

EVERLASTING & ABUNDANT

دائم وعالم



WORLD REGION OF GASTRONOMY
JEDDAH - TAIF CANDIDATE 2027



Jeddah - Taif

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FOREWORD

It is with great honour that we present the joint nomination of Jeddah and Taif as a World Region of Gastronomy. This nomination reflects the Kingdom's cultural depth, global ambition and the ongoing transformation driven by Saudi Vision 2030. It represents more than an appreciation of culinary excellence. It is an invitation to the world to experience two regions where heritage, creativity and hospitality come together in a compelling and timeless narrative.

Jeddah and Taif each embody a distinct identity shaped by nature, history and people. Jeddah, the gateway to the Red Sea, has long served as a crossroads of cultures where international influences harmonise with deeply rooted culinary traditions. Taif, with its mountain climate, fertile valleys and rich agricultural heritage, offers ingredients and flavours that have nourished generations and inspired poetry, craftsmanship and community life. Together, they form a uniquely interdependent culinary ecosystem that exemplifies authenticity, diversity and generosity, the defining values of Saudi gastronomy.

For generations, families across both regions have preserved recipes, techniques and rituals that highlight a shared heritage and a deep connection to the land. The flavours of Jeddah and Taif are more than ingredients on a plate. They are expressions of identity, stories of resilience and reflections of a vibrant cultural narrative. Through this nomination, we seek to safeguard these traditions while empowering the next generation of chefs, farmers, artisans and creatives to shape the future of Saudi cuisine.

Membership in the World Region of Gastronomy network will give Jeddah and Taif an unparalleled platform to collaborate with global partners, strengthen local ecosystems and accelerate sustainable cultural and economic development. It will amplify our national commitment to education, talent development, healthy and sustainable food systems and cross-sector collaboration between communities, institutions and industries.

Ultimately, this bid represents a unified national effort that celebrates who we are today and what we aspire to become tomorrow. With the dedication of our stakeholders, the creativity of our people and the extraordinary diversity of our land, we are confident that Jeddah and Taif will stand proudly as global ambassadors of Saudi hospitality, culture and culinary innovation.



Mayada Badr

CEO – Culinary Arts Commission,
Saudi Arabia

OUR OBJECTIVES



Showcasing diversity

Highlighting the distinctive culinary and cultural identity of Jeddah and Taif for both local and global audiences.



Promoting innovation

Encouraging creativity in the culinary arts and building a long-term sustainable cultural economy that fosters new ideas and investment.



Supporting health

Improving community well-being through the promotion of nutritious local foods and environmentally sustainable practices.



Boosting sustainable tourism

Strengthening the tourism sector by offering authentic food experiences and culturally rich events that attract visitors throughout the year.



Empowering talent

Driving economic growth by supporting chefs, artisans and entrepreneurs with opportunities to learn, collaborate and thrive.



Contributing to food security

Supporting regional and global food security through responsible and sustainable food systems that protect resources for future generations.



دائم وعامر Daim wa Amir Everlasting & Abundant

"Everlasting & Abundant" draws its meaning from the traditional Arabic expression "Daim wa Amir", a warm congratulatory phrase that conveys wishes of continuous joy, prosperity and blessings. It is commonly shared during celebrations, housewarmings or after a meal enjoyed together. The slogan reflects the essence of Saudi hospitality: generosity that never fades and tables that remain full. "Everlasting" represents the enduring culinary heritage and the timeless cultural narrative of Jeddah and Taif. "Abundant" highlights the richness and diversity of local flavours and products that define the region's gastronomic identity and make it a vibrant and welcoming destination for the world.



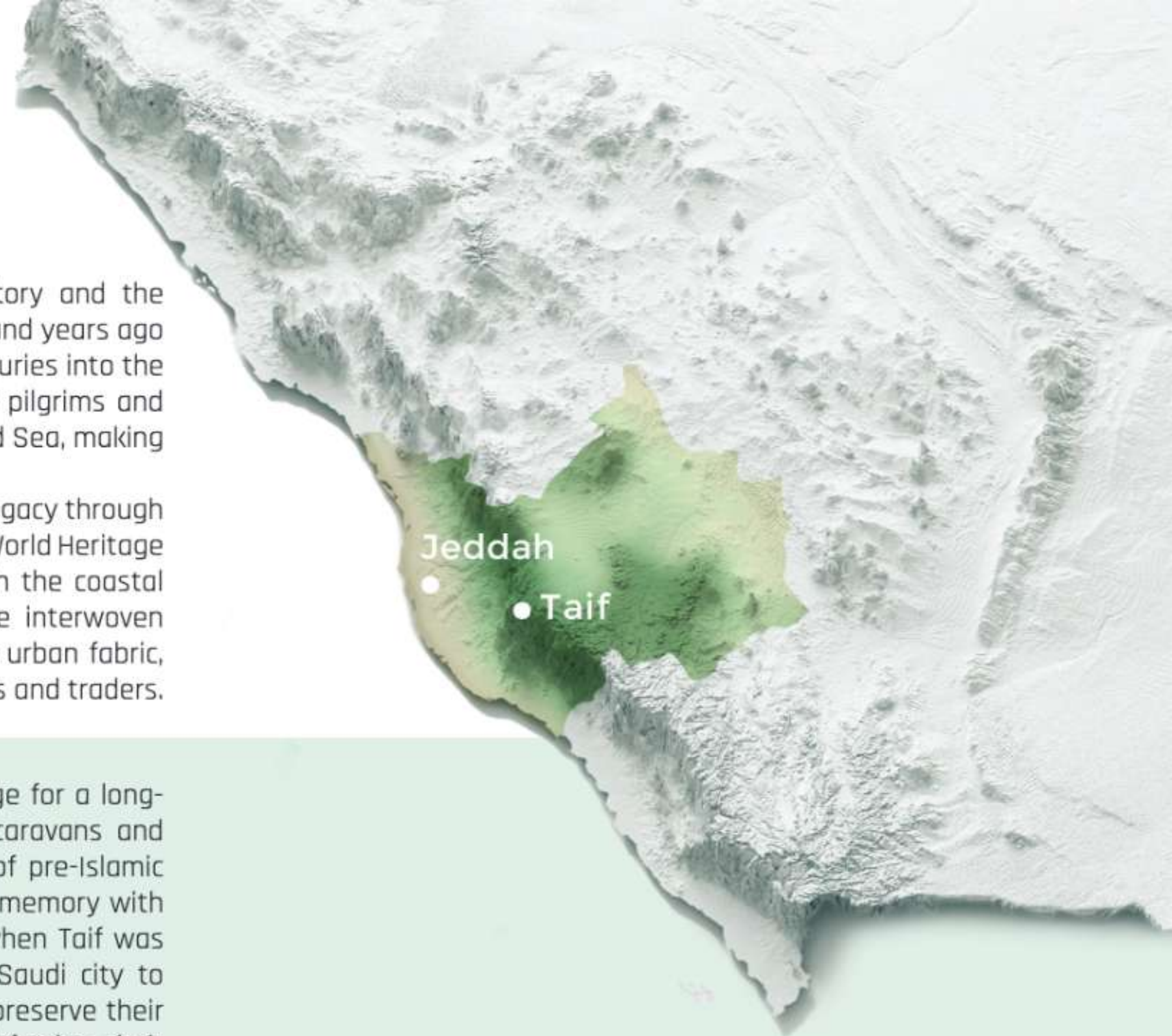
HISTORICAL & CULTURAL OVERVIEW OF JEDDAH & TAIF

Jeddah and Taif together embody the depth of western region history and the diversity of its cultural roots. Jeddah, which emerged more than a thousand years ago as a small settlement for fishermen, gradually transformed over the centuries into the main port for pilgrimage and trade in the western region. It welcomed pilgrims and merchants arriving from Asia, Africa and the Islamic world through the Red Sea, making it a globally oriented city with an open urban identity.

The historic heart of the city, Historic Jeddah - Al Balad, reflects this rich legacy through traditional western region architecture and its inscription on the UNESCO World Heritage List. Its walls, gates and distinctive wooden rawashin, harmonising with the coastal climate, reveal a long-standing cultural and commercial exchange. The interwoven alleyways and elevated rawashin showcase remarkable ingenuity in the urban fabric, designed to maximise shade and natural ventilation for residents, pilgrims and traders.

In contrast, Taif represents the heart of the Hijaz mountains and a stage for a long-standing cultural history. It served as a vital passageway for trade caravans and was home to Souk Okaz, one of the most important literary markets of pre-Islamic Arabia. Revived today as an annual cultural festival, it bridges historical memory with contemporary cultural life. This literary heritage reached new heights when Taif was designated a UNESCO Creative City of Literature, becoming the first Saudi city to receive this title in the field of literature. The people of Taif continue to preserve their local arts and specialised festivals, such as the Taif Rose Festival, reinforcing their cultural identity and giving it a continuous celebratory dimension.

Together, these two cities present a cultural duality. Jeddah offers the model of a coastal cosmopolitan city shaped by pilgrimage, trade and diverse migrations, while Taif represents the model of a mountain city with deep historical roots and cultural practices tied to land and agriculture. Combined, they form a comprehensive historical and cultural tableau, rich in stories, customs and ways of life, providing a strong foundation for a nomination file that connects a deeply rooted food heritage with a modern city open to the world.

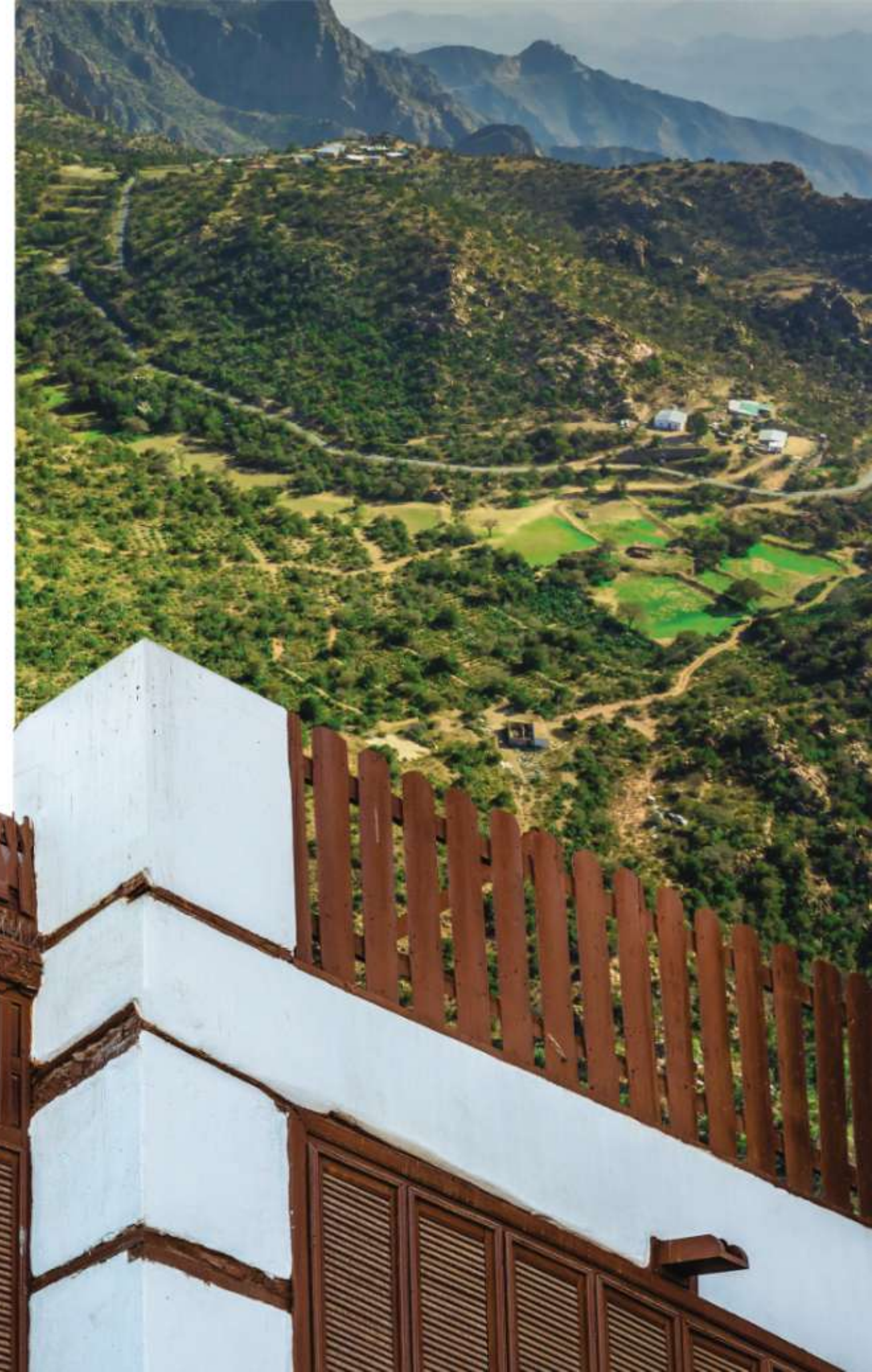


GEOGRAPHICAL & CLIMATIC OVERVIEW OF JEDDAH & TAIF

Jeddah and Taif together form a complementary geographical and climatic duality in western Saudi Arabia. Jeddah stretches along the Red Sea coast in a strategic location that links the Kingdom to international maritime routes. It is characterised by a hot humid coastal climate in the summer that becomes milder in the winter, with long beaches and coral reefs that create a rich marine environment.

In contrast, Taif is situated at an elevation exceeding 1,800 metres above sea level within the Sarawat mountain range. It enjoys a moderate mountain climate in the summer and cold winters, with seasonal rainfall that makes it one of the greenest cities in the Kingdom and grants it a distinctive agricultural identity.

This diversity between an open marine environment and a fertile mountain agricultural environment creates an integrated natural foundation supporting the joint nomination of Jeddah and Taif as a global culinary region, where the products of the Red Sea stand side by side with those of mountain farms in one abundant basket.



JEDDAH & TAIF - THE INFLUENCE OF GEOGRAPHY ON CULTURE

The Red Sea and its abundant marine resources have played a central role in shaping Jeddah's culinary and cultural identity. The city lies along a rich coastal front teeming with high-quality fish such as coral trout, grouper, kingfish and the emperor fish, making seafood an essential part of Jeddah's cuisine and daily lifestyle. This identity is reflected in inherited social practices, including families gathering for fish dishes on Fridays, the bustling atmosphere of the central fish market Al Bangala and the distinctive dishes that blend rice with coastal spices.

In contrast, Taif's mountainous topography and mild climate have fostered a food culture and lifestyle deeply connected to the land. The region is renowned for its farms producing the Taif rose, mulberry, prickly pear, mountain honey, traditional ghee and Bajali almonds, resulting in a cuisine based on fresh seasonal ingredients. Signature dishes such as Taifi Saleeg (Taif-style creamy rice dish) and Malla Bread (bread baked on hot stones) reflect a rural mountain way of living rooted in sustainability.

Together, these characteristics form a shared culinary identity between the two cities, where the food of the sea in Jeddah meets the food of the mountain in Taif, creating a balanced and diverse gastronomic experience that stands as one of the strongest pillars of their nomination as a global culinary region.



JEDDAH & TAIF - FESTIVALS & TOURISM DESTINATIONS

Jeddah and Taif together present a comprehensive tourism landscape that blends sea, mountains, urban vibrancy and cultural heritage. In Jeddah, three core destinations form the backbone of the city's tourism experience:

Historic Jeddah - Al Balad, with its traditional markets and heritage houses listed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. It hosts year-round cultural and artistic events and festivals that revive the memory of the old city.

The Red Sea Corniche, an expansive waterfront that features open public spaces, restaurants and recreational activities, including diving and marine sports. It also serves as a major platform for large public shows and events.

The Jeddah Corniche Formula 1 Circuit, one of the world's fastest street circuits, offering visitors an immersive experience of global motorsport. Its annually hosted Grand Prix positions Jeddah as a dynamic international destination and adds a modern high-energy dimension to the city's tourism offerings.

Additionally, the Jeddah Islamic Port and the Jeddah Corniche Circuit for Formula 1 further strengthen the city's presence on the global events map.



JEDDAH & TAIF - FESTIVALS & TOURISM DESTINATIONS



In Taif, the tourism landscape is shaped by its stunning mountain nature and mild climate, with three main destinations and festivals forming the core of the visitor experience:

Al Ruddaf Park serves as a spacious family retreat, featuring wide green areas, recreational elements and its signature dancing fountain shows, which have become a prominent evening attraction for visitors.

Al Shafa and Al Hada offer the quintessential mountain resort experience, with views overlooking the Sarawat mountain range, terraced agricultural landscapes and organised leisure activities. These destinations represent Taif's identity as one of the Kingdom's most renowned summer retreats.

The Taifi Rose Festival completes the scene as a seasonal celebration of the local rose harvest, showcasing rose fields, distillation workshops and accompanying cultural and artistic events, highlighting the city's agricultural and mountain heritage.

With this blend of a global coastal front, mountain resorts and distinctive festivals, Jeddah and Taif together present a comprehensive tourism offering that enriches and supports year-round culinary tourism experiences.



PARTNERS & STAKEHOLDERS



هيئة فنون الطهي
Culinary Arts Commission



هيئة تطوير محافظة جدة
Jeddah Development Authority



جامعة دار الحكمة
DAR AL-HEKMA UNIVERSITY

شركة
تطوير
البلد
Al-Balad Development Co.



مزارع
AZKA
FARMS



تعاونية المرشدين السياحيين
Tour Guides Cooperative



مؤسسة عبدالله الثقفي العلمية للدراسات والبحوث
ABDULLAH AL-THAGAFI SCIENTIFIC INSTITUTION FOR STUDIES AND RESEARCH





We are proud to take part in the collective effort supporting the World Region of Gastronomy nomination for Jeddah and Taif. We acknowledge the importance of this initiative in enhancing cultural exchange, developing local talent and promoting sustainable gastronomic practices. Our organisation commits to engaging in relevant programmes, sharing expertise and contributing to initiatives that highlight the culinary identity of our regions.

We endorse this nomination and commit to:



Participating in activities related to gastronomic culture and heritage



Supporting collaborative projects across education, tourism and community engagement



Providing information, expertise or coordination when required for the development of the bid

Our institution values the opportunity to contribute to this national initiative and supports the efforts led by the Culinary Arts Commission.



DISCOVER THE GASTRONOMY OF JEDDAH & TAIF

Jeddah and Taif differ significantly in their environments and culinary traditions. Jeddah is a coastal city with a rich maritime heritage and a food culture shaped by its connection to the Red Sea and its long history of maritime trade. In contrast, Taif is known for its mountain climate and fertile agricultural landscape, making it a homeland for fruits and rural products.

This contrast is reflected clearly in each city's food traditions. Jeddah's cuisine draws from the sea, while Taif's culinary identity is rooted in its locally grown crops. Culinary heritage also appears in shared seasonal practices. For example, families in Jeddah and Taif traditionally prepare almond coffee and serve fresh green Molokhia (mallow stew) on the first day of the Hijri year as symbols of purity and renewal.

The diversity of local products and traditional dishes across both cities highlights a unique and vibrant food identity.





ALNAJIL



AlNajil, one of the Red Sea's most valued fish, is a defining element of Jeddah's culinary identity. Found along the city's coral reefs, its firm texture, clean flavour and relative scarcity make it especially prized. For the people of Jeddah, AlNajil carries deep cultural significance, appearing in Friday meals, family gatherings and prominently in the iconic Al Bangala fish market.



Traditionally, fresh AlNajil is prepared by frying it in oil until fully cooked, giving it a crisp texture and rich flavour. This method reflects Jeddah's maritime heritage, where fishing and regular seafood consumption have long shaped local food traditions.



Economically, AlNajil supports local fishermen and remains one of the most sought-after items in seafood restaurants, reinforcing its role as both a cultural symbol and an economic asset to the coastal community.



MUTTABAQ



In Jeddah, Muttabaq is prepared as one of the most popular traditional dishes, combining Jeddah flavour with skilled handcraft. It is made from a thin dough spread over a hot griddle, then filled with a mixture of minced meat, leeks and eggs. The dough is expertly folded and cooked in ghee or oil until it turns golden.



Muttabaq can be prepared either savoury or sweet. The sweet version is filled with bananas, cream or sweet cheese.



MA'SOUB



Ma'soub is made from a mixture of honey, mashed bananas and roasted flour. It is often served for breakfast or on special occasions, where it is placed on distinctive plates until it becomes lightly crisp, then topped with honey or condensed milk.



Ma'soub dates back to ancient times and is still popular among the people of Jeddah, symbolising family connection and the continuity of culinary heritage.



ALSAGODANA



AlSagodana is made using starch pearls (manioc or tapioca). The sago pearls are cooked with milk, sugar and rose water until they become soft and translucent.



In Jeddah, alSagodana is especially known as a traditional Ramadan dessert, gracing the tables in the evenings at the time of opening the fast and in the early morning when preparing for the fast throughout the holy month of Ramadan and drawing its significance from the city's rich heritage.

WHOLE WHEAT BREAD



Whole Wheat Bread is a traditional bread made from whole-grain wheat. It is distinguished by its puffed surface and airy pockets formed when baked at high temperatures.



The bread has a light flavour and a characteristic crispness, and it is especially popular in Jeddah during Ramadan and Eid. It is typically served with both sweet and savoury dishes, reflecting values of family connection and the preservation of culinary heritage.



TAIFI SALEEG



For the people of Taif, Saleeg carries a strong cultural significance, often prepared for family gatherings, festive occasions and large communal banquets as a symbol of generosity and hospitality.



Taifi Saleeg is one of the most iconic dishes of the Taif region and a defining expression of its mountain culinary heritage. Cooked slowly with rice simmered in rich lamb or chicken broth and finished with traditional Taif clarified ghee, the dish is known for its pure white colour, velvety texture and deep buttery flavour.

Its preparation reflects the agricultural character of Taif, where local dairy, livestock and mountain farms have long shaped everyday cooking practices. The reliance on high-quality local ghee and broth ties the dish to the region's farming traditions and seasonal rhythms. Economically, Taifi Saleeg supports local producers of dairy, meat and ghee, while remaining one of the most requested dishes in Taif's traditional restaurants. Today, it stands as both a cultural emblem and a culinary ambassador of the Taif region, embodying the warmth, abundance and heritage of mountain life.

MALLAH BREAD

The Mallah bread originates from the mountain slopes of Taif and is considered one of the earliest breads created by humans using earth and fire. It is made by kneading flour, water and salt into a simple dough, then burying it beneath hot ash to bake slowly. The result is a golden loaf with an aroma that fills the table.



In the past, the Mallah bread was prepared for celebrations and festive occasions. Large batches of dough were mixed in the evening and left to ferment overnight, then baked at dawn. It is traditionally served with ghee and honey.



ALMABSHOUR



AlMabshour comes from the highlands of Taif and is considered one of the region's most distinguished traditional dishes, perfected over generations.



The meat is carefully selected from the back or thigh, then hand-minced with belly fat, garlic, cumin, black pepper and salt. It is shaped into small balls and grilled over fine glowing charcoal until it absorbs the smoky aroma and the richness of mountain ghee.

It is traditionally served with rice cooked in bone broth and enriched with local ghee.



AlMabshour is commonly prepared for lunch and family gatherings and is regarded as a symbol of generosity, often served as a meal when welcoming guests.

BAJALI ALMONDS

Bajali almonds are nuts grown in the high-altitude areas of Taif, known for their large size and crisp texture. They hold a special place in the region's traditions, as crushed Bajali almonds are added to local almond coffee or served roasted alongside meals. Bajali almonds are also used in certain desserts, giving them a rich flavour and a meaningful presence in hospitality occasions.



TAIFI BERRY



The Taifi berry is grown in the cool highlands of Taif. It is eaten fresh during its short seasonal harvest or made into delicious jam. Its uniquely sweet flavour and limited season give it cultural significance, as berry juice is often included in hospitality offerings as a refreshing summer beverage. It is considered a high-value local product with economic and cultural importance.

TAIFI FIG



The Taifi fig is a seasonal fruit grown in the highland farms of Taif. It is distinguished by its early ripening and rich sweet taste and is regarded as one of the most delectable summer fruits. It is eaten fresh when in season or made into delicious jam. Its cultural value is high; fig juice is often included in hospitality menus as a refreshing summer beverage, and the fruit is classified as a local product with added value.



LOCAL FOOD PRODUCTS & CULINARY IDENTITY COMPONENTS

Jeddah's cuisine draws its ingredients from its coastal location and its long-standing openness to the Red Sea.

Wheat products & baked goods

Items such as tamees (flatbread baked in a tandoor), Aish Laham (bread layered with minced meat) and Ma'soub (honey-banana mashed bread dessert) reflect Jeddah's diverse population and its history of commercial openness, where local flavours blend seamlessly with ingredients and influences from neighbouring cultures.

Spices

Jeddah's cuisine was shaped by maritime trade routes through which spices, cloves and cinnamon entered the city centuries ago. This gave its dishes layered flavours that blend influences from both East and West.

Fish & seafood

Fish and seafood form the backbone of Jeddah's cuisine, from Al Najil (coral trout) and kanad (kingfish) to shrimp, and are prepared in various ways such as grilled, fried or cooked with rice as in Sayadiyah (spiced fish and rice dish). Fish in Jeddah is distinguished using well-balanced local spices that highlight the natural flavour of the sea.



LOCAL FOOD PRODUCTS & CULINARY IDENTITY COMPONENTS

Taifi Honey

Taifi honey is a premium mountain honey produced from the nectar of wildflowers found in Taif's high-altitude valleys. It is known for its deep flavour, natural sweetness and aromatic floral notes. Taifi honey is widely used in traditional dishes and served alongside bread, ghee and dairy products. It is also regarded as a cherished gift due to its purity, nutritional benefits and strong association with Taif's rich agricultural heritage.

Taifi Ghee

Taifi ghee is a clarified butter traditionally prepared from full-fat milk. It is recognised for its golden colour and aromatic scent. Taifi ghee is used in cooking and serving, added to rice and traditional dishes such as Taifi Saleeg (Taif-style creamy rice cooked in broth), and is considered a customary gift due to its nutritional value and distinctive flavour.

LOCAL FOOD PRODUCTS & CULINARY IDENTITY COMPONENTS

Taifi Rose

The Taifi rose grows in dedicated mountain farms across the Taif highlands. Its petals are hand-picked and distilled to produce Taifi rose water, which is used in luxury perfumes and cosmetic products. Rose water is also added to desserts and beverages to impart a distinctive aroma that reflects Taif's floral identity. The Taifi rose is considered one of the region's most iconic agricultural and cultural symbols.

Taifi Cheese

Traditional Taif cheese is a white cheese made from cow or goat milk. It has a mildly tangy flavour and a soft, tender texture. This local cheese is typically served at breakfast alongside local ghee, honey and traditional bread. Its presence on the table is closely tied to Taif's heritage of hospitality and its longstanding culinary traditions.



COOKING METHODS IN JEDDAH & TAIF



Jeddah, shaped by the sea and its long maritime heritage, is known for cooking methods inspired by its coastal environment and lively markets. Frying is central to its cuisine, especially for fresh Red Sea fish such as Al Najil (coral trout), giving it a crisp texture and distinct ocean flavour. Steaming is also key, particularly in dishes such as Mantu (steamed meat-filled dumplings), cooked in a dedicated steam pot to achieve soft dough and a rich filling that reflects the city's cultural diversity. Charcoal grilling adds a smoky aroma to meats and chicken, forming an essential part of Jeddah's culinary identity.

Taif, a city of mountains and fertile farms, is known for cooking methods that reflect its landscape and heritage. Cooking over wood and embers imparts a deep smoky flavour and comforting warmth to dishes such as Mandi (spiced meat and rice cooked in a tandoor-style pit) and Taifi Saleeg (creamy rice cooked in broth). The Mallah bread, baked directly on ash, gains its distinctive crispness and unique colour from this traditional method. Taif is also renowned for slow-cooked rice blended with local spices and paired with lamb or chicken, creating a complete dish with authentic flavour and harmonious texture.



FEEDING THE PLANET

This pillar positions Jeddah and Taif at the forefront of developing a safe, inclusive and sustainable food system that reduces waste, preserves resources and strengthens local production within a circular food economy.

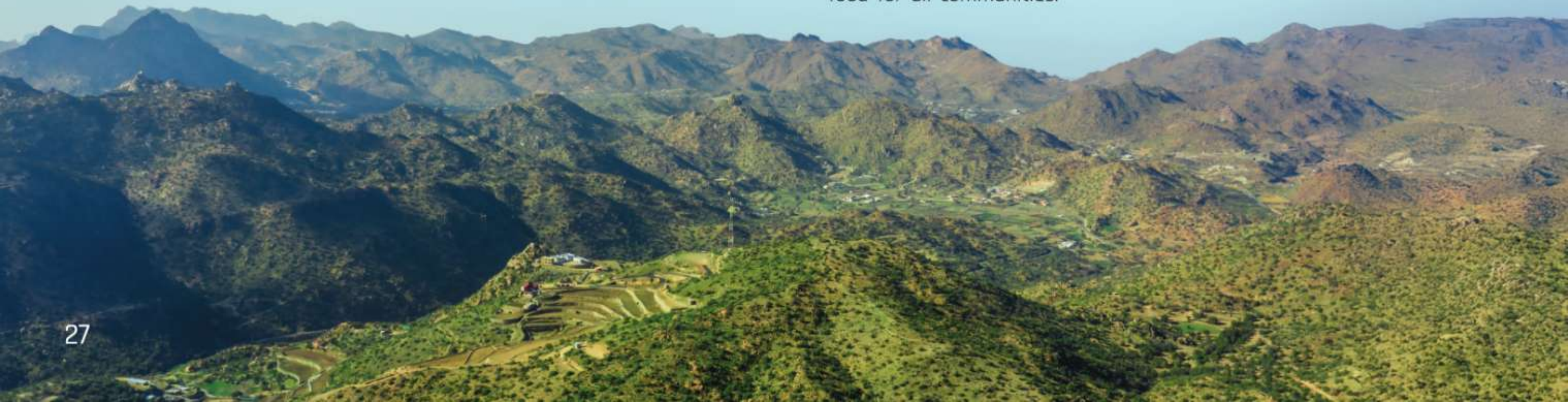
A key component is the establishment of an integrated surplus-food management system. Cooked and uncooked food from restaurants, event halls and major markets is collected, sorted, packaged and stored in accordance with health standards, then redistributed year-round to families in need and charitable organisations. This approach minimises food loss and significantly reduces pressure on landfills.

Another priority is the adoption of non-conventional water resources in agriculture. Efforts include capturing and storing rain and floodwater, reusing tertiary-treated wastewater and deploying advanced technologies that extract atmospheric vapour in desert regions to produce water suitable for irrigation and drinking. These initiatives provide more stable and sustainable water supplies while reducing reliance on groundwater.

Jeddah and Taif are also nurturing innovation within the circular food economy. Universities and innovation centres are encouraged to launch business incubators and entrepreneurship programmes dedicated to food security, agricultural technology, efficient production and storage solutions, improved distribution and the conversion of food residues into new products such as animal feed, organic fertilisers and value-added foods.

The development of healthy food products forms a central part of this pillar. Local crops including almonds, grains and honey are processed to enhance nutritional value, extend shelf life and present them in modern formats that appeal to local and global markets. This supports farmers, boosts income across the food value chain and opens new employment opportunities.

In alignment with the International Institute of Gastronomy, Culture, Arts and Tourism (IGCAT), Jeddah and Taif intend to progressively apply IGCAT's Food Commitment as a guiding framework for this pillar. This will help ensure that local food systems remain sustainable, culturally rooted and equitable – reducing waste, protecting biodiversity and safeguarding traditional food knowledge while improving access to healthy, high-quality food for all communities.



INNOVATION, CREATIVITY & JOB OPPORTUNITIES

This pillar seeks to build a dynamic food innovation ecosystem that positions Jeddah and Taif as leading hubs in the food sector, creating diverse employment opportunities across the entire value chain from farms to culinary experiences and tourism. The focus is on empowering youth, productive families and entrepreneurs to elevate their products, recipes and presentation methods in order to enhance the competitiveness of local offerings in the market.

Key initiatives include developing innovative markets and display platforms that enable productive families and young people to showcase their products in organised and attractive environments, with dedicated spaces for organic goods and small farmers to improve access to consumers. Additional efforts involve exploring shared workspaces and experimental cooking labs where new recipes and products can be tested with sample consumer groups, supported by practical training programmes on culinary skills, entrepreneurship and small business management specific to the food sector.

There is also a strong emphasis on strengthening processing industries based on local crops such as mountain almonds, roses, grains and honey. Modern food products with distinctive visual identities are developed to appeal to local and global markets. These efforts are reinforced through training and mentorship programmes that support entrepreneurs in areas such as financial planning, digital marketing and supply chain management. The subject of food innovation is also being integrated into university and hospitality education to align academic outcomes with labour market needs.

Within this pillar, special attention will be given to local craftspeople and designers, encouraging them to develop high-quality food-related products that express the identity of Jeddah and Taif. Selected products will be prepared for participation in IGCAT's World Food Gifts Challenge, creating opportunities for artisans to gain international visibility. At the same time, entrepreneurs will be supported to design authentic food experiences for international visitors – including curated tastings, storytelling dinners and farm-to-city tours – that connect local chefs, markets, farms and crafts in a coherent and marketable offer.



EDUCATION FOR OUR FUTURE

This pillar seeks to make food a gateway to education and a means of building awareness of identity, history and the environment, so that local dishes become a medium for telling the story of a place and its people. The core approach is to use tasting experiences and cultural events as educational tools that introduce students and visitors to traditional dishes and connect them to their geographical, historical and social contexts.

Efforts focus on creating interactive educational tasting experiences in schools, universities, museums and festivals. These experiences explain the ingredients of local dishes, how they are prepared and how they relate to the surrounding environment and traditional ways of life. This includes hands-on educational programmes for children and youth that combine learning the principles of modern nutrition with preserving traditional recipes, while encouraging the development of new dishes that use local ingredients in contemporary ways.



Programmes and awareness activities on responsible consumption and resource management are also being launched in schools, universities and neighbourhoods through awareness days and practical projects to reduce food waste, recycle organic waste into compost and make use of digital applications that help prevent food waste. These initiatives contribute to instilling the values of sustainability and responsibility in future generations.



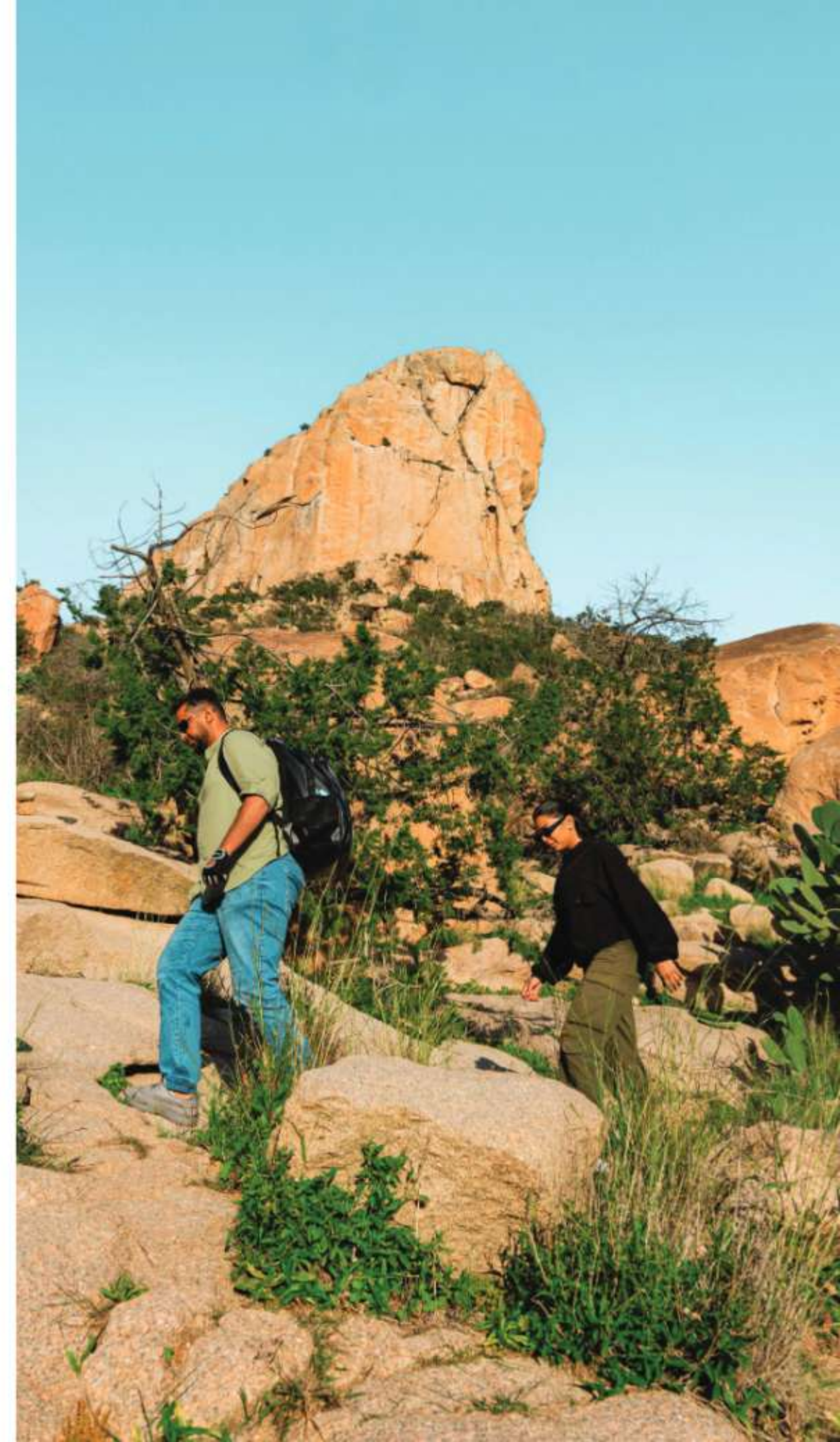
BALANCED & SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

This pillar focuses on connecting tourism experiences with food, agriculture and countryside life within a balanced framework that respects the environment and the local community. The aim is to allow visitors to discover the beauty of each location through flavours, rural traditions and authentic stories. Central to this approach is the development of farm-to-table experiences where visitors can participate in harvesting crops, milking livestock or preparing bread and traditional dishes using fresh farm products, while learning about the families and agricultural heritage behind these experiences.

Efforts include preparing selected farms to receive visitors as fully equipped rural tourism destinations. This involves designing clear internal pathways, creating welcoming hospitality areas and developing complementary activities such as guided tours and the sale of farm baskets and local products. These measures generate additional income for farmers and increase the length of visitor stays. There is also consideration of creating integrated tourist routes that combine multiple rural experiences across Jeddah and Taif, enabling visitors to move between farm tours, live cooking experiences and local product markets within a single organised programme.

To ensure high standards, supporting efforts focus on training farm owners and workers in the principles of rural hospitality, including visitor reception skills, the art of storytelling linked to food and agricultural heritage and effective communication with guests. This is complemented by linking farms to tourism companies and digital booking platforms, helping to reinforce the economic and social sustainability of rural tourism.

To share these experiences with a wider audience, the program will encourage the creation of audiovisual materials and short films that tell Jeddah and Taif's food stories – from farms and markets to contemporary culinary creativity. These works will be promoted locally and, where appropriate, submitted to IGCAT's Food Film Menu International Competition, providing local filmmakers, chefs and communities with a platform to showcase their stories internationally.



RURAL & URBAN LINKING



This pillar aims to rebuild the connection between cities and the countryside and to familiarise residents with the origins of their food and the effort behind every dish that reaches their tables. The focus is on providing educational experiences and field visits that revive historic production sites, highlight agricultural seasons and traditional production methods and allow visitors to take part in hands-on activities such as harvesting crops and preparing rural products.

Practical efforts include establishing camps and family-oriented exploratory activities on farms for families and students. These activities combine walks through the fields, learning about bees and farm animals and outdoor cooking experiences. Such engagement strengthens the bond between younger generations and nature and deepens their appreciation of the value of food. There is also consideration of repurposing vacant land in urban neighbourhoods as community green spaces where residents can grow vegetables and aromatic plants, learn home gardening and manage organic waste.

The picture is completed by organising seasonal festivals in Taif and its surrounding areas that celebrate fruit harvests and agricultural seasons. These festivals bring together agricultural exhibitions with recreational and cultural activities and connect visitors directly with farms and rural experiences, helping ensure that both rural and urban communities benefit from these efforts.

Young chefs from Jeddah and Taif will be encouraged to act as ambassadors for local food and crafts, designing menus that highlight ingredients sourced from rural areas in urban restaurants and participating in outreach activities with schools and communities. Their talent will be nurtured and showcased through participation in initiatives such as the MENA Young Chef Awards, helping to elevate the next generation of culinary professionals while strengthening links between rural producers and urban consumers.



WELL-BEING & A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

This pillar seeks to make local food, health and well-being an integral part of the daily lifestyle of residents and visitors through experiences and programmes that encourage balanced nutrition, physical activity, good sleep and mental health. The approach is built on leveraging the natural, climatic, coastal and mountainous assets of Jeddah and Taif to offer holistic wellness experiences.

Efforts include developing wellness and therapeutic tourism concepts that combine tranquil accommodation with light outdoor activities in nature, such as walking along the seafront or on prepared mountain trails, supported by healthy menus based on local products and tailored to the needs of different groups. Additional wellness and health experiences use local products including honey, dates, herbs, roses and aromatic plants in relaxation sessions and natural treatments that help relieve stress, improve sleep and support mental well-being, while highlighting the link between these products and the region's food identity.

Parallel efforts focus on awareness and education. Programmes introduce the health heritage associated with local food by explaining the benefits of traditional foods such as honey, dates, milk and whole grains, documenting beneficial recipes and practices and presenting them to new generations in contemporary ways. These efforts can be reinforced by school and university programmes centred on physical activity and proper nutrition and by community partnerships with associations and volunteer groups to organise awareness events, health check-ups and open fitness activities for all, supporting the sustainability of a healthy lifestyle across society.



OUR PARTICIPATION & COMMITMENT



Feeding the Planet → IGCAT's Food Commitment

By preparing for and participating in IGCAT's Food Commitment, we will actively practice the Feeding the Planet pillar through a clear framework for sustainable local food systems, including reducing food waste, protecting biodiversity, safeguarding traditional food knowledge, and improving access to healthy, high-quality food.



Innovation, Creativity & Job Opportunities → World Food Gifts Challenge

By developing and curating locally made food-related products for the World Food Gifts Challenge, we will practice the Innovation, Creativity & Job Opportunities pillar by empowering craftspeople and designers, strengthening product identity and quality, and supporting entrepreneurs to create market-ready, authentic offerings that gain international visibility.



Rural & Urban Linking → MENA Young Chef Awards

By nurturing young chefs and preparing them to participate in the MENA Young Chef Awards, we will practice the Rural & Urban Linking pillar by positioning chefs as ambassadors who design menus featuring rural ingredients in urban venues, strengthen producer-consumer connections, and expand community outreach through food education and engagement.



Balanced & Sustainable Tourism → Food Film Menu International Competition

By creating and submitting audiovisual stories to the Food Film Menu International Competition, we will practice the Balanced & Sustainable Tourism pillar by showcasing farm-to-market-to-table experiences, promoting responsible visitor engagement, and elevating the region's culinary identity through high-impact storytelling.



SUSTAINABILITY & LEGACY

Jeddah and Taif adopt a comprehensive sustainability and legacy strategy that ensures the title year becomes a launching point for long-term transformation in the region's food, tourism and cultural systems rather than a temporary moment of celebration. Throughout the title year, programmes and events are delivered through an integrated partnership model led by a regional stakeholders committee that brings together representatives from government entities, the private sector, the nonprofit sector and universities. Roles are clearly defined according to specialisation and geographic scope across both Jeddah and Taif.

This strategy is supported by a sustainable financing framework that combines government support with strategic sponsorships from major companies in hospitality, food and tourism investment, while also encouraging social investment in programmes that empower productive families and young chefs and by leveraging the international IGCAT network.

Beyond the title year, the strategy focuses on converting the project's achievements into a lasting institutional legacy. This includes transforming successful events into annual festivals, integrating awareness and training programmes into government plans, maintaining active membership in IGCAT networks and aligning the project with national tourism strategies and Saudi Vision 2030. The plan also includes publishing a Project Legacy Document and developing an interactive digital archive to document stories and initiatives.

The legacy strategy also focuses on capacity building for productive families, youth and chefs through training, competitions, exchange programmes and professional accreditation for restaurants serving heritage dishes. These efforts are strengthened by establishing supportive institutions such as a Culinary Arts Center in Jeddah and an Agricultural Culinary Institute in Taif, and by transforming the regional committee into a permanent coordinating body, with NGOs and chambers of commerce tasked with leading specialised initiatives. Together, these measures ensure that the project's economic, cultural and social impact continues for many years beyond the title year.



EVALUATION & MONITORING



A dedicated evaluation and monitoring framework will track progress towards the objectives of the Jeddah-Taif World Region of Gastronomy program across all pillars. Baseline data will be collected in 2025 and targets will be set for 2025–2027 for key indicators, including but not limited to:

- 🌸 number of local food SMEs, craftspeople and productive families supported
- 🌸 number of new or upgraded local food products, services and experiences launched
- 🌸 number of participants in gastronomy-related education and training programs
- 🌸 number of schools, universities and training centers integrating gastronomy and sustainability content
- 🌸 volume of food recovered, redistributed or food waste avoided
- 🌸 number of farms, restaurants and tourism businesses adopting sustainable practices
- 🌸 number of participants in farm-to-table experiences, rural tourism and urban-rural exchange activities
- 🌸 number of young chefs and creative professionals engaged in joint projects and competitions
- 🌸 number of national and international visitors reached through gastronomy-focused offers and events
- 🌸 visibility and outreach achieved through media coverage, social media engagement and audiovisual selections

Monitoring will be coordinated by the Stakeholders' Committee, using a digital dashboard «Smartsheet», quarterly progress reviews and annual reports to the Culinary Arts Commission and key partners. An independent academic evaluation will be carried out at mid-term and at the end of the title cycle to assess impact and legacy. Findings will be shared with IGCAT and local stakeholders and will inform adjustments to programs to ensure continuous improvement.



ECONOMIC SUPPORT

Jeddah and Taif rely on a well-developed infrastructure that supports the growth of the sector. This includes a modern road network, an international seaport in Jeddah, airports and tourism attractions capable of accommodating increasing numbers of visitors. The two cities also benefit from vibrant traditional markets, including Jeddah's busy fish markets and Taif's active agricultural markets, which reinforce daily commercial activity and support the income of farmers, fishermen and small-scale traders.

Small and medium enterprises and entrepreneurs in the food, beverage and local product sectors are supported through financing programmes, development initiatives and business incubators that help them establish and scale projects linked to traditional cuisine and high-value agricultural and marine products.

The culinary and gastronomic tourism sector in Jeddah and Taif represents a vital economic engine that contributes to diversifying the national economy in line with Saudi Vision 2030. Its value chains begin with marine fishing and mountain agriculture and extend to food manufacturing, hospitality and event management. These activities generate direct and indirect employment opportunities for youth and women in restaurants, markets, local products and tourism services.

By securing the title of World Culinary Region, Jeddah and Taif will be positioned to attract greater investment in signature restaurants, specialised markets and culinary festivals. This will empower the local community, increase economic returns for distinctive local products and contribute to building a more sustainable and inclusive economic development model for the residents of both cities.



CORE GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES

A comprehensive governance model has been established to ensure the effective management of the title in partnership with entities across Jeddah and Taif, including governmental, private, academic and nonprofit sectors. The model is built on the principles of transparency, partnership and efficiency, supported by clear decision-making mechanisms that ensure inclusive participation and firm commitment from all stakeholders involved.



CORE GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES

Culinary Arts Commission (Supervising Authority)

The Culinary Arts Commission provides overall strategic leadership for the title. Its responsibilities include approving strategic plans and budgets, ensuring alignment with national policies and Vision 2030 and issuing final decisions and directives that guide the project toward its objectives.

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee comprises representatives from major entities in Jeddah and Taif, including local government bodies, private sector institutions, universities and nonprofit organisations. It leads implementation at the strategic level and ensures coordination and integration among partners to achieve shared goals. The committee holds the authority to make executive decisions within the approved budget and plans. It also reviews periodic progress reports and submits structural or technical recommendations to the Culinary Arts Commission when needed.

Executive Office

The Executive Office functions as the administrative working team responsible for day-to-day management and on-ground execution of initiatives and events. It ensures the quality of programme delivery and effective coordination among participating entities, tracks progress and prepares periodic reports for both the Executive Committee and the Culinary Arts Commission. The Office also serves as the central communication link between committees and stakeholders to ensure the timely execution of decisions and directives.



Local Subcommittees (Jeddah Committee and Taif Committee)

Two local subcommittees operate in Jeddah and Taif to address the specific opportunities and challenges of each city. Each committee coordinates initiatives and events within its respective city, engages with local authorities and leaders and ensures that local needs are met and that the benefits of the title are maximised. Both committees provide observations and recommendations to the Executive Committee to maintain alignment across the two cities.

Stakeholders Committee

The Stakeholders Committee brings together representatives from governmental, private, academic and nonprofit sectors and serves as a participatory platform that ensures consultation and the exchange of perspectives among stakeholders. Its purpose is to enhance transparency and strengthen community engagement in planning and execution. The committee provides technical and community-based recommendations that support decision-making and may hold joint meetings with the Executive Office to review policies or initiatives that impact the wider community.



CORE GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES

Transparency

Transparency is ensured by sharing project information clearly and regularly with partners and stakeholders and by adopting public disclosure policies for plans and reports. This strengthens accountability and builds trust across all participating parties.

Partnership

Strong partnerships across public, private and civil society sectors are activated to guarantee active participation in planning, decision-making and implementation. This collaborative approach reinforces integration and shared success.

Effectiveness

Effectiveness is achieved by focusing on measurable results through a flexible and well-defined administrative structure. Roles and responsibilities for all committees and teams are clearly assigned. Performance indicators and regular monitoring ensure efficient and timely execution, together with the ability to adapt to challenges and maintain continuous improvement when needed.

Decision-Making Mechanisms

Clear decision-making processes guide governance at all levels. Strategic decisions are escalated to the Culinary Arts Commission for final approval, while the Executive Committee is authorised to make operational decisions within its scope. Governance mechanisms guarantee the inclusion of technical and community perspectives through the Stakeholders Committee before major decisions are finalised, ensuring outcomes that are comprehensive and aligned with community needs.



Conclusion

Through this structured governance model, Jeddah and Taif will be able to manage the title with efficiency and transparency while sustaining momentum and benefits for years ahead. Bringing all relevant parties together under a unified governance system ensures effective implementation and secures a lasting legacy for the region as a global culinary destination aligned with IGCAT standards and aspirations.





PLATFORM COLLABORATION

As part of preparing the nomination file for the title of World Region of Gastronomy, Jeddah and Taif reaffirm their commitment to strengthening collaboration with European and International Gastronomy Regions. With a clear understanding of the expectations of the International Institute of Gastronomy, Culture, Arts and Tourism (IGCAT), both cities recognise that joining the World Region of Gastronomy platform means becoming active participants in an international network where regions exchange knowledge, share expertise and build long-term partnerships.

Jeddah and Taif will participate in joint meetings and programmes, develop collaboration with awarded regions through exchange visits and expert sharing and lead joint projects in areas such as culinary education, sustainable food tourism and community empowerment. Jeddah and Taif will participate actively in IGCAT's joint international projects – including IGCAT's Food Commitment, the World Food Gifts Challenge, the Food Film Menu International Competition and the MENA Young Chef Awards – and will integrate these initiatives into the main strategic pillars of the program.

Through this commitment, Jeddah and Taif place international collaboration and the exchange of culture and knowledge at the heart of their long-term strategy.



COMMUNICATION & PROMOTION PLAN

The communication and promotion plan is a core component of the nomination of Jeddah and Taif for the title of World Region of Gastronomy. Its purpose is to showcase the cultural and culinary strengths of the region locally, regionally and internationally, while increasing public awareness and strengthening community support for the nomination.

A dedicated website will be developed to present the unique identity of the region and act as a central platform for partners and stakeholders. It will highlight initiatives and projects related to the nomination, facilitate transparent communication and ensure the effective sharing of information with audiences both at home and abroad.

Communication Objectives



Increase public awareness of Jeddah and Taif as a distinguished culinary destination



Attract media coverage and strengthen the digital presence of the nomination



Engage the local community and stakeholders in supporting the nomination



Highlight the region's commitment to sustainability and innovation in the culinary arts



AMBASSADOR

Eman Qazzaz is a Saudi cooking enthusiast who has become one of the most influential voices in traditional Saudi cuisine. As the daughter of a former ambassador, representing her country has always been part of her identity, strongly rooted in her upbringing and reflected in her passion for promoting Saudi food culture. Active on social media since 2010, she has dedicated her platforms to preserving traditional Saudi recipes and ensuring they remain alive and accessible for future generations.

Eman has built a substantial digital presence with more than one million combined followers across TikTok, Instagram and YouTube. She is widely recognised for her creative homemade recipes, her documentation of local ingredients and her consistent celebration of Saudi culinary heritage. Her long-standing dedication to sharing authentic dishes and culinary stories has positioned her as an inspiring example of heritage-rooted cuisine.

With her strong public influence, deep cultural awareness and authentic connection to Saudi traditions, Eman Qazzaz stands as a natural partner to support the vision of Jeddah and Taif as a World Region of Gastronomy.



BUDGET 2025-2029

This budget presents the confirmed core funding committed by the Culinary Arts Commission and local partners for the Jeddah-Taif World Region of Gastronomy program between 2025 and 2027. In addition to these allocations, further co-funding and in-kind contributions are expected from municipal authorities, regional development agencies, private sponsors and cultural and educational institutions. These additional resources - including venue support, communication campaigns, staffing and volunteer contributions - will be detailed in annual implementation plans. The figures below be considered as a conservative starting budget, which will be strengthened as partnership agreements are finalized.

Category	Amount (SAR)
Project Plan	260,869
Marketing & Communication	517,391
Project Governance	204,347
Logistics & International Cultural Program Activation	347,826
Administrative Fees	694,384
Activation Plan	3,500,000
Title Sustainability Plan	2,000,000
TOTAL	7,524,817



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In addition to the following entities

Ministry of Culture

Culinary Arts Commission

Heritage Commission

Saudi Tourism Authority

Ministry of Environment, Water and Agriculture

Jeddah Development Authority

King Abdulaziz University

Dar Al-Hekma University

The Royal Institute of Traditional Arts

Institute of Islamic Research and Studies

Tour Guides Cooperative

Jeddah Chamber

Queen's Taste

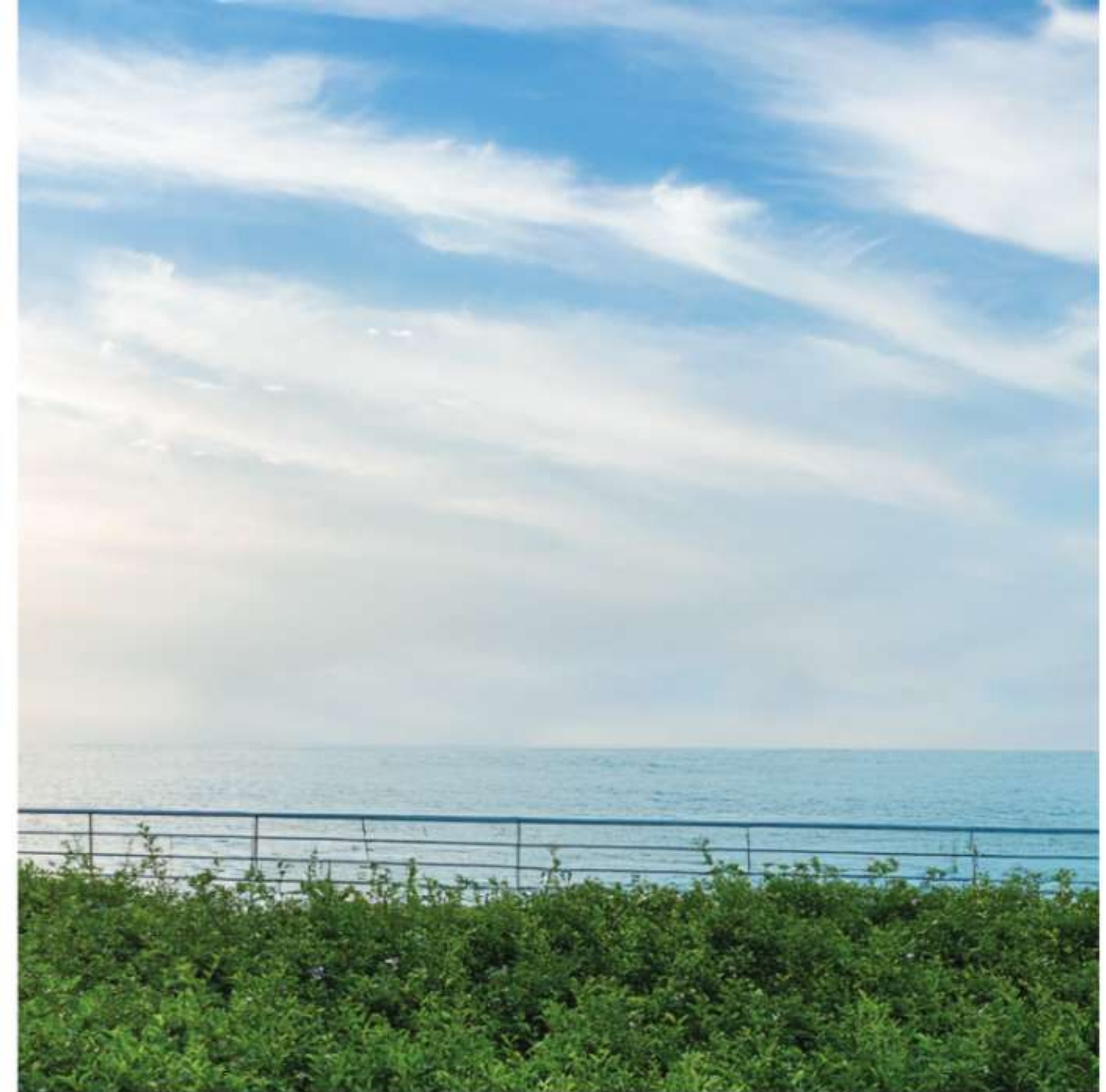
Abdullah Al Thagafi SCIENTIFIC INSTITUTION FOR STUDIES AND RESEARCH

Azka Food

Aish Academy

Taif Literary Society

Chef Safrah Center



Acknowledgement

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Thank you to all stakeholders who have contributed to this endeavor and the entire process of developing this bid.



