

SAUDI ARABIA

Past & Present





ITINERARY

DAY 1	Thu, Feb 13, 2025	Leave USA for Jeddah, Saudi Arabia	
DAY 2	Fri, Feb 14, 2025	Arrive in Jeddah	Jeddah
DAY 3	Sat, Feb 15, 2025	Old Jeddah sightseeing	Jeddah
DAY 4	Sun, Feb 16, 2025	Fly to AlUla - sightseeing	AlUla
DAY 5	Mon, Feb 17, 2025	Mada'in Saleh sightseeing - desert experience	AlUla
DAY 6	Tue, Feb 18, 2025	Fly to Riyadh - sightseeing	Riyadh
DAY 7	Wed, Feb 19, 2025	Riyadh sightseeing	Riyadh
DAY 8	Thu, Feb 20, 2025	Riyadh sightseeing	Riyadh
DAY 9	Fri, Feb 21, 2025	Departure.	

February 13 - 21, 2025
9 Days / 7 Nights

MAP TRAJECTORY





HIGHLIGHTS

Old Jeddah walking tour, tasting Arabic coffee or tea

Jeddah outdoor sculptures

Mada'in Saleh: Nabateans of Northern Arabian peninsula

Desert experience in 4x4s

The Elephant Rock

Maraya - *World's largest mirrored building in a desert canyon*

Dinner by a Micheline-star chef

AlUla: visit an oasis with history and date palms

Visit Hejaz Railway - *Where Lawrence of Arabia was*

Murabba Palace in Riyadh

Masmak Fort in Riyadh

Naila Art Gallery featuring contemporary art in Saudi Arabia

Possible meetings with various institutions

INCLUDED

All accommodations*

Two domestic flights: Jeddah to AlUla and AlUla to Riyadh.

Meals as listed.

One special meal at Maraya Social.

Transportation in a deluxe motor-coach.

All sightseeing, excursions and entrance fees as listed.

Desert excursion by 4x4s.

Special meetings, subject to availability of the hosts.

English speaking professional guide throughout.

Porterage at hotels.

Local taxes.

NOT INCLUDED

International airfare.

Visa fee.

Drinks with included meals, except drinking water and tea or coffee for breakfast.

Gratuities for guides and drivers.

Personal expenditures like phone calls, laundry, medical expenses.

Travel insurance.

*Based on double occupancy in hotels as listed.





SUGGESTED FLIGHTS

February 13- 21, 2025
9 Days / 7 Nights

Suggested flights are on Turkish Airlines:

13 Feb TK 34	Houston to Istanbul dep: 9:20 pm / arr: 6:15 pm
14 Feb TK 128	Istanbul to Jeddah dep: 8:05 pm / arr: 11:55 pm
21 Feb TK 145	Riyadh to Istanbul 6:45 am / arr: 11:25 am
21 Feb TK 33	Istanbul to Houston 2:50 pm / arr: 7:25 pm

Economy class: \$1,200

Business class: \$4,800

per person, including taxes, surcharges and fees as of July 31, 2024.

Fares may change based on availability.

Preferred Travel Partner

UNITED



ACCOMMODATIONS

February 13- 21, 2025
9 Days / 7 Nights

Hilton Jeddah Hotel

<https://www.hilton.com/en/hotels/jedhihi-jeddah-hilton-hotel/>

JEDDAH / 2 nights



Sahary Resort - AlUla

<http://www.saharyalularesort.com/en/>

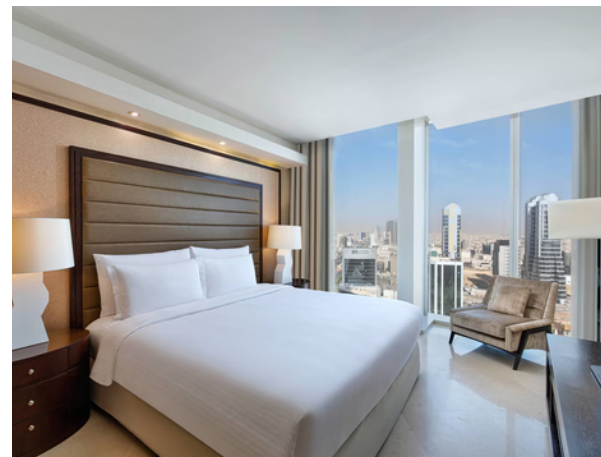
ALULA / 2 nights



Marriott Riyadh Hotel

<https://www.marriott.com/en-us/hotels/ruhsa-riyadh-marriott-hotel/overview/>

RIYADH / 3 nights



PROGRAM DETAILS

Day 1: Thu, Feb 13 Leave USA

We will leave USA for Jedda, Saudi Arabia.

Day 2: Fri, Feb 14 Jeddah

We will arrive in Jeddah late at night.

We will have a good night's rest at our hotel to get ready for the next day.

Overnight in Jeddah

Jeddah was once a port city living mostly off the pilgrim trade of Mecca, serving as Mecca's outlet to the sea. It was always an important stop on the caravan route from Yemen to Egypt and Syria, and a local center of pilgrimage for the tribes from the surrounding deserts.

The spread of Islam made the holy city a religious center for people from all over the world, many of whom arrived by sea. Islam soon transformed Jeddah into a thriving metropolis in its own right. Over the years, it has become one of the Arab world's most important commercial centers while remaining the principal port of entry for more than two million pilgrims who make their way to the holy city of Mecca each year.



Day 3: Sat, Feb 15**Jeddah**

Enjoy a morning walking tour through old Jeddah with its unique, centuries-old, multi-storied white urban dwellings. The wooden ornamentation on the sides of these houses has been designed to let in the sea breezes and at the same time shield residents, particularly females, from the eyes of passers-by. Our expert guide will walk us in the maze of the old city and tell us about Hejazi architecture which has been described as a melting pot of several forms of Islamic design. End the morning with a chance to wander through Jeddah's many souks.

After lunch at a local restaurant, we will visit one of the old merchant houses to see the way of life in the 19th and 20th centuries. We will have tea or coffee in one of the traditional houses that was converted into a tea house. We may have a chance to socialize with local families. Continue on to the Al Tayebat private museum, housed in a restored complex of traditional buildings. The museum has several floors of in-depth exhibits covering history and cultural heritage of Arabian peninsula, Saudi Arabia and Islam.

Return to the hotel passing by more modern parts of the city, including the Corniche which runs for 45 miles along the Red Sea. There are about 400 outdoor sculptures in and around the corniche.

We will enjoy a lovely dinner this evening at a nice local restaurant frequented by Jeddah families.

Overnight in Jeddah**Breakfast: B-L-D****Day 4: Sun, Feb 16****Jeddah - AlUla**

Early in the morning we will take the domestic flight from Jeddah to AlUla.

After having lunch, we will start our program visiting AlUla old town.

Overnight in AlUla**Breakfast: B-L-D**

AlUla Old Town, a captivating gem in Saudi Arabia, offers a rich tapestry of history and culture. This ancient settlement, which dates back to the 12th century, boasts a maze of narrow, winding streets lined with over 800 mud-brick houses, shops, and courtyards.

Once a vital stop on the incense trade route, AlUla Old Town thrived as a bustling hub for merchants and travelers.

Today, visitors can wander through its evocative ruins, imagining the vibrant life that once pulsed through its alleys. The town's historic mosques and market squares provide a fascinating glimpse into the architectural and cultural heritage of the region.

Day 5: Mon, Feb 17

AlUla

We will start our program in the region early in the morning.

First we will proceed to visit the historic site of Mada'in Saleh. Then we will continue with Hejaz railway station No. 21, from pre-First World War era and Maraya, first from outside, then for a special dinner..

We will also have an off-road excursion, by 4x4s, into the desert and canyon formations.

Overnight in Al Ula

Breakfast: B-L-D

Mada'in Saleh is an archaeological site located in the area of Al Ula within Medina Province in the Hejaz. A majority of the remains date from the Nabataean Kingdom (1st century AD). The site constitutes the kingdom's southernmost settlement and its second largest city after Petra (now in Jordan), its capital city.

The Hejaz railway was a narrow-gauge railway that ran from Damascus to Medina, through the Hejaz region of modern day Saudi Arabia, with a branch line to Haifa on the Mediterranean Sea. It was a part of the Ottoman railway network and the original goal was to extend the line from the Haydarpaşa Terminal in Istanbul beyond Damascus to the holy city of Mecca. However, construction was interrupted due to the outbreak of World War I, and it reached up to Medina, 400 kilometers (250 mi) short of Mecca. The completed Damascus to Medina section was 1,300 kilometers (810 mi).

The Hejaz line was repeatedly attacked and damaged, particularly during the Arab Revolt, when Ottoman trains were ambushed by the guerrilla force led by T. E. Lawrence.

Maraya is an architectural wonder that has quickly reached icon status. Upon approaching this magnificent mirrored structure in AlUla's Ashar Valley you may feel your eyes are deceiving you as Maraya seems to disappear into the surrounding sandstone cliffs before swiftly reappearing. A multi-purpose venue for concerts, events and conferences, Maraya — meaning 'mirror' in Arabic — is the largest mirrored building in the world and is a piece of art in itself.



Day 6: Tue, Feb 18 **Riyadh**

Early in the morning we will fly from AlUla to Riyadh.

Upon arrival, we will have lunch.

Afternoon program details will be available as the trip date gets closer.

Overnight in Riyadh

Breakfast: B-L-D

Day 7: Wed, Feb 19 **Riyadh**

We will begin at the archaeological site of Diriyyah, whose zenith as capital of most of Arabia came during the reign of Saud the Great who ruled here from 1802 to 1814. What remains of Diriyyah today is remarkably extensive and evocative of traditional settled life in the region. The most impressive ruins are those of Turaif on the north bank. The sparser ruins of Ghasibah on the south bank are older, possibly dating back to the city's foundation in the 15th century.

After lunch at a traditional local restaurant with floor seating, we will visit the city center, spend time in the National Museum with its sweeping, curved wall and Najd architectural design. The museum's eight galleries trace Saudi Arabia's history. Then we will continue on to the Murabba Palace which has been renovated to reflect the architecture of the original structure.

Overnight in Riyadh

Breakfast: B-L-D

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia's capital and main financial hub, is on a desert plateau in the country's center. Business district landmarks include the 302m-high Kingdom Centre, with a sky bridge connecting 2 towers, and 267m-high Al Faisaliah Centre, with a glass-globe summit. The city center, an area of largely restored, rebuilt and renovated buildings constructed in classic Arabian style. It includes the original area of Riyadh – the enclave fought for by Ibn Saud – which is now the centerpiece of imaginative and extensive redevelopment. The symbolic entrance to this area is the Al Thumairi Gate, a reconstruction of one of the entrances to Riyadh when the city was surrounded by old mud walls.

Kingdom Center is a 41-story, 302.3 m (992 ft) skyscraper in Riyadh. When completed in 2002, it overtook the 267-meter (876 ft) Faisaliyah Tower as the tallest tower in Saudi Arabia. It has since been surpassed and, as of 2021, is the fifth-tallest skyscraper in the country.

There is a 65m skybridge atop the skyscraper.

Day 8: Thu, Feb 20 **Riyadh**

Another full day in Riyadh.

We will continue our sightseeing program with Kingdom Center.

Then we will continue to the Al Masmak Fort, the oldest complete building in Riyadh. (Al Masmak Fort is under renovation at the moment. If renovation is not completed by the time we are in Riyadh, can see the fort only from outside.) We will also spend some time at the Derah Heritage Souq around the fort.

Late afternoon, we can visit a local art gallery to see examples of Saudi artists' works.

Overnight in Riyadh

Breakfast: B-L-D

Day 9: Fri, Feb 21 **Departure**

We will be transferred to the airport for our return flight.



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