

For 20 consecutive years, Jeddah has been named a "global city" by the GaWC for offering a high quality of life to its citizens. So what makes Jeddah a global city and one of the best places to live in the Middle East? Residents and visitors point out several aspects relating to everyday life, such as the city's cultural diversity, modern architecture and engineering, rich cultural heritage, and high quality of education . Jeddah is a leading destination for international students and travelers. It has several public and private universities that provide a very high standard of academics. Jeddah is also the gateway to the Holy City of Makkah and hosts millions of pilgrims from around the world on their way to Hajj every year. Jeddah has been an example of modern architectural and engineering innovation since the 1980s. One of the city's major landmarks is King Fahd's Fountain, the highest fountain in the world. It jets water as high as 312 meters (1024 feet) and can be seen from nearly everywhere in the city. Other landmarks include the NCB Tower, the IDB Tower, and the Jeddah Municipality Tower. There are also plans to build the 1,000-meter high Kingdom Tower, which, when completed, will be the world's tallest building. During the 1980's, many works of art were introduced into Jeddah's public areas, making it one of the largest open-air galleries in the world. Modern sculptures, ranging from abstract works to traditional coffee pots and airplanes, decorate the pedestrian streets and roundabouts of the city. There are also a number of museums and galleries to visit. Bayt Naseef in Al-Balad was once home to the wealthy merchant family who hosted King Abdulaziz Ibn Saud in 1925. Today, it houses a historic museum and heritage exhibits. The historic center of Al-Balad is a charming blend of traditional houses and modern glass skyscrapers, and its huge marketplace features a combination of traditional souqs and designer boutiques. Today, huge efforts are being made to preserve its historical architecture. The city is also famous for its recreation. It is home to many famous football and athletic clubs. A light breeze cools the coast in the Corniche area, where visitors can eat at the many restaurants, relax by the beach, and have fun at the amusement park. And the beautiful coral reefs of the Red Sea are popular with scuba divers. There's always something interesting to do in Jeddah, the "Bride of the red sea"