

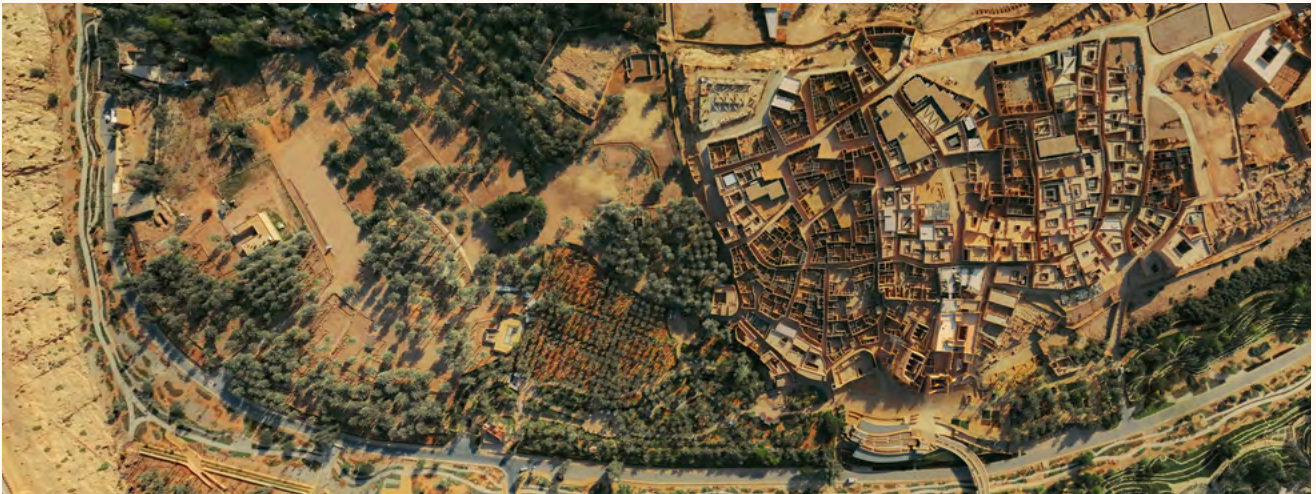
# DIRIYAH

THE CITY OF EARTH



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Historical brief about Diriyah





## Diriyah: A Historical Gem in the Heart of Arabia

Nestled within the central Arabian Peninsula (Najd), the valley known as Wadi Al-Aridh, or Wadi Hanifah as it is now called, holds profound historical and cultural significance. Spanning approximately 122 kilometers from Jabal Tuwaiq to the south of Riyadh, this valley has served as a lifeline for the region's residents, offering precious water resources in an otherwise arid landscape. Throughout history, Wadi Hanifah has stood as a symbol of resilience and hope for diverse tribes and communities navigating the challenges of existence in this environment.

Drawing in prominent tribes from ancient history, like Tasm and Jadis, the unique landscape of Wadi Al-Aridh enticed settlements in the Al-Yammah region. Originally named "Wadi Al-Erdh," the valley later changed to "Wadi Hanifah" around 400, in honor of the Banu Hanifah tribe, ancestors of the Royal Family Al Saud. The founding of Diriyah by Prince Mani bin Rabeah Al-Muraydi, marked a pivotal moment in the region's history. This event led to the establishment of the Emirate of Diriyah in 1446 .

Strategically situated within Wadi Hanifah, Diriyah ascended to become the capital of the First Saudi State in 1727, under the leadership of Imam Mohammed bin Saud. This historical development reshaped the course of the Arabian Peninsula, fostering stability and prosperity while uniting the region under a single state. Diriyah emerged as a vibrant hub for trade, culture, knowledge, communication, and economic exchange, connecting diverse corners of the region and serving as a pivotal link between Asia, Europe, and Africa.

The legacy persisted through the establishment of the Second Saudi State in 1824 by Imam Turki bin Abdullah as well as the founding of the third Saudi State by King Abdulaziz bin Abdulrahman Al Saud in 1902. Today, Diriyah stands as a testament to the enduring legacy of the Saudi State, celebrating the accomplishments spanning from the era of Imam Mohammed bin Saud to the present reign of the Custodian of The Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud - a journey of approximately 300 years from the inception of the first Saudi state to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.



## Reviving History in At-Turaif District

Located on the West Bank of Wadi Hanifah, the historic At-Turaif district stands as a beacon of the past and a testament to the glory days of the First Saudi State. This district earned its name, At-Turaif, due to its strategic position on the edge of the valley site of immense importance. In 1766, Imam Abdulaziz bin Mohammed bin Saud selected At-Turaif as the seat of government and residence for the Saudi Royal Family, breaking away from the common urbanization pattern extending south on the east bank of the valley. Encompassing an area of about 235 thousand square meters, At-Turaif boasts 13 palaces and 5 mosques, with the grand At-Turaif Mosque becoming a significant landmark. Housing the Treasury (Bayt Al-Mal), symbolic of the state's financial hub, Sbalat Modhi, a precious endowment of the Saudi Royal Family, and At-Turaif Bathhouse (Hammam At-Turaif), embodying luxury, the district offers a glimpse into the majestic Najdi architectural style that has withstood the test of time. Recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2010, At-Turaif showcases the charm of Najdi architecture crafted from mud bricks.

## The Majestic Salwa Palace

Famous as a cultural icon in the heart of the Arabian Peninsula, Salwa Palace, located in the At-Turaif district, served as the primary palace and administrative center during the reign of the Imams of the First Saudi State. With an expansive area exceeding ten thousand square meters, construction of this architectural gem commenced in 1766 under the patronage of Imam Abdulaziz bin Mohammad bin Saud, with subsequent enhancements done by successive rulers including Imam Saud bin Abdulaziz and the last Imam, Imam Abdullah bin Saud. The palace's name, Salwa, alludes to its architectural splendor and numerous amenities that offer solace and delight to residents and guests alike.

Comprising seven interconnected architectural units, Salwa Palace primarily functioned as the residence of the ruling Imam, complete with its mosque and a school catering to the palace's young residents. Hosting dignitaries, tribal leaders, and the public, this fortified site also accommodated supply depots, armories, and state offices. In the outer courtyard (Goa Alshareah) served as a focal point for dispensing aid to those in need, embodying the palace's commitment to public welfare and unity.





## Saudi History Historical Milestones

■ 400 ■

The settlement of the Banu Hanifah tribe by the banks of “Wadi Hanifah”

■ 1446 ■

The establishment of the Emirate of Diriyah by Prince Mani bin Rabeah Al-Muraydi

■ 1727 ■

The Founding of the First Saudi State by Imam Mohammed bin Saud, with Diriyah as its capital

■ 1824 ■

The establishment of the Second Saudi State by Imam Turki bin Abdullah, with Riyadh as its capital

■ 1902 ■

The recapturing of Riyadh by King Abdulaziz bin Abdulrahman Al Saud and the founding of the Third Saudi State

■ 1932

The announcement of the Unification of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.