



# Discovering Saudi Arabia's Cultural and Economic Legacy Through Coffee

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**Abstract:** Coffee in Saudi Arabia is far more than a beverage; it is a vibrant tapestry of heritage, social cohesion, and economic ambition. This study examines the profound interplay between coffee (*qahwa*) and Saudi identity, tracing its historical roots from 15th-century trade routes to its modern-day role as a pillar of cultural and economic resilience. Through a mixed-method approach—including qualitative interviews, ethnographic observations, and literature analysis—the research unveils how coffee rituals, such as the Bedouin Ghawah ceremony, embody symbolic interactionism and *communitas*, fostering trust and unity in a collectivist society. Over 94% of Saudi households uphold coffee hospitality as a moral obligation, while 72% of youth frequent coffeehouses (*maqha*) weekly, bridging generational divides. Economically, the sector thrives as a Vision 2030 priority: the \$1.54 billion market grows at 5.12% annually, with the Saudi Coffee Company targeting 2,500 tons of domestic production and 8,000 jobs by 2030 (Statista, 2025; PIF, 2022). UNESCO's 2021 recognition of Arabic coffee as Intangible Heritage underscores its global legacy, while sustainable practices and coffee tourism offer pathways for economic diversification. Policymakers, economists, and cultural custodians will find here a blueprint for harmonizing heritage with progress, ensuring that every cup of *qahwa* brews a future as rich as its past.

**Keywords:** Coffee, Saudi Arabia, Cultural Significance, Social Influence, Economic Sustainability

## Introduction

Coffee, a humble bean with a profound legacy, transcends its role as a mere beverage in Saudi Arabia, weaving itself into the nation's cultural soul, economic vitality, and social fabric. As the aroma of *qahwa* (Arabic coffee) permeates homes, boardrooms, and Bedouin tents, it carries centuries of tradition, hospitality, and identity. Saudi Arabia's coffee culture is not just a ritual—it is a living testament to the nation's heritage, a catalyst for social cohesion, and a burgeoning economic force. This study delves into the multifaceted significance of coffee in Saudi Arabia, exploring its historical roots, sociological dynamics, economic contributions, and evolving global interconnectedness. Understanding these dimensions is not merely academic, it is critical for preserving

cultural identity, informing policy, and navigating the tensions between tradition and modernity in an era of rapid globalization.

Coffee's journey in Saudi Arabia began in the 15th century through the bustling trade hubs of Jeddah and Mocha, where Ethiopian beans traversed the Incense Route, intertwining with Bedouin traditions (Zappiah, 2007). By the 16th century, coffee had become synonymous with Bedouin hospitality, with the Ghawah ceremony—roasting, grinding, and brewing beans before guests—emerging as a sacred ritual of generosity (Maspul, 2025). Today, over 80% of Saudi households serve qahwa daily, often infused with cardamom and served in ornate *finjan* cups, symbolizing unity and respect. UNESCO's 2021 recognition of Arabic coffee as an Intangible Cultural Heritage underscores its global significance, yet its roots remain deeply Saudi, reflecting a lineage of nomadic resilience and communal bonding (Maspul, 2025; Trimeche *et al.*, 2023).

In a society where collectivism and hospitality are paramount, coffee rituals act as social catalysts. Symbolic interactionism, as theorized by Mead (1934), manifests in the shared meanings of *qahwa*: every pour signifies trust, every sip reinforces belonging. Coffeehouses (*maqha*), historically hubs for intellectual discourse and storytelling, now serve as “third places” where 72% of Saudis aged 18–35 gather weekly to forge connections, bridging generational and socio-economic divides (Maspul, 2025; Oldenburg, 1999). The act of offering coffee to guests, a practice ingrained in 94% of Saudi households, transcends mere politeness—it is a moral obligation, a cultural code binding individuals to communal values (Stephenson & Ali, 2018).

Beyond culture, coffee is a formidable economic driver. Saudi Arabia's coffee market, valued at \$1.54 billion in 2023, is projected to grow at 5.12% annually, fueled by a youthful population and rising café culture (Statista, 2025). The Saudi Coffee Company, launched under Vision 2030, aims to boost domestic production tenfold by 2030, targeting 2,500 tons annually while creating 8,000 jobs in farming, roasting, and retail (PIF, 2022). Coffee exports, though nascent, grew by 23% in 2022, capitalizing on global demand for premium Arabica beans cultivated in the mountainous Jazan region (World Bank, 2023). These strides align with economic diversification goals, reducing oil dependency while honoring agrarian heritage.

Yet Saudi coffee culture stands at a crossroads. The influx of global chains like Starbucks (187 outlets nationwide) and the rise of specialty cafés among urban youth reflect a tension between tradition and modernity (Euromonitor, 2024; ICO, 2023). While 68% of young Saudis embrace latte art and cold brew, 89% simultaneously demand preservation of *qahwa* rituals, revealing a duality of identity. Theories of glocalization (Robertson, 1995) and cultural hybridity (García Canclini, 1995) frame this evolution, where global trends adapt to local palates—such as cardamom-infused cappuccinos—showcasing Saudi Arabia's ability to innovate without erasing heritage.

This study is urgent. As Saudi Arabia accelerates toward Vision 2030, understanding coffee's role is vital for policymakers balancing economic ambition with cultural preservation. For sociologists, it offers insights into how rituals sustain social capital in rapidly modernizing societies. Economists gain a blueprint for leveraging

cultural assets into sustainable industries. Globally, it illuminates how a nation navigates globalization while safeguarding intangible heritage—a lesson for cultures worldwide. Moreover, in a world where homogenization threatens diversity, Saudi Arabia's coffee narrative is a beacon. It reminds us that development need not eclipse tradition, and that a cup of *qahwa* can simultaneously honor the past, energize the present, and brew a resilient future.

### Research Method

To explore the historical and social features of coffee in Saudi Arabia, this study adopts a mixed-method approach that combines qualitative research methodologies, a literature review, direct observation, and interviews. The cultural and social relevance of coffee will be investigated using qualitative research methodologies such as in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and participant observation. A thorough survey of the literature will provide the historical backdrop and theoretical framework. Direct observation will provide firsthand information on coffee rituals and social dynamics, while interviews with coffee specialists and members of various social groups will provide insights into their experiences and viewpoints. Thematic analysis will be used on the qualitative data to ensure a thorough evaluation of the subject. The study's methodology aims to produce a complete understanding of coffee's function in Saudi Arabian society and to contribute to the current body of information on the subject.

### Result and Discussion

Coffee is significant culturally and socially in Saudi Arabian civilization, acting as more than just a beverage. It's inextricably linked to the country's customs, hospitality, and social fiber. This article will go into the historical and sociological elements of coffee in Saudi Arabia, offering light on its evolution and impact on societal dynamics. We can acquire a better grasp of the function coffee plays in forming Saudi Arabian culture and its significance in the larger context of social relationships and cultural identity by applying theories from the field of social science.

The coffee culture of Saudi Arabia is based on centuries-old traditions and rituals passed down through generations. Coffee, also known as "*qahwa*" in Arabic, is an important part of Saudi hospitality, expressing the country's warm and inviting culture. Coffee is historically served to guests as a form of hospitality and as a method of developing social relationships in Saudi Arabia (Brodeur, 2022, Stephenson & Ali, 2018). This cultural tradition highlights coffee's value as a symbol of compassion, community, and social connectedness by recounting its history. It also examines the social dynamics influenced by coffee via a sociological lens, such as its significance in forging social ties, promoting cultural practices, and increasing Saudis' sense of community.

From a sociological standpoint, the concept of "symbolic interactionism" sheds light on the role of coffee in influencing social interactions. The sociologist George Herbert

Mead proposed symbolic interactionism, which emphasizes how individuals draw meaning from symbols and engage in social relationships based on common understandings (Mead, 1934). Coffee is a sign of hospitality, charity, and social connection in Saudi Arabian coffee culture. Offering and taking coffee promotes a shared concept of friendliness and a sense of belonging among the Saudi Arabian community.

Furthermore, sociologist Victor Turner's "communitas" theory gives insight on the communal features of coffee consumption in Saudi Arabian society. Communitas is defined as the sense of solidarity and togetherness felt by members of a community during shared rituals or experiences (Turner, 1973). Gathering around a coffee pot and participating in discussion generates a sense of community among participants in Saudi Arabia. Coffee functions as a connector, bringing people together and instilling a sense of belonging and togetherness.

Understanding the historical and sociological features of coffee in Saudi Arabia provides insights into the cultural significance and social dynamics of this beloved beverage. It emphasizes the significance of coffee in Saudi Arabian society as a symbol of hospitality, charity, and communal cohesion. By delving into these characteristics, we can acquire a better understanding of the significance of coffee in shaping social relationships, cultural customs, and Saudi Arabia's overall cultural identity.

### **The Historical Journey of Coffee in Saudi Arabia: From Trade Routes to Bedouin Culture**

Coffee has a rich historical legacy in Saudi Arabian society that goes beyond its role as a beverage. This article examines the introduction of coffee to the region, the trade channels that permitted its arrival, and its subsequent integration into traditional Bedouin society. We can acquire a full grasp of coffee's historical and sociological elements in Saudi Arabia by relying on pertinent ideas and studying its relevance. Coffee, known as "*qahwa*" in Arabic, first arrived in Saudi Arabia via wide trade routes that linked the Arabian Peninsula to other locations. Coffee was first brought to the region in the 15th century, primarily through the thriving port cities of Jeddah and Mocha (Zappiah, 2007). These ports functioned as vital hubs for trade and cultural interchange, allowing coffee from Ethiopia to enter the country.

Cultural and commerce channels were critical in the spread of coffee throughout Saudi Arabia. The Incense Route is the most important of these routes. The Incense Route was a commerce network that linked the Arabian Peninsula to the Levant, Egypt, and beyond (Singer, 2007). Coffee beans, along with other commodities such as spices, textiles, and precious metals, traveled these routes, contributing to the blossoming cultural exchange between nations. As a result, the Incense Route was instrumental in introducing coffee to Saudi Arabia, where it would subsequently become profoundly engrained in the country's cultural and social habits.

Coffee quickly gained popularity among Saudi Arabia's Bedouin tribes, playing an important role in its widespread adoption and cultural significance across the country. Bedouins, nomadic desert inhabitants, accepted coffee as an essential part of their daily lives and social rituals. Coffee was used to greet guests, encourage hospitality, and

strengthen social relationships among the community (Maspul, 2023). The "*Ghawwah*," or traditional Bedouin coffee preparation and serving ceremonial, became an emblem of hospitality and cultural identity. The coffee beans were roasted, ground, and brewed in front of the guests, producing a multimodal experience (Maspul, 2025). Bedouin hospitality and warmth became synonymous with the aroma of freshly brewed coffee and the rhythmic pouring of the dark liquid into little cups.

Coffee drinking spread from the Bedouin tribes to metropolitan centers and other areas of Saudi Arabia over time. It crossed societal barriers and became an essential element of daily life and social interactions. Coffee shops, or "*Maqha*," evolved as places where people could gather for talks, storytelling, and cultural exchange (Maspul, 2025). These coffee shops were important social hubs, supporting community solidarity and knowledge sharing. The history of coffee in Saudi Arabia sheds light on its transformative impact on Bedouin culture and eventual assimilation into Saudi Arabian civilization. Coffee, introduced through trade channels, became firmly ingrained in the country's social fabric, customs, and traditions. Its importance as a symbol of hospitality and communal bonding is still shaping Saudi Arabian society today.

### **Coffee as a Social Catalyst: Fostering Community Cohesion in Saudi Arabia**

Coffee is important in Saudi society not just as a popular beverage, but also as a stimulus for social connections and communal solidarity. It's important to groundbreaking into the social rituals and traditions around coffee consumption in Saudi Arabia. It goes on to examine the relevance of coffeehouses as bustling sites of social interaction, as well as the role of coffee in stimulating talks, networking, and social bonding. We can acquire a full grasp of the social relevance of coffee in Saudi Arabian society by investigating these factors. In Saudi Arabia, coffee consumption is accompanied by a variety of social rituals and customs that contribute to its importance in daily life. These rituals and customs, according to sociological ideas, act as symbols that cement social relationships and cultural identity. Symbolic interactionism, a theory created by George Herbert Mead, proposes that people attach shared meanings to symbols and engage in social interactions based on these meanings (Blumer, 1986).

The traditional coffee preparation and serving ceremony, known as the "*Ghawwah*" or "Arabic coffee ceremony," represents a symbolic gesture of hospitality and communal connection in the context of Saudi Arabian coffee culture. The precise processing of coffee beans by the host, as well as the pouring of coffee into little cups, represent warmth, generosity, and the welcoming of guests. These rituals foster a sense of belonging among participants and reinforce social cohesion. Coffeehouses, or "*Maqha*," are vital to Saudi society as dynamic locations for social interaction and communal solidarity. Coffeehouses, from a sociological standpoint, can be viewed as "third places" that stimulate social engagement outside of the worlds of home and work. Ray Oldenburg's notion of third place highlights the relevance of informal public places in the development of social ties and community connections (Oldenburg, 1999).



Coffeehouses provide welcoming spaces for people of all backgrounds to socialize, discuss ideas, and engage with one another. They foster the building of social networks and the development of social capital by providing a sense of location and a shared space for conversations. Putnam (2000) emphasizes the importance of social ties and networks in increasing individual and societal well-being. Interactions, trust, and the exchange of knowledge among individuals build social capital in the context of coffeehouses, adding to the entire social fabric of Saudi Arabian society. Coffee has long been known in Saudi Arabian society for its ability to spark conversations and enable networking. In terms of communication, coffee functions as a conversational lubricant, breaking the ice and strengthening social bonds. Coffee consumption as a shared experience offers a relaxed and comfortable setting in which individuals may engage in meaningful conversations and develop connections.

Furthermore, coffeehouses in Saudi Arabia serve as venues for intellectual debate, storytelling, and knowledge exchange. These exchanges aid in the preservation and transfer of cultural assets, as well as the building of collective memory. According to Homans (1958), individuals participate in social relationships to maximize rewards and reduce costs. Individuals seek social pleasures such as emotional support, intellectual stimulation, and a sense of belonging in the context of coffeehouses through conversations and networking. Coffee, as a social catalyst, serves many functions in Saudi society. Coffee's social rituals and traditions, robust coffeehouse culture, and function in stimulating conversations and networking all add to its relevance as a symbol of communal togetherness. Coffee rituals and coffeehouses, from a sociological standpoint, serve as symbols and venues that maintain social bonds, assist social capital building, and contribute to the general well-being of individuals and communities.

### **Coffee and Economic Sustainability: The Impact of the Coffee Industry in Saudi Arabia**

The coffee industry in Saudi Arabia is not only a cultural staple, but it also plays a vital role in the country's economic existence. Therefore, it is crucial to delve into the economic significance of the coffee industry in Saudi Arabia. It dives into the various aspects of coffee production and trading, as well as their importance to the national economy. It also looks on the employment opportunities and entrepreneurial enterprises created by the coffee industry. Understanding these processes enables us to appreciate the economic significance of coffee in Saudi Arabia. Coffee has emerged as a major economic sector in Saudi Arabia, contributing to the country's economic success. According to the export-led growth theory (Balassa, 1978), the ability of the coffee sector to generate foreign exchange profits can stimulate economic growth. Coffee production and sales in Saudi Arabia contribute to economic diversification and reduce dependency on oil earnings.

Coffee production is divided into several steps, which include cultivation, harvesting, processing, and packaging. These activities generate value-added opportunities in the agricultural industry and contribute to the country's total GDP. According to economic theories such as value chain analysis, coffee production can provide employment and revenue to farmers, laborers, and other stakeholders along the

coffee value chain (Gereffi & Lee, 2016). Coffee production and commerce have a considerable impact on the Saudi economy. Saudi Arabian coffee is well-known for its exceptional quality, making it a sought-after commodity in both domestic and international markets. The coffee export sector creates income and adds to the country's trade balance.

Furthermore, the coffee trade promotes commercial ties with worldwide markets. Saudi Arabian coffee growers participate in global supply chains, establishing connections with coffee importers, distributors, and retailers around the world. This integration into the global coffee market creates economic prospects for both large and small-scale producers, as well as coffee processing and distribution enterprises. Coffee trading also promotes foreign direct investment and technological transfer in the coffee industry (Etienne *et al.*, 2018). The coffee sector in Saudi Arabia provides a variety of job possibilities and serves as a catalyst for new business operations. Coffee production and processing necessitate a large work force, resulting in job prospects for people living in rural areas. Additionally, the expansion of the coffee industry has resulted in the construction of coffeehouses, cafés, and specialty coffee shops, producing jobs in the service sector.

Coffee-related entrepreneurial ventures go beyond coffee production and distribution. Coffee roasting, packaging, equipment production, and barista training have all emerged as viable business prospects, contributing to the expansion of the coffee ecosystem. These initiatives stimulate innovation, creativity, and the development of local expertise, thereby strengthening the coffee industry's economic viability. The coffee industry in Saudi Arabia is both a cultural emblem and a driver of economic sustainability. The economic influence of the coffee industry may be seen in its contributions to the national economy, which include export profits, diversification, and job creation. We obtain a full grasp of coffee's economic significance in Saudi Arabia by researching many areas of coffee production, trading, and entrepreneurial initiatives.

### **Contemporary Coffee Culture in Saudi Arabia: Exploring the Dynamics of a Modern Tradition**

Coffee has always held cultural significance in Saudi Arabia, and the country's coffee culture has evolved in recent years. It is crucial as providing an in-depth examination of contemporary coffee culture in modern Saudi Arabia. It investigates the growth of specialty coffee as well as the impact of global coffee trends on the local scene. It also emphasizes the importance of coffee in shaping social dynamics, such as business meetings and social gatherings. Understanding these relationships allows us to grasp coffee's cultural and social significance in Saudi Arabia's modern culture.

Saudi Arabia's coffee culture has undergone a remarkable transition, owing to a variety of circumstances. Cultural globalization is one theoretical framework that helps explain this process. Exposure to other cultures and trends has influenced the local coffee scene as Saudi society grows more interconnected with the global world (Tomlinson, 1999).

As Saudi consumers accept new coffee experiences, the adoption of specialty coffee is an example of cultural dispersion that occurs in response to globalization.

In addition, the concept of cultural capital offers light on the emerging coffee culture. In current Saudi society, coffee intake has become a symbol of elegance and social standing. Individuals develop cultural capital by engaging in the specialty coffee movement, which improves their social standing and identity (Bourdieu, 2018). The quest for specialty coffee knowledge and enjoyment becomes a way of distinction and cultural expression.

The global coffee industry has had a significant impact on Saudi coffee culture. The specialty coffee movement, which began in the late twentieth century in the United States, has spread throughout the world. This movement emphasizes coffee bean quality, traceability, and unique qualities, as well as the skill of brewing procedures (Ponte, 2002). Like other countries, Saudi Arabia has embraced this trend, with specialty coffee shops sprouting up in major cities. Early adopters and opinion leaders persuade others to accept specialty coffee, according to the diffusion of innovation theory (Rogers *et al.*, 2014). The quest for fresh and distinctive coffee experiences, combined with the influence of social media and online forums, has aided in the rapid rise of Saudi Arabia's specialty coffee sector.

Coffee has a huge impact on social dynamics in Saudi Arabia, particularly in business meetings and social events. Oldenburg's (1989) "third place" idea emphasizes the relevance of informal public areas where people gather to socialize and participate in community activities. Coffeehouses and specialty coffee shops have evolved into modern-day "third places" in Saudi society, facilitating social contact, intellectual debate, and cultural exchange.

Coffee facilitates informal discussion and relationship-building in the context of business meetings. The concept of "caffeinated power" indicates that coffee rituals generate a comfortable and collaborative environment, allowing for discussions and establishing trust among business partners (Masput & Ardhin, 2025). Coffee meetings offer a neutral space for professionals to network and do business in a less formal setting. In addition, coffee has historical and cultural significance in Saudi hospitality. The custom of providing coffee to guests, known as "*gahwa*," is firmly established in hospitality and charity traditions. Coffee rituals represent camaraderie, warmth, and respect. Offering and sharing coffee at social events strengthens social relationships and fosters a sense of oneness among attendees.

The contemporary coffee culture in Saudi Arabia exemplifies the changing nature of a traditional beverage in a modern environment. The emergence of specialty coffee, driven by global coffee trends, has resulted in new flavors, brewing techniques, and a thriving community of coffee connoisseurs. Coffee's involvement in social dynamics, especially its importance in business meetings and social events, strengthens its position as a cultural emblem of hospitality, connection, and social distinction. By investigating the changing coffee culture in Saudi Arabia, we acquire a better understanding of how coffee continues to shape and enrich the country's cultural and social fabric.



## Coffee in Comparative Perspective: Exploring the Global Interconnectedness and Cultural Diversity of Coffee Cultures

Meanwhile, coffee is a social phenomenon that crosses borders, bringing people from all over the world together via shared experiences and cultural customs. Therefore its important compares Saudi Arabian coffee culture to different coffee cultures throughout the world, highlighting its unique characteristics, similarities, and contrasts. Examining these many coffee traditions allows us to obtain a better grasp of the global connection and cultural diversity inherent in coffee appreciation. Saudi Arabian coffee culture is distinguished by a focus on hospitality, social bonding, and the preservation of cultural traditions. Traditional Arabic coffee, known as *gahwa*, is made in a unique way that entails roasting and grinding the beans before adding cardamom for flavor. *Gahwa* is typically served in little cups known as *finjan*, and the process of serving and drinking coffee is accompanied by complicated rituals that represent warmth and hospitality.

When compared to other coffee cultures, such as Italian or Ethiopian, Saudi Arabian coffee stands out for its emphasis on the social aspects of coffee consumption. While the art of espresso brewing and swift service are important in Italian coffee culture, creating a warm and inviting setting for socializing and forming relationships is more important in Saudi Arabian coffee culture. This contrast can be understood using Hofstede's (2001) theory of cultural dimensions. Different cultures place different emphasis on different ideals, and Saudi Arabian coffee culture exemplifies a high level of collectivism, emphasizing societal harmony and interpersonal ties. In contrast, Italian coffee culture is more individualistic, emphasizing personal enjoyment and efficiency.

Despite cultural differences, there are numerous shared qualities among coffee cultures around the world. Coffee is often connected with social events, acting as a fuel for discourse and community development. Across cultures, coffeehouses or cafes are frequently used as "third places" where people can relax, mingle, and engage in intellectual conversation (Oldenburg, 1999). However, each coffee culture has its own set of behaviors and rituals. Ethiopian coffee rituals, for example, include the roasting and brewing of coffee beans in front of visitors, producing a sensory experience that honors coffee's cultural past.

Saudi Arabian coffee rituals, on the other hand, emphasize the value of hospitality and the relationship between the host and guests through the preparation and serving of *gahwa*. The hypothesis of cultural relativism (Kluckhohn, 1951) can explain these variances. Different cultures have different ideas, values, and customs, and their approach to coffee rituals reflects those norms and objectives. Understanding and valuing these differences promotes intercultural understanding and tolerance.

The cultural interaction and proliferation of coffee traditions across borders demonstrates coffee's global connectivity. Coffee absorbed into numerous cultural contexts as it moved from its roots in Ethiopia to the Arabian Peninsula and beyond, adjusting to local tastes and customs. The growth of specialty coffee shops around the world exemplifies this cultural variation. These institutions not only highlight the distinct flavors and brewing skills of certain regions, but they also serve as a forum for cultural

exchange. Coffee fans can learn about the vast world of coffee by sampling beans from other regions and conversing with baristas and fellow customers.

The term "glocalization" (Robertson, 1995) refers to coffee cultures in which global influences coexist with local traditions. In Saudi Arabia, for example, specialty coffee shops have evolved, fusing international coffee trends with local flavors and preferences. This mix of global and local aspects demonstrates the interrelated nature of coffee culture as well as coffee's adaptation to various cultural situations.

This phenomenon is explained by Garca Canclini's (1995) theory of cultural hybridity. Coffee cultures evolve and transform when they encounter new cultural influences, resulting in the creation of distinct hybrid forms that represent both local and global aspects. This cultural hybridity is exemplified by the rise of specialty coffee shops and the adoption of international brewing techniques in Saudi Arabia. People will discover the global connection and cultural diversity present in coffee traditions around the world by analyzing Saudi Arabian coffee culture in a comparative context. While Saudi Arabian coffee culture focuses on hospitality and social interaction, other coffee cultures highlight heritage, taste preferences, and the social value of coffee consumption.

The global coffee community is bonded by a shared love of coffee, and through cultural exchange, we develop a better understanding of the various practices and rituals associated with this beloved beverage. The comparative study of coffee expands our understanding of its international appeal and its potential to overcome cultural differences, build connections, and promote cultural variety.

### **Exploring Innovative Approaches for Economic Growth in Saudi Arabia's Coffee Industry**

The coffee business in Saudi Arabia has enormous potential for future economic growth, and creative ways can boost its economic effect even further. To fully realize this potential, the government can pursue a variety of measures that promote diversification, sustainability, and technical breakthroughs. Diversification of coffee goods and exports is one new idea for economic progress. Saudi Arabia can invest in specialty coffee manufacturing, focusing on one-of-a-kind blends that highlight the distinctive flavors and qualities of Saudi Arabian coffee. Saudi Arabia can attract discerning consumers and grow its part of the global coffee business by targeting the specialty coffee market, both domestically and globally (Maspu *et al.*, 2022). This method not only adds value to Saudi Arabian coffee, but it also contributes to increased revenue and a more strong coffee sector.

Another opportunity for economic growth is to promote coffee tourism and experiencing coffee culture. Saudi Arabia can establish coffee-themed tourism destinations that offer immersive and instructive experiences by leveraging on its rich coffee legacy. This can include coffee plantations, interactive coffee museums, and coffee tasting experiences that teach tourists about and respect Saudi Arabian coffee traditions (Alivizatou, 2021). Coffee tourism has the potential to attract a specialized market of travelers interested in learning about cultural customs, diversifying the tourism industry, and producing new revenue streams for local companies.

Adopting sustainable coffee production practices gives yet another novel potential for economic gain. Saudi Arabia can improve the quality of its coffee beans and establish itself as a pioneer in sustainable coffee production by adopting ecologically friendly growing practices such as organic farming and water conservation measures (Maspul *et al.*, 2022; Krishnan, 2017). This technique not only appeals to ecologically concerned consumers, but it also helps Saudi Arabian coffee to command premium pricing in the worldwide market, increasing profitability for growers and the coffee industry as a whole.

Encouraging the development of coffee-related small businesses can also contribute significantly to economic growth. Saudi Arabia may encourage the construction of coffee roasteries, specialty coffee cafes, and coffee equipment manufacturing enterprises by offering financial assistance, training programs, and coaching to potential entrepreneurs (Maspul *et al.*, 2022; Wulandari & Djufry, 2022). This creates a vibrant coffee ecosystem, generating employment opportunities, stimulating local economies, and promoting a thriving coffee culture.

Investing in coffee technology research and development (R&D) is another innovative method to driving economic growth in Saudi Arabia. The country may improve the quality and shelf life of its coffee goods by developing R&D facilities focusing on coffee processing, packaging, and preservation techniques. Advanced technology and methods established through R&D activities have the potential to improve the country's export capacities, attract international alliances, and position Saudi Arabia as a center for coffee innovation and knowledge.

**Table 1.** Comprehensive Strategic Roadmap for Saudi Arabia's Coffee Sector

<i>Strategic Objective</i>	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Implementation Steps</b>	<b>Responsible Entities</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)</b>	<b>Risks &amp; Mitigation</b>
<i>Elevate Quality &amp; Differentiation</i>	Develop a "Saudi Cup of Excellence" program to benchmark premium beans	1. Form expert panel (local & international cuppers)	Coffee Guild	6–12 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>≥ 50 farms participating Year 1</li> </ul>	<b>Risk:</b> Low initial participation
		2. Define grading protocols & award criteria	Specialty roasters		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10 awarded lots showcased at trade fairs</li> </ul>	<b>Mitigation:</b> Offer travel stipends & media promotion for farms in pilot phase
		3. Host annual competition	Academia			

n & showcase winners						
<i>Strategic Objective</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Implementation Steps</i>	<i>Responsible Entities</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)</i>	<i>Risks &amp; Mitigation</i>
<b>Expand Market Access</b>	Launch “Arabian Qahwa” export brand targeting Europe & Asia	1. Conduct market feasibility studies	Ministry of Trade	12–24 months	• + 15 % export volume p.a.	<b>Risk:</b> Regulatory barriers overseas
		2. Secure export certifications (EU organic, Fairtrade)	Export councils		• Entry into 3 new key markets	<b>Mitigation:</b> Early engagement with import authorities; hire local compliance consultants
		3. Develop co-branded packaging & digital campaigns	Brand agencies			
<b>Strengthen Farmer Livelihoods</b>	Implement a tiered “Coffee Resilience Fund” combining grants, low-interest loans, and crop insurance	1. Set up fund governance model	Ministry of Finance	6–18 months	• 70 % farmer enrollment in Year 1	<b>Risk:</b> Loan default
		2. Launch application portal & outreach	Agricultural bank		• 30 % yield stability improvement	<b>Mitigation:</b> Combine loans with mandatory agronomic training and peer-group mentoring
		3. Partner with insurers for parametric coverage	Cooperatives			

<i>Strategic Objective</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Implementation Steps</i>	<i>Responsible Entities</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)</i>	<i>Risks &amp; Mitigation</i>
<i>Foster Innovation &amp; R&amp;D</i>	Establish the Saudi Coffee Innovation Hub (SCIH) for genetics, roasting tech & cold-chain research	1. Allocate dedicated facility space	Ministry of Education	18–36 months	• 3 prototype technologies developed	<b>Risk:</b> Brain-drain of researchers
		2. Issue RFPs for equipment & lab setup	National Research Foundation		• 5 peer-reviewed publications/year	<b>Mitigation:</b> Tie grants to 3-year in-country service; offer competitive stipends
		3. Fund 5 doctoral projects on bean physiology & processing				
<i>Advance Sustainability &amp; ESG</i>	Roll out “Green Qahwa” standard certifying regenerative practices, water stewardship & carbon neutrality	1. Define ESG criteria in collaboration with Global Coffee Platform	Environmental Agency	12–24 months	• 50 % certified acreage by Year 3	<b>Risk:</b> High certification costs
		2. Train auditors & farmers	Coffee Guild		• 25 % reduction in water use/kg bean	<b>Mitigation:</b> Subsidize first-year audit fees; offer green-premium price guarantees
		3. Launch label & consumer education campaign				



<i>Strategic Objective</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Implementation Steps</i>	<i>Responsible Entities</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)</i>	<i>Risks &amp; Mitigation</i>
<i>Digital &amp; Experiential Engagement</i>	Build an integrated “Qahwa Connect” platform for traceability, e-learning, and virtual farm tours	4. Develop blockchain-enabled trace module	ICT Authority	6–12 months	• 10,000 users on platform Year 1	<b>Risk:</b> Low digital literacy in rural areas
		5. Populate e-learning courses (harvest to cup)	Coffee Guild		• 5 % uplift in direct-to-consumer sales	<b>Mitigation:</b> Deploy mobile-friendly UX, local language support, in-field training sessions
		6. Create VR/AR farm-to-cup experiences for tourists	Tourism Authority			

Saudi Arabia's coffee sector can reach its full potential by implementing these creative economic growth techniques. Diversification of coffee products and exports, coffee tourism, sustainable farming techniques, growth of coffee-related small companies, and investment in coffee technology research and development are all promising ways to expand the sector and reap economic benefits. Saudi Arabia can increase its position in the global coffee industry while fostering long-term economic development by taking a comprehensive and forward-thinking approach.

## Conclusion

In Saudi Arabia, coffee is not merely a drink; it is an inheritance, a ritual, and a living chronicle of a people bound by warmth, resilience, and community. Every cup of *qahwa* carries within it the echoes of ancient trade caravans, the pulse of Bedouin hospitality, and the steadfast spirit of a culture that has weathered centuries of change without surrendering its soul. From the simplest home gatherings to the bustling elegance of modern cafés, coffee remains a sacred thread weaving together generations, forging unspoken bonds, and reaffirming the values of generosity and togetherness. It is a medium through which identity is preserved and a sanctuary where the past and future converse.

Yet, as Saudi Arabia strides boldly into its Vision 2030 ambitions, this cherished tradition faces both peril and possibility. The surge of global coffee trends threatens to homogenize what was once sacred, but it also offers a rare chance to showcase cultural hybridity without erasure. The evolution of Saudi coffee culture stands as a testament to a nation's ability to innovate without forsaking its roots, turning local heritage into a global emblem of resilience and grace. It reminds the world that true progress is not a severance from tradition but a dialogue with it — and in every aromatic pour of *qahwa*, Saudi Arabia writes a powerful, enduring story of cultural pride, social harmony, and economic rebirth.

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