



Cultural Tourism at the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia



الهيئة العامة للسياحة والآثار
Saudi Commission for Tourism & Antiquities
scta.gov.sa

Introduction:

The cultural tourism at the Kingdom is an essential part of the tourism industry, in general, since it depends on the cultural legacy of the Saudi community. It includes visiting cultural heritage sites that involve archeological, heritage; urban and rural places, historical cities, villages, and landmarks; cultural facilities like museums, theaters, exhibitions, and traditional markets in the KSA; and the geographical areas (natural heritage) with recognizing their components and potentials and the resulting cultural impacts.

The cultural tourism in the KSA depends on the “people movement” towards cultural attractions in order to research and contribute to the new cultural experiences (including intellectual, aesthetic, and entertainment experiences); recognize the community’s authentic cultural behaviors, customs, and traditions; realize the sites’ values, life style, and dominant traditional industries; and identifying some of cultural events and festivals related to such tourism type.

The cultural tourism in the Kingdom focuses on people stories and places through interpreting the cultural scenes and shows, restoring historical structures, and recognizing the past in an interesting way. The Saudi Commission for Tourism and Antiquities (SCTA) has focused its attention on the cultural



tourism just like other tourism industry components such as tourism, heritage, archeological sites, museums, agri-tourism, and others. In order to strike balance in the tourism development, find various job opportunities, and implement new investments in this field, HRH prince Sultan bin Salman, the SCTA President, has issued a decision on 18 /08/ 1435 H to establish a program for cultural tourism and form a work team to evaluate such type of tourism in the KSA and develop all artistic cultural events.

The Cultural Tourism Scope:

The cultural tourism program focuses on developing cultural tourism at the KSA and developing the cultural tourism events at the archeological, heritage, and natural sites with highlighting them within the SCTA framework via the cultural tourism development program in cooperation with the concerned public and private authorities. Also, it concentrates on providing an opportunity to move between the KSA provinces and recognize the KSA cultural depth and heritage and environmental diversity.



The Vision:

The program vision is based on investment of the national culture by transforming its elements, resources, and potentials into vital, valuable, developmental, and sustainable cultural tourism projects that achieve economic, social, and cultural benefits.

Main Objective:

It aims to preserve and invest the cultural legacy of the Kingdom with its heritage and natural components, develop the related cultural tourism, and support the efforts exerted by the concerned authorities to achieve the desired objective.



Other Objectives:

- Developing the cultural and natural sites with employing them in the best ways and finding attractive tourism routes among them that develop the cultural tourism and highlight the national heritage importance.
- Enhancing the national cultural heritage with all possible means and raising awareness of its social, economic, cultural, and tourism significance at the local and international levels.
- Documenting the intangible and oral heritage at the cultural sites with demonstrating it in an appropriate artistic and creative manner that gives life these sites and makes them attractive at the tourism level.
- Creating attractive tourism programs, activities, and products at the cultural and natural sites that can fulfill economic, social, and cultural benefits.
- Providing the national expertise in the field of managing and investing cultural heritage sites and opening the way for the individuals to implement development economic projects in cultural tourism fields, leading to create appropriate job opportunities, raise the individual income level, and support the national economy.

Program Tasks:

- Preparing plans and strategies to revive, rehabilitate, and preserve the national cultural heritage sites and developing the cultural tourism in such sites in collaboration with the public and private concerned authorities.
- Collecting information and identifying the cultural assets and resources around the Kingdom and preparing cultural topics and projects with tourism feasibility that can be implemented in order to revive the cultural sites and make them attractive at the tourism level.
- Contributing to the documentation of intangible cultural heritage around the Kingdom in cooperation with King Abdul-Aziz Foundation for Research and Archives and the public and private concerned authorities.
- Cooperating with the partners and forming cultural alliances to develop the youth expertise in the field of managing, investing, and preserving cultural sites and activating the related cultural tourism.
- Developing the existing cultural events and creating signature cultural events in cooperation with the Tourism Programs and Products Department and the sectors related to the SCTA.
- Contributing to the development of attractive tourism routes of cultural tourism with designing and preparing publications, brochures, and pocket guides of cultural sites and implementing the events on such routes in cooperation with the SCTA divisions and public and private concerned authorities.
- Contributing to the development of tourism trips and cultural programs, activities, and products that are implemented on these routes in collaboration with the SCTA experts, tour operators, and tour guides.
- Working with the Ministry of Culture and Information, High Commissions for the Development of Cities, and the municipalities to develop and rehabilitate cultural youth houses and centers in the urban and historical cities' districts.

Program Sections:

1. Study and documentation section.
2. Cultural development and rehabilitation section.
3. Awareness and education section.
4. Marketing and investment section.



Program Projects:

1. The cultural built heritage site project.
2. Developing some built heritage buildings around the Kingdom and rehabilitating them to be attractive sites.
3. The new museum project.
4. Establishing various cultural museums in selected provinces at the Kingdom.
5. The folk heritage project.
6. Developing cultural sites and events related to tangible and intangible folk heritage.
7. The signature event project.
8. Developing high-class local and international cultural events.
9. The modern tourism program and application project.
10. The pocket guide project.
11. Designing and producing pocket tourism guides on cultural areas and sites.
12. The cultural economic and civilization project (MICE).
13. Organizing cultural conferences, symposiums, forums, and travelling exhibitions.