

# Saudi Arabia's Diriyah Gate Development Authority (DGDA) Project

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Since Saudi Arabia opened its doors to travelers from 49 countries around the world in 2019, visitors have had the opportunity to discover the many wonders the Kingdom has to offer. From the luxurious resorts and shopping found in the capital city of Riyadh to the historical significance of the Al-Ula region and the ancient old town in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia has something for every type of traveler, including couples, families with children and especially adventure travelers.

Of course, the Kingdom is still at work developing a range of new projects for tourists to enjoy over the next few decades. This includes the famous Red Sea Project, which is a luxury resort destination that is being developed across 50 natural and untouched natural islands along 200 kilometers of Saudi Arabia's coastline.

Another lesser-known plan in the works in the Kingdom is the Diriyah Gate Development Authority (DGDA) project, which aims to be "one of the world's foremost lifestyle destinations for culture and heritage, hospitality, retail, and education, and will become one of the world's great gathering places," according to Saudi Vision 2030.

## What is the Diriyah Gate Development Authority (DGDA) project?

The Diriyah Gate Development Authority (DGDA) project is an ambitious tourism initiative in Saudi Arabia that hopes to pull in travelers from all over the world in the coming decades. With a location on the outskirts of the capital city of Riyadh, this project is centered around the historic center of Diriyah and the At-Turaif UNESCO World Heritage Site, an iconic mud-brick city with roots that date back to the 15th century.

At-Turaif was actually the first capital of the Saudi dynasty, and the site is remarkably well-preserved considering its construction and the hundreds of years that have passed. Visitors here can learn about the history of Saudi Arabia, and they can even explore its castles and buildings firsthand.

That said, improving At-Turaif is only one aspect of the Diriyah Gate Development Authority (DGDA) project, and the plan has multiple objectives. The first is promoting the cultural heritage and history found in Saudi Arabia. Others include improving employment opportunities for locals in Saudi Arabia and creating an environment that makes it possible to host world-class cultural entertainment events.

With these objectives in mind, other developments within the project include:

Wadi Hanifah: This component of the Diriyah Gate Development Authority (DGDA) project involves the

rehabilitation of the area's natural watershed for future generations.

**Bujairi District:** This welcoming area near At-Turaif offers rides for children, food stalls and a lively market where travelers can purchase traditional Saudi clothing, jewelry and other souvenirs.

**King Salman Square:** This square will provide yet another place for tourists and locals to gather to celebrate Saudi history and culture. The park will eventually become a green oasis outside Riyadh while also serving as a setting for social gatherings.

**House of AlSaud Museum:** The Diriyah Gate Development Authority (DGDA) project will also include the largest Islamic museum in the world, the House of AlSaud Museum.

Ultimately, Diriyah Gate is aiming to serve as Riyadh's luxury travel hub for guests who may not want to stay in the modern city center. The Diriyah Gate Development Authority (DGDA) project is also part of Vision 2030, which has a target of seeing 27 million visitors across the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia by the year 2030.

### **New Hotels Opening Nearby**

With so many plans in the works for Diriyah Gate, it's no wonder that a range of resorts are currently under construction or newly opened and accepting guests. While the Diriyah Gate Development Authority (DGDA) project website currently lists 19 new hotel openings as part of the project, we know for sure that some of the properties under development include a Hyatt Place, a Montage Hotels & Resorts property, Radisson RED, The Langham and a Waldorf Astoria hotel.

The region will also feature properties offered by Marriott's The Luxury Collection, Park Hyatt, Rosewood and The Ritz-Carlton and Four Seasons.

Even though many of the hotels planned for the Diriyah Gate project aren't open to date, there is still a range of luxury resorts and hotels already up and running in Riyadh. For example, guests can book a stay at the Al Faisaliah Hotel, the Four Seasons Hotel Riyadh at Kingdom Centre and The Ritz-Carlton Riyadh.

### **How to Book a Trip**

If you're interested in exploring all Diriyah Gate has to offer, you can wait for the entire project to wrap up or you can book a trip now. Either way, planning a trip to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia isn't as difficult as you might think.

For example, you can easily apply for an online visa to visit provided you live in one of 49 eligible countries approved by the Kingdom. Your visa is good for up to one year, and you can use it for multiple entries if you prefer.

Many major airlines also fly to Riyadh Airport (RUH), and you can use their sites in your home country to book your trip. For example, you can book travel to Saudi Arabia with British Airways, Qatar Airways and Lufthansa.

Arab News reported that Diriyah officially opened to tourists for its initial opening phase on December 4, 2022. Upon completion, the source says the area will be home to 28 luxury hotels and resorts, 150 high-end dining

establishments and 400 luxury shops and stores. Nearby Bujairi Terrace — Riyadh’s newest luxury dining destination — also opened its doors to the public on the same date.

