

YOUR LOCAL GUIDE | TAIF

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TAIF

Cooler, Greener And Deeply Rooted in Mountain Life



A few favourites to take with you

For many visitors, Taif is a quick escape into the mountains.

We'd suggest slowing down and letting the landscape lead the way.

Breathe in the cooler mountain air, taste fresh fruit straight from the farms, and wander through rose fields where enchanted petals scent the breeze. Beyond the gardens, Taif's wild landscapes and mountain culture reveal a quieter, more rugged side of Saudi Arabia, best discovered by 4x4 Land Cruiser with a local guide.

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Three and a half hours from Jeddah, Taif sits high in the mountains, surrounded by farms, and villages. The drive is part of the experience, watching the landscape change as you climb.

FOR THE ROAD

Before setting off for Taif, stop by Panda Supermarket and put together a simple picnic basket, fresh bread, labneh, salted nuts and some chips. Pick up your coffee from Barn's too; their roasted beans and alternative milk options are a local favourite. And make sure to bring a sweater or, as it can get noticeably cooler once the sun sets.

WHAT TO FIND

The Bread & Honey merchant in Al Balad

Ask your guide to take you to the little honey shop in the Old Town. Try Mulla bread, an ancient Bedouin recipe made with natural yeast and local sesame flour. The best way to have it is exactly as the shopkeeper serves it, warm, with a spoonful of local Taif honey. Sweet, savoury and absolutely delicious.

WHAT TO SAVOUR

A traditional Taif lunch

There's a great local spot in town serving Mabshour — grilled chicken and beef with fragrant, flavourful rice and traditional sides. Order a Karak tea too — strong red tea brewed with milk and spices, a Saudi favourite. It's the perfect way to finish the meal before the drive back to Jeddah. Get one to go too, it's perfect for the drive back to Jeddah.

WHAT TO SEE

The road to Taif

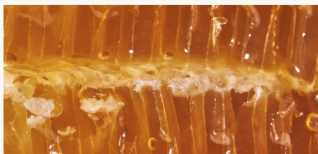
The drive is worth taking your time over. Once you leave Jeddah, the road heads inland towards the mountains, passing the route to Makkah as the landscape gradually shifts from the coast to the highlands. It's a simple way to see how quickly the scenery changes across Saudi Arabia.



WHAT TO LINGER OVER

The rose farms

Taif's famous roses bloom for a short season in spring, with farmers picking the delicate flowers by hand in the early morning. The roses are then taken to local distilleries, where they're turned into fragrant rose water and oil using traditions passed down through generations. Make sure to visit a rose farm while you're here, meet the farmers and support the local growers.



WHAT TO BRING HOME

Local Produce

Ask your guide to take you to the herb and honey sellers in Taif's Old Town. Look out for Habaq mint, pick up some local honey, and don't be shy about tasting before you choose — the darker varieties are especially rich. On the drive back to Jeddah, stop at the roadside fruit stalls for seasonal produce; it's a lovely way to experience the generosity and flavours of Taif.

