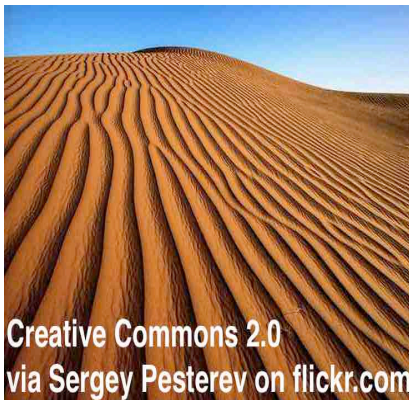


## Saudi Arabia opens up to tourism

30th September, 2019



There is a new destination on the world tourism map - Saudi Arabia. The desert kingdom has decided to open its doors to tourists from around the world. It has decided to issue tourist visas to people from 49 different countries.

The visas can be applied for online and will take just seven minutes to issue. Saudi Arabia's government believes its country has huge potential to develop into a prime tourism destination. It has a wealth of natural attractions, deserts, World Heritage sites, beautiful beaches and unique cultures. The government also wants to make sure it can earn money from other industries besides oil and gas. It hopes tourism will contribute 10 per cent of the country's GDP by 2030.

Tourists will be allowed to stay in Saudi Arabia for a maximum of 90 days in one year. They can enter the Kingdom multiple times in that year. However, non-Muslims will not be allowed to visit the holy sites of Mecca and Medina. Ahmad al-Khateeb, chairman of the Saudi Commission for Tourism and National Heritage, explained the importance of tourism to Saudi. He said: "Opening Saudi Arabia to international tourists is a historic moment for our country." He added that Saudi has a lot to offer: "Businesses from around the world will establish operations within the Kingdom as its unique attractions, culture and natural beauty become more widely appreciated."

Sources: [wsj.com](http://wsj.com) / [arabnews.com](http://arabnews.com) / [saudigazette.com](http://saudigazette.com)

### Writing

Increasing tourism will help the world. Discuss.

### Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

destination / desert / kingdom / tourist / visa / potential / wealth / beaches / oil / gas / Saudi Arabia / maximum / holy / sites / importance / international / business / beauty

### True / False

- a) The article said Saudi Arabia is an old tourist destination. T / F
- b) The article said Saudi Arabia wants to open its windows to tourism. T / F
- c) An online visa for Saudi will take seven days to process. T / F
- d) Saudi wants 10% of its GDP to come from tourism by 2030. T / F
- e) Tourists will be able to stay in Saudi for a maximum of 90 days a year. T / F
- f) Non-Muslims will not be allowed to go to Mecca or Medina. T / F
- g) A tourism spokesman said opening to tourists wasn't so historic. T / F
- h) The tourism spokesman said global businesses would open in Saudi. T / F

### Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- |                        |                     |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. <b>new</b>          | a. many             |
| 2. <b>tourists</b>     | b. get              |
| 3. <b>issue</b>        | c. was grateful for |
| 4. <b>prime</b>        | d. provide          |
| 5. <b>earn</b>         | e. remain           |
| 6. <b>stay</b>         | f. significance     |
| 7. <b>multiple</b>     | g. additional       |
| 8. <b>importance</b>   | h. point in time    |
| 9. <b>moment</b>       | i. travelers        |
| 10. <b>appreciated</b> | j. important        |

### Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you know about Saudi Arabia?
- b) Why hasn't Saudi opened up to tourism before?
- c) Would you like to go to Saudi on holiday?
- d) Where is your favorite tourist destination?
- e) What do you think of applying for visas?
- f) How good a tourist destination is your country?
- g) What are the three best places to visit in your country?
- h) How important is Saudi Arabia's oil?

## Phrase Match

- |  |                            |
|--|----------------------------|
| 1. There is a new destination on the   | a. doors to tourists       |
| 2. The desert                          | b. not be allowed to visit |
| 3. decided to open its                 | c. of the country's GDP    |
| 4. The visas can be applied            | d. to offer                |
| 5. tourism will contribute 10 per cent | e. kingdom                 |
| 6. a maximum of                        | f. for our country         |
| 7. non-Muslims will                    | g. world tourism map       |
| 8. a historic moment                   | h. widely appreciated      |
| 9. Saudi has a lot                     | i. for online              |
| 10. become more                        | j. 90 days in one year     |

## Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- What do you think of Saudi as a tourism destination?
- What do you know about Saudi Arabia's holy sites?
- How will tourism benefit Saudi Arabia?
- How might tourism be bad for Saudi Arabia?
- How important is tourism for your country?
- What advice do you have for Saudi Arabia's tourism minister?
- What questions would you like to ask Saudi's tourism minister?

## Spelling

- a new sntiaditeon on the world tourism map
- The visas can be ppliaed for online
- its country has huge tpneioal
- natural tratcaitnos
- earn money from other nuirtsides
- otcbirunte 10 per cent of the country's GDP
- a ixammum of 90 days
- enter the Kingdom utmpille times
- visit the ohly sites
- a tshoiirc moment
- stbeilash operations
- become more idwely appreciated

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. i	3. d	4. j	5. b
6. e	7. a	8. f	9. h	10. c

## Role Play

### Role A – People

You think the people are the best thing about Saudi Arabia. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): the food, the desert or the weather.

### Role B – Food

You think the food is the best thing about Saudi Arabia. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): the people, the desert or the weather.

### Role C – Desert

You think the desert is the best thing about Saudi Arabia. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): the food, the people or the weather.

### Role D – Weather

You think the weather is the best thing about Saudi Arabia. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): the food, the desert or the people.

## Speaking – Holiday in Saudi

Rank these with your partner. Put the best things about a holiday to Saudi Arabia at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- |           |               |
|-----------|---------------|
| • people  | • beaches     |
| • weather | • cities      |
| • sights  | • handicrafts |
| • desert  | • festivals   |

### Answers – True False

a	F	b	F	c	F	d	T	e	T	f	T	g	F	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.