

SAUDI ARABIA



Saudi Arabia is home to two of Islam's holiest cities and a host of modern oil rich cities. A mixture of desert landscapes and modern metropolises, this stunning country is now supporting private sector growth to lessen the kingdom's dependence on oil and increase employment opportunities for the rapidly growing Saudi population. It also has a large expatriate community despite the recent regional troubles. Saudi is also home to some of the world's best known archaeological sites.

KEY FACTS

- Full name - Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
- Population - 242 million
- Area - 2 million square kms
- Capital city - Riyadh
- Location - Borders the Red Sea
- Languages - Arabic, English
- Currency - Saudi Arabian Riyal
- Time Zone - GMT+ 3 hours
- Climate— Temperatures can range from 15°C in winter (Dec to Jan) to 45°C from April to October. The coastal areas experience regular rain and are humid.

Cost of Living: With no income tax and paid accommodation, the cost of living is relatively low. The standard of living however is exceptionally high if you are prepared to tolerate the restrictions that are the norm in the Middle East.

Accommodation: Accommodation is usually provided by your employer and is generally in a compound. Utilities are paid for and domestic help is provided.

Transport: Generally a car or a driver is provided by the employer but if not, the buses are a pretty good option but tickets must be purchased in advance. It is not advisable for a woman to travel on her own. Service taxis are also available for the same price as a bus.

Socialising: Recreation facilities are usually provided by the employer or at the compound. They include health clubs, pools, tennis and golf courses. Desert drives or "wadi-bashing" are also popular.

Dress Code: Dress is modest in accordance to the customs of the Kingdom. For men, the accepted office wear is casual trousers and shirts. Ties are generally only worn for special occasions. For women, short skirts and sleeveless or lowcut tops are not acceptable.

Taxation: There is no income tax in Saudi Arabia.

Getting There: . Employers generally pay the cost of relocation and return airfares. Riyadh has regular international flights.

Visas: All expatriate workers are required to have a visa which is arranged by the employer. A full medical is required for a visa.