



# Saudi Arabia

Women-only Adventure | 11 nights – Feb 2026

*Designed for curious open-minded women ready to go with the flow. This adventure offers a rare and rewarding insight into a fascinating culture amid rapid transformation. Go now before tourism really cranks up!*

## Day 1 RIYADH

Welcome to Riyadh, the birthplace of modern Saudi Arabia, where old-world charm meets 21st-century vision. Today our guide will be welcoming you at the airport, and you will be driven to your accommodation.

Riyadh Province – also known as Al-Wosta – is home to the country's capital: a modern metropolis with a thriving financial and business centre, and a growing cultural scene. It's a city rich in history, boasting myriad forts, palaces and museums, and some of the country's most colorful souks.

This evening, enjoy a welcome dinner showcasing the rich and diverse cuisine of Najd, served in its authentic style within a beautifully preserved heritage setting.

**Accommodation: Riyadh 2 nights**

## Day 2 RIYADH'S OLD FORTS & SKYSCRAPER VIEWS

Get ready for a full day exploring the layers of Riyadh—historic landmarks, local flavours, and sweeping city views all rolled into one.

We'll kick things off at Al Masmak Fortress, a mudbrick fort built in the 1800s that's stood the test of time. It's a quiet pocket of old Riyadh, full of stories and desert charm. Just around the corner is Souq Al-Zal—one of the city's oldest markets. Here, you can browse everything from antique swords and perfumes to traditional garments and handcrafted jewellery.

Next up, we'll dive into the country's past at the National Museum and King Abdulaziz Historical Center. These cultural gems bring Saudi history to life, with ancient artefacts and exhibits that piece together the story of the Kingdom's origins.

Time to slow down and experience Saudi hospitality at its finest. We'll visit a local home for a traditional lunch and learn about the family-centred culture, where homes are designed for large gatherings and strong community ties.

This afternoon, we explore Diriyah, the birthplace of the first Saudi state. The UNESCO-listed Turaif district is full of beautifully preserved Najdi architecture and offers a glimpse into the early foundations of modern Saudi Arabia.

We'll wrap up the day with sky-high views from the top of Kingdom Tower, an iconic structure inspired by global landmarks and designed by leading international and local architects. The Skybridge offers a stunning perspective over Riyadh's modern skyline—an unforgettable way to end your city adventure.

Timings may shift a little depending on traffic, but that's all part of the journey!

### **Day 3            RIYADH - BURAYDAH (VIA USHAIGER)**

Riyadh to Ushaiger Approx Drive Time: 2 hr 30 min (204 km)

On the way to Buraydah, we'll stop at Ushaiger—a real hidden gem tucked away in the heart of Najd. This peaceful heritage village has been around for more than 1,500 years, first settled by Bedouins and once an important stop for pilgrims travelling to Makkah, thanks to its natural springs and shady palm groves. Its name comes from a nearby red mountain—"Ushaiger" translates to "little blonde." Today, it's like stepping into a living museum. Wandering through the village, you'll find narrow laneways, traditional mudbrick houses, and timber walkways that wind through the old town. Many of the buildings have been beautifully restored, with carved wooden doors and triangle-shaped windows that showcase classic Najdi architecture.

It's a chance to experience a slower pace of life and see a side of Saudi Arabia that many visitors miss.

Ushaiger to Buraydah Approx Drive Time: 2 hrs (185 km)

Once we arrive in Buraydah, it's aprons on for a hands-on cooking session led by a local Saudi chef. You'll be guided through the steps of preparing traditional Najdi dishes—think rich stews, fragrant rice, and comforting wheat-based recipes, all rooted in the hearty flavours of central Arabia. While we won't be whipping up dessert, you'll get to try Kleija—a spiced, date-filled biscuit that's a local favourite in the Qassim region. Paired with a cup of Saudi coffee, it's the perfect sweet finish. This relaxed 3-hour class is a fun, flavourful way to dive into Saudi cuisine—and connect with the culture behind the food.

### ***Accommodation: Buraydah 1 night***

### **Day 4            BURAYDAH - HAIL (VIA UNAIZAH)**

Buraydah to Hail: Approx Drive Time 2 hr 40 min (280 km)

We're up early today for a visit to the world's largest camel market. The Buraydah Camel Market is a whirlwind of activity. Camels parade through the dusty main arena while local traders call out bids and haggle with flair. From prized racing breeds to sturdy desert travellers, each camel has a story—and a price tag to match. It's loud, it's lively, and it's a fascinating window into a centuries-old tradition that's still very much alive today.

From there, we make our way to Unaizah to explore Mosawka Market—one of Najd's most iconic traditional markets. Set against a backdrop of classic Najdi architecture, the market has a variety of local shops for men and women and is dotted with cultural exhibits and open squares. You'll find locally made crafts, textiles, spices, and folk performances that bring the region's heritage to life.

This afternoon we head north to Jubbah, home to Jabal Umm Sinman—a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of Saudi Arabia’s most significant archaeological treasures. Here, guided by a local expert, we’ll explore ancient rock carvings etched into the sandstone cliffs, dating back up to 9,000 years. These petroglyphs offer a glimpse into early human life—think animals, tools, rituals, and the daily rhythm of desert living. It’s a powerful moment of connection with the distant past, set in a dramatic desert landscape.

***Accommodation: Hail 1 night***

## **Day 5            HAIL - ALULA**

Hail to AlUla Drive Time: Approx. 5hrs (433 km) Note: With short breaks, the journey may take up to 6 hours.

On the way, we’ll make a brief stop at a local abaya shop to prepare for our visit to Madinah. This is a great opportunity to explore local styles and choose a traditional garment if needed.

Upon arriving in AlUla, we’ll end the day with a visit to Elephant Rock (Jabal AlFil), one of the region’s most iconic natural landmarks. Shaped by wind and water over millions of years, this towering sandstone formation resembles an elephant with a distinct trunk and body—completely carved by nature.

As the sun begins to dip, the landscape comes alive in shades of gold and crimson. There’s a relaxed outdoor café nearby, so you can kick back with a cool drink, take in the desert stillness, and soak up the magic of this surreal setting.

***Accommodation: AlUla 2 nights***

## **Day 6            ALULA**

Today, we’ll visit Hegra (Mada’in Saleh), Saudi Arabia’s first UNESCO World Heritage Site and the second-largest city of the ancient Nabataean Kingdom after Petra. This awe-inspiring archaeological site features 111 monumental tombs, 94 of which have beautifully carved facades etched into sandstone cliffs, especially in the Jibal Ithlib area. The smallest tomb is just 2.7 meters tall, while the grandest towers over 21 meters high.

But Hegra is more than tombs—it’s a place where human history stretches back millennia, sustained by underground water sources that made settlement possible in the harsh desert.

This 2–3 hour guided bus tour is operated by the AlUla Tourism Board, and tour timing is subject to a time slot allocated by the authorities, so while we’ll aim for a morning visit, the timing and tour content may change. We will keep you updated locally.

After the ancient wonders, we switch pace with a warm and personal experience—a traditional home-cooked lunch with the Al Joud family. This is Saudi hospitality at its finest: generous, welcoming, and delicious. You’ll get a taste of local dishes made with love, all while supporting local women and sustainable tourism.

After lunch, we’ll take a short stroll through the family’s farm to learn about the region’s agricultural traditions and local produce.

Wrap up the day with a stroll through Old Market Street in AlUla’s Old Town. This lively area is home to artisan shops, cafes, and cultural exhibits. Browse handmade crafts, sample local delicacies, and experience the warm spirit of the community in this charming, historically rich setting.

## **Day 7**      **ALULA - MADINAH**

Today we continue exploring the incredible layers of history in AlUla with a visit to two of its most important heritage sites.

First, we'll journey to the ancient city of Dedan—once the thriving capital of the Dadanite and Lihyanite Kingdoms. This area, rich in history and archaeological significance, was one of the most important oases of the 1st millennium BCE. Excavations have uncovered fortified cities, complex urban layouts, and traces of a unique culture that blended Arabian traditions with Mesopotamian and other regional influences.

Just a short distance from the main excavation site lie the famous Lion Tombs—two tombs carved into sandstone cliffs, marked with majestic lion sculptures. These tombs likely belonged to high-ranking leaders and remain among Dedan's most iconic features.

Next, we visit nearby Jabal Ikamah, often called AlUla's open-air library. This striking cliffside is etched with hundreds of inscriptions and petroglyphs that tell stories of ancient beliefs, trade, rituals, and early written language. It's the highest concentration of early Arabic script in the region—perfect for anyone fascinated by ancient cultures and storytelling through stone.

This visit is a journey back through time, revealing the deep roots of AlUla's civilization and the legacy left behind by the kingdoms that once flourished here.

After soaking in the stories of Dedan and Jabal Ikamah, we'll begin our scenic drive to Madinah—a journey of just over 3.5 hours, a great time to reflect on the ancient legacies we've uncovered.

***Accommodation: Madinah 2 nights***

## **Day 8**      **MADINAH CITY TOUR & SUNSET PICNIC**

Our time in Madinah begins with a visit to the Prophet's Mosque—one of the holiest and most significant places in Islam, and the burial site of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). It's a powerful place of peace, reverence, and reflection.

We'll stop next at the Hijaz Railway for a photo opportunity. This historic railway once linked the holy cities of the Ottoman Empire and remains a reminder of the region's modern history.

Then it's on to the Quba Mosque—the very first mosque in Islam. Its simplicity, history and spiritual importance make it a meaningful stop on our journey.

For lunch, we'll explore the Chef's Market, a vibrant local spot offering a variety of traditional Madinah dishes. Afterward, there will be an optional visit to a date factory or farm, where you can purchase delicious fresh locally produced dates.

Before wrapping up the day, we'll explore the Dar Al Madinah Museum. With exhibits on everything from Islamic history to the city's urban development, it's the perfect place to round out our understanding of Madinah. Then, we'll head to the hotel for some well-deserved rest.

We'll end the day with an authentic Saudi-style picnic, led by a female guide. Enjoy traditional Saudi bread and dukkah (a local spice mix), accompanied by tea and peppermint—the signature flavor of Madinah and the Hejaz region. It's a charming and relaxing way to experience local hospitality with stunning views over the city.

## **Day 9            MADINAH - PRIVATE FEMALE-ONLY BEACH IN JEDDAH**

Train from Madinah to Jeddah - Travel time: 1 hour 50 mins on a high-speed bullet train

Spend a relaxing afternoon at one of Jeddah's exclusive female-only private beaches. Enjoy the tranquil atmosphere and stunning views of the Red Sea—a perfect way to unwind and soak up the coastal beauty.

***Accommodation: Jeddah 3 nights***

## **Day 10            JEDDAH CITY TOUR**

We'll kick things off with a short stop at the Jeddah Corniche and waterfront. With the Red Sea shimmering beside us, it's the perfect way to ease into the day.

Then it's on to the Tayebat Museum, tucked away in the Al Faisaliyah district. Housed in a stunning replica of traditional Hijazi architecture—think intricate wooden latticework, ornate coral masonry, and classic bay windows—the museum walks us through 2,500 years of Jeddah's history, from the city's foundation and its cosmopolitan past, to its rich Islamic heritage.

Next, we'll visit the Floating Mosque, one of Jeddah's most recognisable landmarks. Built right on the sea, it appears to float at high tide. Its pristine white walls and turquoise dome shine brilliantly under the sun, blending Islamic architecture with traditional design. Equipped with modern sound and lighting systems, the mosque offers a serene and stunning spiritual experience.

As the sun sets, we explore Al Balad, Jeddah's old town and historic heart, founded in the 7th century. This UNESCO World Heritage Site is famous for its preserved coral stone buildings, unique window designs, and traditional wooden doors. We'll tour inside one of these historic houses to admire authentic interiors and furniture.

Walking through the narrow streets, you'll hear stories of ancient merchants, pilgrims preparing for the Hajj, and the vibrant market life that once thrived here. Key sites include centuries-old mosques, some still active for worship today, and the historic Makkah Gate, through which pilgrims passed on their journey to the holy city.

## **Day 11            RED SEA CRUISE - SWIMMING, SNORKELLING**

On your final day in Jeddah, enjoy a relaxing boat cruise on the stunning Red Sea, renowned for some of the world's best coral reefs. Spend the day swimming, snorkelling, sunbathing, and exploring the vibrant marine life. Light snacks will be served onboard to keep you refreshed throughout this adventure.

## **Day 12            TOUR ENDS JEDDAH**

Today, we bid farewell to beautiful Saudi Arabia. You will be transferred to the airport according to your flight schedule.

**Date**

Starts Riyadh - 15 Feb 2026

Ends Jeddah – 26 Feb 2026

**Price**

NZ\$12,455 per person twin share\*

NZ\$3,165 single supplement

\* willing to share option subject to availability

**Includes**

- Escorted by NZ TV presenter Wendy Petrie with minimum numbers
- 11 nights accommodation in comfortable hotels
- Daily breakfast
- Lunches - 1 at local home and 1 at local farm
- Welcome dinner and 2 dinners in AlUla
- Airport Transfers
- Local Tour escort & expert local guides
- Tours and activities as per the itinerary.
- Tickets and entry fees
- Private transportation in comfortable 49-seater coach (space to relax!)
- Train ticket Madinah to Jeddah in economy

**Excludes**

- International airfares to / from Saudi Arabia (approx. NZ\$3500 on Qatar or Emirates ex AKL)
- Meals not specified
- Travel Insurance (mandatory)
- Gratuities

**Group Size:**

Minimum 10 / Maximum 20

**Essential Info**

Saudi Arabia is a country in transition. Tourism is opening up, but infrastructure and services are still developing—so flexibility and patience are essential. Attractions may close unexpectedly, and logistics can be unpredictable. Our passionate local guides will support you throughout, sharing their knowledge and enthusiasm for this fascinating country.

**Dress**

Modest dress is expected. Women do not need to cover their heads or wear abayas except in the Holy City of Madinah. We will visit an abaya store if you wish to purchase one locally.

**Drive Days**

This tour covers a lot of ground with some long travel days. You'll travel comfortably on a spacious 49-seater coach with plenty of room and regular breaks.

**Religion**

Saudi Arabia remains conservative despite rapid modernization. Alcohol is strictly prohibited, public displays of affection are rare, and prayer times are respected. Many places close daily between noon and 3 pm, plus during other prayer times. During these periods, you may have free time or alternative activities.