

TRAVEL AND HOSPITALITY

Saudi Arabia's first luxury train service to launch in 2025

February 19, 2024



The ride will cover 800 miles of desert, stopping by cities and archaeological sites. Image credit: Arsenale Group

By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

Italian hospitality company Arsenale Group and train company Saudi Arabia Railways (SAR) are starting production on a milestone project.

Construction has commenced on what the companies have shared will become Saudi Arabia's first-ever luxury locomotive service. Featuring 40 opulent cabins and exclusive perks, bookings for the Dream of the Desert are now open.

"We are grateful for the opportunity to strengthen Arsenale's international presence with the arrival of the first luxury train in Saudi Arabia," said Paolo Barletta, CEO of **Arsenale Group**, in a statement.

"I would like to express my gratitude to His Excellency Saleh Al Jasser and SAR CEO Bashar bin Khalid Al Malik, who readily embraced and believed in this project," Mr. Barletta said. "A heartfelt thank you also goes to all the authorities and stakeholders in the tourism sector who have supported us in the realization of our vision.

"The first stages of production of the Dream of the Desert carriages have recently begun in Italy and we look forward to our first train debuting in the Kingdom in the coming years."

Dream of the Desert

Going from the country's capital of Riyadh to Qurayyat, near Jordan, the train will cover 800 miles of ground.

Those onboard will have a chance to see bustling cities, dunes, oases and UNESCO world heritage archaeological sites, getting a taste of the multifaceted nature of Saudi Arabia.

Arsenale Group and SAR are providing updates reservations, which include one or two-night routes, will be made available in 2024.

The Dream of the Desert will soon hit Saudi Arabia

Train production will be finished by the summer of 2025, and an inaugural Dream of the Desert journey is expected to take off later that year.

Currently under construction in Italy, the design of the Dream of the Desert brings together two cultures. It can hold 82

passengers across its 15 cars and includes a fine dining restaurant.

This is just one of the latest strides the host nation's officials have taken to boost its travel and hospitality sector.

The country was largely closed to all foreign tourism but opened its doors in 2019. It has since spent billions on bulking up its infrastructure and marketing to international crowds.



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Aiming to secure 70 million global tourists per year, the nation is planning to spend over \$800 billion on related development over the next decade.

Luxury has already contributed to this evolving national identity ([see story](#)), with many brands from the sector expanding their presence in Saudi Arabia.