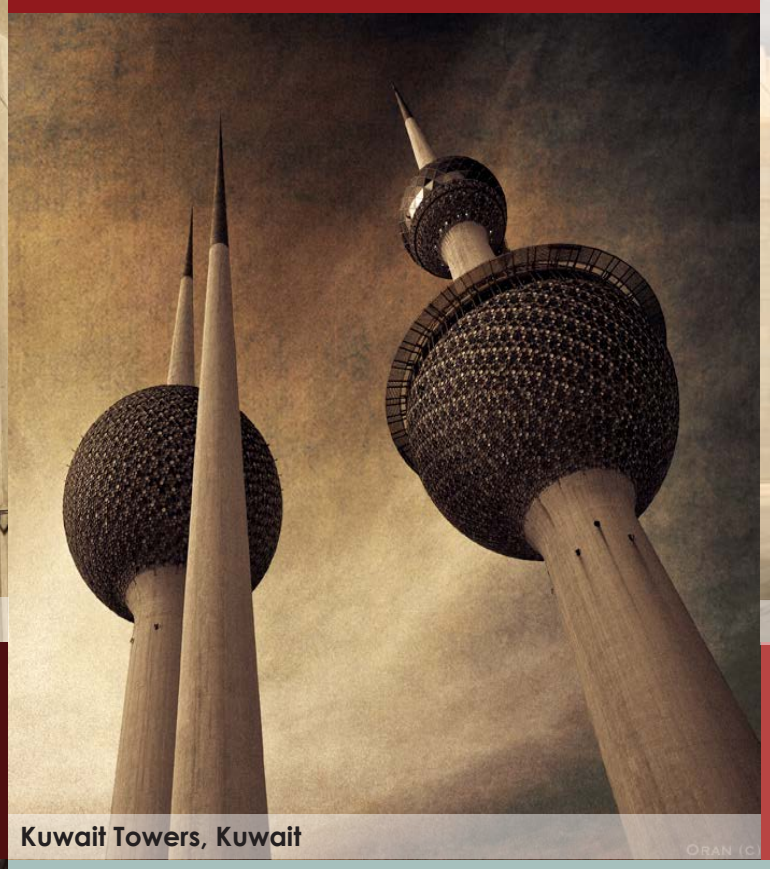
Old Palace, Bahrain


Kuwait Towers, Kuwait

Grand Mosque, Muscat, Oman

Souq Waqif, Doha, Qatar

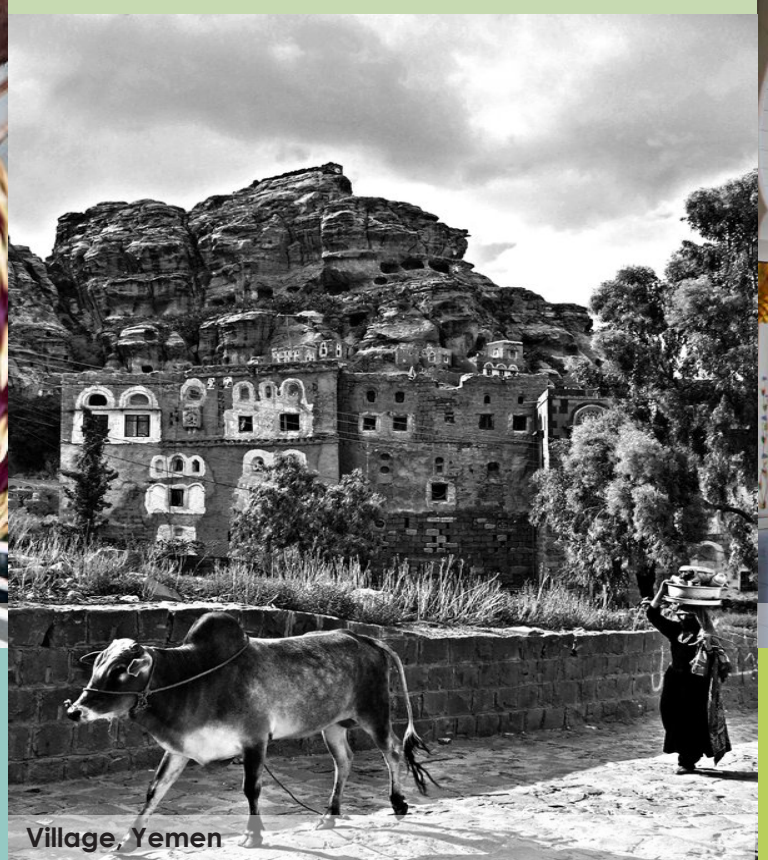
Gulf Region

TRAVEL INFORMATION FOR CITIZENS OF THE UNITED STATES

Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen are all exciting countries with many interesting adventures to experience.

We hope that by following the tips in this guide, your trip will also be a safe one.

Crafts at the Janadriyah Festival, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia


Village, Yemen

Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque, Abu Dhabi, UAE

U.S. State Department Country Specific Information (CSI)

The CSI provides general information of interest to visitors in the region, including entry and exit requirements, medical tips, and U.S. Embassy and Consulate locations. It also provides details of the current security situation in each country, including recent Travel Alerts and Warnings. U.S. citizens traveling outside of the United States are subject to the laws and judicial system of the country in which they are traveling, many of which differ significantly from U.S. law.

The CSI can be found at http://www.travel.state.gov.

Dhow Boat, Doha, Qatar

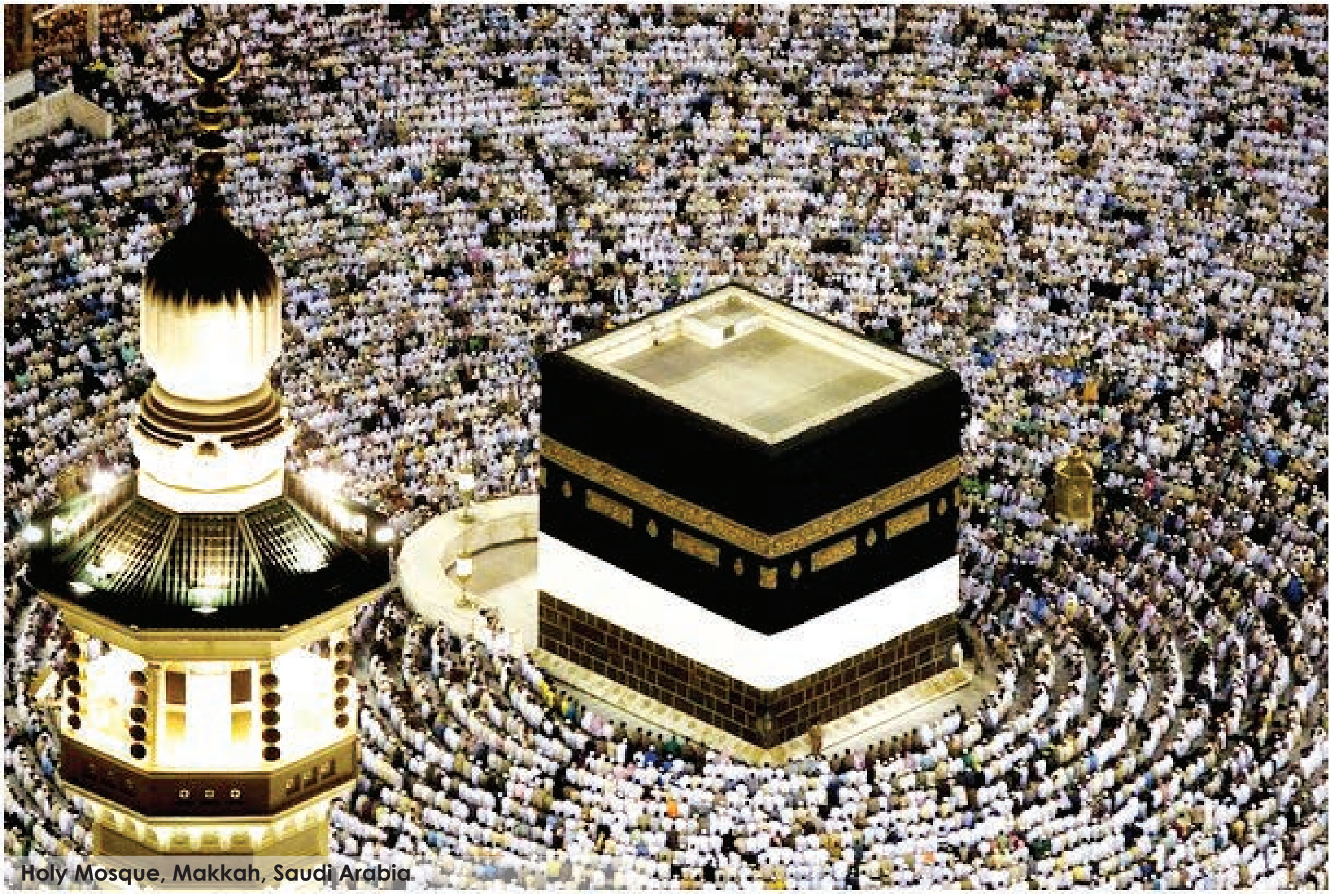
Old Jeddah, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP)

Smart Traveler Enrollment Program

Sign up to receive free Travel Alerts and Warnings.

Stay Informed. Stay Connected. Stay Safe. In a crisis situation, we want to provide updated information to our citizens as soon as possible. No matter how short your stay, please sign up for our Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) on our website to receive updates and alerts during a crisis. You can enroll online at www.travel.state.gov/step, or if you lack internet access, in person at the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate. When you enroll in STEP, we can keep you up-to-date with important safety and security announcements. Enrolling will also make it easier for the Embassy to contact you in the event of an emergency.


Holy Mosque, Makkah, Saudi Arabia

Information for Hajj Travelers

If you are planning to go on Hajj or Umrah, there are a number of ways you can prepare for your trip.

All Hajj and Umrah travel plans must be made only through a Saudi government-approved travel agent. Before you travel, make two copies of your travel documents (such as U.S. passports and green cards), including the pages stamped with Saudi visas; keep one at home and another in a secure location during your trip. Always keep with you contact information for your U.S. travel agent, their Saudi representatives, your travel group, your hotel, and the U.S.Consulate General in Jeddah.

If you lose your passport during your pilgrimage, you should immediately report the loss to your travel agent and obtain a report from the local police and the appropriate United Agents Office, the local entity responsible for liaising with the Saudi government on administrative issues. The U.S. Consulate General in Jeddah can assist you in obtaining a replacement passport but not in resolving immigration violations. Travelers should have their routine immunizations up-to-date and must carry vaccination certificates for inspection by Saudi authorities.

For full details and suggestions on a safe and successful pilgrimage, please visit: http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/go/Hajj.html

Nizwa City, Ad Dakhiliyah Region, Oman

Visa Regulations (Work and Tourism)

Visa regulations and immigration laws vary by country. Travelers should familiarize themselves with such laws before visiting or residing in the Gulf. Travelers who overstay their visas may be required to pay large fines and/or may be subject to imprisonment before being permitted to depart. For the most up-to-date information on entry and exit requirements, travelers should contact the embassy of the country they intend to visit. Country specific information is also available at http://www.travel.state.gov

Employment in the Gulf countries requires the issuance of a work visa prior to arrival. There are a wide variety of visas for those traveling to the Gulf for work purposes, which depend largely on the employer's request. In some cases, the visa may be converted into an iqama (residency permit) upon arrival. In other cases, this will not be possible until the visa classification has been amended. Prospective employees should have a clear understanding of their visa classification prior to traveling to the region, as working without the proper authorization may result in immigration penalties, including deportation or denial of admission.

In some Gulf countries, residents may need an exit visa to leave the country. Exit visas are usually arranged by the sponsor.

Desert, Saudi Arabia

Remain Aware of Security Risks

The Department of State alerts U.S. citizens to the continued potential for terrorist attacks, particularly in the Middle East and North Africa, and possibly occurring in or emanating from the Arabian Peninsula. U.S. citizens are strongly encouraged to maintain a high level of vigilance, be aware of local events, and take the appropriate steps to bolster their personal security.

You can find the most recent Travel Alerts and Warnings by viewing the Country Specific Information for the country you are visiting at http://www.travel.state.gov. The Department of State urges U.S. citizens living overseas or planning to travel abroad to enroll in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) at http://www.travel.state.gov/step. When you enroll in STEP, we can keep you up-to-date with important safety and security announcements. Enrolling will also make it easier for the Embassy to contact you in the event of an emergency.

Special Notice for Travelers to Yemen

The Government of Yemen is currently trying to build a new democracy while simultaneously struggling against the terrorist and anti-western group, al-Qa'ida. In addition, the country is facing multiple challenges from former regime elements, southern secessionists, Houthi rebels, and tribal adversaries. Sectarian violence is frequent, including bombings, assassinations of Yemeni government officials, and kidnapping of Westerners.

The U.S. Department of State warns U.S. citizens of the high security threat level in Yemen due to terrorist activities and civil unrest. The Department urges U.S. citizens to defer travel to Yemen and those U.S. citizens currently living in Yemen to depart. U.S. citizens in Yemen remain vulnerable to kidnappings and terrorist attacks, especially when in transit to and from residences or workplaces. U.S. citizens should exercise caution and take prudent security measures in all areas, especially those frequented by Westerners. All U.S. citizens are reminded to vary their routes and times for all travel, maintain a high level of vigilance, keep a low profile, lock car windows and doors, carry a cell phone at all times, and report suspicious incidents to the Embassy.

The U.S. Embassy in Sana'a remains a restricted staffing post. U.S. government employees are severely restricted in their movements within Sana'a and cannot travel outside of the city. Therefore, our ability to assist U.S. citizens in an emergency and provide routine consular services remains limited.

Souq Waqif, Doha, Qatar

Traveling with the Military

U.S. military personnel stationed in or visiting the Middle East should seek guidance from their commanding officer regarding their destination countries' immigration and visa regulations. U.S. military personnel should also consult the Department of Defense's Electronic Foreign Clearance Guide (EFCG) for procedures to follow to receive country clearance for all leave and official travel. The EFCG can be found at https://www.fcg.pentagon.mil/fcg.cfm. Those planning for regional travel on official passports should work with their base's Immigration Office or designated official on visa requirements. Please allow ample time when applying for the appropriate visas.

Military applying for a no-fee passport book must contact their Military Travel Office at their home installation. Please contact the nearest U.S Embassy or U.S Consulate for an appointment to apply for a regular passport book.

The State Department routinely informs the public of conditions abroad that may affect their safety and security. Country Specific Information, Travel Alerts and Travel Warnings can be found at http://www.travel.state.gov.

Private U.S. citizens working in support of regional U.S. military operations may not be covered under the defense cooperation or status of forces agreements and as a result may not be afforded the same privileges and protections as U.S. service members and Department of Defense civilians. Please confirm your status with your employer and/or sponsoring Department of Defense entity.

Corniche, Doha, Qatar

Respect Local Laws and Customs

While you are traveling in the Gulf region, you are subject to host country laws. Foreign laws and legal systems can be vastly different than our own. If you break local laws, your U.S. passport will not help you avoid arrest or prosecution. It is very important to know what is legal and what is not wherever you go.

Islamic ideals provide an important foundation for customs, laws, and practices in all countries in the Gulf region. Religion and religious practice can be quite sensitive issues. Therefore, discussing religious issues, or answering questions about a religion, should be treated with care and sensitivity. Foreign visitors are expected to remain sensitive to Islamic beliefs and practices. They should bear in mind that local expectations for appropriate attire may be more conservative than in the U.S.

For more detailed information on customs, laws, and regulations in Gulf countries you will be visiting, visit the Country Specific Information on http://www.travel.state.gov/

Desert Road, near Wakra, Qatar

What American Citizen Services Can Do:

- Renew passports and issue replacement passports in emergency situations
- Register the birth of an American citizen born abroad
- Notarize documents for use in the U.S.
- Provide assistance and information if you have been the victim of a crime or have become ill
- Provide contact information for local attorneys, doctors, and other resources
- Visit you as soon as possible if you are arrested
- Offer support in various cases involving American citizens, including international child abduction, death, or missing persons
- Contact friends or family for you, if requested
- Arrange loans for your return to the U.S., in serious emergencies
- Assist citizens during incidents of terrorism, civil unrest, or natural disasters
- Act as liaison for Federal Benefits, such as Social Security or Veterans benefits
- Supply information and forms regarding taxes and voting

What American Citizen Services Can't Do:

- Get you out of jail or prevent your deportation
- Provide personal security
- Give legal advice
- Recommend a specific service provider
- Intervene in personal or commercial disputes
- Obtain better medical treatment for you than that available to locals
- Make travel arrangements for you
- Pay personal debts
- Certify U.S. issued vital records, court documents, or academic credentials
- Facilitate the issuance of your visa or act as your sponsor
- Issue or certify U.S. issued police clearances
- Perform marriage ceremonies

American Citizen Services Around the Region

If you are an U.S. citizen and need assistance while traveling in the region, please contact us:

Bahrain

Embassy Manama:	+973-1724-2700 http://bahrain.usembassy.gov ManamaConsular@state.gov

Kuwait

Embassy Kuwait City:	+965-2259-1001 http://kuwait.usembassy.gov KuwaitACS@state.gov

Oman

Embassy Muscat:	+968-2464-3400 http://oman.usembassy.gov ConsularMuscat@state.gov

Qatar

Embassy Doha:	+974-4496-6000 http://qatar.usembassy.gov ACSConsularDoha@state.gov

Saudi Arabia

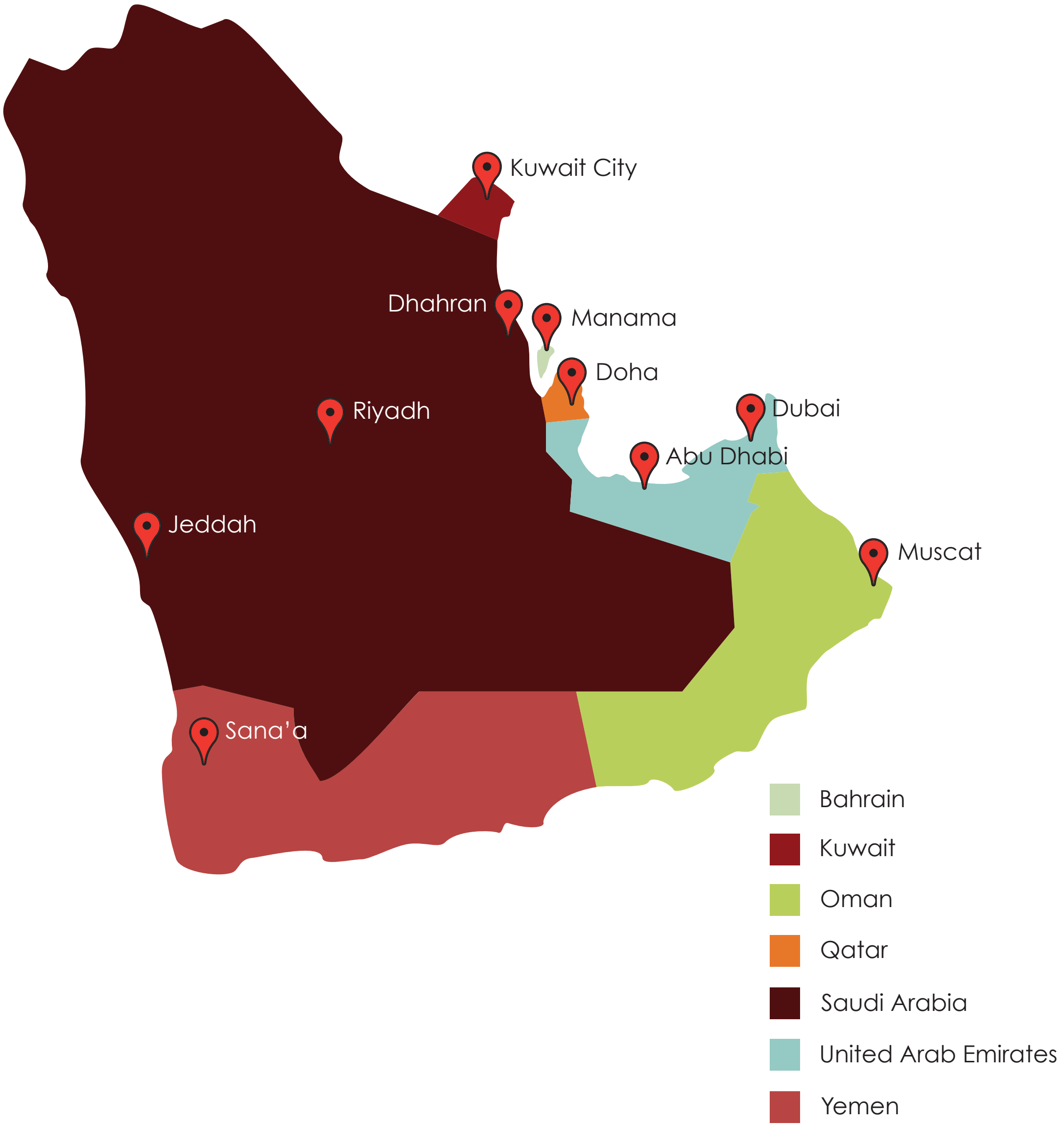
Embassy Riyadh:	+966-011-488-3800 http://riyadh.usembassy.gov RiyadhACS@state.gov
Consulate General Dhahran:	+966-013-330-3200 http://dhahran.usconsulate.gov DhahranACS@state.gov
Consulate General Jeddah:	+966-012-667-0080 http://jeddah.usconsulate.gov JeddahACS@state.gov

United Arab Emirates

Embassy Abu Dhabi:	+971-2-414-2200 http://abudhabi.usembassy.gov AbudhabiACS@state.gov
Consulate General Dubai:	+971-4-309-4000 http://dubai.usconsulate.gov DubaiACS@state.gov

Yemen

Embassy Sana'a:	+967-1-755-2170 http://yemen.usembassy.gov SanaaACS@state.gov

Regional Map with Consular Districts

The map below indicates the locations of our Embassies and Consulates in the region. Information provided is correct at the time of publication and attempts to give an idea of issues and concerns for U.S. citizens living and traveling in the region. This is not an exhaustive list of potential concerns. More information is available—and regularly updated—on the Embassy and Consulate websites, as well as at http://www.travel.state.gov.