Detailed Umrah Travel Guide

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Introduction

The goal of this guide is to help you plan and organise your Umrah journey by providing the information and steps you need to take. It covers the initial preparations, travel routes, expenses, required permits and process steps. Additionally, the guide contains information regarding visiting Madinah (Noble Rawdah and the Honorable Chamber), official platforms that explain Umrah rituals, useful mobile applications and important notes.

The provided information is based on an Umrah experience taken from Bratislava in September 2024. It would be very beneficial especially if you travel for the first time or alone. To make your search easier, we have included examples of companies (for visas, transportation, hotels, etc.), However, you are free to select the ones that best suit your needs. May your Umrah journey be blessed and filled with peace and devotion.

Essentials

a) Saudi visa
b) Ihram clothes
c) Transportation tickets (Buses & Flights)
d) Hotel
e) Umrah permit
f) Noble Rawdah permit (if you wish to visit Madinah and pray in the Noble Rawdah)

Travel Routes

- Here are two routes to perform Umrah. Choose any of them or customize your own route.

A. Entering Ihram state on the plane:

- Go route is (Bratislava - Vienna - Jeddah - Makkah).
- Return route is (Makkah - Jeddah - Vienna - Bratislava).
- Details:
    1. Bus (Bratislava - Vienna International Airport)
    2. Airplane flight (Vienna International Airport - King Abdulaziz International Airport)
    3. Bus (King Abdulaziz International Airport - Makkah bus station).
    4. Walk / bus / taxi (Makkah bus station - your hotel).

B. Entering Ihram state at Madinah - Miqat Dhul-Hulaifa:

- Go route is (Bratislava - Vienna - Jeddah - Madinah - Makkah).
- Return route is (Makkah - Jeddah - Vienna - Bratislava).
- Details:

❖ **Bratislava - your Hotel at Madinah:**

1. Bus (Bratislava - Vienna International Airport)
2. Airplane flight (Vienna International Airport - King Abdulaziz International Airport).
3. Walk / taxi / bus to the Haramain High Speed Railway station.
4. Haramain High Speed Railway (King Abdulaziz International Airport Station - Madinah Haramain High Speed Railway Station).
5. Taxi / bus (Madinah Haramain High Speed Railway Station - your hotel).

❖ **Madinah - your Hotel at Makkah:**

6. Taxi / bus (your hotel - Miqat Dhul-Hulaifa). **For entering Ihram state.**
7. Taxi / bus (Miqat Dhul-Hulaifa - Madinah Haramain High Speed Railway Station).
8. Haramain High Speed Railway (Madinah Haramain High Speed Railway Station - Makkah Haramain High Speed Railway Station).
9. Taxi / bus (Makkah Haramain High Speed Railway Station - your hotel).

❖ **Your Hotel at Makkah - Bratislava:**

10. Walk / bus / taxi (your hotel - Makkah bus station).
11. Bus (Makkah bus station - King Abdulaziz International Airport).
12. Airplane flight (King Abdulaziz International Airport - Vienna International Airport).
13. Bus (Vienna International Airport - Bratislava).

Expenses

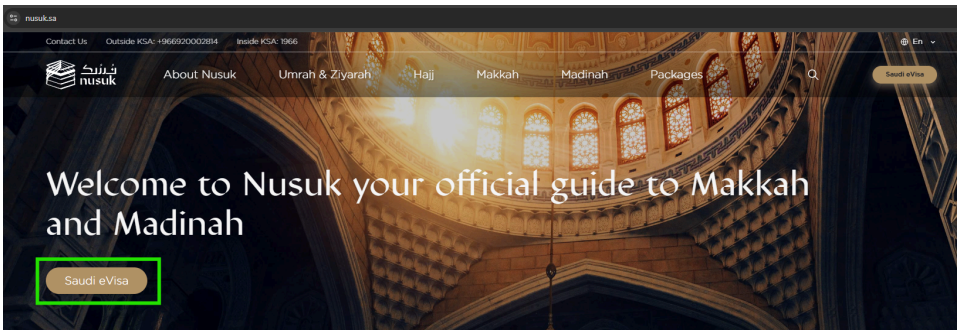
- Expenses are calculated **(Approximately)**.
- “Euro” currency for 1 travel week.
- Essentials: 660 - 850. Optional: 140
- Essentials in detail:
    a) Saudi visa: 110 - 300. Depends on the chosen visa option, validity duration and number of entries.
    b) Ihram clothes: at Vienna 40 , at Madinah 15
    c) Transportation tickets: 250
        - Flights (Better to book weeks in advance, 10 Kg luggage): 200
        - Buses: 40
    d) Hotel: 30 per night
    e) Umrah permit: free
    f) Food: 12.5 per day

- Optional in detail:
    a) Transportation to, inside and from Madinah (round-trip): 125
    b) Saudi SIM card (with internet plan): 15

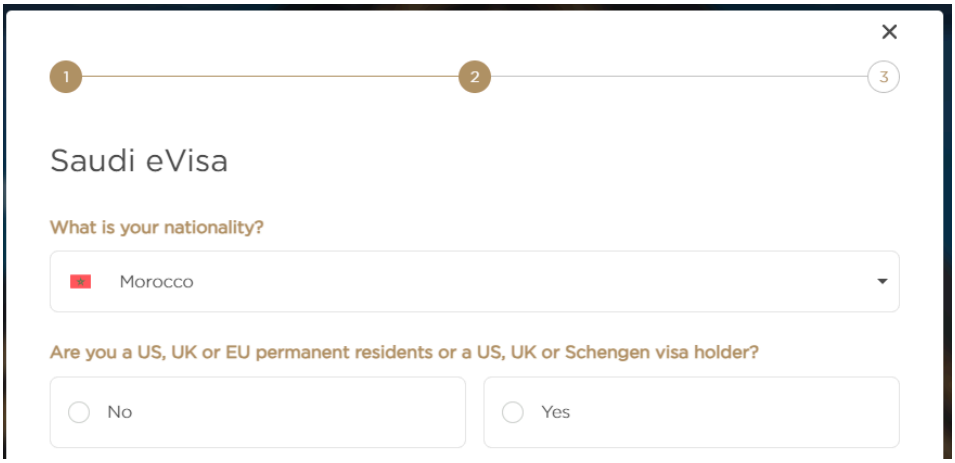
Process steps

a) Saudi visa:

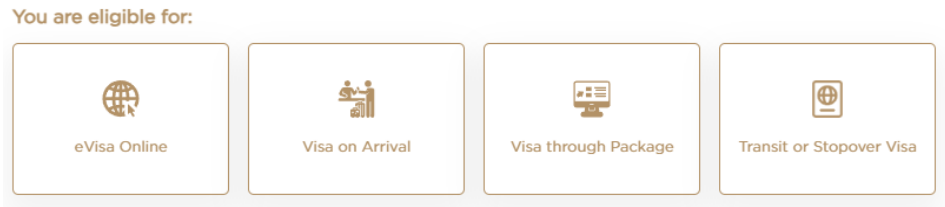
1. Open “Nusuk” website. This is an official platform for Umrah, Hajj and more.
2. Check your visa options:
    - Click on the “Saudi eVisa” button.



    - Fill in personal details.



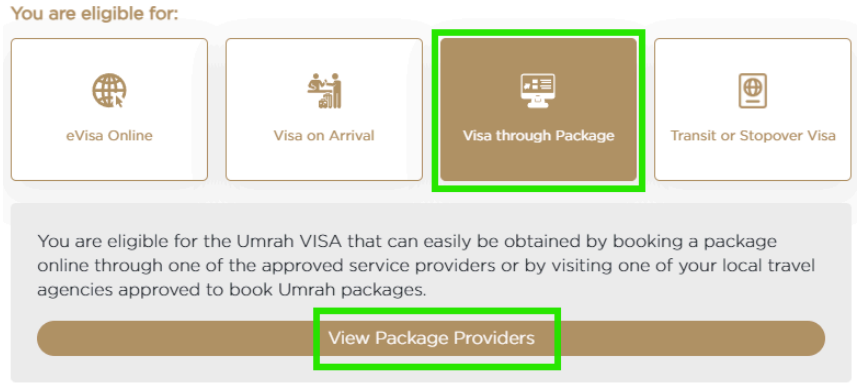
    - See eligible options and read the requirements carefully.

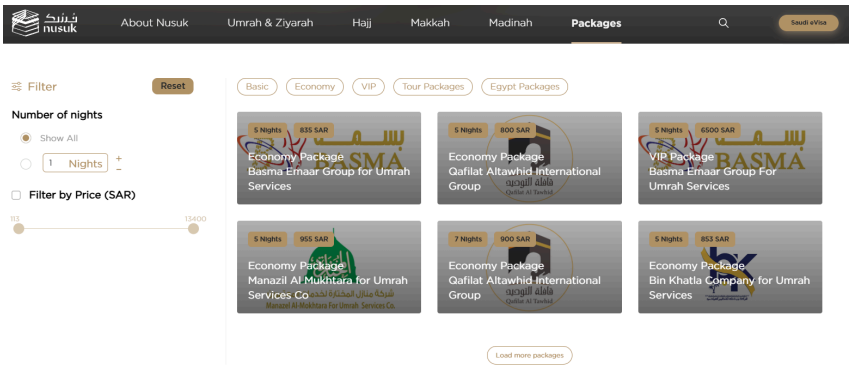


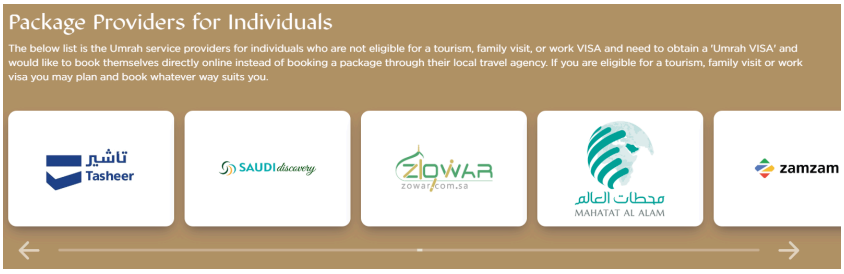
3. **Key Notes when selecting a visa option:**

★ **Generally, for the Umrah purpose.** It is recommended to obtain your visa through one of the approved service providers or by visiting one of your local travel agencies approved to book Umrah packages. You may apply through option “a” or “b”:

a) Approved service providers by Nusuk: Click on the “Visit Package Providers” button. Then, contact any service provider (for Groups or Individuals). Some packages (especially group packages) may include accommodation in a hotel room, transportation from hotel to Haram, etc. Therefore, they will save your time and help you get a hotel room, some transportation inside Saudi Arabia and more.



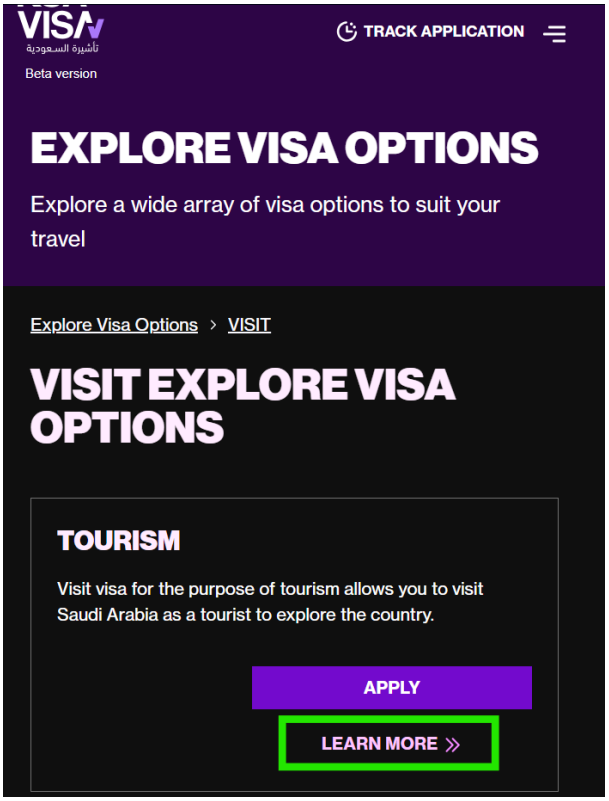




b) Approved local travel agencies: here is an example of an agency located in Vienna (Capital of Austria).

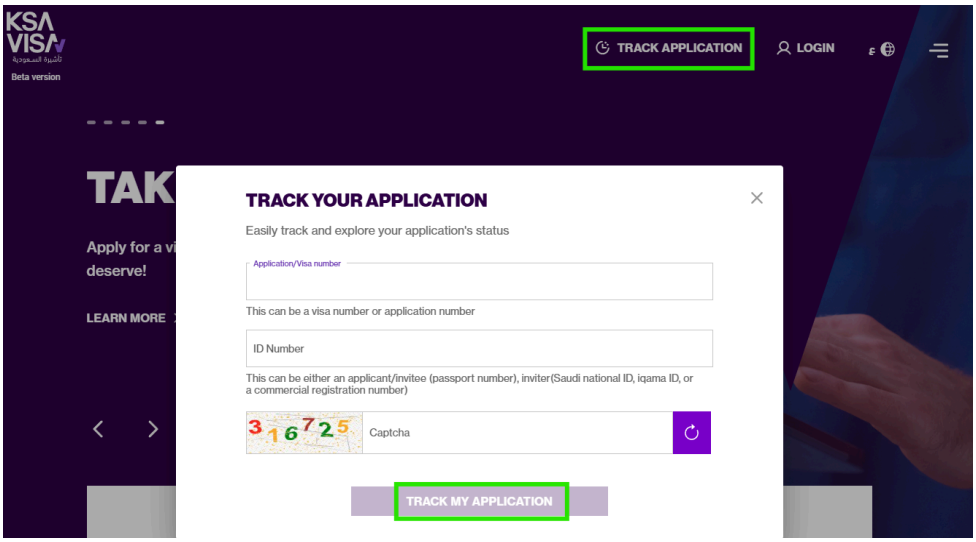


★ **Alternatively,** the “Visit visa” option (purpose of tourism or purpose of Umrah) might be preferred for EU citizens and non-EU citizens (who met specific requirements) as it could be valid for 1 year with multiple entries. You can read the requirements on “KSA Visa” website, “Nusuk” website and ask service providers.

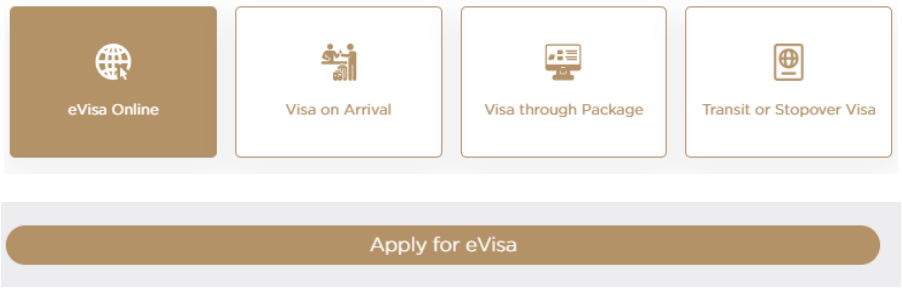


- The Visit visa (tourism / Umrah) can be obtained through:
    a) KSA Visa website (by yourself). Called “eVisa”.
    b) Service Centers and approved travel agencies.
    c) Embassies (please contact the embassy in advance - some embassies do not provide Umrah visas for individuals).

4. Select one of your preferred eligible visa options. Please read the requirements carefully and follow the apply steps.
5. Once you obtain the visa through service providers or travel agencies. Double check the document by using the Track application utility on the “KSA Visa” website.

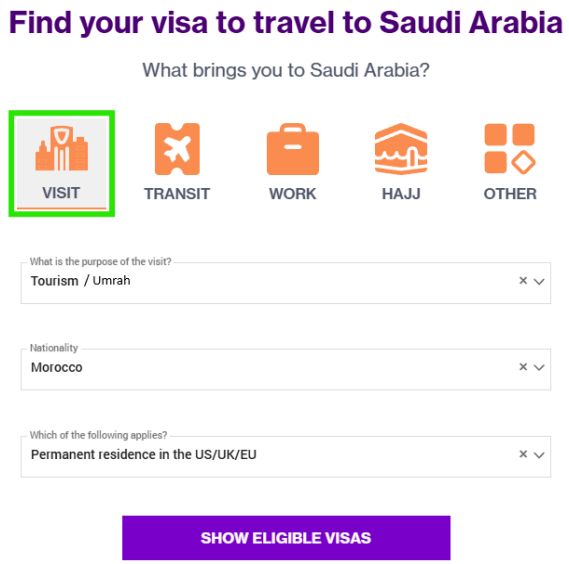


6. This step is just an additional explanation in case you want to apply for the “e Visa Online” option by yourself. Make sure to

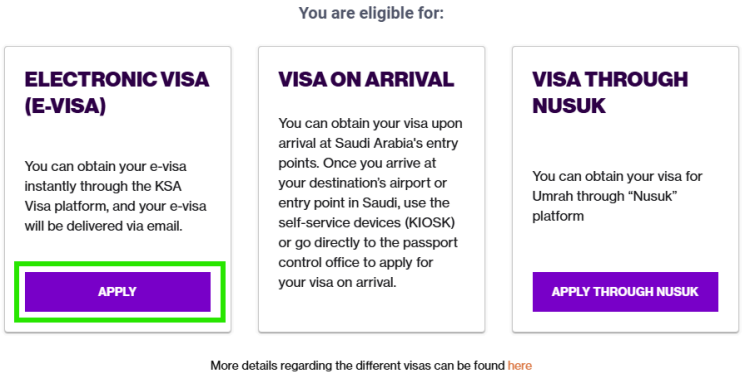


   - This will redirect you to “KSA Visa” website or another one.

- Fill in details. And click on “Show Eligible Visas”.

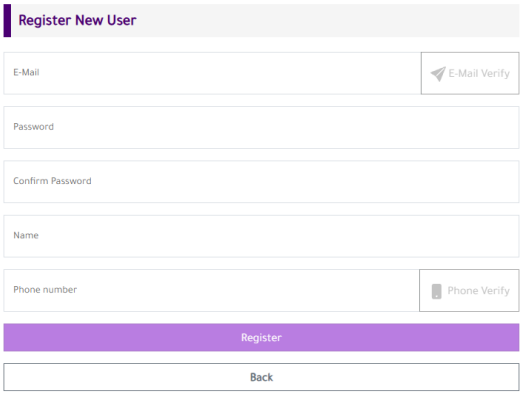


- Click on the “Apply” button for the E-Visa.

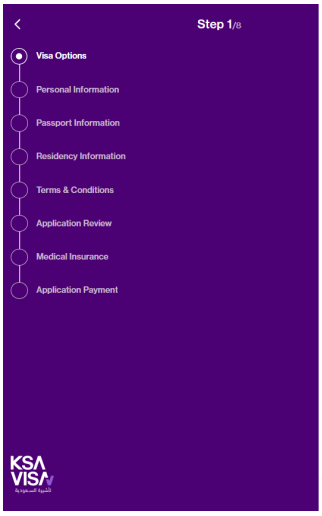


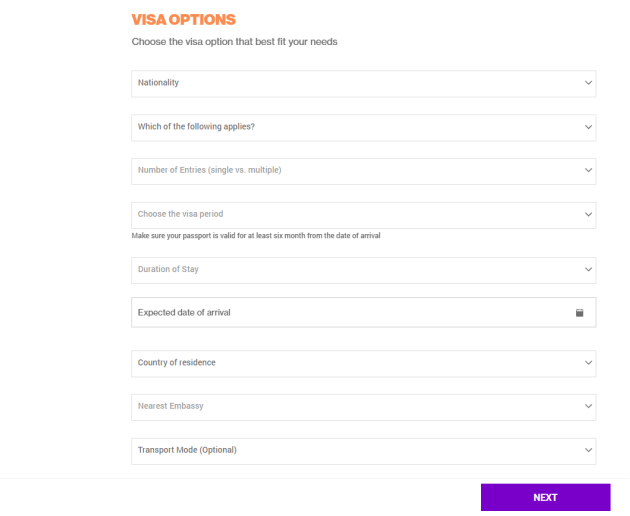
- Register a new account.





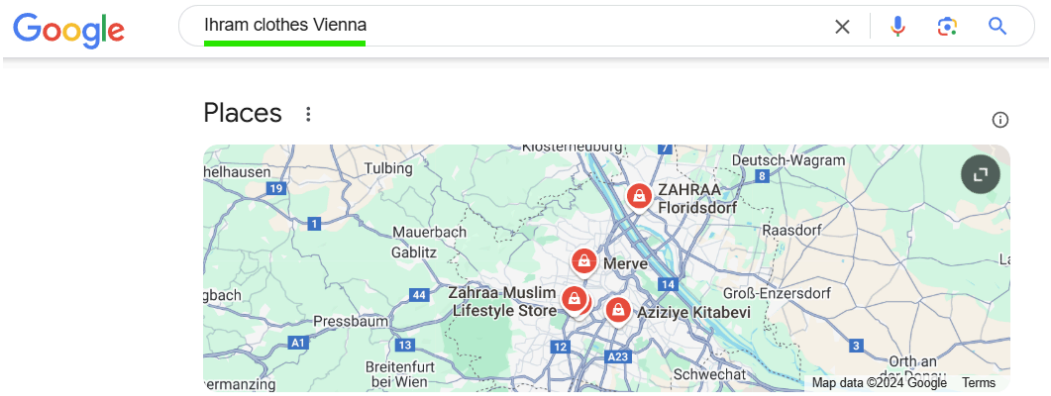
- Complete all steps with payment. Then, if accepted, you will receive the visa in your email after a few minutes or days.





b) Ihram clothes:

- If you are planning to enter Ihram state on the plane. Then, you need to purchase your ihram clothes online or from stores in Vienna.
- There are several stores offering Ihram clothes in Vienna (delivery service is available). Search for the nearest store or order online.
- Make sure to order the clothes as soon as possible to avoid delays and inspect the items.

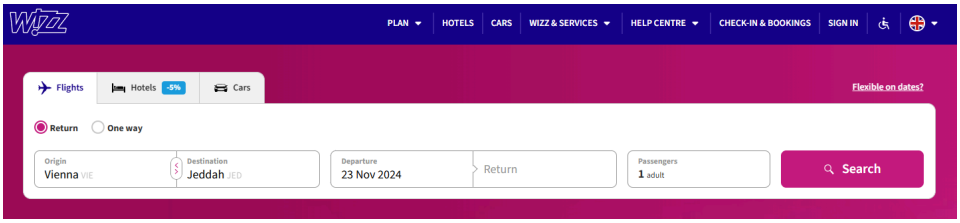


- If you plan to enter Ihram state at Madinah. Then, you may purchase your ihram clothes there. From stores near Al Masjid an Nabawi.

c) Transportations:

1. Flight tickets:

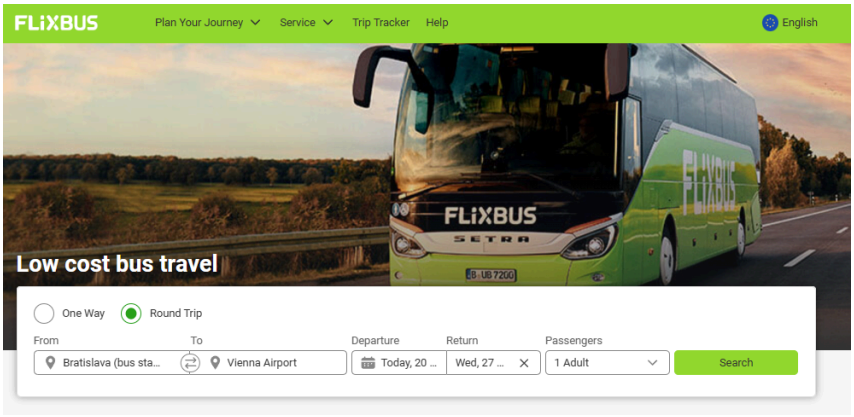
- You need round-trip tickets. Easiest route is (Vienna - Jeddah).
- You may use "Wizz Air". As it provides low cost and direct flights (Vienna - Jeddah).



2. Bus tickets:

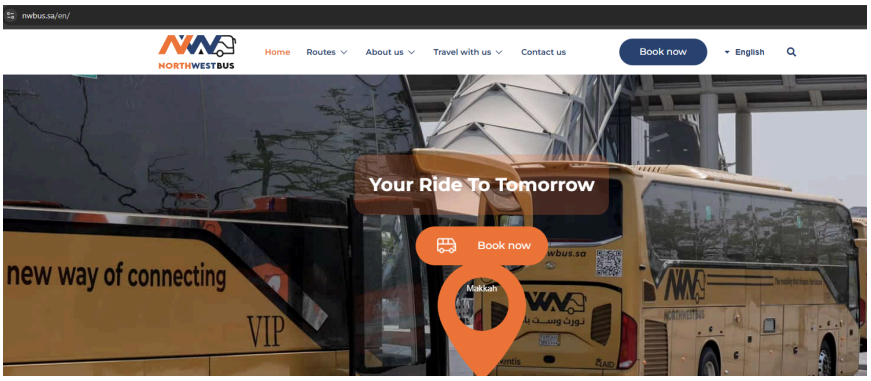
I. Bratislava & Vienna International Airport:

- You need round-trip tickets. First ticket before flight departure (Bratislava → Vienna). Second ticket after coming back (Vienna → Bratislava).
- You may use FlixBus (https://global.flixbus.com)



II. King Abdulaziz International Airport & Makkah:

- You need round-trip tickets. First ticket after arrival to Jeddah (King Abdulaziz International Airport → Makkah). Second ticket, on the way back (Makkah → King Abdulaziz International Airport).
- You may use “North West Bus”. It provides low cost and comfortable transportation.

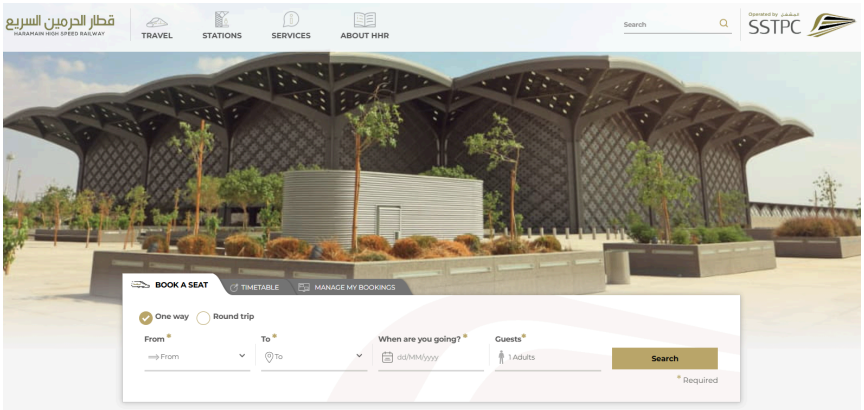


- If you are traveling using Wizz Airlines. Then, select the north terminal of Jeddah airport.



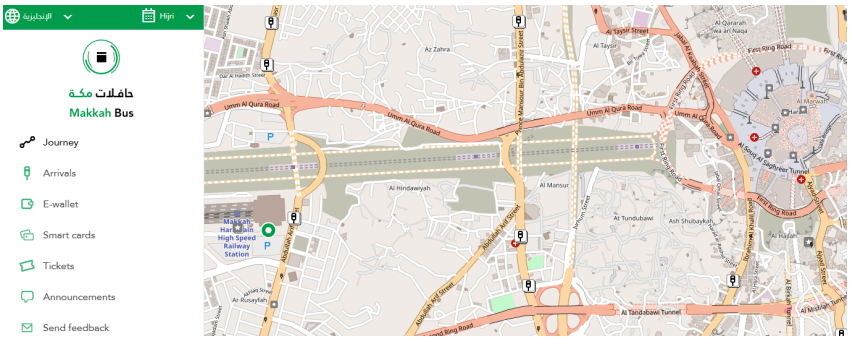
III. King Abdulaziz International Airport, Madinah & Makkah:

- This part is for visiting Madinah using the "Haramain High Speed Railway".
- This transportation option connects (Makkah, Jeddah & Madinah). So you can use it for visiting Madinah anytime.
- For route section B (visiting Madinah first). You may travel from (King Abdulaziz International Airport → Madinah station). Then, (Madinah station → Makkah station).

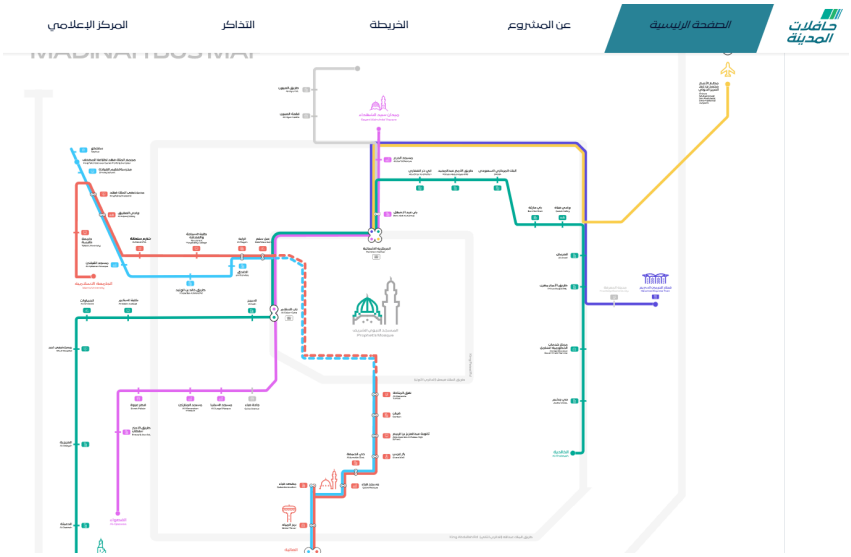


IV. Inside Makkah & Madinah:

- Inside Makkah, you may use Taxi / "Makkah bus" service to travel between Al-Haramain train station, Jarwal, hotel, Al-Masjid al-Haram, etc.



- Inside Madinah, you may use Taxi / "Madinah bus" service to travel between Madinah Haramain train station, Miqat Dhul-Hulaifa, hotel, Al-Masjid an Nabawi, etc.

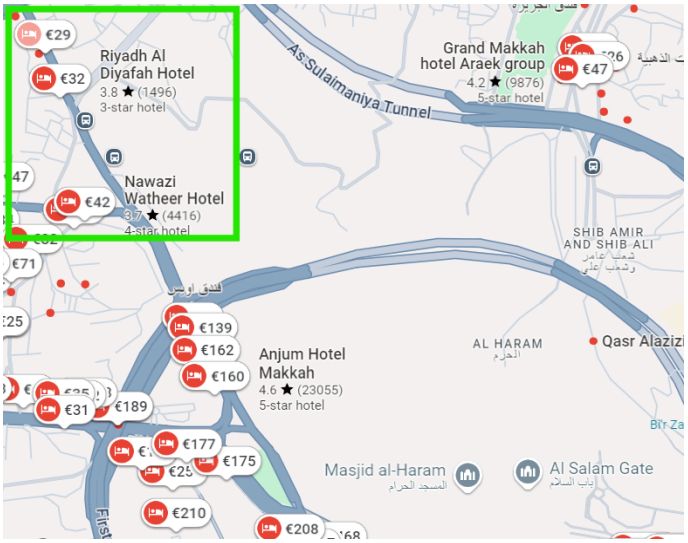


d) Hotels:

- It is better to book your accommodation online.

❖ **Makkah:**

- Search for hotels near Haram through applications.
- “Jarwal” area has lots of reasonably priced hotels. The price includes shuttle transportation to the Haram before every prayer. On the other hand, walking takes around 25 minutes to the Haram.



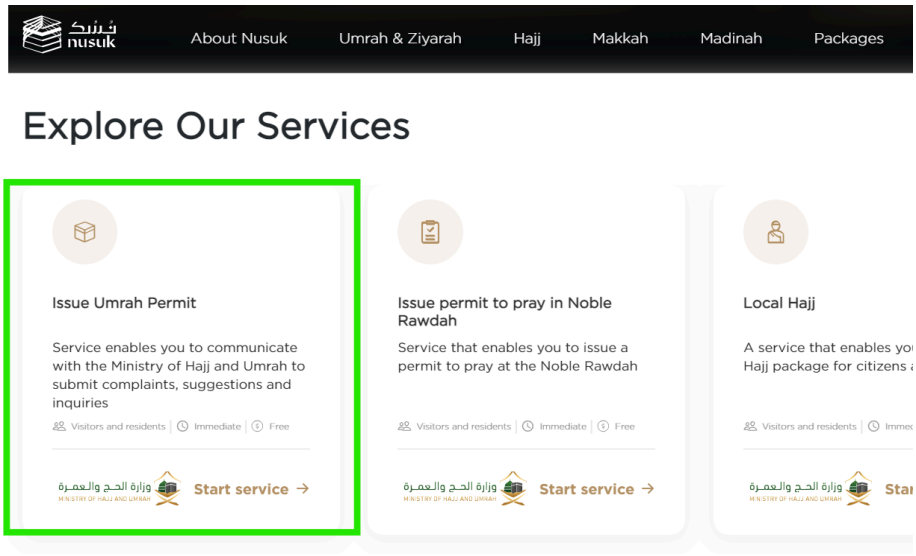
- Here is information of a hotel that you may take into consideration:
  SAMA AL-KHAIR HOTEL

❖ **Madinah:**

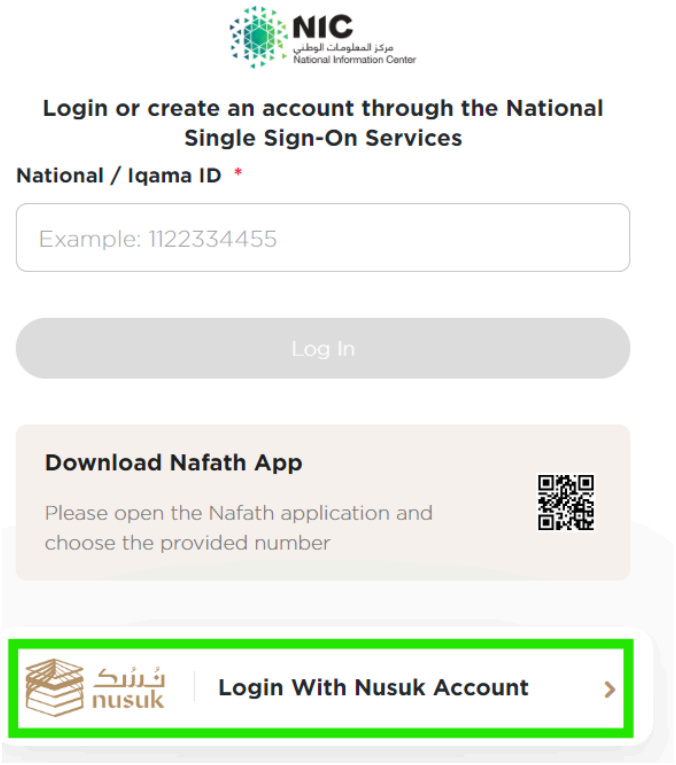
- Search for hotels near Al Masjid an Nabawi through applications.

e) Umrah permit:

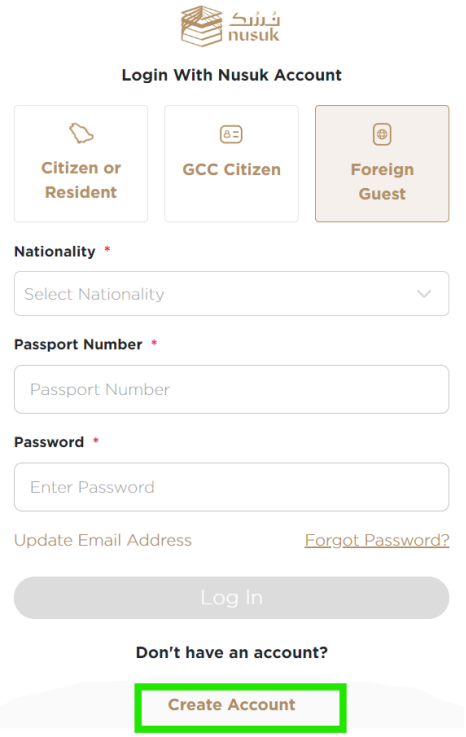
- Allows performing Umrah at a specific time. Gives you a priority to perform Umrah in case of crowdedness.
- Open the “Nusuk” website. Click on “Issue Umrah Permit”.



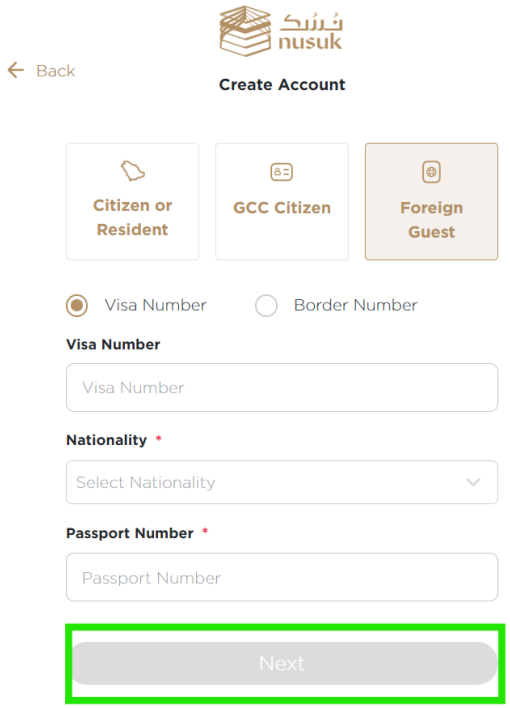
- Click on “Login With Nusuk Account”.



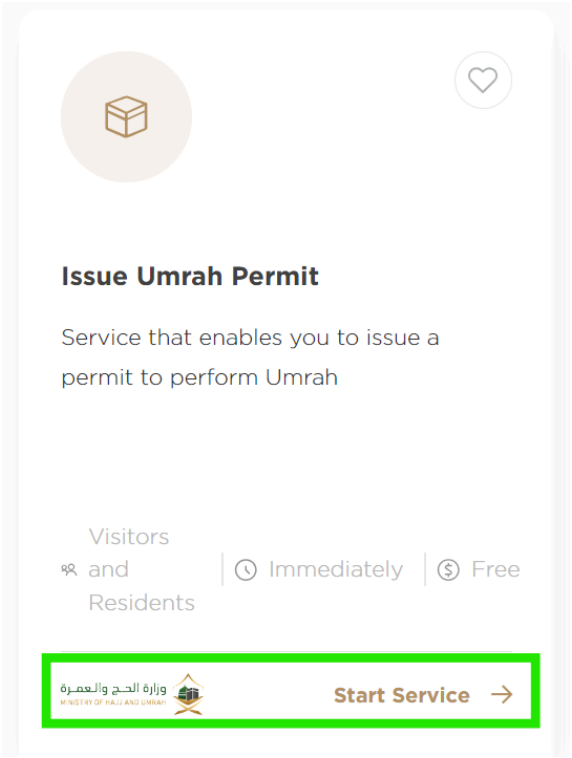
- Click on “Create Account”.



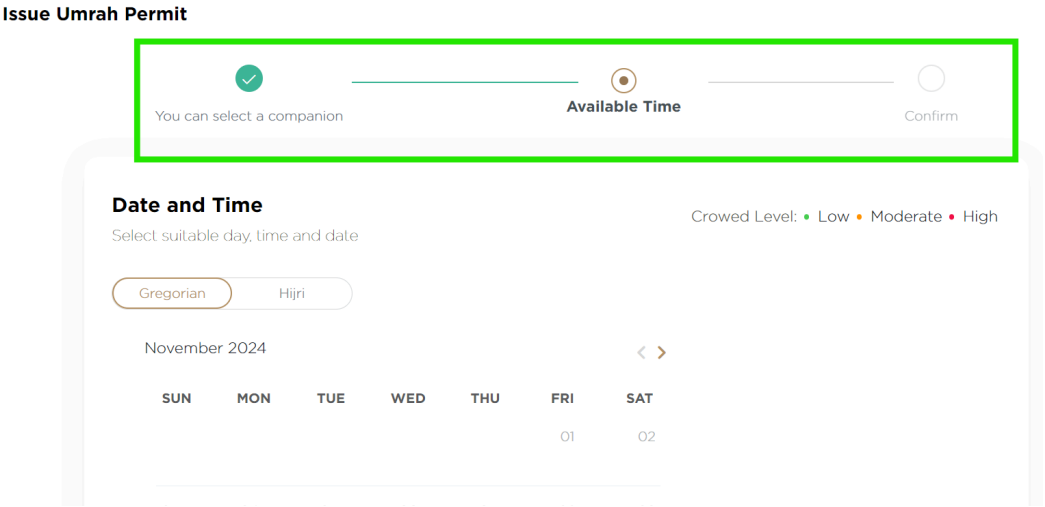
- Enter your information. Then, click on “Next” and complete the account creation process. Visa number is the received Saudi Visa number.



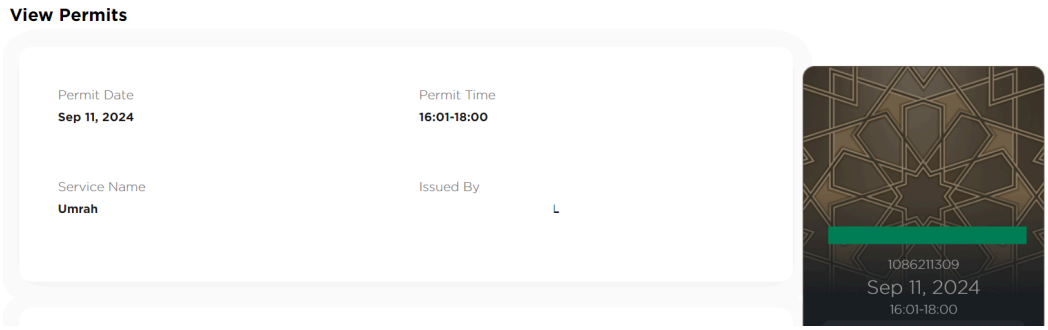
- Click on “Start Service”.



- Complete the full process (select a companion, Umrah time and confirm).

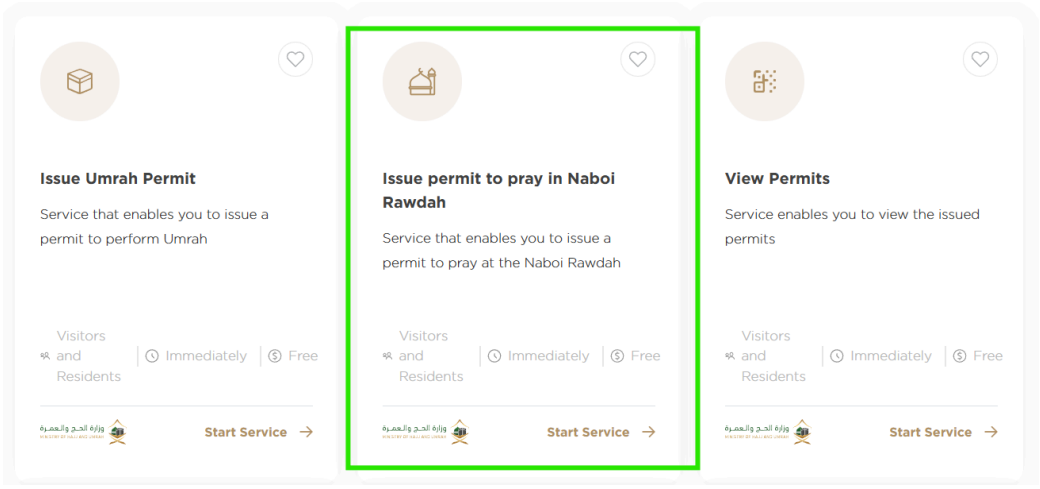


- Then, you will see the Umrah permit details.



f) Noble Rawdah permit:

- **Mandatory and pray within the selected time (10 mins inside the Rawdah).**
- **Entering the Noble Rawdah is allowed only once a year.**
- Recommended to reserve your slot a few weeks before arriving.
- Open the “Nusuk” website. Click on “ Issue permit to pray in Noble Rawdah”.



- Follow similar steps as “Umrah permit” (select a companion, pray time and confirm).

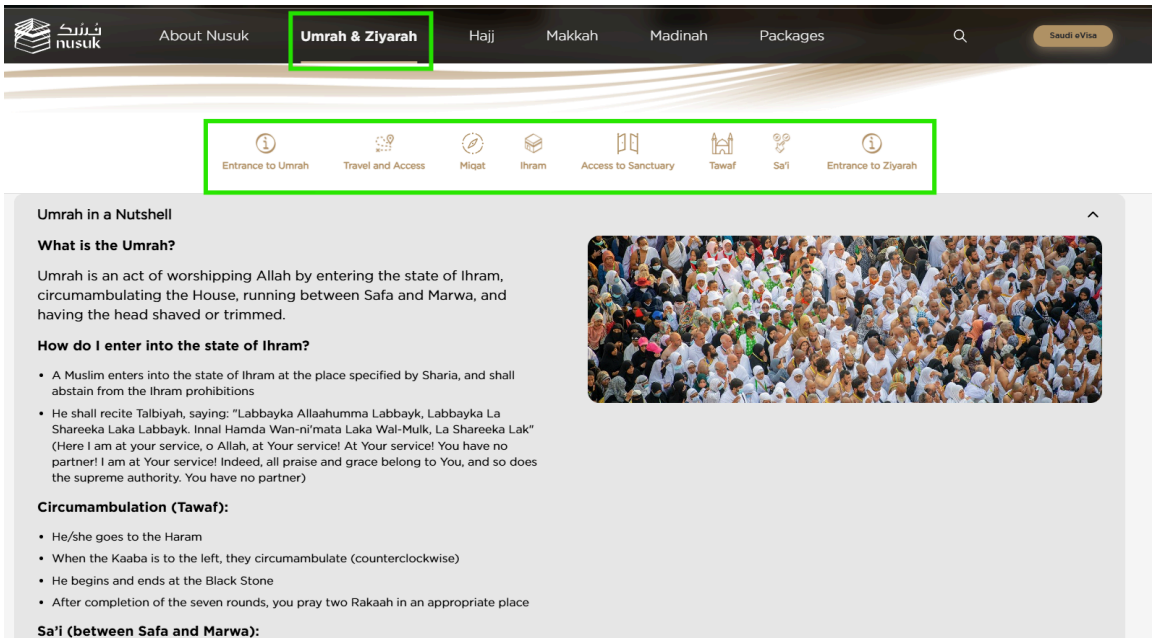
The Honorable Chamber

- Visitors to the Prophet's Mosque go to the Prophet's Burial Chamber to greet him, (blessings and peace be upon him), and his two companions, Abu Bakr and Omar, (may Allah be pleased with both of them).
- No reservation is needed.



How to Perform Umrah

- “Nusuk” website provides detailed instructions on the rituals of Umrah. It also includes videos.



- It is also recommended to view other peoples’ Umrah journeys (on youtube).

Useful Mobile Applications

- Bus (ex: FlixBus)
- Flight (ex: Wizz Air)
- Transportation apps in Saudi Arabia (HHR Train, Makkah bus, Madinah bus, Bolt, Jeeny, etc).
- Your preferred hotel reservation app.
- Nusuk. Shows Umrah & Noble Rawdah permits, how to perform Umrah, prayer times, Du’a texts, Thikr, etc.

Important Notes

- Watch Umrah, Makkah and Madinah videos on social media. To learn more about the places and benefit from other people's experiences.
- Double-check the website of (Ministry of Hajj and Umrah) or inquire from the Umrah visa provider about announcements regarding mandatory vaccinations, health requirements and guidelines for travellers to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for Umrah. If you are unsure, contact them directly for clarification.
- Make sure to obtain your "Saudi Visa" before reserving tickets,
- Recommended to print all necessary documents (flight tickets, busses tickets, Saudi visa, etc) to avoid mobile problems (battery run-out, etc).
- Make sure to learn all of Umrah's pillars, obligations, and recommended actions. Also, it is better to know more details on each section.
- Read "Ihram" instructions carefully, especially if you decide to make Ihram on the plane.
- It is recommended that you travel with light luggage. Around 4 sets of clothes would be enough for 1 week.
- Another useful video: فيلم تعليمي صفة العمرة من النية إلى تمامها.
- For money exchange, better to take enough cash (Euros), and then exchange it for (Saudi Riyals) in Saudi Arabia (€100 at the airport, rest when visiting a city - normal currency exchange shop).
- Regarding Zamzam water on a plane. As of last visit with WizzAir. Zamzam water was allowed for people having an "Umrah" visa. But NOT for "Tourism" visa holders. However, It is better to contact the airline in advance and make sure whether it will be counted as a luggage weight or not.
- For hotel reservations (especially in Makkah). Make sure the hotel provides shuttle/bus transportation to Al-Masjid al-Haram if the hotel is far away. In Madinah, most hotels are 1-5 (walking) minutes away from Al-Masjid an Nabawi.
- Saudi SIM cards and money exchange stores are available in Jeddah airport.
- When you have a bus / train / any transportation which posts a flight. Do not book a time very close to the flight arrival time. Take into consideration the possibility

of flight delay, airport operations, luggage collection, time to reach the transportation, etc. Therefore, make a reasonable time between the flight arrival time and reserved transportation start time.

- Make sure to do the airplane online check-in on time (usually between 24 and 3 hours before departure). Check-in at the airport may cost extra money.
- Register emergency contact numbers in Saudi Arabia on your phone (Kingdom emergency, ambulance, ministry of health, etc). Contact numbers can be found here: “Saudi Arabia emergency contact numbers”
- Watch videos of other peoples' experiences in Makkah and Madinah posted on social media platforms. To get more excited doing Umrah, know more about the places, updated news, recommendations, restaurants, etc.
- In case you applied for the visit visa option by yourself “eVisa” and your application is rejected. Only “eVisa Price” will be returned. Other fees (medical insurance, etc) are non refundable.