

Discover the striking heritage sites and immerse yourself in the experiences and activities on offer at Arabia's best-kept secret, which is now open to visitors all year round

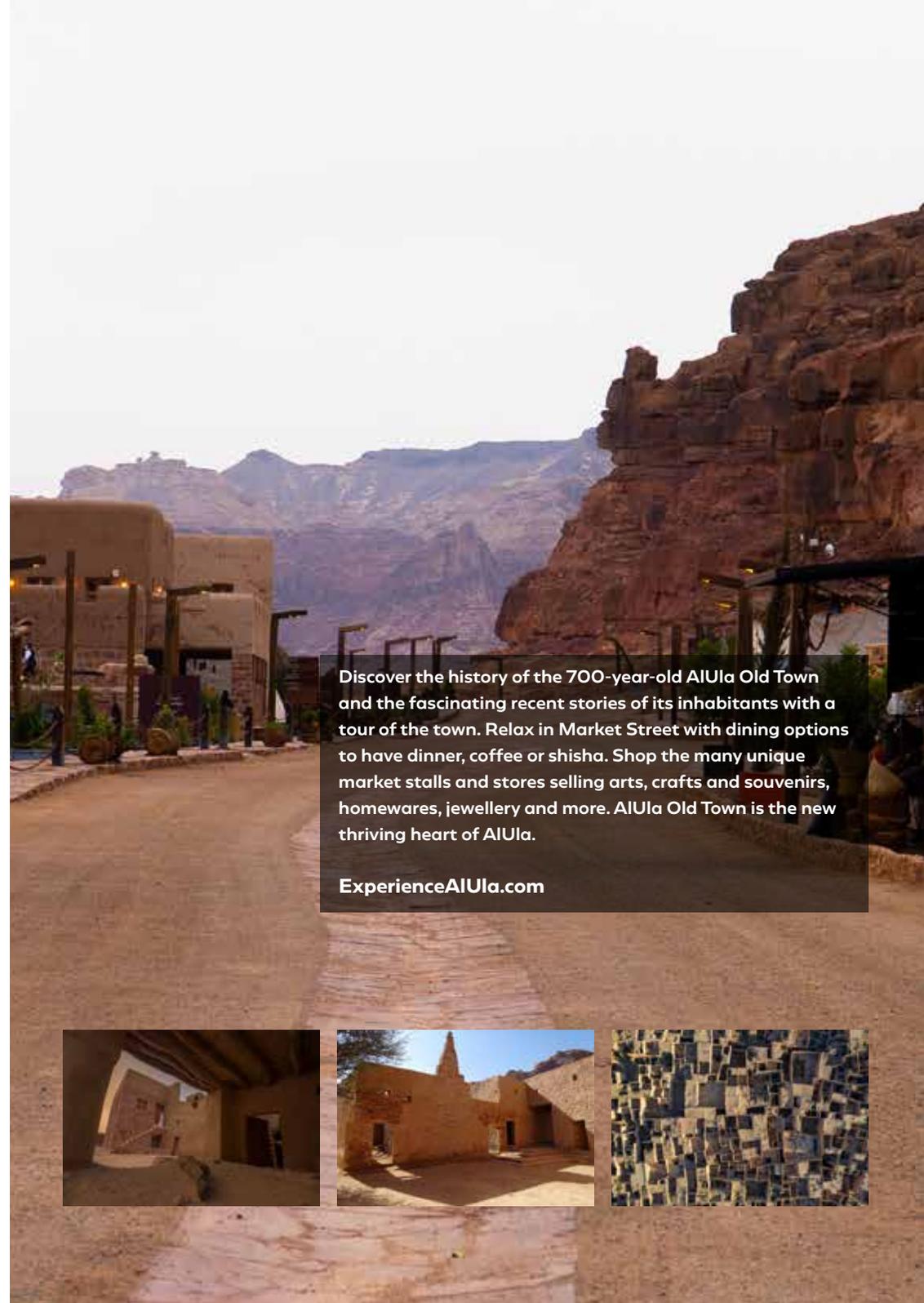
THE OFFICIAL VISITOR GUIDE

AlUla



■ **ACTIVITIES TO BOOK TODAY** ■ **MUST-HAVE EXPERIENCES** ■ **WHERE TO STAY**
■ **WHERE TO EAT** ■ **ITINERARIES TO TRY** ■ **YOUR HANDY ALULA MAP**

REGIONAL MAP



Discover the history of the 700-year-old AlUla Old Town and the fascinating recent stories of its inhabitants with a tour of the town. Relax in Market Street with dining options to have dinner, coffee or shisha. Shop the many unique market stalls and stores selling arts, crafts and souvenirs, homewares, jewellery and more. AlUla Old Town is the new thriving heart of AlUla.

ExperienceAlUla.com





WELCOME

Perhaps you have seen the captivating photographs of the Nabataean city Hegra, colourful hot air balloons rising above dramatic natural rock formations, and the architecturally striking mirrored concert and entertainment venue Maraya, which reflects the surrounding desert landscape. But how much do you really know about AlUla? Stretching around 25,000km² in size and located 1,000km northwest of Riyadh, this world wonder is home to some of the best-preserved tombs and rock art sites of its era. While it's not as well-known as some of its UNESCO World Heritage Site neighbours in Jordan and Egypt, that's all about to change.

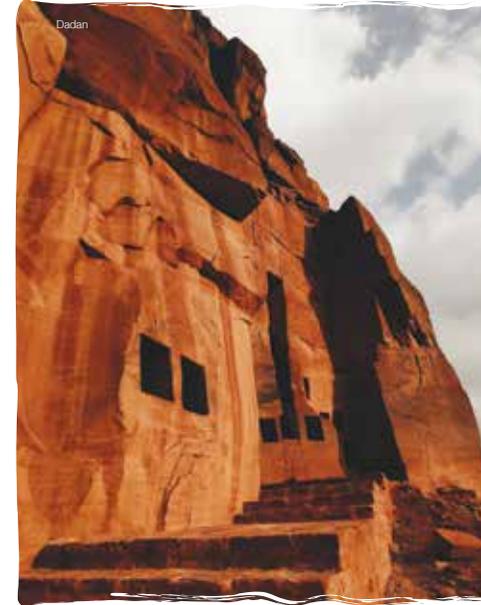
Today, the historic crossroads that welcomed traders and pilgrims through the ages is open to visitors all year round. Home to more than 200,000 years of human history, and five successive civilisations over 3,000 years, AlUla is undergoing a careful and sensitive restoration to ready itself for modern-day guests. As details of its heritage continue to emerge (it's still an active excavation site), you can write your own story by discovering the preserved tombs, sandstone outcrops, historic dwellings and monuments that are both natural and human-made.

Inside this guide, you will find all the information you need to get the most out of your visit. From the immersive experiences you simply cannot miss (p26) to all the exciting activities to tick off your wish list (p34), places to stay (p57), and where to go for a memorable meal (p66) delve into our comprehensive round-up of everything that's on offer.

Plus, we asked a number of local experts and previous visitors to share their insights into making the most of your time in this monumental and awe-inspiring destination – you'll find their words woven throughout these pages. We hope you enjoy your visit to AlUla.



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Extend your visit to Saudi Arabia by tagging on a trip to these top destinations

Tourism Call Centre:
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to upholding the highest standards of visitor experience across the destination. Look out for it at the time of booking to ensure a world-class visitor experience from start to finish.



Scan for the latest updates on experienceAIUla.com



Khaybar



The Hot Air Balloon Festival at Hegra

Saudi Arabia SHIFTING SANDS

How the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia grew from humble roots into an Arab superpower

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was founded in 1932 under the rule of King Abdulaziz Al Saud, who united the land. Oil was discovered in 1938, which supercharged the country's development. Yet to this day, the Kingdom stays true to its roots by blending culture, heritage and Islamic values with modernity. Saudi Arabia is home to the Two Holy Mosques: Al Masjid Al Haram in Makkah, Islam's holiest city and the site of the Kaaba, and The Prophet's Mosque in Medina. The country is blessed with a varied topography, including a generous portion of the Rub' al Khali (a vast, unbroken sand desert that stretches across the southern part of the Arabian Peninsula), the Hijaz mountain range in the western region, and a beautiful stretch of Red Sea coast. The capital city, Riyadh, is the main financial metropolis while Jeddah, on the Red Sea, is a popular resort hub, as well as being a gateway for Hajj and Umrah pilgrimages. Today, the country is ruled by His Majesty King Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, who ascended the throne in 2015. His son, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, who is first in line to the throne, has been influential in diversifying the Kingdom's economy and liberalising various laws.

Currently, the government is working towards its Vision 2030, which sets out the longer-term



A minaret in Makkah

The Kingdom stays true to its roots, by blending culture, heritage and Islamic values with modernity

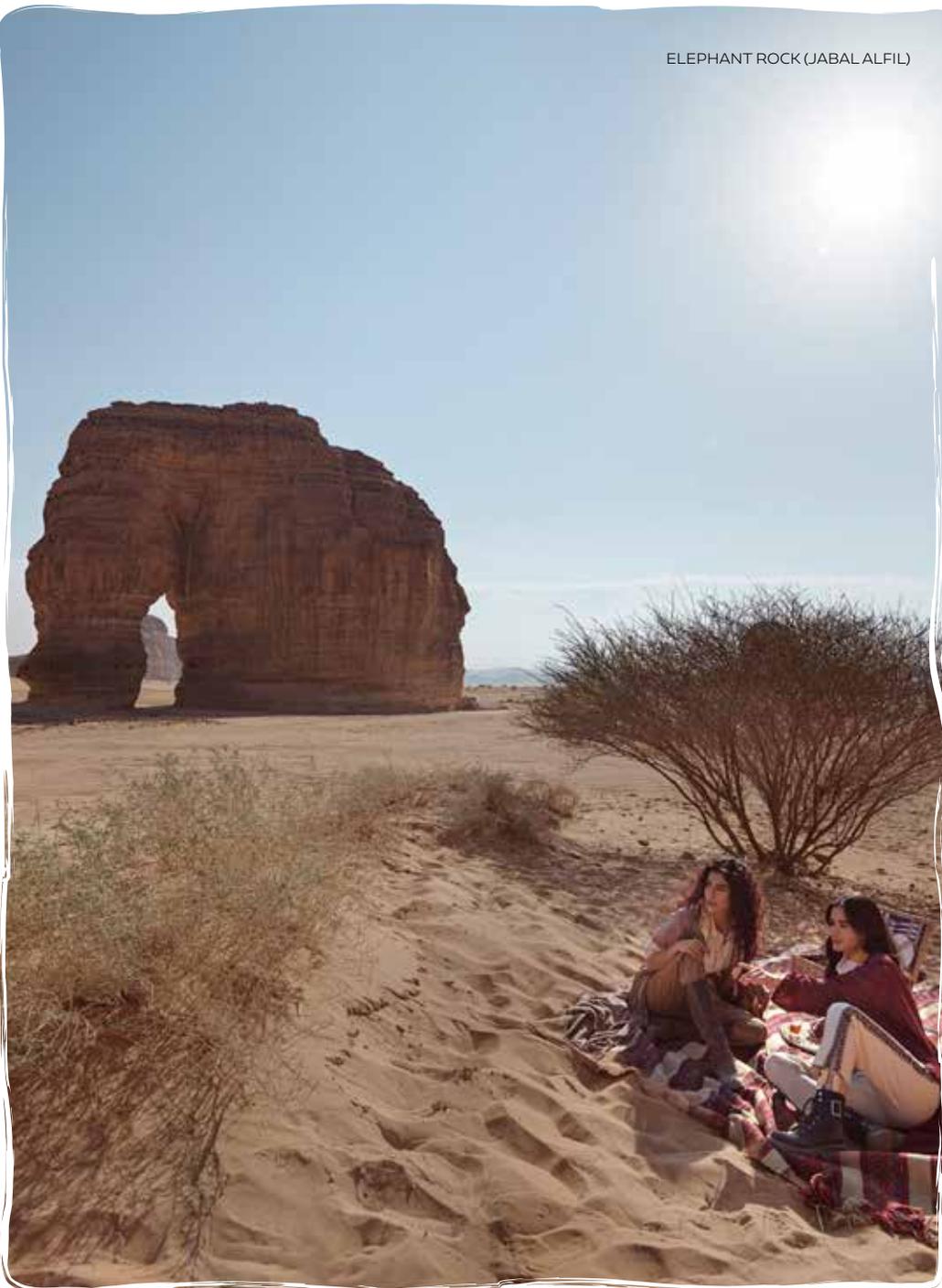
goals and expectations for the nation. It marks a new phase of development to create a vibrant society in which all citizens can fulfill their dreams, hopes and ambitions to succeed in a diversified economy. With the world starting to travel again, AIUla is well positioned to become a destination of choice for those looking for an unforgettable adventure in a safe environment

with plenty of space. Extraordinary landscapes, nature, history and culture all combine in a setting like no other. Visit now and you'll be amongst the first international travellers to discover all that AIUla has to offer.

AIUla is undergoing significant development to diversify the economy, give back to the community and welcome domestic and international visitors to one of the world's most significant culture and heritage destinations. The information provided in this guide is correct at the time of printing. However, much ongoing work is being undertaken to bring further engaging experiences, accommodation, eateries and more to AIUla over the course of the next months and years. For the latest updates and information, see experienceAIUla.com or call our information line on +920025003

(Source: UNWTO (arrivals of non-resident tourists at national borders)

ELEPHANT ROCK (JABAL ALFIL)



Culture & traditions
THE PEOPLE OF ALULA

Ahmed Alimam, the first rawi of AIUla, shares an insight into the culture of the local people and their treasured traditions

“The people of AIUla have a rich ancestry and are resilient, self-sufficient and, of course, they love welcoming guests,” says Ahmed Alimam, the first rawi (traditional Arabic storyteller) of AIUla.

The families who live here have records tracing their lineage over 600 years. People generally know the exact date their ancestors came to AIUla, where they travelled from and why. The papers usually record what items they brought with them, whose house they stayed in and if they later went on to buy their own house and farm. My family name means ‘the person who leads people in the prayer’, as one of my great grandfathers was the Imam of the mosque in 851 AH (in the Islamic calendar – around 1448/1449 CE). One of my other grandfathers worked as a tribal judge.

The ways in which the people lived have evolved over time. More than 200 years ago, the community needed to defend and protect their homes and natural reserves from potential attacks from outsiders. With an impenetrable wall around AIUla Old Town, residents could happily live inside for many years due to the plentiful supply of water from the natural springs, the lush vegetation and palm trees, which provided materials for many uses, from building our homes to making our clothes.

Around 70-80 years ago, things changed when one of the first government schools in Saudi Arabia was opened in AIUla. The payment to attend school before this was doing good deeds for the

teacher, such as collecting water or firewood, in exchange for teaching your children. So the new school gave the youth of that generation an opportunity to get a job. Many who graduated went on to work in Riyadh, Jeddah and Tabuk, or at government offices around the Kingdom. So we have something of a missing generation from AIUla, although some of them do return to retire. Nowadays, many students have taken part in a scholarship programme, which invites them to earn a degree in agriculture, archaeology, or hospitality and tourism, with a chance to study in

The families here’ have records tracing their lineage over ‘years 600

France, the US, the UK and Australia before returning to work in AIUla. I grew up in a family that was naturally very interested in the history and heritage of AIUla Old Town. Many of our conversations revolved around the civilisations that lived here and every weekend we would visit



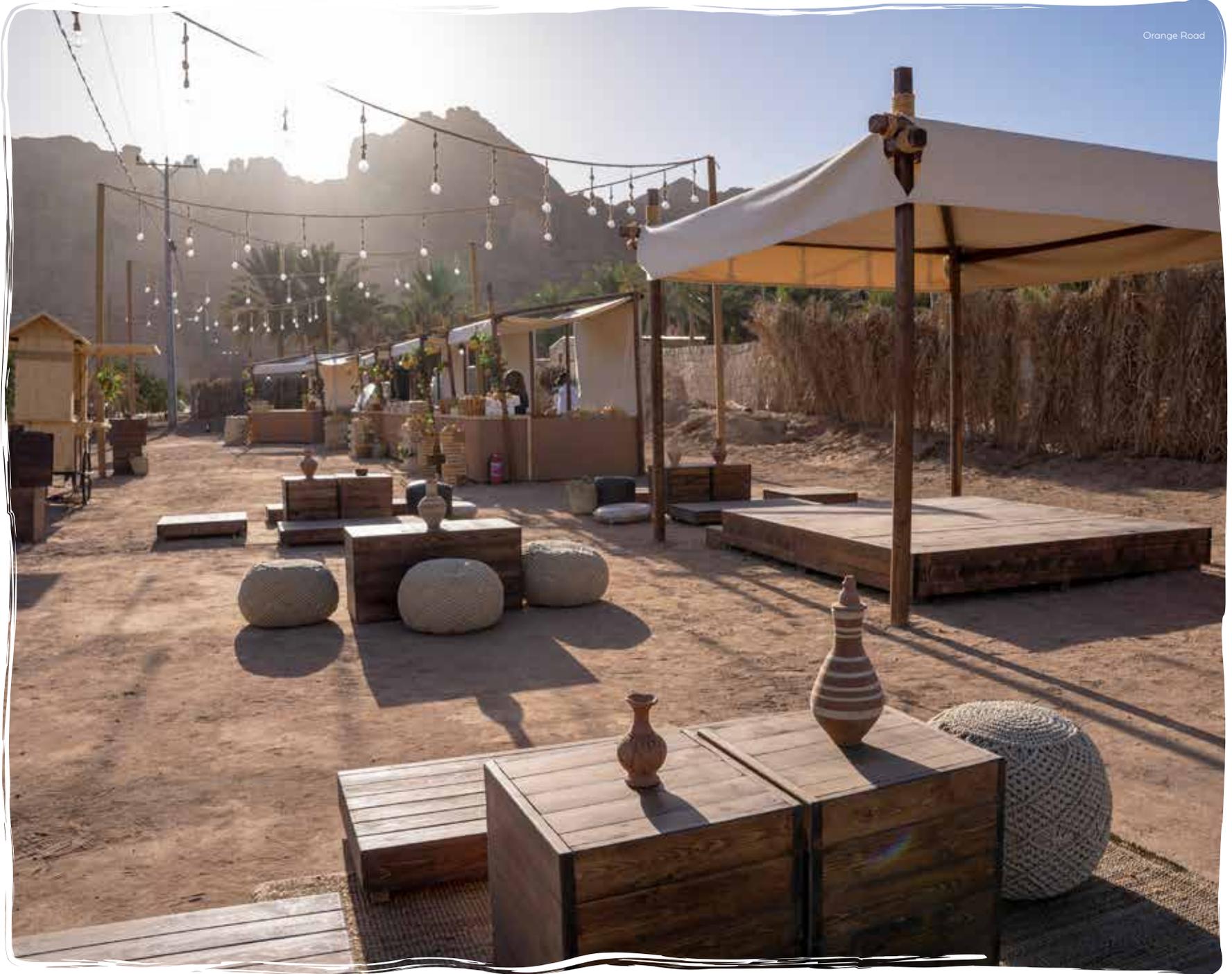
A local artisan shows her skills

We are excited' that AlUla is returning to its roots as a crossroads for 'cultural exchange

the town, the farms and go climbing in the mountains. My mum used to take her sheep and goats to feed at the desert springs, so we have a solid experience of exploring the land and all the major heritage sites. I studied English and graduated in 2008, when I immediately started my own tour guide business. AlUla residents are still as welcoming as they've always been. When caravans arrived during pre-Islamic times, the people gave them what they needed, from dates to eat, to somewhere to rest. But the people were smart in that they adapted their offering to appeal to those travelling through. Around 1,000 years ago, for instance, AlUla became famous for making swords and selling horses to travellers from Egypt and Spain. It makes us wonder what modern visitors need today. The area has been very respectfully prepared for tourists, with all the plans discussed in consultation with the community. The local people want their stories to be heard and we are excited that AlUla is returning to its roots as a crossroads for cultural exchange."

ALULA IS A DREAM FOR TRAVELLERS

Personally, I love the sense of stillness you experience here. But AlUla answers many tourist needs, including outdoor adventure, wellness, heritage and entertainment.



YOU'LL LOVE THE COMMUNITY VIBE

We're a small community so we all know each other. Our neighbours are like family and our homes are like hotels. Relatives of the families living here usually come for their summer holidays, so there are usually three or four families living in one house. It's crowded, but we thrive on it.

THE LOCALS WILL ENTERTAIN YOU FOR HOURS

When I am doing my tours, the locals ask if the visitors can come to their farm and have lunch or dinner with them. Even though we have the itineraries, the invitations keep flowing.

WE RESPECT THE NATURAL WORLD

The palm tree is like the mother of all of us. We respect palm trees because they are a source of life and they are useful in so many ways. There's an old story about a man who got a splinter from a palm tree and said in anger that he wouldn't water it anymore. The palm tree responded that it wouldn't die, so the man shot back, "then I won't visit you" and the tree replied, "then I will die". It reminds us to never be absent – to always visit your palm tree. There are even certain songs we like to sing to them.

The Alwawah (plural of Rawi) are a special class of tour guide. The term 'rawi' translates to 'storyteller', and each has a specialist knowledge of the heritage sites, as well as their own family history to share. The term comes from a time when skilled storytellers in the community would have the informal role of entertaining people around the campfire, in the days before television. The rawis were highly regarded and celebrated for their abilities to recite much-loved poems and to captivate the audience with their gripping tales.



Sharing the date harvest

"We respect palm trees because they are a source of life and they are useful in so many ways"



An aerial view of date palms at AlUla Oasis

● ATM	◆ Pharmacy
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Heritage & Culture

1 Dadan	6 Hijaz Railway
2 Jabal Ikmah	7 Hegra
3 AlUla Old Town	8 Hegra Fort
4 Tantora Sundial	9 The Siq & The Diwan
5 AlUla Castle	

Eateries & Essentials

1 AlMahkar	2 Barzan Restaurant
3 Pink Camel	4 Winter Park
5 Maraya Social	6 Suhail
7 Annabel's	8 Merkaz
9 Nakheel	10 Somewhere

Accommodation

1 Ashar Banyan Tree Resort	2 Ashar RV Park
3 Shaden Resort	4 Caravan by Habitas
5 Sahary Resort	6 Habitas AlUla Resort

See & Do

1 Oasis Heritage Trail	2 AlWadi Farm
3 AlJadidah Village	4 Maraya
5 Market Street	6 Ashar Valley
7 Adventure Canyon Zipline	8 Helicopter Tour
9 Cycline trail	10 Stargazing Experience
11 Adventure Trail	

Nature

1 Elephant Rock	2 Jarah Rock
3 AlUla Fresh Farm	4 Harrat Uwayrid
5 Finger Rock	6 Dancing Rocks
7 Rainbow Rock	8 Ghrameel
9 Hijrat Noura farm	10 Face Rock

Introduction LAND OF LEGEND

Saudi Arabia's hidden gem has been a magnet for intrepid travellers for millennia and now it's your turn to uncover the stories that shaped this wonder of the world

Once upon a time, AlUla was a thriving hub of activity. Located in the northwest of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, approximately 1,000km from Riyadh, the ancient city has been a beacon of cultural exchange for thousands of years, due to its role as a crossroads along the incense trading route and the pilgrimage route to Makkah. All those who passed through - including 14th century Arab traveller Ibn Battuta - are thought to have received a warm welcome by settlers through the ages who thrived on the natural bounty of the oasis. Today, AlUla is a fascinating immersion into Saudi Arabia's rich culture and deep-rooted history. Open to visitors all year round from October 2020, travellers in search of a meaningful experience will be rewarded with a coveted glimpse of the culture, heritage and mysticism of the Arabian Peninsula and the early civilisations that lived there. The region is also significant to the story of Islam - it is believed that the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) paid several visits to Wadi Al-Qura (the Valley of the Villages located at the heart of the oasis). The largely untouched landscape, with its imposing landmarks carved by nature and its settlers, is a lesson in human resilience and endeavour. Its four main heritage sites - Hegra and the Hijaz Railway, AlUla Old Town, Dadan, and Jabal Ikma - tell the tale of all those who once called



Hot air balloons soar above Hegra Fort

it home. And with recent archaeological discoveries charting more than 200,000 years of human history in AlUla, there's a lot to learn. Feel the energy at Saudi Arabia's first UNESCO World Heritage Site, Hegra, which has more than 94 intricately carved tomb façades to discover. Weave your way through the labyrinthine streets of the abandoned AlUla Old Town, examine centuries-old rock inscriptions at Jabal Ikma, and explore the remains of the ancient kingdom of Dadan. After exploring the active excavation sites and rich culture and heritage, there are many other ways to enjoy AlUla. With its extraordinary natural landscapes - a lush oasis filled with sheltering palm groves, mind-blowing lookout points for stargazing, valleys, canyons, work-of-art rock formations and farms offering dates, mangoes, mint, basil and a variety of citrus fruits - there is much to see and do, at whatever pace you desire.

New guided treks and immersive tours are on offer, as well as action-packed activities at the new Adventure Canyon. Accommodation is available to suit all types of travellers, from luxury desert resorts to self-catering recreational vehicles (RVs) that offer a glamping style experience. Rest assured that AlUla has been made visitor-ready with conservation in mind. The sensitive development of the area is part of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030, to diversify the economy and open up the country to international tourism, aided by the launch of the Saudi eVisa programme in September 2019. An extraordinary place where heritage, art, nature and adventure are intertwined, AlUla offers a unique travel experience that expands the mind - and it's all just waiting to be discovered.

<p>C. 300 MILLION YEARS AGO AUSTRALIA</p>	<p>C. 252 MILLION YEARS AGO PALAEOZOIC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TRILOBITES IN SANDSTONE <p>200,000 BCE OR EARLIER PALAEOLITHIC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HANDAXE AMONG EARLIEST DISCOVERED IN ARABIA <p>C. 5200 BCE NEOLITHIC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RITUAL DEPOSITS OF ANIMAL SKULLS, HORNS AND TEETH <p>C. 2000-5000 BCE LATE PREHISTORY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MONUMENTAL BURIALS AND SEASONAL CAMPSITES 	
<p>2550 BCE EGYPT</p>	<p>C. 100-900 BCE ANCIENT NORTH ARABIAN KINGDOMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MULTIPLE SCRIPTS AND LANGUAGES INSCRIBED IN STONE • PROSPERITY FROM INCENSE TRADE • WATER MANAGEMENT AND CULTIVATION IN THE ALULA VALLEY, DEVELOPING THE OASIS 	
<p>C. 100 BCE-106 CE JORDAN</p>	<p>C. 100 BCE-106 CE NABATAEAN KINGDOM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPECTACULAR CARVED TOMBS • PROSPERITY FROM INCENSE TRADE • OASIS DEVELOPMENT ON THE HEGRA PLAIN 	
<p>70-80 CE ITALY</p>	<p>106 CE-C. 400 CE ROMAN PRESENCE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ROMAN CAMP AT HEGRA • SOUTHERNMOST INLAND LIMIT OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE 	
<p>1000 CE RAPA NUI</p>	<p>C. 622-400 CE PRE-ISLAMIC</p> <p>C. 1200-622 CE EARLY ISLAMIC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PROSPERITY FROM TRADE AND PILGRIMAGE TO MAKKAH • LARGEST CITY AFTER MAKKAH IN THE 10TH CENTURY 	
<p>1648 CE INDIA</p>	<p>C. -1200 PRESENT LATER ISLAMIC</p> <p>ALULA OLD TOWN IS THE CULTURAL HEART OF ALULA FROM C. 1200 UNTIL THE 1980S</p>	
<p>1889 CE FRANCE</p>	<p>1980-1870 CE MODERN TIMES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WESTERN EXPLORERS DISCOVER AND DOCUMENT ALULA • HIJAZ RAILWAY BUILT TO MODERNISE PILGRIM TRAVEL 	



FAST FACTS

Count the ways in which ALULA will capture your imagination



200,000
YEARS OF HUMAN HISTORY TO TRACE



900
TRADITIONAL BUILDINGS TO EXPLORE AT ALULA OLD TOWN



2.3 MILLION
DATE PALM TREES DELIVERING A BUMPER HARVEST



1ST UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITE IN SAUDI ARABIA: HEGRA

111 WELL-PRESERVED MONUMENTAL
TOMBS TO DISCOVER



29 VARIETIES OF FRAGRANT CITRUS
FRUITS GROWING ON THE FARMS

10,000 SQM OF MIRRORS ADORN THE CONCERT AND
ENTERTAINMENT VENUE MARAYA



Trace over 200,000 years of human history at this crossroads on ancient incense trading and pilgrimage routes, where civilisations thrived to leave a fascinating collection of wonders as their legacy



HISTORIC SITES
Delve into the stories of ALULA's most significant heritage sites in this open-air, living museum. Marvel at the sandstone rock masterpieces, which have been sculpted by nature and its skilled settlers over thousands of years.

THE SILENT CITY
Hegra is Saudi Arabia's first UNESCO World Heritage Site (it was inscribed onto the list in 2008) and a thriving Nabataean city from the middle of the 1st century BCE until around the 2nd century CE. Research also suggests that, after 106 CE, it was likely to have been the most southerly outpost of the Roman Empire in Arabia. A fascinating collection of more than 100 monumental decorated tombs carved into the colossal sandstone outcrops that surround the ancient city, are impressively well preserved.



'A fascinating collection of more than 100 tombs tell the tale of the ancient people and culture of AlUla'

They tell the tale of the ancient people and culture of AlUla, with the carefully carved inscriptions on many helping to piece together the puzzle of those buried within. You can learn about the destination's roots as an historic hub for travel and trade at the **Hijaz Railway** experience. Running through AlUla, the Hijaz Railway began construction from 1900 and stretched to Medina and Damascus, modernising the way that pilgrims travelled. Due to the outbreak of World War I, its full route, which would have extended all the way to the Holy City of Makkah, was never completed. Today, the station at Hegra houses an original locomotive. At the southern end of the station is **Hegra Fort**, which was built in the 18th century CE and later restored. Stroll around the double water tower and renovated reservoir that used to nourish a small garden of pomegranate trees and date palms and cast your mind back to a time when pilgrims would arrive in search of food and shelter.



MARAYA

Pause for reflection at **Maraya**. This award-winning, Guinness-World-Record-setting architectural marvel, designed by Italian architect Gio Forma, is covered in great swathes of mirrors – 9,740sqm to be exact – that reflect the surrounding desert landscape. The cube-shaped building, with its 26-metre-high theatre, is a 550-seat concert and entertainment venue where acclaimed artists including Andrea Bocelli, Lionel Richie and Yanni have performed.



WHISPERING CANYONS

Once a revered site on the ancient trade routes, **Jabal Ikmah** is home to over 500 inscriptions, both carved and in relief (raised), mostly dating to the Dadanite and Lihyanite Kingdoms of the 1st millennium BCE. A veritable open-air library, the hundreds of carvings that adorn the cliff faces and rocks depict the site's rich history of pilgrimages, cultural rituals and more. Take your time studying the inscriptions as well as petroglyphs (rock art) depicting humans, musical instruments and animals, which offer an insight into the everyday lives of the people who lived there, as well as those who travelled through.



Trace the footsteps of traders and pilgrims of a bygone era who enjoyed a bountiful place to rest at AlUla Oasis'

ANCIENT ARABIAN KINGDOMS

The ancient city of **Dadan** is considered to have been one of the most developed 1st millennium BCE cities in the Arabian Peninsula. Home to two kingdoms dating to the late 9th and early 8th century BCE (Kingdom of Dadan) and the 6th to the 2nd century BCE (Kingdom of Lihyan), this must-see heritage site is an architectural feat of its time. Make your way towards the tombs that have been cut into the red-rock cliff faces east of the city and see if you can spy the seated lion sculptures. It's thought that these ferocious protectors mark the resting places of elite members of society.



HISTORICAL CROSSROADS

You can trace the footsteps of traders and pilgrims of a bygone era who enjoyed a bountiful place to rest, recuperate and socialise at **AlUla Oasis**. Nestled within Wadi AlQura (Valley of Villages), this lush haven is awash with date palms, citrus trees and herbs such as basil and mint, which thrive on the natural spring water that surrounds them.

With its maze of winding alleyways, mudbrick houses and town squares, the walled **AlUla Old Town** was once a hub of activity. Located in the narrowest part of the AlUla valley, it was established in the 12th century CE and continuously inhabited through to the 20th century CE, with the last wave of settlers moving on in the 1980s.

The summer farms shine a light on **AlUla's** agricultural clout. Although the crops that are grown have evolved over time, date palms continue to dominate. Evidence of the fruit has been discovered in funerary remains at Hegra suggesting that, to the Nabataeans, dates represented a symbolic link between the living and the dead.

RISE UP

Take in the striking scenery that the settlers and visitors to AlUla have enjoyed for millennia, by getting an up-close look at the dramatic rock formations that dot the desert landscape.

One of AlUla's most recognisable, **the arch** (also known as rainbow rock), is well worth the 90-minute drive from the centre of the city. Its bridge-shaped structure, which resembles a rainbow flanked by two clouds, is a rare sight indeed.

Similarly, **Elephant Rock** (also known as Jabal Alfil) has captured the imagination of keen photographers the world over. As the name suggests, this red sandstone marvel is shaped like an elephant with a distinctive 'trunk' and 'body' - the result of millions of years of wind and water erosion. It's a popular camping spot, especially during festivals when the structure is bathed in light and campers can take the chance to ride a horse or camel, keep warm by the firepits, and dine on delights from the pop-up eateries.

There's also **Gharameel**, which has dark thin pillars of stone stretching up to the sky. **Dancing Rocks** is so-called due to its two large pillars that appear as if they are swaying in unison, while **Face Rock** resembles the profile of a human head.

THE LOOKOUT

AlUla is blessed with numerous lookout points that offer an elevated view of the epic landscape. Scale the black lava stone terrain of Harrat Uwayrid and you'll be rewarded with views over Dadan, AlUla Old Town, AlUla Castle and AlUla oasis. Arrive before sundown to soak up the sights and sounds of the golden hour, when the sky's orange glow adds a magical touch to the scene.

Get your tourist visa

Visiting from abroad? You can apply for a tourist visa online at visa.visitsaudi.com. This one-year, multiple entry visa allows you to spend up to 90 days in the country as a visitor. Currently, the eVisa is available to tourists from 49 countries. If your country is not eligible, contact your nearest Saudi Arabia Embassy.



The Arch

Face Rock



GETTING TO ALULA

By Air

The nearest airport is AlUla International Airport (ULH), which is located around 35 kilometres southeast of AlUla. You can fly in with Saudia (saudia.com) via Riyadh, Jeddah and Dammam. Direct flights from wider destinations, such as Dubai, are planned for the near future.

By Road

AlUla is around three-and-a-half hours' drive from both Medina (to the south) and Tabuk (north). Alternatively, you can roll your visit into a road trip by setting off from Jeddah (approximately 7½ hours) or Riyadh (10 hours).

GETTING AROUND

Ride Sharing: download the Careem app to book your ride

Car Hire: book in advance
 Aldoor car rental: +966553330750
 AlUla Guides +966 553338228
 Daleel AlUla: +966 553338228

Car Hire: office at the airport
 Yelo +966 559502782
 Lumi +966 9200 28 428

'Dramatic rock formations dot the desert landscape'



Dancing Rocks

WHEN TO GO

Temperatures range from 10 - 25°C (50-77°F) during winter months, (October to April), and hover around 30 - 40°C (86-104°F) during the summer. During December to March there is normally an exciting line-up of cultural, sporting and art events to enjoy.

Wish list
21 MUST HAVE EXPERIENCES

Make the most of your time in AlUla by seeking out these memorable moments

1 During the AlUla Skies Festival, take to the skies at dawn and glide peacefully above UNESCO World Heritage Site, Hegra. You'll be able to spot wells and burial grounds hidden on top of the sandy outcrops that are only visible from above.



Hot Air Balloon, AlUla



2 Transport yourself back in time at AlUla Oasis. Walk the path from Dadan to Pink Camel via the old summer farms and sample the pomegranates, limes, bananas, mangoes, grapes and mint along the way.

3 Catch the magical moment when the sunlight illuminates the path of The Siq at Jabal Ithlib, the Holy Mountain at Hegra. The perfect time for this falls roughly between 9.30am and 11am. There's a 30-minute window when the rays shine through.

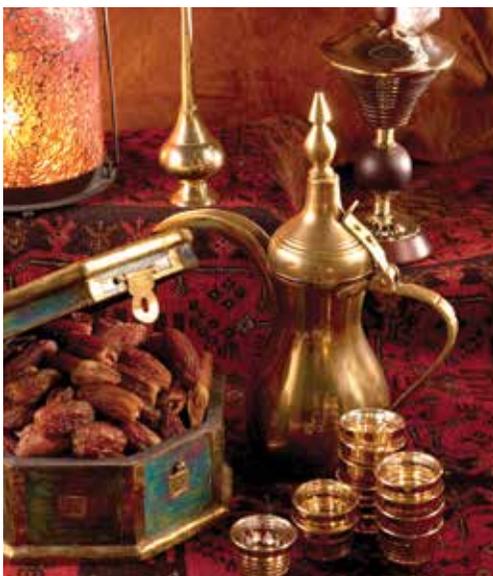
Mikhail Tenazas at the Airstream RV Resort in Ashar



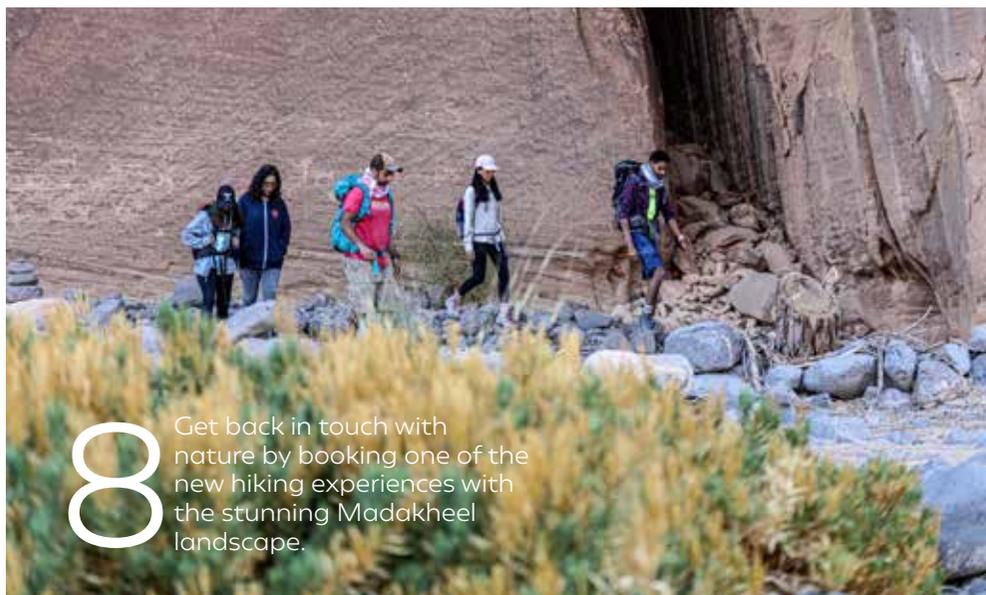
4 See the sun rise over the canyons "Waking up early to watch the sun rise over AlUla's majestic Rock Formations will definitely go down as one of my favourite travel memories," says Mikhail Tenazas, content creator and travel photographer (@thetravelpro, @welivetoexplore and @theglobewanderer). "The view from the airstream rv camp in the Ashar Valley, where i stayed, is incredible. AlUla has such a fascinating history and a very rich heritage that has been wonderfully preserved and still largely untouched by the outside world. Travelling here is like going back in time."

5 Visit the Dancing Rocks in the Raggasat Valley, so-called because these rocks are sculpted by nature and appear as if they are dancing together. The valley is a top spot for hiking.

6 Head to Ghameel in the evening and get comfortable on a traditional carpet so you can gaze up at the twinkling stars. Listen to tales of the past from the expert stargazer and feel connected to the universe.

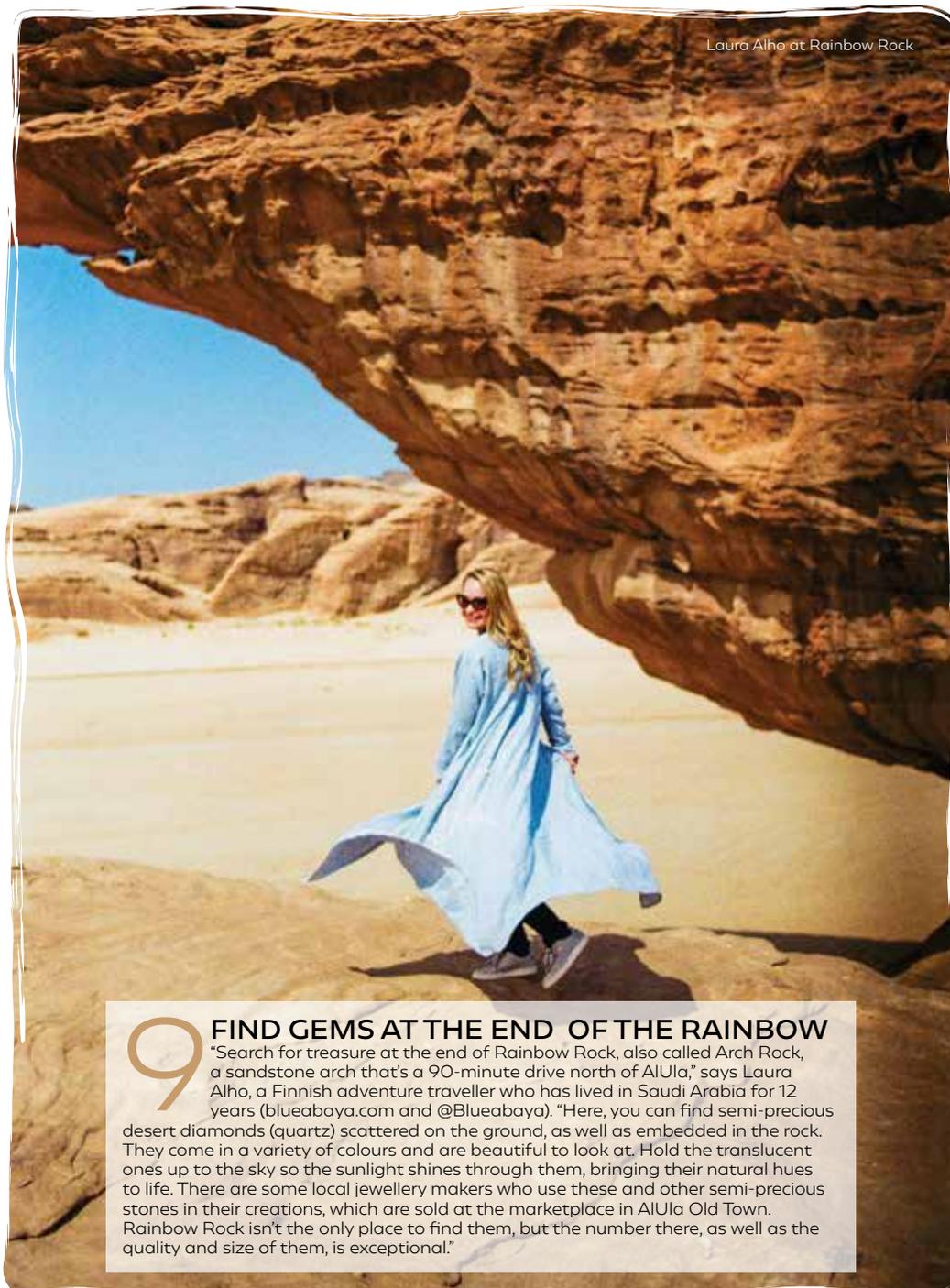


7 Take time out to mingle with the friendly locals at AlUla Old Town market square over a cup of freshly brewed Arabic coffee.



8 Get back in touch with nature by booking one of the new hiking experiences with the stunning Madakheel landscape.

Laura Alho at Rainbow Rock



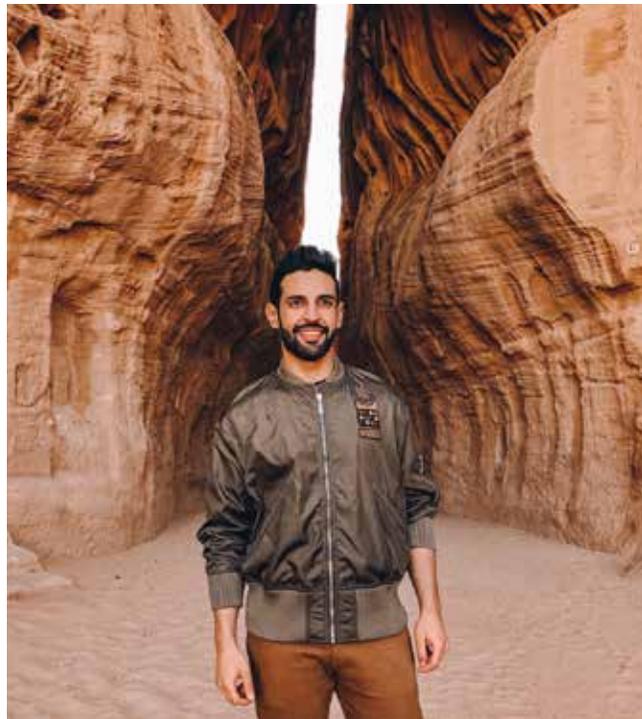
9 FIND GEMS AT THE END OF THE RAINBOW
 “Search for treasure at the end of Rainbow Rock, also called Arch Rock, a sandstone arch that’s a 90-minute drive north of AlUla,” says Laura Alho, a Finnish adventure traveller who has lived in Saudi Arabia for 12 years (blueabaya.com and @Blueabaya). “Here, you can find semi-precious desert diamonds (quartz) scattered on the ground, as well as embedded in the rock. They come in a variety of colours and are beautiful to look at. Hold the translucent ones up to the sky so the sunlight shines through them, bringing their natural hues to life. There are some local jewellery makers who use these and other semi-precious stones in their creations, which are sold at the marketplace in AlUla Old Town. Rainbow Rock isn’t the only place to find them, but the number there, as well as the quality and size of them, is exceptional.”

10 Make your way to Elephant Rock in time to see the sun rise, when sunrays and shadows dance on the rock faces.



11 Catch the afternoon sunrays at Maraya. This record breaking building provides the perfect lighting for your photoshoot of Ashar Valley.

12 Heed nature's wake-up call by watching the sunrise from your terrace while staying at one of luxury deserts resorts. (Turn to page 57 to see our accommodation options).



13 ENJOY THE TRANQUILLITY OF THE DESERT

Lose yourself in the natural maze of the rocky mountains of AlUla, says Abdullah AlJumah, travel writer and influencer (@aaljumah). "With the high altitude and intense proximity, it feels like Manhattan made by nature, but here you will only experience the tranquillity of the desert, and echoes of the calls of eagles roaming the clear sky."



14 UNPLUG IN THE GREAT OUTDOORS

"Mountain climbing is my favourite thing to do in AlUla," says Abdulaziz Albalawi, a photographer born and raised in AlUla (@Aziz.AIUla). "In a world flooded by screens, sometimes just taking the time to unplug and go outside can do wonders." If you want to go hiking in the mountains, please stay safe by requesting the services of a local, qualified expert to accompany you.

15 Find the perfect spot to sit and gaze at the Tomb of Lihyan son of Kuza at Hegra. Being beside this stunning tomb, which is a favourite among photographers, is a humbling experience.



Harrat Uwayrid



16 Watch artisans making crafts with palm fronds at the Handicrafts Pavilion in AIUla Old Town.

17 Feel a rush of adrenaline, and the wind in your hair, by zooming along the zipline at Harrat Uwayrid. (Bookable).

18 Get the perfect Instagram shot by asking your rawi to take you to their favourite selfie spots. Harrat Uwayrid, and the hidden canyons and rock formations, are the ideal backdrop for enchanting sunset photos.



20 For something truly memorable, take to the clear blue sky in a vintage aircraft, flying high above AIUla for a breathtaking view of this open-air living museum.

19 Take the Rock Art Trail at Hegra at night and go hunting for ancient petroglyphs guided by your rawi. The torches at night pick up details in the rock art not seen during the day.

SHARE YOUR STORIES
We'd love to hear about your best experiences in AIUla. Tell us about them via our social channels @experienceAIUla



Sam Kolder at Jabal Ikamah

21 EXPLORE WITH CHILD-LIKE CURIOSITY
“Walk through the narrow gorges in the rock clusters of Jabal Ikamah and imagine a time when humans roamed the land without the modern day technology we are all so used to today,” says Sam Kolder, a creative director and filmmaker @samkolder. “Our guide jokingly said that the etchings on the walls are like Twitter, but thousands of years ago. It was a way to communicate where to find water, tell stories and share art. What a way to live.”

Please note that while the majority of these experiences are available now, there are a number that are being unveiled over the coming months - turn to the What to Do section on page 34 for further information.

What to do
**READY,
SET,
EXPLORE**

Unlock the secrets of this open-air museum, where an exciting collection of immersive experiences and activities bring its stories to life – simply book online at experienceAIUla.com

HERITAGE TOURS

Must-do for any visitor to AIUla are the four main heritage site tours. On arrival in AIUla, you will be welcomed at a newly enhanced airport, and have access to air-conditioned transport to take you between the key sites and around Hegra. Alrowah (Arabic and English storytellers) are waiting to accompany you on your journey of discovery and deepen your appreciation of these incredible sites. Alternatively, you can explore at your own pace by using the Experience AIUla app – see QR code below. Before you visit, please see the latest details on what to expect and associated prices at experiencealula.com.

HEGRA

Visit Hegra, Saudi Arabia's first UNESCO World Heritage Site, and the largest preserved site of the Nabataean civilisation south of Petra. In addition to viewing Hegra's signature tombs carved from giant rock formations, you'll visit the historic Hijaz Railway station, peek inside a ceremonial chamber called the Diwan and take advantage of photo opportunities with stunning rock backgrounds.



Download our location specific interactive app

GETTING TO HEGRA

Your Journey to Hegra starts at the Winter Park where you board the air-conditioned coach to transfer you to Hegra Heritage Site. Arrive at Winter Park one hour prior to your tour start time to allow time for transportation. Parking is available at Winter Park free of charge at the designated area near the entrance of the park. Winter Park has a visitor centre to pick up your guide and map as well as a variety of food trucks to get you fueled up for the tour.

HOW WILL YOU GET AROUND HEGRA?

Once your bus from Winter Park arrives at Hegra Heritage Site, you will be guided to the Hegra Welcome Centre, where you will be greeted by a Rawi and offered complimentary Arabic coffee, some local dates and water. After a short briefing, you will walk outside and visit the Hijaz Railway Station and the buildings of the era, then you will be guided to the air-conditioned luxury coach that will transport you around Hegra. The air-conditioned luxury coaches operate continuously on a circular route around the site. Coaches will be stopping at key points of interest for you to take photos and learn more from the Rawi. You will finish your tour back at the Hijaz Railway Station, from where you will take the coach back to Winter Park.

LET'S BEGIN

First up is the **Hijaz Railway** experience, which will deepen your understanding of AIUla as

a prominent hub for travel and exploration. The historic station houses an original locomotive from a time when merchants and pilgrims traversed the land. Learn how the construction of the railway, which began in 1900, helped to modernise the way that pilgrims travelled. The railway is currently on the Tentative List for UNESCO World Heritage Site recognition.

UPGRADES AND ADD ONS

Upgrade your heritage tour in Hegra and Dadan by booking a **Vintage Land Rover** tour which seats 8 people or take a leisurely bike ride around Hegra. Electric bikes coming soon.

Next at **Jabal Ithlib**, a natural mountain outcrop to the east of Hegra, hone your knowledge of the inner workings of Nabataean society, from how they built their settlements to the ways in which they practised their religion. Peek inside **The Diwan**, a rock-cut chamber that was once a venue for sumptuous banquets, and a meeting room for the leaders of the city.

Use the Experience AIUla app to see the hall transformed to its former glory, complete with guests enjoying the feast. You will also find **The Siq** here, a natural narrow passageway through the mountains, perfect for a photo.

The next stop is **Jabal AlBanat**, one of the largest clusters of tombs in Hegra with 33 tombs that have skillfully carved facades on all sides of the sandstone rock. The name of the outcrop **Jabal AlBanat** refers to the number of tombs owned or commissioned by, or for women. There are examples of female owners or commissioners throughout Hegra, as well as references to female relatives within the inscriptions. Sometimes the craftsman who carved them were mentioned along with the date they were built and the King who ruled during that time. Many include a legal formula to protect the tomb, threatening punishment to whoever disturbs them or their contents.

Continue your journey of discovery at **Jabal AlAhmar**, home to 18 tombs, some of which have been recently excavated. The name refers to the unique red colour of the rock.

The last stop of the tour is the monolithic **Tomb of Lihyan Son of Kuza**, Hegra's largest tomb, measuring about 20.5 meters tall. Left unfinished, with rough, unsmoothed chisel marks skirting its lower third, it is at times referred to as Qasr al-Farid by the locals, meaning the "Lonely Castle" in English, because of its distant position in relation to the other tombs.

As your tour comes to an end, you will return to the Hijaz Railway Station, from where you will take the coach back to Winter Park.

KEY DETAILS

- Tour is approximately 2 hours.
- Please allow up to 3-4 hours for the transportation from Winter Park

and back.

- Visitors can download the Experience AIUla app for an immersive location-specific digital guide.
- Tours and capacity are subject to availability and COVID-19 restrictions apply.

HEGRA ROCK ART TRAIL

If you could leave a message for future generations and civilisations to see, what would you say? The Rock Art Trail will walk you through carvings and inscriptions that were left thousands of years ago by travellers, pilgrims and residents alike. Be enthralled by your Rawi (guide) weaving tales of travel, trade, offerings and warnings that now act as an open-air library of preserved languages spoken long ago. Learn how these people lived and the legacies that they left behind.

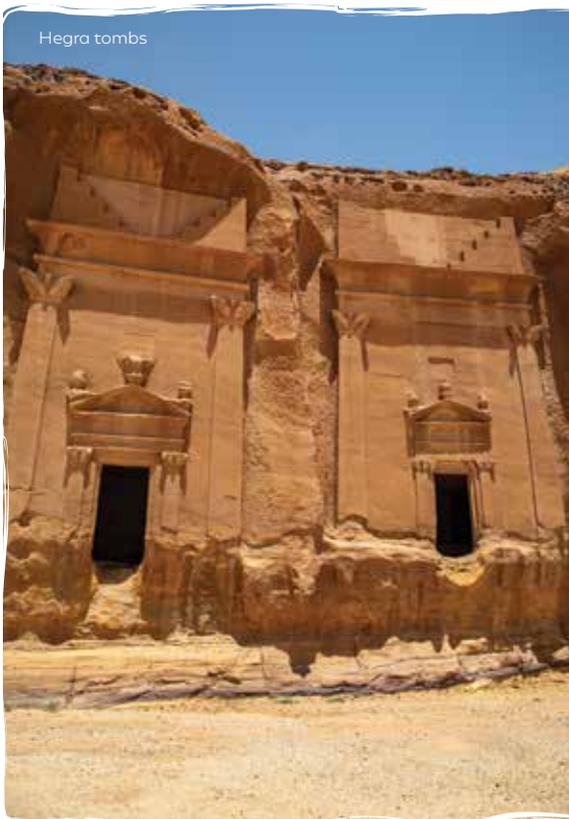
Interpretative signage and a touch and feel table will help bring the

stories to life. The 1500m track takes walkers on an elevated loop providing stunning views of Hegra. Visitors can choose daytime or evening for their rock art tour. The atmospheric evening tour includes torches for visitors to search for hidden details in the inscriptions.

LET'S BEGIN

The AIUla Rock Art Trail is a journey of walking and storytelling, a 1.6-kilometre trail past inscriptions and engravings set into the stunning mountain landscape. These clues to AIUla's past reflect a variety of languages and topics, deciphered by a Rawi, your guide on this journey.

To follow the AIUla Rock Art Trail, begin at Winter Park. Board the air-conditioned coach (be sure to arrive 40 minutes before your tour start time to allow for transportation). Your coach will convey you to Hegra Heritage Site.



Hegra tombs



Upon arriving at Hegra, your bus will stop briefly at the Hegra Welcome Centre, where you will be greeted by a Rawi. After a short briefing, the coach will transport you to the trailhead.

The experience isn't complete when the trail ends. On your return trip, you will stop at a lookout point for unforgettable views. Take a moment to enjoy the scene and snap a selfie with the magnificent view of Hegra in the background.

Following this brief stop, your coach will return to Winter Park via the Hegra Welcome Centre, creating the perfect opportunity for you to explore more of Hegra Heritage Site.

TOUR DETAILS

- Tour operates every Thursday and Friday at 7:30 PM.
- Duration: approximately 60- 90 minutes
- Children below 12 are not permitted
- Medium fitness level required
- Meeting point at Winter Park southern entrance
- We recommend you dress in comfortable hiking attire from clothes to boots/closed-toed walking shoes.

DADAN AND JABAL IKMAH

Start your journey through time at Dadan, the ancient kingdom of the Lihyanite and Dadanite civilisations. After exploring the ruins, a bus service takes you on a 10-minute drive to Jabal Ikmaah, an open library of inscriptions, rock art and petroglyphs set in a stunning desert canyon. Below, you'll find tour details, planning tips and what to expect when visiting these extraordinary heritage sites.

LET'S BEGIN

You will tour the extensive site between Dadan and Jabal Ikmaah in an air-conditioned coach. The Dadan and Jabal Ikmaah Tour starting point is at Winter Park where you will board the coach to the Dadan Welcome Centre.

At the Dadan Welcome Centre, you'll be greeted by one of the local Rawis and offered complimentary Arabic

coffee, some local dates and water and have a short briefing.

Explore the ruins of the ancient Kingdom of Dadan, one of the most developed 1st millennium BCE cities in the Arabian Peninsula. Dadan was the capital of the Dadanite and then the Lihyanite Kingdom, and was one of the most important centres of the caravan trade.

Head to the east of the city to see more than a dozen tombs cut into the red-rock cliff faces, including the famous Lion Tombs marked by seated lion sculptures and marking the burial site of a member of the royal family.

This area was once just a basin covered in dust and sand. Now it's a live excavation site and archaeologists are discovering more about this little-known era in Northern Arabian history.

NEXT STOP

Moving on to Jabal Ikmaah to examine the hundreds of inscriptions and writings on the cliffs and rock faces that date mainly to the Dadanite and Lihyanite periods. There are five different languages found in the inscriptions in Jabal Ikmaah including one which is the pre-cursor to the Arabic language. These inscriptions help decipher the way of life and the things that matter to the people living in AlUla during that era.

We are working hard to protect the heritage sites from any accidental or unintended damage.



Lion Tombs at Dadan

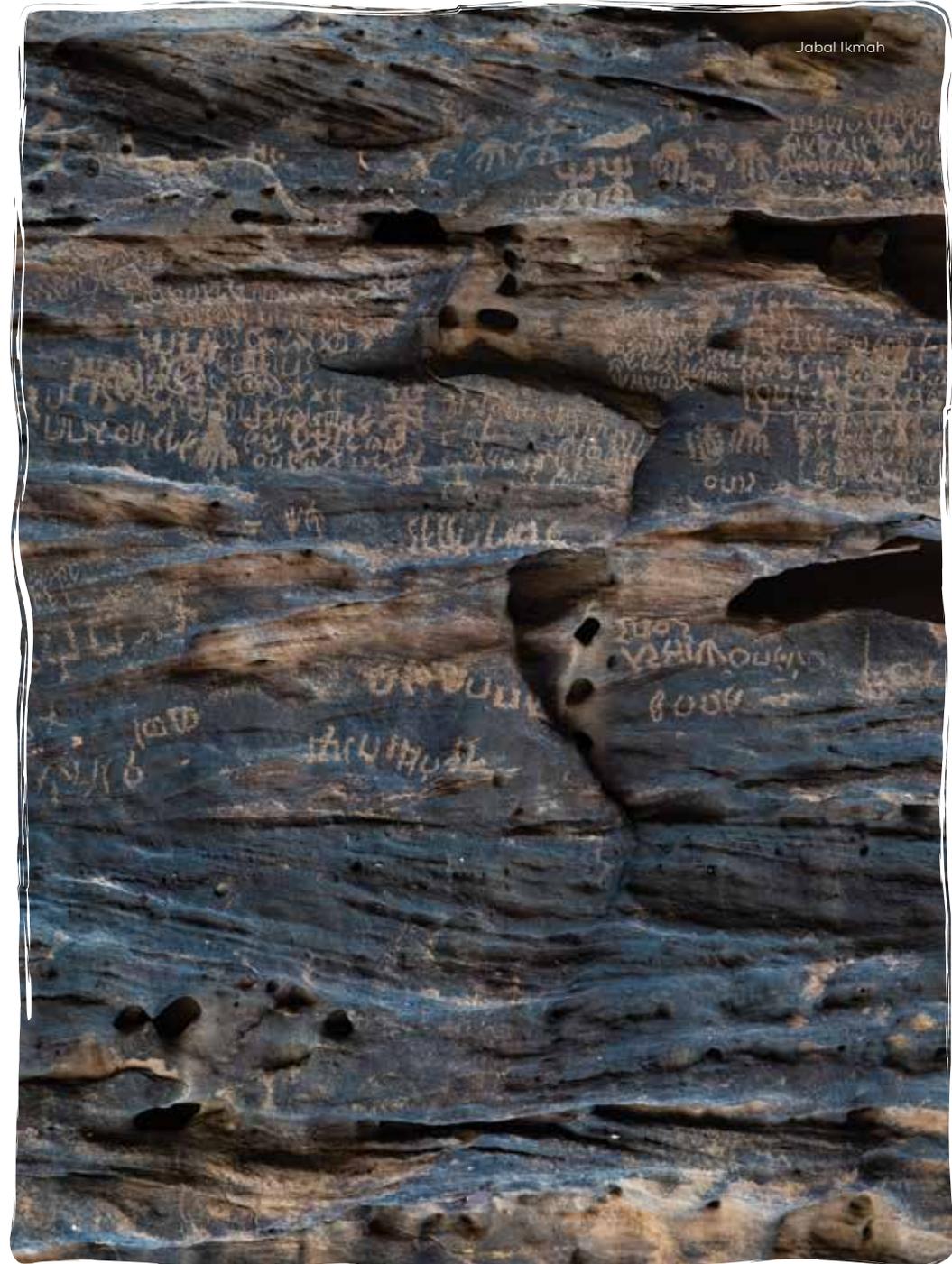
In order to preserve them for future generations, this tour does not include entry to any of the tombs and you can only visit and see them from outside. Please book online or at the visitor centre at Winter Park before visiting Dadan & Jabal Ikmaah to avoid disappointment.

TOUR DETAILS

- Your Journey to Dadan and Jabal Ikmaah starts at Winter Park where it is free of charge designated parking and where you board a shuttle bus to transfer you to Dadan.
- Arrive at Winter Park 25 minute before your tour start time to allow time for transportation.
- The tours are daily, with the first tour starting at 9:00 AM and the last tour starting at 3:00 PM.
- With the transportation from Winter Park and back, allow up to two hours for the Dadan and Jabal Ikmaah Tour.
- Visitors can download the Experience AlUla app for an immersive location-specific digital guide.

ALULA OLD TOWN

Get a glimpse into AlUla's not-so-distant past on the AlUla Old Town Tour. A Rawi (guide) will lead you through AlUla Old Town, where pilgrims, travellers and permanent settlers congregated through the ages. Inhabited from before the 12th century up until the early 1980s, AlUla Old Town offers researchers unique oral histories and living memory that the area's other heritage sites cannot.



Jabal Ikmaah

With 900 houses and 5 town squares, you can explore a maze of remnants of original stone and mudbrick buildings and enjoy views of an AlUla Castle dating back to the 10th century. Guest will learn about Old Town's settlers and pilgrims, as well as their motives and methods in the city's construction.

LET'S BEGIN

Your journey starts at the Winter Park where you board the air-conditioned coach to transfer you to AlUla Old Town. Arrive at Winter Park 30 minutes before your tour start time to allow time for transportation. Parking is available at Winter Park free of charge at the designated area near the entrance. Stop by the visitor centre and pick up your guide and map. Enjoy a variety of food and snacks at the food trucks available at Winter Park.

HOW WILL YOU GET AROUND ALULA OLD TOWN?

Once your bus from Winter Park arrives at AlUla Old Town, you will be guided to the Welcome Centre, where you will be greeted by a Rawi and offered complimentary Arabic coffee, local dates, and water.

At one of the town's mosques, your Rawi will highlight the interesting elements of the architecture and design, before leading you up to the roof for a photo of the mudbrick village and the surrounding oasis, framed by the majestic rocky outcrops. Next stop, Tantora Plaza. Centred around a sundial that was used as a marker for the beginning of the winter planting season, the Tantora Sundial was a pivotal tool for AlUla Old Town residents, dictating agricultural milestones and water management processes.

Climbing up the steps to the AlUla Castle you will have an opportunity to hear all about the significance of this citadel, which was built in the 10th century. It is one of the best places for panoramic views of AlUla, so here you will have the chance to enjoy the view, take some photos, and discover the history of the iconic building. As your tour comes to an end, you can take the coach back to Winter

Park, or make your way to the west side of the AlUla Old Town to the market street and the handicraft pavilion.

The handicraft pavilion at AlUla Old Town will provide an insight into the crafts and arts practised by the residents of the town over generations. Focusing on the palm frond weaving, local artisans provide demonstrations and examples of the products they make.

TOUR DETAILS

- Please allow up to 90 minutes for the AlUla Old Town Tour.
- Tours run daily from 9:00 AM - 6:30 pm.

ALULA OLD TOWN MARKET STREET

Very quickly becoming the vibrant heart of AlUla, Market Street, running alongside Old Town is now a thriving place to explore, shop, eat, and people watch.

Dining options include a mix of welcoming regional restaurants as well as more casual cafes for burgers or shisha.

Market stalls and shops are a mix of locally made souvenirs, arts and crafts and a curated selection of fashion, jewellery, homewares, entertainment and more. Highlights include the pressed oil store selling Moringa and other oils, the Athr Art Galley, the Madrasat Addeera store selling art made by students of the nearby school, Desert Designs homewares and jewellery, the dates, citrus and spice stalls and artisan soaps.

See further information in the eating and shopping sections.

HERITAGE TOURS HELPFUL TIPS

- Arrive at the Winter Park - if driving park your car free of charge at the designated area near the entrance - our staff will guide you to the meeting point to join the shuttle bus to your heritage site.
- Please arrive 25 minutes prior to your tour start time to allow time for transportation.
- Book tickets in advance online or at Winter Park or Visitor Centres and have your printed copy or e-ticket ready when you arrive to check in.
- Take nothing but pictures, leave

nothing but footprints. AlUla is an open expanse, and exposed to the elements, we encourage you to take responsibility of your health and safety and stay hydrated.

- We are working hard to protect the heritage sites from any accidental or unintended damage in order to preserve them for future generations. Tours do not include entry to the any of the tombs and you can only visit and see them from outside.
- Men and women are encouraged to dress modestly in public and avoid tight-fitting clothing.
- Women should cover their shoulders and knees in public, but do not need to wear traditional clothing.
- Visitors are advised to wear comfortable shoes and a hat and bring a sun umbrella if desired.

REFUNDS & REBOOKING

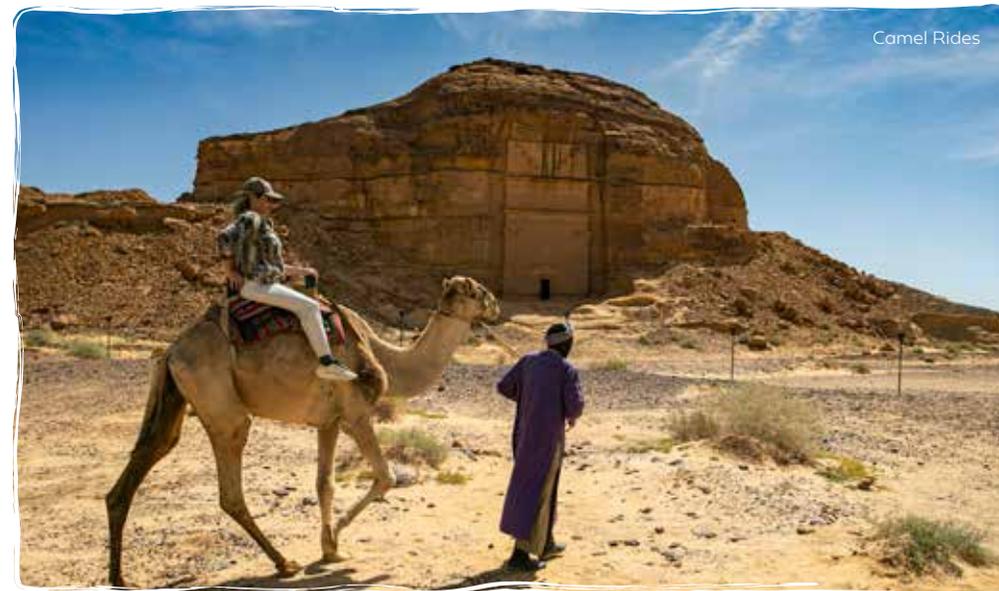
Direct Customer Bookings: We will gladly refund the ticket price of cancelled experiences up to 3 days before the scheduled tour.

TERMS & CONDITIONS

- Unfortunately, we are unable to refund credit card fees.
- Experiences cancelled within 1-3 days before your tour may be rebooked if timeslots are available but are not eligible for refund. We are unable to refund or rebook experiences cancelled on the day of scheduled tour.
- Tour Operator / Third Party bookings: Cancellation policies will be at the discretion of your tour operators.
- If you booked your experience through a tour operator, please coordinate with them on policies, changes and updates.



AlUla Old Town



Camel Rides

ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES

AlUla inspires you to embrace your sense of adventure, with a wide range of activities designed for those who want to get out in the open or out of their comfort zone. Whether by horse, camel or bike, or on a relaxing tour of the night sky, there are many ways to appreciate the history and magnificence of AlUla. Most tours are available five days a week (see experiencealula.com for details) from 8am to 5pm, until the end of March 2022. Group sizes may be affected while Covid-19 safety measures are in place.

NEW HIKING TRAILS

Experience new hiking trails led and organized by Husaak, designed to suit different fitness levels. The hikes vary in length and are some of the best ways to explore the vast landscape. New trails include:

- **The Road to Eldorado** - a 12 kilometre (7.45 miles) hike through a vibrant canyon with colourful rocks, many of which hold gold within them, hence the name of the hike. This is a medium-level hike, but towards the end there are some steep parts and sections accessible only by ladder. Suitable for those aged 14 and above, available

Sunday to Friday.

- **The Volcano Hike** - an exciting hiking experience to an extinct volcano, starting with an off-road drive to reach the starting point. Ascend to the ridge via a short but steep hike to reach the windy top of the extinct volcanic peak, before experiencing complete calmness as you descend. Loose rocks mean that you'll need ankle-supporting boots for this hike. Suitable for those aged eight and above. This six-hour hike is available morning and afternoon Saturday to Wednesday.

- **The Twisted Maze Hike** - an experience for extreme hikers, the Twisted Maze Hike is not to be underestimated! Taking you deep into the canyons of Madakheel, this day trip is ideal for those who like to explore remote places where few have gone before. The challenging route will involve hiking and swimming through the canyon using ropes and other expert techniques. One of our most difficult and rewarding hikes, the 8 to 10-hour journey is available Sunday to Thursday is not suitable for people afraid of getting wet, who suffer from claustrophobia, or who are averse to getting in very cold water

in winter months. Suitable for those aged 16 and over.

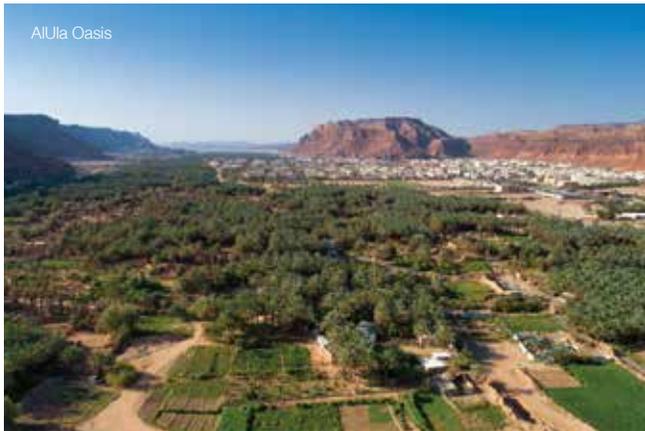
- **The Ridge Walk** - an easy 4 kilometre (2.5 miles) hike along a ridge offering spectacular views of Wadi AlUla, and a great option for families and groups looking to see more of the area's extraordinary landscapes. After an initial steep uphill climb, the trail levels out and the rest of the hike is easy. Depending on the speed and fitness level of the group, the hike takes between two and four hours, available seven days a week. Suitable for those aged eight and above.



New hiking trails

The Adventure Trail

Lace up your hiking boots and hit the mountains for a half-day journey along an 8 kilometre (4.9 miles) trail led by an expert guide through the Madakheel landscapes. Choose from sunrise or sunset, and trek over volcanic rock and soft sand, passing 2,000-year-old rock art and unique flora and fauna on this memorable trail. In winter, some sections of the trail will have deep pools of rainwater that reach up to the waist-line or above, so be prepared! Suitable for those aged eight and over, hikes take place in the morning and the afternoon. Available October to March, seven days a week.



The Oasis View Trail

Hike up to the peak of Alfath mountain for an unforgettable view of the AIUla oasis with its millions of palm trees spread below you on the four-kilometre guided trail. During this three-hour hike you'll enjoy the very best of what nature can offer between the magnificent mountains and valleys, wild flora, and majestic oasis.

Hidden Valley Hike

This secluded four-kilometre nature walk will make you feel at one with the peace and wonder of the Arabian desert. Follow your guide through dramatic canyons and secret spots, and marvel at the stunning views and desert landscapes. Suitable for those aged seven and older, available seven days a week October to March.

Helicopter Tours

Discover a completely different viewpoint of AIUla's spectacular landscapes from up in the air on a helicopter tour. You'll fly over seven of AIUla's most famous landmarks and heritage sites, including Jabal AlFil (Elephant Rock), Hegra, the Hijaz Railway, Maraya, Jabal Ikmah, Dadn, and AIUla Old Town on an exhilarating journey to remember.

- 30-minute tours take place in the morning and afternoon.

Adventure Hub

Located at the heart of the Adventure Canyon, the Adventure Hub is the start and end point for all Adventure Activities on the Harrat. Not only does it offer dining options and information points for visitors, but the Hub also boasts 180-degree views over AIUla.

- Open from 9am to 6pm daily

AIUla Zipline

Adrenalin junkies will love Saudi Arabia's most thrilling zipline is located here in AIUla, where you'll race at speeds of 100km/h over incredible landscapes at Harrat Uwayrid. And it keeps growing, with Warrior Group adding a new launch platform at the current landing site to ensure your adventure finishes in even closer proximity to the Adventure Hub.

- Open from 9am to 6pm daily

AIUla Via Ferrata

A series of challenging climbing points connected to various bridges and suspended obstacles along the way on this Via Ferrata experience built onto rocks and cliffsides in AIUla. You'll be connected to a safety system during this exhilarating aerial journey that allows you to move freely and explore along the route.

- Open from 9am to 6pm daily

Mountain Biking

Warrior Group's expanded mountain biking experience now takes riders to Adventure Canyon where the impressive natural surroundings offer the ultimate mountain bike routes.

- Open from 9am to 6pm daily

Adventure Park

The ideal spot for adventurers young and old, Adventure Park's interactive and educational experiences are both challenging and fun, perfect for families to enjoy together surrounded by spectacular landscapes.

- Open from 9am to 5pm and from 7pm to 11pm daily

Camel Trekking

AIUla's location on the ancient incense and pilgrimage routes means that camels have been passing through here for centuries. Now you can join a modern camel caravan to journey in their footsteps. Your trek will take you to an authentic Bedouin camp where you'll enjoy famed Arabic hospitality.

- Open from 9am to 5pm daily

Stargazing

The skies above AIUla paint the perfect canvas to discover stars, planet and more. Experience the enchantment of the desert with stargazing led by an expert



astronomer. Surrounded by mystical rock formations, gaze up at the blanket of stars that covers the night sky as you enjoy a traditional grilled dinner al fresco.

- From 6:30 pm to midnight daily

4x4 Sharaan Safari

This thrilling 4x4 adventure into the heart of the Sharaan Nature Reserve will take you to the extraordinary Raqasat, also known as the Dancing Rocks.

Passing spectacular scenery along the way in the comfort of your air-conditioned vehicle, sit back and enjoy the ride as your guide teaches you about this untouched place of natural splendour.

- From 7:30am daily



STARGAZING / MOONLIT EXPERIENCE

Let your jaw hang open in awe at the pitch-black sky dotted with brilliant stars, or the moonlit night with the moon looming large and luminous. Enjoy a traditional Bedouin set-up and dinner as your expert guide points out the constellations and how they relate to AIUla's unique culture and history. Approximately 4-5 hours From 8pm to 2am.

NATURE EXPERIENCES

AIUla is a place of extraordinary natural beauty, where improbable rock formations sit alongside heritage sites that speak of 200,000 years of human history. From sweeping deserts to ancient petroglyphs, and from lush oases to rich flora and fauna, there's so much to discover here. It's easy to find your way around AIUla, whether you hire a car and driver, hail a taxi, or drive yourself. Time your visits to the main heritage sites around sunrise or sunset when the light is at its most magical, and set out on foot or on a guided tour where even more secrets of our destination will be revealed by your expert Rawi storyteller guide. Our unmatched landscapes are awaiting your visit.

The Orange Path

A beautiful walking path lined with orange and citrus trees as an ode to AIUla's important agricultural heritage. A great place to visit during the winter Citrus Festival when workshops and various activities will be on offer.

AIUla Fresh Farm

At first glance you may be surprised to find so much green in the desert, but that's what you'll find as you tour this working produce farm. Pick fruit fresh from the tree, try the farm's dates, and sample juice freshly-squeezed on the spot as you sit in the shade of trees. You can also try your hand at tree-planting.

- Open daily by appointment from 9am to 5pm, except Sunday. Please call +966 582003880 to contact the farm owner prior to your visit.

Jabal Afil - Elephant Rock

Given the nickname Elephant Rock due to its resemblance to a pachyderm, Jabal Afil climbs 10 metres out of the desert sands into the Saudi Arabian sky, one of the most emblematic and instantly recognizable symbols of AIUla. Unlike the hand-carved rock tombs of the Nabataeans, the body and trunk were carved purely by nature,

Taste delicious dates

"The region's famous barni dates, which comprise approximately 75 percent of the date fruit harvest each year, are a must-try," says Nayef Alharbi, a local date farmer. "You should also sample the plump but firm mabroom date, which is extra sticky with rich notes of toffee. Machrook dates will satisfy the sweetest tooth with their sugary aftertaste. All varieties are highly nutritious."



with millions of years of wind and water erosion leaving their mark. Time your visit for sunset when golden light shines on this geological marvel, and take a seat at SALT, where a lovely atmosphere and good food combine, as you watch nature's show.

- Open from 4pm daily

AIUla Oasis

The Oasis has been at the heart of AIUla for centuries. Nestled within Wadi AIQura, the Valley of Villages, this lush haven has provided life to AIUla's residents, weary travellers, flora and fauna for thousands of years, making the region a cultural crossroads which ancient peoples chose as the place to establish their kingdoms. Today, as well as being home to 2.3 million date palms and 200,000 citrus trees, it's also where visitors can visit farms, take part in cooking classes, and enjoy pop-up concerts.

- Always open

EPIC EVENTS

From art to music to sport, AIUla has already earned a reputation as being an emerging destination for events, but this was just the beginning. This winter sees the arrival of four new festivals to bring even more excitement to the destination - Winter at Tantora, Art AIUla, AIUla Skies, and the AIUla Wellness Festival. Visitors to Winter at Tantora will be able to experience exciting equestrian events including the AIUla Desert Polo Masters and the Alfursan Endurance Race, as well as historical re-enactment shows and other cultural attractions. The spot is for art lovers as Desert X returns for a second series as part of Art AIUla which will also feature an art-focused supper. Aviation enthusiasts will love AIUla Skies when vintage aircraft take flight and hundreds of hot air balloons float at sunrise over the desert. And for those looking to focus on their physical and mental wellbeing,

the AIUla Wellness Festival will bring numerous healthy activities to the desert, including running events, fitness classes in the oasis, yoga, meditation, and mindfulness sessions.

These four main festivals will be enhanced by seasonal festivals, pop-up art installations, dining events, and more. Keep up to date with the announcements at experiencealula.com.

Maraya

The architectural wonder that is Maraya is a multi-purpose concert and entertainment venue and has already played host to many international artists and events. While access to the interior is currently limited to events, you can visit the landmark and capture remarkable photographs with the desert reflected in the mirrored cladding. There is also a brand new fine dining restaurant, Maraya Social, on the rooftop which is open daily.

Nadim Karam, On Parade, installation view at Desert X AIUla



WELLNESS EXPERIENCES

AIUla's spectacular natural landscapes, clean air, wide open spaces and calm energy set the stage for a variety of different wellness activities. Yoga, meditation, sound bath and mantra sessions surrounded by the silence of the desert are all on offer, and don't miss the AIUla Wellness Festival and Wellness Camp, taking place in March.

Yoga and Meditation

Located in the calm surrounding of AIUla's lush, green oasis, the Hidden Farm is a calming venue for yoga sessions, meditation retreats, sound therapy and silence workshops.

- Open from 9am to 5pm and from 7pm to 11pm on weekends

Sadu Escape

Blending with nature in a peacefully majestic location, Sadu Escape is the place to retreat for a few hours, surrounded by AIUla's mystical mountains. Located in a

beautifully secluded spot close to Camel Rock, listen to relaxed live music performances, refresh with delicious food and drinks, lounge in the tents and try your hand at a game of chess, watch the sky through telescopes from the moon beds, or simply wander around the beautifully natural spot where wellness is practically in the air. Dress comfortably and bring something warm for the evenings.

- Open from 5pm to 11pm most days

AIUla Wellness Festival March

The AIUla Wellness Festival invites visitors to get out into the open and stretch themselves with a range of healthy activities in spectacular natural settings focusing on physical and mental health. Challenge yourself with the Eco Trail community running event. Get your body moving with Oasis Fusion Fitness. Embark on a sensory journey into wellness with yoga, meditation and mindfulness with world-class experts at the Sensory Five Sanctuary or AIUla Moments

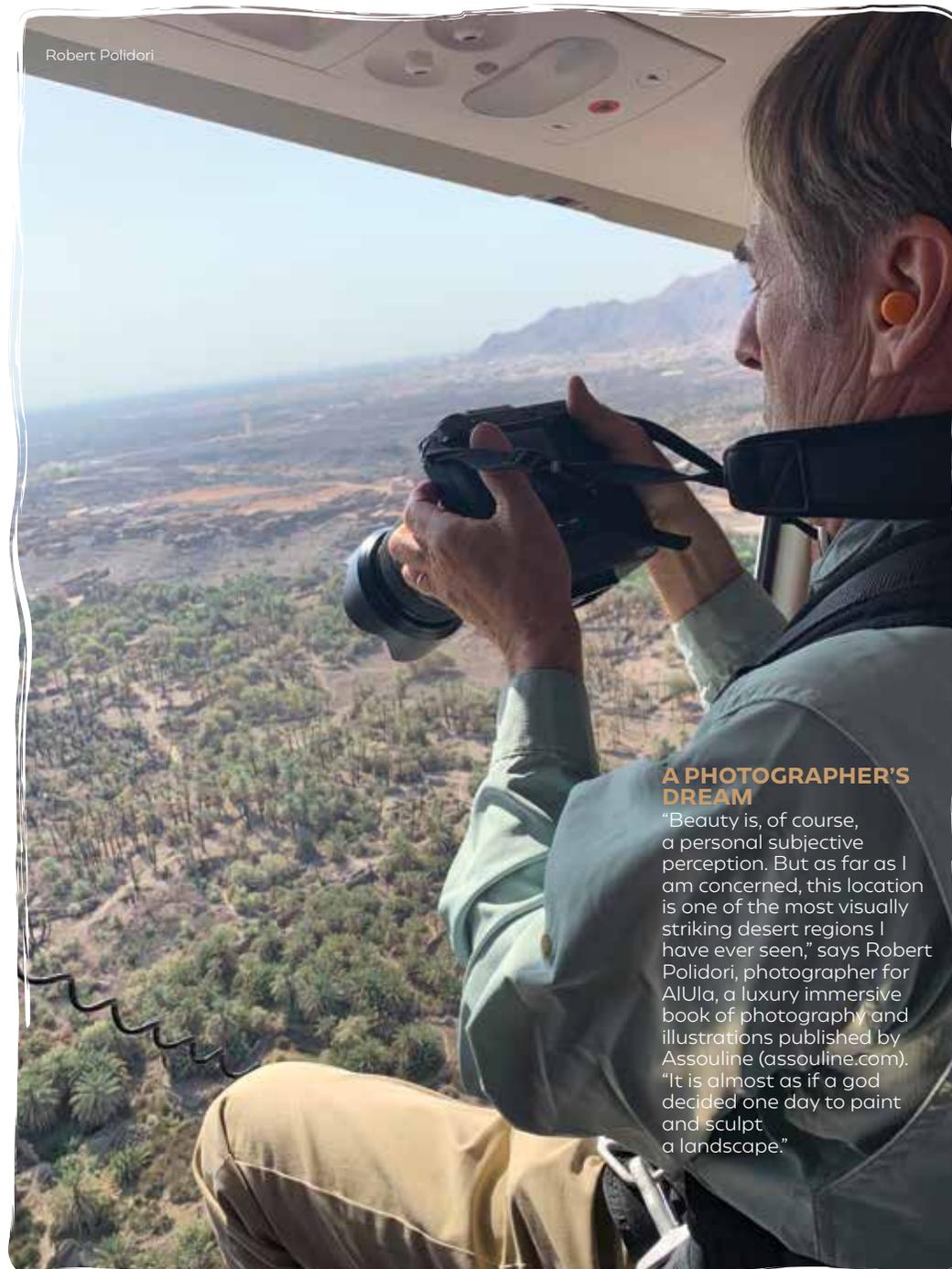
Garden. Take part in healthy cooking and food tasting sessions in the oasis. And work alongside the community by participating in programmes such as tree-planting, mud renovation and economic awareness.



Sound Therapy



Robert Polidori



A PHOTOGRAPHER'S DREAM

"Beauty is, of course, a personal subjective perception. But as far as I am concerned, this location is one of the most visually striking desert regions I have ever seen," says Robert Polidori, photographer for AIUla, a luxury immersive book of photography and illustrations published by Assouline (assouline.com). "It is almost as if a god decided one day to paint and sculpt a landscape."

Itineraries
**ROUTES
 WE
 RATE**

Make sure your days are packed full of wonder thanks to our suggested itineraries that combine the very best experiences



AIUla Old Town

IMMERSED IN HERITAGE

Peel back the layers of history that have shaped AIUla

MORNING

Start your journey through time at **Dadan**, the ancient kingdom of the Lihyanite and Dadanite civilisations, which was developed in the 9th century BCE. An active archaeological site, you can learn about the treasures uncovered from excavations and scour the rock faces for the famous Lion Tombs (tombs marked by lion sculptures, which indicate the resting place of elite members of society).

Next, take the 10-minute drive to Jabal Ikmah. Situated in a stunning desert canyon, this 'open-air library' has an impressive collection of inscriptions, mostly dating to the Dadanite and Lihyanite Kingdoms of the 1st millennium BCE.

LUNCH

If you're in need of a snack, stop to refuel at Winter Park where a number of fast-food chains offer quick and easy lunch options.

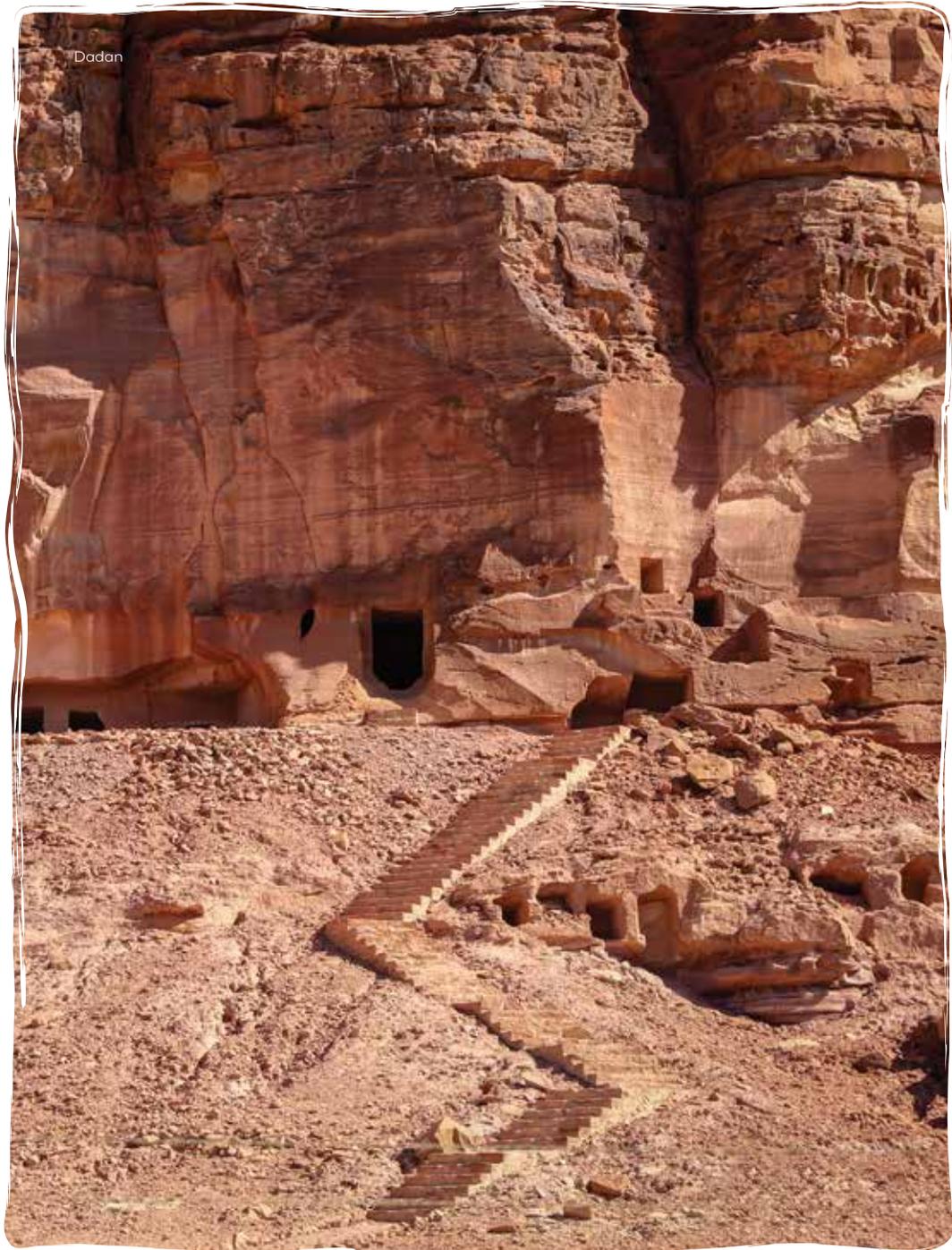
AFTERNOON

Set off for UNESCO World Heritage Site **Hegra**. The second largest settlement of the Nabataeans after Petra, this world wonder has over 100 well-preserved tombs, 94 of which have elaborately carved facades. Plus, there are a number of interactive experiences to take part in that bring the story of **Hegra to life**.

Duration: Approximately 6 hours, plus time for lunch and dinner.
Best for: All travellers – especially history and culture buffs.
Good to know: Breakfast, coffee, snacks and gifts are available to buy at cafés and shops along the way.

'Explore AIUla Old Town's maze of 900 tiny houses and shops that date to the beginning of the Islamic Period'

Make your final stop AIUla Old Town, which is less than a 30-minute drive away. Explore its maze of 900 houses that date to the beginning of the Islamic Period. Wander the shaded streets and see how communities once lived. Old Town is also home to a great selection of cafés and restaurants, ranging from outdoor spots for coffee and pastries to opportunities to taste traditional Saudi cuisine. Save some time here for browsing the boutiques, too. AIUla Old Town is home to a great range of shops selling artisanal crafts, homewares, Saudi fashion and art.



Dadan

*'Feel a rush of adrenaline
by taking part in the
adventure activities'*

THRILLS AND SPILLS

Early risers can seize the day by embarking on this thrill-a-minute escapade

MORNING

Lace up your sturdiest walking shoes and set off along the Adventure Hiking Trail at Madakheel. This picturesque trail, suitable for intermediate hikers, takes you on an epic tour of the desert around narrow canyons, gorges and cliffs. Once you've completed your hike, make the 25-minute transfer to **Winter Park** for a quick pick-me-up in the form of a cup of hot coffee from the food trucks. Energy levels restored, embark on the 25-minute drive to Harrat Uwayrid.

AFTERNOON

Feel a rush of adrenaline with your choice of a range of new adventure

activities. Whether it's seeing the landscape whizzing by from the safety of your harness on the zipline at Harrat Uwayrid, seeing the scenery from atop a camel, or enjoying a leisurely guided cycling tour - there are many great options for all.

Soften the pace by making the 45-minute journey to Shaden, where you can reflect on the day's activities at Elephant Rock. You'll admire the raw beauty of this distinctive monolith that has been naturally carved from weathering. At sunset you'll be rewarded by the sight of glowing rays bursting through the elephant's 'trunk'.

Duration: A full day of fun (approximately 8 hours), with some extra time to see the sunset.

This itinerary has plenty to keep young and energetic souls on their toes. If you like to venture off the beaten path, then this one's for you. Good to know: You're in very safe hands - the Adventure Hiking Trail the Cycling Trail and the Stargazing Tour is run by experienced adventure operators Husaak, which has a team of experienced guides to lead you on your way.



Elephant Rock



'Head out early to Elephant Rock to see the sun rise over this much-loved monolith'

NATURE'S BOUNTY

Leave the electronics back at the hotel and refresh body and mind with this route that will help you get back in touch with nature

MORNING

Ask your hotel to pack you up a breakfast and head out early to Elephant Rock to see the sun rise over this much-loved monolith. With that once-in-a-lifetime experience firmly ticked off your wish list, you can take the 15-minute transfer to AlUla Oasis. Here, you can explore at your own pace by taking the Oasis Heritage Trail from Dadan to AlUla Old Town past the summer farms. Smell the mint and jasmine and say hi to the farmers along the route.

LUNCH

End your walk through the oasis at Pink Camel. A firm favourite with

locals and visitors alike for its delicious menu featuring citrus and other local flavours and irresistible macrons.

AFTERNOON

Take a drive out into the Ashar Valley or Shallal Valley and admire the rock-strewn landscape with breath-taking views around every corner.

EVENING

Following a delicious dinner at Merkaz or Nakheel at AlUla Old Town, you can gaze up at the beauty of the night sky at Gharameel. Dark and mysterious, it is the perfect place for a spot of stargazing. With powerful telescopes, blankets and hot chocolate available, it's sure to be an evening to remember.

New in 2021 - Take a drive out to the stunning Sharaan Nature Reserve by booking a 4x4 Safari tour by Pangea and see some of AlUla's famous rock formations.

'It's like stepping into a painting, as the path you follow is characterised by generous washes of green and brown plant life'



CHASE THE OASIS

Follow in the footsteps of Bedouins by soaking up the highs and lows of this lush green oasis.

Get up early and join the Oasis View hike up to Alfath mountain peak to catch an unforgettable view of the **AlUla oasis** with millions of palm trees below you on this 4km guided trail. On the walk you will enjoy the very best that nature can offer, between the magnificent mountains and

valleys, flora and majestic oasis. Having worked up a well-earned rest and hunger, head to AIUla Fresh to enjoy the aromatic surroundings and a spot of lunch made up of farm-fresh produce. Linger a while, and even plant a tree to show your respect to the environment.

Duration - 5 hours, 3 hour hike and 2 hour AIUla Fresh experience.

Best for - adventure and nature lovers who like to earn their lunch.

Good to know - book the Oasis View Hike and AIUla Fresh Farm tickets from experienceAIUla.com



Where to stay

DARE TO DREAM

HABITAS AIULA

Located amid the desert canyons of the Ashar Valley, this community-focused, eco-friendly resort will immerse you in the environment, heritage and people of the AIUla region through a variety of culturally engaging, authentic experiences. Designed to blend with the landscape, parts of the infrastructure were manufactured at Habitas' facilities in Mexico using sustainable materials, and delivered and assembled on-site in order to minimise its impact on the environment.

After a day hiking, biking and adventuring around AIUla soothe your tired muscles at the Spa where in-and-outdoor treatments and facilities are available. Escape the heat in the dramatic infinity pool overlooking the valley, or soak up art and culture at the Desert X Pavilion showcasing local and international artists.

The onsite Middle-Eastern restaurant focuses on farm-to-table practices, bringing locally sourced ingredients to the fore, or try your hand at creating your own dishes with a cooking class led by a local chef.

Habitas' commitment to community involvement involves a number of projects, including sourcing handicrafts in collaboration with the Madrasat AdDeera School, a creative hub for nurturing local artisans.

Visit ourhabitas.com/alula for the latest details and bookings.

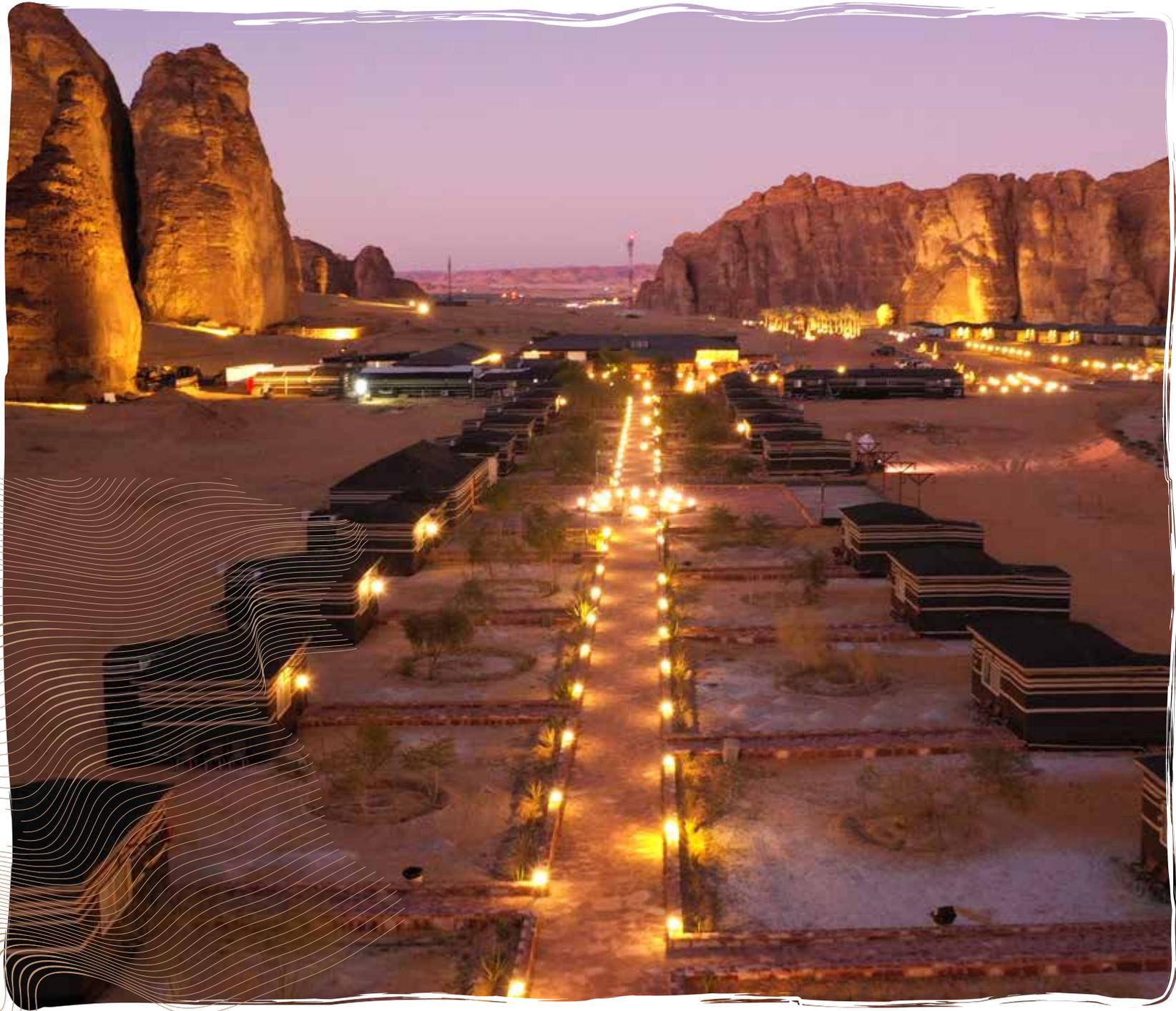


'This desert camp offers all the creature comforts you need for a memorable stay'

SAHARY ALULA RESORT

The charming tent-style accommodations of Sahary place you in the heart of nature, with all of the comforts and conveniences to create a truly memorable stay. All of the elegantly decorated rooms and suites come with a terrace, perfect for enjoying the early morning light or for reflecting on your day of adventure in the evening. The onsite Sahary Restaurant serves international cuisine throughout the day, and you can also grab a bite to eat at Desert Restaurant. There's a swimming pool for cooling off in, and a gym for those who want to stick to their fitness regime while travelling.

Visit experiencealula.com or call +966 55 105 3222 for the latest details and bookings.

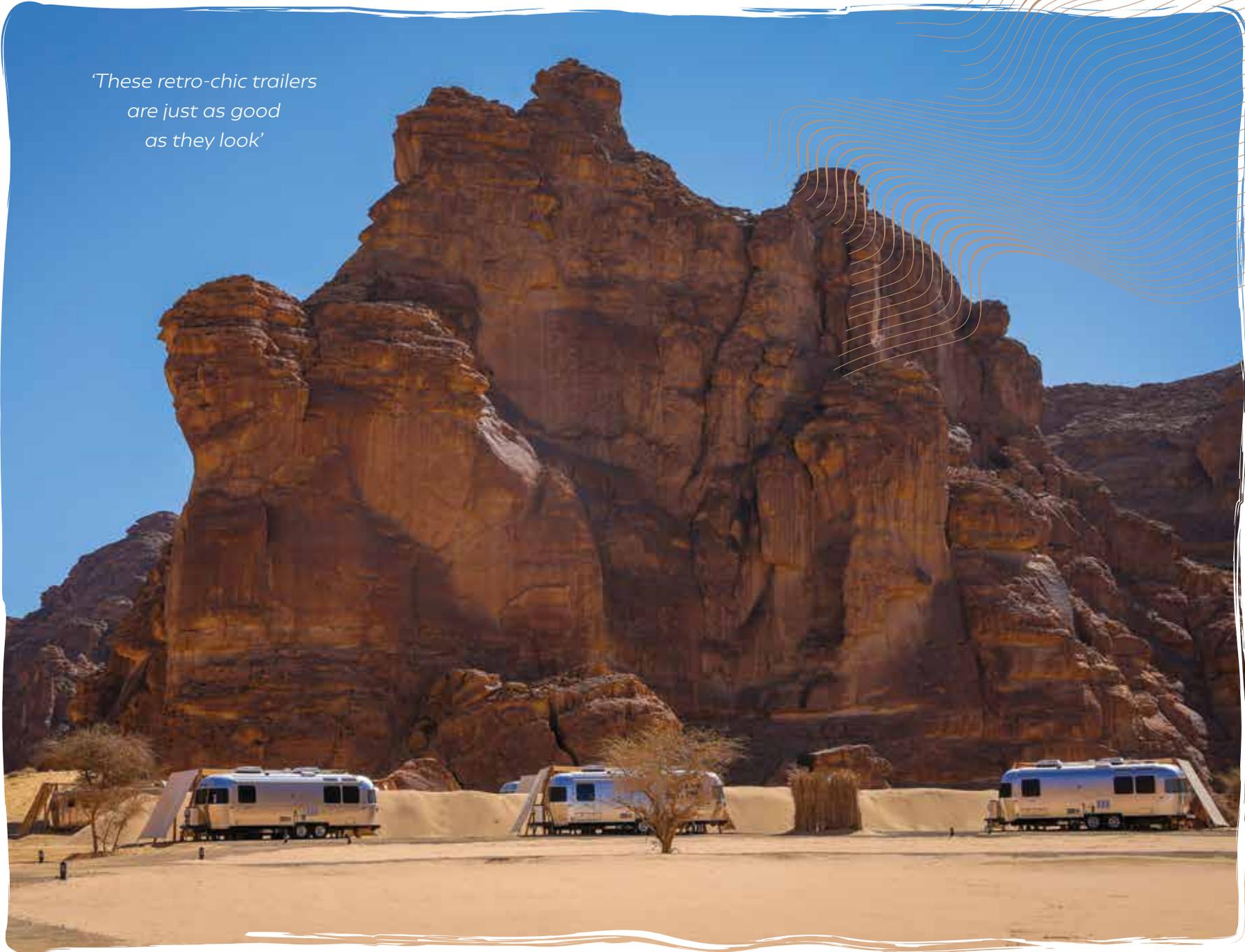


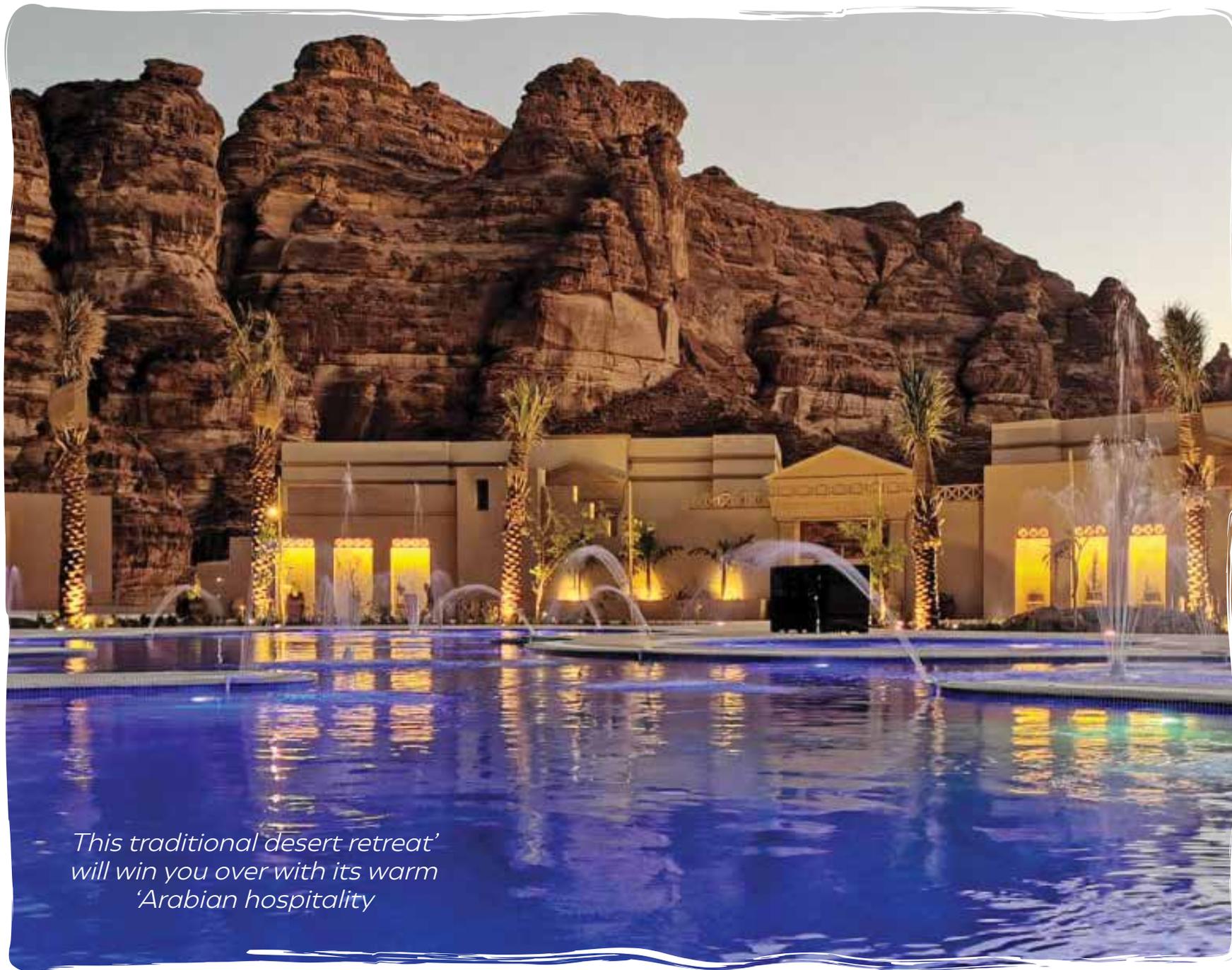


Caravans by Habitas

Operated by Habitas Resort AlUla these retro-chic Airstream RVs are in a spectacular location and are as comfy as they are instagrammable. With state-of-the-art fillings, en-suite bathroom, mini- kitchen and covered outdoor patio and access to Habitas restaurant and all the facilities of the hotel.

*‘These retro-chic trailers
are just as good
as they look’*





This traditional desert retreat' will win you over with its warm 'Arabian hospitality

Escape to a luxury desert resort or camp out in a retro-chic Airstream trailer surrounded by ALULA's spectacular scenery

SHADEN RESORT

This traditional desert retreat located amid striking rock formations will win you over with its warm Arabian hospitality and modern touches. All of the 120 deluxe rooms and villas here have private terraces or balconies, and for those who would like to make a splash, some even come with their own private pools. Large families should opt for the Royal Suite with six bedrooms, four bathrooms, and plenty of space to unwind. Shaden restaurant is open all day for Arabic and international flavours. After a day exploring the sights, take a dip in the swimming pool, or head to the cinema to watch a movie, open nightly from 8pm to midnight.

Visit experiencealula.com or call +966 50 604 3344 for the latest details and bookings.





'This luxury camp in Ashar is a firm favourite'

Banyan Tree AlUla

Located at the southern end of the Ashar Valley, each of the 79 accommodations at Banyan Tree AlUla resort has been specifically designed to seamlessly complement the extraordinary landscape and heritage of the valley, while ensuring a completely unique luxurious experience, in peaceful harmony with surrounding nature. All accommodations feature stunning tent accents and are tastefully furnished with Arabian-inspired touches, beautiful lamps and a tent covering to the exterior, which allows them to blend into the surroundings.

Wellness within the camp revolves around both mind and soul. Spa therapists focus on Banyan Tree's signature high-touch, low-tech approach, offering traditional techniques and remedies, while utilizing locally sourced herbs, plants and oils.

Regionally sourced and locally curated, dining within the camp is an event, showcasing an exciting and varied experience. Travel through authentic flavours of Thailand at Saffron, experience traditional and modern Middle Eastern cuisine at the Arabian restaurant, find something to cater to every palate at any time of day at Alban, or enjoy In-Tent Dining to soak up the ambience of your desert home.

Visit banyantree.com/en/saudi-arabia/alula for the latest details and booking information.



Where to eat **GREAT TASTE**

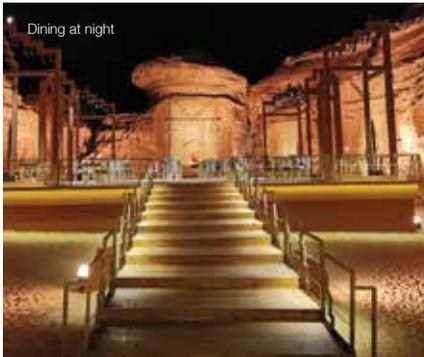
If all that exploring has given you an appetite, these vibrant eateries are just the ticket

DINING

From world-renowned chefs to cute Old Town cafés, Saudi flavours, innovative cuisine in extraordinary venues, and unforgettable dinners that will surprise and delight, you won't go hungry in AlUla.

MARAYA SOCIAL

One of Britain's best loved chefs and owner of multiple Michelin-starred restaurants around the world, Jason Atherton's Maraya Social is located on the rooftop of the extraordinary Maraya. Open for dinner from Wednesday to Saturday, the cuisine takes inspiration from AlUla with produce sourced from local farms, all served up in Atherton's signature style.



Dining at night

district, Circolo's authentic Italian dishes use only premium ingredients to create the flavours that will have you coming back time and again. Don't miss the artisanal pizzas fresh from the wood-fired oven.

PINK CAMEL

Pink Camel's lovely location in the AlUla Oasis and its traditional design with shady palm roofs makes this a great spot at any time of day. Start the day with good coffee and breakfast, or spend an afternoon surrounded by thousands of swaying palms as you indulge in Pink Camel's famous cakes, pastries and macarons. Open all day.

SOMEWHERE

in the vibrant new arts hub of AlJadidah. Set among the oasis this outdoor / indoor restaurant has a large capacity and is great for groups.

CIRCOLO

With a casual rustic setting located in the newly revived AlJadidah

SKLT

Also in AlJadidah, carnivores should head to SKLT where they can embark on a culinary experience exploring high quality cuts of meat, prepared and served on cast iron skillets. Sleek, stylish and fun, SKLT also has regular live music.

SUHAIL OLD TOWN

The first fine-dining restaurant in AlUla Old Town, Suhail offers high-end Saudi Arabian cuisine featuring traditional recipes and spices from the Arabian Peninsula, prepared in a time-honoured way with a contemporary touch. Open from lunch through to midnight.



SUHAIL OLD TOWN

FORCES OF NATURE

Drawing inspiration from over 200 millennia of human activity in AlUla, Forces of Nature focuses on the elemental beginnings of cooking, using open fires, natural resources, and hyper-local ingredients, with a menu developed by chef Tomos Parry of Michelin-starred Brat in London. Housed within a dramatic setting in the canyon, seating is informal and relaxed, with fire pits, lanterns and architectural installations. Perfect for both intimate dinners and larger groups. Located at the stunning Shallal area near Hegra, open daily for dinner.

ANNABEL'S

Annabel's, renowned as being one of the most elegant private members' clubs in the world, is bringing Mayfair glamour to AlUla. Setting up home for its residency at the stunning new Ikmah farm location, dinner at Annabel's is sure to be a memorable experience. Themed private dining areas change each year and create the backdrop for evenings of signature menu favourites from the club in London, and bespoke mocktails inspired by AlUla.

MERKAZ

With its atmospheric location in AlUla Old Town, Merkaz is a great spot to experience a taste of traditional Saudi cuisine. Serving breakfast, lunch and dinner, along with a selection of typical Saudi sweets and hot drinks.

RAHBA CAFÉ

Lanterns, cushions and carpets all add to the ambience of this outdoor café and restaurant inspired by the streets of Egypt in the 1940s. Outdoor carts offer Egyptian food, tea, coffee and honey, and traditional board games, dice and chess add to the fun. It's a living piece of history in the heart of AlUla Old Town. Open from morning to midnight.

NAKHEEL CAFÉ

Located in a charming part of AlUla Old Town on the buzzing Market Street, Al Nakheel Café is a delightfully relaxed outdoor venue for dining with views over



palm trees and the surrounding landscape. Open for breakfast, lunch and dinner, the café's friendly and knowledgeable staff will be happy to introduce you to their food, drinks, and shisha offerings.

ENTRECÔTE CAFE DE PARIS

Entrecôte is the newest fine-dining restaurant at AlUla Old Town. Originating from Geneva, the Parisian style restaurant is famous for its "Cafe de Paris" sauce developed by Mr. Boubier in 1930 with the recipe remaining a secret still today. The restaurant is known for its simple but irresistible single menu formula: faux fillet steak served with "Café de Paris" sauce, mixed salad and homemade French fries.

SAHARY RESTAURANT

Taste a selection of international favourites at Sahary Restaurant at Sahary AlUla Resort, which is open for breakfast, lunch and dinner. For reservations call +966 55 105 3222.

SHADEN RESORT

Boost your energy reserves by stopping for a casual meal at Shaden Restaurant where you'll find quality food, friendly service and affordable prices available throughout the day. The chefs cook up a storm in the kitchen, preparing everything from grilled meats to seafood, pasta dishes and traditional staples. For reservations call +966 50 604 3344.



Dining in the AlUla Oasis

HERITAGE GARDEN RESTAURANT

Serving a variety of different traditional foods in the heart of the city centre, Heritage Garden Restaurant is a great place to eat how the Saudis do, with sharing dishes served in one of the private rooms, or by settling down on the carpet in one of the traditional majlis-style seating areas which are perfect for larger groups.

DUNKIN' DONUTS

Producing over 30 million handmade donuts a year globally, Dunkin' Donuts is just the spot when you need a classic American-style sugar hit, with good coffee on the side.

SALT

With a spectacular location at Elephant Rock, Salt is guaranteed to be a hit. With a cult following, Salt's juicy Wagyu and crispy chicken burgers are cooked to perfection and sandwiched between soft brioche buns for a superbly tasty treat. Accompany them with sweet potato fries and homemade lemonade, and save space for desserts. Salt's ice creams are legendary.

MAYAZU

Located in the Shaden resort, MAYAZU is contemporary culinary art rooted in Japanese culture and blended with the most sophisticated international cuisine influences. The restaurant



NAKHEEL

serves modern dishes with the finest quality ingredients in a modern architecture and luxurious atmosphere. Find this exciting restaurant poolside of the Shaden Resort, with live DJs every Thursday and Friday.

OKTO

The restaurant set atop the beautiful outlook area of Harrat Uwayrid, serving amazing, authentic Greek cuisine at the edge of the Earth. Stunning views and delicious food are perfect for sharing with family and friends.

Nestled within this outlook, OKTO is an upscale, authentic Greek restaurant developed by top-rated chef, Ntinos Fotinakis. A range of dietary needs can easily be accommodated, from vegan and vegetarian to gluten- or dairy-free options. Arrive at OKTO before sundown to soak up the sights and sounds of the golden hour at Harrat Viewpoint, when the sky's orange glow adds a magical touch to everything you see.

LE MASCHOU

Le Maschou brings rich culinary flavours and a sophisticated ambience from the old alleyways of France to AlUla. An authentic array of wood-fire smoked meats will leave customers craving for more. Be welcomed by a soft, crackling fire complemented with ambient music, intimately designed to settle you in, slow and easy. The dreamy interiors are matched with a superior-

quality homestyle cuisine and a concoction of flavours, with just the right amount of indulgence. From homemade country bread and a bresaola melon board to wood-fired grilled meats with Provençal herbs.

MOON SHELL

Good vibes and great food make up the perfect hangout spot in AlUla. These organic, playful dishes will have your taste buds begging for more! Moon Shell is a peaceful café that serves delicious smoothie bowls, healthy dishes, fresh juices and the finest coffee. Using rich ingredients to satisfy the senses, Moon Shell makes vegan and vegetarian food accessible and fun. Combining fruits, nuts and natural



Maraya Social



MAYAZU

healthy sugars. No reservations necessary; walk-ins are welcome.

WACAFE

Mouthwatering croissants and scrumptious cinnamon rolls fill the cases at Wacafe. From deliciously crafted lattes and strong cold brew to beautiful, handmade ceramics, Wacafe's attention to detail delights. This AlUla Old Town café is open all day long. No reservations necessary; walk-ins are welcome.

ACME

ACME's unique burgers and delicious bites bring fun new flavours to AlUla's Old Town. From refreshing drinks to savoury snacks, an exciting menu awaits kids and adults alike. AMCE's signature burgers are sure to delight, with a wide range all served on colourful buns. The menu also boasts buffalo shrimp bursting with flavour, and more. Healthy salads, vegan, and vegetarian options are also available. Open for lunch and dinner

all week long, AMCE is a perfect spot to grab a bite in Old Town.

LE MOULIN BAKERY

Delicate French pastries and delicious coffee are served all day long at Le Moulin Bakery in AlUla's Old Town. Inspired by sophisticated French cafes. From

various flakey croissants and cakes to classic madeleines, guests will find the perfect pairing for breakfast or a little afternoon. No reservations necessary; walk-ins are welcome. Suitable for people of determination; the ground floor is easily accessible.



OKTO

SHOPPING

No one leaves AlUla without some incredible memories, but if you're keen to take home some gifts and souvenirs as well, there are plenty of shops, boutiques and stores offering locally produced and one-of-a-kind items. From dates grown in the AlUla oasis to natural soaps and candles, Saudi fashion, hand-crafted ceramics, furniture and much more, you'll definitely need to leave a little extra room in your suitcase. These AlUla Old Town boutiques and market stalls can all be found in Market Street, which has become the place to be in AlUla for shopping.

DESERT DESIGNS

A visit to this lovely boutique is like a journey through Saudi design. specialising in heritage pieces, the store is filled with items made

from locally-sourced materials and crafts made by AlUla residents. Handcrafted artisanal wooden furniture, Bedouin silver antiques, Najdi doors and palm-weave items are just some of the treasures you'll find at Desert Designs.

SINDI THOBE

If you're looking to pick up some traditional Saudi clothing while you're here, look no further. Sindi's collection of high-quality tailored thobes is enhanced by modern touches and designs. The store's collection includes headwear, vests, homeware, shoes and accessories, all produced in Saudi Arabia's Western Province and selected to suit the landscapes of AlUla.

GHAZAL SOAP

Ghazal specializes in handcrafted soaps made locally in AlUla from natural, organic oils and herbs.

Ingredients include olive and coconut oils as well as shea and cocoa butters, complemented by sidr, henna, lemon and orange for a true scent of AlUla. Beeswax candles are also available.

ARAM RISN

Aram Risn's collection of resin giftware is all designed to express the identity of AlUla. Motifs include local symbols such as plates of citrus fruit, dates, wheat and stones, as well as Lihyani calligraphy. Each piece is crafted by hand, and items can also be customised for a truly one-of-a-kind memory of AlUla.

PHOTO SHOP

Photographer Abdul Majeed Saleh Al-Balawi's store offers a wide range of landscape, heritage and aerial photography of AlUla in multiple formats, as well as a selection of antique cameras. Visitors can also do a shoot with



Market Stall in AlUla Old Town

Abdul Majeed in AlUla Old Town for a collection of unique photos to take home.

MADRASAT ADDEERA AT THE OLD TOWN

This store in the Old Town functions as an exhibition space displaying products from Madrasat Addeera, a multi-disciplinary arts centre focusing on developing traditional handicraft skills. Items produced by the centre's artisans include ceramic vases and mugs, earrings, necklaces and rings, embroidered bags and face masks, fans and carpets woven from palm leaves, notebooks, and engraved pieces of stone and wood, all handmade in AlUla.

VIRGIN MEGASTORE

An exciting shopping option in AlUla Old Town, Virgin Megastore stocks a wide range of books, gadgets, toys and electronic items, some of which are made locally. If you're looking for a fun, up-to-the-minute gift item, this is the place for you.

HOUSE OF OTTA

Fans of pottery, porcelain and glassware will love House of

OTTA where a selection of items focusing on quality of design, materials and the spirit of Saudi Arabia has been lovingly curated. Look out for limited edition pieces exclusive to AlUla.

GHOSSN ALBAN APIARIES FOR HONEY SHOP

Take home a true taste of AlUla from the only shop specialising in rare local honey. Varieties on offer include citrus honey from AlUla's orchards, frankincense honey, and honey based on a variety of plants that grow in the AlUla mountains.

DANAT ALMADAYIN DATES SHOP

The history of AlUla is linked to date production, and the beautiful Old Town location of this store provides the perfect place to learn about locally grown dates. All the dates here are organic and make for lovely gifts to take home.

FAKHAMAT ALJALLABEYA SHOP

Fakhamat AlJallabeya Shop is filled with Saudi women's fashion, including abayas, scarves, masks and jallabeya full-length dresses. A great place to learn about Saudi style and to find a piece to wear long after you leave AlUla.

OUTSIDE OF ALULA OLD TOWN

CULTURAL HERITAGE SHOPS

Located within the heritage sites, these boutiques stock a wide variety of high-quality souvenirs and homewares, including artisanal ceramics, leather accessories, notebooks, t-shirts, caps, gold and silver jewellery and more, all celebrating the icons, patterns and designs inherent in AlUla's heritage sites and natural geological landscapes. The flagship store in Hegra has the largest selection, and the other three stores in Dadan, Jabal Ikmah and Old Town all sell site-specific souvenirs.

ALULA CITY CENTRE STORES

AlUla City Centre is the place to go to pick up essentials you might need on your travels, or to browse everything from electronics to everyday homewares. You'll find a range of international and local brands stocking pretty much everything you could need.



Cultural Heritage Store, Hegra

Future developments ON THE HORIZON

There are a number of mindful developments in the pipeline that will make you want to plan a return visit to AIUla. Here's some insider intelligence...

AMAN RESORTS

If you're already a fan of Aman Resorts you'll be pleased to know that the brand is making its Middle East debut in AIUla. Aman will develop three distinct resorts of architectural excellence. First up is a spa concept resort featuring 30 luxury tents, which is being developed within a secluded and tranquil mountain valley close to many of AIUla's main cultural and heritage areas. If a room with a view is your priority, you'll gravitate towards the second resort, which promises a coveted address surrounded by awe-inspiring natural beauty. The third resort will have a desert ranch look and feel, with panoramic landscape vistas. Expect distinctive yet considered designs, but be prepared to wait: these resorts will welcome their first guests in 2023.

SHARAAN NATURE RESORT BY JEAN NOUVEL

Deep in a valley of the Sharaan Nature Reserve, an exciting new resort by Pritzker Prize-winning architect Jean Nouvel is taking shape. While detailed plans for this newcomer are still under wraps, we do know that it'll place you deep inside the tranquil reserve. Furthermore, it will be a lesson in how modern architecture can coexist with nature and support sustainable development. As Nouvel says: "AIUla is a museum. Every wadi and escarpment, every stretch of sand and rocky outline, every geological and archeological

These images: Sharaan Nature Resort by Jean Nouvel



Ateliers Jean Nouvel © JN





site deserves the greatest consideration. It's absolutely vital we keep all its distinctiveness and conserve its attractiveness, which largely rests on its remote and occasionally archaic character. We have to safeguard a little mystery as well as the promise of discoveries to come."

The resort will offer suites and villas, a number of restaurants and a summit centre. There will also be a collection of private villas for sale.



Top and above : Ashar Resort by Banyan Tree

ASHAR RESORT BY BANYAN TREE

The existing Ashar Resort will be expanded to add 47 new high-end tents into the fold. Operated by Accor, under the Banyan Tree brand, the luxury resort will be transformed into a hospitality haven with a total of 79 impressive tents, as well as a lavish spa and several gourmet restaurants.

SHARAAN NATURE RESERVE

Conservation is key in ALULA, and the area has an important role to play in Saudi Arabia's vision to preserve its natural assets. As such, a team of environmental conservation experts is working hard to re-establish the rich variety of native plants and wildlife that once flourished here. The goal is being realised through the Sharaan Nature Reserve project, which aims to set a standard in the region for re-balancing the fragile desert ecosystem. It is located in the canyon area of

Sharaan, where red-rock canyons meet steep-sided ravines, wide valleys and open desert areas with scattered rocky outcrops. Over time, the flora has been nibbled away by domestic livestock but it is now being nurtured back to its former glory. Once this has been achieved, there is a huge opportunity to re-introduce a number of native flora and fauna species, including indigenous acacia trees, the Nubian ibex, red-necked ostrich and Idmi gazelles, as well as larger predators such as the Arabian leopard. After a successful pilot reintroduction in 2019, further animal releases are planned for 2021 and 2022, and the animals will be closely monitored. The Nature Reserve is not yet open to the public, but once the planning is completed, a specially trained team of rangers, including members of the local community, will be its guardians.



Maraya concert and entertainment venue

Beyond AlUla TO ALULA AND BEYOND

Whether it's city, desert or sea you're after, these nearby destinations are the perfect add-ons to your stay in AlUla

KHAYBAR

AlUla's neighbouring county Khaybar is also blessed with imprints of past civilisations. The area stretches 656 km² and is home to key archaeological sites, such as old town forts, keyhole Stone Age burial sites and historical oases. It also has a captivating volcanic landscape home to the White and Black Volcano and its lava fields known as 'haraat'. The expansive underground network of lava caves carries basalt lava for hundreds of miles. It's an active volcano, although the most recent recorded eruption took place between 600-700 CE. Currently, the focus is on preserving the historical sites, with plans in place to make it easier to access and travel between the main attractions. Developments in the area will give rise to lots of exciting ways to discover Khaybar, including aerial tours. Check experienceAlUla.com for more information.

How to get there: Approximately 220km (just over a 2-hour drive) from AlUla.

THE RED SEA

King Abdullah Economic City
Discover Saudi Arabia's Red Sea delights at King Abdullah Economic City (KAEC). This modern hub is a hive of activity with luxury hotels, spas, glamorous marinas and a wide range of fun activities on offer.

'Khaybar is blessed with imprints of past civilisations and a captivating volcanic landscape'

Spend a relaxing day soaking up the sun at Yam Beach, or take a swan paddleboat out with the kids at the Marina Canal. There are watersports to suit all skill levels at Lagoona Adventure, mini golf at Juman Park and a challenging 700-metre-long karting track to whizz your way around. Culture seekers can take a walking tour of the Art District, which has a fantastic showcase of graffiti, caricatures and more by local artists. **How to get there:** KAEC is approximately 575km from AlUla (just over a 6-hour drive).

UMLUJ

This small coastal town is often referred to as 'the Maldives of Saudi Arabia'. Comprising 104 little islands, it is a top spot for scuba diving and snorkelling. You'll find fringing reefs, such as Jabal Hassan, just off the sandy beaches, and you may even spot Hawksbill turtles, dolphins and dugong sea cows. The warm waters are home to more than 1,200 fish species and 300 species of hard coral – enough to

give the Caribbean a run for its money. Go island hopping, tour the nearby mango farms and pencil in enough time to make the hour-long inland drive to Harrat Lunayyir, a black lava field peppered with craters and cones.

How to get there: Approximately 310km from AlUla (roughly a 3-hour 40-minute drive).

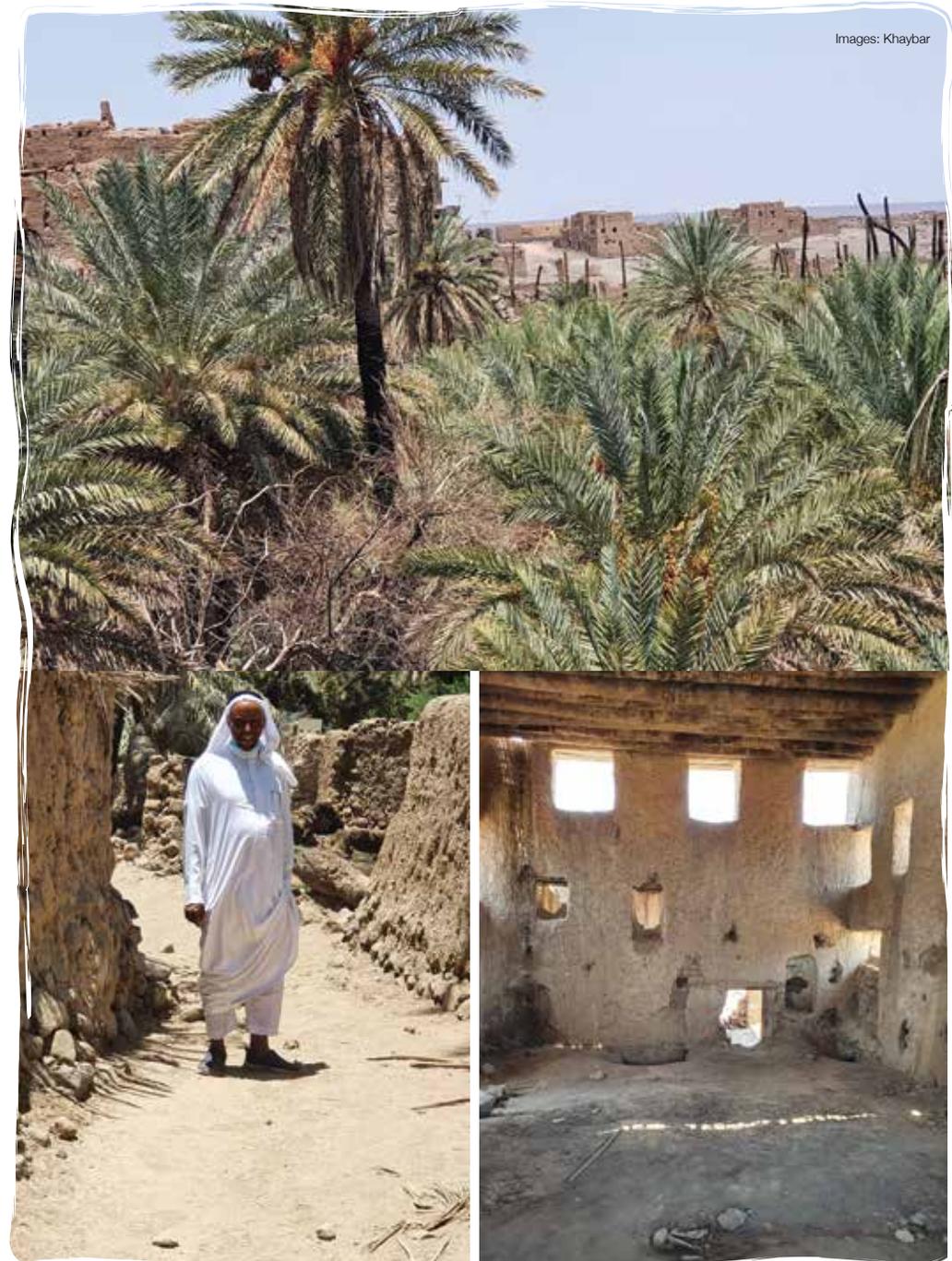
NEOM - ONE TO WATCH

Emerging destination Neom is a cornerstone of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030. The forward-thinking mega-city, which is 35 times the size of Singapore, is situated in the northwest of the Kingdom, on the Red Sea, near to the borders of both Egypt and Jordan. Its unique geographical location affords Neom a temperate climate that's roughly 10°C (50°F) cooler, on average, than the rest of the GCC. It is being built from the ground up to include towns and cities, ports and enterprise zones, research centres, sports and entertainment venues, as well as top tourist attractions. Once completed, it's expected to attract more than a million people from around the world to live and work there.

How to get there: Approximately 415km from AlUla (roughly a 4-hour 45-minute drive).

ALWAJH

You can admire traditional Hijazi architecture in AlWajh. The city is flanked by unspoilt beaches to



Images: Khaybar

the north and south, and there are several historical monuments to discover. Also on your itinerary should be Al-Zareb Castle in the mountains, which was once a resting place for pilgrims.

How to get there: Approximately 245km from AlUla (around a 2½-hour drive).

JEDDAH

This historic city, a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 2014, is a vibrant mixture of traditional architecture, atmospheric souks, delicious cuisines and high-end resorts dotted along the picturesque coastline.

Architecture fans will have a field day in the historic district of Al-Balad. The cobblestone streets are lined with traditional houses offering a fantastic display of the Hijazi architecture of the old city – think bay windows overlaid with intricate wooden latticework and ornate coral masonry.

You can shop for keepsakes along Gabel Street Souk, which is brimming with boutiques selling handicrafts, spices, fabrics and traditional clothing.

Jeddah has plenty of modern attractions, too. Jeddah Tower, which will be the world's tallest tower, is being built there.

Meanwhile, the waterfront district of Jeddah Corniche calls. Here, you'll find Atallah Happy Land Park, an amusement park with various rides and games, as well as Fakieh Aquarium. After the sun has set, head to the 312m-high King Fahd's Fountain (the world's largest) to see its burst of water bathed in colourful lights.

How to get there: Approximately 680km (roughly a 7½-hour drive) from AlUla. Or, you could fly into King Abdulaziz International Airport (JED).

RED SEA CRUISES

Want to stretch your sea legs? You could roll your Red Sea adventures into one amazing cruise that will take you to the most popular stop-offs, as well as some secluded spots. Either set off on a bespoke itinerary on a yacht, or hop aboard a luxury cruise ship. Red Sea Spirit offers two cruise itineraries. The first spans three nights (four days),



departing from King Abdullah Port in KAEC, spending a day in both Yanbu and Ras Abyadh, followed by a day at sea, before returning to KAEC on the fourth day. The second itinerary, a four-night trip (five days) also departing from King Abdullah Port, takes you to Neom, Magna, Yanbu, Ras Abyadh and back to KAEC on the fifth day. To find out more, contact Red Sea Spirit on +966 800 897 1419 or redseaspirit.com.

TABUK

Tabuk is the capital city of the Tabuk Region in northwestern Saudi Arabia and the largest city in the north of the Kingdom. Situated close to the border with Jordan, it is known as the northern gateway to the Arabian Peninsula. It's sure to deliver a fantastic introduction, with its roster of important monuments and attractions to discover, many of which speak to the rich history of the region.

Traverse the sandy dunes in a four-wheel drive at the Al-Zeeta Mountains, take a trip to the town of Magna to visit the 12 Springs of Prophet Moses, and head to Ras Alsheikh Hamid to see the famous Catalina seaplane wreckage that was abandoned on the beach in 1960.

Tabuk is also known for its beautiful beaches, and you can

count on the locals to teach you the steps to the traditional Sesameya dance.

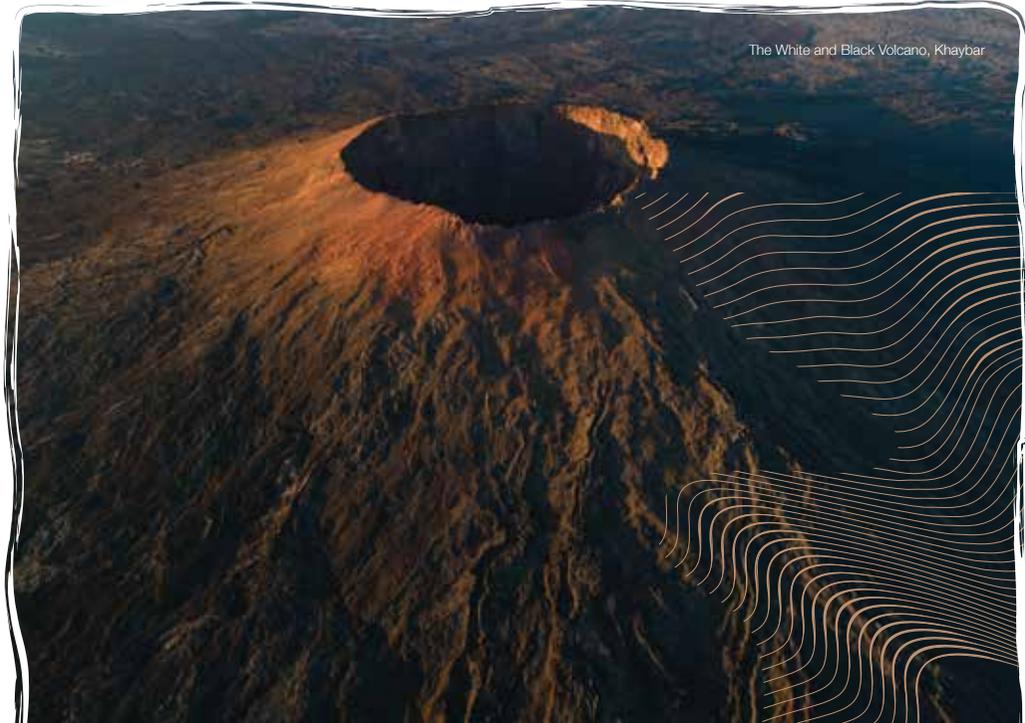
How to get there: Approximately 360km from AlUla (roughly a 3-hour drive)

MEDINA

Saudi Arabia's second holiest city, Medina, is an important Islamic pilgrimage site, home to the striking green-domed Al-Masjid an-Nabawi

(The Prophet's Mosque). It is also the site of Masjid Quba, the first mosque in the history of Islam, and Masjid al-Qiblatayn, where Muhammad (PBUH), the last Islamic prophet, received the command to change the Qibla (direction of prayer) to Makkah. Other notable landmarks include the historic Seven Mosques (Sab'u Masajid), and Mount Uhud (north of Medina) where the Battle of Uhud took place. There are lots of hotels in the city centre. Bear in mind that Nabawi Square, where Al-Masjid Al-Nabawi is located, is only open to Muslims.

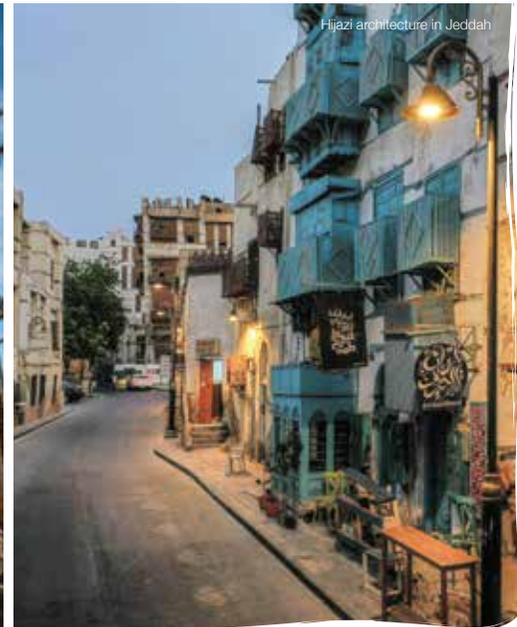
How to get there: Approximately 330km from AlUla (roughly a 3-hour 40-minute drive). Or, you can fly into Prince Mohammed Bin Abdulaziz International Airport (MED).



The White and Black Volcano, Khaybar



Tabuk Castle



Hijazi architecture in Jeddah

Useful information
NEED TO KNOW

Handy information, at your fingertips

VISITOR INFORMATION

To find the latest information and advice use the Visitor Centres at Winter Park, Dadan/Jabal Ikmah and Hegra. Information desks are also located at AIUla International Airport, as well as at Shaden Resort, and Sahary AIUla Resort.

ROYAL COMMISSION FOR AIULA

The Royal Commission for AIUla (RCU) is developing AIUla into a world-class tourist destination. Call: +96620025852 For international callers: +966 11 828 6900 Email: rcuinfo@rcu.gov.sa Tweet: RCU_SA Visit: rcu.gov.sa

LANGUAGE

Arabic is the Kingdom's official language, but English is widely spoken. It's polite to master a few friendly greetings, such as "marhaba" ("hello") and "salaam alaikum" ("peace be upon you").

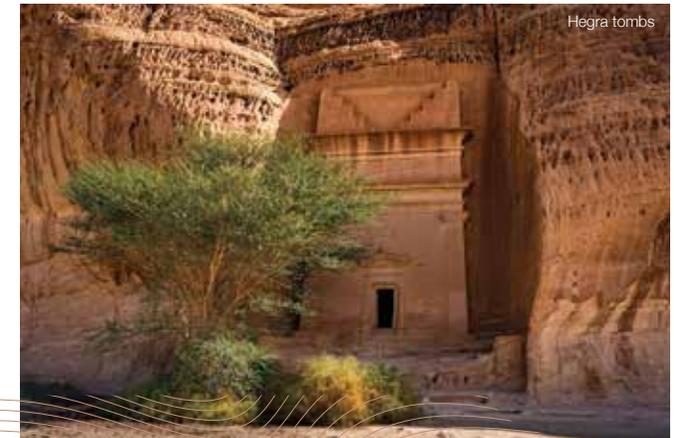
WEEKENDS

The weekend falls on Friday/Saturday.

LOCAL CUSTOMS

Saudi Arabia is a Muslim country that follows Islamic law. As a visitor, you should be mindful of cultural sensitivities, as well as the local customs and traditions:

- Dress modestly when in public. As a rule of thumb, you should



avoid tight-fitting clothes and any items bearing images or words that may offend. Women should cover their shoulders and knees - wearing a headcover or abaya is optional.

- Steer clear of using profane language or gestures.
- Couples do not need to provide proof of marriage in order to share a hotel room.
- Public displays of affection are best avoided.
- It is against the law to buy, sell or consume alcohol in Saudi Arabia.

CURRENCY EXCHANGE

The local currency is the Saudi Riyal (SAR). Some shops in town only accept cash, so it's a good idea to carry some small change at all times. There are ATMs in AIUla, but there is no currency exchange. You can change your money at Riyadh or Jeddah airports.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

It's a wise idea to purchase travel insurance for your trip that will cover you for any travel-related issues, such as loss of belongings, and in the event of a medical emergency.

The nearest hospital is Prince Abdulmohsen Hospital in AIUla (about 45 minutes from Hegra). There are also a number of well-stocked pharmacies in AIUla City.

ELECTRONICS AND WI-FI

In Saudi Arabia the power plugs and sockets are type G - three rectangular pins in a triangular pattern (the same as in the UK and Dubai). There are Wi-Fi hotspots



at a number of locations, as well as in all hotels. If you're coming from outside Saudi Arabia, you could consider buying a local mobile SIM card from a telecom provider at Riyadh or Jeddah airports. SIM providers in AIUla include Saudi Telecom Company (STC) in Al Sakhirat and Zain in AIUla city centre.

HELPFUL NUMBERS

- The country code for Saudi Arabia is +966
- Tourism Call Centre: 930
- Tourism International Call Centre: +966 920 000 890
- Police: 999

If you are in a car accident, call the traffic police on 993

- Saudi Ambulance: 997
- Emergency medical consultation: 937

FURTHER INFORMATION

To find out more about AIUla, visit the official website experienceAIUla.com and engage with us on social media @experienceAIUla via Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter.



Catch a vintage rover ride through Hegra

It's polite to master a few friendly greetings, such as "marhaba" ("hello")

SEE YOU AGAIN SOON

Saudi Arabia has a number of special occasions and holidays, so if you're planning a return visit, you may want to bear these dates in mind...

Ramadan. The holy month is a special time of year, when Muslims dial down the pace and take time to reflect on the important things in life. Those observing Ramadan will fast from sunrise to sunset and, as a sign of respect, visitors must refrain from eating or drinking in public during daylight hours. Most cafés and restaurants are closed during the day, although you can usually order room service at your hotel, or

order take out or delivery. Ramadan is likely to take place from 1 April to 30 April 2022, depending on the sighting of the new moon.

Eid Al Fitr. Marking the end of Ramadan, this is a time for family and friends to come together. In AIUla, this means sharing good food and conversation with the locals, and taking part in lots of fun activities. Bear in mind that, during the first three days, some

businesses may be closed and restaurants may operate shorter opening hours. In 2022, Eid Al Fitr is likely to fall on 1 or 2 May.

Eid Al Adha. Celebrating the completion of the Hajj pilgrimage, the second Eid AIUla comes to life after sunset, with restaurants opening for iftar – the meal that breaks the fast – and shops open late into the evening.

LEAVE NO TRACE

Help protect your precious heritage

TAKE NOTHING BUT PICTURES, LEAVE NOTHING BUT FOOTPRINTS

Hegra is the first UNESCO World Heritage Site to be inscribed in Saudi Arabia. It is globally recognised as a precious place. Dadan, Jabal Ikmah and AIUla Old Town are equally significant. They are also delicate. We want our heritage sites and natural beauty spots in AIUla to be marvelled at for thousands of years to come. This will only be possible if every visitor becomes part of its conservation story, by enjoying your visit while treating this precious place with care and respect.

RESPECT THE MONUMENTS

The monuments may seem mighty, but they are fragile. Regard these sites as precious treasures, in an extraordinary open-air museum, to be admired and not mistreated. Please:

- Do not climb.
- Do not scratch, draw or in any way mark the monuments.

KEEP IT AS YOU FOUND IT

We want to keep AIUla beautiful, and its heritage intact. We welcome you, not your waste. We want you to make memories, not take mementos. Please:

- Put your litter in the bin, or take it with you.
- Do not smoke at Hegra or any other heritage sites, except in designated smoking areas.
- Do not remove or take anything from the tombs.
- Do not remove or take anything from the ground.

PROTECTING NATURE

- No fires of any kind are permitted, including campfires.
- No trees, plants, or stones are to be removed.

PARK IN THE ALLOCATED AREAS

Parking areas are located for your convenience. They are a short walk from the heritage sites and activities.



From left to right: Tomb of Lihyan son of Kuza; Dadan

Please:

- Park your car in the designated parking areas only.
- Avoid parking near the monuments.

KEEP TO THE ROADS. THIS IS A PRECIOUS LANDSCAPE, WITH HISTORIC REMAINS BURIED

BENEATH THE SANDS AT HEGRA.

Please:

- Drive on the graded and paved roads only.
- Avoid driving on the sand.
- Avoid driving on the walkways.

Visitors who do not comply will be asked to leave the area.

KEEPING SAFE

Many parts of AIUla are an open expanse, and exposed to the elements. We encourage every visitor to take responsibility for his or her own health and safety. Please:

- Stay hydrated.
- Observe the speed limit.

IN THE CASE OF AN EMERGENCY, CALL 911.

MUST DO

Appreciate that Hegra has fascinated generations of explorers and archaeologists. Some of the discoveries date to the Bronze Age, and are almost as old as the Egyptian pyramids. Gaze in awe and admiration at the skills and ingenuity of the builders of Hegra's tombs. These tombs were once the resting place of families and communities, so please treat them with respect. Understand that AIUla's heritage sites hold a very special place in the heart of the people of AIUla, and the global heritage community, so please behave with decorum. We hope that you enjoy your visit to this fascinating open-air living museum.





experienceAIUla.com

ExperienceAIUla   