

TRAVELLING FACTS

Climate	Summer, Winter, Arid (with extreme variations in temperature)
Rainfall	69mm
Summer	Max. - 52°C (125.6°F) Min. - 18°C (64°F)
Winter	Max. - 19.9°C (67.82°F) Min. - -0.5°C (31.91°F)
Best Time to Visit	March, April. September and October (rest of the month being extremely hot or cold)
Major Attractions	Al Murabba'a Palace, Masmak Castle and Kingdom Center
Major Entertainment Centers	Riyadh Museum of History and Archaeology, King Saud University Museum, The National Museum, King Abdul Aziz Military Museum and King Fahad National Library Museum, Al Rawdah Sharaco Amusement Park, Al Hamrah Entertainment Village
Shopper's Paradise	Olaya Street, Al Faisaliah Mall and Kingdom Tower
Near by Places (Excursions)	City of Old Diriyah and Dir'aiyah
Famous Food and Beverages (Gourmet's Delight)	Kabsa, Arikah, Fatir/Kimaje (Flat Bread), Hawayij (Spice Blend), Haysa Al-Tumreya (Dip for Dates), Laban Drink (Yogurt Drink), Tabbouleh (Bulgur Wheat Salad), Hummus, Qahwa (Arabic Coffee),
Foreign Embassies and Consulates	There are more than 100 embassies and consulates which are currently located in Riyadh. Some of them are Afghanistan, Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, China, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Malaysia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Philippines, South Africa and Sweden. * See separate file for the list of embassies and consulates.

RIYADH MARRIOTT HOTEL

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HISTORY AND EVOLUTION

Originally, Riyadh was located along a green river bed that in addition to sources of underground water allowed a rich agriculture. This settlement which was historically famous for its dates and orchards was called Hajar in Pre-Islamic times.

The important face of the city's history started at the end of 18th century when Riyadh became a part of the First Saudi State with capital at Diriyah. Soon, Turks destructed Diriyah moving the capital to Riyadh in 1824. However, after much conflicts and collisions the city was eventually seized by Abdul Aziz bin Abdul Rahman Al Saud in 1902 who then went on to establish the modern Kingdom of Saudi Arabia making Riyadh the new recognized capital of the nation in 1932. Even so, the diplomatic capital remained at Jeddah until 1982 when in 1985 all government offices and foreign embassies were moved from Jeddah to Riyadh.

SITE-SEEING

Riyadh like most other cities of Saudi Arabia has wealth of historical monuments and architectures that tells the story of the country's history. The city is also home to number of museums that preserve the remnants of its culture and heritage.

But this is just the one side of the coin as the other part of the city, an ultra modern metropolis with ultra modern multiplexes and high-rise skyscrapers like Al Faisaliah Tower, Kingdom Tower and Abraj Atta'Awuneya North Tower.

Riyadh by its name means gardens and oases. Therefore, the city has everything a tourist can ask for.

THE MASMAK CASTLE (QASR-AL-MASMAK)

Built in 1865 under the reign of Mohammed bin Abdullah bin Rasheed, Masmak is the site associated with the foundation of Saudi Arabian kingdom. Today, the castle is one among several buildings that form the King Abdal Aziz Historical Center, a series of restored buildings in Riyadh.

Lying in the center of the city in the old quarters, the fort is dominated by a square-based Al-Murabba Tower in the center along with four watchtowers and thick walls. Its 3.65 meter high and 2.65 meter wide palm tree gate is named as Al-Khokha. The castle encloses a mosque and a well too.

The interior roofs of the fort are covered with painted palm-tree, taramic and Ethel wood while the communicating doors of the rooms and courtyards are also of painted wood.

The building received some important renovation in the 1980s and became a museum in 1995, which displays many antique guns, costumes and agriculture artifacts.

Location: Al-Bathaa, a City Center

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THE KINGDOM CENTER

The tallest building in Saudi Arabia and built to an unusual elliptical award-winning design, Kingdom Center is indeed the place to see and be seen in Central Riyadh.

A Saudi prince owns this remarkable tower which besides containing modern offices, apartments, the Four Seasons Hotel and a fitness club, also houses a state-of-the-art three level shopping mall with more than 160 stores.

The center also bristles with dozens of first class international restaurants.

Location: Al-Urubah Road, Olaya Business District

RIYADH MUSEUM OF HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY

The chief museum among the numerous others in Riyadh, Museum of History and Archaeology besides showcasing local art, religion and culture, also displays the diverse and intriguing history of Arabian kingdoms in eight sections.

It covers the history of the nation right from the Stone Age to early Islam, which are explained both in English and Arabic. There is also a separate Ethnographic Hall. The artifacts include clothing, weapons, jewelry and musical instruments.

Location: West of Old City Center, Al-Bathaa

AL MURABBA'A PALACE

Another principal component of King Abdul Aziz Historical Center, Al Murabba'a Palace is situated just outside the original city walls. Built in 1946 by King Abdul Aziz as a home and seat of government, the palace has been preserved as a living example of Arabian royal life. This palace cum fortress includes the King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies, which usually conducts an exhibition on some aspect of Islamic art or culture.

Wherein, there is also a permanent exhibition on the treatment and preservation of old books and manuscripts. The ground floor of the palace has guardrooms and storerooms, while the reception salons, political offices and private apartments can be found upstairs.

Location: Khazzan Street

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