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# Condé Nast Traveller

THE WORLD MADE LOCAL

APRIL 2022

## Tune in Bliss out

HOW PUERTO RICO IS STRIKING A NEW CHORD IN THE CARIBBEAN

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OUTDOOR BREAKS  
IN THE UK

**ALL ABOARD**  
CRUISES TO  
HOP ON IN 2022



# THE VIEW FROM HERE

A FUTURISTIC ILLUSION IN THE ARABIAN DESERT IS AN UNEXPECTED CULTURAL HUB



## MARAYA, SAUDI ARABIA

Blurred lines between the man-made and the natural have been a fixture of the ancient city of AlUla for millennia – ever since the Nabateans came to carve their monumental tombs into the epic sandstone outcrops here, just as they did at Petra. Whether the tombs are as beautiful as the nearby Elephant Rock – a great monolith shaped by wind and water over millions of years – is open to debate. Yet mankind is still making extraordinary interventions, including the Maraya (‘mirror’) concert hall. This ethereal edifice, the world’s largest mirror-clad structure, vanishes almost without trace into the craggy landscape of Wadi al-Qura. The trompe l’oeil effect is dizzying by night, when the mountains glow red, green and blue with lights, creating the disorienting sense of standing in a vast al-fresco infinity room. Recently, benches have been etched into the sand here, forming a staging zone for cultural drama: Andrea Bocelli’s vocal chords reverberating off the walls of soaring rock; a curious pyramid of shipping containers at Desert X, an outpost of the Californian art festival; and even a Dolce & Gabbana fashion show. SARAH KHAN

PHOTOGRAPH: JULIA FRIEDLE