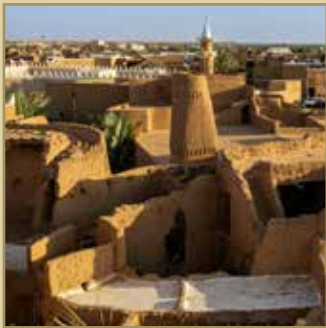


SAUDI ARABIA



Best Time to Visit:

APR, MAY, OCT, NOV



The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is the only country with coastline bordering the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf, making it both in Asia and Middle East. The country covers most of the Arabian Peninsula and is the fifth largest in Asia and the largest in the Middle East. The landscape is mainly dry desert, lowlands, steppe, and highlands. Interestingly, there is evidence that human habitation in what is now Saudi Arabia originated 125,000 years ago, the earliest outside of Africa. The Arabian Horse can be traced back 3500 years. The archaeological site at Hegra, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, shows the work of the Nabateans with huge rock-cut tombs built between the 1st century BCE and the 1st century CE.

Before the dawn of Islam, other than trading settlements, most of the peninsula was populated by nomadic pastoral tribes. Arabs founded several caliphates as time passed, but for the last 1000 years until 1908 when Hussein bin Ali became the ruler, all were under the control of a Arab ruler known as the Sharif of Mecca. Hussein rebelled against the Ottoman rule during the Arab Revolt of 1916 and subsequently declared himself Caliph of the independent Kingdom of Hejaz.

With the discovery of oil, Saudi Arabia became prosperous as the world's third largest oil producer and leading oil exporter. It is one of the world's major economies and ranks high in the Human Development Index, with tuition-free university education, free health care, and no personal income tax. Its citizens are young, half under 25 years old, and it is dependent on foreign labor. In the area of tourism, Saudi Arabia is becoming a sought destination with plenty of sights to explore. Lakani will create an itinerary to showcase the highlights of Saudi Arabia to suit your interests.

Begin your exploration in the capital Riyadh, set on a plateau in the center of the country. Discover the history of the city with your expert English speaking guide on a tour of the Masmak Fort in the old quarter. Fly to the walled city of AlUla, founded in the 6th century along the trade route, where you will see the Old Town overlooked by the Musa bin Nusayr Castle built in the 10th century. Travel to Winter Park and explore the world's largest living museum of AlUla. Discover the ancient kingdoms in Dadan and see impressive inscriptions, rock art and petroglyphs at Jamal Ikma. Tour the ancient Nabatean city of Hegra with its historic architecture. Fly south to the port city of Jeddah, the gateway for Muslim travelers on their pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca. Visit the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Old Jeddah. Drive along the scenic Corniche and see the Al Rahmah Mosque seemingly 'floating' in the water.

Saudi Arabia Highlights include:

- Embark on a privately guided tour of Riyadh and step inside the museum of Masmak Fort
- Step back in time at the incredible outdoor living museum of AlUla where you will see its amazing history unfold before your eyes
- Walk through narrow streets of Old Jeddah and see the elegant tower houses, some over 400 years old
- Tour the Old Market and Mosque of Jeddah and see King Fahd's Fountain – the highest in the world – on a drive along the scenic Corniche