



NEW LIMITED EDITION SMALL GROUP JOURNEYS

Saudi Arabia: Desert Kingdoms 2022-23

8 days from \$9,895 per person

Limited to 18 guests

This journey is a unique opportunity to travel with other international guests on a limited-edition itinerary operated by A&K Australia.

The birthplace and spiritual home of Islam, Saudi Arabia is a mysterious desert kingdom that has been closed to much of the outside world until recently. Discover the many hidden delights of this uncharted territory, from the capital's bustling center to a traditional mud-brick village, galleries of ancient rock art and modern museums.

Included With Every Limited edition Small Group Journey

- Limited-edition Journey Offered in Partnership with the A&K Australia Office
- English-Speaking Resident Tour Director® and Local Guides
- Hand-Selected Accommodations
- Airport Meet and Greet with Private Transfers
- Full Breakfast Daily; Select Lunches and Dinners
- Entrance Fees, Taxes and All Gratuities
- 24/7 A&K On-Call Support
- Guaranteed Departures with Just Two Guests

A&K Advantages

Visit historic monuments and an array of UNESCO-listed wonders, including Jeddah's Floating Mosque

Explore the fascinating capital city of Riyadh, a showcase for modern Saudi Arabia

Experience the mysterious mountain and desert landscapes of AlUla, as well as breathtaking sites such as Madain Saleh, Al Ragasat and Elephant Rock

Attend a special guest lecture on treasured antiquities

Immerse yourself in the local language with a Thamudic script demonstration

Savor Saudi hospitality with lunch at a local farm

Witness a captivating demonstration of traditional dance alongside a flavorful farewell dinner

Itinerary

DAY 1 ARRIVE RIYADH, SAUDI ARABIA

Arrive in Saudi Arabia's buzzing capital Riyadh and transfer to your luxurious hotel. Riyadh, Saudi Arabia's capital, is one of the wealthiest cities in the world. Once a walled, mud-brick way station along desert trading routes, it is now a modern metropolis undergoing rapid change. Freshen up before joining your fellow guests at a delicious welcome dinner.

InterContinental Riyadh | Meals: Dinner

DAY 2 RIYADH | MONUMENTS & HISTORIC ARTIFACTS

Start your day by visiting UNESCO-listed Diriyah, an historic site on the outskirts of Riyadh, which is said to be the birthplace of the first Saudi state and is today the current home of the royal family. The mud-brick walls once fortified a thriving desert city that was a powerhouse of culture and commerce. Take a walk through the old town to admire its many ruins, including the once-splendid palace, houses and marketplace. Continue to Musmak Fort, in Riyadh's old quarter, built during the reign of Abdullah bin Rashid in AD 1895. Afterward, explore the Dirah Souk, a market famed for colorful textiles from silk to luxurious pashminas, before stopping for lunch. This afternoon, pay a guided visit to the National Museum, a national treasure and UNESCO World Heritage Site composed of eight galleries that tell the complete story of Arabian history, from the creation of the universe to the modern era. Continue to Murabba Palace, built by King Abdul Aziz in 1937. A family dwelling, it was constructed from local materials and is composed of several smaller palaces, service buildings, and the Royal Diwan. Afterward, discover Saudi fashion on a visit to the Kingdom Tower shopping mall. Particularly fascinating for female guests is Ladies Kingdom, a women-only shopping mall, where there are opportunities to meet local women who share their stories and insights into life in the kingdom. This evening, meet a special guest from within the antiquities, finance or creative sectors, learning about their projects, their impact and how work has changed over recent years.

InterContinental Riyadh | Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 3 HAIL | ANCIENT ROCK ART

This morning, transfer to the airport for your flight northwest to Hail, located in the northern Arabian Peninsula. From there, drive to the UNESCO-listed site of Jubbah, where magnificent rock carvings and thousand-year-old petroglyphs adorn the surrounding sandstone outcrops depicting camels, lions, and other wildlife that called the region home. A historic crossroads of trade, especially during the *hajj* season when camel caravans passed through, Hail has played an intriguing role in the history of modern Saudi Arabia, and it is home to a buzzing *souk*. Enjoy some Saudi hospitality and learn about the importance of camels in Saudi culture as you sit down to a lunch of traditional fare at a local farm. Return to Hail, and then pay a visit to Qeshla Palace, admiring the monumental structure from the outside before exploring the A'arif Fort built on top of a rocky outcrop with outstanding views over the city. Following your explorations, meet with Fraih Al Shummari, a local guide, and his family, who immerse you in the local language with a written demonstration of the Thamudic script, an elegant northern variant of the typical South Arabian script. Return to your hotel for dinner.

Millennium Hotel Hail | Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 4 ALULA | TOWERING ANCIENT MONUMENTS

This morning, visit the intriguing Hail Local Heritage Museum, the private museum of local resident Khalid Bin Hamoud Al Matrod, set in a traditional Najd house. Peruse the eclectic collection which comprises domestic items from kitchen paraphernalia to antique radio and get a glimpse of a bygone era. After your explorations, drive to AlUla and enjoy lunch with your fellow guests. Nestled in a large, spectacular valley, where palm groves run down the center of a *wadi* and foreboding red-sandstone cliffs rise up on either side, AlUla was an important trading hub for the ancient Lihyanites. Spend your afternoon exploring the wonders of UNESCO-listed Madain Saleh, the Petra of Saudi Arabia. The site spreads over approximately 4,000 acres, with an abundance of relics and rock-cut tombs. Discover the Nabatean Well, Qasr el-Bint, Diwan Tomb, and Al Farid Palace as well as the preserved railway station. As sunset approaches, return to your accommodation for dinner.

Habitas AlUla or Banyan Tree AlUla | Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 5 ALULA | IMPOSING MOUNTAINS & LEGENDARY LANDSCAPES

Start the day with a desert adventure to Al Ragasat and its towering carved rose-colored sandstone mountains, known as the Dancers. After your mountain explorations, drive back to AlUla for a traditional lunch. After refueling, continue to iconic Elephant Rock and the nearby mudbrick village, before driving onward to Harrat Uairedh, the town's highest point with stunning panoramic views of the surrounding landscape. Drink in the sunset from this spectacular vantage point over a cup of Arabic coffee or tea, with dates. This evening you may like to admire the area from above on an exhilarating helicopter ride over the surrounding landscape, taking in breathtaking aerial views of AlUla, available at an additional cost. Return to your accommodation for dinner.

Habitas AlUla or Banyan Tree AlUla | Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 6 JEDDAH | CAPTIVATING PORT CITY

This morning, transfer to the airport for your flight to Jeddah, Saudi Arabia's commercial capital and the main gateway to Mecca, the holiest city in Islam. The historic crossroads of pilgrims and traders, Jeddah is the most fascinating of Saudi Arabia's major cities, with a cosmopolitan and liberal air not present anywhere else in the country. Your first stop is the open-air museum on the Corniche, where you can admire an extraordinary array of modern sculpture ranging from traditional Arabic designs to the abstract and monumental. Afterward, gaze upon the "floating mosque," which appears to drift on the water's surface shimmering in the sun light. Pause to take in the spectacular views over the Red Sea. Next, discover King Fahd's Fountain, also known as Jeddah Fountain, which is the tallest of its type in the world, shooting saltwater from the Red Sea nearly 1,000 feet up into the air, at speeds over 185 miles per hour. Admire the city's Red Sea architecture, and explore the bustling *souk*, the laid-back coastline and its diverse, world-class cuisine. The evening is yours to experience this captivating city.

InterContinental Jeddah | Meals: Breakfast

DAY 7 JEDDAH | ANCIENT CITY EXPLORATIONS & DESIGN YOUR DAY

This morning, enjoy an expert-guided tour of Jeddah's traditional architecture. Visit some of the old Ottoman houses, constructed from coral and reinforced with



wooden beams, including Nasif House, one of the most beautiful, which was built in the 1850s by the distinguished Nasif family. It was here that King Abdul Aziz spent his first night in Jeddah as the guest of Mohammed Nasif after leading his victorious army into the capital of the Western Province. This afternoon, plot your own course by selecting one of these Design Your Day activities:

Admire spectacular art and architecture at Abdul Raouf Khalil. Explore the Abdul Raouf Khalil Museum, which showcases the nearly 2,500-year-old history of the Jeddah area, its exhibits spanning pre-Islamic history to pre-modern civilizations and the rich Islamic cultural heritage of the city. The complex also contains a mosque and the facade of an old castle.

Gaze at geological wonders while exploring majestic Moon Valley. Admire the geological wonders of majestic Moon Valley on a day hike. The area is known for its unique rock formations that have naturally formed over millions of years into different shapes. Hone your photographic skills as you clamber across the terrain, keeping an eye out for a variety of endemic wildlife.

Take time out with a private beach experience. Unplug from the modern city with some private beach time. Jeddah boasts some of Saudi Arabia's best beaches, so take your pick and escape the city to relax in the sun or explore the underwater tropical forest on a snorkeling adventure. Return to the hotel for your farewell dinner, which is accompanied by a mesmerizing traditional dance performance.

InterContinental Jeddah | Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 8 DEPART JEDDAH

After breakfast, transfer to the airport for your departure flight.

Meals: Breakfast

Program Note: Saudi Arabia is still developing its tourist infrastructure and some hotels may not meet normal A&K luxury standards; however, they are comfortable and well located, and we have selected the best available at each point on your itinerary.

As a traditional Islamic nation, Saudi Arabia observes a strict dress code that must be adhered to at all times. Women should wear long skirts or loose-fitting pants and ensure that their ankles and arms are properly covered. Men should keep their arms covered as well. Though it is not legally required, women may occasionally be asked to wear an abaya (long robe) or hijab (headscarf), and many female visitors feel more comfortable wearing these garments in public.

Dates & Prices

Prices are in USD, per person, based on double occupancy.

| Dates | Prices | Single Supplement | Internal Air (From) | Availability |
|-----------------------|---------|-------------------|---------------------|--------------|
| Oct 16 - Oct 23, 2022 | \$9,895 | \$2,195 | \$390 | Available |
| Nov 20 - Nov 27, 2022 | \$9,895 | \$2,195 | \$390 | Available |
| Feb 19 - Feb 26, 2023 | \$9,895 | \$2,195 | \$390 | Available |

Journey Details

Proof of COVID-19 full vaccination is required for this program.

Internal Air: Economy class from \$390
Riyadh/Hail; AIUla/Jeddah

Minimum number of guests to guarantee operation: Departures are guaranteed to operate with a minimum of 2 guests.

Maximum number of guests: Limited to 18 guests.

Minimum Age: 10 years

First group event: Welcome briefing at 7:00 p.m. on Day 1.

Last group event: Farewell dinner at 7:30 p.m. on Day 7.

Tour inclusions: All accommodations as detailed on a double-occupancy basis with private facilities; meals as specified; bottled water during transfers and touring; airport welcome; assistance with luggage and group transportation by private air-conditioned vehicle; services of English-speaking A&K Resident Tour Director; economy flights only if specified as included in itinerary; all entrance fees, planning, handling, operational and communication charges; and all tipping.

Tour exclusions: International flights not specified as included; visas; insurance coverage of personal loss, injury, illness or damages incurred during your trip; items of a purely personal nature such as drinks, laundry, dry cleaning, Internet, fax or phone charges; transfers, sightseeing or meals not specified in itinerary; and excess baggage charges.

Prices are per person based on double occupancy. Internal and international air not included. See complete terms and conditions [here](#).