

الهيئة الملكية لمحافظة العلا Royal Commission for AlUla



About AlUla and the Kingdom's Institute

AlUla: 200,000 years of human legacy & 7,000 years of human civilisation

Discovering AlUla

Saudi Arabia has been described as a crossroads of civilisations; nowhere is this truer than in AlUla. The region of Al Ula is an extraordinary example of a cultural landscape, where it is possible to trace human interaction with the environment for thousands of years.

AlUla is a county covering an area of around 23,000km² in north-west Saudi Arabia. The capital, AlUla city, is located in the Wadi Al-Qura, approximately 325km north of Madinah, 750km from Makkah and 1,100km from Riyadh. AlUla Valley and the surrounding area constitute a place of extraordinary human and natural heritage. Its landscape includes a lush oasis and spectacular sandstone mountains that have influenced thousands of years of human history.

Sites dating from the Palaeolithic period, possibly upwards of 200,000 years old, demonstrate the range of time for which human populations may have used and occupied this landscape, which are significant and relatively unknown in the region. A good example is the Harrat 'Uwayrid lava fields, where there is evidence of prehistoric sites with lithic artefacts, stone structures, petroglyphs, and inscriptions.

Notable sites also include Dadan, the capital of the Dadan and Lihyan kingdoms, Jabal Ikma, Qurh and Umm Daraj, as well as more than 20,000 megalithic structures and thousands of ancient inscriptions and rock art. Hegra Archaeological Site (al-Hijr / Madā' in Ṣāliḥ) is Saudi Arabia's first UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Nabataean city, which is second only to Petra in historical significance during that period.

About the Kingdoms Institute:

The Kingdoms Institute is the first scientific institution in Saudi Arabia specifically focussed on science applied to heritage research and conservation. It is a hub of research, education, outreach, and scientific cooperation from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the World.

As part of the Royal Commission for AlUla, its core mandate is to research, conserve and disseminate the immense value to be found in the heritage of AlUla, Khaybar and Tayma, implementing innovation, local values and sustainability as strategic formulas for its programmes and projects.

The Kingdoms Institute integrates the core values of Saudi Arabian's Vision 2030 ambitions and the invaluable heritage of AlUla as a unique tool for stability, dialogue and growth through scientific knowledge sharing and communication.

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