

We are pleased to share with you that [AlUla](#), the Saudi Arabian destination of exceptional natural beauty and deep history, will become a new Official Partner of [Green Edge Cycling](#), known as Team Bike Exchange, for the 2021 Men and Women Cycling WorldTour season. Starting from Tour de France 2021, the partnership will run from July 2021 to December 2023.

With the global bicycle market on the rise to reach \$34.6 billion by 2027, according to Global Industry Analytics, Green Edge Cycling has chosen to partner with AlUla due to the destination's focus on safeguarding the natural and cultural landscape, sustaining eco-systems and wildlife and light-touch tourism experiences, and its vision to become the next cycling capital of the world. These practices align perfectly with Green Edge Cycling's ambitions to become a leading role model for environmentally friendly practices both in the sport of road racing and outside.

If you are interested in learning more, we invite you to attend the media event hosted by AlUla and Green Edge Cycling with special guest **Simon Yates**, British cyclist and gold medalist, starting **tomorrow, June 23<sup>rd</sup>, at 9am PST**. Please see the Zoom invite linked [here](#).

Let us know if you have any questions or would like additional information.

Thank you!  
Meredith

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Reaching out to see if you are looking for any ideas **on where to go in 2022?** If so, we want to place the destination of [AlUla](#), a desert oasis sprinkled with undiscovered heritage sites tucked away in the unexplored northwestern deserts of Saudi Arabia. Now open to international visitors for the first time, AlUla is where 200,000 years of human history meets contemporary architecture, art, and hotels. Home to ancient heritage, active adventures, authentic culture, epic outdoor experiences, and gracious people- AlUla is a true hidden gem waiting to be discovered in 2022.



*(L to R: HEGRA, Stargazing at AlGharameel, Baby Arabian Leopard Cub, and Habitas AlUla; Photo credit: Experience AlUla)*

Key destination highlights include:

- Never-before visited [heritage sites](#) including Hegra (Petra's sister city and a UNESCO world heritage site)
- New luxury hotel openings from well-known brands including [Habitas](#), Accor Banyan Tree, and Aman
- Major entertainment events and a [festival season](#) (December – March) that brings to life unique celebrations like Desert X, Winter at Tantora, and A-list performances at [Maraya Concert Hall](#)
- New culinary concepts coming to the region this fall from renowned chefs including Michelin starred chef Jason Atherton and the team behind Annabel's London
- Conservation efforts around the endangered Arabian Leopard, including the birth of a baby Leopard cub

Please let us know if you are interested in learning more or have any questions about the destination of AlUla.

Link to images: [https://www.dropbox.com/sh/jcphqzr2el4hecZ/AAD\\_dVZ1VClbwBmp-1rM6jypa?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/jcphqzr2el4hecZ/AAD_dVZ1VClbwBmp-1rM6jypa?dl=0)

Thank you,

Meredith

Subject: AlUla Reopens its Doors to Vaccinated US and Candian Travelers

Hi,

We are thrilled to share that [Experience AlUla](#) has announced that fully vaccinated Americans are now able to visit the region starting August 1, having previously been closed off to most of the world for years. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia only permitted religious travelers to the destination but has now introduced an [e-visa program](#) allowing international tourism to the country. A relatively undiscovered territory located in northwest Saudi Arabia, AlUla is at the historical crossroads of ancient civilizations along the Incense Route. Americans can now explore uncharted heritage sites, immerse themselves in authentic cultural experiences, and witness breath-taking natural beauty from the moment of arrival.

With low Covid-19 levels and world-class protocols in place to protect the health of visitors and their families, AlUla has gone to great lengths to ensure that visitors can enjoy the country's legendary hospitality with confidence. Travelers looking to visit AlUla must provide proof of full vaccination with a vaccine that has been certified for use including two doses of the Pfizer, Moderna or Oxfod/ Astra Zeneca vaccines, and Johnson & Johnson's single dose vaccine. Additionally, travelers must register their vaccination status on Saudi Arabia's [dedicated web portal](#), and take a PCR test before boarding their flight. All travelers who comply will not be required to quarantine.

Upon arrival, visitors can explore the ancient lands of AlUla and embark on a new journey through the vast desert and cool oasis to discover mysteries and uncover truths of ancient societies and cultures. Some new and exciting experiences to enjoy in AlUla include:

**What to do:**

- **Take a Ride in a Helicopter:** Experience the breathtaking views of AlUla's stunning desert vistas and landscapes from the sky. Be awed by the bird's eye view of iconic landmarks such as Elephant Rock, Maraya and AlUla Old Town. Fly over the UNESCO World Heritage Site, Hegra and take photos of the famous sandstone tombs. These new tours will operate twice a day during July and August and increase from September.
- **Get Illuminated with Culture:** the night-time version of the Rock Art Trail takes place within he Hegra Heritage site. You will be guided on a walk around one of Hegra's most fascinating mountains stopping at carvings and inscriptions that were left thousands of years ago by travelers, pilgrims and residents alike. The night-time experience includes torches for visitors to highlight the hidden details in the rocks not visible in the day. Learn how these people lived and the legacies that they left behind.
- **Get Real Deep at Dadan and Ikmah:** The ancient capital city of Dadan is shrouded in mystery. We know it was a highly organized and sophisticated kingdom that prospered as the nexus of the caravan trade and archaeologists now suggest was developed in the 9<sup>th</sup> century BCE. But when did the Dadanites become the Lihyanites? Did the Lihyan King Han'as stage a coup? What do the massive Lihyan statues of Kings left behind tell us? Experts speak of a complex and cultured society of people, the most sophisticated of its era. Some of the answers lie in the inscriptions at Jabal Ikmah, which is included in the one ticket.
- **Go Green:** The Oasis Trail from Dadan South, arriving in AlUla Old Town and passing by AlWadi area is 3KM long and will offer visitors an extraordinary nature stroll through AlUla farms, suitable for families and nature-lovers of all ages. The trail is open daily between 8:00 AM till

4:00 PM and is free for visitors, while you walk between the shadows of the palms on land that witnessed the rise and vanishing of many great civilizations.

#### Where to stay:

- **Habitas AlUla:** The hip, eco-friendly, and experiential hotel brand Habitas is opening a highly anticipated property in AlUla in fall 2021. Habitas AlUla is a 100-room luxury property situated in the dramatic Ashar Valley. The hotel will include world-class wellness center, pool, and restaurant specializing in Middle Eastern cuisine.
- **Shadan Resort:** Nestled against magnificent rock formations, Shaden's luxury villas, suites and rooms each offer private patios and access to a vast pool and lounge complex. Several on-site restaurants and coffee shops, a business center and more ensure your stay is comfortable.
- **Ashar Resort:** Open for limited time during active renovations and expansion to Accor's Banyan Tree (slated to be complete end of 2021); The resort is nestled against sky-high rock formations in a monumental valley, the Ashar Resort almost completely blends into the desert that surrounds it. Stroll between the sloping canvas roofs, striped wood walls and intricately designed panels on candlelit pathways to see the epic views that surround Ashar on all sides. From the luxurious tented villas, guests can relax into plush beds, en-suite bathrooms and terraces.
- **Airstream Resorts:** Visitors to this relatively undiscovered Saudi Arabian desert destination can immerse themselves in the great outdoors and red rock vistas by staying in one of the state-of-the-art Airstream RVs. There are 50 in total, split between two locations: Ashar and Shaden. These retro-chic trailers come equipped with a bathroom, mini-kitchen, and a covered patio area that is cozy yet cool. Continental breakfast is delivered directly each morning and there are also outdoor barbecue areas with seating. A community firepit invites gatherings under the starry night sky.

#### What to eat:

- **Suhail:** Suhail is a high-end Saudi Arabian dining concept serving dishes inspired by old Arabian Peninsula spices and time-honored traditions, matched with a modern twist and exemplary service.
- **Pink Camel:** An authentic coffee shop made from traditional wooden architecture, giving you the feeling of walking through a traditional farm. With terrace-style seating, wooden decked floors, and recycled paper menus, the homely beauty of the Pink Camel is a must-see.
- **New restaurants for Fall 2021:** AlUla will be welcoming two new fine dining restaurants to the destination this fall including **Anabel's Hegra**-- featuring a series of private dining areas serving signature menu favorites and mocktails inspired by Alula, and **Maraya Social**—the destination's first restaurant created by Michelin Starred chef, Jason Atherton.

For the most up-to-date information on entry requirements, especially from countries with new variant coronavirus, travelers should check with their carrier before booking. To stay current, please visit <https://www.experiencealula.com/en/plan-your-trip>. Supporting images can be found [here](#). Please don't hesitate to reach out should you have any questions or require more information.

Regards,

**Subj: Time to meet? Special interview opportunity with Experience AIUla**

Reaching out with a singular opportunity for you to meet with Phillip Jones, Chief Destination Marketing Officer for [Experience AIUla](#), while he is in NYC July 27<sup>th</sup> and July 28<sup>th</sup>.

Given we've been in recent communication about the destination of AIUla in the Northwestern Arabian Peninsula and thought you would be interested in learning more straight from the source with a meeting with Phillip during his travels in the US.

Right now is a great time to connect as Phillip will have more information to share on when US travelers will be able to visit AIUla (finally!). Phillip can also share information around AIUla's Masterplan: a ground-breaking strategy to bring the heritage and culture of the region to life for generations to come. The plan is significant because it represents a novel, responsible approach to tourism development guided by regeneration, sustainability, community, and collaboration.

I'm including Phillip's bio below for reference. He's a wealth of knowledge on the relatively undiscovered region of AIUla and super down-to-earth and easy to talk to. Please let us know if you're available to meet with him during his visit and we will be happy to arrange it.

Best,  
Shannon

**About Phillip Jones, Chief Destination Marketing Officer for Experience AIUla**

In his role as Chief Destination Marketing Officer, Phillip Jones actively drives the strategy for the development, promotion, expansion, and reputation of AIUla as a global tourism brand and destination in line with the destination's strategic objectives. Jones is currently leading the efforts to develop the brand identity for Experience AIUla. In addition, Jones was part of the team that launched AIUla, Wonder of Arabia, the first major exhibition to present AIUla's spectacular nature, archaeological treasures and cultural heritage at the Institut du Monde Arabe in Paris, France, supported by the first advertising campaign to introduce the destination to the global travel market. Prior to his role at the Royal Commission of AIUla, Jones served as the President and CEO of VisitDallas in Dallas, Texas USA from 2003 to 2019. Prior to joining VisitDallas, Jones served as Secretary of the Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism. He previously served as Director of Legislative/Intergovernmental Affairs for the U.S. Department of Commerce's Travel and Tourism Administration in Washington, D.C., where he helped organize and was a lead spokesman for the inaugural White House Conference on Travel and Tourism. In 2017, Jones served as chairman of the Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA) Education Foundation, the world's largest, most respected and most recognized network of business events strategists with more than 7,000 members in 37 countries located in North America, Europe, Asia, the Middle East, Australia and New Zealand.

**Subject:** You're Invited: Experience AIUla Hosts Luncheon to Present Archeology Discoveries in Northwest Arabia, 6/13

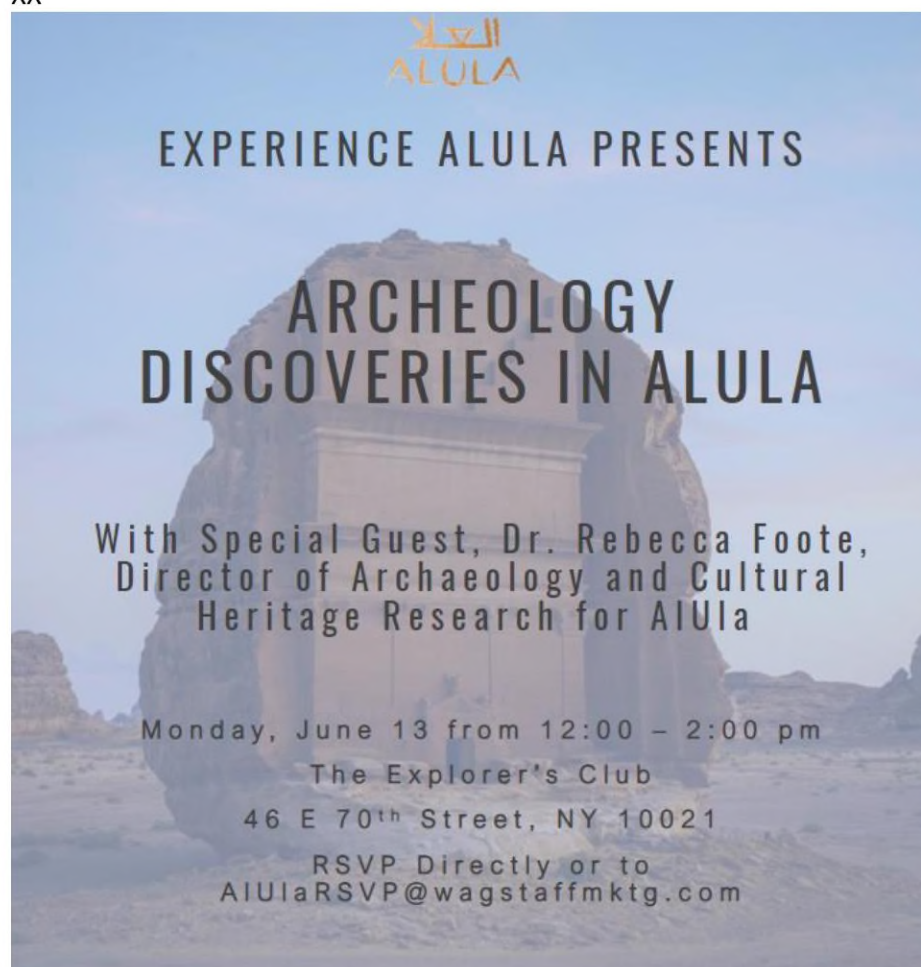
Hi,

We invite you to join [Experience AIUla](#) and Dr. Rebecca Foote on Monday, June 13 at 12:00 pm as we explore the archaeological site of AIUla, and the latest discoveries found from this year's site digs.

Taking place at The Explorer's Club in NYC, this exclusive lunchtime event will feature a presentation from Dr. Rebecca Foote, Director of Archaeology and Cultural Heritage Research for AIUla, as she shares more about this undiscovered region and gives a behind-the-scenes look at some of the most recent findings of modern history and ancient Arabia in this cultural heritage hub.

Official invitation is below. Please let us know by Friday, June 10 if you are able to attend.

My best,  
XX



how are you doing this week? Reaching out to see if you are writing any inspirational travel articles as we look forward to a brighter future of travel in 2021. If so, we wanted to share with you 21 reasons to visit the undiscovered region of [AlUla](#) located in Northwest Saudi Arabia. The destination is reopening its borders to international travel on **March 31**, so we thought this would be a great time to share details on the region, home to ancient heritage, adventure, arts and culture, and epic outdoor experiences, as well as new luxury accommodations in the pipeline including Habitas AlUla and Accor's Banyan Tree. Please see below for more information.



*(L to R: HEGRA, Hot Air Balloon at Winter at Tantora, Rainbow Rock, and Oasis; Photo credit: Royal Commission for AlUla)*

## THE HERITAGE

1. **Be the first to see AlUla's natural and man-made works of art** - from stunningly preserved tombs to rock formations sculpted from nature as the undiscovered destination opened to global travelers for the first time in October 2020.
2. **Marvel at Saudi Arabia's first UNESCO World Heritage Site, Hegra** – consisting of 94 elaborately carved tombs built by the Nabataean Kingdom.
3. **Visit AlUla's Old Town**—A labyrinth of 900 mud-brick houses that make up AlUla Old Town is opening to visitors in early 2021 – travelers can take a tour with a Rawi, a traditional Arabic storyteller and guide, up to the castle to get a great bird's-eye-view.
4. **Catch a magical moment** – when the sunlight illuminates the path of The Siq at Jabal Ithlib, the Holy Mountain at Hegra.
5. **Examine the rock art at the Ashar Valley** – these petroglyphs hold precious stories about how ancient civilizations lived and what was important to them.
6. **Explore the famous tombs, wells, and the curious burial grounds from above** – whether in a vintage aircraft, a helicopter or a hot air balloon, few destinations can compete for aerial views like the open-air living museum of AlUla.

7. **Visit the carved lions of ancient Dadan** –spot the famous carved lions high above and uncover stories about the legends of the Dadanite and Lihyanite Civilisations. The same ticket will allow access to the open-air library of 500 rock inscriptions at Jabal Ikmah.
8. **Visit an Arabian railway** – the story of this famous Hijaz Railway and Hegra Fort train route and its importance in transporting pilgrims to their holy places is a highlight for trainspotters and history buffs.

#### THE ADVENTURE

9. **Hike the Adventure Trail** – operated by adventure specialists Hussak, this half-day trek through the dramatic Madakheel landscapes is the perfect way to be at one with nature, or try the shorter Hidden Valley or Oasis View trails.
10. **Bike or hike Harrat Uwayrid** – A lookout point of for spectacular views of Hijaz Mountain range, oasis, canyons and valleys, the ideal backdrop for enchanting sunset photos.
11. **Ride Arabian horses** – across newly launched leisurely trails crossing through the sand dunes and surrounded by AlUla’s unique landscapes.
12. **Feel the wind in your hair**— while whizzing through the canyon on a zipline or hire a three-wheeled desert buggy at the new Adventure Canyon.

#### NATURE EXPERIENCES

13. **Explore wide-open spaces**— with more than 11 thousand square of stunning desert landscape, AlUla is the perfect place to be safely re-acquainted with the joys of travel.
14. **Book an evening Stargazing Tour at Al Ghameel** – get comfortable on a traditional carpet and as you stare into the bright stary night and hear stories of the human ingenuity of ancient civilizations.
15. **Search for unique rock formations** – sunrise and sunset are the best time to view iconic AlUla rocks such as Elephant Rock, Face Rock, Rainbow Rock, Hand Rock, Dancing Rocks Or Pyramid Mountain.
16. **Taste native fruits in a desert oasis**— Visit the lush palm groves and the AlUla Fresh Farm and sample the varieties of zingy citrus fruits, such as the Jaffa orange and helo lemons.
17. **Reconnect with each other and with the friendly locals** – Enjoy the surrounding nature while refueling on a juicy burger, coffee and donuts, or local cuisine from one of eight food truck vendors at the new Winter Park dining precinct.
18. **Relax with Arabic Coffee** – Enjoy the silence, the vastness and monumentality of the desert while sipping on an Arabic coffee

## ARTS & CULTURE

19. **Visit the gorgeous-mirrored concert venue – Maraya** – the Guinness Book of Record’s biggest mirrored building. This multi-purpose concert and entertainment venue is reopening early 2021, its cladding of 107,639 square feet of mirrors reflecting the desert landscapes makes it a magical experience that is never the same.
20. **Watch local artisans practice their craft** – from pottery to weaving wool into intricate patterns in the dedicated handicraft tent at Hegra, or at the arts hub of Madrasat Aldrirah – both new cultural immersion experiences coming soon to AIUla.

## ACCOMMODATION

21. **Coming in 2021, Habitas AIUla**, an eco-resort with a focus on immersive music and cultural events, and **Ashar Resort, 5-star luxury desert suites** which will transform into a Banyan Tree Resort later in the year. Both will be opening for bookings during the course of the year.

Please let us know if you have any questions about the destination of AIUla and happy to provide more information and additional.

Link to images: [https://www.dropbox.com/sh/jcphqzr2el4hecz/AAD\\_dVZ1VClbwbmp-1rM6jypa?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/jcphqzr2el4hecz/AAD_dVZ1VClbwbmp-1rM6jypa?dl=0)

Thank you,

Shannon

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**Subj: New adidas collaboration | adidas Originals and Arwa Al Banawi Launch Sneaker Collab from AIUla**

Something that seems to never lose steam in the fashion industry is a good sneaker collaboration. Adidas may be known for its collabs with big-time celebrities like Pharrell and Bad Bunny, but have you seen the newest Forum Lo sneaker collaboration with [Arwa Al Banawi](#)?

**Available globally today on [adidas.com](#)**, female Saudi fashion designer Awra Al Banawi partnered with adidas on this novel sneaker collab to pay homage to her roots in the burgeoning destination of [AIUla](#). AIUla is a cultural gem located in northwest Saudi Arabia offering travelers the opportunity to explore undiscovered heritage sites including Saudi's first UNESCO World Heritage Site, Hegra; the kingdom of Dadan; the ancient hub of Old Town AIUla; and the whispering canyons of Jabal Ikmah.

Al Banawi has reimagined the iconic Forum Lo sneaker by echoing the region's spectacular landscape which is emphasized through soft sand tones on the heel and sole of the shoe, along with red stitching as a nod to traditional Arabic embroidery. The shoe was unveiled earlier this week at a special activation in AIUla providing early access to limited pairs for all Gulf countries.

Al Banawi is known for her unwavering commitment to bringing together Eastern and Western perspectives, often paying homage to her Gulf heritage and reinterpreting it through new lenses. A natural champion for her home region, Al Banawi stands for empowering women and never ceases to communicate Arab culture through her brand.

If interested in learning more about the collaboration, please see the official media release [here](#). We look forward to hearing your thoughts and please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions.



Thank you,

Shannon

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Subject: Exclusive invite: Experience a desert polo match in AIUla this February

Hi XX, we're reaching out to invite you to experience the [Richard Mille AIUla Desert Polo Event](#) in [AIUla, Saudi Arabia](#) this February.

This is an opportunity to experience the polo match, interview polo star Adolfo Cambiaso, and be one of the first to explore the destination of AIUla. You will be one of the first to stay at [Habitat AIUla](#), the destination's newest luxury property with a sustainable build, explore ancient heritage sites dating back thousands of years, take in awe-inspiring natural landscapes and lush oases, stargaze under the Arabian skies, and so much more. The trip will be a hosted experience on behalf of Experience AIUla and includes flights, accommodations, hosted experiences, and most meals. We are still confirming travel dates and are aiming for February 7-13<sup>th</sup>.

Richard Mille AIUla Desert Polo event is the only major polo tournament staged in the desert, adjacent to the ancient heritage site of [Hegra](#). The match will take place February 11-12<sup>th</sup> and will include a handful of professional players drawn from the global polo community, including La Dolfina— polo's "perfect team". Recently the Royal Commission for AIUla and the La Dolfina Polo Team announced the establishment of a long-term partnership to help showcase the region's incredible Arabian horse heritage, and position AIUla as the premier destination for horse enthusiasts from around the world.

Please let us know if you would be interested in experiencing this event firsthand and we are happy to jump on a call to answer any questions you may have.



*(L to R: UNESCO Heritage site, Hegra; Habitat AIUla; Jabal Aifil (Elephant Rock) | Credit: Experience AIUla)*

Subj: Interested in some good news? Birth of rare Arabian Leopard cub marks significant milestone in saving a critically endangered species

Hi XX,

Reaching out on behalf of [Experience AIUla](#) to share exciting news of the birth of rare Arabian Leopard cub, marking a significant milestone in saving a critically endangered species. Might you be interested in sharing the news of the cub, including ways that your readers can help support this endangered species by registering for the first-ever [Catwalk](#) on Nov. 6, 2021?



*(Female Arabian Leopard Cub; Photo Credit: Aline Coquelle)*

The female cub was born on April 23 and is now one of 16 born in a captive-breeding program at the Arabian Leopard Breeding Center in Taif, Saudi Arabia as part of a campaign to bring the animal back from near extinction. The species will eventually be reintroduced into the wilderness in the mountains of [AIUla](#), by restoring the population through the breeding program and the preparation of a suitable habitat in which the leopards can thrive. Initiatives for the rewilding program include:

- Expansion of the captive-breeding program with the opening of a state-of-the-art breeding center to open by early 2024 as part of [Sharaan Nature Reserve, AIUla](#).
- Establishment of the Arabian Leopard Fund
- Extension of partnerships with relevant conservation entities such as the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and Panthera
- Conversion of 80% of the AIUla project's land into nature reserves, in line with the Saudi Green Initiative. The Sharaan Nature Reserve, for example, will restore and conserve the ecosystem, including indigenous flora and fauna, across 600 square miles
- Reintroduction of prey species such as Nubian Ibex and Idmi Gazelles
- Training of AIUla residents as park rangers to safeguard the reserves

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**HOW YOU and YOUR READERS CAN HELP THE ARABIAN LEOPARD:**

To raise awareness of the Arabian Leopard, we invite you and your readers to join the **Arabian Leopard Cat Crew** for the nonprofit organization, [Catmosphere's](#) first-ever **Catwalk**. The [Catwalk](#) event is a 4-mile outdoor walk organized to raise awareness of endangered big cats taking place around the world on Nov. 6, 2021.

**More information about Catwalk below:**

- **Who:** [Experience AIUla](#) partnered with [Catmosphere](#) to promote conservation efforts for the Arabian Leopard and their critical ecosystems

- **What:** Catmosphere will be launching its inaugural **Catwalk** where participants will engage in a 7km (4.4 mile) outdoor walk and dedicate their walk to their favorite Big Cat. The *cat crew* that walks the most miles in total will be named the “Winning Cat”
- **Where:** A virtual race, to take place wherever you are. Fun, flexible and inclusive, it’s open to everyone of all abilities and can be achieved in the way that best suits you
- **When:** Any time on Saturday, November 6, 2021
- **Why:** Catwalk is designed to raise awareness of Big Cats including the Arabian Leopard as the future of Big Cats is under threat, primarily due to diminishing habitat. Experience AIUla is developing a rewilding program to reintroduce the leopards into the Sharaan Nature Reserve by 2024.
- **Cost:** It is free to participate in the Catwalk.

If interested in posting on social media, please use the hashtags #meetourcub #catmosphere #catwalk2021 #arabianleopard and tag [@experiencealula](#) and [@catmospherenow](#).

**Links to images (Photo Credit: Aline Coquelle):**

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/szyj7yuuak25yr4/AAB7vEcJW9Mx-lqNen2N1wm1a?dl=0>

**Link to video:** [https://www.dropbox.com/sh/o97hqpjt5d1xmhk/AABal\\_XICcWTub7orwKcAcTXa?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/o97hqpjt5d1xmhk/AABal_XICcWTub7orwKcAcTXa?dl=0)

**Link to Catwalk registration:** <https://catmosphere.org/register/>

Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions. Happy to provide additional information and hope you will join the Arabian Leopard Cat Crew.

Thank you,

Subj: JOIN US | Exclusive media preview of Discovery's "The Architects of Ancient Arabia"

Hi XX,

We invite you to tune in with [Experience AIUla](#) for an exclusive live pre-screening of Discovery's newest documentary, "The Architects of Ancient Arabia," on Thursday, March 25 at 9:00 am PST / 12:00 pm EST.



Enjoy delicacies from the region as you receive a behind-the-scenes look at one of the most important discoveries of modern history as expert teams of archeologists uncover clues that reposition the global understanding and significance of ancient Arabia. Narrated by Academy Award winner Jeremy Irons, the documentary unearths previously unknown aspects of the ancient history of AIUla, as experts uncover traces of a society from more than 7,000 years ago.

The virtual pre-screening will also include a live Q&A session with Dr. Rebecca Foote, one of the leading Archaeologists on the project, along with appearances from special guests including contacts from Experience AIUla and the Discovery Channel.

"The Architects of Ancient Arabia" will officially air on Travel Channel in the US on Wednesday, March 31<sup>st</sup> and Thursday April 1<sup>st</sup>. The documentary will also air on Friday, April 2 on Discovery Channel. A teaser of the documentary can be viewed [here](#).

We will be providing the live Zoom link and sending you simple Arabian treats to enjoy during the screening. If interested in attending, can you kindly RSVP and please share your address and phone number by Monday 22<sup>nd</sup>?

We look forward to your attendance.

Thank you,

**SHANNON CROSBY** (she/her) | associate

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Subject: Culinary Geology | cooking with molten lava in the ancient desert of AlUla

Hi XX, reaching out as we just received news of an extraordinary pop-up dining experience, Forces of Nature, by our client, [Experience AlUla](#), which features experiential gastronomy specialists, Bompas & Parr who will cook a full set menu over molten lava heated to a staggering 2464 degrees Fahrenheit.

Lava technicians will pour out the molten rocks in a **performance spectacle**, where guests' dinner is cooked, seared to perfection in mere seconds, or smoked, roasted and grilled over three roaring fire pits. Bompas & Parr developed the concept driven by the black lunar-esque volcanic plateaus that contrast with the ochre sandstone and lush green oasis of the AlUla, a remote but globally significant heritage destination located in an extraordinary geological setting in Saudi Arabia.

We have outlined some fast facts about Forces of Nature below for your reference

- Full Menu inspired by flavors and ingredients that react well to lava, from produce to proteins and mocktails.
- Menu highlights include **Cinnabar Sour**, an Italian meringue torched in-glass and served with a saffron and caramel lemon sour to pour over, **Open fire Pumpkin Steak** finished across lava and served on a bed of lava roasted seeds and endive with a hazelnut vinaigrette, and **Spiced Chickpea Stew** prepared in a terracotta cauldron filled with slow-cooked spiced chickpeas warmed slowly over an open flame.
- The venture builds on the ground-breaking work of one of the world's foremost experts in molten rock, Prof. Robert Wysocki from Syracuse University in New York.
- Set under the vast night sky, the open-air restaurant is set in a remote canyon area not far from the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Hegra, a Nabataean city that is famous for its necropolis of intricately carved monumental tombs.
- The experience of Forces of Nature is guided by torchlight through a bespoke sound and light installation which completes the sensory effect of the world-first event.
- To tie in with the geological theme, Saudi Arabia spans over 200 dormant volcanos, creating some of the most dramatic volcanic landscapes in the world. The limestone of AlUla was formed between 541 and 251 million years ago, during the Paleozoic Era creating the rock-faces that allowed habitation that are synonymous with AlUla.

Please let us know if you are interested in a story on this one-of-a-kind culinary event. Happy to share more information and answer any questions you may have.

Link to hi-res images: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1cRWdKH2MjUjNn9H20UiOyt9nzt6qx-PO?usp=sharing>

Link to video: [https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1oyE41THQD\\_pChluSmsEuXPcliPguUmwa](https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1oyE41THQD_pChluSmsEuXPcliPguUmwa)



Subject: Culinary Geology | cooking with molten lava in the ancient desert of AlUla

Photo Alert: Maestro Andrea Bocelli and family perform at Hegra

Sharing the below information about Andrea Bocelli's recent performance at the UNESCO world heritage site, Hegra, in [AlUla](#), Saudi Arabia. Please see below for more information, images, and videos about the performance. Thank you for your consideration.

**Who:** Andrea Bocelli

**When:** Yesterday, April 8

**Where:** AlUla, Saudi Arabia

**Link to images:** <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/obhsuws60z11e4f/AAAXHkPntbt8oInGTncE7vXaa?dl=0>

**Link to video:** <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/eih138l24ikoggm/AABsWyRkT07In0vRgTQNJhmaa?dl=0>

**What:**

The world's most beloved tenor, Maestro Andrea Bocelli, gave a stunning performance within the surrounds of the UNESCO World Heritage Site, Hegra last night. The concert's many stand out moments included a performance from Andrea Bocelli with his 9-year-old daughter Virginia. The duo sang *Hallelujah* to the delighted and intimate crowd attending the event. In fact, the concert is the first time Andrea has shared the stage with both his son Matteo and his daughter. The multi-talented family showed off their musical prowess with Bocelli swapping instruments throughout the performance.

Songs included favorites from *Puccini*, hits from the artist most recent album, *Believe*, as well as songs from the *Greatest Showman* and *Carousel*. No Bocelli performance would be complete without an encore of *Time to Say Goodbye* and fans both at the event and millions watching live on MBC1 in MENA and the artists YouTube channel globally were not disappointed.

As well as the surprise performance from young talent Virginia Bocelli, the master tenor was joined by musicians from the Arabian Philharmonic and special guests Loren Allred, Matteo Bocelli, soprano Francesca Maionchi, with Eugene Kohn at the piano.

The musical genius is said to be able to play any instrument he puts his hands on and proved this on arrival at AlUla International Airport by playing a rendition of *O sole mio* on a Qanoun, or Zither.

Bocelli says the concert was about a celebration of life and music, "Our planet is beautiful and music is the world's great unifier so this moment for us has been about spreading a little joy as we all see the light at the end of the tunnel and look forward to enjoying music together again soon."

The concert marks the third successive year that Bocelli has performed in AlUla having delighted audiences at the previous two Winter at Tantora festivals. However, this is the first time that the ancient city of Hegra will be the setting for a music event of this calibre.

Hegra, built in the first century BCE by the Nabataean Kingdom, is an ancient desert city home to thousands of tombs cut into sandstone mountains. At least 100 tombs have elaborate carved facades, a signature of the skilled Nabataean craftsmen.

Bocelli said performing in such a setting was a very special moment for the family and for all the musicians on stage: "To be here creating a piece of history in such an inspirational setting so rich in human ingenuity, heritage and culture is truly a moment we will never forget."

Maestro Bocelli will go directly from AlUla, Saudi Arabia to Genoa, Italy to record the opera *Otello*, by Giuseppe Verdi.

**For press inquiries, please reach out to Wagstaff Media & Marketing at [AlUla@wagstaffmktg.com](mailto:AlUla@wagstaffmktg.com)**

###

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WAGSTAFF | MEDIA & MARKETING  
LOS ANGELES | NEW YORK | CHICAGO | SAN FRANCISCO | VANCOUVER

Subj: Be one of the first to visit these newly discovered ancient cities of the middle east

Hi XX, With the [recent news](#) around the discovery of the ancient Egyptian city “Rise of Aten” dating back more than 3,000 years ago, I wanted to gauge your interest in a travel trend story around newly discovered ancient cities in the middle east for travelers to add to their “must-visit” lists. In addition to Rise of Aten in Egypt, travelers should also be aware of AIUla in Saudi Arabia and En Sur in Israel for future trip planning – details below!



(L to R: Hegra and aerial shot of Old Town AIUla; Photo Credit: Experience AIUla)

**AIUla | Saudi Arabia:** [AIUla](#) is home to Saudi Arabia’s first UNESCO world heritage site, [Hegra](#), the second city of the ancient Nabatean civilization. The region also has deep roots with the [Dadan and Liyhan kingdoms](#) and was one of the main stops along the historic incense route. Today, travelers can see one of the highest concentrations of varied inscriptions across different ancient civilizations at [Jabal Ikmah](#) which is called an “open air library” and traverse through the newly reopened [AIUla Old Town](#) which was an essential settlement along the pilgrimage route from Damascus to Makkah. The region continues to uncover new discoveries including the [Mustatils](#), the earliest large scale, monumental landscape ever identified, and the earliest physical evidence of the domesticated dog in Arabia.

- **Where to Stay:** [Habitat 67](#) have partnered to create experiential resort in the desert canyons of AIUla’s Ashar Valley, which will be community-focused and eco-friendly and slated to open in fall 2021.

**“Rise of Aten” | Egypt:** A 3,000-year-old city is the largest ancient municipality discovered in the country and has already been referred to as the most important architectural find within Egypt’s borders since the discovery of King Tut’s tomb nearly 100 years ago. Only a few weeks ago, the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquity of Egypt announced the discovery near the city of Luxor which is believed to date back to the reign of King Amenhotep III, who ruled over Egypt from 1391 and 1353 BCE. Many archaeological finds, such as rings, scarabs, colored pottery vessels, and mud bricks bearing seals of King Amenhotep III’s cartouche, confirmed the dating of the city.

- **Where to Stay:** [Sofitel Winter Palace](#) oozes history and is located on the east bank of the River Nile. This property was the spot where Agatha Christie wrote, “death on the Nile” and where the discovery of King Tut’s Tomb was revealed.

**En Sur | Israel:** Discovered in 2019, this ancient lost city north of Tel Aviv dates back 5,000 years and was considered the “New York City” of its time. The city was home to 6,000 people and included planned roads, neighborhood and a ritual temple. The ancient city is located 35 miles north of Tel Aviv in

the valley of Wadi Ara, the ancient city was discovered while the region was undergoing excavations in preparation of a new road. Today, there are plans for the road to be built high above to protect and preserve the ruins.

- **Where to Stay:** The famed SoHo House brand is slated to open [Soho House Tel Aviv](#) in the historic Jaffa neighborhood this spring with an mosaic style outdoor pool, terrace and 24 guestrooms.

Please let us know if you have any questions and looking forward to your thoughts.

Thank you,

XX

Subject: Where to go 2021 | AIUla, undiscovered destination in Northwest Saudi Arabia

Hi XX,

Interested to see if you are working on where to go 2021 stories for XX this year? We just started working with a new international destination, [AIUla](#) in Northwest Saudi Arabia which re-opened its heritage sites only a few weeks ago, having been largely closed off to global visitors for many years. The destination will offer travelers access to undiscovered heritage sites, luxury accommodations, outdoor adventure, eclectic art and music festivals, and much more.



AIUla is a historical crossroads of ancient civilizations which played an essential role in the Incense Route and Nabatean culture. The destination is unveiling a suite of experiences to be launched over the coming months which include a “living museum” of preserved tombs, sandstone outcrops, historic dwellings and monuments—both natural and man-made—that hold 200,000 years of largely unexplored history. The first of these sites to reopen include UNESCO World Heritage Site, Hegra; the ancient kingdom of Dadan; and the whispering canyons of Jabal Ikmaah will be the first sites to reopen to the public.

In addition to the re-opening of the heritage sites, the destination also has many exciting accommodations in the pipeline including:

- **Sharaan Resort:** French architect Jean Nouvel’s daring new project will be sculpted inside the rock dwellings of the Sharaan Nature Reserve, truly a world’s first. The new Jean Nouvel resort, set to be completed by 2024, will include 40 guest suites and three resort villas. A retreat summit center near the resort will feature 14 private pavilions.
- **Ashar Resort** – This property will expand under the Accor Banyan Tree brand this winter. There will be 47 new units added, which will bring the resort’s total number up to 82 high-end villas, along with a luxury spa and several gourmet restaurants. This will be guided by a sensitive design that allows each villa to blend discreetly into the striking natural scenery of the Ashar valley, located nearby the Kingdom’s first UNESCO World Heritage Site, Hegra.
- **Habitas AIUla** - Habitas AIUla is located amongst dramatic sandstone canyons in Ashar Valley. Set to open this winter, the 100-room luxury resort is sustainably driven with a few 3-D printed elements of the resort. Additionally, Habitas AIUla is rooted in shared community and

connection and offers rituals including sunset ceremonies, a “sound sensorama,” and bracelet gifting.

Please let us know what you think and we are more than happy to supply additional information, press kits, hi-res images, and more.

Thank you,

Shannon

**CATMOSPHERE ANNOUNCES CATWALK, A GLOBAL WALK TO  
RAISE BIG CAT CONSERVATION AWARENESS**

*Igniting physical movement locally, triggering the Big Cat conservation movement globally*

[Washington—November 1, 2021] -- Catmosphere is launching its inaugural campaign [Catwalk](#), taking place on November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021. A fun, free, open-to-all, 7km walk or run, Catwalk's aim is to activate fitness and learning, and in doing so create a community that is not only informed, but also invested, and whose engagement in the support of Big Cat conservation, including the Arabian Leopard, becomes ongoing.

The future of Big Cats is under threat, due to loss and fragmentation of habitat, conflict with people and poaching for the illegal wildlife trade, with the tiger, lion, leopard, and cheetah having disappeared from 65% to 96% of their historic range (source: Panthera.org). Accordingly, Catwalk is striving for a healthy habitat for Big Cats, and healthy habitats start at home. A healthy and active lifestyle helps us to respect our own bodies, and engaging with our natural environments gives us an appreciation for the fundamental roles they play in all life.

One of the Big Cats that Catmosphere is supporting is the rare Arabian Leopard. There are only about 200 critically endangered Arabian Leopards left in the wild with a new female cub being born just a few months ago at a breeding facility in Saudi Arabia. [The Royal Commission for AlUla](#) is working with the facility and the Sharaan Nature Reserve in the ancient region of AlUla to rewild these magnificent creatures within the next few years along with a handful of other conservation initiatives within the destination.

Participants can take part in two ways:

1. **Catwalk:** Walk up to 7 kilometres and dedicate your walk to your favorite Big Cat.
2. **Catwalk Cubs:** Walk 700 metres and add on an activity that reflects the behaviour of your favorite Big Cat. This shorter distance is designed for children and families.
3. Catwalk is open to participants of any age / ability who register at [catmosphere.org/register](https://catmosphere.org/register)

According to the World Health Organization, an estimated 24% of all global human deaths are attributable to environmental factors, while a quarter of the world's population are at health risks because they don't get sufficient exercise in our increasingly sedentary society. Catwalk invites participants to get active in nature as a way of underlining the critical contribution that Big Cats have to their natural habitats, while simultaneously triggering appreciation of the physical and mental benefits of outdoor physical activity.

As participants learn about the Big Cats, they will be encouraged to choose which Big Cat they will Catwalk for on November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021. The Cat Crew that collectively walks the longest distance will be crowned the Winning Cat. Designed to increase Big Cat awareness through a fun and engaging physical activity for all ages and fitness levels, Catwalk's efforts are being supported by partners that include Google, as well as endorsements from the International Olympic Committee, TAFISA, and Peace and Sport.

Catmosphere's Founder Ambassador Reema Bandar Al Saud says: "What's unique about Catwalk is that we are crafting creative partnerships to align unlikely mandates, and one example of that is how Catwalk is aligning health and well-being to Big Cat conservation.

“The reality of the pandemic and the experience that the whole world just had of separation and isolation from human communities due to Covid-19 has parallels with what Big Cats experienced when we cut off their territorial corridors and isolated them from their natural habitats in nature. Just as we have seen that impact on us, imagine what that impact has been on them. Therefore, Catwalk is hoping to highlight a very simple fact: that our collective wellbeing is interconnected, and so it is incumbent on all of us to operate through empathy and provide spaces that we as humans would want to live and thrive in, and ensure the same for Big Cats.”

#### **About Catmosphere**

Launched in 2021, [Catmosphere](#) is a US non-profit 501 (c)(3) foundation created to activate innovative engagement and storytelling around Big Cat Conservation. Catmosphere’s awareness-raising campaigns are positioned to amplify the work of [Panthera](#), the only organization globally that is devoted exclusively to the conservation of the world’s 40 wild cat species and their ecosystems. Utilizing the expertise of the world’s premier cat biologists, Panthera develops and implements strategies to study and protect cheetahs, jaguars, leopards, lions, pumas, snow leopards and tigers and the 33 small cat species and their vast landscapes.

#### **ABOUT THE ROYAL COMMISSION OF ALULA**

The Royal Commission for AlUla (RCU) was established by royal decree in July 2017 to protect and safeguard AlUla, a region of outstanding natural and cultural significance in North-West Saudi Arabia. RCU is embarking on a long-term plan to develop and deliver a sensitive, sustainable transformation of the region, reaffirming it as one of the country's most important archaeological and cultural destinations and preparing it to welcome visitors from around the world. RCU’s development work in AlUla encompasses a broad range of initiatives across archaeology, tourism, culture, education and the arts, reflecting the ambitious commitment to cultivate tourism and leisure in Saudi Arabia, outlined in Vision 2030.

For more information, please visit: [www.rcu.gov.sa](http://www.rcu.gov.sa)

D O L C E & G A B B A N A  
A L T A M O D A  
A L T A S A R T O R I A  
A L T A G I O I E L L E R I A

ALULA

## AlUla and Dolce&Gabbana celebrate ancient equestrian heritage in the unique and elegant Ikamah Fashion Cavalry Show



### AlUla, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 4<sup>th</sup> January 2022

AlUla, the Saudi Arabian city of heritage and culture, situated in the northwest of Saudi Arabia, will host Dolce&Gabbana Alta Moda, Alta Sartoria and Alta Gioielleria in a unique and elegant fashion show on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2022 as part of AlUla Moments festivals season.

In addition to the show, Dolce&Gabbana will exhibit the one-of-a-kind collection in Maraya, the world's largest mirrored building, which will be open for visitors to experience from 28<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2022. The guests will have the opportunity to visit the exclusive space, meet the Dolce&Gabbana première and master tailor and get their choices from the unique and customized collection.

The event represents a new stage in the creative path that Dolce&Gabbana started in 2012 with the first Alta Moda Collection, which has been presented through the years in some of the most fascinating Italian and worldwide locations. This has been a journey to discover craftsmanship and pay homage to the most beautiful, poetic and passionate creations that are shaped by human hands.

The fashion show will take place during the Ikamah Fashion Cavalry Show, an event during Winter at Tantora, the first festival in the Kingdom celebrating heritage, culture and music. Ikamah Fashion Cavalry Show is a special exhibition celebrating the extraordinary spirit and tradition of Arabian horses, famous all over the world for their unparalleled beauty and elegance.

Jabal Ikamah, considered one of the main historical and archaeological sites in AlUla, will witness a special evening dedicated to handmade fashion design creativity with an all-Mediterranean flavour. Jabal Ikamah, a mountain near the ancient city of Dadan - the capital of the ancient Dadanite and Lihyanite Kingdoms - has been described as a huge open-air library with historical inscriptions and rock art.

The Ikamah Fashion Cavalry Show has been conceived and produced by Balich Wonder Studio. The show will showcase a full parade of 12 Arabian horses with customized horse accessories and attire, highlighting the harmony between horses and models and impressing the attendees with a unique show.

Winter at Tantora runs from 21<sup>st</sup> December 2021 to 12<sup>th</sup> February 2022, offering both international and local visitors an exciting six weeks of music, cultural and equestrian events. Winter at Tantora is the first festival

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A L T A M O D A

A L T A S A R T O R I A

A L T A G I O I E L L E R I A



of AIUla Moments which include three other distinctive festivals: AIUla Arts, AIUla Skies, and AIUla Wellness festival.

Tickets to attend Ikmah Fashion Cavalry Show will go on sale from 10<sup>th</sup> January 2022 on [www.experiencealula.com](http://www.experiencealula.com)

-Ends-

**Multimedia assets:**

For high resolution imagery [download from here](#)

For Media Outlets' social media platforms, use AIUla Moments KV Video [from here](#)

**About AIUla:**

Located 1,100 km from Riyadh, in North-West Saudi Arabia, AIUla is a place of extraordinary natural and human heritage. The vast area, covering 22,561km<sup>2</sup>, includes a lush oasis valley, towering sandstone mountains and ancient cultural heritage sites dating back thousands of years to when the Lihyan and Nabataean kingdoms reigned.

The most well-known and recognised site in AIUla is Hegra, Saudi Arabia's first UNESCO World Heritage Site. A 52-hectare ancient city, Hegra was the principal southern city of the Nabataean Kingdom and is comprised of 111 well-preserved tombs, many with elaborate facades cut out of the sandstone outcrops surrounding the walled urban settlement.

Current research also suggests Hegra was the most southern outpost of the Roman Empire after the Roman's conquered the Nabataeans in 106 CE.

In addition to Hegra, AIUla is also home to ancient Dadan, the captial of the Dadan and Lihyan Kingdoms and considered to be one of the most developed 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BCE cities of the Arabian Peninsula. And Jabal Ikmah, an open-air library of hundreds of inscriptions and writings in different languages. Also AIUla Old Town, a labyrinth of more than 900 mudbrick homes developed from at least the 12th century, and Hijaz Railway and Hegra Fort, key sites in the story and conquests of Lawrence of Arabia.

For more information, please visit: [www.experiencealula.com](http://www.experiencealula.com)

**About the Dolce&Gabbana Group:**

Established in 1985, Dolce&Gabbana is an international leader in the fashion and luxury goods sector. The founders, Domenico Dolce and Stefano Gabbana, have always been the creative and stylistic source of all the brand's activities as well as the drivers behind the development strategies.

The Group creates, produces and distributes high-end clothing, leather goods, footwear, accessories, jewelry and watches. The brand is present in the Prêt-à-porter segment with Men's, Women's and Children's collections, and in the Alta Moda, Alta Sartoria, Alta Gioielleria and Alta Orologeria collections.

The only activities entrusted to licensee partners are the production and distribution of Eyewear and Beauty lines

**Media Inquiries:**

For RCU media inquiries, please contact

[media@rcu.go.sa](mailto:media@rcu.go.sa)



An aerial photograph of a desert landscape featuring large, layered rock formations. The rocks are dark brown and show distinct horizontal strata. The surrounding terrain is sandy and flat, with numerous tire tracks visible. In the background, a body of water is visible under a clear sky. The overall scene is arid and rugged.

**ADVENTURE TRAVEL TRADE  
ASSOCIATION  
ADVENTURE ELEVATE 2021  
EXPERIENCE ALULA**





## WONDERS OF TIME

AlUla is a place of extraordinary human and natural heritage. A living museum of preserved tombs, sandstone outcrops, historic dwellings and monuments, both natural and human-made, that hold 200,000 years of largely unexplored human history.

AlUla has long been at the crossroads of ancient civilizations; a place of rich history, but one that is constantly evolving.

AlUla is an extraordinary place that is unveiling its many secrets for the first time and is ready to share them with the world.

## THE ESSENCE OF ALULA

### **Heritage carved in rocks**

Architecture in AlUla merges with the landscape, and creates outstanding works of art. It is within this union that the uniqueness of AlUla is found.

### **Silence and Monumentality**

A deep and ancient silence covers the desert, the dramatic canyons, and the pristine rocks. There is a deeply comforting feeling in the realization of our smallness when experiencing the full scale of natural powers.

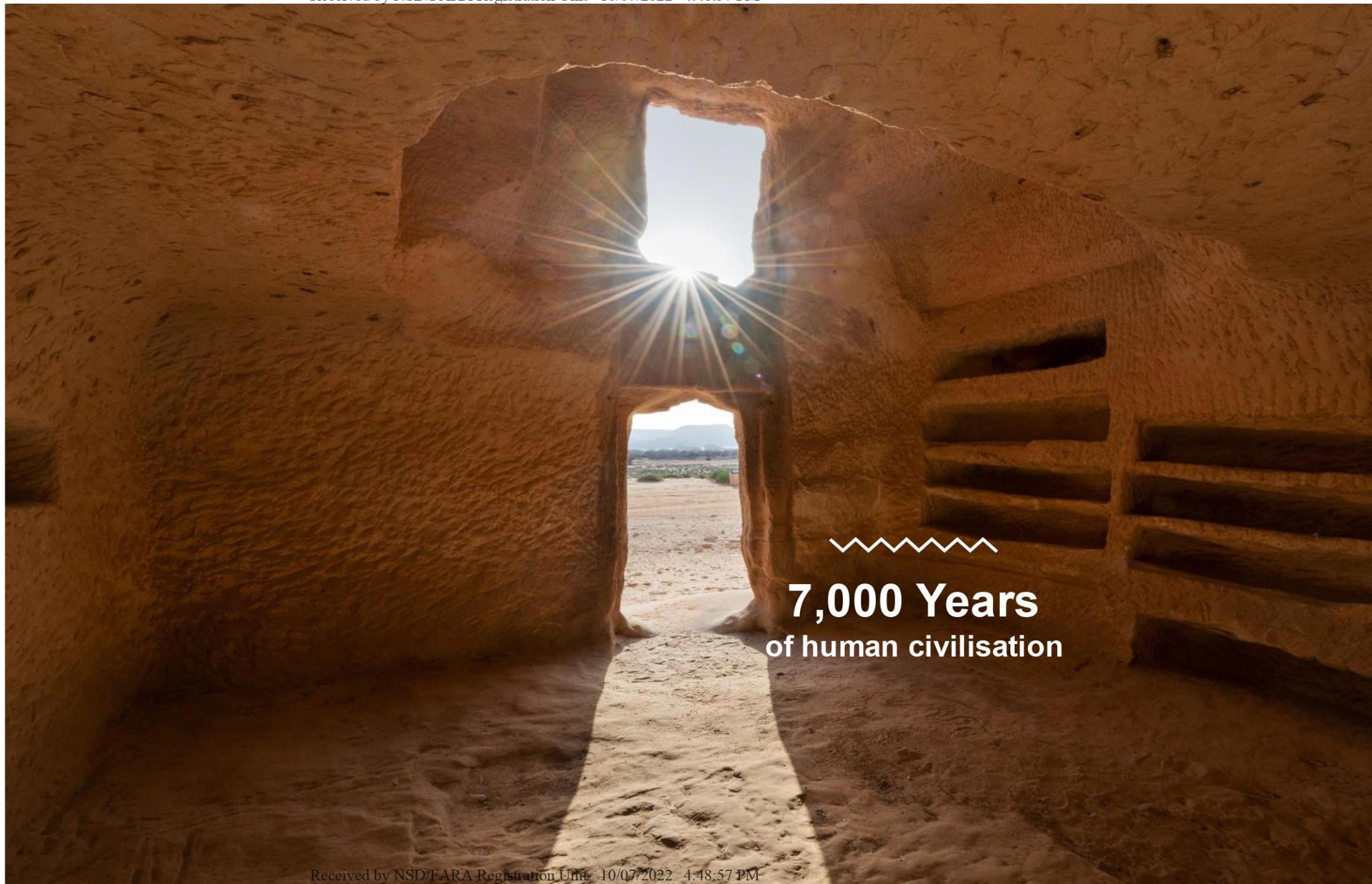
### **Timeless authenticity**

AlUla is sublime. Its presence is humbling. Everything in AlUla reflects the authenticity of a landscape that has remained unaltered for centuries.



~~~~~  
**200,000 Years**  
of human legacy

ALULA



**7,000 Years**  
of human civilisation



ALULA

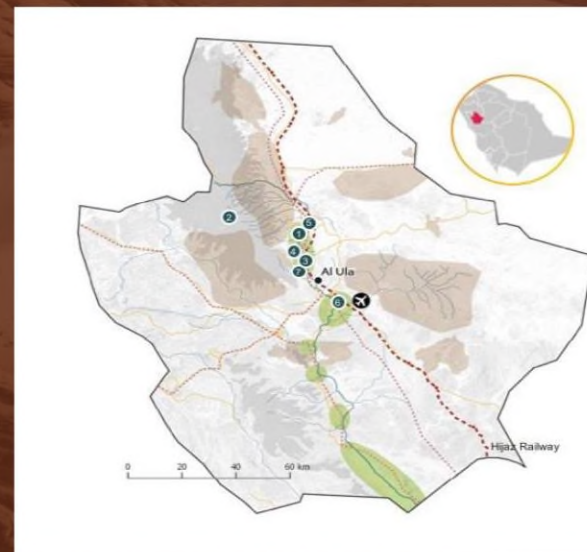
1000 km northwest of  
Riyadh



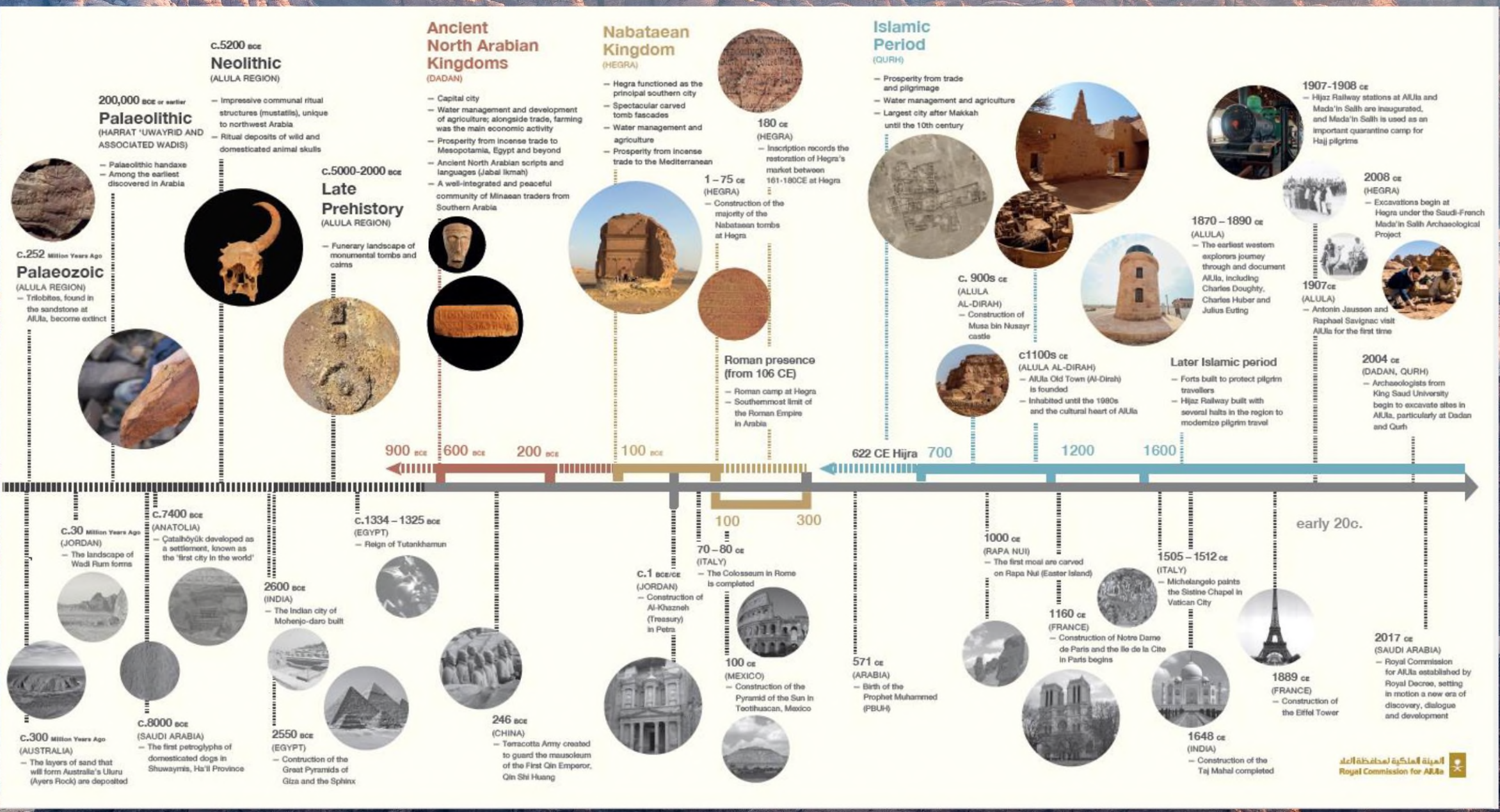
Population:  
45,000



25,000 square kilometers  
– AlUla size of a country



# ABOUT ALULA



# ABOUT ALULA



## AlUla Facts



Important stop  
on the the  
incense road



7,000 years of  
successive  
civilizations and  
history, captured in  
one site.



1st UNESCO world  
heritage site registered  
in Saudi Arabia in 2008



111 tombs at Hegra of  
which 94 have elaborate  
remarkably well-preserved  
carved facades



Ongoing  
archaeological  
diggings



**AlUla's four  
significant  
Heritage sites  
are**



Hegra UNESCO World  
Heritage Site & Hijaz  
Railway Station



Dadan



Jabal Ikmah



AlUla Old Town



## PRODUCE



Significant number of **palm trees** in AIUla Oasis (2.3M) & produce 90K tons of dates a year.



**Citrus trees** grow in the Oasis (200K)

## FAUNA



AIUla will ultimately welcome the return of Arabian leopards



Nubian Ibex



Idmi gazelles



Ibexes



Red-Necked ostriches

# AN EXTRAORDINARY EXPERIENCE



**NATURAL &  
SUSTAINABLE**



**LOCAL &  
AUTHENTIC**



**LUXURY &  
QUALITY**



**JOURNEY &  
ADVENTURE**



**CULTURE &  
WONDER**

**CREATING A LIVING IMMERSION EXPERIENCE AT THE WORLD'S LARGEST OUTDOOR MUSEUM**



# HERITAGE SITES

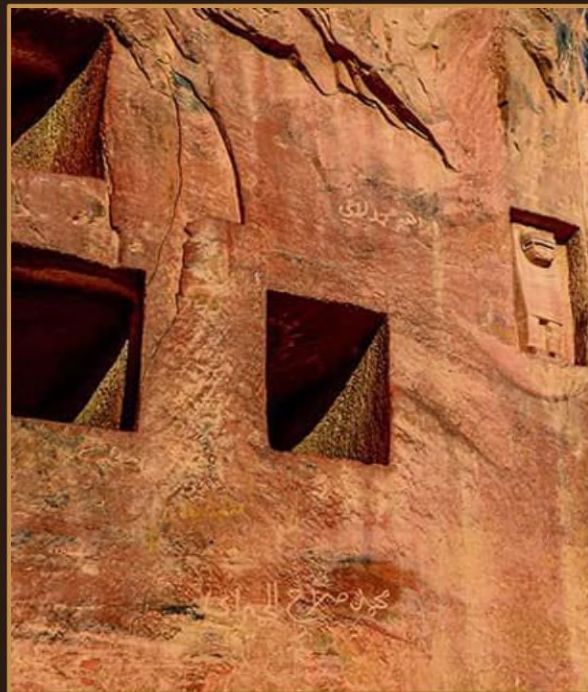


## Hegra

Saudi Arabia's first UNESCO World Heritage Site. Here you'll explore over 110 remarkably well-preserved tombs set in a desert landscape, while learning about the ancient people and culture of AlUla.



Evidence for human presence and use of the site dates back beyond the 1st millennium BCE, but it was the location of the Nabataean city from the end of the 1st millennium BCE into the 1st millennium CE. The city was at its peak from the late 2nd century BCE to the 2nd century CE.



## Dadan

Amongst the most significant discoveries in all of AlUla is the city of Dadan, the capital of the Dadan and Lihyan kingdoms. The city, which was built meticulously from stone and astride the valley's oasis, dates back between the late 9th and early 8th century BCE (Kingdom of Dadan) and 5th–2nd century BCE (Kingdom of Lihyan).





## Jabal Ikmah

Across the AlUla Valley lie thousands of inscriptions in Aramaic, Dadanitic, Thamudic, Minaic and Nabataean.

Thousands of pre-Arabic inscriptions across numerous sites make AlUla an important location in studying the Arabic language. A mountain north of the AlUla Valley, AlAqra'a, features more than 450 early Arabic inscriptions. Naqsh Zuhayr, to the east, features one of the oldest inscriptions of the Islamic era — dating back to 24AH (644 CE). But no such site is more significant than Jabal Ikmah, home to the highest concentration of and most varied inscriptions in AlUla.



## Oasis Trail

The Heritage Trail from Dadan South, arriving to Old Town and passing by AlWadi area is 3 km long and it offers visitors an extraordinary nature stroll through the AlUla farms, suitable for families and nature lovers of all ages.





## AlUla Old Town

Modern AlUla encompasses one of Saudi Arabia's exceptional heritage sites, AlUla old town. One of the reasons it evokes such a deep sense of emotion is that it was actually inhabited in the not-so-distant past. AlUla Old Town is located in the narrowest part of the AlUla Valley. Built on a slight elevation, the town is overlooked by the Musa bin Nusayr Castle, a citadel dating to at least the 10th century.



# Accommodations



# ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS

## HABITAS AIUIa

- Opened November 2021
- 96 stand alone villas
- Eco-friendly accommodations
- Wellness, rituals, arts, and music experience



# ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS

## BANYON TREE

- Opening Q2 2022
- 79 accommodations
- Luxury Bedouin-style tents and villas
- Three dining concepts featuring Thai, Arabian, and American
- Rock pool carved between the canyons



# ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS



**SHADEN**

**Open  
Now**



**SAHARY**

**Open  
Now**



**RV'S**

**Open  
Now**

# ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS

Total Keys with Additions: 668

BY 2024

30

80

40

50

40



Opening 2023  
Star 5

2023  
5

2024  
5

2023  
TBD

2023  
5



**ADVENTURE PRODUCTS**



## Adventure Experiences

AlUla, The World's Masterpiece offers adventure and experiences for every type of traveler.

Get your adrenaline pumping by ziplining across a mountain range. Lace-up your boots and bring yourself back to nature by hiking one of our trails and explore the rock formations, hidden valleys and the serene beauty of AlUla.

As the sun sets, join a local astronomer on a stargazing or moonlit nights adventure and enjoy a traditional meal as you look up in awe at the dark sky above you.

There is something to do every day in AlUla.



ALULA



## Adventure Trail / Canyoning Experience

Lace-up your hiking-shoes and hit the mountains for a half-day journey led by an expert guide through the rocky terrain and deep pools of water (in the winter months). The Adventure Trail will take you through the story of the people who lived in this area thousands of years ago; their writings are on the wall, how they lived, how they fought, and how they connected.





## Madakheel Hike

A challenging 1-hour hike to the top of Madakheel with stunning views as far as the eye can see. Traverse through canyons lined with ancient Rock Art. Easily one of the most beautiful hikes in AIUla! The start point is a 1-hour drive from Husaak Center AIUla. Begin with a hike straight uphill and get rewarded with amazing views of Madakheel from the top.





## Cycling Trail

A leisurely sunset cycling experience through the sandy dunes of AlUla with remarkable views of AlUla's mountain landscapes.





# \*\*\*\*\*New Bike Trail (add here)

Kjhds;iaugf;iUGF:IUDFG





## Camel Trekking

Join a camel caravan & Bedouin camp along the incense road. Follow the ancient trade route ride along one of the historical places. Led by an experienced Saudi guide, search for rock inscriptions before settings sown for the night in a traditional Bedouin desert camp, before making your way back to base the following day on your camel caravan.



## Horse Trail

Travel through time in an intimate horseback riding experience while crossing through desert landscapes enriched with breathtaking canyon scenes and panoramic vistas at every turn.



## Volcano Hike

A unique experience hiking to a remote extinct volcano. This is a short but very steep hike with loose rocks, so care is needed. The area is often windy, you feel as though you are flying at the ridge of the volcano and then experience complete calmness as you go down ..... Refreshment will be provided by Hussak for the guests. Age must be 8 years or older.





## Ridge Walk

An easy 4km hike to a ridge which offers spectacular view of Wadi AlUla . The hike begins with a steep walk , once you reach the top the rest of the hike is easy.

Age must be 8 years or older.





## Twisted Maze Hike

This day trip is a challenging journey through a canyon. The ultimate experience for adventure seekers and extreme adventurers. Hike, swim, use ropes and other techniques to navigate the narrow canyon.

Age must be 16 years old or older.





## Via Ferrata

The Via Ferrata will be a series of climbing points with various bridges and suspended obstacles along the way. During the whole journey, customers will be connected to a safety system allowing them to freely move and explore along the route. At the end of the Via Ferrata, there will be a massive suspended hammock allowing guests to look out on the canyon below.

Age must be 6 years or older.





## Rock Climbing

Climb your way up to the top of the mountain while enjoying the amazing beauty of the nature surrounding you. Guests can learn the basics of climbing by using the auto belays as well as take on some more challenging lead climbing routes available. Age must be 6 years or older.

## Road to Eldorado



The Road to Eldorado is a 12km hike through a vibrant canyon with colorful rocks. This route is considered medium level but towards the end there are some steep parts and sections where you will have to access by ladder, lunch and snacks are included. Age must be 14 years or older.



## 4x4 Safari

A thrilling adventure to the heart Sharaan Nature Reserve to reach The Raqasat (Dancing Rocks). Enjoy the scenery from the comfort of an air conditioned vehicle as our guide teaches you more about this Nature reserve.



## AlUla Oasis View Trail (Jaddah Trail)

Hike up to Alfath mountain peak to catch an unforgettable view of AlUla oasis, millions of palm trees below you.





## Zipline

Experience the Kingdom's most thrilling Zipline, racing to a speed of over 100 km/h while enjoying the incredible scenery of the AlUla mountains.





## Hidden Valley Hike

Experience a secluded 4km nature walk after dark. Feel the wonder and peacefulness of the Arabian desert under a sky of stars. The hike itself is short but is considered medium level because most of it is through soft sand and you will require more energy than regular walking.



## Hegra Cycling Tour

Enjoy the experiences of cycling amidst the beauty of the mountains, passing the famous landmarks and rock engravings. Observe the returning wildlife of Hegra and concluded with a memorable photograph in front of the most famous tomb, that of Lihyan, son of Kuza.





## Elephant Rock

As the light changes throughout the afternoon, no two visits are the same. Book a sunset experience or an evening ticket to see the stars shining bright in the dark AlUla sky. Our onsite café, Key, offers delicious sweets and warm beverages to stimulate all the senses and make it an experience never to be forgotten.



## Gharameel

Extraordinary sand stones in remote desert land create some of the world's most enviable dark skies, making AlUla an idyllic locale for star gazing. AlGharameel is the iconic location for star gazing in AlUla.

As the sun sets here, its beautiful hues of orange, pink and gold are the prelude to a magical excursion once the sky drops its curtain and be overwhelmed with AlUla sparkling stars.





## Stargazing at Gharameel

Ever wondered why a dark sky is so coveted? You only need to understand how light pollution from cities dims the capacity to see stars and constellations. As the sun sets here, its beautiful hues of orange, pink and gold are the prelude to a magical excursion once the sky drops its curtain. We all live under the same sky, but its clarity and unfathomable beauty are a spectacular sight to behold in the ancient desert realm of AlUla.

Tilting your eyes skyward and witnessing a dark horizon lit up by an infinity of twinkling stars is a deeply moving experience.





## Helicopter Tour

Get ready to view AlUla from above, with this 30-minute helicopter tour with your pilot (guide), an exhilarating flight that takes you over AlUla's seven most famous landmarks and heritage sites.

Children must be three years of age or above to be carried on any of our Flights. All children under 13 years of age must be accompanied by an adult.



## Oasis of AlUla

Nestled within the Wadi AlQura (or Valley of Villages) is the heart of the region — the Oasis of AlUla. This lush haven in the midst of the windswept Saudi Arabian desert has provided life to AlUla's residents, weary travellers, flora and fauna for thousands of years. The oasis has made the region a cultural crossroads, the site of ancient kingdoms and a modern-day agricultural epicentre for flavourful fruits, aromatic herbs and perfumed oils.





## Arts & Culture

Everywhere you look in AlUla, wondrous inspiration can be found — in its organic, red-rock shapes, its flourishing green palms and the startling contrast of bright blue sky against desert landscapes. From contemporary artists projecting light against the rocks to locals studying traditional handicrafts, the spirit of the arts lives in this valley.

In addition to the traditional arts, contemporary artists are finding creative ways to express themselves amid AlUla's extraordinary landscape. The near future promises extraordinary exhibitions and installations, art walks, artists' residencies and galleries, and other events that celebrate AlUla's distinct artistic heritage.



**WHAT'S NEW**

ALULA



# AlUla Skies Festival

- Hot Air Balloon Festival
- Vintage Airplanes
- Sky Shows
- Symphony under the stars



# UNESCO Partners with AlUla

- AlUla just signed a long-term strategic partnership with UNESCO
- It's remarkable because it's the first region to sign a deal with the heritage organization, rather than a country-wide partnership
- The agreement accelerates the ongoing cultural and socio-economic renaissance of AlUla by further protecting thousands of years of historical, natural and cultural sites
- The partnership connects AlUla's past, present, and future by harnessing the power of education, science and culture to act as a catalyst for sustainable development and long-lasting change.





## Birth of Arabian Leopard

- There are only about 200 critically endangered Arabian Leopards left in the wild
- The female cub was born on April 23 and is now one of 16 born in a captive-breeding program at the Arabian Leopard Breeding Center in Taif, Saudi Arabia
- Expansion of the captive-breeding program with the opening of a state-of-the-art breeding center to open by early 2024 as part of Sharaan Nature Reserve, ALULA
- Establishment of the Arabian Leopard Fund
- Extension of partnerships with relevant conservation entities such as the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and Panthera



Shannon Crosby  
PR Manager, Americas  
Scrosby@wagstaffmktg.com



**THANK YOU**

ALULA

Subj: JOIN US | Exclusive media preview of Discovery's "The Architects of Ancient Arabia"

Hi XX,

We invite you to tune in with [Experience AIUla](#) for an exclusive live pre-screening of Discovery's newest documentary, "The Architects of Ancient Arabia," on Thursday, March 25 at 9:00 am PST / 12:00 pm EST.



Enjoy delicacies from the region as you receive a behind-the-scenes look at one of the most important discoveries of modern history as expert teams of archeologists uncover clues that reposition the global understanding and significance of ancient Arabia. Narrated by Academy Award winner Jeremy Irons, the documentary unearths previously unknown aspects of the ancient history of AIUla, as experts uncover traces of a society from more than 7,000 years ago.

The virtual pre-screening will also include a live Q&A session with Dr. Rebecca Foote, one of the leading Archaeologists on the project, along with appearances from special guests including contacts from Experience AIUla and the Discovery Channel.

"The Architects of Ancient Arabia" will officially air on Travel Channel in the US on Wednesday, March 31<sup>st</sup> and Thursday April 1<sup>st</sup>. The documentary will also air on Friday, April 2 on Discovery Channel. A teaser of the documentary can be viewed [here](#).

We will be providing the live Zoom link and sending you simple Arabian treats to enjoy during the screening. If interested in attending, can you kindly RSVP and please share your address and phone number by Monday 22<sup>nd</sup>?

We look forward to your attendance.

Thank you,

**SHANNON CROSBY** (she/her) | associate

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**WAGSTAFF** | MEDIA & MARKETING  
LOS ANGELES | NEW YORK | CHICAGO | SAN FRANCISCO | VANCOUVER

**Subject: Where to Go in 2023 – AIUla**

Hi –

Hope all is well. We are kindly reaching out to see if you are in search of ideas for the **where to go in 2023** feature? If so, we would love to share the destination of [AIUla](#)—a desert oasis bursting with undiscovered heritage sites tucked away in the unexplored northwestern deserts of Saudi Arabia—for consideration. AIUla is a region where 200,000 years of human history meets contemporary architecture, art, wellness exploration, and luxury hotels. Home to ancient heritage, adventures, authentic culture, epic outdoor experiences, and gracious people – AIUla is a true hidden gem waiting to be discovered in 2023.



*(L to R: Hegra, Maraya, Banyan Tree AIUla, and AIUla Oasis. Photo credit: Experience AIUla)*

**How to get there in 2023:**

- New Emirates Airline code share partnership with Fly Dubai, which offers an expansion of direct flights from NYC, LA and Washington DC.
- Flights also offered via Saudi Airlines, Emirates, Qatar, and Flynas.

**Where to stay in 2023:**

- New luxury hotel openings from well-known brands including Accor Banyan Tree and Aman
  - In 2023, travelers will be able to stay at the brand-new [Banyan Tree AIUla](#) - a luxury tented resort nestled against sky-high rock formations in the art-filled region of Ashar Valley.
  - Also slated to open in 2023 is one of three upscale tented resort Aman properties.

**Where to eat in 2023:**

- [Tama Habitas](#) (meaning ‘here and now’ in Aramaic) and [Somewhere](#) both bring culinary concepts that take guests on cultural journeys through their uniquely designed menus.
- 2023 will also welcome new dining collaboration pop-ups like this year’s [Forces of Nature](#) experience by Bombass and Par and the seasonal, and uniquely themed, [Annabel’s](#) pop-up.

**Things to do in 2023:**

- Essentially undiscovered [heritage sites](#) including Hegra (Petra’s sister city and Saudi Arabia’s first UNESCO world heritage site).

- Major entertainment events aka “AIUa Moments”, which happen during [festival season](#) (December – March). These special experiences are focused around art, culture, wellness, and A-list performances at [Maraya Concert Hall](#).

Please let us know if you are interested in learning more AIUa or if you have any questions.

Link to images: [https://www.dropbox.com/sh/jcphqzr2el4hecz/AAD\\_dVZ1VClbwbmp-1rM6jypa?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/jcphqzr2el4hecz/AAD_dVZ1VClbwbmp-1rM6jypa?dl=0)

Thanks so much,  
Sophia

We wanted to share the exciting news with you that today [Experience AlUla](#), the Saudi Arabian destination of exceptional natural beauty and deep history, has launched the world's first "**Museum in the Sky**" offering a unique inflight experience from Riyadh to AlUla on November 4<sup>th</sup>. In partnership with [SAUDIA Airlines](#), the in-flight museum's purpose is to highlight the significance of the AlUla region as a living museum, as a handful of archeological sites are currently being uncovered in the destination.

Onboard the flying museum, passengers can view a replica collection of artifacts discovered in AlUla during excavations by archeologists and discover some of the mysteries of the region's ancient civilizations – ranging from the ancient Nabatean civilization to the Lihyan Kingdom. The museum will also be showing the Discovery Channel documentary [Architects of Ancient Arabia](#), a 2021 release full length documentary revealing that some of human civilization's first building blocks were set in place in AlUla.

Passengers will also have the opportunity to book some of the first tickets to the new **Hegra After Dark** experience. This new progressive evening event in the World Heritage Site welcomes guests to enjoy the silence and have a taste of AlUla with light refreshments served in a candlelit setting, enjoy the popular living immersion theatre performance, Queen Shuqailath, and end with a stargazing experience surrounded by the stunning Nabataean works of art.

Link to photos: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/epzed9u49mzjjrg/AAAEvTDROvwkZzpAZW39bZUAa?dl=0>

Link to Architects of Ancient Arabia Documentary: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z8A0LpX7\\_yM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z8A0LpX7_yM)

Please let us know if you have any questions or would like additional information about the destination of AlUla.

Thanks!

Meredith

In a world where indulging our passions has become second nature, travel is more than just an enjoyable getaway, but a means by which to explore interests old and new. From history and cuisine, to discovering the world's most scenic views, there are many motivators for travel planning, including the long overdue shift to traveling specifically for the arts.

I'm reaching out on behalf of [AIUla](#), which until recently has been closed off to international tourists. A new travel destination filled with history, discovery and wonder, AIUla is a desert oasis where 200,000 years of human history meets contemporary architecture, art, experiences and more. At the helm of AIUla lies wondrous inspiration that can be found in its red-rock shapes, desert landscapes, and flourishing green palms. But beyond that lies so much more.

Accessible via various direct flights from NYC, LA and Washington DC, travelers can be the first to explore both AIUla's traditional and contemporary art programming in many forms. I've included some recent announcements of AIUla's curated arts program and upcoming events below.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this new destination and its emerging arts scene for upcoming story opportunities.

My best,  
Meredith

#### What to Do—

- **Explore Immersive Art at Desert X AIUla (February 11-March 30, 2022):** Free and open to all, California native art exhibit Desert X returns to AIUla for the second time. A recurring, site-responsive, international art exhibit, Desert X AIUla places visionary contemporary artworks by Saudi and international artists amidst the extraordinary desert landscape. Under the theme of *Sarab*, this year's exhibition explores ideas of mirage and oasis, both intrinsic to desert history and culture. Participating artists at this year's exhibit have created works that address dreams, camouflage, fiction, illusion and myth.
- **Discover "What Lies Within" at Maraya (February 11-March 20, 2022):** Curated by artist Lulwah AlHomoud, an influential figure in the Saudi Arabian art scene, this exhibition conveys [Basma AlSulaiman's](#) appreciation of, and connection to, both local and global contemporary culture and is a tribute to her invaluable work in supporting Saudi artistic production and talent. The founder of BASMOCA, AlSulaiman is considered a patron of the arts in Saudi Arabia, whose passion for the arts was discovered through her travels. This walking exhibit, located in the biggest mirrored building in the world, includes a remarkable visual record from AlSulaiman's personal collection, showcasing the evolution of artistic forms and ideals with works that reflect the time and context in which they were created.
- **Travel Back in Time and Witness the Wonder of AIUla's Natural Works of Art:** Known as the world's largest living museum, there are traces of many who have built AIUla over millennia, from the capital of the kingdoms of Dadan to the epic rock formations that still remain. Everywhere you turn in AIUla, there is a history of art to be discovered. [Hegra](#), Saudi Arabia's first UNESCO World Heritage Site, was the southern capital of the Nabataean kingdom, dating back to the first century BCE. Today, visitors will find that more than 100 well-preserved tombs remain, most with the elaborate facades carved from rock formations.

- Known as the open-air library, [Jabal Ikmah](#) was once part of the caravan way station and served as a record keeper of sorts with carvings providing information to researchers about the old way of life. Hundreds of inscriptions referring to the journeys, pilgrimage, ritual and offerings can be found here.
- One of AIUla's most recognizable natural sites is [Jabal Alfil](#), or Elephant Rock. A geological marvel, this natural wonder is set in golden desert sands and climbs three stories into the sky. Another familiar wonder includes Jabal AlAhmar, a formation that resembles the profile of a human head gazing out over the desert landscape. As with all of AIUla's rock formations, sunrise and sunset are prime times to visit, when the light dances on the sandstone, seeming to illuminate the rocks from within.

**Where to Stay – [Habitas AIUla](#):** The latest hotel to open in AIUla, this sustainable, experience-led resort rests within an ancient oasis in the desert canyons of the Ashar Valley, which was home to Desert x AIUla. With 96 rooms, a yoga deck, wellness center, restaurant and swimming pool, this modular-built hotel is also surrounded by the hosted artworks of [Mohammad Ahmed Ibrahim](#), [Superflex](#) and [Nadim Karam](#).

**Where to Eat – [Maraya Social](#):** The first restaurant in AIUla by a Michelin-starred chef Jason Atherton, Maraya Social is located on the rooftop of Maraya, surrounded by stunning rock-strewn valleys and canyons of the Ashar Valley. Maraya is a work of art on its own, as this desert mirage is the world's largest mirrored building. The restaurant offers a relaxing yet vibrant atmosphere during the day, and by night, the mood shifts to create an unforgettable dining experience under the bright stars. The menu is sourced from local seasonal fruits and vegetables found in AIUla's lush oasis, and features a selection of sharing plates, accompanied by trend-forward mocktails. The menu is designed to share and create a social environment for diners.

**Subject:** The Undiscovered Wellness Destination – AIUla

Hi xx,

I'm reaching out on behalf of [AIUla](#), an essentially new travel destination filled with discovery and wonder in the enchanting desert oasis in Saudi Arabia, where 200,000 years of human history meets contemporary architecture, experiences and more.

But, beyond the historical beauty, **lies the hidden gem of undiscovered desert healing**, serenity, and wellness exploration. As travelers are starting to seek out desert destinations for wellness trips, including places like Sedona, Joshua Tree, and Utah (Amangiri), we believe **AIUla is the perfect addition to the growing trend.**

Please find below some of AIUla's wellness offerings and upcoming events.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this **new destination and its under-the-radar wellness offerings for upcoming story opportunities.**

All the best,  
Sophia

#### **What to Do—**

- **[AIUla Oasis](#):** This lush agricultural haven sits in the midst of the windswept Saudi Arabian desert. Once home to ancient kingdoms, this oasis is known as a modern-day agricultural epicenter for flavorful fruits, aromatic herbs, and perfumed oils.
  - **Experience the Calm Within the Flourishing Green Date Palms:** Towering over the oasis, the vibrant emerald-green groves of 2.3 million date palms provide a peaceful sanctuary for the area's ecosystem to flourish. Along with capturing the pleasant scents of aromatic herbs such as basil and mint that carpet the ground below, these nutrient-filled date trees are brimming with nourishing vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, protein and fiber.
  - **Taste the Vibrant Flavors from the Citrus Crops:** Cherished for more than just a source of fruitful food, the expansive spectrum of 29 different varieties of vibrant citrus colors and scents provides valuable vitamins and medicinal properties that can increase one's immune system, as well as ease stress through soothing essential oils.
  - **Discover the Healing Powers of the Sacred Moringa Peregrina Trees:** Identified for their beautiful white blooms streaked with dusty pink, the Moringa Peregrina trees are renowned for the luxury natural oil that is extracted from the seed, which contains rare botanical properties that repair and moisturize the skin.
  
- **Silence Festival (September 29 – October 23, 2022):** Known as the biggest global celebration of silence, guests are invited to participate in a number of unique wellness and eco-focused experiences in AIUla's desert and stunning oasis.

### Where to Stay –

- [Habitat AlUla](#): The latest hotel to open in AlUla, this sustainable, experience-led resort rests within an ancient oasis in the desert canyons of the Ashar Valley. With 96 rooms, a yoga deck, wellness center, restaurant and swimming pool, this modular-built hotel's [Thuraya Wellness](#) program uses traditional Middle Eastern techniques and ancestral practices to welcome complete relaxation and rejuvenation.
- [Banyan Tree AlUla](#): Slated to open at the end of the year, this luxury tented resort is situated in the eco-tourism region of Ashar Valley. With canvas covered villas, numerous restaurants, and private spa experiences, this tented resort redefines wellness through its intimate rock pool spa.

### Where to Eat –

- [Pink Camel Pastry Boutique](#): Tucked away in AlUla's famous oasis of date palms and fragrant citrus trees, the Pink Camel's café-style menu, sourced from local seasonal fruits and vegetables found in AlUla's lush oasis, fits seamlessly with the laidback and relaxing atmosphere. Serving delicious vegan, vegetarian, and gluten-free friendly coffee, pastries, and health-focused options, the Pink Camel is a great stop for a light bite.

**Subj: Time to meet? Special interview opportunity with Experience AIUla**

Hi,

Reaching out with a singular opportunity for you to meet with Phillip Jones, Chief Destination Marketing Officer for [Experience AIUla](#), while he is in NYC July 26<sup>th</sup> and July 27<sup>th</sup>.

Right now is a great time to connect as Phillip will have the latest information to share on new developments that travelers can look forward to this season, including new hotel openings, world-class festivals, and dynamic partnerships with some of the world's leading organizations. Phillip can also share details on the recent progress made from AIUla's Masterplan: a ground-breaking strategy to bring the heritage and culture of the region to life for generations to come. The plan is significant because it represents a novel, responsible approach to tourism development guided by regeneration, sustainability, community, and collaboration.

I'm including Phillip's bio below for reference. He's a wealth of knowledge AIUla and super down-to-earth and easy to talk to. Please let us know if you're available to meet with him during his visit and we will be happy to arrange it.

Best,  
XX

**About Phillip Jones, Chief Destination Marketing Officer for Experience AIUla**

In his role as Chief Destination Marketing Officer, Phillip Jones actively drives the strategy for the development, promotion, expansion, and reputation of AIUla as a global tourism brand and destination in line with the destination's strategic objectives. Jones is currently leading the efforts to develop the brand identity for Experience AIUla. In addition, Jones was part of the team that launched AIUla, Wonder of Arabia, the first major exhibition to present AIUla's spectacular nature, archaeological treasures and cultural heritage at the Institut du Monde Arabe in Paris, France, supported by the first advertising campaign to introduce the destination to the global travel market.

Prior to his role at the Royal Commission of AIUla, Jones served as the President and CEO of VisitDallas in Dallas, Texas USA from 2003 to 2019. Prior to joining VisitDallas, Jones served as Secretary of the Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism. He previously served as Director of Legislative/Intergovernmental Affairs for the U.S. Department of Commerce's Travel and Tourism Administration in Washington, D.C., where he helped organize and was a lead spokesman for the inaugural White House Conference on Travel and Tourism.

In 2017, Jones served as chairman of the Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA) Education Foundation, the world's largest, most respected and most recognized network of business events strategists with more than 7,000 members in 37 countries located in North America, Europe, Asia, the Middle East, Australia and New Zealand.

**UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL MONDAY 27 JUNE 2022 AT 16:00 SAUDI ARABIA**

## **Five era-defining artworks commissioned for iconic new cultural destination Wadi AlFann, Valley of the Arts, AIUla**

- A major milestone in the Cultural Manifesto of the Royal Commission for AIUla (RCU), under the vision of His Royal Highness The Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman Al Saud, Chairman of the Royal Commission for AIUla
- Manal AlDowayan, Agnes Denes, Michael Heizer, Ahmed Mater and James Turrell announced as five artists completing new permanent, large-scale land art commissions as first phase by 2024
- Site spanning 65 square kilometres located in AIUla, a desert region of natural, historical and cultural wonder in north-west Saudi Arabia
- Unparalleled opportunity for enrichment, education and economy will support local economy and arts ecosystem
- Maquettes and drawings for Ahmed Mater's commission displayed at exhibition in AIUla's AlJadidah Village



*A render of Ashab Al-Lal by Ahmed Mater at Wadi AlFann, AIUla*

*AIUla, Monday 27 June 2022* – The Royal Commission for AIUla reveals plans for **Wadi AlFann**, meaning ‘Valley of the Arts’, an awe-inspiring new global cultural destination for contemporary art, where era-defining works by some of the most compelling artists from around the world will be permanently placed in the monumental landscape of AIUla, the extraordinary desert region of north-west Saudi Arabia steeped in thousands of years of natural, historical and cultural heritage.

New, large-scale, site-specific commissions by **Manal AlDowayan** (b. 1973, Saudi Arabia), **Agnes Denes** (b. 1931, Hungary), **Michael Heizer** (b. 1944, USA), **Ahmed Mater** (b. 1979, Saudi Arabia) and **James Turrell** (b. 1943, USA) will be the first five works to be conceived for Wadi AlFann, a spectacular valley spanning approximately 65 square kilometres. These initial five works will be completed and unveiled by 2024, marking the start of a continued programme of commissions, with more artists and activities to be announced.

Created by some of the world's most renowned pioneers of land art and artists at the forefront of contemporary practice, the concepts, vision and epic scale of Wadi AlFann's cross-generational

commissions mark a new chapter in art history. Juxtaposed with historic traces of ancient desert communities, this unprecedented, ambitious and visionary showcase of contemporary artworks will continue growing in years to come, adding to the legacy of this millennia-old location.

Wadi AlFann will offer a profound opportunity to experience art in dialogue with nature. Learning from the desert, the artists are responding to the landscape of AlUla, taking inspiration from its dramatic topography, undulating vistas, remarkable geological structures and complex natural ecosystem. The works will be created with respect for the landscape, set against the stunning sandstone cliffs and canyons of the vast terrain.

Wadi AlFann will provide unparalleled opportunities for local communities to experience art as a source of education and enrichment. Through job creation, skills development and engagement with local creatives, Wadi AlFann will strengthen AlUla's cultural economy, inspiring a new generation of arts professionals and enhancing quality of life for its residents. This epic new destination will also welcome art lovers, adventurers, and globetrotters from across the world on a transformative cultural journey to a unique place of creative and geographical wonder, continuing the region's history as a place of cross-cultural exchange.

A keen, sensitive witness to cultural metamorphosis, Saudi artist **Manal AIDowayan's** practice revolves around themes of invisibility, collective memory and the status and representation of women. Her labyrinthine installation *The Oasis of Stories* takes inspiration from the mud walls of AlUla's Old Town, inviting viewers to walk through and get lost in an architectonic sculpture that replicates the ancient spaces of Arabic settlements. The walls of AIDowayan's maze-like passages will be inscribed with personal histories and folklore gathered by the artist from communities of AlUla.

A leading figure among the concept-based artists of the 1960s and 70s, and a pioneer of environmental art, **Agnes Denes'** artistic oeuvre is distinctive in terms of its remarkable aesthetics and engagement with science, philosophy, psychology, linguistics, poetry, history, music and sociopolitical ideas. Her new work will continue her ongoing series of monumental pyramids: through careful examination of the rocks' characteristics, these new pyramids will awaken the silent canyons they sit within, representing the past, present and future of mankind, exploring civilisation, advancement and achievement, to create a breathtaking environment.

Influential in the second half of the 20th century and continuing into the 21st, **Michael Heizer** is known for producing large outdoor earthwork sculptures and for his work with rock, concrete and steel that exists both outside and inside museums and galleries. The earthworks, being outside in the environment, are known to elicit responses not common to architecturally dependent artworks. At Wadi AlFann, he is introducing altogether new lineal/incised engravings in the sandstone rock, relating directly to the extraordinary geology of the area and the varied detail of the Quweira sandstone. Viewable from a far distance, most of these large-size works will change in appearance as viewers move around the area. Heizer will soon open to the public on a limited basis his monumental sculpture the mile-and-a-half-long City, created in Garden Valley, Nevada, over the course of more than fifty years.

Physician-turned-artist **Ahmed Mater**, a significant cultural voice documenting and scrutinising the realities of contemporary Saudi Arabia, creates his new work *Ashab Al-Lal* that will explore the mythic space between subjective imagination and objective reality by generating a mirage within the sand dunes. The artist challenges the idea of the landmark as a symbol of status and authority, viewing it instead as a place for the transmission of knowledge. Creating a spiritual, transcendental experience for the viewer, Mater has drawn inspiration from great scientific and

philosophical thinkers of the Islamic Golden Age. An exhibition of maquettes and drawings detailing Mater's vision for this work opens 8 June 2022 in AIUla's arts and culture district AlJadidah Village.

For over half a century, **James Turrell**, a leading figure of the Light and Space movement of the 1960s, has dedicated his practice to perceptual art, investigating the materiality of light and the limits of human perception. At Wadi AlFann, Turrell will build upon the sensorial experience of space, colour and perception, creating a series of spaces within the canyon floor. Experiencing the thingness of light as well as elements of sky and terrain, the viewer will explore these spaces via a series of tunnels and stairs. The work examines the very nature of seeing, creating an experience of wordless thought.

The unveiling of the first five artworks will be accompanied by a dynamic, engaging public programme that will include performances and tours through the valley. In partnership with Madrasat AdDeera, the commissions at Wadi AlFann will offer educational opportunities for local communities, including practical, skills-based engagement in the process of conceiving and installing the artworks, sessions with art professionals to develop skills and masterclasses for local creatives with Wadi AlFann's commissioned artists. Launching in late 2022 is a pre-opening programme of temporary exhibitions, artist residencies and public symposia bringing together artists, architects, environmentalists, archaeologists, farmers and local communities.

With the preservation of the valley as a central mission, Wadi AlFann is developed in line with the Royal Commission for AIUla's commitment to the region's biodiversity and natural heritage, which includes reintroducing wildlife and protecting indigenous flora and fauna. The site's pavilions, walkways and belvederes will use locally sourced materials and be positioned to enable free movement of camel herds and other native species. Wadi AlFann will also link AIUla's two historic capitals – Qurh, one of the seven great marketplaces of Arabia, and Hegra, built by the Nabataeans over 2,000 years ago – adding a rich new dimension to the journey through AIUla that connects its past with its future.

Art and creativity are an important component of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 and a foundational part of the AIUla experience. It extends the legacy of the site from ancient civilisations into the present, positioning AIUla as a contemporary cultural crossroads and a destination built by artists. Forming part of a new nexus of artistic exploration, expression and production, Wadi AlFann is one of various new creative landmarks planned for AIUla as part of its Journey Through Time masterplan, along with the Perspectives Galleries, the Arts District and the Water Pavilions. The Journey Through Time masterplan, unveiled by His Royal Highness the Crown Prince, will see 15 new destinations for culture, heritage and creativity open by 2035.

AIUla is a majestic region of natural and creative heritage steeped in a legacy of cross-cultural exchange. Home to the ancient Nabataean city of Hegra, Saudi Arabia's first UNESCO World Heritage Site, the region has been at the crossroads of cultural exchange for millennia, historically lying on the incense trade route and once capital to the ancient Kingdom of Dadan. Today, it is a living museum of heritage, arts and nature, rekindling its legacy as a vital cultural destination.

**Nora Aldabal, Executive Director of Arts and Creative Industries, Royal Commission for AIUla, says:**

*"Wadi AlFann will rekindle the creativity of AIUla and deliver new transformative experiences for locals and visitors alike. As custodians of this land, a crossroad between East and West marked by 200,000 years of natural, human and cultural history, we must continue to harness the unique legacy of AIUla to build its future. It is an honour to be working with such esteemed and celebrated artists to aide our ambitions to further establish AIUla as a world-leading centre for art and culture. This visionary destination will build a vibrant and prosperous local cultural economy, forging*

*pathways for the people of AIUla to unlock creative potential and be architects of the region's future."*

**Iwona Blazwick, Chair of Royal Commission for AIUla's Public Art Expert Panel, says:**

*"Wadi AlFann is unprecedented in its ambition, a world-leading platform enabling remarkable artists to create the most significant works of their lifetimes. It will set a new global example for experiencing art in dialogue with nature, celebrating the human creativity that unites communities across the world and inspiring current and future generations of artists. A display of such epic scale, set in a terrain as monumental as the AIUla desert, has the potential to shape the course of art history in real time."*

**Allan Schwartzman, member of Royal Commission for AIUla's advisory board, says:**

*"In addition to their unparalleled beauty, the valleys and canyons of AIUla hold layers of history which span thousands of years and countless cultures. In each of their projects, these first five artists have envisioned a work which embodies the artistic achievements of our time - sensitive to the magnitude and wonder of AIUla and existing in proximity to the significant archaeological remains and vast history in the process of being unearthed and discovered. These artworks are visionary in conception, monumental in physical scale and scope of experience, keenly sensitive to site and context, and singular destination pieces created by artists of different generations, cultural backgrounds, and sources of inspiration. Together, they set the foundation for a major new destination for art and transcultural exchange."*

**ENDS**

**For more information visit:**

[www.livingmuseum.com](http://www.livingmuseum.com)

[@artsalula](#)

[#wadialfann](#)

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**Royal Commission for AIUla**

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**NOTES TO EDITORS:**

**About AIUla**

Located 1,100 km from Riyadh, in North-West Saudi Arabia, AlUla is a place of extraordinary natural and human heritage. The vast area, covering 22,561km<sup>2</sup>, includes a lush oasis valley, towering sandstone mountains and ancient cultural heritage sites dating back thousands of years to when the Lihyan and Nabataean kingdoms reigned.

The most well-known and recognised site in AlUla is Hegra, Saudi Arabia's first UNESCO World Heritage Site. A 52-hectare ancient city, Hegra was the principal southern city of the Nabataean Kingdom and is comprised of more than 100 well-preserved tombs with elaborate facades cut out of the sandstone outcrops surrounding the walled urban settlement. Current research also suggests Hegra was the most southern outpost of the Roman Empire after conquering the Nabataeans in 106 CE.

In addition to Hegra, AlUla is home to fascinating historical and archaeological sites such as: Ancient Dadan, the capital of the Dadan and Lihyan Kingdoms, which is considered one of the most developed 1<sup>st</sup>-millennium BCE cities of the Arabian Peninsula; thousands of ancient rock art sites and inscriptions at Jabal Ikma; AlUla Old Town, a labyrinth of more than 900 mudbrick homes developed from at least the 12<sup>th</sup> century, and Hijaz Railway and Hegra Fort, key sites in the layered story of this route of passage.

### **About The Royal Commission for AlUla**

The Royal Commission for AlUla (RCU) was established by royal decree in July 2017 to protect and safeguard AlUla, a region of outstanding natural and cultural significance in North-West Saudi Arabia. RCU is embarking on a long-term plan to develop and deliver a sensitive, sustainable transformation of the region, reaffirming it as one of the country's most important archaeological and cultural destinations and preparing it to welcome visitors from around the world. RCU's development work in AlUla encompasses a broad range of initiatives across archaeology, tourism, culture, education and the arts, reflecting the ambitious commitment to cultivate tourism and leisure in Saudi Arabia, outlined in Vision 2030.

Reaching out to see what your upcoming travel coverage is looking like? We wanted to share incredible international heli experiences from Iceland and Italy to Saudi Arabia and South Australia. With many travelers looking to socially distance during their trip, these heli experiences from around the world are the perfect option for jetsetters looking for an intimate, luxury escape or a bucket list travel experience in 2022:

#### **ALULA, SAUDI ARABIA - Fly over never before seen heritage sites**

- The ancient landscape of [AlUla](#) showcases three distinct geological periods going back up to a thousand million years. For the first time, visitors to the desert oasis can appreciate the diversity, monumentality and global significance of the landscape by taking the one of the region's first helicopter tours. The 30 minute flight will take in seven crucial areas of civil development including the monumental Jabal AlFil (Elephant Rock), the region's most notable natural geological rock formation; Hegra, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and the southern capital of the Nabataean civilization; and the modern-day marvel of Maraya, the world's largest mirrored building shining brightly like a diamond in the desert.
- **Can Americans travel there?** Yes, AlUla has just reinstated their tourism e-visa program for vaccinated Americans.

#### **CARLSBAD, CALIFORNIA -- Soar over 7-miles of pristine coastline**

- Carlsbad is the golden state's best kept secret for year-round outdoor adventures thanks to its near perfect weather. The destination welcomes travelers and local visitors to experience [Icon Helicopter Tours](#), for those who want to see San Diego County and miles of pristine coastlines from the best seat in the house. All tours can be customized and created to suit your needs, with options including the "Sunset Tour" with champagne available, the "Winery Tour" of San Diego's Temecula wine country, or the "Explorer Tour" featuring the La Jolla Cove and Torrey Pines golf course.
- **Can Americans travel there?:** Yes

#### **GRINDAVIK, ICELAND -- Get a bird's eye view of an active volcano**

- The eruption at Mount Fagradalsfjall is part of the natural wonder of the Reykjanes Peninsula. Guests of the Retreat at [Blue Lagoon Iceland](#) can safely witness the beauty of the active volcano, which has been erupting since March 2021, during a [private, one-hour helicopter tour](#) across the peninsula. From black sand beaches to glaciers, sprawling lava fields, stunning lakes, and an astounding aerial view of the Blue Lagoon, the country's otherworldly landscape is on full display during this one-of-a-kind tour.
- **Can Americans travel there?:** Yes

#### **PIEDMONT, ITALY - Ascend to the top of the snowcapped Dolomites**

- For those extreme adventurers who need a dose of adrenaline, Italy offers lush smooth alps, perfect for heli-skiing. Travelers can ski in [Valle Stura](#) which is one of the few remaining valleys across the whole of the European Alps protected from development where you can enjoy the

pure sensation of powder skiing in a secluded wilderness. Those looking for an added adrenaline rush can be dropped off by a helicopter to these raw, untouched slopes!

- **Can Americans travel there?** Yes

**RAWNSLEY PARK, SOUTH AUSTRALIA -- Experience South Australia's red dirt outback with this heli-swag experience**

- Overlooking the southern side of Wilpena Pound, [Rawnsley Park Station](#) offers the perfect base for exploring South Australia's awe-inspiring Flinders Ranges. The [heli-camping](#) experience starts with a late-afternoon helicopter flight past Rawnsley Bluff and over the massive rock formation of Wilpena Pound, before landing on the Chace Range. Watch the sun set over spectacular views, whilst the "swag" (tent) and camp are set up for the night. You are then provided with a 2-course camp oven meal before lounging to sleep soundly under a star-filled Outback sky. The next morning, wake to a stunning sunrise and cook yourself a bush breakfast over the campfire.
- **Can Americans travel there?:** Not just yet. Australia's border remains closed to non-essential travel for the time being.

**CLAYOQUOUT WILDERNESS LODGE, VANCOUVER ISLAND, CANADA – Rise above it all for an exclusive hike around the stunning mountains of Clayoquot Sound in British Columbia**

- While exploring the forests and rocky coastlines of Clayoquot Sound is already life-changing, a heli-hiking experience gives way to truly breathtaking hikes, with 360-degree views of mountains and ocean. Climb aboard [Clayoquot Wilderness Lodge's](#) own Bell Jet Ranger and be transported even further into the remote wilderness. Reach inaccessible lakes, streams and forest to enjoy time on the world's edge.
- **Can Americans travel there?:** Yes! Fully vaccinated Americans have been welcomed to visit Canada since August 9.

Link to photos: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/6viunbixal61ogg/AAC7-e3DORaAX7MkNxkp3uNMa?dl=0>

Please let us know if you have any questions or would like additional details on the destinations.

Thank you,  
Meredith

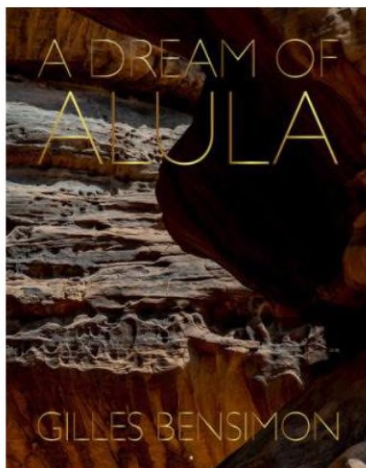
Subject line: A Dream of AlUla by Gilles Bensimon | Gift Guide

Hi,

For the upcoming 2021 holiday gift guide, what are your thoughts on including a new travel photography book focused on [AlUla](#), a remarkable destination in northwest Saudi Arabia, from renowned photographer Gilles Bensimon? [A Dream of AlUla](#) is an oversized collector's item showcasing the unique experience of traveling to a mythical land and little-known paradise—perfect for the intrepid traveler, photography aficionado, or bookworm.

The AlUla valley is a natural, historical, and cultural site, located on the ancient Incense Route. The destination is reopening to global travelers for the first time in 2+ years on October 31, revealing grandiose natural landscapes, oases, and ancient settlements dating back 8,000 years. Home to the UNESCO World Heritage Site, Hegra; the ancient kingdom of Dadan; and the whispering canyons of Jabal Ikmah—it's a hidden treasure waiting to be discovered. Exclusive images by the acclaimed photographer Gilles Bensimon reveal the poetic aspects and magnificence of age-old desert landscapes and highlight the lives they are home to.

- **Price:** \$300 (release date Nov 24 – pre-order online now)
- **Where to buy:** [Target](#) | [Rizzoli](#) | [Barnes & Noble](#) | [Amazon](#) | | [Books-A-Million](#) | [IndieBound](#) | [Alibris](#) | [Powell's](#)
- **Additional details:** hardcover | published by Rizzoli | 215 pages
- **Who it's good for:** people planning 2021 travel to bucket list destinations; ancient civilization history buffs; UNESCO World Heritage Site enthusiasts; photography/art collectors



Please let me know if you would like any additional details. Looking forward to your thoughts.

Thank you,  
Jessie

العلوة  
ALULA

DESERT > ALULA 2022



# **DESERT X ALULA**

**11 FEBRUARY – 30 MARCH 2022**

**SECOND EDITION OF INTERNATIONAL ART  
EXHIBITION FEATURES 15 ARTISTS EXPLORING IDEAS  
OF MIRAGE AND OASIS UNDER THE THEME SARAB**





— Abdullah AlOthman, *Geography of Hope*, installation view, Desert X AlUla 2022, courtesy the artist and Desert X AlUla, photo by Lance Gerber

— Title page

— Top  
Alicja Kwade, *In Blur*, installation view, Desert X AlUla 2022, courtesy the artist and Desert X AlUla, photo by Lance Gerber

— Bottom  
Jim Denevan, *Angle of Repose*, installation view, Desert X AlUla 2022, courtesy the artist and Desert X AlUla, photo by Lance Gerber

**FREE AND OPEN TO ALL, DESERT X ALULA IS A RECURRING, SITE-RESPONSIVE, INTERNATIONAL ART EXHIBITION TAKING PLACE IN ALULA, A GLOBALLY SIGNIFICANT ANCIENT DESERT REGION IN THE ARABIAN PENINSULA. THIS YEAR'S EXHIBITION, UNDER THE CURATORIAL VISION OF REEM FADDA, RANEEM FARSI AND NEVILLE WAKEFIELD, FEATURES NEWLY COMMISSIONED WORKS BY 15 ARTISTS BRINGING A PLURALITY OF VOICES FROM AROUND THE WORLD.**

Following its inaugural exhibition in 2020, **Desert X AlUla** returns for its second edition from **11 February – 30 March 2022**, placing visionary contemporary artworks by 15 Saudi and international artists amidst the extraordinary desert landscape of AlUla, a majestic region in north-west Saudi Arabia of natural and creative heritage steeped in a legacy of cross-cultural exchange.

Under the theme of *Sarab*, this year's exhibition explores ideas of mirage and oasis, both intrinsic to desert history and culture, that have taken on complex worldwide significance over time. Invited to consider these ancient concepts, participating artists have responded with new works that address dreams, camouflage, fiction, dis/appearance, extraction, illusion and myth, while also examining the dichotomy between the natural and man-made worlds.

The exhibiting artists are:

- **Shadia Alem**, b. Saudi Arabia, based in Paris.
- **Dana Awartani**, b. 1987, Saudi Arabia, based in Jeddah.
- **Serge Attukwei Clottey**, b. 1985, Ghana, based in Accra.
- **Claudia Comte**, b. 1983, Switzerland, based in Basel.
- **Shezad Dawood**, b. 1974, United Kingdom, based in London.
- **Jim Denevan**, b. 1961, United States, based in Santa Cruz.
- **Stephanie Deumer**, b. 1989, Canada, based in Los Angeles.
- **Sultan bin Fahad**, b. 1971, Saudi Arabia, based in Los Angeles.
- **Zeinab Alhashemi**, b. 1985, United Arab Emirates, based in Dubai.
- **Alicja Kwade**, b. 1979, Poland, based in Berlin.
- **Shaikha Al Mazrou**, b. 1988, United Arab Emirates, based in Dubai.
- **Abdullah AlOthman**, b. 1985, Saudi Arabia, based in Riyadh.
- **Khalil Rabah**, b. 1961, Palestine, based in Ramallah.
- **Monika Sosnowska**, b. 1972, Poland, based in Warsaw.
- **Ayman Zedani**, b. 1984, Saudi Arabia, based in Riyadh.

Desert X AIUla is a collaboration between Desert X and the Royal Commission for AIUla (RCU) established to advance new cultural dialogue through art. The first site-responsive exhibition of its kind in Saudi Arabia, it fosters dialogue and exchange between artists, curators and international and local communities, shaped by a curatorial vision that takes the desert as its inspiration. Building on the legacy of Desert X, which takes place in California's Coachella Valley, Desert X AIUla draws on principles of land art, offering a profound opportunity to experience art on a monumental scale in dialogue with nature.

This year's exhibition takes place in a different location in AIUla to the previous edition, situated in the Al Mutadil valley, with visitors invited to wander through and experience spectacular landscapes as they weave their journey between the works.

**Shadia Alem's** sculptural installation adapts the art of origami, applying the basic principles of geometry and beauty to create shapes that make reference to the Arabian desert's literature, mathematics and mythology. **Dana Awartani's** sculpture draws inspiration from the vernacular architecture of AIUla, taking the form of a concave geometric sculpture that references the Nabataean tombs and mimics the shapes of surrounding mountains, gorges, caverns and rock formations.

**Serge Attukwei Clottey's** installation addresses the experience of globalisation, migration and water equity by shrouding slabs of rock in meticulously crafted tapestries made from yellow kufuor gallons, which are plastic containers used in Ghana for storing and transporting water. **Claudia Comte's** work features a progression of walls imposing their architectural presence within the natural order of the AIUla canyons, with each carrying a section of a larger algorithmic pattern relating to the waveforms that shape the sound and surface of the desert.

**Shezad Dawood's** work explores ideas of deep time and the geo-biological relationship between the desert floor and nearby Red Sea through a pair of coral-like forms whose temperature-sensitive surfaces reflect the effects of climate change and mankind's continuing struggle to find a sustainable relationship with a rapidly changing ecosystem. Land artist **Jim Denevan** creates ephemeral drawings whose interlocking patterns speak to the shifts in magnitude and scale that so often shape our experience of the desert and our attempts to position ourselves within the vastness of unbounded space.

Working at the intersection of nature and technology **Stephanie Deumer** has created an underground greenhouse; hinting at the lush sanctuary of native plants below, a large puddle-shaped array of solar panels mounted flush with the desert floor creates an energy feedback loop where the energy of the sun is captured, stored and transformed through photosynthesis into growth and transformation. **Sultan bin Fahad's** mud structure is shaped like a desert kite, with mirrors on the façade that create the look of a mirage, and houses an urn-like sculpture embossed with four protective symbols traditionally used in Nabatean tombs.

**Zeinab Alhashemi's** interactive sculpture uses discarded camel skins on an abstract, geometric base, resembling a rock formation in the desert; like a camouflage, these camel hide sculptures merge into the mountains. **Alicja Kwade's** architectural structures reflect and frame the natural artefacts she encountered on the desert floor, which she rearranged and supplemented to create constantly changing perspectives that strike the fine line between reality and illusion. **Shaikha Al Mazrou's** lengthy steel-made inflated structures are wedged in the voids of rocks, tensely balanced in the landscape, occupying the liminal state between stasis and movement, creating a silent yet imposing composition suspended in inertia.

**Abdullah AlOthman's** piece references theories of light refraction rooting back to the early days of desert civilisation and culture, with stainless steel plinths that interact with the light and create a radiant space that seeks to manifest the experience of capturing the mirage for the first time. **Khalil Rabah** creates a mirage of an orchard of olive trees, which stand here in the desert as living things displaced from their indigenous land and longing to be repatriated, as an exploration of territory, survival and citizenship.

**Monika Sosnowska's** sculptural exploration of memory speaks to AIUla's historical position as a hub and passage of trade and its more recent cultural re-awakening; using heritage rails from the Hejaz railway, that ran from Damascus to Medina, the linear steel forms have been transformed into giant dried grasses replete with possibilities of growth and transformation. **Ayman Zedani's** soundscape installation in a rocky cavern comprises horizontal sculptural wires and an audio projection of music, voices and footsteps, creating a cacophony of sounds that add to the chimes of nature.

Desert X AIUla aims to contribute to and continue the artistic heritage of the local community and region: works from the 2020 edition by Lita Albuquerque, Manal AlDowayan, Sherin Guirguis, Mohammed Ahmed Ibrahim, Nadim Karam and Superflex remain in place in AIUla, on view from sustainable hotel Habitas, while Rashed AlShashai and Muhannad Shono were selected to work as part of AIUla's first artist residency, an 11-week programme whose final exhibition, The Oasis Reborn, is on display in the palm grove of Mabiti until 31 March. Likewise, the ongoing collaboration provides an international platform for Saudi artists: Zahrah Alghamdi, whose

work Glimpses of the Past was presented in the inaugural Desert X AIUla, went on to exhibit her work What Lies Behind the Walls to critical acclaim at Desert X 2021 in California.

Home to the UNESCO World Heritage Site, Hegra, built by the Nabataeans over 2,000 years ago, the AIUla region has been at the crossroads of cultural exchange for millennia, historically lying on the incense trade route and once capital to the ancient Kingdom of Dadan. Today, it is a living museum of heritage, arts and nature, rekindling its legacy as a vital cultural destination. By reimagining the boundaries of creativity and ingenuity, AIUla aims to share the transformative power of the arts through the prism of AIUla's legacies, character and ambition.

As part of AIUla's wide-ranging local community engagement and education programme that aims to reinvigorate a vibrant cultural economy, Desert X AIUla 2022 includes art mediator training programmes, family events, workshops for teachers and other networking and programming activities for visitors and communities, including site-specific, newly commissioned dance and music performances.

Desert X AIUla takes place as a highlight of AIUla Arts Festival, which also includes 'What Lies Within: Works from the Basma AlSulaiman Collection' (11 February – 20 March), an exhibition at Maraya of seminal works by contemporary Saudi artists, including Shadia Alem and Dana Awartani, exhibited for the first time in Saudi Arabia. This exhibition, curated by artist Lulwah AlHomoud, marks the first in a series of shows in AIUla featuring pioneering collectors and patrons.

During the festival, AlJadidah village, an area adjacent to AIUla Old Town, will be a vibrant hub of activity and performances, with the outdoor Cinema El Housh presenting Saudi arthouse filmmakers. Between February and March, the first edition of a collaboration with Italy's Cortana On The Move festival of visual narratives takes place, presenting cutting-edge photography in AIUla, with works from the Cortana festival exhibited alongside works by Arab artists, curated by Arianna Rinaldo and Kolhood Albakr.

With a view to the future, as detailed in AIUla's 'Journey Through Time' masterplan, AIUla Old Town adjoined by the Cultural Oasis will develop into one of five districts and serve as a nexus of community, cultural production and artistic explorations. By 2035, the masterplan will see 15 new landmark destinations for culture, heritage and creativity open in AIUla.

**Reem Fadda, curatorial advisor to Desert X AIUla 2022, says:**

"The desert concepts of mirage and oasis have long been tied to ideas of survival, perseverance, desire and wealth. The oasis pertains to ideas of finding prosperity or heaven, while the mirage is a universal symbol of the mysteries of imagination and reality. They also connote the incomprehensible beauty and abundance of nature in its most bereft state – the desert – and humans' obsessive desire to capture and control it. Under the theme of 'Sarab', the artists presented in the exhibition – all of whom have spent time in the AIUla region – have developed ambitious and strikingly innovative, site-specific responses, all of which address profound issues, that emerge from the local context but also resonate with audiences the world-over."

// **Raneem Farsi, co-artistic director of Desert X AIUla, says:**

“As a powerful form of self-expression, art has the power to transform societies, cities, and perspectives. Everyone is hungry for the best in contemporary art – and Desert X AIUla is feeding that appetite in an unprecedented way. Having worked for many years on the development and representation of the Saudi art scene, I can see that today Saudi artists are getting more attention and opportunities than ever before, both locally and internationally. Desert X AIUla plays a very important part in a vast wave of art and culture initiatives that is shaping the ecosystem for creativity in Saudi Arabia.”

// **Neville Wakefield, co-artistic director of Desert X AIUla and artistic director of Desert X, says:**

“AIUla has always been at the crossroads of trade and culture. Its landscape and history have and continue to draw people from across the globe. In captivating the imagination of artists and travelers alike, AIUla presents itself as the perfect site for an exhibition that explores the idea of the desert as a place of cultural interaction, dialogue and exchange. The first edition of Desert X AIUla in 2020 proved how much there is for artists and audiences from different parts of the world to learn from one another. Artists are often leaders in these conversations and so it is particularly exciting for Desert X AIUla to have such a significant role in the region’s many programs of cultural transformation.”

// **Nora Aldabal, executive director of arts and creative industries at Royal Commission for AIUla says:**

“AIUla values arts and creativity as essential and transformative layers for enriching society, economy and quality of life. By 2035, AIUla will be home to 15 landmark destinations for culture, heritage and creativity, each designed in careful dialogue with the region’s unique natural landscape, including museums, galleries, research centres and arts districts. The heritage, legacy and character of AIUla must be protected and preserved; with initiatives like Desert X AIUla, we are crafting the next chapter in AIUla’s history as a cradle of artistic inspiration, transfer and expression.”

**ENDS**

**For more information please visit:**

[www.livingmuseum.com](http://www.livingmuseum.com)

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@desertx (Facebook)

#desertxalula

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#### **Notes to editors:**

#### **About AIUla:**

Located 1,100 km from Riyadh, in North-West Saudi Arabia, AIUla is a place of extraordinary natural and human heritage. The vast area, covering 22,561km<sup>2</sup>, includes a lush oasis valley, towering sandstone mountains and ancient cultural heritage sites dating back thousands of years to when the Lihyan and Nabataean kingdoms reigned.

The most well-known and recognised site in AIUla is Hegra, Saudi Arabia's first UNESCO World Heritage Site. A 52-hectare ancient city, Hegra was the principal southern city of the Nabataean Kingdom and is comprised of more than 100 well-preserved tombs with elaborate facades cut out of the sandstone outcrops surrounding the walled urban settlement. Current research also suggests Hegra was the most southern outpost of the Roman Empire after conquering the Nabataeans in 106 CE.

In addition to Hegra, AIUla is home to fascinating historical and archaeological sites such as: Ancient Dadan, the capital of the Dadan and Lihyan Kingdoms, which is considered one of the most developed 1st-millennium BCE cities of the Arabian Peninsula; thousands of ancient rock art sites and inscriptions at Jabal Ikmah; AIUla Old Town, a labyrinth of more than 900 mudbrick homes developed from at least the 12th century, and Hijaz Railway and Hegra Fort, key sites in the story and conquests of Lawrence of Arabia.

#### **About The Royal Commission for AIUla:**

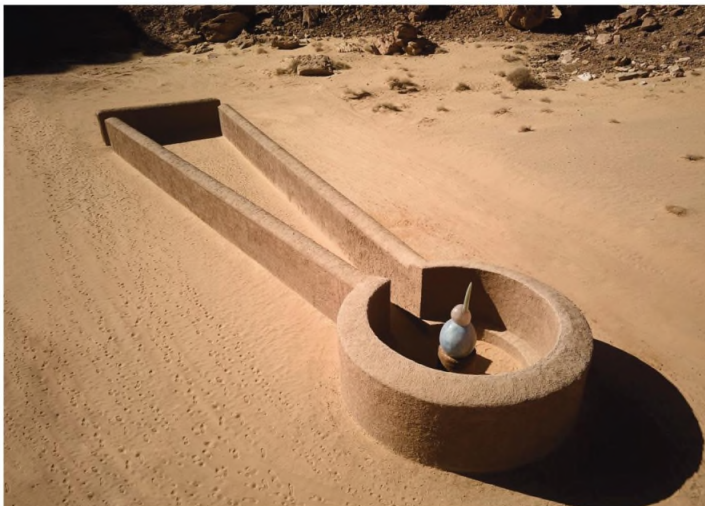
The Royal Commission for AIUla (RCU) was established by royal decree in July 2017 to protect and safeguard AIUla, a region of outstanding natural and cultural significance in North-West Saudi Arabia. RCU is embarking on a long-term plan to develop and deliver a sensitive, sustainable transformation of the region, reaffirming it as one of the country's most important archaeological and cultural destinations and preparing it to welcome visitors from around the world. RCU's development work in AIUla encompasses a broad range of initiatives across archaeology, tourism, culture, education and the arts, reflecting the ambitious commitment to cultivate tourism and leisure in Saudi Arabia, outlined in Vision 2030.

#### **About Desert X:**

Desert X is produced by The Desert Biennial, a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) charitable organisation founded in California, conceived to produce recurring international contemporary art exhibitions that activate desert locations through site-specific installations by acclaimed international artists. Its guiding purposes and principles include presenting public exhibitions of art that respond meaningfully to the conditions of desert locations, the environment and indigenous communities; promoting cultural exchange and education programmes that foster dialogue and understanding among cultures and communities about shared artistic, historical, and societal issues; and providing an accessible platform for artists from around the world to address ecological, cultural, spiritual, and other existential themes.



— Dana Awartani, *Where The Dwellers Lay*, installation view, Desert X AIUla 2022, courtesy the artist and Desert X AIUla, photo by Lance Gerber



— Sultan bin Fahad, *Desert Kite*, installation view, Desert X AIUla 2022, courtesy the artist and Desert X AIUla, photo by Lance Gerber



— Claudia Comte, *Dark Suns, Bright Waves*, installation view, Desert X AIUla 2022, courtesy the artist and Desert X AIUla, photo by Lance Gerber



— Zeinab Alhashemi, *Camouflage 2.0*, installation view, Desert X AIUla 2022, courtesy the artist and Desert X AIUla, photo by Lance Gerber



— Khalil Rabah, *Grounding*, installation view, Desert X AIUla 2022, courtesy the artist and Desert X AIUla, photo by Lance Gerber



**MEDIA RELEASE**

**AlUla stars on Samsung's global content platforms**

**AlUla, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia – 1<sup>st</sup> of August 2021:**

The globally significant heritage and culture destination of AlUla is featured on Samsung's 2021 TV lineup worldwide as part of an agreement between Samsung and The Royal Commission for AlUla (RCU).

AlUla's UNESCO World Heritage Site, Hegra, the abandoned Hijaz Railway Station, AlUla Old Town and the Elephant Rock formation Jabil AlFil in AlUla, Saudi Arabia are currently featuring on Samsung's new ambient 2021 TV app with five artworks and four cinema-graphs. The AlUla images are being showcased in demo mode at 20,000 retail outlets in 62 countries around the world.

Millions of Samsung's Galaxy Phone owners will also be able to set their wallpaper on one of AlUla's many stunning desert landscapes including aerials views of the 20km green oasis and Nabataean tombs.

The agreement forms part of ongoing activity between RCU and Samsung which is to include a photography competition launched by a group of Samsung influencers who will be visiting AlUla this summer to take pictures through Samsung's #withGalaxy lens.



*Hegra, UNESCO World Heritage Site – Samsung Ambient TV Mode*



*Elephant Rock (Jabil AlFil) – Samsung Ambient TV Mode*

With travel set to resume around the world in 2021, Phillip Jones, Chief Management and Marketing Officer for RCU says the timing is perfect.

“As an unexplored destination to most people around the world, the exposure that AlUla will achieve through our initiatives with Samsung is unprecedented. We know people are itching to travel and we also know that as a new and unexpected destination with vast open spaces and deep rich heritage and culture, AlUla will be an exciting prospect for many. We are excited to work with such an innovative brand and hope to continue developing interesting ideas as the past of AlUla connects with the future of tech.”

Hyung Bin Joo, Managing Director of Samsung Saudi, commented on the strategic partnership with RCU.





“At the forefront of Saudi Vision 2030, AlUla is a destination with captivating sceneries and a deep rooted heritage. Samsung’s collaboration with AlUla enables our consumers around the world to #experienceAlUla, Saudi Arabia’s Hidden Gem, on our latest Samsung TVs with Ambient Mode.”



-Ends-

#### Notes to Editor

DIGITAL ASSETS

[Smartphone/tablet wallpapers:](#)

[Artwork](#)

[Cinemagraph](#)

#### About AlUla

Located 1,000 km from Riyadh, in North-West Saudi Arabia, AlUla is a place of extraordinary natural and human heritage. The vast area, covering 22,561km<sup>2</sup>, includes a lush oasis valley, towering sandstone mountains and ancient cultural heritage sites dating back thousands of years to when the Lihyan and Nabataean kingdoms reigned. The most well-known and recognised site in AlUla is Hegra, Saudi Arabia’s first UNESCO World Heritage





Site. A 52-hectare ancient city, Hegra was the principal southern city of the Nabataean Kingdom and is comprised of 111 well-preserved tombs, many with elaborate facades cut out of the sandstone outcrops surrounding the walled urban settlement. Current research also suggests Hegra was the most southern outpost of the Roman Empire after the Roman's conquered the Nabataeans in 106 CE.

In addition to Hegra, AlUla is also home to ancient Dadan, the capital of the Dadan and Lihyan Kingdoms and considered to be one of the most developed 1st millennium BCE cities of the Arabian Peninsula. And Jabal Ikma, an open-air library of hundreds of inscriptions and writings in many different languages. AlUla Old Town, a labyrinth of more than 900 mudbrick homes developed from at least the 12th century, and Hijaz Railway and Hegra Fort, key sites in the story and conquests of Lawrence of Arabia.

For more information, please visit: [www.experiencealula.com](http://www.experiencealula.com)

#### About The Royal Commission for AlUla

The Royal Commission for AlUla (RCU) was established by royal decree in July 2017 to protect and safeguard AlUla, a region of outstanding natural and cultural significance in North-West Saudi Arabia. RCU is embarking on a long-term plan to develop and deliver a sensitive, sustainable transformation of the region, reaffirming it as one of the country's most important archaeological and cultural destinations and preparing it to welcome visitors from around the world. RCU's development work in AlUla encompasses a broad range of initiatives across archaeology, tourism, culture, education and the arts, reflecting the ambitious commitment to cultivate tourism and leisure in Saudi Arabia, outlined in Vision 2030.

For more information, please visit: [www.rcu.gov.sa](http://www.rcu.gov.sa)





## Royal Commission for AIUla and UNESCO announce partnership to share Saudi Arabia's rich cultural heritage with the world

- *Recently signed in Paris, the new agreement is part of RCU and UNESCO's inclusive cultural development plan to engage with local and worldwide communities*
- *Newly announced partnership acts as a roadmap to showcase the introduction of Saudi Arabia and AIUla's physical and intangible heritage on the global stage*
- *Partnership to set new benchmark in heritage conservation, education & capacity building, nature and creative arts in AIUla*

Paris, France, November 10, 2021: The Royal Commission for AIUla (RCU) today signed a long-term strategic partnership with UNESCO to preserve and promote a cultural landscape of outstanding natural and historical significance in North-West Saudi Arabia

Signed at the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, the agreement accelerates the ongoing cultural and socio-economic renaissance of AIUla by further protecting its historical, natural and cultural sites as well as its local culture, by fostering capacity building and knowledge transfer with experts from around the world joining RCU efforts to transform AIUla into a benchmark destination for heritage, nature, arts & culture.

The partnership was signed by HH Prince Badr bin Abdullah Al-Saud, Governor of RCU and Minister of Culture of Saudi Arabia, with Audrey Azoulay, Director General, UNESCO; HH Princess Haifa AlMogrin, Ambassador, Saudi Arabia's Permanent Delegation to UNESCO, and Amr AlMadani, CEO of RCU.

Audrey Azoulay, Director General, UNESCO declared: "The relationship between Saudi Arabia and UNESCO builds on a long history that extends back to 1946, when the Kingdom became a Member State of our Organization. Today, cooperation between UNESCO and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is taking another important step forward, with a view to accompanying a major transformation of the AIUla region."

HH Prince Badr bin Abdullah Al-Saud, Governor of RCU and Minister of Culture of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia said: "It is the vision of His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed bin Salman, Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia, to transform AIUla into a global destination for heritage, nature, arts & culture. The signing of this first-of-its-kind agreement is another significant moment in our journey towards reaching these ambitions and building upon the enduring relationship that exists between Saudi Arabia, RCU and UNESCO. Aligned with Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 plans and UN Sustainable Development Goals, this partnership will connect AIUla's past, present and future by harnessing the power of education, science and culture to act as a catalyst for sustainable development model and long-lasting change."

HH Princess Haifa AlMogrin, Ambassador, Saudi Arabia's Permanent Delegation to UNESCO said: "The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is home to some of the most unique and culturally significant heritage sites, of which AIUla is the most iconic and inspiring. As a global institution that celebrates and protects cultural and heritage diversity, UNESCO will be instrumental in helping to advance RCU's commitment to fulfil the potential of the AIUla region, its people, landmarks and natural environment through diverse development and economic programmes



that reflect Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 and UNESCO's efforts towards Sustainable Development.”

Amr AIMadani, CEO of RCU said: “Mutually beneficial partnerships and alliances are essential to our strategy and demonstrate an open and engaged dialogue that amplifies AIUla's heritage status and show culture's capacity to be an engine for sustainable and long-term development. The alignment of RCU, UNESCO and Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 is powering growth, fostering intellectual, cultural and scientific exchange and enabling wisdom to grow on a global scale in full alignment with the 17 UN's Sustainable Development Goals. Our motive for protecting and evolving AIUla is to help bring it to the world, to develop shared knowledge, grow understanding of AIUla's past and anticipation of its future by establishing it as a destination of global prominence for visitors and residents alike, in partnership with UNESCO.”

AIUla tells the story of 200,000 years of human history. It has been home to ancient civilisations, including the Dadanties, Lihyanites and Nabateans who each left their indelible imprint on the area, most clearly preserved in grand tombs carved into the mountains.

The partnership will see the implementation of knowledge-based initiatives to transform sustainably and responsibly the cultural, heritage and natural landscape of AIUla and establish this vast swathe of north-west Saudi Arabia as the world's largest living museum.

AIUla's development will establish it as a unique destination home to a culturally rich local population who are empowered to interact with and inspire visitors through informed story telling.

Leading academics from across the globe will be invited to explore AIUla through immersive opportunities designed to unlock the secrets of ancient languages and societies that are captured in time in AIUla.

RCU will work alongside UNESCO and global experts on key programmes including:

- Memory of the World, focused on the preservation of documentary heritage.
- UNESCO-Kingdoms Institute Fellowships Programme, for researching, preserving, promoting and transmitting heritage.

The jewel in Saudi Arabia's heritage crown, AIUla is part of the Kingdom's Vision 2030 plan to unlock its vast cultural, tourism and economic potential. UNESCO and Vision 2030's Agenda for Sustainable Development are strategically aligned to promote education, culture and science as a powerful platform to stimulate economic opportunities, job creation and growth.

Spanning the next five years and focused on 10 programmes, the new partnership includes the listing of new natural and cultural sites under UNESCO's taxonomy to protect and promote local heritage and natural landscape and ecosystems. Key sectors that will shape this include heritage conservation, education and capacity building, nature and creative arts, with local people as the main beneficiaries of AIUla's development.

Helping to open up the long-hidden potential, knowledge and unique culture that make up Saudi Arabia's identity and heritage, AIUla will act as a laboratory for sustainable development models and conservation practices while also enabling UNESCO to increase its footprint in the region.

The agreement builds on a long history of collaboration between Saudi Arabia and UNESCO that extends back to 1946 when the Kingdom was one of 20 countries to ratify the UNESCO constitution. Over the years this relationship has continued to thrive and develop in both directions; UNESCO designated Hegra in AIUla as Saudi Arabia's first World Heritage Site in 2008, KSA became a member of UNESCO's Executive Committee in 2019 and was elected to UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage Committee for the first time in 2020.



## ENDS

For media enquiries please contact the RCU Public Relations team at [publicrelations@rcu.gov.sa](mailto:publicrelations@rcu.gov.sa)

Note to editors:

It is always AIUla / not Al-Ula

About the Royal Commission for AIUla

The Royal Commission for AIUla (RCU) was established by royal decree in July 2017 to preserve and develop AIUla, a region of outstanding natural and cultural significance in north-west Saudi Arabia. RCU's long-term plan outlines a responsible, sustainable, and sensitive approach to urban and economic development, that preserves the area's natural and historic heritage, while establishing AIUla as a desirable location to live, work, and visit. This encompasses a broad range of initiatives across archaeology, tourism, culture, education, and the arts, reflecting a commitment to meeting the economic diversification, local community empowerment, and heritage preservation priorities of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 programme.

About UNESCO

UNESCO is the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. It seeks to build peace through international cooperation in Education, the Sciences and Culture. UNESCO's programmes contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals defined in Agenda 2030, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2015.

## PHOTO CAPTIONS

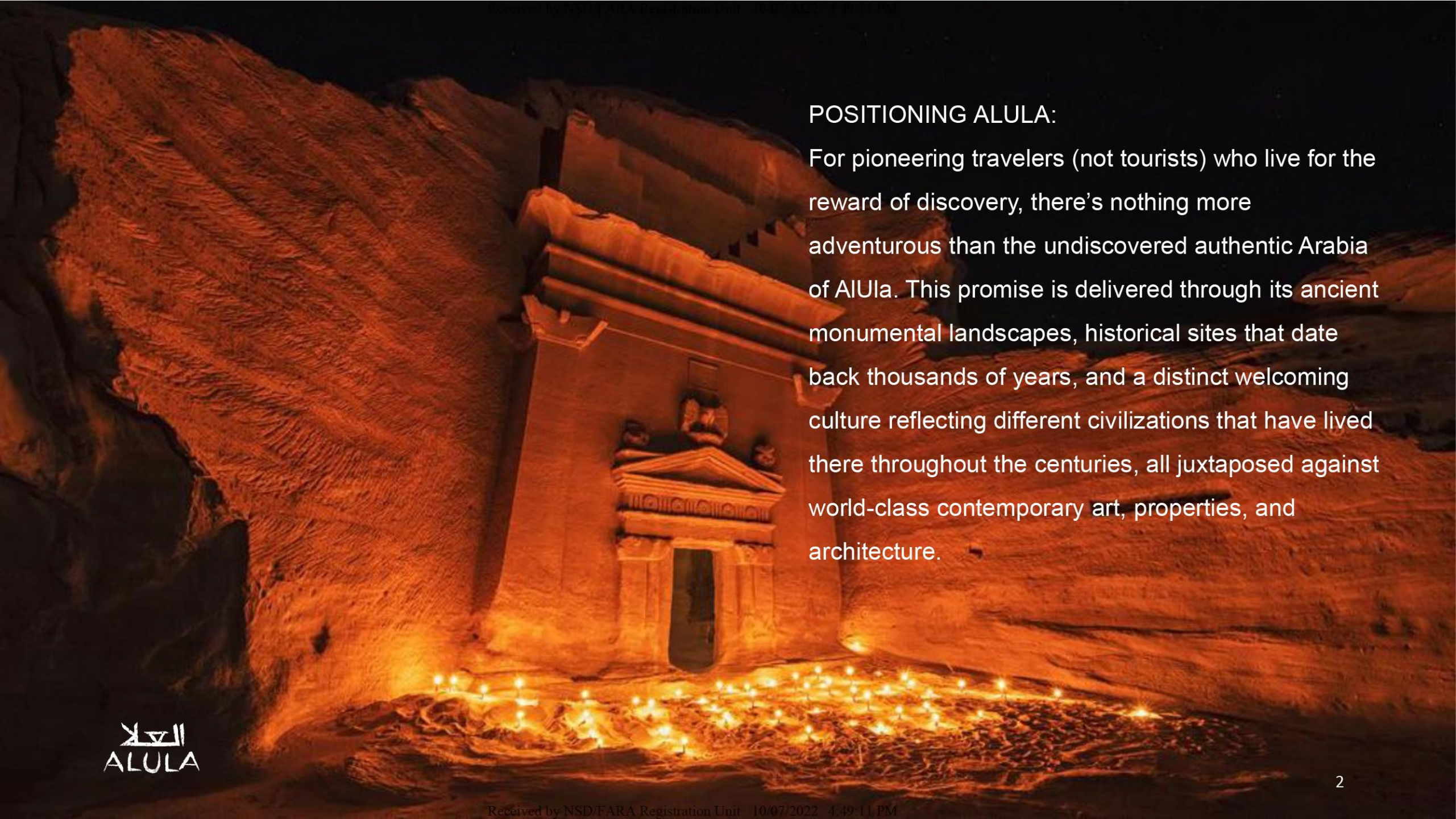
Credit for all: Royal Commission for AIUla

1. **Image of Hegra: UNESCO designated Hegra in AIUla as Saudi Arabia's first World Heritage Site in 2008**
2. **Signing of partnership: HH Prince Badr bin Abdullah Al-Saud, Governor of Royal Commission for AIUla and Minister of Culture of Saudi Arabia, and Audrey Azoulay, Director General, UNESCO sign long-term strategic partnership to preserve AIUla's heritage and accelerate its renaissance**

الهيئة الملكية لمحافظة العلا  
Royal Commission for AlUla



WAGSTAFF  
MEDIA & MARKETING



## POSITIONING ALULA:

For pioneering travelers (not tourists) who live for the reward of discovery, there's nothing more adventurous than the undiscovered authentic Arabia of AlUla. This promise is delivered through its ancient monumental landscapes, historical sites that date back thousands of years, and a distinct welcoming culture reflecting different civilizations that have lived there throughout the centuries, all juxtaposed against world-class contemporary art, properties, and architecture.



ALULA

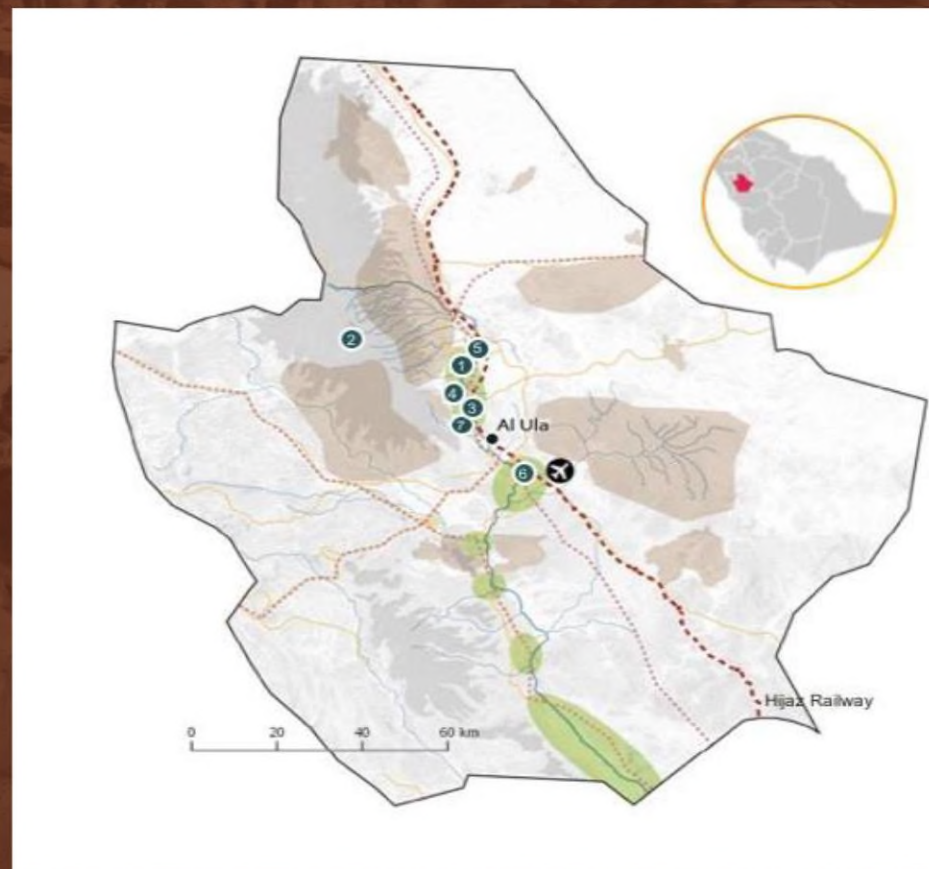
625 miles northwest of  
Riyadh



Population:  
45,000



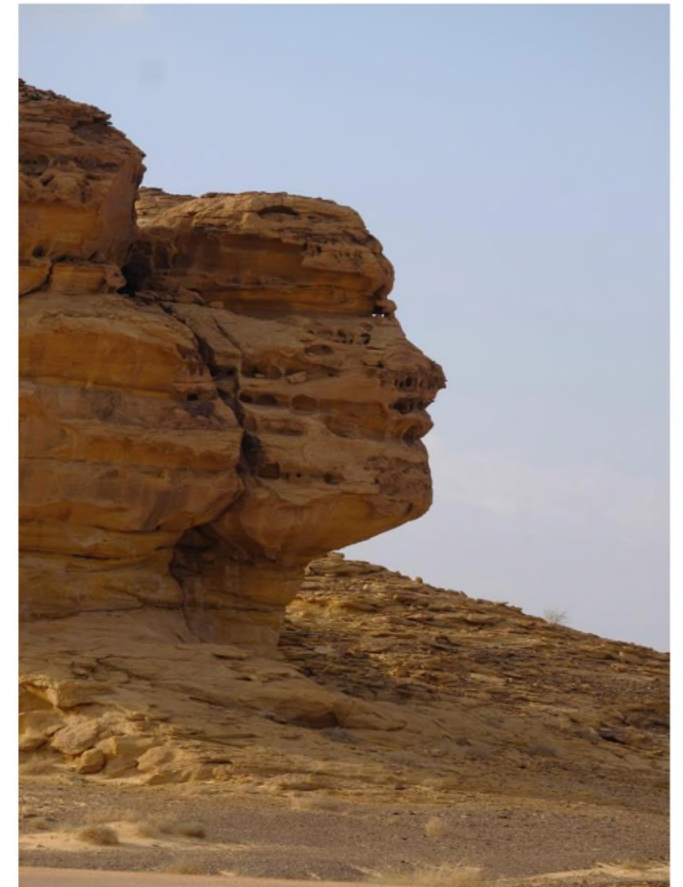
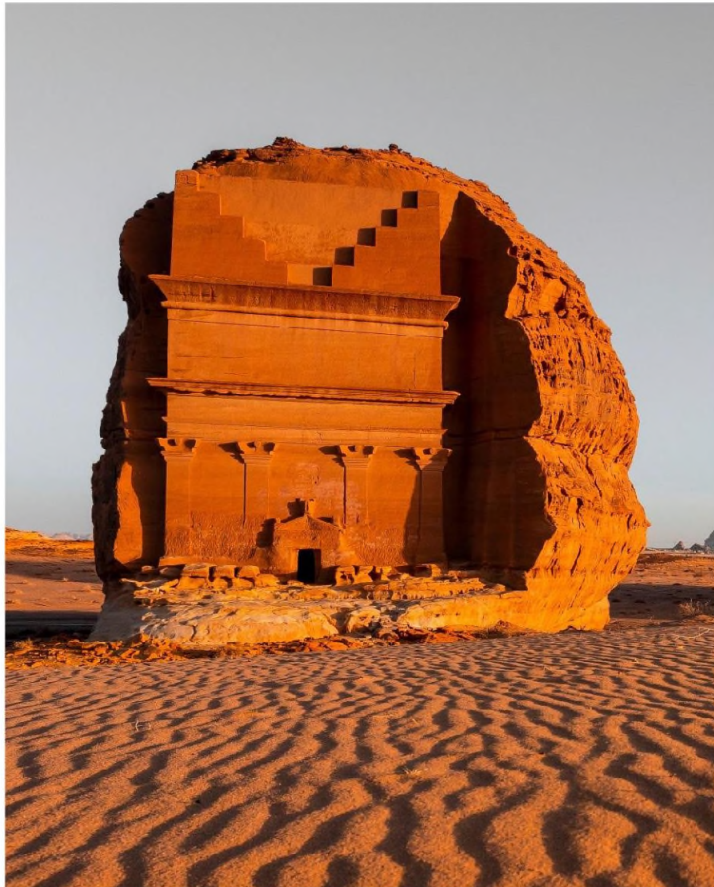
10,000 square miles –  
AlUla size of a country





# Heritage

A cultural heritage gem, the destination is essentially a living museum of preserved tombs, sandstone outcrops, historic dwellings and monuments, both natural and human-made, that hold 200,000 years of largely unexplored human history.



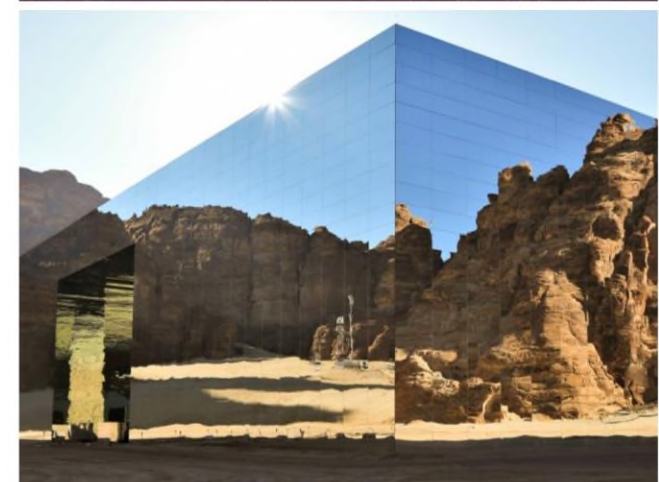
# Adventure

From hiking, camel riding, hot air ballooning, and horseback riding, AIUla takes a step back in time and allows you to explore the destination slowly, taking in all the sights and sounds.



# Arts & Culture

Everywhere you look in AIUla, wondrous inspiration can be found. Experience emerging art at Desert X, partake in world-famous entertainment at Winter at Tantora, or learn the art of stone carving from the hands of the ancients.



# Conservation

AIUla is a desert oasis that beckons natural wonders and is committed to preserving the natural heritage, culture and beauty of the destination. From protecting the Arabian Leopard through AIUla's work with Catmosphere, to safeguarding the natural surroundings through thoughtfully planned tourism development, AIUla will regenerate and restore this important region of Saudi Arabia.



# Familiar Brands in Undiscovered Places

Hospitality brands that have become known the world over for their exceptional level of service have chosen AIUla as their next home. These include luxury lodging like Habitas, Aman, Accor's Banyan Tree AIUla, as well as renowned restaurateurs like London's Jason Atherton and Annabelle's restaurant. By the end of 2021, 400 room keys will be available to global visitors.



# Culinary

In AIUla there are many dining options for replenishing your energy after a day of exploring. AIUla has a rich culinary scene — from casual to fine dining. Dine at a variety of local restaurants, cafés and food trucks, and be sure to sample the dates, citrus fruits and other delights of the AIUla oasis.



# What's new?

## **Destination Reopening**

Previously only open to religious travelers, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has now introduced an e-visa program allowing fully vaccinated tourists to the country.

## **Journey Through Time Masterplan**

The Journey Through Time Masterplan is an ambitious roadmap to protect, preserve and sustainably rejuvenate AlUla and form a backbone of the world's largest and oldest cultural landscape, formed from the combined works of man and nature over millennia.

## **AlUla Moments**

Under the banner of AlUla Moments, AlUla's events calendar highlights four festivals including Winter at Tantora, AlUla Skies, AlUla Arts and AlUla's Wellness Festival. The festivals will offer curated experiences of art, culture, music, nature, wellness, equestrian, gastronomy and astronomy. The four distinct festivals will commence on December 21 and run through March 30 against the backdrop of AlUla's many timeless wonders. Musical performances will also be back in AlUla with Maraya taking center stage again as the venue for regional and international acts starting from this October.



WAGSTAFF  
MEDIA & MARKETING

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THANK YOU!

LINDSAY MCCABE | DIRECTOR

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[www.wagstaffmktg.com](http://www.wagstaffmktg.com)



TRAVMEDIA IMM 2022

Experience AIUIa



**TRAVMEDIA IMM 2022  
EXPERIENCE ALULA**



## WONDERS OF TIME

AlUla is a place of extraordinary human and natural heritage. A living museum of preserved tombs, sandstone outcrops, historic dwellings and monuments, both natural and human-made, that hold 200,000 years of largely unexplored human history.

AlUla has long been at the crossroads of ancient civilizations; a place of rich history, but one that is constantly evolving.

AlUla is an extraordinary place that is unveiling its many secrets for the first time and is ready to share them with the world.

## THE ESSENCE OF ALULA

### **Heritage carved in rocks**

Architecture in AlUla merges with the landscape, and creates outstanding works of art. It is within this union that the uniqueness of AlUla is found.

### **Silence and Monumentality**

A deep and ancient silence covers the desert, the dramatic canyons, and the pristine rocks. There is a deeply comforting feeling in the realization of our smallness when experiencing the full scale of natural powers.

### **Timeless authenticity**

AlUla is sublime. Its presence is humbling. Everything in AlUla reflects the authenticity of a landscape that has remained unaltered for centuries.



~~~~~  
**200,000 Years**  
of human legacy

ALULA



**7,000 Years**  
of human civilisation

ALULA

Direct flights on  
Saudi Airlines from  
New York,  
Washington DC, Los  
Angeles and Paris

ALULA



Emirates



السعودية  
SAUDIA



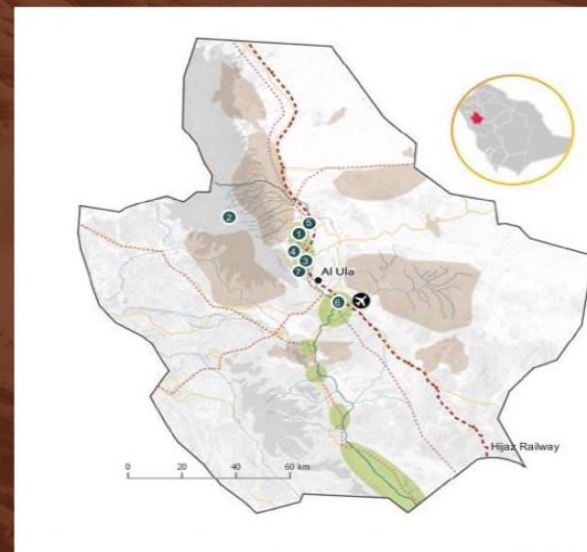
1000 km northwest of  
Riyadh



Population:  
45,000



25,000 square kilometers  
– AIUla size of a country



# ABOUT ALULA

# ABOUT ALULA



## AlUla Facts



Important stop on the the incense road



7,000 years of successive civilizations and history, captured in one site.



1st UNESCO world heritage site registered in Saudi Arabia in 2008



111 tombs at Hegra of which 94 have elaborate remarkably well-preserved carved facades



Ongoing archaeological diggings



AlUla's four significant Heritage sites are



Hegra UNESCO World Heritage Site & Hijaz Railway Station



Dadan



Jabal Ikmah



AlUla Old Town







# HERITAGE SITES

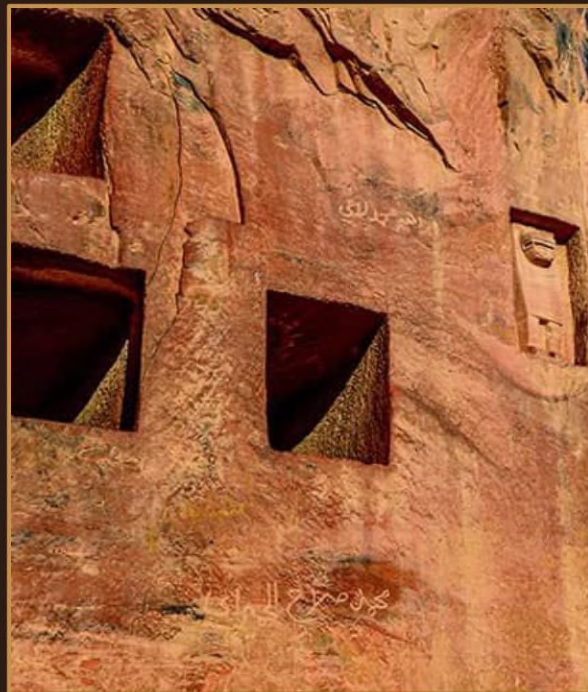


## Hegra

Saudi Arabia's first UNESCO World Heritage Site. Here you'll explore over 110 remarkably well-preserved tombs set in a desert landscape, while learning about the ancient people and culture of AlUla.



Evidence for human presence and use of the site dates back beyond the 1st millennium BCE, but it was the location of the Nabataean city from the end of the 1st millennium BCE into the 1st millennium CE. The city was at its peak from the late 2nd century BCE to the 2nd century CE.



## Dadan

Amongst the most significant discoveries in all of AlUla is the city of Dadan, the capital of the Dadan and Lihyan kingdoms. The city, which was built meticulously from stone and astride the valley's oasis, dates back between the late 9th and early 8th century BCE (Kingdom of Dadan) and 5th–2nd century BCE (Kingdom of Lihyan).





## Jabal Ikmah

Across the AlUla Valley lie thousands of inscriptions in Aramaic, Dadanitic, Thamudic, Minaic and Nabataean.

Thousands of pre-Arabic inscriptions across numerous sites make AlUla an important location in studying the Arabic language. A mountain north of the AlUla Valley, AlAqra'a, features more than 450 early Arabic inscriptions. Naqsh Zuhayr, to the east, features one of the oldest inscriptions of the Islamic era — dating back to 24AH (644 CE). But no such site is more significant than Jabal Ikmah, home to the highest concentration of and most varied inscriptions in AlUla.



## AlUla Old Town

Modern AlUla encompasses one of Saudi Arabia's exceptional heritage sites, AlUla old town. One of the reasons it evokes such a deep sense of emotion is that it was actually inhabited in the not-so-distant past. AlUla Old Town is located in the narrowest part of the AlUla Valley. Built on a slight elevation, the town is overlooked by the Musa bin Nusayr Castle, a citadel dating to at least the 10th century.





# EXPERIENCES



## Maraya

Maraya, meaning mirror or reflection in Arabic, is a state-of-the-art structure covered in 9,740 mirrored panels reflecting AlUla's beauty, making it the largest mirrored building in the world, according to Guinness World Records.

Giò Forma's Italian-German group of Florian Boje, Cristiana Picco and Claudio Santucci headed the architecture and design team for Maraya.

Michelin-starred Chef Jason Atherton's restaurant Maraya Social is located on the rooftop of the extraordinary building and opened in October 2021.





## Oasis Trail

The Heritage Trail from Dadan South, arriving to Old Town and passing by AlWadi area is 3 km long and it offers visitors an extraordinary nature stroll through the AlUla farms, suitable for families and nature lovers of all ages.





## Elephant Rock

As the light changes throughout the afternoon, no two visits are the same. Book a sunset experience or an evening ticket to see the stars shining bright in the dark AlUla sky. Our onsite café, Key, offers delicious sweets and warm beverages to stimulate all the senses and make it an experience never to be forgotten.



## Stargazing at Gharameel

Ever wondered why a dark sky is so coveted? You only need to understand how light pollution from cities dims the capacity to see stars and constellations. As the sun sets here, its beautiful hues of orange, pink and gold are the prelude to a magical excursion once the sky drops its curtain. We all live under the same sky, but its clarity and unfathomable beauty are a spectacular sight to behold in the ancient desert realm of AlUla.

Extraordinary sand stones in remote desertland create some of the world's most enviable dark skies, making AlUla an idyllic locale for star gazing. AlGarameel is the iconic location for star gazing in AlUla.

Tilting your eyes skyward and witnessing a dark horizon lit up by an infinity of twinkling stars is a deeply moving experience.





## Helicopter Tour

Get ready to view AlUla from above, with this 30-minute helicopter tour with your pilot (guide), an exhilarating flight that takes you over AlUla's seven most famous landmarks and heritage sites.

Children must be three years of age or above to be carried on any of our Flights. All children under 13 years of age must be accompanied by an adult.



# ACCOMMODATIONS

# ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS



**SHADEN**

**Open  
Now**



**SAHARY**

**Open  
Now**



**RV'S**

**Open  
Now**

# ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS

## HABITAS AIUIa

- Opened November 2021
- 96 stand alone villas
- Eco-friendly accommodations
- Wellness, rituals, arts, and music experience



# ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS

## BANYAN TREE

- Opening Q2 2022
- 79 accommodations
- Luxury Bedouin-style tents and villas
- Three dining concepts featuring Thai, Arabian, and American
- Rock pool carved between the canyons



# ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS

## SHARAAN RESORT BY JEAN NOUVEL

- Opening 2024
- 40 exclusive accommodations
- Designed by Architect Jean Nouvel



ALULA

# ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS

BY 2024

30

80

40

40



Placeholder image for Aman Tented Camp, showing the word 'ĀMAN' in a stylized font on a light background.



Placeholder image for Janu (by Aman), showing the word 'ĀMAN' in a stylized font on a light background.



Placeholder image for Aman Hegra Resort, showing the word 'ĀMAN' in a stylized font on a light background.



Image of Sharaan Resort interior, showing a decorative ceiling with a pattern of small lights.

Opening 2023  
Star 5

2023  
5

2024  
5

2024  
5



**WHAT'S NEW**

ALULA



## UNESCO Partners with AIUla

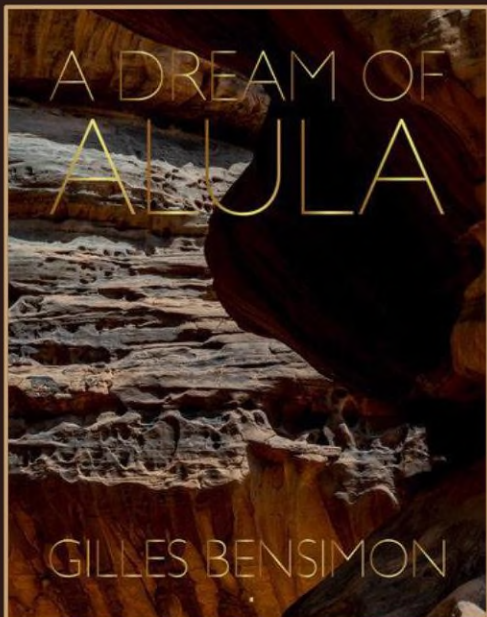
- AIUla just signed a long-term strategic partnership with UNESCO
- It's remarkable because it's the first region to sign a deal with the heritage organization, rather than a country-wide partnership
- The agreement accelerates the ongoing cultural and socio-economic renaissance of AIUla by further protecting thousands of years of historical, natural and cultural sites
- The partnership connects AIUla's past, present, and future by harnessing the power of education, science and culture to act as a catalyst for sustainable development and long-lasting change.





## Birth of Arabian Leopard

- There are only about 200 critically endangered Arabian Leopards left in the wild
- The female cub was born on April 23 and is now one of 16 born in a captive-breeding program at the Arabian Leopard Breeding Center in Taif, Saudi Arabia
- Expansion of the captive-breeding program with the opening of a state-of-the-art breeding center to open by early 2024 as part of Sharaan Nature Reserve, AlUla
- Establishment of the Arabian Leopard Fund
- Extension of partnerships with relevant conservation entities such as the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and Panthera
- February 10 – Arabian Leopard Day



## Arts & Culture

Everywhere you look in AlUla, wondrous inspiration can be found — in its organic, red-rock shapes, its flourishing green palms and the startling contrast of bright blue sky against desert landscapes. From contemporary artists projecting light against the rocks to locals studying traditional handicrafts, the spirit of the arts lives in this valley.

- Desert X AlUla (February 11-March 30, 2022)
- Ricahard Mille AlUla Desert Polo Tournament (February 11 & 12, 2022)
- “What Lies Within” exhibit at Maraya (February 11-March 20, 2022)
- AlUla Skies Festival (February 27 – March 13)
- Live Performances from global artists (Andrea Bocelli)
- *A Dream of AlUla* by Gilles Bensimon



## Women of AIUla

- Mashail Makki, Tour Guide / Rawi Storyteller: Mashail Makki is the first licensed female tour guide in AIUla and only the fifth in Saudi Arabia, also holding the title of President of the AIUla Youth Council, leader of the Majd AIUla Group for Heritage, and a certified trainer.
- Basma Al Sulaiman, Founder of BASMOCA: Considered the patron of the arts, Basma Al Sulaiman is the founder of BASMOCA, the Basma Al Sulaiman Museum of Contemporary Art..She is currently creating an art exhibit for Maraya Concert Hall (the beautiful, mirrored building in AIUla) for early 2022.
- Mayada Badr, Culinary Expert: Mayada Badr heads the subdivision of the ministry of culture's culinary committee. She gained her culinary expertise at Le Cordon Bleu in Paris and most recently opened the Pink Camel café in AIUla. She incorporates Saudi culture with western flavors for example creating Halawa macarons for Ramadan. She owns 3 of the 15 restaurants in AIUla.
- Arwa Al Banawi, launched her latest collaboration with sports brand adidas earlier this year and, fittingly, the big reveal will take place in Saudi Arabia's cultural gem, AIUla.





Lindsay McCabe  
Director of Marcomms, N. America  
lindsay@wagstaffmktg.com

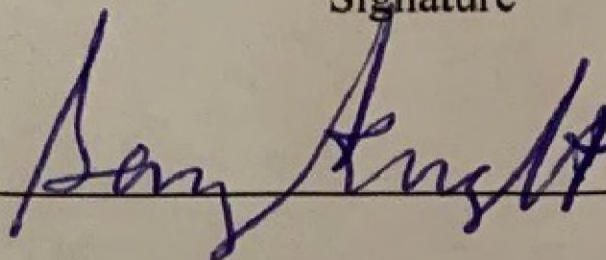


**THANK YOU**

ገዳ  
ALULA

**EXECUTION**

In accordance with 28 U.S.C. § 1746, and subject to the penalties of 18 U.S.C. § 1001 and 22 U.S.C. § 618, the undersigned swears or affirms under penalty of perjury that he/she has read the information set forth in this statement filed pursuant to the Foreign Agents Registration Act of 1938, as amended, 22 U.S.C. § 611 *et seq.*, that he/she is familiar with the contents thereof, and that such contents are in their entirety true and accurate to the best of his/her knowledge and belief.

Date	Printed Name	Signature
<u>10-7-22</u>	<u>Gary Knight</u>	<u></u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>