

Driving forward

Saudi Arabia's capital Riyadh is one of the richest cities in the Middle East and progressive changes in legislation have made it safer than ever to visit

Once a small walled city, Riyadh has blossomed into a sprawling dynamic metropolis. Located in the centre of the Arabian Peninsula desert plateau, 800 kilometres northeast of Mecca, this 'Global City' is home to more than six million people. Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud is moving swiftly to implement 'Vision 2030' which aims to position his Kingdom at the heart of the Arab and Islamic world; an investment powerhouse and

a hub connecting three continents. It seeks to diversify and privatise the economy, making Saudi Arabia less reliant on oil, of which it currently holds more than 25 per cent of the world's known oil reserves.

As part of the Vision, Prince Mohammad has relaxed religious laws, which includes removing the ban on female drivers.

STAY

The King Abdullah Financial District (KAFD) has flourished into

a bustling business hub and the KAFD Hotel, with its birds-eye view, is just 21 kilometres from King Khalid Airport. The King Suite has spectacular views across Riyadh's sprawling grid-system, and the hotel's luxurious health club, restaurant and meeting suite leave no stone unturned.

The Kingdom Centre, at the heart of the city, catches the eye before even touching down in Riyadh. Four Seasons has a hotel inside the stunning tower, including a new two-storey suite

that spans the 48th and 50th floors, with a decadent living room, private office, dining room and media room.

Further south, the five-star Al Faisaliah Hotel is located inside the Al Faisaliah Tower with a whole world of comfort and elegance. The Royal Suite includes a four-poster, master king bedroom and a signature 24-hour personal butler service with a dedicated pantry, a lounge with designer furnishings, separate steam showers and a spectacular sunken Jacuzzi.

KAFD
executives-hotel.com
+966 11-455-5599

Four Seasons
fourseasons.com/riyadh
+966 11-211-5000

Al Faisaliah Hotel
alfaisaliahhotels.com
+966 11-273-2000

DRINKS & DINNER

A visit to the famous Ritz-Carlton Riyadh is imperative. The world-class Al Orjouan restaurant invites diners to travel the globe with culinary delicacies and partake in the Arabian tradition of gathering together to eat. The hotel respects local culture and tradition and asks all those entering the property to dress in either traditional local garments, smart casual to formal attire.

Four Seasons restaurant, Elements, presents the best of dishes from China, Japan, India and the Middle East, and a view to boot, high in the Kingdom Centre Tower.

Meanwhile, award-winning Nozomi has arrived from Knightsbridge in London, serving contemporary Japanese cuisine in a sharing plate concept and located in a striking new building on Dabab Street.

Al Orjouan
ritzcarlton.com
+966 11-802-8020
Elements
fourseasons.com/riyadh
+966 11-211-5000



Nozomi
nozomisaudi.com
+966 92-000-9686

SEE

The Masmak Fortress, built around 1865, is famous for its capture in 1902, which restored Saudi control over Riyadh. The heroism and bravery of King Abd Abdulaziz Ibn Saud, who returned from exile in Kuwait to reclaim

his family's land, is at the centre of the nation's narrative – with the story almost spilling over into mythical folklore.

Next door, the National Museum continues the story of Saudi Arabia's history, traditions and culture. Deira is a traditional souk located in walking distance of the National Museum and Mismak Castle. It is also in the same location as the infamous

'Chop Chop Square', otherwise known as 'Clocktower Square'.

The Kingdom Centre tower, which won the 2002 Emporis Skyscraper Award, features a three-level shopping centre and 99 stories in total. It is divided into two parts in the last one third of its height and is linked by a sky-bridge walkway, which provides stunning views of Riyadh.

Thumamah National Park, about 40kms outside of Riyadh City, where all outdoor pursuits can be done like hiking, camping, and rock climbing.

Masmak Fortress
arriyadh.com/en
+966 11-411-0091
The National Museum
nationalmuseum.org.sa
+966 11-402-9500
Deira & Thumamah National Park
sauditourism.sa/en

Opener: With the ban on female drivers lifted, Saudi Arabia is proving more progressive than every before Above: King Fahad National Library facade Left: Al Masmak fort was built around 1865 and captured by the future King Abdulaziz in 1902 to restore Al Saud control

