

# Ibb

## A tour through beautiful nature

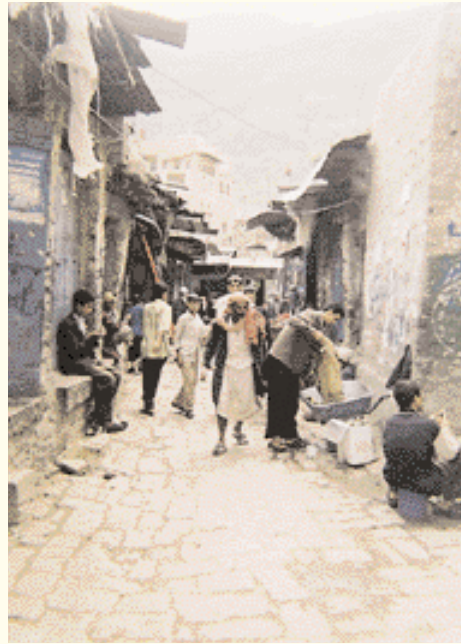
Ibb-Khalid al-Dhababi

Once I received the invitation to attend Ibb tourism festival, I went to the town straight away as it has always enchanted me with its beauty.



Old Ibb.

جزء من إيب القديمة.



Traditional markets in old Ibb. الأسواق الشعبية في مدينة إيب القديمة.



Old door in Ibb.

أحد الأبواب القديمة لمدينة إيب.

Ibb is only an hour's drive from Ta'az. The journey was short and I asked the driver to slow down. He was amazed and asked me why is that? I replied: It will give us a chance to contemplate the magnificent scenery. It was a wonderful drive through a green land and the mountains on the horizon put a defining line to the scene. Such views are unique to Yemen.

Ibb is a joy to behold. There are so many attractive characteristics and it certainly deserves the name of the "Green Governess" and the capital of Yemen. "Ibb" is the name of the old town "Thaja". Many authors mentioned that the name is connected to the Arabic name "Aab" which is the rainy month, good for shepherding.

The town, three hours drive from Sana'a, is located to the south of the Yemeni capital, 2500m above sea level. It has a population of

about 2 million and an area of 5120 sq. km. The climate is mild throughout the year. The town sees increasing numbers of tourists during the months of July and August.

More and more people have been visiting Ibb during the past four years, encouraging an economic revival. The area is mountainous. More than 12 valleys, among them Bana, Dor, Anah and Sahul, provide the inhabitants with the food they need. There are also a number of waterfalls, such as: Bana, Baadan, as well as hot springs and natural spas which are used in therapeutic tourism. The most important natural baths are:

- Al-Shaarani in Adden
- Al-Asloum in Hazim
- Burhan in Qafir

### Historical signpost

Ibb still has its authentic traditions and

architecture which is obvious in decorations on its forts, mosques and doors of its old houses. The most attractive historical buildings are:

- Mosques: Ibb has 35 mosques, such as: the Large Mosque built in the early days of Islam on the orders of Caliph Omar; Queen Arwa mosque built during the Salihi Kingdom (477/1137-532/1184) by Queen Arwa bint Ahmad Al-Salihi in a mountainous region; Thu Sharaq mosque which dates from the rule of Umar bin Abdul-Azziz (77/ 696) in Thu Sharaq to the south of Ibb.

- Schools: Upper Jalaliah in the middle of the old town which dates back to the 9th century AH and Mashna, to the east of old Ibb from the middle of the eighth century AH, built by prince Jalal eddine Nadhari..

- There are beautiful old buildings, ➤

## City Tourism

such as: Dar Al-Hamam, Al-Bidha and Al-Khan which was built by the Ottomans.

### The town wall

Ibb's defences are well constructed. It is surrounded by a wall with five gates: The Large, Rakza, Nasr, Sanbal and the Jadid. Some of these gates are still standing. It is also a town of many forts: Taakur, Hib, Qahir, Manar, Kahlan, Samara, Kahal and Khadad.

### Traditional markets and crafts

There are several markets in this region, such as Al-Sahul market held every Saturday, the Red Najd, Madar, Rabua, Radma and Sabra. Ibb is also a town where traditional craftsmen have been passing on their skills from generation to generation. The tourists are attracted by silver work, pottery, agricultural tools, fabrics, daggers and wood carvings.

### The second Ibb tourism festival

The festival started on the 21st of August 2004 in historical Dafar, the capital of the Kingdom of Sheba and Thu Redan. The Himyari tribes made it their political centre and used it as a base to unite Yemen.. The town was selected for its strategic location and its economic and military importance since it overlooks several valleys with their rivers, such as Wadi Bana, Wadi Dhafar and Qaa Al-Haql.

The week-long festival, which was attended by many VIPs, including the Minister of Culture and Tourism, Mr. Khalid Al-Ruwishan, was largely a festival of Himyari culture. Traditional crafts were on display and lectures were delivered on investment in tourism.

The tourists who attended were delighted by the natural beauty and cultural heritage of the region. A number of investors also expressed a willingness to invest in the tourism sector. The festival was well covered by satellite television and Islamic Tourism magazine was awarded a certificate for its participation by the governor of Ibb and its counsel. ■



The Eastern entrance of Ibb.

المدخل الشرقي لمدينة إب القديمة.



Folkloric dance in Ibb Festival.

عرض للرقصة الشعبية + مهرجان إب السياحي.



Folkloric costume in Ibb Festival.

عرض فلكلوري للأزياء الشعبية في محافظة إب.