



## Shooting for the moon

The inaugural excavation for Sharaan – a groundbreaking upcoming resort in Saudi Arabia's AlUla – took place in March, marking a significant milestone for The Royal Commission for AlUla. Designed by renowned French architect Jean Nouvel along with the expertise of French engineering company Bouygues S.A., Sharaan will offer a unique experience that contributes to AlUla's journey development into a premier destination for sustainable luxury tourism. The resort is nestled into the rock at Sharaan Nature Reserve, blending in harmoniously with its surrounding ancient geological wonders. It will feature 38 custom suites carved into the sandstone mountains, along with comprehensive wellness facilities, family-friendly amenities, diverse dining options, and unique panoramic views. It isn't just the location that's unique – it's also the method behind its build: RCU and its contractor partners have developed construction techniques that combine the ancient Nabataean practice of creating spaces within rock together with modern engineering methods, to create habitable spaces that honour the past while aligning with modern-day expectations – one of which involves excavated spaces that exist on top of each other. RCU aims to have 5,000 hotel rooms in AlUla by 2030 and 8,500 by 2035, and Sharaan is a flagship project that demonstrates the commitment to safeguard the area's natural beauty and historical importance, while transforming it into a leading global destination for sustainable luxury tourism, and the world's largest Living Museum.