

Abercrombie & Kent



SAUDI ARABIA: DESERT KINGDOMS - A LIMITED EDITION SMALL GROUP JOURNEY (2022/23)

The birthplace and spiritual home of Islam, Saudi Arabia is rich in attractions and stirring symbolism.

Limited Edition Small Group Journeys, Small Group Journeys



North Africa & Middle East, Saudi
Arabia



8 days, from AU\$12,650pp



18 Guests

Journey Overview

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. On this journey you'll discover the hidden delights of this uncharted territory on an exclusive glimpse at a realm veiled in secrecy. Discover the carved temples of Madain Saleh, known as the second Petra, and stand in awe of the sophisticated rock art of Jubbah, some of the kingdom's greatest pre-Islamic treasures. Explore fascinating Riyadh, a showpiece for modern Saudi Arabia, while Jeddah's World Heritage coral architecture whisks you back to the history of this bustling pilgrim port and the pristine, azure waters of the Red Sea await. From the capital's bustling centre to the mud-brick village of Al Ula, rock art galleries and modern museums, Saudi Arabia reveals a host of architectural marvels and ancient icons.

Journey Highlights

- Explore the mysterious mountain and desert landscapes of Al Ula, and the surrounding breathtaking sites including Madain Saleh, Al Ragasat and Elephant Rock
- Visit ancient monuments and heritage listed wonders, including Jeddah's 'Floating Mosque'
- Attend a special guest lecture by an esteemed local expert
- Be immersed in the local language with a Thamudic script demonstration
- Savour Saudi hospitality during lunch at a local farm
- Witness a captivating demonstration of traditional dance alongside a flavourful farewell dinner
- Typically features a small group size of 10-12 guests



Itinerary

Day 1: Arrive Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Arrive in Saudi Arabia's buzzing capital to a warm A&K welcome and transfer to your hotel. Freshen up before an arrival briefing followed by a welcome dinner.

InterContinental Riyadh | Meals: D

Day 2: Riyadh | Ancient Crossroads Meets Modern Powerhouse

Start your day by visiting heritage listed Diriyyah on the outskirts of Riyadh, said to be the birthplace of the first Saudi state and the current home of the royal family. Take a walk through the old town to admire its many ancient ruins including the once-splendid palace, houses and marketplace. Continue to Musmak Fort, in Riyadh's old quarter, built in 1895. Afterwards, explore Dirah Souq, a market famed for colourful textiles, before stopping for lunch.

This afternoon, be guided through the National Museum, a national treasure and World Heritage Site that tells the complete story of Arabian history. Continue to Murabba Palace, built by King Abdul Aziz in 1937 and afterwards, discover Saudi fashion on a visit to the Kingdom Tower shopping mall. Travellers will be fascinated by a women-only shopping mall, where there are opportunities to meet local women who will share their stories and insight 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: BL

Day 3: Hail | Ancient Rock Art at the Crossroads of History

This morning fly northwest to Hail in the northern Arabian Peninsula. Transfer by road to heritage listed Jubbah, where magnificent rock carvings and petroglyphs adorn the surrounding sandstone outcrops depicting thousand-year-old illustrations of camels, lions, and other wildlife.

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 is home to a buzzing souq.

Be treated to some Saudi hospitality and learn about the importance of camels in Saudi culture as you sit down to a traditional farm lunch. Return to Hail, and pay a visit to Qeshla Palace, admiring the monumental structure from the outside before exploring the ancient A'arif Fort. Afterwards, meet with Fraih Al Shummari, a local guide, and his family, who will immerse you in the local language with a written demonstration of the elegant Thamudic script.

Millennium Hotel Hail | Meals: BLD

Day 4: Al Ula | Towering Ancient Monuments

This morning, visit the intriguing Hail Local Heritage Museum, the private museum of local resident set in a traditional Najd house. Peruse his eclectic collection and glimpse a bygone era. Drive to Al Ula for lunch with your fellow travellers.

Nestled in a large, spectacular valley, where palm groves run down the centre of a wadi and foreboding red-sandstone cliffs rise up on either side, Al Ula was historically located on the Incense route and was an important trading hub for the ancient Lihyanites. It is delightfully mysterious and is the gateway to Saudi Arabia's very own 'Petra', Madain Saleh.

Spend your afternoon exploring the wonders of World Heritage listed Madain Saleh. Southernmost settlement of the Nabatean kingdom, the city was known as 'Al Hija' during ancient times and was once a stopover on the trade route. The site spreads over 2000 square metres, with an abundance of relics and rock-cut tombs. Discover the Nabatean Well, Qasr Al Bint, Diwan Tomb, and Al Farid Palace as well as the preserved railway station. As sunset approaches, reach your tented camp in time for dinner.

Best Available at the Time | Meals: BLD

Day 5: Al Ula | Legendary Landscapes

Start the day with a desert adventure to Al Ragasat and its towering carved rose-coloured sandstone mountains, known as 'The Dancers'. Return to Al Ula for a traditional lunch.

After refuelling it's off to the iconic 'Elephant Rock' and nearby mudbrick village, before driving onward to Harrat Uairedh for stunning panoramic views of the surrounding landscape. Drink in the sunset from this spectacular vantage point over a cup of Arabic coffee, or tea, and delicious local dates.

This evening you may embark on an exhilarating helicopter flight over the surrounding landscape taking in breathtaking aerial views of Al Ula (additional cost).

Best Available at the Time | Meals: BLD

Day 6: Jeddah | Captivating Port City

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. Your first stop in this cosmopolitan city 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. Afterwards, gaze upon the 'floating mosque' and 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 kind in the world, shooting saltwater from the Red Sea 300 metres up into the air.

Intercontinental Jeddah | Meals: B

Day 7: Jeddah | Ancient City Explorations & Design Your Day

This morning, be led on a 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 1850's by the distinguished Nasif Family, influential traders.

This afternoon plot your own course with one of these Design Your Day activities:

- **Admire Spectacular Art and Architecture at Abdul Raouf Khalil**
Explore Abdul Raouf Khalil Museum which showcases the nearly 2,500-year old history of the Jeddah area with exhibitions spanning pre-Islamic history, to pre-modern civilisations 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.
- **Private Beach Experience**
Take time out to enjoy 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 snorkelling adventure.

Return to the hotel for your farewell dinner accompanied by a traditional dance performance.

Intercontinental Jeddah | Meals: BD

Day 8: Depart Jeddah

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

Meals: B

Journey Details

Internal air included: Riyadh–Al-Ula/Al Ula–Jeddah

Maximum Group Size: 18

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

Note: Al Ula accommodation will be confirmed and advised prior to departure.

Tour Inclusions

- All accommodation as detailed with private facilities
- Meals as specified in itinerary, including welcome and farewell dinners
- Internal flights as mentioned in itinerary
- Services of English speaking A&K Resident Tour Director
- Airport welcome
- Porterage
- Group transportation by private air-conditioned vehicle
- Bottled water during transfers and touring
- All entrance fees
- Planning, handling, operational and communication charges
- All tipping

Tour Exclusions

- International flights to the tour start point and from the tour end point
- Visas and other border fees
- Insurance coverage of personal loss, injury, illness or damages incurred during your trip
- Items of a purely personal nature such as drinks (unless specified), laundry, dry cleaning, internet, fax or phone charges
- Transfers, sightseeing or meals not specified in itinerary
- Excess baggage charges

If scheduled departure dates don't work for you, or you would prefer to travel privately, please **talk to one of our expert Journey Designers** or your travel agent about creating the perfect bespoke tailor-made journey for you, or your own small group with family or friends.

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

Accommodation

Intercontinental Riyadh



Set amidst 100 acres of beautifully landscaped gardens, the InterContinental Riyadh combines peaceful surroundings with urban luxury. Many of the hotel's 275 rooms and suites feature city or golf course views, decorated in a modern Arabian style. Guests can enjoy a 9-hole golf course on site, a 12-lane bowling alley, tennis and squash courts as well as an indoor and outdoor swimming pool. The hotel's health club features a well-equipped gym as well as a sauna, hot tub and wellness centre. The hotel's 2 restaurants offer a variety of flavourful fare, with the hotel's Pavilion Restaurant delivering themed buffets and casual dining or the hotel's Mondo Restaurant serving punchy Asian-Western fusion.

Millennium Hotel Hail



Centrally located Millennium Hail Hotel Saudi Arabia offers luxury accommodation in its 166 luxurious rooms and 17 suites, each spacious, beautifully designed and well-appointed. Be pampered at the on-site beauty salon, relax in the spas and unwind with a few laps in the swimming pool. Savour flavourful Asian fusion at Al Fairouz restaurant, or a variety of international fare at indulgent Layali Café.

Intercontinental Jeddah



Slender palms and the turquoise waters of the outdoor pool combine to create this cool haven on the edge of the Red Sea. Stroll through the luxurious marble lobby and into a world of regal grandeur and flawless service. Each of the elegantly appointed rooms offers luxury and comfort. Unwind with a few laps in the outdoor pool or a dip in the hot tub, or treat yourself to a massage. A choice of gourmet restaurants complete the amenities.

Dates & Pricing

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

Oct 16, 2022 - Oct 23, 2022

Price	Single Supplement	Internal Air (From)	Availability
AU\$12,650 pp	AU\$2,620	Included	Available

Nov 20, 2022 - Nov 27, 2022

Price	Single Supplement	Internal Air (From)	Availability
AU\$12,650 pp	AU\$2,620	Included	Available

Feb 19, 2023 - Feb 26, 2023

Price	Single Supplement	Internal Air (From)	Availability
AU\$12,650 pp	AU\$2,620	Included	Available

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