

"No Muslim plants a tree
or cultivates land, and a
person, animal, or
anything eats from it,
except that it is charity
for him."

— Prophet Muhammad ﷺ,

AI-MEDINA الْمَدِينَةُ النُّورُ

A few favourites to take with you

Medina is one of those places that stays with you long after you leave.
There's a quiet beauty here, shaped by faith, hospitality and everyday rituals.
As a non-Muslim, I found joy in the little moments - buying an abaya, trying Arabic calligraphy,
sharing warm date biscuits on the road to AIUla.



Just over two hours from Jeddah by high-speed train, Madinah is an easy journey north. Arrive at the station a little early, settle in and enjoy the changing landscape along the way. Before boarding, pick up some snacks for the journey, we'd recommend stopping by Danube for freshly baked manaesh to enjoy on the train.

BEFORE YOU LEAVE JEDDAH...

For the girls, a little reminder before leaving Jeddah: make sure you have your “Abaya” with you. You’re heading to Madinah, the second holiest city in Islam, so it’s nice to dress respectfully. For the guys, just keep it modest, no shorts or sleeveless tops. And if you really want to blend in, grab yourself a “Thobe” and “Kufiya” before you go.

WHAT TO WEAR -

If you didn't get a chance to buy an “Abaya” before leaving Jeddah, “Alhayy” has some great options. “Mama Noura” has a beautiful collection of designer-made abayas — I found mine there with a little help from the owner and two lovely Saudi women who happened to be shopping at the same time.

Make some time to wander around “Alhayy”, enjoy a little local shopping, and then stay for dinner at “Dar Basmah”, where Saudi flavours meet Italian cuisine

WHAT NOT TO MISS

The Mohammed bin Salman Global Center for Arabic Calligraphy

Ask if a private lesson with Ustaz Mohammed Muktar can be arranged. Watching him work with a traditional calligraphy pen is an experience in itself. He can teach you how to hold the pen, understand the basics of Arabic calligraphy, and carefully draw each letter.

He is one of the master calligraphers entrusted with contributing to the calligraphy of the “Kaaba's kiswah”, making the experience all the more special.

WHAT TO SEE -

The Prophet's Mosque is one of the most significant places in the Islamic world. As a non-Muslim, you won't be able to enter the mosque, but try to be nearby around prayer times and watch as thousands of Muslims move together in prayer, following the Imam.

Maghrib, Isha, and fajr are particularly special, as the Imam recites the Quran aloud, allowing you to hear the verses echoing beyond the mosque.



WHERE TO EAT

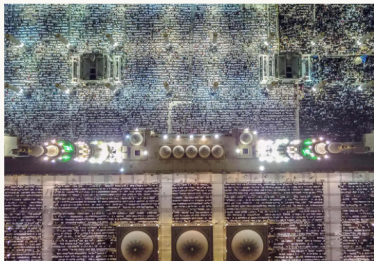
Mountain Top "Uhud" is as much about the location as it is about the food. Go before sunset to take in the views, and try their set menu inspired by Prophetic food traditions — comforting, generous and full of flavour. And whatever you do, don't skip the pumpkin soup. In my opinion, it's better than some I've had at five-star Michelin restaurants.

A little tip: book your ticket online in advance to avoid waiting when you arrive.

WHAT TO EXPERIENCE

Explore Madinah by E-Bike

A fun and different way to explore the city, this e-bike tour takes you around 10 of Madinah's key Islamic landmarks with a local guide sharing stories and context along the way. You'll see the city from a different angle, find plenty of photo opportunities, and get a light workout in without even realising it.



WHAT TO BRING HOME

An "Ajwa date" box, an "abaya" you'll wear long after the trip, or your name written in Arabic calligraphy. The best souvenirs are the ones that carry a little story home with you.

