

Cristiano Ronaldo launches unreal calendar

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Riyadh: “Saudi, Welcome to Arabia” the consumer facing brand of the Saudi Tourism Authority (STA), launched its latest campaign starring Cristiano Ronaldo (CR7). Launching across key markets in Europe as well as India and China, “I Came for Football, I Stayed For More” brings to life a Saudi that offers visitors far more than the expected. Heralding the start of its extended season of high stakes sports, rousing entertainment, and breathtaking film, fashion and cultural events, the campaign harnesses TV, Social, Digital, and OTA to give audiences a taste of one of the world’s most exciting destination calendars.

Featuring football superstar and Saudi’s most famous foreign resident, CR7, the film takes viewers on a journey through Saudi’s cornerstone events. An awed CR7 sits in the stands – comparing the different sports to his own. Hushed monochromes give way to vibrant colour as we see more of what enticed CR7 to stay in Saudi. From the adrenaline

coursing through the crowd, we hear its roar – feeling the highs and lows of a shared experience. The emotion is palpable, and brings audiences into the thick of the action. This is Saudi – engaged, excited, and eager to take its place on the world stage.

The campaign highlights Saudi's diverse, year-round sports and entertainment events held across Riyadh, Jeddah and AlUla, with curated packages making it ever easier to visit. As hosts of the FIFA World Cup 2034, AFC Asian Cup 2027, Esports Olympics Games 2027, Asian Winter Games 2029 among others, Saudi is bringing sport home. Its regular calendar includes largescale international events such as the Esports World Cup, Formula 1, LIV Golf Riyadh, Tennis, Saudi Pro League (RSL) - cementing its position as a hub for largescale events.

From sports to culture and entertainment, Saudi offers something for all interests. Its annual calendar continues to grow, with Riyadh Fashion Week, the Red Sea International Film Festival, Arts Biennales and the eponymous Seasons – held in Riyadh and Jeddah, forming the cornerstone of activities. From music to comedy, international and regional acts are taking the stage in Saudi, furthering reach and accessibility for ever more audiences.



Ahmed Al Khateeb, Minister of Tourism for Saudi, stated: "Today, Saudi is cementing its place as a global destination that combines cultural authenticity, warm hospitality, and the thrill of world-class events. In the tourism sector, we remain steadfast in our commitment to developing a seamless landscape that inspires the world and provides visitors with unforgettable experiences."

Fahd Hamidaddin, CEO of the Saudi Tourism Authority, added: "This campaign with CR7 is a showcase of Saudi today, and our ambitions. Tourism is a core component of our vision, and we are continuously expanding our offerings. Since 2018 we've hosted over 100 major international events, and as our calendar continues to expand, we're on track to reach our goal of 150 million visitors by 2030. From world class events to iconic sites and breathtaking landscapes, Saudi is a land of

discovery. We are committed to welcoming the world to join us in the Heart of Arabia, to stay a while and witness the future unfold in real time.”

Cristiano Ronaldo said: “Being part of Saudi’s journey as a global sports hub has been truly special and somehow unexpected for me a few years ago. Today, the truth is, that from the energy of the fans to the scale of ambition — this is where the future of sport is being written. What I admire most about Saudi is how it honors its roots while building for the future. From camels to horses, racing to esports, from the desert to the stadium — this is a place where every young athlete can dream big.”

Saudi is investing to become a global hub for events, as part of its Vision 2030 goal of diversifying the economy and expanding the tourism sector. It has committed \$800 billion to the sector, which is projected to reach \$22.4 billion in market value by 2030 and contribute \$16.5bn to GDP by 2030. Events play a pivotal role in this, boosting tourism numbers, driving infrastructure growth, creating jobs, and inspiring youth participation. Investments in stadiums, arenas, and grassroots programs are helping shape Saudi’s legacy as a leader not only in global sports tourism, but wider entertainment. Explore Saudi’s Unreal Calendar [here](#).

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