

AlUla, Saudi Arabia leads the way in Sustainable Tourism Growth

CBS News Speaks with Chief Tourism Officer of AlUla, Phillip Jones, on destination developments

NEW YORK, NY, USA, July 22, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Located in the northwest of Saudi Arabia, AlUla is an oasis city renowned for its diverse natural landscape including mountains, desert and unique geological rock formations, along with significant heritage sites. Among these is [Hegra](#), Saudi Arabia's first UNESCO World Heritage Site. Only open to international tourism since 2019, the historic oasis city is attracting visitors worldwide with its multifaceted offerings and new luxury hotels, including Habitas AlUla, Banyan Tree AlUla, and most recently Dar Tantora, with more properties scheduled to open before the year end. The newly launched global brand campaign, "Forever Revitalizing," highlights the destination's transformation into a vibrant hub not only for ancient heritage, culture, art and adventure, but also for responsible tourism.

CBS News explores this in the recently released episode of CBS News' "A Moment With..." series on July 18, 2024 featuring the destination's Chief Tourism Officer Phillip J. Jones. In the episode, Jones discusses how "Forever Revitalizing" reflects AlUla's commitment to purpose-driven revitalization, showcasing it as more than just a historical landmark.

Travelers to AlUla can expect a unique and diverse experience. Culturally, AlUla boasts important historical sites including Hegra, featuring stunning Nabataean tombs carved into the sandstone, Dadan, once the capital of the Dadan and Lihyan Kingdoms, and Jabal Ikamah, a vast open-air library with ancient etchings and inscriptions dating back potentially as far as 644 B.C.. Adventure seekers can soar above dramatic canyons in a hot air balloon, hike through the desert, marvel at the stars from luxurious glamping accommodations, or embark on a thrilling open-air vintage Land Rover adventure.

As AlUla continues to grow, responsible tourism practices are a priority. This ensures the preservation of the natural and cultural heritage for generations to come. This fall, AlUla welcomed Dar Tantora, the first-ever luxury hotel offering an eco-community experience nestled within its historic Old Town, known for its traditional mud-brick buildings. Additionally, the Sharaan Nature Reserve exemplifies AlUla's commitment to conservation through its vast rewilding projects. This ambitious initiative aims to rehabilitate 65,000 hectares of degraded land by 2030, resurrecting the harmony between humans and nature that once defined this region for millennia, and ultimately looking to reintroduce the currently critically endangered Arabian

Leopard.

AlUla is also becoming a global hub for art and music. In 2024, AlUla introduced Wadi AlFann, a 25-square-mile installation which will feature monumental, site-specific works by renowned artists from around the world, including Manal AlDowayan, Agnes Denes, Michael Heizer, Ahmed Mater and James Turrell. Other developments include the world's largest mirrored building, Maraya, Desert X AlUla and the AlJadidah Arts District, all of which showcase this commitment, alongside AlUla Moments' festivals like Azimuth that brings together musicians from across the world.

With its focus on sustainable growth and revitalization, AlUla is positioned to become a leader in the world of culturally rich and sustainable tourism. Visit www.experiencealula.com to discover why AlUla offers a unique blend of natural beauty and historical significance unlike anywhere else.

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About AlUla

Located 1,100 km from Riyadh, in North-West Saudi Arabia, AlUla is a place of extraordinary natural and human heritage. The vast area, covering 22,561km², includes a lush oasis valley, towering sandstone mountains and ancient cultural heritage sites dating back thousands of years to when the Lihyan and Nabataean kingdoms reigned.

The most well-known and recognized site in AlUla is Hegra, Saudi Arabia's first UNESCO World Heritage Site. A 52-hectare ancient city, Hegra was the principal southern city of the Nabataean Kingdom and is comprised of more than 100 well preserved tombs with elaborate facades cut out of the sandstone outcrops surrounding the walled urban settlement.

In addition to Hegra, AlUla is also home to ancient Dadan, the capital of the Dadan and Lihyan Kingdoms and considered to be one of the most developed 1st millennium BCE cities of the Arabian Peninsula, and Jabal Ikma, an open air library of hundreds of inscriptions and writings in many different languages, which has been recently listed on the UNESCO's memory of the World Register. AlUla Old Town Village, a labyrinth of more than 900 mudbrick homes developed from at least the 12th century, has been selected as one of the World's Best Tourism Villages in 2022 by the UNWTO.

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.

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