THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA: Land of Surprises and Contrasts

February 21 – March 3, 2019
Dear Smith College Travelers,

I invite you to join Steven Heydemann, Janet Wright Ketcham 1953 Professor in Middle East Studies and Professor of Government as well as nonresident senior fellow in the Center for Middle East Policy of the Brookings Institution on a journey through the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, one of a few remaining borderlands of global tourism.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is a land of surprise and contrast, where age-old traditions and values exist side by side with ultra-modern architecture and the latest technology. Contemporary Saudi Arabia has been shaped by its Islamic heritage, its historical role as an ancient trade center, and its Bedouin traditions. Yet, in a remarkably brief period of time, the Saudi people have taken these values and traditions and adapted them to the modern world. The evolving role of women is just one aspect of Saudi society little understood in the West.

Our trip begins in the capital city of Riyadh, located in the heartland of the country, and home to the Al Saud family, who have ruled the central Nejd region for centuries and the modern Kingdom since its formation. In Jeddah, our next destination we will visit Effat University, a private non-profit women’s university operating under the auspices of the King Faisal Charitable Foundation. A short flight then takes us to the city of Hail followed by an excursion into the Great Nafud Desert where T.E. Lawrence once fought in the Arab Revolt. We then cross the desert by train returning to Riyadh where we will be guests of a member of the House of Saud on his private organic family farm.

We anticipate that interest to this exciting new destination will be strong and spaces are limited! Contact Smith Travel at (800) 225 – 2029 or alumtrav@smith.edu to reserve your space today.

With kind regards,

Elizabeth Bigwood, Director, Smith Travel

Smith Lecturer: Professor Steven Heydemann

Professor Steven Hyedemann is a political scientist who specializes in the comparative politics and the political economy of the Middle East, with a particular focus on Syria. His interests include authoritarian governance, economic development, social policy, political and economic reform and civil society. In addition to holding the Janet Wright Ketchum Chair 1953 Chair in Middle East Studies, with a joint appointment in the Department of Government, Steven Heydemann is a nonresident fellow in the Center for Middle East Policy of the Bookings Institution. From 2007 – 15 he held a number of leadership positions in the U.S. Institute of Peace in Washington, D.C, including vice president of applied research on conflict and senior advisor for the Middle East. Professor Hyedemann directed USIP’s Syria program, including the Day After project, in which the institute facilitated a transition planning process for Syria with the Syrian opposition. In addition, he consults widely with the U.S. government, NGO’s and European governments on issues relating to Syria policy and the status of the Syrian conflict. Prior to joining USIP, he was director of the Center for Democracy and Civil Society at Georgetown University and associate professor in the government department.
Trip price is $7,950 per person based on double occupancy.

Day 1: Wednesday, February 20
Depart the U.S. bound for Riyadh

Day 2: Thursday, February 21 - Riyadh
Upon arrival at King Khalid International Airport travelers will be met and transferred to the hotel.

Accommodations: Radisson Blue Hotel

Day 3: Friday, February 22 - Riyadh
After a morning briefing and introduction of faculty and staff, we spend the day visiting some of the city’s highlights starting with D’Iriyah, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and the former home of the House of Saud and capital of the first Saudi dynasty from 1744 to 1818. After lunch we will have a chance to walk along the wadi taking in the majesty of the site and also visit Souq al Bujairi.

We celebrate the first evening with a traditional Nejdi cuisine welcome dinner. B, L, D.

Accommodations: Radisson Blu Hotel

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

“The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is a land of surprise and contrast, where age-old traditions and values exist side by side with ultra-modern architecture and the latest technology.”
Day 4: Saturday, February 23 - Riyadh
The day begins with a tour of the world-class National Museum, which sets the historical foundation for our visit. In the afternoon we will explore Justice Square and Fort Masmak dating back to 1865. The fort played a pivotal role in the Kingdom’s history when Abdul-Aziz bin Saud and a small band of followers captured the citadel in 1902, a date that marks the beginning of the reunification of the modern Kingdom.

The last stop of the day will be D’ira Souq and its old antique market, the carpet souq and the gold souq. B, L, D.

Accommodations: Radisson Blu Hotel

Day 5: Sunday, February 24 - Jeddah
Morning meeting with Khlood Aldukheil, Managing Director of Aldukheil Financial Group. Mrs. Aldukheil worked at the World Bank in 1994 and was the first Saudi woman to represent a member at the Saudi Stock Exchange Tadawul, she was the VP of the Women Business Council at the Chamber of Commerce, and an Executive Member of the National Committee for women, the first committee established by the late King Abdullah for the inclusion of women in the private sector.

She holds an MBA in Finance from the American University in Washington and a BS in International Economics and Finance from Georgetown University.

We then proceed to the Art of Heritage which is affiliated with Al-Nahda Philanthropic Society for Women, the country’s oldest charity founded in 1963 by the late Queen Effat Al Thunayan, the most prominent wife of King Faisal of Saudi Arabia.

HRH Princess Haifa Al Faisal began the Art of Heritage Museum Collection years ago. Today, these designs are implemented and crafted in contemporary luxury renditions of traditional dress. All the garments are produced by more than 100 female artisans who are employed full-time, from the designers who work with clients all the way through to the final finished product. The base of the thobe (dress) is chosen individually from silks, wool, linens and cotton, then the traditional design is chosen from one of the many regional areas of the Kingdom with gold or silver thread used in the finish. These dresses would rival any haute couture house in the West. Under the leadership role of Princess Basma bint Majid bin Abdul-Aziz Al Saud, we will meet with her manager and her team, learn about the styles and designs, meet with designers and learn about the ongoing fashion scene that few in the West are aware of.

After a late lunch we transfer to the airport in time for our flight to Jeddah arriving late in the evening (note: dinner will be a light snack tonight not a full meal, additional food items can be purchased the airport). B, L, D, S.

Accommodations: Intercontinental Hotel
Day 6: Monday, February 25 - Jeddah
Morning meeting with Lina Khaled Al Maeena of the Shoura Council.

Lina Khaled Al Maeena is a member of the Shoura Council and according to Forbes, one of the 200 Most Powerful Women in the Middle East. She has been actively involved in the promotion of sports in the Kingdom, is a member of the Jeddah Chamber of Commerce’s Young Saudi Business and Sports Investment Committees and the Kingdom Young Business Women’s Council. She founded Jeddah United, Saudi Arabia’s first private female basketball club in 2003, when the government did not allow the licensing of female gyms or clubs. Many years later, after much campaigning to change attitudes toward women’s athletics, Prince Mohammed bin Salman’s Vision 2030 plan has elevated the status of sports in the Kingdom. In the Shoura Council, she advises the cabinet on legislation.

Following lunch we set out to explore the alleyways of the old city and visit one of the many coral homes built by the old Jeddah merchant families who developed the port as a trading center. Here, you will have an opportunity to purchase spices, coffee and dates and learn about their importance in the Arab world.

Dinner will be served in the old city followed by an evening through some of the alleys lined with antiques stores. B, L, D.

Accommodations: Intercontinental Hotel

Day 7: Tuesday, February 26 - Jeddah
This morning we will tour Effat University, originally founded in 1999 by the children of King Faisal and Iffat Al Thunayyan as a college. In January 2009 it became Effat University and in 2011 it obtained approval for its first graduate program. It is a private non-profit women’s university with over 1,000 women enrolled and over 200 faculty members. We will have a chance to meet with the principal, faculty and students. Afterwards we depart for an excursion to the Red Sea where fresh fish will be cooked for us on site at lunchtime.

In the late afternoon as the light softens over the city we return, passing the famous Floating Mosque that looks much like a mirage floating on the still water. Jeddah is also famous for its vibrant art scene and galleries. This evening we will meet the daughter of one of a merchant family, artist and gallery owner Safeya Binzagr.
She is the only artist in the Kingdom to have her own museum, the Darat Safeya Binzagr, which opened in 2000. She works in oil, watercolor, pastel, drawings and etchings. Themes evolve around marriage, traditional customs and Jeddah’s old corral merchant family homes. Aramco have held private exhibitions of her work and she published a book about Saudi Arabian art titled “Saudi Arabia, An Artist’s View of the Past.”

B, L, D.

Accommodations: Intercontinental Hotel

Day 8: Wednesday, February 27 - Hail
A morning flight takes us to Hail, situated close the Great Nafud Desert, in Northwest Saudi Arabia and along the old trade routes of the camel caravans and pilgrimage route to Makkah. Hail is an agricultural region known for growing wheat and dates. In the olden days this area was visited by many famous explorers and writers such as Lady Anne Blunt and Getrude Bell to mention just a few of them. Hail was also home to Hatim Al Tai, the famous warrior who fought alongside T.E. Lawrence during the Arab Revolt in the Hijaz.

Upon arrival in Hail we will set out on a city tour visiting the Al Qislah fortress, Airif Fort and the old traditional souq of Barzan.

Enjoy the cuisine of this region this evening. B, D.

Accommodations: Golden Tulip Hotel

Day 9: Thursday, February 28 - Hail
Today’s excursion takes us to the UNESCO World Heritage site of Faid situated on the old pilgrimage route between Kufa in Iraq and Makkah. During the ongoing excavations, Saudi archaeologists discovered a city that was built inside a walled area surrounded by a moat and elaborate water system. Coins dating back to the Abbassid period were discovered here along with clay shards. B, D.

Accommodations: Golden Tulip Hotel

Day 10: Friday, March 1 - Hail
Friday’s are relaxed days in the kingdom as it is the Holy Day of Prayer and many places will be closed. However, the Friday Market in Hail is full of hustle and bustle. We will also have time to go for a leisurely walk in Wadi Al Adayra in the Jebel Aja Region this morning. In the afternoon we board a local train for a journey through the desert back to Riyadh for a late evening arrival.

B, L, D (on train).

Accommodations: Ibis Hotel
Day 11: Saturday, March 2 - Riyadh/Departure

Transfers

Following breakfast, we will have the opportunity to walk across the road to the Kingdom Towers which is part of the Kingdom Holdings empire of Prince Al Waleed bin Talal bin Abdulaziz Al Saud who according to Forbes is the 5th wealthiest man in the world. From the top of the towers, the views the 360 degrees views of Riyadh and beyond are breathtaking.

Our farewell lunch will be hosted at the family farm of a member of the House of Al Saud who is very much involved in the organic food movement.

Remainder of the evening at leisure. B, L.

Accommodations: Ibis Hotel

NOTE: Many flights will depart Riyadh late at night or in the early morning hours. Transfers to the airport will begin approximately 4 hours prior to your departure flight. It will take one hour by road to reach Riyadh International Airport and you are required to be at the airport 3 hours prior to your departure time.

Day 12: Sunday, March 3 - Depart Riyadh

We bid farewell to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia!

Meals: B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner, S = Snack

Your Tour Price Includes

- All accommodations as listed
- All meals as listed
- Tea and coffee with all meals; bottled water with all meals and during all sightseeing; soda and juice drinks with all meals
- Airport transfers in Riyadh
- Sightseeing and entrance fees; gratuities to guides, drivers and porters and wait staff
- Service of a professional tour manager and local Saudi guides
- Talks/lectures by Professor Steven Heydemann.

Not included are:

U.S. domestic and international airfare in and out of Saudi Arabia; trip cancellation/baggage insurance; excess baggage fees; items of purely personal nature and those not expressly mentioned as included.

Size:
This departure is limited to 20 travelers.

TOUR COST

$7,950 per person based on double occupancy. $1,050 single supplement.

For a detailed itinerary and additional information on this journey through Saudi Arabia, please contact Smith Travel at:

Phone: 1 (800) 225-2029
Email: alumtrav@smith.edu.
SMITH TRAVEL RESERVATION FORM
THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA: LAND OF SURPRISES AND CONTRASTS
February 21 – March 3, 2019

I/We understand that the final payment is due December 6, 2018, 75 days prior to departure. For registrations received after December 6, 2018: full payment is due. Your trip deposit is non refundable!

NAME #1 ________________________________________ (as listed in passport) Smith Affiliation
NAME #1 ________________________________________ (as it should appear on name badge)
NAME #2 ________________________________________ (as listed in passport) Smith Affiliation
NAME #2 ________________________________________ (as it should appear on name badge)

Street Address ____________________________________ City __________________________
State Zip/Postal Code ________________________________
Phone (Home/Cell) ____________________ Phone (Work) __________________________
Email _______________________________ Fax ______________________________

Accommodations
☐ ____ Double/Share  ☐ ____ Single (Single Room Supplement $1,050)

I/We have agreed to read the tour itinerary and information section of the brochure and agree to the Terms and Conditions as stated therein.

Signature __________________________________________
Date of Signature __________________________________

TOUR COST: $7,950 per person based on double occupancy. For a detailed itinerary and additional information on this journey through Saudi Arabia, please contact Smith Travel at (800) 225 2029 or email alumtrav@smith.edu. Please make your check payable to Authentic Asia Tours and Travel and mail it to: Smith Travel, Office of Alumnae Relations, 33 Elm Street, Northampton, MA 01063 or fax the credit card form to 413-585-2015. For more information, please contact Smith Travel at (800) 225-2029 or at alumtrav@smith.edu.

Method of Payment

Payment ☐ ____ Enclosed is my check for $ ___________ ($1,000 per person), payable to Authentic Asia, to reserve__________ places on the journey to THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA. OR Please charge the deposit to my:
☐ ____   VISA    ☐ ____   MasterCard    ☐ ____   AmEx
Card # ________________________ Exp. Date _________ Security Code __________
Name of Cardholder ______________________________________________________________
Cardholder Signature ______________________________________________________________
Included are: All accommodations as listed; all meals as listed; airport transfers in Riyadh, tea and coffee with all meals; bottled water with all meals and during all sightseeing; soda and juice drinks with all meals; all sightseeing and entrance fees; gratuities to guides, drivers and porters and wait staff; service of a professional tour manager and local Saudi guides; talks/lectures by Professor Steven Heydemann.

Not included are: U.S. domestic and international airfare in and out of Saudi Arabia; trip cancellation/baggage insurance; excess baggage fees; items of purely personal nature and those not expressly mentioned as included.

Size: This departure is limited to a maximum of 20 paying participants.

What to expect: This trip does involve a certain amount of physical activity such as moderate walking, stair climbing, walking on uneven surfaces and getting in and out of boats. Travelers must be in good physical health in order to fully participate in the tour.

Reservations & Payments: To reserve a space, return the completed reservation form with your $1,000 per person deposit to: Smith Travel, Office of Alumnae Relations, 33 Elm Street, Northampton, MA 01063 or fax the credit card form to 413-585-2015. Balance of payment is due 60 days prior to departure. Personal checks should be made payable to our tour operator Authentic Asia Tours and Travel. VISA, MasterCard and American Express are also accepted. Reservations will be processed in order of receipt. Your trip deposit is non-refundable!

Cancellation Policy and Refund: The trip deposit of $1,000 is non-refundable. The final invoice will be sent 90 days prior to departure and is due 75 days prior to departure. Cancellations shall not be effective until they are received in writing and confirmed by Smith Travel. The following cancellation fees will apply:

If a written cancellation is received within 74 - 60 days prior to departure: 50% of the trip price will be refunded.
If a written cancellation is received less than 40 days prior to departure no refund shall be issued.
No refund shall be issued after the tour has commenced, or for leaving the tour early. No refunds shall be issued for missed meals, sightseeing or any unused services.

Responsibility: Tour participants assume the responsibility to select a tour that is appropriate for his or her abilities and health. Authentic Asia acts only in the capacity of agents for the hotels, airlines, bus and ship lines or owners of contractors providing accommodations, transportation or other services. As a result, all coupons, receipts or tickets are issued subject to the terms and conditions specified by the supplier. By acceptance of tour membership, the participant agrees that neither Authentic Asia nor Smith College nor any of its subsidiaries shall become liable or responsible for personal injury or illness, damage to person or property, loss, delay or irregularity caused by person not controlled by it, such as (without limitation) airlines, bus and shipping companies, suppliers of accommodations or other services, or resulting from any acts of God, defects in vehicles, strikes, wars, whether declared or otherwise, civil disturbances, medical or customs regulations, acts of terrorism, epidemics, government restrictions, criminal or negligent acts, weather, or any other circumstances over which Authentic Asia and Smith College have no control. Authentic Asia and Smith College are not responsible for any additional expenses or liability sustained or incurred by the participants as a result of the above mentioned causes.

Tour participant acknowledges receipt of a copy of these terms and conditions and signifies acceptance of, and consents to all of the terms and conditions set forth herein, when registering for the tour, or making payments on this tour.

Disclaimer: Please note that Smith College does not conduct tours, nor does it act as an agent for guests interested in tours. Smith Travel acts as a facilitator with tour operators, with whom tour participants make arrangements for completing travel, and is pleased to act as a liaison with tour operators should you have any questions that may arise before, during or after your tour. Smith Travel encourages you to familiarize yourself thoroughly with the tour operator's cancellation and refund policy, and also to investigate available services such as trip cancellation insurance. Insurance information will be sent to you by Smith Travel once your registration and deposit have been confirmed. Smith Travel is not responsible for changes to trips or travel arrangements or for losses or additional expenses resulting from travel.