

18 DAYS DRIVING THROUGH SAUDI ARABIA NORTH TO SOUTH (SELF-DRIVE)



Day 1. Jeddah – Al Balad & Corniche

Arrive Jeddah. Al Balad UNESCO district, Corniche, Al Rahma Mosque, Red Sea Museum. Overnight in Jeddah.

Day 2. Jeddah – Old Town Tour & Souk Al Alawi

Guided tour of Old Jeddah. Al Balad historic architecture. Souk Al Alawi. Evening free. Overnight in Jeddah.

Day 3. Jeddah to Al Bahah

Self-drive east through the Hejaz mountains to Al Bahah. Sawawat Mountain range. Balijureshi market town. Zee Ayn ancient village. Khairah Forest Park. Overnight in Al Bahah.

Day 4. Al Bahah Mountain Exploration

Full day in the Al Bahah highlands. Ancient stone tower villages of the Ghamid and Zahran tribes. Terraced agricultural landscapes. Local markets. Overnight in Al Bahah.

Day 5. Al Bahah to Taif

Drive to Taif via rose farms. Mountains of Taif, Hada Mountains, Eastern slopes of Al Sarawat. Rose farm factory visit. Sharif Museum. Overnight in Taif.

Day 6. Taif to Medina

Drive north through the Hejaz. Al Waba Crater. Arrive Medina: exterior view of Al Masjid An Nabawi, Masjid Al Qiblatain, Mount Uhud. Dar Al Medina museum. Overnight in Medina.

Day 7. Medina to Al Ula

Drive through the northwestern Hejaz to Al Ula. Abandoned Hejaz Railway stations. Khaybar — an ancient oasis with volcanic lava fields and pre-Islamic ruins. Overnight in Al Ula.

Day 8. Al Ula – Hegra UNESCO

Full day at Hegra Nabataean site. Oasis Heritage Trail. Overnight in Al Ula.

Day 9. Al Ula – Dadan, Shallah Mountain & Harrat

Dadan archaeological site. Shallah Mountain hike. Harrat viewpoint. Jebel Ikma inscription library. Elephant Rock at sunset. Overnight in Al Ula.

Day 10. Al Ula to Tabuk

Drive northwest to Tabuk through dramatic desert scenery. Tabuk Castle and Ottoman Railway Station. Overnight in Tabuk.

Day 11. Tabuk – Wadi Qaraqir & Dissah Valley

Wadi Qaraqir sandstone canyon. Oasis of Dissah hidden in the rocks. Ancient Nabataean petroglyphs. Overnight in Tabuk.

Day 12. Tabuk – Neom & Sinai Mountain

Tour of Neom — Saudi Arabia's futuristic mega-project on the Gulf of Aqaba. Madyan historic site. Wells of Moses. Valley of Moses. Sinai Mountain. Overnight in Tabuk.

Day 13. Tabuk – Hisma Desert & Departure East

Hisma desert — a dramatic landscape of huge sandstone buttes and mesas rising from the flat desert floor, one of Saudi Arabia's most dramatic landscapes. Drive to Tayma. Overnight in Tayma.

Day 14. Tayma to Hail via Jebel Umm Sanman

Tour of ancient Tayma — one of Arabia's oldest oases, mentioned in Babylonian texts. Nafoud Al Kebir desert. Sarawat Mountains panoramas. Jebel Umm Sanman. Drive to Jubbah. Overnight in Hail.

Day 15. Hail – A'arif Fort & Regional Museum

Full day in Hail: A'arif Fort, Heritage Museum, Hail Regional Museum — the region's history as a major stop on the ancient trade routes. Overnight in Hail.

Day 16. Hail to Buraydah

Drive south to Buraydah through the Najd heartland. World's largest camel market. Dates Market. Ushaiger heritage village. Overnight in Buraydah.

Day 17. Buraydah to Riyadh

Drive to Riyadh. National Museum. Diriyah UNESCO site. Kingdom Tower. Overnight in Riyadh.

Day 18. Riyadh – Departure

Final morning in Riyadh. Masmak Fortress. Transfer to King Khalid International Airport.

Must see ATTRACTIONS



The Red Sea Museum,
Jeddah



Balijureshi Market Town



Taif Rose Farm



Khaybar



Sinai Mountain



Hisma Desert



Tayma



Hail Regional Museum



Buraydah Camel Market

ACCOMMODATION

Options

Jeddah

- ★★★★★ Rosewood Jeddah
Park Hyatt Jeddah - Marina, Club & Spa
InterContinental Jeddah
- ★★★★★ Radisson Blu Hotel Jeddah Al Hamra
Hilton Jeddah
Marriott Jeddah
- ★★★ Holiday Inn Jeddah Al Salam
ibis Jeddah City Center
Premier Inn Jeddah Al Murjan

Taif

- ★★★★★ InterContinental Taif
Mövenpick Hotel Taif
Al-Hada Sheraton Hotel Taif
- ★★★★★ Golden Palace Hotel Taif
Ramada by Wyndham Taif
Le Méridien Taif
- ★★★ Holiday Inn Taif
ibis Taif
Taif Grand Hotel

Medina

- ★★★★★ Anwar Al-Madinah Mövenpick Hotel
Dar Al-Taqwa Hotel Madinah
Madinah Marriott Hotel
- ★★★★★ Al-Salam Hotel Madinah
Pullman ZamZam Madinah
Hilton Madinah
- ★★★ Al-Haram Hotel Madinah
Taibah Hotel Madinah
Al-Nour Hotel Madinah

Al Ula

- ★★★★★ Habitas AlUla
Banyan Tree AlUla
Shaden Resort AlUla by Accor
- ★★★★★ Caravan by Habitas AlUla
Dar Tantora The House Hotel AlUla
Maraya Hotel AlUla
- ★★★ AlUla Lodge
Rose Governate Hotel AlUla
Dadan Hotel AlUla

Tabuk

- ★★★★★ Tabuk Rotana Hotel
Al-Murooj Royal Hotel Tabuk
Golden Palace Hotel Tabuk
- ★★★★★ Tabuk International Hotel
Holiday Inn Tabuk
Ramada by Wyndham Tabuk
- ★★★ ibis Tabuk
Tabuk Grand Hotel
Al-Wadi Hotel Tabuk

Hail

- ★★★★★ Hail Rotana Hotel
Hail Palace Hotel
Golden Tulip Hail
- ★★★★★ Hail International Hotel
Al-Wasim Hotel Hail
Crown Prince Hotel Hail
- ★★★ Al-Fanar Hotel Hail
Al-Rashid Hotel Hail
Hail City Hotel

Buraydah

- ★★★★★ Buraydah Park Hotel
Al-Qassim Palace Hotel Buraydah
Grand Hotel Buraydah
- ★★★★★ Crown Prince Hotel Buraydah
Al-Wadi Hotel Buraydah
Orchid Hotel Buraydah
- ★★★ Buraydah City Hotel
Al-Nakheel Hotel Buraydah
Al-Qasr Hotel Buraydah

Riyadh

- ★★★★★ Four Seasons Hotel Riyadh at Kingdom Centre
The Ritz-Carlton Riyadh
Waldorf Astoria Riyadh Ithra
- ★★★★★ JW Marriott Hotel Riyadh
Crowne Plaza Riyadh Palace
Sheraton Riyadh Hotel & Towers
- ★★★ Novotel Riyadh Al Anoud
ibis Riyadh Olaya
Citymax Hotel Riyadh

Must try FOOD



Kabsa

Regarded as Saudi Arabia's national dish, Kabsa is an aromatic one-pot chicken and rice mix similar to an Indian biryani; the chicken and fluffy, fragrant rice is cooked in a chicken and tomato-based broth with a rich blend of spices and garnished with almonds, raisins and chopped parsley.



Mansaf

Consists of lamb cooked in a sauce of fermented dried yogurt; served on a large platter with a layer of flatbread topped by rice and the meat, garnished with almonds and pine nuts, with the creamy yogurt sauce then poured on top.



Qursan

Consists of thin, whole-wheat flatbread discs baked on a hot griddle and then soaked in a rich, meat, usually tender chicken or lamb, and vegetable stew; tomato paste, black lime (loomi), cardamom, cinnamon and cumin are added to spice up the dish.

RESTAURANT

Options

Halal Certified

Jeddah

1. Al-Nafourah – Lebanese fine dining with panoramic Red Sea views, Corniche location
2. Fakieh Aquarium Restaurant – Seafood restaurant with live aquarium backdrop, Al Hamra district
3. Bab El-Yemen Jeddah – Traditional Yemeni cuisine, famous for slow-cooked lamb
4. The Globe Restaurant – International cuisine at Park Hyatt, floor-to-ceiling ocean views
5. Kaia Jeddah – Modern Japanese halal restaurant, sushi and teppanyaki, Corniche Road

Taif

1. Al-Shifa Restaurant – Traditional Hijazi food in the rose city of Taif, honey and lamb
2. Rose Valley Café – Saudi café with rose-themed décor, local specialties and rose honey
3. Al-Baik Taif – Saudi fast food chain, popular stop for families and pilgrims
4. Turkish Grill Taif – Turkish restaurant with grills and meze, cable car district
5. Kabsa Palace Taif – Traditional Saudi rice and lamb dishes, generous mountain portions

Medina

1. Al-Baik Medina – Saudi Arabia's beloved fried chicken chain, iconic for pilgrims
2. Nawab Restaurant Medina – Authentic Indian-Pakistani cuisine, biryani a specialty
3. Turkish House Medina – Turkish restaurant, grills and meze, near the Prophet's Mosque
4. Kabsa Kingdom Medina – Traditional Saudi Kabsa rice dishes with slow-cooked lamb
5. Al-Safa Restaurant Medina – Local Hijazi cuisine, generous portions near the Haram district

Al Ula

1. Ashar Restaurant – Modern Saudi cuisine with views over the ancient Hegra archaeological site
2. Maraya Concert Hall Café – Fine dining inside the mirror-cube Maraya venue, extraordinary setting
3. Al-Nakheel Restaurant AlUla – Traditional oasis cuisine, dates, meats and Saudi rice
4. Turkish House AlUla – Turkish restaurant, popular with tour groups and adventure travellers
5. Al-Wadi Restaurant AlUla – Saudi and Levantine mixed menu, good value, near Old Town

Tabuk

1. Al-Rumman Restaurant – Tabuki cuisine with local mountain herbs, very fresh flavours
2. Al-Baik Tabuk – Popular Saudi fast food, convenient for desert and Hisma excursions
3. Turkish Nights Tabuk – Turkish restaurant, good grills and soup near Tabuk city center
4. Kabsa Corner Tabuk – Saudi rice and meat specialty, Mabeet slow-cooked lamb
5. Al-Wasim Tabuk – Middle Eastern restaurant, mixed grills and fresh bread

Hail

1. Al-Reem Restaurant – Traditional Najdi cuisine, desert ambiance, local favourites
2. Al-Baik Hail – Saudi fast food franchise, fried chicken and rice, family favourite
3. Kabsa House Hail – Local rice and meat specialty, slow-cooked lamb and rice
4. Turkish Delight Hail – Turkish restaurant, grills and pide bread
5. Al-Andalus Hail – Middle Eastern mixed grill, generous portions and fresh bread

Buraydah

1. Al-Baik Buraydah – Saudi fried chicken chain, always a local favourite in Qassim region
2. Kabsa Kingdom Buraydah – Traditional Qassimi rice dishes, slow-cooked camel and lamb
3. Al-Khaleej Restaurant – Arabian cuisine in the heart of Buraydah's commercial district
4. Turkish Café Buraydah – Turkish restaurant, grills and meze, popular with business travellers
5. Al-Andalus Buraydah – Middle Eastern mixed grill, fresh bread, generous portions

Riyadh

1. Najd Village – Traditional Saudi Najdi cuisine served in a heritage setting, authentic experience
2. Al-Orjowan at The Ritz-Carlton – Arabic fine dining, rooftop terrace, panoramic city views
3. Bab Al-Yemen – Traditional Yemeni and Arabic food, highly popular local institution
4. Gaucho Riyadh – Premium Argentinian steakhouse with Saudi-certified halal meats
5. Nusret Riyadh – International steakhouse (Salt Bae brand), extravagant presentation, prime cuts