

AL-WSEL

Description

Human presence as far back as the Stone Age is suggested at the large archeological site in Al-Wsel. Consisting of a variety of dwellings, towers and burial sites, the ruins can be found by the sea on an outcrop 100 meters inland. Slabs extracted from sedimentary rocks and arranged into circles in the sand are the most fascinating element of this site.

Current thinking suggests these configurations may have been used to mark graves. The circles are of varying sizes, perhaps indicating that larger groups used the larger stones.

In 1956, a Danish archaeological expedition discovered a number of flint stone axes, arrows and spear tips that would suggest the groups who inhabited the site enjoyed a relatively sophisticated level of development. Archaeological evidence also suggests that their economy was based on seafood, and that they may have traded with other communities along the coast.

Similar flint stone tools were uncovered along the northern and western shores of the state, demonstrating that Qatar was widely inhabited in ancient times.

In 1991 and 1992, Qatari authorities collaborated with Japanese teams to carry out a K14 radiocarbon-based analysis. They determined a chronology of the site based on three phases of development. The first and oldest one is the Stone Age period (7th century BC), the second is very late 3rd century BC (2100 BC), and the third dates back to the 1st century BC.

Planning a visit

If you take a walk along the beach, you will enjoy a well-preserved Arabian coastal landscape with large groups of mangroves.

A four-wheel-drive vehicle and a GPS device are required to explore Al-Wsel. The site is always open and there is no admission fee. Remember to bring some snacks and refreshments along, as there are no facilities in the area. Please remember not to litter and to take any garbage back with you.

UTM coordinates N 25° 30' 05.5" E 51° 28' 43.6"

Directions

A four-wheel drive vehicle and a GPS device are required to explore this site. Al-Wsel is located on the east coast of Qatar, about 27 km north of Doha. To reach the site, take

Lusail Street. Make a right at the International Moto Race Circuit junction, drive through the gate and go straight toward the coast until you reach the Lusail graveyard. Prepare your vehicle for driving off road, start driving toward the north (on your left) and find your way through the sandy path along the beach. First you should find the outcrop, where ruins of dwellings and towers are located. Then continue east until you are closer to the beach, where you will find the sign marking the circular stone burials.