

Common Ground Riyadh: A Platform for Cultural Exchange for Bangladeshi Travellers

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When you dream of travelling beyond the ordinary, what could be more inspiring than being at a festival that celebrates cultural unity and creative expression? From December 24, 2025, to January 6, 2026, the Common Ground Festival returns to Riyadh —bringing together the heritage of Kingdom of Saudi and People’s Republic of China in a spectacular, sensory celebration at Malfa Hall, Misk City.

The latest edition promises a multi-sensory cultural event combining art exhibitions, live performances, collaborative showcases, traditional crafts, culinary experiences, and more. For Bangladeshi students, young professionals, artists and travellers, this is a golden opportunity to discover a new dimension of Saudi culture and witness traditional art forms, music and food reimagined in a modern context.

Interactive Art & Design Showcases

This year's festival will feature an extensive series of interactive art and design exhibitions that merge Saudi and Chinese aesthetics. Visitors will experience contemporary artworks, digital installations, cultural motifs, and cross-border design concepts that highlight how two ancient cultures are evolving in a modern world.

For lovers of fine arts, architecture, design, and creatives, these showcases offer a fresh source of inspiration. Explore how artists combine traditional Saudi elements such as geometric patterns, desert-inspired palettes, and Arabic typography with Chinese artistic influences like ink-brush strokes, intricate symbolism, and traditional landscape styles.

A special highlight is the pavilion by the Prince Mohammed bin Salman Global Center for Arabic Calligraphy, where visitors can watch live Arabic calligraphy demonstrations, learn about various historic script styles, and learn how Arabic calligraphy has influenced and interacted with other Asian traditions, including Chinese calligraphy. This offers a unique educational experience for Bangladeshi visitors interested in Islamic art, history, and creative expression.

Live Performances and Music

For music enthusiasts, this year's festival is expected to feature a dynamic lineup of artists and performers from both Saudi and China. Saudi performances include artists such as Ayed, known for his modern Khaleeji pop style, or Abdullah Al-Farwan, popular for his soulful contemporary Saudi music. Traditional acts featuring Saudi folk-dance groups, such as Ardah performers, will also offer a culturally rich experience.

Visitors can also enjoy performances by traditional Chinese instrumental ensembles featuring the erhu, pipa, and guqin, as well as modern fusion groups that blend traditional Chinese sounds with contemporary electronic or pop elements. These mixed-genre collaborations tend to resonate well with Bangladeshi audiences who enjoy global music trends.



Parts of the Common Ground 2023 exhibition featuring Yemeni culture. (AND photo Abdulaziz Alnoman)

Together, these performances create a vibrant cultural atmosphere that is likely to attract Bangladeshi students, young professionals, content creators, and anyone who enjoys live international music and cultural shows.

Crafts, Souvenirs & Handmade Goods

A lively crafts market will be one of the most popular attractions at the festival. Dozens of stalls will showcase handmade goods from both Saudi and China, ranging from traditional pottery, woven baskets, Arabic calligraphy art pieces, incense burners, dates and specialty teas, to Chinese ceramics, paper crafts, and silk accessories.

Visitors from Bangladesh—who often love collecting souvenirs during

their trips—will appreciate having access to authentic cultural items rather than commercial products. These crafts provide meaningful keepsakes such as Arabic-calligraphy wall art, handcrafted jewellery, Saudi incense (oud), Chinese tea sets, or artisanal home décor, making the visit more memorable.

Food, Hospitality & Culture

One of the most crowd-pulling elements of Common Ground is its culinary experience. The festival's food zone will offer a curated selection of Saudi and Chinese dishes, representing the warm hospitality traditions of both cultures.

Guests may enjoy tasting Saudi kabsa, mutabbaq, Arabic coffee, dates, and regional desserts, alongside Chinese dumplings, noodles, fried rice varieties, tea ceremonies, and modern fusion bites.

For Bangladeshis—who have strong culinary curiosity and enjoy exploring new flavors—this mix of cuisines creates a delightful and approachable cultural immersion. Food plays a major role in cultural bonding, and this festival uses cuisine as a bridge between Saudi, Chinese, and international visitors.

A Cultural Journey Worth Taking

Saudi is now more accessible than ever for Bangladeshi travellers, with improved connectivity and travel services. An event like Common Ground offers a safe, vibrant and youth-friendly environment for visitors from abroad.

The art exhibitions, workshops, live performances and design showcases will open up new perspectives, especially for those who still associate Saudi with tradition or conservative culture. Common Ground will dispel this stereotype and help visitors see a side of Saudi that embraces innovation, global cultural exchange, and contemporary art forms.

Join the crowd, immerse in art and culture, taste new flavors, and witness a country in transformation — where tradition and innovation walk hand in hand. Common Ground awaits — a place where hearts and minds meet.

For more information, one can

visit: <https://www.visitsaudi.com/en/riyadh/events/common-ground>

