

Planning Your Hajj or Umrah?

Avoid Travel Scams!

Hajj and Umrah are sacred pilgrimages to Mecca, Saudi Arabia that often cost Muslim travelers thousands of dollars. Predatory travel agencies and scammers take advantage of this high-cost trip by claiming to offer low prices and premium accommodations. If a travel package price seems too good to be true, *it's likely a scam*. Review our checklist to avoid scams:

✓ RESEARCH AND BOOK EARLY

Do not book a trip based only on advertisements, flyers, or social media posts.

Verify that the travel agency is authorized by the Saudi Arabia Ministry of Hajj and Umrah to provide services. Saudi Arabia's Nusuk online platform is the *only* official booking platform for managing your Hajj or Umrah trip.

Visit hajj.nusuk.sa or umrah.nusuk.sa to view authorized service providers, register for a visa, or book travel packages.

IMPORTANT: Beware of scammers posing as Nusuk officials. Nusuk will *never* ask you to pay for your trip via email or social media.

✓ PAY WITH A CREDIT CARD

Avoid paying with cash, wire transfers, cryptocurrency, gift cards, or payment apps that do not offer purchase protections. Credit cards may give you additional rights if you paid for services the travel agency did not provide.

✓ REVIEW THE CONTRACT AND ASK QUESTIONS

Make sure your travel agent provides you with a contract or other form of written confirmation of the services the travel agency will provide. **Do not rely on verbal confirmation or text messages through social media like Facebook or WhatsApp to confirm your trip.**

Ask questions about anything you do not understand in the contract before you sign. Take time to review and if you are pressured to sign or place a deposit, walk away!

Make sure your contract clearly lists:

- total price
- payment schedule
- any additional fees
- visa details
- hotel name and dates of your stay
- airline reservation details
- transportation
- cancellation and refund policies

Even after your trip is booked, confirm your hotel reservations and flights directly with the hotel and airline.

✓ KEEP TRACK OF ALL COMMUNICATIONS

Save contracts, receipts, travel confirmations, invoices, emails, text messages, and screenshots of advertisements or social media posts. Write down the dates and details of any phone or in-person conversations.

Ask for itemized invoices and make sure there aren't any surprise fees.

! A TRAVEL SCAM IS LIKELY IF AN AGENCY:

- Has no physical address
- Offers low prices or fast visa processing times
- Has vague descriptions of accommodations
- Has no refund policy
- Requests cash up front
- Asks you to pay with wire transfers or gift cards
- Makes no reference to Nusuk platform for booking *or* claims it can bypass Nusuk

You can file a complaint against a New York City-based travel agency if you were deceived by false advertising, were promised services or certain accommodations that you did not receive, were charged unexpected fees, or had your contract cancelled without consent. File a complaint: nyc.gov/consumers or 311.