



Saudi Arabia

Red sand dunes, carved Nabataean tombs, cool green mountains and a small cup of cardamom coffee, in the country that holds Islam's two holiest cities.

AT A GLANCE

Facts to know

CAPITAL

Riyadh

POPULATION

About 35 million (official estimate for 2024), of whom about 15.7 million are foreign residents

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

Arabic. People speak regional dialects such as Najdi, Hejazi and Gulf Arabic, and English is widely used in business and for visitors

CURRENCY

Saudi riyal (SAR), divided into 100 halalas. It is fixed at 3.75 riyals to one US dollar

AREA

About 2,150,000 km², the largest country on the Arabian Peninsula

GOVERNMENT

Absolute monarchy: the king is head of state and, as of September 2026, the crown prince is prime minister. There is no elected parliament

HIGHEST MOUNTAIN

Jabal Sawda in the Asir mountains, officially 3,015 m (a 2018 survey found Jabal Ferwa, also in Asir, to be slightly higher)

LONGEST RIVER

None. Saudi Arabia has no permanent rivers, only wadis that flow after rain

NEIGHBOURS

Jordan, Iraq and Kuwait to the north, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates to the east, Oman to the southeast and Yemen to the south. Bahrain is linked by a causeway, and Egypt, Sudan, Eritrea and Iran lie across the sea

DRIVES ON THE

Right

CALLING CODE

+966

A 45-minute trip to Saudi Arabia

Everything you need is in this pack. No preparation beyond printing. Adapt the timing to your group.

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| 0 to 5 min | Welcome. Show the map page and find Saudi Arabia together. Ask: who has been there, or knows someone from there? |
| 5 to 15 min | Read the facts at a glance, then three moments from the story: AD 106: Rome annexes the Nabataean kingdom; 1824: The Second Saudi State is founded; 2019: Tourist visas are introduced. |
| 15 to 25 min | At the table: talk about Kabsa and Jareesh. Idea: bring a small taste (bread, cheese, fruit, tea) if your kitchen can help. |
| 25 to 30 min | Say it like a local: practise "As-salamu alaykum" (Peace be upon you (hello)), "Wa alaykum as-salam" (And upon you be peace (the reply)), "Ahlan wa sahan" (Welcome). Everyone says them together. |
| 30 to 40 min | Quiz: read the questions aloud, or play the big-screen version at https://preview.worldstroll.com/countries/saudi-arabia/group . No scores needed. |
| 40 to 45 min | Talk about it (questions page), then stamp or sign everyone's passport page. |

You will need

- This printed pack (one per table, or one each)
- Pens for the quiz
- Optional: a world map or globe, a small tasting, music from the country

Saudi Arabia and its cities



- Riyadh (Riyadh Province, Najd (the centre)): The Masmak fort in the old centre, Skyscrapers such as the Kingdom Centre, The historic At-Turaif district in nearby Diriyah
- Jeddah (Makkah Province, Red Sea coast): Historic Jeddah, a World Heritage Site, A long corniche on the Red Sea, Diving and snorkelling in the Red Sea
- Mecca (Makkah Province, the Hejaz): The Great Mosque and the Kaaba, The Hajj pilgrimage, The Cave of Hira on Jabal al-Nour
- Medina (Medina Province, the Hejaz): The Prophet's Mosque with its green dome, Ajwa dates, The end of the old Hejaz Railway
- Dammam (Eastern Province, Gulf coast): The first commercial oil well, Dammam No. 7, The Gulf seafront, The King Fahd Causeway to Bahrain nearby
- Taif (Makkah Province, the Hejaz mountains): Fields of fragrant Taif roses and rose oil,

Grapes, pomegranates and honey, Saleeg, the Hejazi rice dish

- Abha (Asir Province, the southwest): Jabal Sawda, the country's highest mountain, nearby, The stone village of Rijal Almaa, Al-Qatt, the colourful wall painting of Asir
- Tabuk (Tabuk Province, the northwest): Tabuk Castle, an Ottoman pilgrims' fort, A station of the Hejaz Railway, Rock art and inscriptions in the surrounding region
- AlUla (Medina Province, the northwest): Hegra, the first World Heritage Site in Saudi Arabia, Elephant Rock, Its old mud-brick town
- Hofuf (Eastern Province, Al-Ahsa): The Al-Ahsa Oasis, a World Heritage Site, Dates, The caves of Jabal Al-Qarah
- Hail (Hail Province, the north): Ancient rock art at Jubbah, a World Heritage Site, Maqshush, the national dessert, Farms of wheat and dates

A short history of Saudi Arabia

Long before Islam, caravans carrying incense and spices crossed Arabia, and peoples such as the Nabataeans built cities along their routes. In the 7th century Islam began in Mecca and Medina and spread across much of the world. For centuries the holy cities of the Hejaz were ruled from far away, while in the central region of Najd a family from the oasis town of Diriyah, the Al Saud, founded a state in 1727. After two earlier Saudi states, the modern kingdom was proclaimed in 1932.

AD 106 Rome annexes the Nabataean kingdom

The Nabataeans, famous for Petra in Jordan, had built their second city at Hegra in the northwest of today's Saudi Arabia, carving grand tombs into the sandstone. In AD 106 the Roman Empire under Trajan annexed their kingdom and made it the province of Arabia Petraea.

AD 570 The Prophet Muhammad is born in Mecca

Muhammad was born in Mecca in about 570, into the Quraysh tribe. Mecca was already a trading town and a place of pilgrimage around the Kaaba.

AD 610 The first revelation

Muslims believe that in about 610, in the Cave of Hira on a mountain just outside Mecca, Muhammad received the first verses of the Quran. He began to preach in Mecca soon after.

AD 622 The Hijra to Medina

Facing hostility in Mecca, Muhammad and his followers moved to the oasis town of Yathrib, which became known as Medina, 'the city' of the Prophet. This journey, the Hijra, marks year 1 of the Islamic calendar.

AD 647 Jeddah becomes the port of Mecca

The caliph Uthman chose Jeddah, a fishing village on the Red Sea, as the main port for travellers to Mecca. Since then, millions of pilgrims have arrived in Mecca by way of Jeddah.

1517 The Ottomans take over the Hejaz

After the Ottoman sultan Selim I conquered Egypt, the Sharif of Mecca accepted Ottoman rule. The sharifs kept a good deal of local power, and

the Ottomans held the Hejaz, with Mecca and Medina, with a short break in the early 1800s, for four centuries.

1727 The First Saudi State begins in Diriyah

Muhammad bin Saud became the ruler of Diriyah, a small oasis town now on the edge of Riyadh, in February 1727. Since 2022, 22 February has been celebrated as Founding Day, a public holiday. His state, the Emirate of Diriyah, grew to rule much of Arabia.

1818 Diriyah is destroyed

An Ottoman Egyptian army sent by Muhammad Ali Pasha besieged and destroyed Diriyah, ending the First Saudi State. The ruins of its At-Turaif district still stand.

1824 The Second Saudi State is founded

Turki bin Abdullah drove the Ottoman Egyptian forces out of Najd and restored Saudi rule, this time with Riyadh as the capital. The Second Saudi State lasted until 1891, when the Al Rashid of Hail took Riyadh and the family went into exile in Kuwait.

1902 Abdulaziz retakes Riyadh

In January 1902 the young Abdulaziz Al Saud, later known as Ibn Saud, returned from exile with a small band of men and captured the Masmak fort in Riyadh. Over the next 30 years he brought most of the peninsula under his rule.

1908 The Hejaz Railway reaches Medina

The Ottoman railway from Damascus reached Medina on 1 September 1908, cutting the pilgrims' journey from weeks to days. It never reached Mecca, and after damage in the First World War it fell out of use; old stations still stand in Tabuk and Medina.

1925 Abdulaziz takes the Hejaz

Abdulaziz's forces entered Mecca in 1924, and the campaign ended in December 1925 with the surrender of Jeddah. Najd and the Hejaz, with the holy cities, were now under one ruler.

1932 The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is proclaimed

On 23 September 1932 Abdulaziz's lands were renamed the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The date is celebrated every year as Saudi National Day.

1938

Oil is found at Dammam No. 7

After six disappointing wells, American and Saudi oilmen struck oil in commercial quantities at well Dammam No. 7 on 3 March 1938. Oil soon transformed the country's economy; the well, nicknamed the Prosperity Well, produced oil until 1982.

2018

Women begin driving

On 24 June 2018 the first women received Saudi driving licences and took to the roads legally. Until then Saudi Arabia had been the only country where women were not allowed to drive. The same year the first public cinema in 35 years opened.

2019

Tourist visas are introduced

In September 2019 Saudi Arabia began issuing tourist visas online and on arrival to citizens of dozens of countries, opening the country to independent holiday visitors for the first time.

What people eat in Saudi Arabia

Saudi cooking is built on rice, wheat, meat, dates, ghee and warm spices such as cardamom, cinnamon, cloves, black pepper and dried black lime. A family meal usually centres on a large shared platter of spiced rice topped with chicken or lamb, with salad, a spicy tomato sauce and yoghurt drinks on the side. Guests are welcomed with small cups of Arabic coffee and dates, and every region has its own dishes: rice with milk in the Hejaz, cracked wheat and date desserts in Najd, and spiced cookies in Qassim. In January 2023 the Culinary Arts Commission named jareesh the national dish and maqshush the national dessert. Pork and alcohol are forbidden under Islamic law.

Kabsa

All of Saudi Arabia, and across the Gulf

The best-known Saudi dish: long-grain rice cooked in one pot with chicken, lamb or camel, tomatoes, onions and a mix of spices such as cardamom, cloves, cinnamon, black pepper and dried black lime. It is piled on a large platter with the meat on top and often scattered with raisins and fried almonds.

Jareesh

Central and northern Saudi Arabia

Crushed wheat cooked slowly with meat or chicken, onions and spices, often with yoghurt or laban, until soft and creamy. It is served in a wide dish topped with crisp fried onions and a spoonful of ghee.

Mandi

From Yemen, now loved all over Saudi Arabia

Chicken or lamb seasoned with spices and cooked in a deep oven in the ground, called a tannour, hung above a pot of rice so that the juices drip into the rice below. The meat comes out very tender, with a light smoky taste.

Ruz Bukhari

The Hejaz, especially Jeddah and Mecca

A golden rice dish cooked with meat or chicken, onions, tomato, black pepper, cumin and grated carrots. It is as widespread as kabsa, but milder and a little sweeter.

Saleeg

The Hejaz, especially Taif

Short, creamy rice cooked slowly in chicken or lamb broth with milk, cardamom and a little mastic, then topped with the roasted meat and a pool of ghee. It is often compared to an Italian risotto.

Harees

All of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf

Whole wheat grains cooked for hours with meat and then beaten until smooth, like a thick savoury porridge. It is served with melted ghee, and sometimes cinnamon or sugar, on top.

Mutabbaq

The Hejaz: Jeddah, Mecca and Taif

Paper-thin dough folded around minced meat, beaten egg, leeks and spring onions, then fried on a flat griddle until crisp and cut into squares. It is eaten hot with lemon and green chillies.

Dakkous

All of Saudi Arabia

A simple spicy tomato sauce with garlic, chilli and cumin, spooned over kabsa, saleeg and other rice dishes.

Dates)

Oases all over the country, especially Al-Ahsa, Qassim and Medina

Soft, sweet fruit of the date palm, eaten every day and always offered to guests with coffee. There are hundreds of varieties, from soft and dark to golden and crunchy, and they are also made into date paste and date syrup (dibs).

Arabic coffee)

All of Saudi Arabia

Lightly roasted coffee boiled with plenty of cardamom, sometimes with saffron or cloves, giving a pale golden, bitter and fragrant drink. It is poured from a long-spouted pot called a dallah into small cups without handles, a few sips at a time.

Luqaimat

All of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf

Small balls of yeast batter, deep-fried until crisp and golden outside and soft inside, then drizzled with date syrup or honey and sometimes sprinkled with sesame seeds.

Kleija

Qassim, in the centre of the country

Round cookies of whole wheat flour filled or flavoured with sugar, cardamom, cinnamon, ginger, ground black lime and ghee, often pressed with a pattern on top. They keep well and are eaten with coffee or tea.

Maqshush

Hail and the north

Small bites of dough cooked in a pan and served warm with ghee, honey, date syrup or sugar. It is a comforting treat for cold, rainy days.

Hininy

Najd and Qassim, a winter dish

Soft dates kneaded with crumbled brown bread and warm ghee, flavoured with cardamom and saffron, and shaped into balls or pressed into a dish. It is rich, warming and often eaten for breakfast in winter.

GOOD MANNERS

At the table

- Wash your hands before and after the meal. Eat, and pass food, with your right hand.
- Many families eat from a large shared platter, sitting on a carpet or cushions. Take food from the part of the dish directly in front of you.
- Your host will keep offering more. It is polite to accept and to praise the food, and to leave a little on your plate when you have had enough.
- Arabic coffee is poured into small cups, a little at a time. Hold the cup in your right hand; when you have had enough, gently shake the cup from side to side before handing it back.
- Do not ask for alcohol or pork: both are forbidden by law.
- During Ramadan, if you are invited to break the fast (iftar), it usually begins with dates, water and coffee at sunset, followed by a larger meal.

Kabsa

The best-known Saudi dish: long-grain rice cooked in one pot with chicken, lamb or camel, tomatoes, onions and a mix of spices such as cardamom, cloves, cinnamon, black pepper and dried black lime. It is piled on a large platter with the meat on top and often scattered with raisins and fried almonds.

Ingredients

- 1.5 kg chicken pieces (thighs and legs), or 1 whole chicken cut into 8
- 3 tablespoons oil or ghee
- 2 onions, chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, crushed
- 2 tomatoes, chopped, and 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 2 carrots, grated
- 1 dried black lime (loomi), pierced with a knife, or the peel of half a lemon
- 4 cardamom pods, 4 cloves, 1 cinnamon stick and 2 bay leaves
- 1 teaspoon each of ground black pepper, cumin and coriander, and 1/2 teaspoon turmeric
- 500 g basmati rice, rinsed and soaked for 20 minutes
- 1 litre hot water or chicken stock, and salt
- A handful of raisins and toasted flaked almonds, to serve

Method

1. Heat the oil in a large, heavy pot and fry the onions until golden. Add the garlic, then the chicken, and brown it on all sides.
2. Stir in the tomatoes, tomato paste, carrots, dried lime and all the spices, and cook for 5 minutes.
3. Pour in the hot water or stock, add 2 teaspoons of salt, cover and simmer for 35 to 40 minutes, until the chicken is cooked through. Lift out the chicken and keep it warm (you can brown it under a hot grill for a few minutes).
4. Drain the rice and stir it into the broth. There should be about 2 cm of liquid above the rice; add a little water if needed. Bring to the boil, then cover

tightly and cook on the lowest heat for 20 to 25 minutes, until the rice is tender.

5. Spoon the rice onto a large platter, lay the chicken on top and scatter over the raisins and almonds. Serve with a green salad and a spicy tomato sauce such as dakkous.

Saleeg

Short, creamy rice cooked slowly in chicken or lamb broth with milk, cardamom and a little mastic, then topped with the roasted meat and a pool of ghee. It is often compared to an Italian risotto.

Ingredients

- 1 chicken (about 1.3 kg), cut into 4 pieces
- 1 onion, halved
- 4 cardamom pods, 1 cinnamon stick, 2 bay leaves and 4 black peppercorns
- 300 g short-grain or medium-grain rice, rinsed
- 500 ml whole milk
- 2 small pieces of mastic, crushed with a pinch of sugar (optional)
- 2 tablespoons butter, and 1 tablespoon ghee to serve
- Salt and ground black pepper

Method

1. Put the chicken, onion and whole spices in a pot with 1.5 litres of water and 1 teaspoon of salt. Simmer for 40 minutes, until the chicken is cooked through. Lift out the chicken and strain and keep the broth.
2. Put the rice in a clean pot with about 1 litre of the hot broth. Simmer, stirring often, for 15 minutes.
3. Add the milk, the mastic if using, and the butter, and cook gently for another 10 to 15 minutes, stirring, until the rice is very soft and creamy. Add more broth if it gets too thick.
4. Meanwhile, brown the chicken pieces under a hot grill or in a pan for a few minutes.
5. Spread the rice on a platter, place the chicken on top, drizzle with the ghee and sprinkle with black pepper. Serve with dakkous or a squeeze of lemon.

Dakkous

A simple spicy tomato sauce with garlic, chilli and cumin, spooned over kabsa, saleeg and other rice dishes.

Ingredients

- 4 ripe tomatoes, or 1 x 400 g tin chopped tomatoes
- 2 cloves garlic
- 1 or 2 small green chillies (use less for a milder sauce)
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- A small handful of fresh coriander
- Salt

Method

1. Put the tomatoes, garlic, chillies and coriander in a blender and blend until fairly smooth.
2. Pour into a small pan with the cumin and a pinch of salt and simmer for 5 to 8 minutes, until slightly thickened.
3. Stir in the lemon juice and taste for salt. Serve warm or cold with rice dishes.

Arabic coffee

Lightly roasted coffee boiled with plenty of cardamom, sometimes with saffron or cloves, giving a pale golden, bitter and fragrant drink. It is poured from a long-spouted pot called a dallah into small cups without handles, a few sips at a time.

Ingredients

- 3 tablespoons lightly roasted Arabic coffee, coarsely ground
- 1 tablespoon cardamom pods, lightly crushed
- A few saffron threads and 2 cloves (optional)
- 750 ml water
- Dates, to serve

Method

1. Bring the water to the boil in a small pot, add the coffee and simmer gently for 10 to 15 minutes, taking care it does not boil over.
2. Take off the heat, add the cardamom, and the saffron and cloves if using, and leave to settle for 5 minutes so the grounds sink.
3. Pour carefully into a flask or dallah, leaving the grounds behind.
4. Serve in small cups, only a third full, with dates on the side. Take care: the coffee is very hot.

Luqaimat

Small balls of yeast batter, deep-fried until crisp and golden outside and soft inside, then drizzled with date syrup or honey and sometimes sprinkled with sesame seeds.

Ingredients

- 250 g plain flour
- 1 tablespoon cornflour
- 1 teaspoon instant yeast
- 1 tablespoon sugar and a pinch of salt
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cardamom and a pinch of saffron (optional)
- About 300 ml warm water
- Vegetable oil for deep-frying
- Date syrup (dibs) or honey, and sesame seeds, to serve

Method

1. Mix the flour, cornflour, yeast, sugar, salt and cardamom in a bowl. Gradually beat in the warm water to make a thick, smooth, sticky batter.
2. Cover and leave in a warm place for about 1 hour, until doubled and bubbly.
3. Heat about 5 cm of oil in a deep, heavy pan to 170 °C. Never leave hot oil unattended and keep children away from the pan.
4. Using a wet teaspoon, drop small balls of batter into the oil, a few at a time. Fry for 4 to 5 minutes, turning, until golden all over. Lift out and drain on kitchen paper.
5. Drizzle with date syrup or honey and sprinkle with sesame seeds. Serve warm with Arabic coffee. Honey should not be given to babies under one year old.

Useful phrases

As-salamu alaykum

as-sah-LAH-moo ah-LAY-koom · Peace be upon you (hello)

Wa alaykum as-salam

wah ah-LAY-koom as-sah-LAHM · And upon you be peace (the reply)

Ahlan wa sahlan

AH-lan wah SAH-lan · Welcome

Sabah al-khayr

sah-BAAH al-KHAYR · Good morning

Kayf al-hal?

KAYF al-HAAL · How are you?

Al-hamdu lillah

al-HAM-doo lil-LAH · Praise be to God (I am fine)

Shukran jazilan

SHOOK-ran ja-ZEE-lan · Thank you very much

Afwan

AF-wan · You're welcome; also excuse me

Min fadlak / min fadlik

min FAD-lak / min FAD-lik · Please (to a man / to a woman)

Law samaht

law sa-MAHT · Excuse me, if you would allow

Bikam?

BEE-kam · How much is it?

Ma afham

mah AF-ham · I don't understand

Tatakallam ingleezi?

ta-ta-KAL-lam in-GLLEE-zee · Do you speak English?

In sha Allah

in SHAH al-LAH · If God wills

Ma sha Allah

mah SHAH al-LAH · What God has willed (how wonderful)

Ramadan kareem

ra-ma-DAAN ka-REEM · Have a generous Ramadan

Eid mubarak

EED moo-BAA-rak · Blessed Eid

Ma'a as-salama

MAH-ah as-sa-LAA-mah · Goodbye (go with peace)

Things you might not know

1. Saudi Arabia is the largest country in the world without a single permanent river. Its water comes from underground aquifers, wadis that flow after rain and, today, huge desalination plants.
2. The Rub' al Khali, or Empty Quarter, covers about 650,000 km² of the southern Arabian Peninsula and is the largest continuous sand desert in the world. Some of its dunes are up to 250 m high.
3. The green Saudi flag carries the Islamic declaration of faith, the shahada. Because the words are holy, the flag is never flown at half-mast, and it is made so that the writing reads correctly from both sides.
4. The name of the country comes from the royal family, the Al Saud. It is one of the very few countries named after a family.
5. The King Fahd Causeway, a 25 km chain of bridges and embankments opened in 1986, links Saudi Arabia to the island kingdom of Bahrain. Border checks take place on an artificial island in the middle.
6. The Saudi riyal has been fixed at 3.75 riyals to one US dollar since 1986, and the rate was made official in 2003.
7. Rock carvings of hunters with dogs found in the northwest of Saudi Arabia are more than 8,000 years old, and may be the oldest pictures of dogs in the world.
8. The Al-Ahsa Oasis has more than 2.5 million palm trees, fed by more than 280 springs, and Saudi Arabia is one of the world's largest producers of dates (as of 2022).
9. As of September 2026, the Jeddah Tower is still under construction. It is planned to be the first building in the world to reach 1 kilometre in height.
10. At the 2022 World Cup in Qatar, Saudi Arabia beat Argentina 2 to 1 in the group stage. Argentina, with Lionel Messi, went on to win the tournament.
11. Riyadh will host the world fair Expo 2030, from October 2030 to March 2031, and in December 2024 FIFA confirmed Saudi Arabia as host of the 2034 World Cup.
12. Taif, high in the mountains near Mecca, is known as the City of Roses: its small pink roses are distilled into a precious rose oil.

- 13.** Hegra was the second-largest city of the Nabataean kingdom after Petra in Jordan, and its more than 110 tombs are among the best-preserved Nabataean monuments anywhere.

TALK ABOUT IT

Questions for the group

- Have you ever been to Saudi Arabia, or has someone in your family? What do you remember?
- Have you ever tasted Kabsa or Jareesh? What is a dish you remember from a trip?
- Have you seen Hegra (Al-Hijr), in person or in pictures? Which famous place would you most like to see?
- If you could spend one day in any city of Saudi Arabia, which would it be and why?
- Which fact surprised you the most today?

QUIZ

How well do you know Saudi Arabia?

Circle the right answer. The answers are on the last page.

1. 'Ramadan kareem' is a greeting used during the month of Ramadan.

- A) True
- B) False

2. What is a 'wadi'?

- A) A mountain
- B) A valley or dry riverbed that fills after rain
- C) A palm tree
- D) A market

3. What does 'in sha Allah' mean?

- A) Peace be upon you
- B) If God wills
- C) What God has willed
- D) Praise be to God

4. Unlike Mecca, the city of Medina may be visited by non-Muslims.

- A) True
- B) False

5. Someone greets you with 'As-salamu alaykum'. What is the usual reply?

- A) Ma'a as-salama
- B) Eid mubarak
- C) Bikam?
- D) Wa alaykum as-salam

6. Which site became Saudi Arabia's first World Heritage Site, in 2008?

- A) Hegra
- B) Historic Jeddah
- C) Al-Ahsa Oasis
- D) At-Turaif District in Diriyah

7. What is kabsa?

- A) Crushed wheat with yoghurt
- B) Folded flatbread with a meat and egg filling
- C) Fried balls of dough with date syrup
- D) Spiced rice cooked with meat in one pot

8. Saudi Arabia has no permanent rivers.

- A) True
- B) False

9. What does the name Riyadh mean?

- A) Sands
- B) Gardens
- C) Fortress
- D) Wells

10. Saleeg, the creamy rice dish of the Hejaz, is cooked in broth together with what?

- A) Coconut cream
- B) Pomegranate juice
- C) Date syrup
- D) Milk

11. According to UK travel advice (as of September 2026), which of these is illegal to photograph in Saudi Arabia?

- A) Sand dunes
- B) Government buildings and palaces
- C) Coffee pots
- D) Date palms

12. Elephant Rock near AlUla is a statue carved by the Nabataeans.

- A) True
- B) False

Quiz answers

1. True

True. Ramadan kareem means have a generous Ramadan, and it is a friendly greeting throughout the month.

2. B) A valley or dry riverbed that fills after rain

A wadi is a valley or dry riverbed that fills after rain. With no permanent rivers, Saudi Arabia has many wadis.

3. B) If God wills

In sha Allah means if God wills, and is said about anything planned for the future. Al-hamdu lillah means praise be to God, and ma sha Allah means what God has willed.

4. True

True. Non-Muslims may not enter Mecca, but they may visit Medina. The Prophet's Mosque itself is a place of worship for Muslims, and the rules for the area around it have been relaxed in recent years.

5. D) Wa alaykum as-salam

The reply is 'wa alaykum as-salam', and upon you be peace. Ma'a as-salama means goodbye.

6. A) Hegra

Hegra was listed in 2008. At-Turaif followed in 2010, Historic Jeddah in 2014 and the Al-Ahsa Oasis in 2018.

7. D) Spiced rice cooked with meat in one pot

Kabsa is spiced rice cooked with meat in one pot, usually chicken or lamb, with spices such as cardamom, cloves and dried black lime.

8. True

True. Saudi Arabia is the largest country in the world without a permanent river. It has only wadis, dry valleys that fill with water after rain.

9. B) Gardens

Riyadh means gardens, after the oasis orchards of date palms that surrounded the old walled town.

10. D) Milk

Saleeg is rice cooked slowly in chicken or lamb broth with milk, then topped with roasted meat and ghee. Taif is famous for it.

11. B) Government buildings and palaces

It is illegal to photograph government buildings and palaces, military sites and embassies. Always ask people before photographing them.

12. False

False. Elephant Rock is a natural sandstone formation, about 52 m high, shaped by wind and water.

Saudi Arabia visa page

Name: _____ Date: _____



Next stops

Country: _____	Country: _____	Country: _____
Country: _____	Country: _____	Country: _____

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