arabia. Once the home of kings, Diriyah and more specifically the Al Turaif District, was the birthplace of the First Saudi State. Its mudbrick architecture is in the traditional Najd style, and in 2010 UNESCO recognized its beauty, history and heritage by making it a World Heritage Site. Settlements in the area date back hundreds of years, with Ibn Saud establishing the site as a capital in the 18th century.

The city was besieged and destroyed by the Ottomans and left in ruin for many years. Now, the Diriyah Gate Development Authority (DGDA) is tasked with bringing the city and its districts back to life, especially through the addition of museums, guided tours for local and international tourists, and the introduction of a period village which will showcase life as it was 300 years ago. It will take some years to realise the ambitious project to uncover and renovate the entire site, including the addition of world-class luxury hotels, residential communities and even a Greg Norman championship golf course.

For now, visitors can still find many hidden treasures and historically significant buildings to fully stock Instagram accounts with stunning pictures. There are also seasonal events and calendar moments to build your trip around, especially if you're a sports fan. In recent years, the Diriyah Arena has hosted the thrilling Anthony Joshua vs Andy Ruiz heavyweight championship boxing match and, the mud-walled streets and fortifications provide the incredibly picturesque setting for the annual Diriyah E-Prix, part of the Formula E World Championship series, featuring electric cars that can accelerate to 100 kph in under three seconds. Diriyah was also recently announced as the Arab Capital of Culture 2030, underlining its importance in influencing the region and its ongoing commitment to promoting cultural events.

ITINERARY

Day 1 Morning: Welcome to the Land of Kings and Heroes

Start in the Al-Turaif District. Take a tour guide and wander through the fascinating architecture, with one of

the highlights being the Salwa Palace. This is the most photographed place in Diriyah. It used to be the home of the royal family and is one of the key locations in Saudi history. Explore the narrow streets and the mudbrick homes.

Afternoon Explore palaces and museums

Head into the courtyard of Salwa Palace and see the museums. Diriyah Museum contains the royal family tree and heritage artifacts, while the Saudi Daily Life Museum presents the old traditions and routine of Diriyah's original inhabitants. The Military Museum highlights some of the battles to take place throughout history and, if you're a horse lover, the Arabian Horse Museum highlights the importance of the animals to Saudi culture.

Day 2 Morning Learn more in Riyadh

Take a day trip to further enhance your knowledge of Saudi culture and heritage by heading into nearby Riyadh to the National Museum of Saudi Arabia. From ancient cave paintings and rock art to interactive exhibitions, there are eight main halls to explore. There's also a scale-model of Diriyah.

Afternoon Visit the home of a king

A short distance away from the National Museum is Murabba Palace. This was the home and court of King Abdul Aziz, founder of modern Saudi Arabia. A historical centre showcases various memorabilia and the palace's gardens are a must-visit in the cooler months.

Day 3 Morning Stretch your legs

Take a morning stroll along the Wadi Hanifah, with its palm-tree lined pathways. It actually goes all the way into Riyadh, but instead detour to the Saad bin Saud Palace, which is fully restored and is one of the most intact palaces in Diriyah. You can also visit the Turaif Bath House which used to draw water from the wadi surrounding it.

Afternoon Bustle around Bujairi

Head to the cafes and craft shops of Al Bujairi, a short distance from Al-Turaif. Have a coffee and soak up the real daily life of the neighbourhood. Round off your trip with a visit to the nearby archery centre, next to Diriyah Arena. Challenge your companions to a target contest or fire arrows at balloons.



Al Diriyah Gate



Al-Turaif District



WHERE TO EAT

Dim Light Restaurant (Saudi)

With an outdoor terrace and garden, Dim Light has a variety of traditional Saudi dishes to try, as well as more international options. It's a convenient location within walking distance of the main tourist attractions.

Al Faisaliyah, Ad Diriyah, (+966 50 276 0001)

Jal Al Wadi (Saudi)

This venue is in the traditional mudbrick style and has comfy outdoor seating. It's casual and relaxed, with good selection of Saudi-style mezze dishes.

2137 King Faisal Road, Ad Diriyah, (+966 50 115 8165)

Éclat

Fancy a coffee? Eclat has you covered with a selection of hot and cold drinks, as well as savoury and sweet dishes to pair it with. A great afternoon tea stop.

Al Khuzama, Ad Diriyah, @eclat_saudi





IF YOU ONLY DO ONE THING...

Explore Salwa Palace

The incredible architecture of the exterior and the museums within its grounds should be on the list of any visitor to Diriyah.

NEARBY DESTINATIONS

Al Masmak Fortress A clay and mudbrick fort that has been converted into a fascinating museum.

Heet Cave Take an adventurous trip to this cave system with underground lake.

TRAVEL TIME

From Dammam

Car: 4hr 4m; Plane: 1hr 5m

From Jeddah

Car: 9hr 28m;
Plane: 1h 30m



WHERE TO STAY

Crowne Plaza Riyadh RDC Hotel & Convention

Relax at the on-site spa, or work up a sweat at the state-of-the-art fitness facility. The hotel has plenty of options for dining including Wildfire, a Brazilian steakhouse, and KOI, a Japanese-Peruvian fusion venue.

Imam Saud Ibn Abdul Aziz Road, Raidah Digital City, Riyadh, www.crowneplaza.com, (+966 11 813 1313)

Radisson Blu, Riyadh Diplomatic Quarter

Features a fully equipped gym and indoor pool, plus all-day dining options and meeting rooms if you need a quiet space for a video call. *7826 Umro Adhamry Street, Diplomatic Quarter, Riyadh, www.radissonhotels.com, (+966 11 297 9400)*

The Ritz-Carlton Riyadh

A popular luxury hotel and very convenient for visiting Diriyah, as it's only 18 minutes away. If you've got the budget, this high-end hotel is for you. *AlHada Area, Mekkah Road, Riyadh, www.ritzcarlton.com, (+966 11 802 8020)*



Diriyah Museum

DAMMAM

The sixth largest city in Saudi offers visitors tranquil sea views against a bustling city backdrop

MAMAM



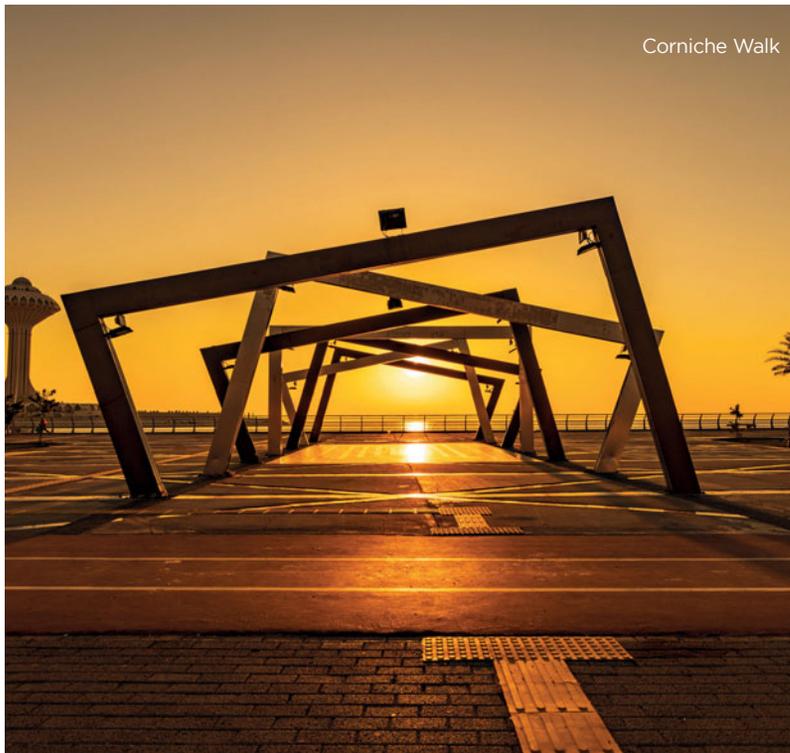


King Abdulaziz Center

Dammam is the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's sixth biggest city by population, and along with neighbouring Dhahran and Al Khobar, makes up the Tri-city area. Set on the Arabian Gulf, the urban area is the fastest growing city in the Arab world. It was originally a small fishing village, but with the discovery of oil in the 1930s, Dammam quickly established itself as an important location for wealth generation and development for the Kingdom.

As wealth and populations in the Dammam metropolitan districts have grown, so too has its importance as a cultural hub for Saudi Arabia. The establishment of state-of-the-art museums, heritage centres, galleries and exhibitions has positioned this thriving oil and gas city into more than a home of natural energy, and into one of artistic energy that welcomes visitors from around the world. It is embracing its global status on the tourism map too, by providing guests to the city with unique and authentic experiences, trips to areas of natural beauty and curated urban and offbeat adventures.

Corniche Walk



3-DAY ITINERARY

Day 1 Morning

Wander the island and relax

Ease into your trip by switching off completely with a relaxing visit to Al Murjan Island. This coastal landmark has panoramic views across the Arabian Gulf. It might surprise you that the island is manmade, having been built in 1991. Take a boat tour from the jetty out into the sea so you can get a real feel for the features of Dammam.

Afternoon:

Get acquainted with heritage

Take a walk along the Corniche Walk Way at the King Abdullah Park sea front where you'll take in terrific views across the Arabian Gulf and out towards Al Murjan Island. There are plenty of restaurants and cafés dotted along, so stop off for an afternoon caffeine hit or a bite to eat. When you're suitably refreshed pop along to the Heritage Village where there are all manner of traditional antiquities and artifacts are to be discovered, plus if you're a fan of cars you'll enjoy the Automobile Museum where you can find some cool classic vehicles on display.

Day 2 Morning:

Get cultural in Dhahran

The King Abdulaziz Center for World Culture (Ithra) is built near to the site where they discovered oil in the area. It was a gift to the city from Saudi Aramco and outside you can see the breathtaking design of its futuristic tower that rises 90 metres into the air. Ithra means enrichment, and visitors will find many ways to enrich their minds amongst the interactive installations and family activities. There's also a Children's Museum for the little ones, plus a cinema, theatre and exhibition halls. Here you will also find the Energy Exhibit designed to engage people about the connection between the area and the energy industry.

Afternoon: Learn to scuba dive

Head to Half Moon Bay, a beautiful cove on the coastline. Here the water is just seven-metres deep, so it's an ideal spot to learn how to scuba dive and see some aquatic wildlife. Or if you're a more advanced diver there are options to suit. You could even wait

until the evening to do a night dive to see flathead fish, bull rays and octopus. In spring, especially, you'll find bright bioluminescence.

Day 3 Morning: Island touring

Visit Tarout Island and head to Tarout Castle, an old fort that is claimed to be built on a site dating back thousands of years. The building that you can visit more likely dates back to the 16th century when the Portuguese invaded the Gulf. It sits atop a hill, which gives a good view back across the island.

Afternoon: Souvenir shopping in the souqs

Take your pick from a wide array of local souqs and malls. If you're looking for a bigger experience then Othaim Mall is one of the shopping highlights of Dammam, while if you're searching for somewhere a little more authentic to pick up some gifts for family and friends, Share Al Hob and Dammam Souq are packed with specialist vendors and handcrafted wares.



Dammam beach front

5- DAY ITINERARY



Day 1

Morning:

Get your bearings

Whenever visiting a city, it's always a good idea to start by getting to know the place a little. So what better way than sitting on some paddle boat swans in King Fahd Park and watching the world go by? Yes, we know it's not the norm, but the park is right in the centre of the city and if you can find your way to the pedalos in this central green urban space, then you'll know you've got your bearings for the trip ahead.



Afternoon:

Stroll through the souqs

Have a chilled afternoon exploring the shops and malls - one of the most popular is Othaim Mall which also has play areas for children. Finish with an evening visit to Share Al Hob, where there is a wide selection of gold and

jewellery shops. Local sellers offer all sorts of luxurious items from perfumes to spices, ceramics to carpets.



Day 2

Morning: Energise your trip

Take a family trip to explore the Ithra Energy Exhibit. Participate in interactive displays, workshops and learn through a 3D theatre. By the time you leave you'll be a brainbox about all things energy and natural resources.



Afternoon: Solve puzzles

To further test your group's brainpower, head to Escape The Room SA in Al Hizam Al Akhdar. You know the score - fiendishly tricky puzzles, codes to crack, teammates getting frustrated but ultimately overcoming challenges to beat the clock and escape in sixty minutes. If you're a competitive sort this could be the highlight of the

trip. Afterwards head over to the Al Khobar waterfront where you can watch dancing fountains and take some scenic pictures for social media.



Day 3

Morning: See the street art

Walk around the streets and sights of Al Khobar. Stop off at the graffiti neighbourhood of Bayoniya and see the painted houses and murals. This project was arranged by the Dawi Gallery, founded by Madawi Albaz, and endorsed by Her Highness Princess Abeer Bint Faisal Al Saud. Stop off at a local café for a coffee and a bite to eat. Caffeination Coffee House has a good range of international coffees and sandwiches.

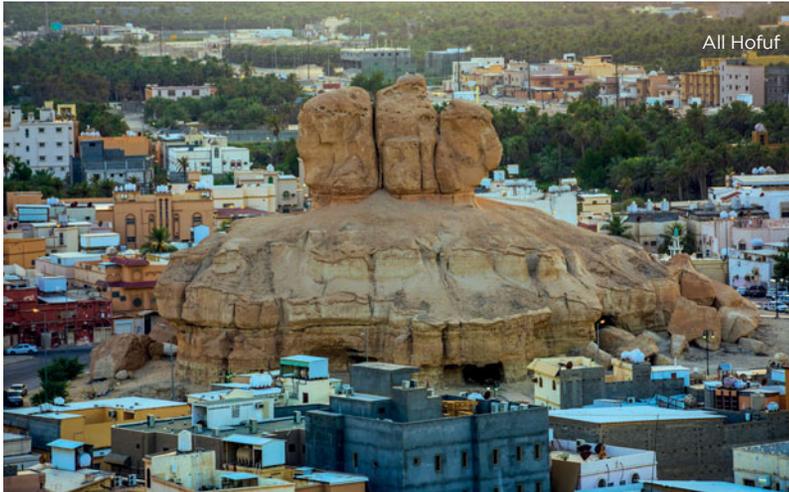


Afternoon: Visit a unique museum

Head to Taybeen Museum, also in Al Khobar. This is one of the most eclectic



Al Khobar tower



Al Hofuf

IF YOU ONLY DO ONE THING...

Visit the Corniche

Walking around the waterfront of Dammam, you'll get a sense of the importance of its history and its rapid development over the past few decades to become one of the key cities in Saudi Arabia. Head to the Heritage Village to learn more about traditional life, or just walk through King Abdullah Park and soak up the sea air

NEARBY DESTINATIONS

Al Ahsa Oasis and Al Hofuf

Take a drive southwest to this oasis governorate where you'll find lush green gardens, natural springs and world-class dates.

Al Qatif and Tarout Island

A short drive north will bring you to this connected seaside area, where you can visit heritage buildings like Tarout Castle, walk along the beaches and visit the fishing market.

TRAVEL TIME

From Riyadh

Car: 3hr 47m; Plane: 1h 0m

From Jeddah:

Car: 13hr 31m; Plane: 2h 0m

museums you'll find because it comes from the passionate inspiration of Majid Al Ghamdi, who has been collecting vintage items since his childhood. Over time, it grew to a collection of more than 10,000 pieces, with retro video games, classic cameras, old televisions, and a range of Coke bottles from different eras. Finish the day with a sunset walk along the Corniche.

Day 4 Full Day: Take a day trip to Al Ahsa

Visit the picturesque oasis region of Al Ahsa and its capital Al Hofuf. Explore the Al Qarah mountain for views across the city and walk through the cave network. Stop off to make some clay pots at 150-year-old Dougha Handmade Pottery Factory where

you can have a go at the traditional spinning wheel. For a spot of important Islamic history, head to the Jawatha Mosque, believed to be the oldest mosque in eastern Arabia, before picking up some souvenirs at Souq Al Qaisariya.

Day 5 Morning: Sign up for science

For a bit of mental stimulation, head to Scitech and visit the observatory, where you can learn more about the solar system, planets, the moon, comets, meteors, and stars. You can also find out more about wildlife and habitation across the region and how science and technology are rapidly improving our lives with the advancement of robots and artificial intelligence.

Afternoon: Last-minute sightseeing and souvenir shopping

Don't know enough about Dammam yet? The Heritage Village displays lots of intriguing artifacts including ancient manuscripts, letters, art and collectibles that will enrich your trip. You'll also find a craft market selling locally made products such as baskets, paintings and perfumes. If you're hungry, there's a great restaurant serving traditional bites, while for those with a need for speed, check out the automobile exhibition with an enviable collection of classic cars. For some last minute shopping, head to the female-run Dammam Souq where you can pick up some new clothes or choose from handcrafted jewellery.





Wyndham Garden Dammam



WHERE TO EAT

Heritage Village (Saudi)

An ideal stop-off if you're on the Corniche, Dine in the mudbrick fort and tuck in to a traditional Saudi feast of warming soups, delicious samosas, fresh salads and large grilled meat platters accompanied by fragrant rice. *King Abdullah Park, Corniche Walk Way, Ash Shati Al Gharbi, Dammam, www.heritage-village.com/sa (+966 55 843 2232)*

Ayrouz Restaurant (Lebanese)

If you like nothing more than a big buffet full of mixed grills, hot and cold mezze and plenty of pastries and desserts, then you've hit the jackpot. *Sheraton Dammam Hotel & Convention Centre, 1st Street, Dammam, www.marriott.com, (+966 13 834 5555)*

Maharaja by Vineet (Indian)

By famed chef Vineet Bhatia, the interior is beautifully palatial and immediately transports you across the Arabian Gulf to India. There are live

tandoori cooking stations and classics like lamb rogan josh, seekh kebab and assorted biryanis.

Mövenpick Hotel Al Khobar, Prince Turkey Street, Al Yarmouk, Al Khobar, www.movenpick.com, (+966 13 898 4999)

WHERE TO STAY

Braira Dammam Hotel

Select one of the spacious rooms with modern amenities, set in this well-located area. There's easy access to the corniche, plus for the family there is a kid's pool area and terrace.

Ash Shati Ash Sharqi, Dammam, www.brairahotels.com, (+966 13 834 8313)

Kempinski Al Othman Hotel Al Khobar

Right in the centre between the Tricities, the hotel offers an impressive range of luxury spa treatments, massages and facials. It's also close to malls and the business districts.

3266 Custodian of Two Holy Mosques Road, Al Khobar, www.kempinski.com, (+966 13 331 1234)

Mövenpick Beach Resort Al Khobar

There are plenty of reasons to choose this hotel if you're into relaxation. In beautiful coastal surroundings, this resort has a lagoon beach, swimming pool, wellness spa and fitness centre. It's also only 30 minutes from Dammam town centre.

Half Moon Bay Road Aziziyah, Al Khobar, www.movenpick.com (+966 13 849 2999)

Sheraton Dammam Hotel & Convention Centre

Affordable 5-star hotel with indoor and outdoor swimming pools, tennis courts and views across the Arabian Gulf. Centrally located close to the action, it has three main restaurants specialising in Italian, Middle East grills and a mix of Asian cuisine, plus a café and social lounge. The hotel also plays host to business conferences, exhibitions and large-scale weddings in its dedicated ballrooms.

1st Street, Dammam, www.marriott.com, (+966 13 834 5555)

Wyndham Garden Dammam

Located in the hustle and bustle of the city, near to many of the top malls, this hotel is perfect as a landing spot for any shopping fans. There's also a spa to help relieve any traveller tensions.

21st Street Al Adama District, www.wyndhamhotels.com, (+966 13 839 8700)

AIU

From contemporary art to Michelin-starred chefs, the insta-friendly region of AIUla isn't your usual desert destination

Ula





Maraya

Steeped in history, the breathtaking scenery, craggy rocks, rolling dunes and stunning vistas of AlUla, in the Medina region of Saudi Arabia, is without doubt one of the most impactful places you'll ever visit. The 22,000 square-kilometre area is otherworldly, as fascinating as it is beautiful, with heaps of historic sites, hidden tombs, and even modern art to discover. Once a major trade hub, on the Incense Route between the Arabian Gulf and Mediterranean countries, AlUla is fast becoming popular with tourists thanks to attractions such as the renowned UNESCO World Heritage site

of Hegra, the Insta-friendly mirrored art installation Maraya in the Ashar Valley, and the natural wonder of Jabal Alfil. With world-class hotels and restaurants making a debut too, and with a packed arts and social calendar, you're sure to be wowed.

3-DAY ITINERARY



Day 1

Morning:

Visit AlUla Heritage Village

Also known as Ad-Deerah, the village is built on a higher part of the valley to

escape the floods. AlUla Old Town is overlooked by Musa bin Nusayr Castle - which is said to date back to the 10th century. The old town has hundreds of houses, shops and four town squares and was a popular stop on the pilgrimage route between Damascus and Mecca. The city is built with houses attached to each other, to act like a fort, and at some points in history the gated settlement physically opened and closed the gates each morning and evening. You can take a tour around the old town with a guide to soak in the history, plus there's an outdoor market to explore too.



natural sights you'll see, so don't forget your camera. The Nabataean civilization left behind 111 preserved tombs, so history buffs, you're in for a treat.

 **Afternoon:**
Explore the Hijaz station and Hegra Fort

While you're in Hegra you can check out the Hijaz Railway, which was built in 1900 along the historic pilgrimage route. The Hegra station still stands, and you can explore it. Next, make your way to Hegra Fort, which used to be a shelter for travellers.

 **Day 3**
Morning:
Pedal your way through AIUla
Think yourself a bit of a Chris Froome?

Pull on the lycra (optional) and head off on AIUla's 14km cycling trail. The pathway offers spectacular views as it winds and traverses through the region's sandstone mountains. There are sandy tracks, steep slopes and uphill climbs to tackle, so while it's not the easiest of trails, the rewards will be rich and it will take around an hour to complete.

 **Afternoon:**
Cool off at AIUla Oasis

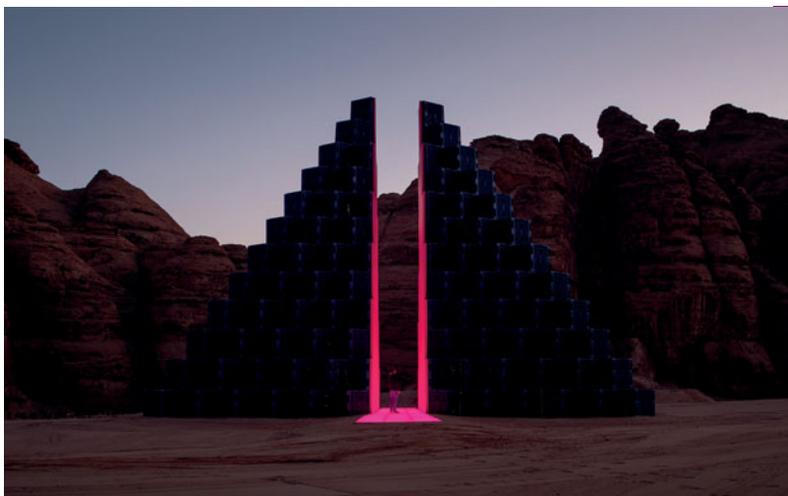
Surrounded by lush date palm groves and citrus trees, this picturesque and serene oasis is a charming place to spend an afternoon. You'll find it nestled within the Wadi AlQura (or Valley of Villages) and there are plenty of other crops grown including wheat, barley, olives, figs and oats.

 **Afternoon:**
Soak up the culture at Athr Gallery

Athr Gallery opened recently in the city's new art and culture precinct, AlJadidah. As one of AIUla's first permanent cultural structures, the dedicated exhibition space is found within the AIUla Design Gallery, and the inaugural exhibition focused on the themes of human nature, ecology, the inner self, country and representation, so get ready for a lot of fascinating culture shows coming up.

 **Day 2**
Morning:
Visit the tombs of Hegra

As the Kingdom's first UNESCO World Heritage Site (one of currently six in Saudi Arabia), Hegra is one of the most jaw-dropping locations on the planet, and is fully deserving of a full-day excursion. With more than 100 well-preserved tombs, it's a massive historic area that only recently opened to tourists. The area dates back to the first century BCE as it was originally a trade route for pilgrims heading to Mecca. The rock formations are absolutely incredible and include Face Rock - which looks, as you'd imagine, like the profile of a face. Don't miss a trip to Qasr Al Farid, which is more than 22m high and built as a tomb for Lihyan, son of Kuza. It's one of the most amazing



AIUla Design Gallery,



Dancing rocks

5-DAY ITINERARY



Day 1

Morning:

Hike the Adventure Trail

With striking scenery, soaring mountain ranges, deep valleys and plunging canyons, AlUla is a nature-lover's dream. If you fancy a hike, head to the Adventure Trail, where you can explore rugged terrain, climb over volcanic rocks and see hundreds of ancient rock carvings on the cliff faces, dating back to the Dadanite and Lihyanite periods. There are trails suitable for all levels of hiker.



Afternoon:

Visit the Dancing Rocks

You'll find three spiralling rock formations known as the Raqasat (the Dancing Rocks) around 45 minutes from the Ashar Valley. The three huge pillars are a marvellous sight so take

a moment to soak it all in. Just along from here in the Ragasat Valley there's Jabal Al Rukkab, where you'll see more ancient rock carvings, thought to date back around 2,000 years.



Day 2

Morning:

Get up early for a helicopter ride

See the natural wonders from a totally different point of view with a 30-minute helicopter tour over AlUla. Your pilot will point out all the stunning landmarks and heritage sites so keep your eyes peeled. You'll see, among others, Jabal AlFil (Elephant Rock), Hegra, the Hijaz Railway, Dadan, AlUla Old Town, Maraya and more.



Afternoon:

Marvel at Maraya

This amazing site is the Guinness World Record holder for the world's largest mirrored building, making it an eye-catching spot in the middle of

IF YOU ONLY DO ONE THING...

Hegra The UNESCO World Heritage Site can't be missed. The soaring rock formations will knock your socks off.

NEARBY DESTINATIONS

Al Bada An ancient oasis in Tabuk that's worth a visit.

Hadaj Well This well in Tabuk is thought to be one of the largest wells in the region dating back 2,500 years.

TRAVEL TIME

From Dammam

Car: 13hr 40m; Plane: 4hr 5m

From Riyadh

Car: 10hr 11m; Plane: 1hr 40m

From Jeddah

Car: 7hr 18m; Plane: 1h 15m



the desert. Maraya in Ashar Valley is designed to blend in with landscape and is covered in 9,740 mirrored panels. Maraya means mirror or reflection in Arabic and is home to art exhibitions, concerts and more. It is also the site of Maraya Social, from Michelin-starred chef Jason Atherton, so if you're peckish, stop in for a superb meal.



Day 3

Morning:

Check out Jabal Ikamah

The outdoor library, as it is known, has more than 500 rock carvings, in five different languages - Aramaic, Dadanitic, Thamudic, Minaic and Nabatean. In the east of the area is Naqsh Zuhayr, which has some of the oldest Islamic inscriptions dating back to 644CE. Just ten minutes drive away is Dadan, the ancient Kingdom of the Lihyanite and Dadanite civilisations that well-worth a trip.



Afternoon:

Take the Hidden Valley Hike

Experience AlUla at night with a 4km hike under the stars. The peacefulness of your surroundings will be glorious and you'll be gobsmacked by the imposing shadows of the massive rock formations.



Tombs of Hegra



Stargazing at AlGhameel

Day 4
Morning

Get a thrill on a zipline

If you're an adrenaline-seeker, AIUla zipline is for you. You'll speed along 1.5km at 120km/h while whizzing through the spectacular scenery of AIUla. The zipline is the longest and fastest of its kind in the Kingdom and is not to be missed.

Afternoon:
Dine at Elephant Rock

This monolithic sandstone arch, also known as Jabal AlFil, is a brilliant place to visit during the day as you can really see the rock formation in all its glory. It resembles an elephant with a long trunk - hence its name - and it's a hit with geography fans of all ages. It stands 171ft, meaning it looms imposingly over the sand. Head here at night, however, and you can plan a special dinner under the stars for a truly memorable night out. Just along from Elephant Rock is a jar-shaped rock formation so there's loads to see.

Day 5
Morning:
Go on a hike at Oasis View Trail

If you want to see AIUla Oasis from a different angle, why not try a hike in the mountains. The Oasis Trail means you can look down on the oasis and millions of palm trees for a picture-perfect shot. The trail is just 3km more and is suitable for nature-lovers of all ages. The tour takes around two hours, and will end at AIUla Old Town where you can refuel with a cup of Arabic coffee.

Afternoon:
Stargaze at AlGhameel

With its remote location at the heart of the desert, the skies above AIUla are beautifully clear meaning it is an incredible place for stargazing. At AlGhameel you'll find a traditional Bedouin set-up and you'll be treated to a history and stargazing lesson from a pro so you can learn all about the stars and constellations that sparkle magically in the sky above. For the ultimate experience, head along at sunset to see the amber skies give way to velvety, inky blackness. You'll get a rare glimpse of the Milky Way splashed across the night sky in all its glory, made all the brighter thanks to the lack of light pollution.



Elephant Rock







Circolo

WHERE TO EAT

Pink Camel Pastry Boutique

This adorable little home-grown café concept from celebrated Saudi chef Mayada Badr is a great spot to fuel up on some good quality coffee and a tasty handmade pastry. There are plenty of choices for vegans and vegetarians, plus there are gluten-free options available.

AlWadi, AIUla Oasis, @pinkcamelksa, (+966 59 040 0902)

Circolo (Italian)

This gorgeous eatery with stunning outdoor terrace backs onto the mountains, where you can enjoy freshly cooked pizza from the authentic wood-fired oven. You can also tuck into lobster with pasta, perfectly al dente

risotto, and save room for dessert as there are a range of yummy treats for those with a sweet tooth.

Oasis Square, AlJadidah District, AIUla, @circolo.pizza, (+966 53 335 3201)

Maraya Social (International)

The first Saudi outpost from British Michelin-starred chef Jason Atherton, Maraya Social specialises in seasonal ingredients and modern European cooking. It sits at the striking mirrored Maraya structure and is a unique place to dine.

Maraya, AIUla, www.marayasocial.com (+966 50 876 7166)

SALT

What do you do when you're off-road, in the rocky wilderness next to one of Saudi Arabia's must visit sites? Stop for a burger of course. Now possible

thanks to SALT, which has brought its legendary food truck to Jabal AIFil, otherwise known as Elephant Rock. This is unlike any burger joint you're ever likely to visit.

Jabal AIFil (Elephant Rock), AIUla, @findsalt

WHERE TO STAY

Canyon RV Park

Camping doesn't have to be soggy tents and wondering where the spiders are. If you head to AIUla you can enjoy a far more refined way of outdoor living. With the Retro Airstream RVs at Canyon RV, enjoy amazing mountain views not far from Elephant Rock.

Canyon RV Park, AIUla, www.booking.com/gathern.co

Gathern Accommodations

Choose from your own house with pools and mountain views for a truly awe-inspiring stay. This is a super option for families or groups of friends who want their own privacy.

Various options available. www.gathern.co

Habitas AIUla

For fans of wellness resorts, AIUla's stunning Habitas resort is an eco-friendly way to explore the area. Enjoy facilities including a yoga deck, fitness centre and serene swimming pool, plus a Thuraya wellness menu. The focus on wellbeing continues to the restaurant, Tama, which sources fresh local ingredients and presents a menu of Saudi and Middle Eastern dishes.

Ashar Valley, AIUla, www.ourhabitas.com/alula, (+966 14 821 3900)

Sahary AIUla Resort

Elegant rooms decorated in a unique heritage style make up this tranquil resort set amongst the sandstone rock faces. There are outdoor dining options, so you can have dinner underneath the stars in the heart of the spectacular World Heritage Site.

Sahary AIUla Resort, AIUla, www.saharyalularesort.com, (+966 55 105 3222)

Shaden Resort

Set in a dip amongst the rocky hillscape, Shaden Resort has 121 deluxe rooms and villas to choose from.

Private pool options are available too. There are four restaurants to choose from, including casual, seafood, Indian and steakhouse venues.

Hail Street, Saq, AIUla, www.accor.com, (+966 50 604 3344)

DAIH



Perched on the shores of the Red Sea, Jeddah is not only the commercial centre of Saudi Arabia, it's a rapidly growing tourist destination too. The port city is known as the gateway to Mecca due to the proximity to the holy city, while Jeddah itself is a bustling place with top-class hotels, restaurants and attractions. The historic old town area is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and the city has an astounding history dating back to 552BC. There are lots of souks and markets around the city, as well as museums and malls. Water sports, particularly diving, are very popular here too, as you'd expect with its superb position on the Red Sea.

3-DAY ITINERARY



Day 1

Morning:

Take a boat trip on the Red Sea

You can't visit Jeddah without a trip out on the water, and happily there are loads of options at the Red Sea City. Head to Red Sea Marina if you fancy chartering a yacht, while you can also go on a sunset cruise, snorkelling trip, a dolphin watching excursion or scuba diving mission. Get the adrenaline racing with a speed boat trip and see the stunning coastline from the sea.



Afternoon:

Visit King Fahd Fountain

The most famous attraction in Jeddah, King Fahd Fountain is the tallest of its kind in the world and shoots a stream of water 312m in the air. The much-loved landmark is more than 30 years old and stands at the Corniche. It's stunning day or night, but for the best show head along after dark to see it lit up in all its glory. You can stop at the city's oldest Italian restaurant, Café Aroma, if you want a snack.



Day 2

Morning:

Stroll along Jeddah Waterfront Park

Pop on your sneakers and head out for a wander along Jeddah Waterfront Park. It's a brilliant way to see the city, and the coastline, as the stretch along the Corniche is home to beaches, parks, coffee shops and playgrounds. Whether you take a gentle stroll, go for a jog or just want to stretch your legs, it's a lovely place to soak in the vibe of Jeddah in the sunshine.

Al Alawi





Afternoon: Go shopping in the Red Sea Mall

This popular mall is found the north of Jeddah and is home to many luxury brands, from Burberry and Chanel to Givenchy and Dior. There's also a VOX Cinema, restaurants and an indoor fountain. If you're looking for more high street shops then the Mall of Arabia, near to King Abdulaziz International Airport, is a top place to shop with globally recognised stores such as M&S, H&M, Zara, and more.



Day 3 Morning: Explore Souk al-Alawi and Al-Balad

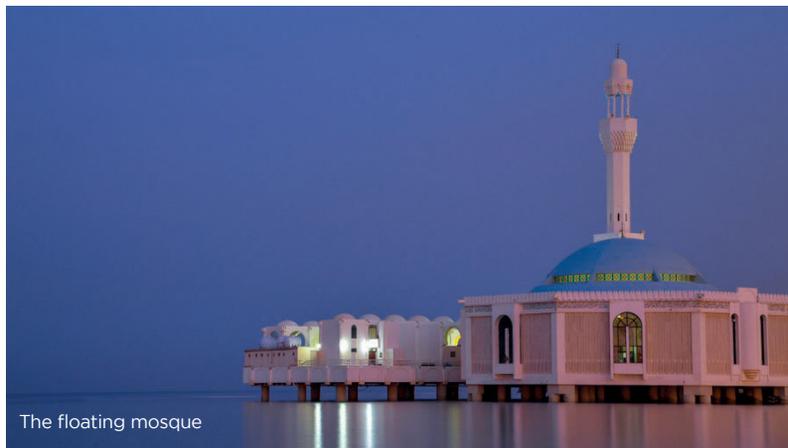
The historic area of the city is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and there's a buzzing vibe. Head along to Souk Al-Alawi to pick up trinkets

including jewellery, textiles, art and more. Bring your best haggling skills to bag a bargain. Peckish? Grab a snack at the balila stands where you'll find the traditional Saudi Arabian street food made from chickpeas, garlic and spices.



Afternoon: Marvel at the floating mosque

The stunning Al Rahma Mosque, otherwise known as the floating mosque, gets its name from its position over the water – giving the impression of it floating serenely on top. It's a stunning location, and you'll definitely want to take a snap to remember it. You can also look around the inside as well. By night, it's a beautiful sight as light streams through the intricate stained glass windows.



The floating mosque

IF YOU ONLY DO ONE THING...

Go diving in the Red Sea

You can't come to the Red Sea City without going for a dive in the ocean – it's one of the best places in the world to dive and the underwater views are absolutely incredible. There are stunning coral reefs to explore, shipwrecks to discover and tonnes of sealife to get up-close-and-personal with. There are heaps of dive companies that you can go with so get ready to have some serious fun.

NEARBY DESTINATIONS

Abu Tair To the southwest of Jeddah you'll find Abu Tair, home to the world's most famous shipwreck – the remains of the Greek Staphonos that sank in 1978, also known as the Cable Wreck. Jabal Al Laith. This island is around 200km south of Jeddah and is home to many whale sharks. It's popular for diving, while you can also climb Mouth Laith.

Mecca The historic holy city is under an hour drive from Jeddah – which is often called the "gateway to Mecca" for this reason.

TRAVEL TIME

From Dammam

Car: 13hr 6m; Plane: 2hr 5m

From Riyadh

Car: 9hr 13m; Plane: 1hr 30m



5-DAY ITINERARY

Day 1 Full day

Go on a dive to a shipwreck and snorkel in the Red Sea

Get ready to make the most of your time in the Red Sea City and go on a full-day trip out to sea. There are loads of dive companies to choose from and you can even explore historic shipwrecks not too far off the coast. If you're not qualified to dive, then go snorkelling and see the marine creatures from above. The crystal clear waters of the Red Sea are a special place to admire the sealife and you

might even see the rare black marlin or Napoleon fish.

Day 2 Morning:

Admire al fresco art

Jeddah has heaps of amazing outdoor art to see – and the best news is that you can glimpse them all across the city. There are sculptures from international and local Saudi artists scattered throughout the city, with work from famed names such as Joan Miro and Henry Moore, while there's a 15m-tall bike in Bicycle Square.

Afternoon:

Scream at a theme park

White-knuckle fan? Al Shallal Theme Park is spread over a huge 60,000sqm on the Corniche and is a popular day out for all ages. There are loads of rides, with varying levels of thrill, as well as special kids' zone for the littlest visitors. The brave can check out Sling Shot and Power Surge, while those after a gentler ride can have a go on the tea cups (they can still pack a stomach-churning punch). Get ready to get soaked on Amazon – the popular indoor flume. Hands in the air, team.

Day 3 Morning:

Let's go fly a kite

If you want to try out a new water sport, kite surfing is for you. We're not saying it's easy, but once you get the hang of it you'll be darting about above the water with style. You can try it all year around (except December when the wind isn't high enough) and with temperate waters Jeddah is the ideal place to give it a whirl (literally). Super Kite Day offers lessons to get you in the swing of things.

Afternoon: Chill at Al-Saif Beach

Once you've spent all your energy on the water it's time to laze on the sand. Al-Saif beach is a popular spot for families due to its shallow waters, and it's a popular place for flying an actual kite. For something more fancy, check into Salhia Beach Club for a chance to chill out away from the city.

Day 4 Morning Visit Naseef House and walk through Bab Makkah

One of the oldest and best-restored

Waterfront Jeddah



coral houses in Al-Balada is Naseef House, built for the merchant Omar Nasseef Efendi in 1881. It's where King Abdulaziz Ibn Saud stayed when in the city from 1925 and is now a museum. It has a huge tree outside, which was the only tree in the city until the 1920s. While in Al-Balad you can see Bab Makkah – the gate to the historical city of Mecca where billions of pilgrims have walked in years gone by.

Afternoon: Take a trip to Moon Mountain

You'll need a 4x4 but once you've secured your vehicle it's time to take a trip to Moon Mountain, just outside Jeddah. The 95km road trip promises otherworldly lunar landscapes to explore, stunning rock formations to marvel at, and challenging, yet rewarding, hikes. You can even set up camp for a night or two and enjoy the stargazing.



 **Day 5**
Morning:

Head under the sea – on land

Once you've had your fair share of diving, splashing and swimming you can check out the marine life at Fakieh Aquarium. There are more than 200 types of sea creatures, including rays, turtles and sharks, as well as spectacular coral reefs.

 **Afternoon:**

Get some R&R at Narcis Spa

The Narcissus Obhur Resort & Spa, prides itself as the largest spa in Jeddah. It's a massive 1,200sqm and there are six different treatment rooms as well as a sauna and steam room. There are also amazing views of the Red Sea. Been there before? The brand-new The Spa at Shangri-La has a state-of-the-art facilities to help you unwind in an indulgent manner.



WHERE TO EAT

Abu Zaid (Saudi)

This traditional Saudi Arabian spot is a top place to tuck into tasty local cuisine. It's famed for masoob and motabag – the latter of which comes with a modern twist. It's also a popular place for breakfast and there are plenty of branches across the city to try.

www.abuzaidrest.com, (+966 92 000 2670)

Taibat Al Hijazi (Saudi)

This Middle Eastern eatery serves up tasty Arabic dishes and is busy at all times of day and night. However, it's best known of its Hejazi breakfast platters, so head along early in the day to scoop up shakshuka, fowl and more.

Various locations including Prince Sultan Road, Jeddah, (+966 12 6060 1474)

Central Fish Market (Saudi)

You'd expect the freshest of fish given its seaside location, but for the catch of the day you should head to Central Fish Market. Boasting the widest selection of fish in Saudi Arabia and more than 100 stalls, you can pick up tuna, squid, prawns, bass and more – and if you don't fancy cooking it yourself, there's an onsite restaurant. Choose to have you fish filleted and then grilled or fried and served with salads, hummus and more. Tasty.

Al Kurnaysh Br Rd, Al-Baghdadiyah Al-Gharbiyah, Jeddah, (+966 54 808 8630)

Ful 21 (Levantine)

This casual, family-friendly spot is a popular place to dig into traditional Arabic food with a modern twist. It has a stone oven, so expect delicious freshly baked bread, while Ful 21 also serves a range of tasty mezze and grills in a hip setting.

Al Rawdah, Jeddah, (+966 56 220 2121)

La Ciel (International)

As the only revolving restaurant in Jeddah, you can expect striking views alongside your meal. La Ciel sits on the 15th floor of Al Suhaili Business Center and it takes around an hour and half to do a full rotation, during which you'll enjoy 360-degree panoramic views of Jeddah.

Al Mohammadiyah, Jeddah, (+966 55 924 9292)

Kuuru (Nikkei)

Kuuru specialises in Nikkei cooking – a blend of Japanese and Peruvian flavours and influences. There's a range



Waterfront, Jeddah



Shangri-La



Park Hyatt, Jeddah

of sushi, sashimi, nigiri and ceviches on the menu, as well as grills, salads and more. You're also promised plenty of theatre with your dinner, while there's a special Nikkei bar serving a creative nigiri tasting menu that you won't want to miss.

Al Malik Road, Al Khalidiyyah, Jeddah, www.kuururestaurant.com, (+966 53 250 0123)

Rasoi by Vineet (Indian)

This creative Indian restaurant from renowned chef Vineet Bhatia is a must-try if you like Indian food. The chef was the first from India to secure a Michelin star at one of his restaurants, and Rasoi

THE ART PROMENADE

An exciting new development to explore in Jeddah is The Art Promenade located by the waterfront, running along the marina to the chic Jeddah Yacht Club. Fast becoming a favourite with those in-the-know, stroll along the water's edge, spot unique artworks and sculptures along the way, and stop at the cafes and restaurants for a bite to eat to watch the world go by.

Current favourites are 95 Celsius cafe (www.95celsius.com), serving unique coffee mocktails and pastries, then there's Maillard (www.visitmaillard.com) where Saudi chefs present an exciting menu of star dishes such as duck waffle, coconut lobster and watermelon tatakai; and a must-try is contemporary Greek restaurant Okto (www.okto-sa.com), which also has a venue in AlUla.

by Vineet is a tasty place to enjoy fine dining Indian dishes. Rasoi by Vineet is inspired by the spirit of the old parts of Jeddah, which Bhatia fell in love with on his visits. Rasoi means kitchen in Hindi and the menu boasts modern cooking techniques and flavours.

Mövenpick Hotel Tahli, Jeddah, www.movenpick.com, (+966 12 213 2000)

Shang Palace (Chinese)

A restaurant famed around the globe, Shang Palace serves up traditional Chinese dishes in a modern, slick setting. Housed in the new Shangri-La Jeddah, you can expect a top-notch dining experience here – and don't leave without trying the speciality duck.

Ash Shati, Jeddah, www.shangri-la.com/Jeddah, (+966 12 696 8888)

WHERE TO STAY

Assila, a Luxury Collection Hotel

With super-modern interiors and high ceilings, this chic hotel is modern and spacious. Neutral tones in the lobby are lifted by pops of vibrant coloured furnishings and massive ceiling lights, while rooms and suites follow the same theme. The hotel also doubles as an art gallery with more than 2,000 pieces of art by Saudi artists. There's a men's and women's spa, a gym and an incredible rooftop pool that has stunning views across the city. Restaurant-wise there's Argentinean restaurant Pampas, Mediterranean-Arabic restaurant Aubergine, international restaurant Twenty Four, and coffee house Il Caffé.

Prince Mohammed Bin Abdulaziz Street, Jeddah, www.marriott.com, (+966 12231 9800)

Park Hyatt Jeddah

A five-star resort on the peaceful shores of the Corniche, this modern hotel has stunning rooms and gorgeous landscaped gardens. Rooms face the Red Sea or King Fahd Fountain, so you'll be greeted with a glorious vista each morning, and when it comes time to chill out and unwind there's a state-of-the-art spa. The 142 rooms and suites have a modern design with an Andalusian twist. Looking to dine? Restaurants include Mediterranean restaurant Nafoura, lavish buffet Andalusia, a lounge for afternoon tea and Dardasha, a Middle Eastern spot in the ladies-only spa. There's a kids' club too to keep the little ones occupied.

Al Hamra District, Southern Corniche, Jeddah, www.hyatt.com, (+966 12263 9666)

Shangri-La Jeddah

The very first Shangri-La in the Kingdom opened in February 2022 and is home to 203 modern rooms, three restaurants, a superb spa and a kids' club. Floor-to-ceiling windows flood the stylish hotel with natural light and the beach is just a seashell's throw away. Peckish? Copa serves coffees, pastries and more in a boutique-style café setting, Shang Palace offers contemporary Chinese food, while Waterfront Kitchen is a top all-day dining space to dig into international dishes while gazing out at the Red Sea. The hotel is close by the Red Sea Mall and all of the city's major landmarks too, making it a luxe choice for tourists.

Ash Shati, Jeddah, www.shangri-la.com, Jeddah, (+966 12 696 8888)



The Ritz-Carlton, Jeddah

The Ritz-Carlton, Jeddah

This stunning hotel is set right on the Corniche, overlooking the Red Sea, so the views are absolutely lovely. The property is just a 45-minute drive from the airport, too, which makes it a popular destination for international travellers, attracting everyone from couples to families, business people and more. As a former palace the hotel itself is gorgeous, with rooms overlooking the Red Sea, King Fahd Fountain, or Jeddah skyline, and there

are rooms ranging from deluxe to massive suites. The facilities are top-notch too, with a luxurious men-only spa. When you get peckish there are plenty of restaurants including Reyhana, which serves Asian, Arabic and Mediterranean classics, Saltz serving a unique salt-based menu, and Karamel Lounge is the place to go for afternoon tea. When it comes to downtime, there's a private beach and fitness centre, plus kids' club, so there's plenty to do for all the family.

Al Hamra Corniche, Jeddah, www.ritzcarlton.com, (+966 12231 4444)

Waldorf Astoria Jeddah - Qasr Al Sharq

A luxury hotel on the corniche, the Waldorf Astoria Jeddah has Italian styling and a ladies-only spa that features an aquamedic pool. With an indoor and outdoor pool there's plenty of space to splash around and chill out, plus there are super views of the Red Sea. When you get hungry, Aromi serves Venetian-inspired Italian dishes, Mataam Al Sharq is the place to go for Middle Eastern dishes, while you can take breakfast, coffee or afternoon tea in the Al Shurfa Lounge. It's a super-swanky spot, on arrival you'll notice the three-storey Swarovski chandelier, plus you'll also get a butler for the duration of your stay at this palatial spot.

North Corniche Road, Jeddah, www.hilton.com, (+966 92000 9565)



Bay La Sun

Set up in 2005, the megaproject King Abdullah Economic City, dubbed “the city of the future”, was designed to attract international business. However, that doesn’t stop it from being a popular place to go on holiday with the family. KAEC (pronounced cake) is around an hour’s drive north of Jeddah and is rapidly becoming a go-to destination thanks to its proximity to the Red Sea. Meanwhile international tournaments are played at the Royal Greens Golf & Country Club, but even if you’re not there for one of them, why not try your hand at a round of golf? There are also lots of sandy beaches, plus an expansive waterfront for strolls or water sports, plus the mild climate of around 28 degrees all year round makes for a pleasant holiday destination.

3-DAY ITINERARY

Day 1 Morning:

Take a stroll around Juman Park

Set just a stone’s throw from the marina and all of KAEC’s major hotels, Juman Park is one of the best places to while away a few hours. Take a picnic and unwind in the sun, or if you’re after a more active adventure, play tennis or volleyball, or take a dip to cool off in the swimming pool. There’s even a mini golf course to perfect your putting. The lush green park is a lovely place to enjoy with your kids, while there’s plenty of parking, and direct access

to loads of beach front eateries if you fancy having a bite for lunch.

Afternoon: Start your engines

Have a need for speed? Pull on a helmet and hop into a go kart to impress your mates with your driving prowess. Juman Karting has more than 700 metres of karting track and is the ideal place to let off some steam and partake in some friendly competition, while having loads of fun in the process.

Day 2 Morning:

Pedal boat on KAEC’s canal

Hire a swan pedal boat and get those legs moving – you can power yourself along the KAEC marina canal and take in all the sights from the water.

Afternoon: Go glamping at Lagoona Escape

For a charming retreat in the desert, head along to Lagoona Escape – a luxury glampsite that you’ll definitely want to check into. With luxe suites

with modern amenities you’ll have a delightfully relaxing time, away from it all. Perfect for a reset under the stars.

Day 3 Morning:

Catch some rays at Yam Beach

Rent a sun lounger for the day and get your chill on at cute little Yam Beach, a sandy spot at Bay La Sun. Remember a good book, sunscreen and some snacks and kick-back in the sun for a few hours of R&R. There are plenty of food trucks on hand for when you get peckish, plus there’s a natural pool surrounded by coral reefs for when it’s time for a dip.

Afternoon: Take a cycle along Beach Walk and dine at the Beach Promenade

Beach Walk overlooks the stunning turquoise blue of Red Sea and is the ideal place for a leisurely stroll or spin on a bike. Head along at sunset for the perfect views across the sea and to see the amber skies light up. Don’t forget your camera.



Yam Beach

IF YOU ONLY DO ONE THING...

Juman Park This park is a brilliant place to spend the day with the family. Take a picnic, or pick up some snacks at one of the food stops, play mini golf or just stroll in the sunshine.

NEARBY DESTINATIONS

Jeddah Don't miss a day trip to the Red Sea City, where you'll find heaps of stunning sculptures, top-class restaurants and plenty of boat trips.

King Abdullah Monument Park This park in Thuwal is close by, while there are also plenty of beaches, too.

TRAVEL TIME

From Dammam

Car: 14hr 6m; Plane: 2hr 10m

From Riyadh

Car: 9h 56m; Plane: 1hr 45m

From Jeddah

Car: 1hr 21m

5-DAY ITINERARY

Day 1 Morning:

Splash around at Aqua Fun floating Water Park

Get ready for some watery fun with this inflatable floating water park. It's heaps of fun for all the family as you splash around and dive into the sea.

Afternoon:

Have a stroll around Bay La Sun Marina & Yacht Club

Soak in the coastal vibes at Bay La Sun Marina & Yacht Club and enjoy a casual stroll around. The views are superb on land, but you can always rent a boat or go on a trip if you want to take to the high seas. And there are plenty of restaurants to grab a snack at.

Day 2 Morning:

Go on a diving trip in the Red Sea

Being based right on the Red Sea, you can't miss the opportunity to go diving

in one of the most amazing strips of ocean on the planet. If you don't have your PADI – or deep sea diving isn't your thing – then head out with a snorkel instead. At KAEC Bay you can book a full-day diving adventure with a variety of dive companies, while your non-diving pals can always book a fishing trip or coastal cruise.

Day 3 Morning:

Have a go at water sports

Head over to Yam Beach to try an exhilarating water adventure. From jet skis to wakeboarding, waterskiing and more, there's loads to try, whether you're a water sports pro or complete novice. And if you don't like water, watch the experts while you lie back on the sand and chill.

Afternoon:

Catch a movie at the K-Max cinema

This 46-seater motion ride cinema has state-of-the-art technology and immersive effects to make you feel like you're in the movie. It's exhilarating and fun and offers motion rides as well as 4D shows, making it an exciting afternoon out for all the family. There are non-moving seats too, if you'd rather keep it on the sedate side.

Day 4 Morning:

Play a round at Royal Greens Golf & Country Club

Think you're a pro when it comes to swinging a club? Budding Tiger Woods? Show off your skills at the Royal Greens Golf & Country Club and book in for a round of golf. The moderate temperature means you can play all-year round and the top level course is also home to many international tournaments – so you can pretend you're an expert even if you're not. The premier 18-hole championship course has panoramic views of the Red Sea, so it's something really special too.

Afternoon:

Massage away at Mandara Spa

Relax, unwind and treat yourself to some pamper time at the elegant Mandara Spa at the Royal Greens Golf & Country Club. There are loads of treatments available from massages to facials and more – plus there are both male and female facilities so no one is left out when it comes to a little self-care.

Day 5 Morning:

Explore the city on I-Bike

Ready to see more of the city and get your legs moving? It's time to hire an I-Bike. A top way to see all the sights while getting some legwork in, the roads here are smooth and flat so you don't need to be a pro-cyclist to get involved.

Afternoon: Visit Green Arts Park

Make the most of the temperate weather and take a stroll around the Green Arts Park. The park has some impressive topiary – including some animals such as giraffes and camels.





WHERE TO EAT

Al Saefer (Saudi)

Indulge in some fresh catch of the day Saudi-style at this local hot-spot, where they'll cook your chosen fish any style, for a truly authentic foodie experience by the Red Sea.

*Beach Walk, Bay La Sun, KAEC,
(+966 50 000 0088)*

Bhar Restaurant (Levantine)

This Mediterranean- Lebanese restaurant on Beach Walk is a top place to order a mixture of mezze while enjoying views of the sea.

*Beach Walk, Bay La Sun, KAEC,
(+966 50 000 0088)*

Bistro (International)

This casual dining spot at the Royal Greens golf course is ideal for a quick bite pre- or post-round of golf.

Royal Greens Golf and Country Club, Al Murooj, KAEC, www.royalgreens.net, (+966 12 422 7800).

FireGrill (Mexican)

In the mood for Mexican? Dig into burritos, tacos and more, all fully loaded with homemade guacamole. It's a super-casual spot down at the Beach

Walk and is top for hungry families.

*Beach Walk, KAEC, www.firegrill.com.sa,
(+966 55 471 2910)*

Seasons (International)

Dig into a range of international dishes with views over the marina at this casual dining spot.

*Bay La Sun Hotel & Marina, KAEC,
(+966 12 510 6400)*

Casper & Gambini's (Italian)

This popular deli chain serves up everything from sandwiches and salads to pasta. Simple and tasty.

*Views Hotel & Residence, Bay La Sun, KAEC,
www.casperandgambinis.com,
(+966 55 067 3388)*

Bert's Café (French)

This beachfront café serves French food, pastries, sandwiches and coffee. There's al fresco seating overlooking the sea, while indoors there are TVs so you can catch the latest match.

Bay La Sun, KAEC, (+966 56 361 1895)

Steak House (American)

The clue's in the name with this one – dig into tender meat cuts at this carnivorous restaurant.

Bay La Sun, KAEC, (+966 11 243 9018)



KAEC City



WHERE TO STAY

Bay La Sun Hotel & Marina

This five-star hotel is one of the most popular in the area. With views over the Red Sea and the marina, there's a multi-lane bowling alley, pool tables, car simulators and other games for you to try at the Bay La Sun Club. It's in the heart of the city, and super-close to all the main attractions too, making it a top place to stay for holidaymakers.

Bay La Sun, www.baylasunhotel.com, (+966 12 510 6400)

Lagoona Escape

This luxury campsite is the perfect place for glamping, set in the middle of the Lagoona Reserve. When it comes to somewhere to lay down your head, there's a suite tent – which has two bedrooms – or a double room tent, all with all the latest mod-cons.

Lagoona Reserve, KAEC, (+966 56 270 9212)

Oceana Resort

This serene resort is in the heart of KAEC and has view of the Red Sea. There are a range of villas – standard and luxe – and restaurants plus loads of facilities including pools, a beach and games suitable for all ages.

Bay La Sun, KAEC, www.oceana-resort.hotels-saudi-arabia.com, (+966 56 932 4275)

Views Hotel & Residences

This modern hotel has views of the sea, and is also located in Bay La Sun, near to all the city's major tourist attractions. Accommodation ranges from studios to one- and two-bedroom suites and penthouses. If you're peckish there's Casper & Gambini's for breakfast, lunch and dinner, plus Views Lounge for a game of pool.

Bay La Sun, www.viewsresidences.com, (+966 12 510 5888)



ASEER

Home to the country's highest peak, Jabal Swada, the lush valleys and breathtaking scenery of Aseer is a must-see while in Saudi



Aseer, or sometimes spelled Asir, is one of the most beautiful, unspoiled areas of Saudi Arabia. The region is located in the southwest, and is a great place to visit if you like exploring mountains, as Saudi Arabia's highest peak Jabal Sawda, at a height of over 3,000 metres, is located here near to the village of Al Soudah. Its regional capital and must-visit city is Abha, while its most populous urban centre is Khamis Mushait. Aseer is a popular getaway location for those escaping the heat of the summer, as parts of the mountain region can be up to 10-degrees cooler, with lush vegetation, forests and scenic valleys.

ITINERARY

🕒 Day 1 Morning

Tour historic Abha

Explore the city of Abha and its surroundings. Ascend from the Abha Al Jadidah cable car station up to Jabal Thera (Green Mountain). From there you'll be able to take some truly Instagram-worthy pictures. Head back down and go for a walk around Al Muftaha Village, with its elegant mosque that is decorated with beautiful calligraphy. You'll find an array of arts and crafts, painted homes, murals and museums where you can learn more about the artistry.

🕒 Afternoon

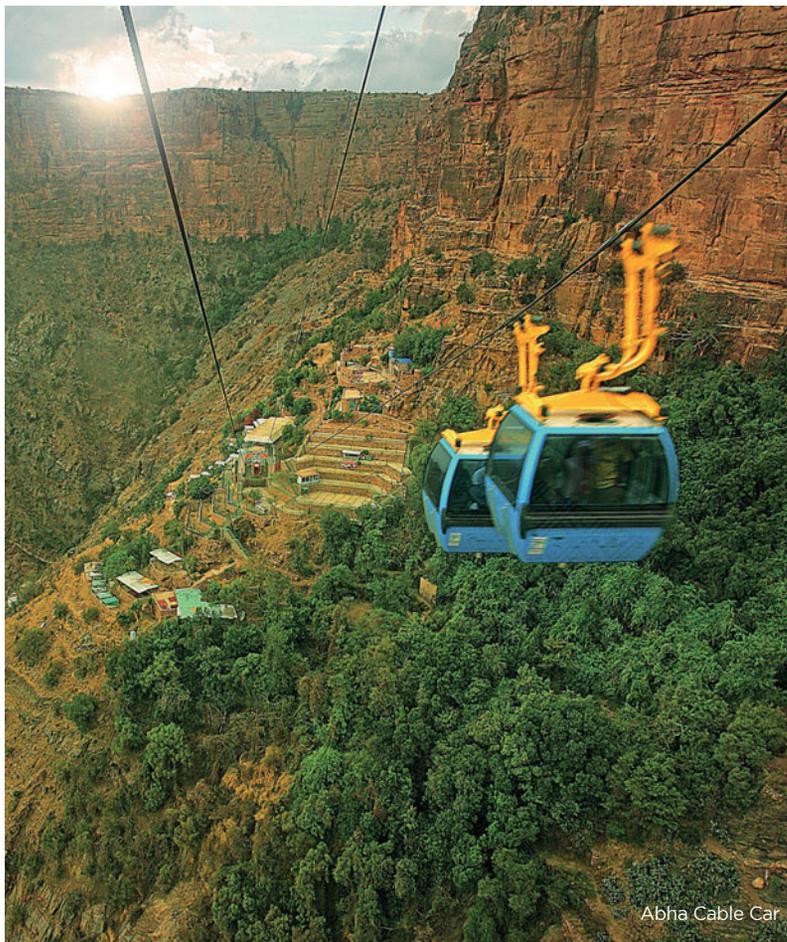
Eyes on the architecture

At the heart of Abha town centre is the mud-fortress of Shada Palace. It dates back more than 200 years and displays traditional architectural styles of the region so you can get a feel for the history of the place. Round the day off looking back across to the Green Mountain where you spent the morning, now illuminated in neon green lights.

🕒 Day 2 Morning

From the top rope

Perfect for a seasonal summer adventure, the hanging village of Al Habala is perched on a sandstone cliffside. It's named after the Arabic word for rope – habal – because in times gone by, the Qahtan tribe would access the village by a rope ladder. Now, the village is easily reached by cable car. Head to the top where you can visit the Habala Museum and learn more about the heritage of the region. .



Abha Cable Car

🕒 Afternoon

Shop for souvenirs in the souqs

Plan for an overnight stay in Khamis Mushait, with its spice and silver souqs, perfect for picking up a souvenir or two. It used to be a small agricultural market town, but it has expanded with more than a million people now residing in the city. All the exploring tired you out? Then head to the Bayat Hotel for relaxation and recuperation at the spa.

🕒 Day 3 Morning

Say yes to adventure

Make an early start and drive 120km north to Tanomah to go hiking, mountain bike riding, or even try your hand at some rock climbing with an expert guide. This picturesque location features natural waterfalls and fortified

stone houses, plus a reservoir where the adventurous can go kayaking.

🕒 Afternoon

Brave the heights

Take a drive to Al Soudah National Park where you can visit Saudi Arabia's tallest peak, Jabal Sawda. The journey to get there is magnificent in itself, with misty mountain roads and valleys saturated with juniper trees.

Take a cable car across to the historic 900-year-old village of Rijal Almaa where the intricate buildings look like little gingerbread houses perched on the mountainside - an experience that is so unique the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) named it one of the world's 'best tourism villages'. Or book a guided hike or camping trip to really make the most of your visit.



Rijal Almaa

WHERE TO EAT

Assalam Palace Hotel Revolving Restaurant (Saudi)

Located on the 10th floor and overlooking the city of Abha, there's a huge choice of buffet food. The restaurant rotates so you always have a different view and it's open for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Al Imam Muhamed Ibn Saud Assalam Palace Hotel, Abha, www.assalamabha.com, (+966 17 228 1000)

Craving Club (International)

A great spot for meat lovers, with options including T-bone steak, cowboy ribeye, applewood 'bb-back' ribs and beef short rib. There's a good selection for all the family, with seafood, pizza, pasta and burgers, plus a menu just for the kids.

King Fahed Street, Khamis Mushait, (+966 54 210 7964)

N Lounge (International)

Whether you're looking for a coffee, a slice of pizza, or some tasty shrimp, N Lounge offers diners superb views across to the Green Mountain.

8993 King Abdul Aziz Road, Abha, www.Nlounge.business.site (+966 55 718 2280)

WHERE TO STAY

Abha Palace Hotel

With great access to cable cars that traverse the city, the hotel on the edge of Lake Saad also provides fitness facilities including a gym, hot tub and indoor pool. There's even a bowling alley for extra entertainment.

Abha Al Jadidah, Abha, www.abhapalace.com.sa, (+966 17 229 4444)

Azd Hotel

Welcoming business visitors and tourists alike, Azd Hotel has comfortable rooms and is centrally located in the town centre. There's a hammam and massage facilities, plus a convenient minimarket.

King Faisal Road, Town Centre, Abha, (+966 17 238 8777)

Bayat Hotel

An excellent range of facilities including fitness centre, spa, sauna, steam room and indoor swimming pool. Dining options include an all-day international buffet at the Skypoint Restaurant overlooking the city, while the Asador restaurant offers delicious barbecue inspired by South America, Spain, Portugal, and France.

King Faisal, Khamis Mushait, www.bayatohotels.com, (+966 17 226 6666)

IF YOU ONLY DO ONE THING...

See the Flowerman Festival in Rijal Almaa

Every September, the Saudi Ministry of Culture presents a two-week festival dedicated to telling the stories of the Qahtani tribesmen and their ancient practice of decorating headwear with flowers and leaves.



NEARBY DESTINATIONS

Caves of Shada Mountain

Stunning granite caves that have been formed into ancient homes.

Raghadan Forest Park A little further north into the mountains of Al Baha, this beautiful forest features a 957-metre zipline.

TRAVEL TIME

From Dammam

Car: 13hr 56m; Plane: 2hr 5m

From Riyadh

Car: 9hr 59m; Plane: 1h 40m

From Jeddah

Car: 8hr 3m; Plane: 1h 20m

AL AHSA

Renowned for its lush green oasis, Al Ahsa offers a wealth of natural beauty, ideal for those with a thirst for adventure and discovery





Al Ahsa Oasis

Al Ahsa, sometimes called Al Hasa, is a beautiful part of Saudi Arabia, packed full of adventurous things to do and awe-inspiring places to visit. The area is the largest governorate in the Eastern Province and its major urban centre is Al-Hofuf. Al Ahsa is famous for being a protected UNESCO World Heritage site and the Guinness World Record holder of the largest self-contained oasis in the world. It is also the largest oasis for date production in the world. But why should it be on your travel list? Aside from the natural beauty of its 2.5 million date palms, there are heritage markets, craft visitor centres, history museums, extraordinary mosques, palaces and forts. Some might say this is the world's most exciting oasis destination – pay a visit and you'll soon agree.

ITINERARY

Day 1 **Morning:** **Go back in time**

If you're looking to quench your thirst for history, then Jawatha Mosque built by the Bani Abd al-Qays tribe should be high on your list. It is believed to be the earliest mosques in eastern Arabia, dating back nearly 1,400 years. Located around 12km northeast of Hofuf, the building has been restored in recent years, and while it isn't the biggest mosque, it more than makes up for that in terms of historic and cultural significance, and is well worth a visit.

Afternoon: **Enjoy the oasis**

Explore exactly what makes this place special by touring around the oasis in Al Ahsa's capital Hofuf. Take a trip to King Abdullah Environmental Park, a green area with fountains and fun things to do for all the family with playgrounds, games and a selection of dining spots. Make sure to try a khalasah date, popularly thought of as the best dates in the world.

Day 2 **Morning:** **Driving adventure**

Take a 4x4 vehicle just outside the city and you'll find the Yellow Lake, otherwise known as Asfar Lake. The water itself isn't yellow, but rather the edges are made up of striking sand dunes. The lake is home to plenty of bird life, including eagles, warblers and plovers. If watching our feathered friends isn't your thing, then you can take a kayak out onto the water for a relaxing way to unwind, or sit back and enjoy a picnic for lunch. If you fancy more of a drive, then continue on to Uqair, where you can see the Arabian Sea, walk along the beach and visit the historical fort and port.

Afternoon: **Potter around a palace**

Qasr Ibrahim, or Ibrahim Palace, is a domed castle that dates back to the Ottoman Empire and was captured by King Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud in the early

20th century. It showcases a mix of Islamic and military architectural styles, and has been painstakingly restored. It's also one of the places recognised on the UNESCO list as a site of cultural significance.

Day 3 **Morning:** **Head for heights**

It's time to get those hiking boots on with a trip to Al Qarah mountain. It's not a difficult climb up the 220-metre mountain, and once you reach the top the view across the oasis is worth the journey. You can also explore the canyons and caves of the area, forged by thousands of years of weathering and erosion. For those who want to understand more about the history of the area, the Land of Civilizations museum will suffice. Feeling creative? Pay a visit to the Dougha Handmade Pottery Factory (a 150-year old craft business) where you can have a go at traditional clay pot making.

Afternoon: **Go shopping in Souq Al Qaisariya**

No trip would be complete without collecting a souvenir or two for friends and family back home, and in the 400-plus shops of the 600-year-old Souq Al Qaisariya there is a lot of choice. Honoured with World Heritage status in 2018, the souq showcases everything from bargain trinkets to luxury leathers, prayer beads to abayas, incense and even antiques. Be sure to leave extra space in your luggage.



Rub' Al Khali Desert



Al Ahsa Souk

WHERE TO EAT

MED Restaurant (Levantine)

Mediterranean and Middle Eastern flavours make this restaurant one of the most popular. There are regular seasonal menus and food festivals, offering a variety of experiences. *InterContinental Al Ahsa, Al Malik Khaled Street, Al Hofuf, Al Ahsa, www.intercontinental.com, (+966 13 533 5555)*

AlKeet Restaurant (International)

This is a gem for seafood lovers and especially ones with a hearty appetite, as the portion sizes are generous. *Prince Naif Road, Al Hofuf, Al Ahsa, www.alkeet-restaurant.business.site, (+966 13 588 0087)*

Hasa Steak & Grill (American)

Get your grill on with a juicy steak at Hasa Steak & Grill, with dry aged meats, banging burgers and tasty skewers. *Prince Saud Bin Jalawi Road, Al Hofuf, Al Ahsa, (+966 55 500 5928)*

WHERE TO STAY

Al Koot Heritage Hotel

Family rooms are available in this charming property close to Al Hofuf's city. This hotel is ideal if you're looking for an authentic taste of the area. *King Khalid Road, Al Hofuf, www.booking.com, (+966 57 173 7078)*

InterContinental Al Ahsa

This 5-star hotel is ideally located in Al Hofuf, with great views of the oasis and four restaurants serving up international and local cuisines. If you're keeping fit then there is a gym and indoor pool. *Al Malik Khaled Street, Al Hofuf, Al Ahsa, www.intercontinental.com, (+966 13 533 5555)*

Somewhere Hotel

This relaxed hotel has plenty of facilities, featuring a spa, pool, and variety of restaurants and lounges. *King Saud Bin Abdulaziz Street, Al Mubarraz, Ash Sharqiyah, Al Ahsa, www.somewhere-hotels.com, (+966 13 535 5555)*

IF YOU ONLY DO ONE THING...

Explore the oasis Whether you choose to view it from on high at Al Qarah, wander through the lush green gardens and parks packed full of date palms, or visit one of the many naturally occurring springs, Al Ahsa is famous for its oasis and that has to be top of the list.

NEARBY DESTINATIONS

Empty Quarter (Rub' Al Khali Desert) Technically part of Al Ahsa governorate, it's very much off-the-beaten-track and you'll need to go with an expert tour group to see the vast, untouched desert landscapes. Day trip to the Tri-Cities. Explore Dhahran, Dammam and Khobar, from beach walks to city sights.

TRAVEL TIME

From Dammam
Car: 1hr 27; Plane: N/A
From Riyadh
Car: 3hr 18m; Plane: N/A
From Jeddah
Car: 13hr; Plane: 1h 55m

HAIL

Nestled between Mount Shammer to the north and Mount Salma to the south, steeped in history and with wildlife in abundance, Hail really is a sight to behold





Uqdah

Hail (Ha'il) province is located in northwest Saudi Arabia, with the region named after its largest city and provincial capital. Its history dates back thousands of years, with prehistoric rock art in the region tracked to Paleolithic times. As the area developed it became a popular stop-off on the camel caravan route and was the home of legendary Arab poet Hatim al-Tai, famed across the Middle East for his generosity.

Every evening on the Samra Mountain overlooking the city of Hail, a reproduction of his campfire is lit, which was traditionally used to welcome his guests.

Many of the most interesting heritage buildings across the province were constructed under the rule of the Rashid royal family, who reigned over the region until the unification of Saudi Arabia under Ibn Saud in the 1920s. Castles, fortresses and palaces can all be found in area, dating back hundreds of years.

The area is also home to some fascinating annual events, including the Hail Desert Life Festival which takes place in the Al Nafud desert every spring. Visitors can enjoy poetry events, market stalls with traditional produce

and heritage crafts, food pop-ups and shows that explain and celebrate life in the desert. If you're looking for something a little more high octane, the Hail International Rally takes place in December and is part of the FIA World Cup for Cross Country Rallies calendar. For the last few years it has also been a key location on the Dakar Rally circuit which has found a home in the Kingdom. The desert landscape set amongst picturesque mountains makes it an ideal location for rallying. Hail is also packed full of natural wonders, from wildlife and nature reserves to oases springing from the desert, rock formations and mountains. Whether it's heritage sites and historical marvels, or adventure-seeking dune bashing and shopping in the souqs, there's something to please everybody in Hail.

ITINERARY



Day 1

Morning

Get clued up on the history of Hail

Start in the Hail Museum to find out more about how the city was established and how the region has

changed. The tour will take you back to prehistoric times, with geology and rock inscriptions, through to the development of civilisation with art, tools and old artifacts.



Afternoon:

Visit the castles and forts

Spend time exploring the Aarif Fort, constructed by the Al Ali family in the 17th century. Its architecture is in traditional mudbrick style and there are great views across the city from the watchtower. You can also head to the ruins of Barzan Palace and the well-restored Qishlah Fortress, which is the largest mudbrick building of its kind in Hail.



Day 2

Morning:

Explore ancient rock art

Head north from the city of Hail to Jubbah. This incredible place was put on the UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Site list in 2002, as an area of significance because of its amazing Neolithic petroglyphs. The rock art and inscriptions of Jabal Umm Sinman date back at least 7,000 years.



Afternoon:

Shop in the souqs

Once back to the city, head to the town centre and visit the Hail Souq. Here you can pick up handcrafted souvenirs. Or if you really want to find a bargain, try the Hail Flea Market, where there's an eclectic mix of items.



Day 3

Morning:

Go dune bashing or camel trekking in the desert

Take a tour into the Al Nafud dunes – either by motorized vehicle or on the back of a camel. However you choose to explore, it's best to go with a guide who can show the most interesting spots, especially as it's a challenging landscape for novices.



Afternoon:

Pay homage to a hero

Visit the remains of the 6th century palace of Hatim Al Tai in the Shammar Mountains, famously mentioned in *One Thousand and One Nights*. The legendary poet's mud house is near to the town of Tuwarin, while the scenic route is also home to wildlife such as caracal and deer.

IF YOU ONLY DO ONE THING...

See the petroglyphs

The petroglyphs of Jabal Umm Sinman at Jubbah and Jabal Al Manjor, and Jabal Raat at Shuwaymis, are an intriguing glimpse back to ancient times. Take your pick, but seeing inscriptions from prehistoric times is truly memorable.

NEARBY DESTINATIONS

Al Khanafah Wildlife Sanctuary

Explore the sandstone rock formations and keep a look out for wildlife such as foxes, gazelles, vultures and rock doves.

Jibal Al-Rukkub Dramatic rock faces rising out of the desert. One for your photo collection.

TRAVEL TIME

From Dammam

Car: 9hr 32m; Plane: 1hr 45m

From Riyadh

Car: 6hr 1m; Plane: 1h 15m

From Jeddah

Car: 8hr 11m; Plane: 1h 20m



Ayada Museum

WHERE TO EAT

At-Turathy Restaurant (Saudi)

In a traditional mudbrick building in the town centre of Hail, this venue is packed full of historical artifacts. Seating is on traditional cushions on the floor, with the food a selection of local rice and meat dishes.

King Abdul Aziz Street, Hail,
(+966 16 535 0000)

Al-Marsaai (Saudi)

For fresh seafood, a stop to this restaurant for lunch or dinner should be on your agenda.

Prince Saad Street, Hail, (+966 13 894 5858)

The Palm's Coffee

With a gloriously spacious outdoor terrace, enjoy a wide selection of coffees and desserts with great views of the surrounding park.

Alsamra Park, Alkhuraymi, Hail,
(+966 53 351 0077)



Janien Cave

WHERE TO STAY

Millennium Hotel Hail

This modern luxury hotel complex has a pool, spa, fitness centre, and business facilities for convenience.

Hail University Complex, North Hail City Road, Hail, www.millenniumhotels.co, (+966 16 538 6111)

Holiday Villa Hotel

This accommodation has well-appointed rooms, an on-site restaurant and convenient location.

King Saud Road, Hail, www.booking.com

Aronani Hotel

A popular hotel with business travellers, the Aronani is also comfortable and affordable.

King Faisal Bin Abdulaziz Road, Al Aziziyah, Hail, www.facebook.com/aronanihotelhail, (+966 16 531 4999)

TABUK

The ethereal beauty of this mountainous region is the stuff of fairy tales with wild wadis and lush vegetation, contrasted against fascinating sandstone tombs



Located in the northwest of the Kingdom with a rich history dating back more than 5,000 years, Tabuk is a stunning site in Saudi Arabia with loads to see and do. Geographically there are spectacular valleys and mountains, as well as deserts, springs, coral reefs and white sandy beaches. While in the capital city you can visit historical sites and museums, as well as the Hijaz Railway Station and Tabuk Castle. Venture outside of the city and experience Saudi's natural beauty in full force, exploring Wadi Al Disah, Moses Springs and Maghaer Shuaib. Looking into the future, Tabuk is also home to the megaproject NEOM, set to be the world's first cognitive and smart city that will also be home to the GCC's first outdoor ski destination, which is currently under construction.

ITINERARY

Day 1 Morning:

Explore traditional Tabuk

Start off your trip to Tabuk by exploring the town itself. And if you're looking for traditional souks, make your way to the old quarter, where you'll find several, including the must-visit Souk Twaheen, where you can discover trinkets, textiles and more to pick up, with speciality buys including patterned rugs and goat hair tent covers. Once you've had your shopping fill, head to the Museum of Tabuk to get a deeper insight into the area and learn all about the rich heritage of the area.

Afternoon:

Take a trip to Tabuk Castle

One of the most famous landmarks in Tabuk, you need to visit this fortress. The castle dates back to 1559 and is now a museum with loads of artefacts on display showcasing the region's history including references to Ibn Battuta and the pilgrims who stopped in on their way to Mecca and Medina. There are two mosques inside, too.

Day 2 Morning :

Seek adventure at Maghaer Shuaib

Become Indiana Jones for the day and take a trip back in time with a visit to the ancient carved tombs of Maghaer Shuaib. Situated in the red desert 225km west of Tabuk, the haunting facades and poky tombs carved into



the sandstone rock is an experience not to be missed. This is where Prophet Moses lived after he fled Egypt, and has long been a resting point for pilgrims.

Afternoon: Visit the Moses Springs

In the Magna area, on the border of the Hejaz region, you'll find the 12 Springs of the Prophet Moses – an ethereal oasis where natural springs flow under swaying date palms. Not just a pretty space, it's also steeped in history and is said to be where the Prophet Moses came to drink after he arrived in Magna from Egypt.

Day 3 All day: Wadi Al Disah

Set in the Prince Mohammed Bin Salman Natural Reserve, southwest of Tabuk, is Wadi Al Disah – a stunning valley famed for its mountainous terrain, green palms, rushing streams and hidden hot springs. Described as a mix of the Grand Canyon and Monument Valley in the USA for its magnificent rock formations, it's also home to relics that date back to the Nabatean Empire – as you explore the reserve ancient inscriptions etched onto cave walls are uncovered all over the valley.



Wadi Al Disah



Maghaer Shuaib



12 Springs of the Prophet

WHERE TO EAT

Al Qariyah Al Turathiyah (Saudi)

If you're after traditional Saudi Arabian food, look no further than this authentic restaurant. Dishes include mandi, camel meat, mezze and more.

King Khalid Road, (+966 56 120 6666)

Falafel Pie (Saudi)

The clue is in the name with this one, as this cheap and cheerful street food spot specialises in falafel. Choose local by digging into a saj wrap stuffed with the chickpea snack, dressed with tahini.

King Abdullah Road, (+966 14 423 2200)

Jandofly (Saudi)

Jandofly is one of the best places to find fresh seafood in Tabuk, and it's popular with visitors and locals alike.

King Abdulaziz Road, (+966 24 442 4442)

WHERE TO STAY

Hilton Garden Inn Tabuk

The hotel boasts a gym and outdoor pool, plus it's near shopping centres, restaurants and Tabuk Castle.

Prince Sultan Road, www.hilton.com, (+966 14 422 6116).

Holiday Inn Tabuk

Family-friendly, the hotel has an outdoor pool, billiards, table tennis, and a fitness centre to keep everyone entertained.

Prince Fahd bin Sultan Avenue, www.ihg.com, (+966 14 422 1212)

Swiss Inn Tabuk Hotel

This hotel is close to the airport, plus it has a fitness centre, pool and business facilities.

Prince Sultan Road, www.booking.com, (+966 14 423 1770).

IF YOU ONLY DO ONE THING...

Tayeb Al Ism

Just 15km from Magna is Tayeb Al Ism, a stunning natural site comprised of a valley of steep granite stones next to the turquoise waters of the Gulf of Aqaba. You can also explore on foot by hiking inside the valleys.



NEARBY DESTINATIONS

Hegra The stunning archaeological site in AlUla is under four hours drive away.

Al-Khunfah Natural Reserve

Covering nearly 20,000 square kilometres this protected nature reserve is on the edge of Nafud desert and is home to plenty of birds including lappet-faced vultures, sandgrouse, rock doves and houbara bustards.

TRAVEL TIME

From Dammam

Car: 16hr 20m; Plane: 2hr 10m

From Riyadh

Car: 12hr 27m; Plane: 1h 50m

From Jeddah

Car: 8hr 20m; Plane: 1h 25m



Red Sea Yanbu

Nestled on the shores of the Red Sea, on Saudi Arabia's west coast, the port of Yanbu is growing increasingly popular with tourists – especially those who love to dive. White sandy beaches hug the coastline, while there are loads of fascinating dive sites to explore with hundreds of beautiful fish to spot. Split into two distinct cities – the new city in the south, and the old town in the north – Yanbu boasts historic buildings, museums and souks, including the home of Colonel Thomas Edward Lawrence – otherwise known as Lawrence of Arabia. The pace of life is more leisurely than in other cities in Saudi Arabia, and with history, water sports and lush parks there's a lot to enjoy in Yanbu.

ITINERARY

🕒 Day 1

Morning:

Check out the fountains at Yanbu Lake Park

This family-friendly park is home to several fountains and open spaces where you can see plenty of birds and wildlife. It's a popular place for families to go picnicking, as well as for taking a jog or stroll. Yanbu Lake is one of the largest man-made lakes in Saudi Arabia and has an impressive amount of greenery and flora – there are even a few waterfalls.



Afternoon:

Sunset stroll along the Corniche

Winding along the coastline of Yanbu, this walkway is lined with palm trees and is an ideal place for a stroll at any time of day, but for the best views head along at sunset and take in that beautiful golden glow.

🕒 Day 2

Morning:

Explore Mount Radwa

As the highest point in the Al Nakhil mountain range, Mount Radwa is a popular attraction to the northeast of Yanbu. The jagged peaks make for stunning photos, while hikers love exploring the winding paths. The area is well known for its honey and wildlife – wolves, lynx, tigers and ibex all live in the vicinity, so keep your eyes peeled.



Afternoon:

Visit T.E. Lawrence's house

The author of *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* and the inspiration for *Lawrence of Arabia*, this residence in the Historic Quarter that was formerly the home of T.E. Lawrence has been restored as a museum. Lawrence lived in Yanbu from 1915 to 1916 and it has since been renovated to remember the British

IF YOU ONLY DO ONE THING...

Go diving in the Red Sea

A dreamy location for diving, Yanbu is perched right on the coast of the Red Sea, so don't miss your chance to explore the ocean. Not a diver? Try snorkelling instead.

NEARBY DESTINATIONS

Badr Badr is about an hour's drive away and is home to the historic Badr battlefields.

Ar Rayyis A small coastal town on the Red Sea.

TRAVEL TIME

From Dammam

Car: 13hr 38m; Plane: 2hr 10m

From Riyadh

Car: 10hr 17m; Plane: 1hr 40m

From Jeddah

Car: 3h 18m; Plane: 50m

army officer's story. Once you've soaked in the history here, take a stroll around the old town and admire the buildings made of coral and the maze-like alleyways.

🕒 Day 3

Morning:

Go fishing at Yanbu Waterfront

Ready to make the most of the Red Sea, but prefer to be above the water? You can try fishing at Yanbu Waterfront, and you may well be treated to bird sightings too. There's also a picturesque beach if you want to just flop down and read your book, or go for a relaxing stroll on the sand.



Afternoon:

Dive the wreck of SS Iona

If you have your PADI, Yanbu is an amazing place to go diving and explore the Red Sea. There are several popular sites around the area including Seven Sisters – famed for its hammerhead sharks – as well as Abu Galawa, an island surrounded by coral grottoes and schools of barracuda. For something fascinating and fun, dive to the wreck of the SS Iona – a living reef.



WHERE TO EAT

Al Marsah Seafood (Saudi)

Considering it's on the shores of the Red Sea, you'd expect Yanbu to have plenty of tasty fish restaurants. This seafood restaurant serves fresh catch from its home near the night market.
Al Sayadah, Yanbu, (+966 54 429 1010)

Najil Arab Restaurant (International)

A family restaurant that specialises in seafood, but also serves a menu packed with international cuisine, from mezze to Chinese food.
Omar Bin Abdulaziz Street, Yanbu, facebook.com/NajilArabYanbu, (+966 54 661 2882)

Patch Burger (International)

Dig into tasty burgers, fried chicken sandwiches, loaded fries and more at this popular burger restaurant.
King Abdullah Road, Yanbu, www.patch-restaurant.business.site

WHERE TO STAY

Mövenpick Hotel & Resort Yanbu

This Yanbu outpost of the popular hotel chain has superb views of the Red Sea. There's also a swimming pool, terrace, sauna and seafood restaurant to check out.
Al-Mahar Island, Yanbu, www.movenpick.com, (+966 14 393 3333)

Novotel Yanbu

The Novotel is set right next to the beach along the Prince Abdelmajid Bin Abdulaziz Corniche. The four-star resort is conveniently located just ten minutes from the airport.
Prince Abdelmajid Bin Abdulaziz Corniche, Yanbu, www.novotel.accor.com, (+966 14 398 0000)

Radisson Blu Hotel Yanbu

Located on Al-Bahr beach, this seaside spot is a top choice for active travellers as there's a pool, tennis courts and beach. to take advantage of.
King Abdallah Bin Abdel Aziz Road, Yanbu, www.radissonhotels.com, (+966 14 322 3888)



Al-Hada mountain

With fragrant roses, lush forests, soaring mountains and sweeping valleys, Taif is a beautiful place to visit. The fifth largest city in Saudi Arabia, Taif is unofficially known as the summer capital, thanks to its pleasant climate. It's found nestled in the Sarawat Mountain range and is famed for its stunning views and agriculture, as figs, grapes, pomegranate and honey are all cultivated here. Particularly well known for its roses, Taif is also known as the City of Roses, with the most famous type being the *rosa damascena tringintipetala*, so be sure to pick up some rose water or oil when you visit.

ITINERARY

Day 1 Morning:
Take a trip up Al-Hada Mountain
 Taif is a top spot for adrenaline seekers and nature-lovers. While you're there don't miss a visit to the Al-Hada Mountain, and hop aboard the 4.5km cable car ride that takes you to the top where you can marvel at the stunning views across the Sarawat Mountain range.

Afternoon:
Go zip-lining at Al-Hada
 If you've travelled all the way to Al-Hada you might as well make a day of it - and once you've explored on foot it's time to test your nerves and whizz along on a zip-wire for a thrill-seeking, bird's-eye view of the region. (+966-591442982)

Day 2 Morning:
Trek up Jebel Daka
 Keen hikers should take a trip further out to the highest peak in the area. Jebel Daka lies about 20km from Taif town, and is the fifth highest mountain in the Kingdom, reaching around 2,900 metres above sea level. Those who love climbing are in luck as it's a popular place for adventure seekers, while those who are less brave can take it easier with a drive, which offers just as spectacular vistas to view.

Afternoon:
Check out the fruit gardens of Ta'if
 The town of Ash-Shafa is 20km from the city of Taif and only 200km from Jeddah. The area is abundant with fruit

gardens and orchards showcasing a colourful display of pomegranates, grapes, cactus fruit and figs all bursting with flavour. Be sure to try the local produce while you're there.

Day 3 Morning
Haggle at Souk Al-Balad
 Fancy bagging yourself a bargain? You'll find spices, honey, textiles, gold, silver and more at Souk Al-Balad. Don't forget to barter - it's expected - to get a top deal. For high street brands and family shops visit Taif International Mall or Jourri Mall for a shopping trip. But if its something more authentic you are after, take a trip to Sharif Museum to peruse its interesting private collection of artefacts.

Afternoon:
Saiysad National Park
 Whether travelling alone or with family, this nature reserve is a great place to get lost for a while. Lush green trees and wild streams make for a super backdrop in which to get back to nature, while there are numerous kids' play areas dotted about to keep the whole gang entertained.

IF YOU ONLY DO ONE THING...

Visit a rose plantation

Taif is famed for its roses, with around 900 local rose farms producing more than 300 million flowers each spring – the most famous of which is a 30-petalled Damask rose, that's used in luxury perfumes.

April is the prime time to visit, when a corner of Al Rudaf Park transforms into a rose village., and The Al Gadhi Rose Factory - one of the oldest and largest in Taif – is also open to the public.

NEARBY DESTINATIONS

Al Baha This green, lush province is filled with forests to explore and is a top place for hiking and camping.

Mecca Islam's holiest city is just over an hour's drive away.

TRAVEL TIME

From Dammam

Car: 11hr 51m; Plane: 1hr 52m

From Riyadh

Car: 7hr 52m; Plane: 1hr 28m

From Jeddah

Car: 1hr 55m; Plane: 45m



WHERE TO EAT

Mabshoor Taif (Saudi)

So popular is this local restaurant that people travel especially to Taif just to enjoy the sumptuous kebabs and juicy koftas it serves. The warm and filling meat offerings are the perfect snack to enjoy on a not-so-rare chilly night in Taif.

Al Rayyan, Taif, (+966 127377776)

Khayal Restaurant (Turkish)

Khayal is known for its delicious Turkish cuisine and tasty grills. It's open all day, so whether you're after a breakfast pie or kebab for dinner, you'll be well looked after.

Ashuhada Aljanubiyah, www.khayalrest.com, (+966 92 000 2223)

Mirage (Indian)

This Indian restaurant has heaps of vegetarian and vegan options to try, all you need to do is choose your spice level. How hot can you go?

Al Sadad (+966 54 968 3365)

WHERE TO STAY

Awaliv International Hotel

Ideally located with easy access onto the highway towards Jeddah and Mecca, the Awaliv International Hotel is a popular stay in Taif. It's also home to a health club with direct access to Heart Mall

Abu Baker As Siddiq Street, www.awalivhotels.com, (+966 12 737 5555)

InterContinental Taif

Found in the Hejaz Mountains, this global brand, five-star hotel has 179 rooms, indoor and outdoor swimming pools, plus tennis courts, gym and a special kids' area.

Airport Road, Hawiyah Street, www.ihg.com, (+966 12 750 5050)

Le Méridien Al Hada

Located on the highest peak of Al-Hada, this 111-room mountainside hotel has city views, a swimming pool and five restaurants and cafes, making it a favourite of the Saudi government who escape here during the scorching heat of the summer.

Alhada Ring Road, www.marriott.com, (+966 12 754 1400)

AL BAHHA

Located on the Sarawat mountain range, the fertile lands of Al Baha produces dates, honey and an abundance of fruit





AlKhalif

This lush, green province sits at 2,500m above sea level and is home to stunning forests and beautiful mountain ranges, making it a top tourist destination. Found on the Sarawat Mountain range the province has six cities – Al-Baha, Baljurashi, Al-Mandaq, Al-Makhwah and Al-Qilwa.

As one of the smallest provinces in the Kingdom it's not difficult to get around, and you can really make the most of your time here. Expect loads of greenery, wadis and winding valleys to explore, so if you're a nature-lover you'll be in your element in Al Baha, plus the moderate temperature makes it the perfect place to hike and camp. The province is famed for honey as well as agriculture – veg, grains, fruit and dates as well as grapes, grapefruits, lemons, oranges and pomegranates. With 1,001 stone qasbah lookout towers Al Baha is also steeped in history so there's plenty to see and do when you get there.

ITINERARY

Day 1 Morning:

Grab a bargain at Al Baha Souk

This market is one of the most traditional souks in the area, so it's worth heading along on a Tuesday to check it out. Market stalls sell arts, crafts and fresh produce including herbs and honey. If you're looking for more mainstream shopping you can visit Ghunaim Mall, which has a range of high street shops and boutiques.

Day 1 Afternoon: Visit Khairah Forest Park

Lace up your hiking books and head to this lush park, which is charming for a stroll around, or camping if you want



Al Khub

to stay longer. While you're there don't miss the famous Khairah waterfall, which will make for a top Insta shot.

Day 2 Morning: Drive to Dhee Ayn

Dhee Ayn, which is also known as the marble village, was originally built as a citadel. Situated on top of a hill, it is surrounded by banana plantations and is a source of fresh spring water (Dhee Ayn means 'of spring'). The town itself is made up of markets, houses and alleyways built on a white marble outcrop. The village dates back around 400 years and has been abandoned since the 1980s. The drive alone is magnificent, taking you through stunning valleys and past ruined towers, plus while you're there you should swing by Al Malad Dam.

Day 2 Afternoon: Set up camp and stargaze at Raghadan Forest Park

This super park is a top spot for families as there's heaps to do. Set atop the Sarawat Mountain range, there are stunning views of the Tihama plains

– you might even spot a baboon or two along the hiking trails. There's a children's park to keep the family entertained while there are also cafés to stop at if you need to refuel. It's a popular place to camp, so take warm clothing and pitch your tent ready for an evening of stargazing in the clear night skies.

Day 3 Morning: Zip-line in the forest

After a night in the forest you'll wake up bright and early ready for the day. The forest is an ideal place for a hike, but if you're after an adrenaline rush don't miss the zip-line where you'll fly through the sky and take in the amazing views.

Day 3 Afternoon: Explore AlKhalaf and AlKhalif historic villages

These archaeological gems have been restored to preserve their heritage and traditional architecture. You'll find ancient Islamic inscriptions on the basalt stones, for a taste of the history of the region.



Eleqa Traditional Village



Al-Malad Heritage Village



Raghdan Park

WHERE TO EAT

Abu Al Khair Al Ramadi (Saudi)

One of the most prominent restaurants in Al-Baha serving authentic Saudi food it's renowned for its signature breakfast, serving up Saudi fame and beans
Prince Muhammad Bin Abdulaziz road, (+966 17 227 0827)

Fifth Season (Saudi)

Classic Arabic dishes and plenty of mezze are served at this chilled-out restaurant on King Saud Road.
King Saud Road, Town Center, Al Baha, @fifthseasonksa, (+966 17 724 0444)

ORFA Restaurant (Syrian)

Arabic dishes are served at this casual, family-friendly spot.
Alnuzhah, (+966 55 022 1500)

WHERE TO STAY

Capital 309 Al-Faleh Hotel

This hotel in Raghdadan has a pool, fitness centre and a restaurant.
King Abdulaziz Rd, Raghdadan, Al Baha, www.oyorooms.com, (+966 800 814 6590)

National Park Hotel

This luxury hotel has 62 rooms, as well as two restaurants, both an outdoor and indoor pool and a gym.
Baljurashi, (+966 17 722 2273)

Saf Hotel

A simple hotel with a restaurant, fitness centre and garden, with accommodation including family rooms, twin rooms and suites.
Baljurashi, (+966 17 722 2000)

IF YOU ONLY DO ONE THING...

Dhee Ayn village

Don't miss a trip to this fascinating abandoned village. For the ultimate experience visit at sunrise or sunset to see the white marble walls glow in the golden light.

NEARBY DESTINATIONS

Taif The province of Taif lies to the north and is particularly famous for roses, grapes, figs, honey and pomegranate.

Bisha To the East is Bisha, which is famous for its date palms.

Al-Qunfuda On the west is Al-Qunfuda, which lies on shore of the Red Sea if you fancy some diving.

TRAVEL TIME

From Dammam

Car: 12h 35min; Plane: 1h 45min

From Riyadh

Car: 8hr 30min; Plane: 1hr 30min

From Jeddah

Car: 4hr 45min; Plane: 55min

JAZAN

It may be small, but the spectacular natural beauty of this region on the Red Sea coast makes it a must-see on any travel itinerary



Jazan is the second smallest region in Saudi Arabia after Al Baha. It stretches 300km along the Red Sea coast, while the Farasan Islands, an archipelago in the Red Sea, is just an hour away by boat. The Farasan Islands – Saudi Arabia’s first conservation area – is a must visit for nature-lovers, and there’s the Sarawat Mountain Range and Alhazoun Forest on the list to explore. The region – one of the hottest areas in the country – is also known for growing coffee beans, barley, wheat, apples, bananas, grapes, mangos, plums and papayas.

ITINERARY

Day 1 Morning Go diving

As you’re staying right on the stunning Red Sea you should definitely go diving in Jazan. Get ready to be wowed by gorgeous underwater scenes, colourful fish and bright coral formations. You might also be lucky enough to spot dugongs, manta rays, sea turtles and more. Don’t dive? Grab a snorkel and explore the clear waters from the shallows.

Afternoon: Visit the beach

After all that splashing around it’s time to chill out. There are plenty of scenic beaches to explore, have a stroll and dip your toes into the sea. Al Muwasem beach in the south or Al Shuaqaiq

beach in the north are particularly popular with families, and there are water sports, boat rides, fishing trips and seaside cafés to check out.

Day 2 Morning: A day trip to the Farasan Islands

Ready for an adventure? Take an hour-long boat ride to the Farasan Islands for the day. Explore the white sandy beaches and beautiful mangroves to see loads of birds including pink-backed pelicans, red-billed tropics, white-eyed gulls, osprey, sooty falcons and flamingo. Al-Qandal mangrove forest is an ideal spot for snapping pics of the wildlife, too, you might even glimpse a rare Farasan Island gazelle. Once you’ve explored the islands on foot you can hop in the water to have a go at snorkelling and see some super marine life, such as the parrot fish, for which the area is famed.

Afternoon: Looking for a spot of history?

Visit the sandstone Al Qassar Village, which is said to date back to Roman times, for an insight into Jazan’s history, while there’s a house made entirely of coral, too. The beautiful Najdi Mosque is also worth a visit. Round off the day with an evening of stargazing.

Day 3 Morning: Go for a hike

Active visitors will want to don their

walking gear and head off for a hike. The scenery is spectacular and you’ll be able to enjoy stunning views while you explore. Hike in the Faiifa Mountains, Wadi Lajab or Jabal Al Qahar – you’ll be spoilt with the landscape at each.

Afternoon: Step back in time

Jazan has a rich history, with some artefacts uncovered there dating back to the Bronze Age. If you’re fascinated by the past then a trip to one of Jazan’s museums or forts is a must. First up there’s the Dr Ali Mohammed Awaji Museum that has pots, tools, vases and more dating back thousands of years. The privately owned Ibrahim Moftah Museum also contains loads of historic artifacts, while the Zayla’l Maritime Museum is one of the most important natural history museums in the region. There are also two intriguing Ottoman forts that were built in the 16th century, so there’s loads to explore if you’re a history buff.

IF YOU ONLY DO ONE THING...

Visit the Farasan Islands

Only three of the 84 islands are permanently inhabited – the rest are a protected marine sanctuary so expect an abundance of wildlife and birds, lush green mangroves and white sandy beaches.

NEARBY DESTINATIONS

Half Moon Bay Take a day trip to the beautiful nearby beach resort in neighbouring Khobar.

Faiifa A must-visit while in Jazan is the stunning mountain range known as “the neighbours of the moon”.

TRAVEL TIME

From Dammam
Car: 16hr 20m; Plane: 2hr 10m
From Riyadh
Car: 12hr 27m; Plane: 1h 50m
From Jeddah
Car: 8hr 20m; Plane: 1h 25m



Al Muwasem



Farasan Islands

WHERE TO EAT

Happy Times Fish Restaurant (Saudi)

Tasty, fresh seafood is served in this family-friendly restaurant in Jazan. Grilled fish and shrimp are the specialities, plus there's a range of mezze to share too.

King Fahd Road, Alqal'a, Jazan, (+966 55 776 7712)

Al Ma'Ali Restaurant (Saudi)

Searching for traditional Saudi cuisine, look no further than Al Ma'Ali, a popular family restaurant serving a great selection of classic dishes.

North Corniche, Jazan, (+966 17 322 7777)

Taste of Spices (Indian)

An Indian restaurant with a menu packed with traditional dishes. The restaurant is set right next to the Red Sea so has nice views, plus there's a dedicated family area upstairs.

North Corniche Park, Jazan, (+966 50 282 7430)

WHERE TO STAY

Courtyard by Marriott Jazan

This modern hotel attracts both business people and tourists and can



Traditional food

be found near the downtown area, just a short car journey from the airport. It's directly connected to Al Rashid Mall and has 129 clean and contemporary rooms. There's a large indoor pool, gym and whirlpool plus a restaurant and café to refuel at.

Al Riyadh Road, Jazan, www.marriott.com, (+966 17 312 9999)

Novotel Jazan

Looking for a sea view? This hotel has a range of rooms and suites, plus four restaurants to choose from. There's a pool plus a fitness centre and spa facilities – which have separate areas for me and women, as well as an air-

conditioned kids' play area.

King Fahd Bin Abdul Aziz Road, Alqal'a, Jazan, www.novotel.accor.com, (+966 17 315 0000)

Radisson Blu Resort Jazan

This coastal resort hotel is set right next to the Red Sea, but is also handily located near the city centre, meaning you get the best of both worlds. The hotel has 150 rooms and suites, as well as a gym, sauna, massage rooms and outdoor pool, while there's also a kids' pool and play area.

Makkah-Corniche Roundabout, Waterfront, Jazan, www.radissonhotels.com, (+966 17 323 9200)

DIRECTORY

AL AHSA

ALKEET RESTAURANT (International)

Prince Naif Road, Al Hofuf, Al Ahsa,
www.alkeet-restaurant.business.site,
(+966 13 588 0087)

MED RESTAURANT (Levantine)

InterContinental Al Ahsa, Al Malik
Khaled Street, Al Hofuf, Al Ahsa,
www.intercontinental.com,
(+966 13 533 5555)

HASA STEAK & GRILL (American)

Prince Saud Bin Jalawi Road, Al Hofuf,
Al Ahsa, @hasa_steak_grill,
(+966 55 500 5928)

AL KHOOT HERITAGE HOTEL

King Khalid Road, Al Hofuf,
www.booking.com, (+966 57 173 7078)

INTERCONTINENTAL AL-AHSA

Al Malik Khaled Street, Al Hofuf, Al
Ahsa, intercontinental.com (+966 13
533 5555)

SOMEWHERE HOTEL

King Saud Bin Abdulaziz Street, Al
Mubarraz, Ash Sharqiyah, Al Ahsa,
www.somewhere-hotels.com,
(+966 13 535 5555)

AL BAHA

ABU AL KHAIR AL RAMADI (Saudi)

Prince Muhammad Bin Abdulaziz road,
(+966 17 227 0827)

CAPITAL 309 AL-FALEH HOTEL

King Abdulaziz Rd, Raghadan, Al Baha,
www.oyorooms.com, (+966 800 814
6590)

FIFTH SEASON (Saudi)

King Saud Road, Town Center, Al Baha,
@fifthseasonksa, (+966 17 724 0444)

NATIONAL PARK HOTEL

Baljurashi, (+966 17 722 2273)

ORFA RESTAURANT (Syrian)

Alnuzhah, (+966 55 022 1500)

SAF HOTEL

Baljurashi, (+966 17 722 2000)

ALULA

CIRCOLO (Italian)

Oasis Square, AlJadidah District, AlUla,
@circolo.pizza (+966 53 335 3201)

MARAYA SOCIAL (International)

Maraya, AlUla, www.marayasocial.com,
(+966 50 876 7166)

PINK CAMEL PASTRY BOUTIQUE

AlUla (+966 59 040 0902)

CANYON RV PARK

AlUla, www.gathern.co

GATHERN ACCOMMODATIONS

AlUla, www.gathern.co

HABITAS ALULA

Ashar Valley, AlUla, www.ourhabitas.
com/alula, (+966 14 821 3900)

SAHARY ALULA RESORT

Sahary AlUla Resort, AlUla, www.
saharyalularesort.com, (+966 55 105
3222)

SHADEN RESORT

Hail Street, Saq, AlUla, www.accor.com,
(+966 50 604 3344)

ASEER

ASSALAM PALACE HOTEL (Saudi)

Al Imam Muhamed Ibn Saud Assalam
Palace Hotel, Abha, www.assalamabha.
com, (+966 17 228 1000)

CRAVING CLUB (International)

King Fahed Street, Khamis Mushait,
(+966 54 210 7964)

N LOUNGE (International)

8993 King Abdul Aziz Road, Abha.
www.nlounge.business.site, (+966 55
718 2280)

ABHA PALACE HOTEL

Abha Al Jadidah, Abha,
www.abhapalace.com.sa, (+966 17 229
4444)

AZD HOTEL

King Faisal Road, Town Centre, Abha,
(+966 17 238 8777)

BAYAT HOTEL

King Faisal, Khamis Mushait,
www.bayathotels.com, (+966 17 226
6666)

DAMMAM

FAYROUZ LEBANESE (Levantine)

Sheraton Dammam Hotel & Convention
Centre, 1st Street, Dammam,
www.marriott.com, (+966 13 834 5555)

HERITAGE VILLAGE (Saudi)

King Abdullah Park, www.heritage-
village.com/sa, (+966 55 843 2232).

MAHARAJA BY VINEET (Indian)

Mövenpick Hotel Al Khobar, Prince
Turkey Street, Al Khobar, www.
movenpick.com, (+966 13 898 4999)

BRAIRA DAMMAM HOTEL

Ash Shati Ash Sharqi, Dammam,
www.brairahotels.com, (+966 13 834
8313)

KEMPINSKI AL OTHMAN HOTEL

3266 Custodian of Two Holy Mosques
Road, Al Khobar, www.hyatt.com, (+966
13 331 1234)

MOVENPICK BEACH RESORT

Half Moon Bay Road Aziziyah, Al
Khobar, www.movenpick.com, (+966 13
849 2999)

SHERATON DAMMAM HOTEL

1st Street, Dammam, www.marriott.
com, (+966 13 834 5555)

WYNDHAM GARDEN HOTEL

21st Street Al Adama District, Dammam,
www.wyndhamhotels.com, (+966 13
839 8700)

DIRIYAH

DIM LIGHT RESTAURANT (Saudi)

Al Faisaliyah, Ad Diriyah, (+966 50 276
0001)

ECLAT (Desserts)

Al Khuzama, Ad Diriyah, (@eclat_saudi)

CROWNE PLAZA RIYADH

Imam Saud Ibn Abdul Aziz Road, Raidah Digital City, Riyadh, www.crowneplaza.com, (+966 11 813 1313)

RADISSON BLU, RIYADH

7826 Umro Adhamry Street, Diplomatic Quarter, Riyadh, www.radissonhotels.com, (+966 11 297 9400)

RITZ-CARLTON RIYADH

AlHada Area, Mekkah Road, Riyadh, www.ritzcarlton.com, (+966 11 802 8020)

JAL AL WADI

2137 King Faisal Road, Ad Diriyah, (+966 50 115 8165)

KAEC

AL SAFEER (Saudi)

Beach Walk, Bay La Sun, KAEC, (+966 50 000 0088)

BERT'S CAFE (International)

Bay La Sun, KAEC, (+966 56 361 1895)

BHAR RESTAURANT (Saudi)

Beach Walk, Bay La Sun, KAEC, (+966 50 000 0088)

BISTRO (International)

Royal Greens Golf and Country Club, Al Murooj, KAEC, www.royalgreens.net, (+966 12 422 7800)

CASPER & GAMBINI'S (Italian)

Views Hotel & Residence, Bay La Sun, KAEC, www.casperandgambinis.com, (+966 55 067 3388)

FIREGRILL (Mexican)

Beach Walk, KAEC, www.firegrill.com.sa, (+966 55 471 2910)

SEASONS (International)

Bay La Sun Hotel & Marina, KAEC, (+966 12 510 6400)

STEAK HOUSE (American)

Bay La Sun, KAEC, (+966 11 243 9018)

BAY LA SUN HOTEL & MARINA

Bay La Sun, www.baylasunhotel.com, (+966 12 510 6400)

LAGOONA ESCAPE

Lagoona Reserve, @lagunaescape_kaec, (+966 56 270 9212)

OCEANAN RESORT

Bay La Sun, KAEC, www.oceana-resort.hotels-saudi-arabia.com, (+966 56 932 4275)

VIEWS HOTEL & RESIDENCES

Bay La Sun, www.viewsresidences.com, (+966 12 510 5888)

HAIL

AL-MARSAAI (Saudi)

Prince Saad Street, Hail (+966 13 894 5858)

AT-TURATHY RESTAURANT (Saudi)

King Abdul Aziz Street, Hail, (+966 16 535 0000)

THE PALM'S COFFEE

Alsamra Park, Alkhuraymi, Hail (+966 53 351 0077)

MILLENIUM HOTEL

Hail, www.millenniumhotels.com (+966 16 538 6111)

HOLIDAY VILLA HOTEL

King Saud Road, Hail, www.booking.com

ARONANI HOTEL

King Faisal Bin Abdulaziz Road, Al Aziziyah, Hail, (+966 16 531 4999)

JAZAN

HAPPY TIMES FISH RESTAURANT (saudi)

King Fahd Road, Alqal'a, Jazan, (+966 55 776 7712)

AL MA'ALI RESTAURANT (Saudi)

North Corniche, Jazan, (+966 17 322 7777)

TASTE OF SPICES (Indian)

North Corniche Park, Jazan, (+966 50282 7430)

COURTYARD BY MARRIOTT

Al Riyadh Road, Jazan, www.marriott.com, (+966 17 312 9999)

NOVOTEL JAZAN

King Fahd Bin Abdul Aziz Road, Jazan, www.novotel.accor.com, (+966 17 315 0000)

RADISSON BLU JAZAN

Makkah-Corniche Roundabout, Waterfront, Jazan, www.radissonhotels.com, (+966 17 323 9200)

JEDDAH

ABU ZAID (Levantine)

Various locations including, www.abuzaidrest.com, (+966 92 000 2670)

CENTRAL FISH MARKET (Saudi)

Al Kurnaysh Br Rd, Al-Baghdadiyah Al-Gharbiyah, Jeddah, (+966 54 808 8630)

FUL 21 (American)

Al Rawdah, Jeddah, @ful21.sa, (+966 56 220 2121)

KUURU (Nikkei)

Al Malik Road, Al Khalidiyyah, Jeddah, www.kuururestaurant.com, (+966 53 250 0123)

RASOI BY VINEET (Indian)

Mövenpick Hotel Tahlia Jeddah, (+966 12 213 2000)

SALTZ (International)

The Ritz-Carlton Jeddah, Al Hamra District, Jeddah, www.ritzcarlton.com, (+966 12 231 4444)

SKY LOUNGE (International)

Rosewood Jeddah, Ash Shati, www.rosewoodhotels.com/en/Jeddah, (+966 55 031 3255)

SHANG PALACE (Chinese)

Ash Shati, Jeddah, www.shangri-la.com/Jeddah, (+966 12 696 8888)

TAIBAT AL HIJAZ (Levantine)

Various locations including Prince Sultan Road, Jeddah, (+966 12 6060 1474)

ASSILA, A LUXURY COLLECTION HOTEL, JEDDAH

Prince Mohammed Bin Abdulaziz Street, Jeddah, www.marriott.com, (+966 12231 9800)

PARK HYATT JEDDAH - MARINA, CLUB AND SPA

Southern Corniche, Jeddah, www.hyatt.com, (+966 12263 9666)

SHANGRI-LA JEDDAH

Ash Shati, Jeddah, www.shangri-la.com/Jeddah, (+966 12 696 8888)

THE RITZ-CARLTON, JEDDAH

Al Hamra Corniche, Jeddah, www.ritzcarlton.com, (+966 12231 4444)

WALDORF ASTORIA JEDDAH – QASR AL SHARQ

North Corniche Road, Jeddah, www.hilton.com, (+966 92000 9565)

RIYADH

AL ROMANSIAH (Saudi)

Various locations including Az Zubair Ibn Al Awam, Ar Rawabi, www.alromansiah.com, (+966 92 000 0144)

AL SAEED RESTAURANT (Saudi)

Al Anwar, As Sina'iyah, (+966 011 495 6009)

BB SOCIAL RIYADH (Asian)

Huna, Panorama Mall, Al Takhasussi Road, Al Ma'sthar Al Shamal, Riyadh, (+966 11 215 6000)

CIPRANI RIYADH (Italian)

Prince Turki Ibn Abdulaziz Al Awwal Road, Riyadh, www.ciprani.com, (+966 11 277 6700)

ENTRECÔTE CAFÉ DE PARIS (French)

Al Faisaliah Tower, Riyadh, www.entrecote-cdp.com, (+966 92 001 8998)

LPM RESTAURANT (French)

Al Motassem Street, Al Olaya, Riyadh, www.lpmrestaurants.com/Riyadh, (+966 92 001 1794)

HOTEL CARTAGENA (Colombian)

U Walk, Al Nakheel, Riyadh, www.hotelcartagenariyadh.com, (+966 92 003 3801)

NAJD VILLAGE (Saudi)

Al Wahah, Riyadh, www.najdvillage.com (+966 92 003 3511)

NUSR-ET (Turkish)

Prince Turki Ibn Abdulaziz Al Awwal Road, UWalk, Riyadh, (+966 11 494 5120)

ROKA RIYADH (Asian)

Prince Muhammad Ibn Abd Al Aziz, As Sulimaniyah, Riyadh, www.rokarestaurant.com, (+966 92 001 2327)

THE GLOBE (International)

Mandarin Oriental Riyadh, Al Olaya, www.mandarinoriental.com/Riyadh, (+966 11 273 2005)

FAIRMONT RIYADH

Business Gate Qurtubah Area, Riyadh,



www.Fairmont.com/riyadh, (+966 11 826 2626)

INTERCONTINENTAL RIYADH

King Saud Road, wq Al Mutamarat, Riyadh, www.ihg.com, (+966 11 465 5000)

FOUR SEASONS RIYADH

Kingdom Centre, King Fahd Road, Al Olaya, Riyadh, www.fourseasons.com/Riyadh, (+966 11 211 5000)

SHAZA RIYADH

Eastern Ring Branch Road, Al Jazirah, Riyadh, www.shazahotels.com, (+966 11 834 9020)

THE RITZ-CARLTON RIYADH

AlHada Area, Mekkah Road, Riyadh, www.ritzcarlton.com, (+96611 892 8020)

TABUK

AL QARIYAH AL TURATHIYAH (Saudi)

King Khalid Road (+966 56 120 6666)

FALAFEL PIE (Saudi)

King Abdullah Road, (+966 14 423 2200)

JANDOFLY (Saudi)

King Abdulaziz Road (+966 24 442 4442)

HILTON GARDEN INN TABUK

Prince Sultan Road, www.hilton.com, (+966 14 422 6116)

HOLIDAY INN TABUK

Prince Fahd bin Sultan Avenue, www.ihg.com, (+966 14 422 1212)

SWISS INN TABUK HOTEL

Prince Sultan Road, www.booking.com, (+966 14 423 1770)

TAIF

KHAYAL RESTAURANT (Turkish)

Ashuhada Aljanubiyah, www.khayalrest.com, (+966 92 000 2223)

MABSHOOR TAIF (Saudi)

Al Rayyan, Taif, (+966 12737776)

MIRAGE (Indian)

Al Sadad, (+966 54 968 3365)

AWALIV INTERNATIONAL HOTEL

Abu Baker As Siddiq Street, (+966 12 737 5555)

INTERCONTINENTAL TAIF

Airport Road, Hawiyah Street, www.ihg.com (+966 12 750 5050)

LE MÉRIDIEN AL HADA

Alhada Ring Road, www.marriott.com, (+966 12 754 1400)

YANBU

AL MARSAH SEAFOOD (Saudi)

Al Sayadah, Yanbu (+966 54 429 1010)

PATCH BURGER (American)

King Abdullah Street, Yanbu

NAJIL ARAB RESTAURANT (International)

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