



## SAUDI ARABIA: A KINGDOM REVEALED - A MARCO POLO JOURNEY (2024)

Journey deep into the heart of once-inaccessible Saudi Arabia to explore the pre-Islamic cities of Hegra and Dadan and go off-roading through the desert of AlUla.

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Small Group Journeys, Marco Polo Small Group Journeys



North Africa & Middle East, Saudi  
Arabia



9 days from AU\$28,370 pp



18 Guests

## Journey Overview

Journey deep into the heart of once-inaccessible Saudi Arabia to explore the pre-Islamic cities of Hegra and Dadan and go off-roading through the desert of AlUla. Learn firsthand about the modern Saudi state and discover the roles tradition and modernization play in its continuing development, as you explore dynamic Riyadh as well as history-laden Jeddah, set beside the Red Sea.

### Journey Highlights

- Be among the first to explore a mysterious yet welcoming kingdom, which has only recently opened for tourism
- Gain insight into the ruling Al Saud dynasty and its influence on the history of the region during a three-night stay in the capital city, Riyadh
- Take in the magnificent rock-cut tombs of Hegra in AlUla, a Nabatean site with ties to Jordan's Petra
- Appreciate the blend of tradition and modernity as you stroll narrow streets lined with coral houses in Jeddah
- Admire the modern art found on Jeddah's Corniche, along the Red Sea's turquoise waters



## Itinerary

### **Day 1: Arrive Riyadh, Saudi Arabia**

Arrive in Riyadh, original homeland of the ruling Al Saud family and now the nation's capital city, where you are met and privately transferred to your hotel.

***Mandarin Oriental Al Faisaliah, Riyadh***

### **Day 2: Riyadh | Riding Camelback**

After a morning at leisure, travel outside the city to a camel farm and enjoy the opportunity to Ride Like a Local, on camelback, before lunch. Return to the city and venture to the top of Kingdom Tower, taking in expansive views of the city. This evening, enjoy a welcome dinner at a local restaurant.

***Mandarin Oriental Al Faisaliah, Riyadh | Meals: BLD***

### **Day 3: Riyadh | The Saudi Royal Heritage**

Explore the National Museum, a UNESCO World Heritage Site that tells the complete story of Arabian history. Continue to Masmak Fort, in Riyadh's old quarter, and then stroll through Dirah Souk, a market renowned for colourful textiles, from silk to luxurious pashminas. Enjoy a traditional lunch of Saudi specialties, served family-style, on a palate-pleasing Chef's Table demonstration. This afternoon, visit UNESCO-listed Diriyah, the original home of the royal family. Walk the old town to admire its palace, houses and marketplace. Then, meet with a local expert from the antiquities or creative sectors to hear about recent changes in Saudi society.

***Mandarin Oriental Al Faisaliah, Riyadh | Meals: BLD***

### **Day 4: AlUla | Oasis in the Desert**

Fly into the Arabian Desert to AlUla and transfer to your hotel. Set in a spectacular valley, with date palm groves that line the banks of a wadi (dry riverbed) and red sandstone cliffs rising on either side, AlUla was once a trading hub on the historic Incense Route. Later, view iconic Elephant Rock, shaped by erosion to resemble a massive pachyderm, and sip a Scenic Sundowner of juice or tea.

***Banyan Tree AlUla | Meals: BD***

### **Day 5: AlUla | Mysterious Hegra**

Today, explore Hegra, a UNESCO World Heritage Site only open to the public since 2020 that features a towering carved façade revealing its Nabatean connection to Petra in Jordan. Also discover the Nabatean Well, Qasr Al Bint, Diwan Tomb and Al Farid Palace. After lunch at a local restaurant, enjoy your afternoon at leisure. This evening, you may choose to explore AlUla's Old Town to view its architecture and wander among its cafés and shops.

***Banyan Tree AlUla | Meals: BL***

### **Day 6: AlUla | Ancient Discoveries Revealed**

Journey overland to Jabal Ikamah, situated in a stunning desert canyon. This "open-air library" has an impressive collection of inscriptions carved into its stone cliffsides, most dating to the first millennium BC. Continue to nearby Dadan, once the capital of the ancient kingdom of the Lihyanite and Dadanite civilizations, to learn about the treasures uncovered from excavations at this active archaeological site.

***Banyan Tree AlUla | Meals: BLD***

### **Day 7: AlUla/Jeddah | Historic Crossroads**

This morning, stop for photos at Maraya, a dazzling concert hall rising out of the desert that is the world's largest mirrored building, and take in panoramic views of AlUla at Harratt view point. Then, fly to Jeddah, Saudi Arabia's commercial capital and the main gateway to Mecca, the holiest city in Islam.

***Shangri-La Jeddah | Meals: B***

### **Day 8: Jeddah | Turquoise Shores of the Red Sea**

Head to Al-Balad, Jeddah's old quarter, a bastion of traditional architecture. Visit some of its Hejazi houses, constructed from coral and reinforced with wooden beams, including the beautiful Nasif House, built in the 1850s. After lunch, stroll the Corniche, a waterfront promenade beside the sparkling Red Sea, and behold the extraordinary array of modern sculpture on display. View King Fahd's Fountain, and then enjoy an A&K-exclusive visit to Al Makkiah House, a striking example of traditionally preserved Hijazi architecture. Gaze upon the "floating mosque," which appears to drift on the water's surface. This evening, savour your farewell dinner.

***Shangri-La Jeddah | Meals: BLD***

## Day 9: Depart Jeddah

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

**Meals: B**

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## Journey Details

Internal air included: Riyadh/AIUIa/Jeddah

This journey contains some active elements.

Minimum age is 10 years.

First group event: welcome briefing at 11:00 a.m. on Day 2.

Last group event: farewell dinner at 7:00 p.m. on Day 8.

Departures are guaranteed to operate with a minimum of 2 guests.

## Included with every Marco Polo Journey

- English-Speaking Resident Tour Director and Local Guides
- Hand-Selected Luxury Accommodations (Where Available)
- Airport Meet and Greet with Private Transfers
- Travelling Bell Boy Luggage Handling
- Breakfast in Bed on Select Days
- Full Breakfast Daily; Select Lunches and Dinners
- Traveller's Valet Laundry Service
- Internet Access (Where Available)
- Entrance Fees, Taxes and All Gratuities Except Resident Tour Director
- 24/7 A&K On-Call Support
- Guaranteed Departures with Just Two Guests

## Customise this Journey

**Talk to one of our expert Journey Designers** or your travel agent about booking this tour as a private journey for your own small group with family or friends. Or, if you would prefer to travel privately, find out more about creating the perfect bespoke Tailor-Made Journey based on this itinerary.

## Map



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## Dates & Pricing

Prices are in AUD, per person, based on double occupancy

### Oct 24, 2024 - Nov 1, 2024

Price	Single Supplement	Internal Air (From)	Availability
<b>AU\$28,370 pp</b>	AU\$12,145	Included	Call for Availability

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### Nov 7, 2024 - Nov 15, 2024

Price	Single Supplement	Internal Air (From)	Availability
<b>AU\$28,370 pp</b>	AU\$12,145	Included	Call for Availability

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