

ALUla announces collaboration with world-renowned Chef Alain Ducasse for distinctive gastronomic pop-up venture



[Chef Alain Ducasse in the ALUla oasis]

- *Ducasse in ALUla will be the first oasis-to-table concept celebrating the vibrant palette of flavours unique to the county*
- *Pop-up dining experience, set to open on 20th January, 2024, on seamlessly blends essence of sustainability and French culinary excellence*

ALUla, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 19th January 2024: ALUla, the ancient oasis city in the northwest of Saudi Arabia, is pleased to announce Ducasse in ALUla, an exciting collaboration with world-renowned multi-Michelin star chef Alain Ducasse.

This partnership marks the highly anticipated launch of the pop-up dining experience, set to open on Saturday, 20th January for a limited period, located adjacent to the ancient heritage site of Jabal Ikmaah. The new venture seamlessly blends sustainability with the flavours of Saudi Arabia, France, as well as the whole Middle Eastern region for a unique and memorable experience. Ducasse has entrusted one of his young protégés, Afonso Salvação Barreto, as the executive chef of the restaurant.



[Executive Chef Afonso Salvação Barreto and Chef Alain Ducasse in AIUla]

Nestled against the picturesque backdrop of AIUla's iconic oasis palm trees, the upcoming restaurant will deliver a combination of local ingredients sourced from nearby farms and traditional flavours, with an exquisite French touch, redefining the luxury dining landscape of the city.

Phillip Jones, Chief Tourism Officer for the Royal Commission for AIUla said, "Representing a significant leap forward in AIUla's evolution as a premier culinary destination, Ducasse in AIUla is meticulously designed to captivate both residents and visitors alike. We have crafted the restaurant to not only introduce an unparalleled, refined dining experience to the city but also honour and incorporate AIUla's precious natural resources that have long nourished ancient civilisations and modern residents."

Ducasse started his career in 1972 as a 16-year-old in France, before working for restaurants including Michel Guérard, Gaston Lenôtre, Alain Chapel and legendary chef Roger Vergé's Moulin de Mougins. Ducasse restaurants currently hold 20 Michelin stars worldwide.

Renowned for his exceptional prowess in the global culinary realm, the French culinary icon is creating a meticulous menu for Ducasse in AIUla that highlights the vibrant palette of flavours unique to AIUla. Each dish promises to be a celebration of the region's cultural heritage, with an emphasis on integrating local ingredients and cooking methods into the finest French culinary traditions and savoir-faire.

Chef Alain Ducasse said: "When I visited AIUla with my chef Afonso, we were curious to discover and impressed to taste produce from the local farms. You have these natural oases growing everything from the dates and citrus the area is famous for, to green vegetables of all sorts. The region is in the middle of an ambitious project to diversify the economy and create opportunities for the local community. The agricultural training scheme is offering help to local farmers to supply the ingredients of the quality and scale required for the increasing hospitality offer."

In alignment with AlUla's commitment to sustainable development and preservation of its natural beauty, Ducasse in AlUla has been thoughtfully designed by French designer Aliénor Béchu and Donald Bovy from Volume ABC to seamlessly harmonise with the surrounding environment. The restaurant's architectural integration with the natural landscape reflects a deep respect for the region's allure and natural heritage, providing diners with an unparalleled dining experience that bridges history and innovation.

Find out more details at [here insert the Web address for the restaurant] and www.experiencealula.com

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Press Materials

Download the Ducasse Launch Hero film and high-resolution photos [here](#).

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About AlUla

Located 1,100 km from Riyadh, in North-West Saudi Arabia, AlUla is a place of extraordinary natural and human heritage. The vast area, covering 22,561km², includes a lush oasis valley, towering sandstone mountains and ancient cultural heritage sites dating back thousands of years to when the Lihyan and Nabataean kingdoms reigned.

The most well-known and recognised site in AlUla is Hegra, Saudi Arabia's first UNESCO World Heritage Site. A 52-hectare ancient city, Hegra was the principal southern city of the Nabataean Kingdom and is comprised of 111 well-preserved tombs, many with elaborate facades cut out of the sandstone outcrops surrounding the walled urban settlement.

Current research also suggests Hegra was the most southern outpost of the Roman Empire after the Roman's conquered the Nabataeans in 106 CE.

In addition to Hegra, AlUla is also home to ancient Dadan, the capital of the Dadan and Lihyan Kingdoms and considered to be one of the most developed 1st millennium BCE cities of the Arabian Peninsula, and Jabal Ikmah, an open air library of hundreds of inscriptions and writings in many different languages, which has been recently listed on the UNESCO's memory of the World Register. Also AlUla Old Town Village, a labyrinth of more than 900 mudbrick homes developed from at least the 12th century, which has been selected as one of the World's Best Tourism Villages in 2022 by the UNWTO. Additionally, Hijaz Railway and Hegra Fort, which are key sites in the story and conquests of Lawrence of Arabia.

For more information, please visit: www.experiencealula.com