

PRESS RELEASE

Villa Hegra Announces the Launch of Its First Tableware Design Residency in Partnership with Campus Mana

AIUla, June 05, 2026 – Villa Hegra is pleased to announce the launch of its first residency dedicated to the art of tableware design, taking place from June 8 to July 17, 2026, in Champignelles, Burgundy. This initiative is developed in partnership with Campus Mana, a professional training center bringing together experts in craftsmanship, design innovation, and architecture, with the support of the Culinary Arts Commission of the Saudi Ministry of Culture.

Selected through an open call for applications that closed on May 10, 2026, six Saudi female designers will take part in a residency program aimed at designing and producing the first collection of tableware pieces for Villa Hegra.

A Dialogue Between Contemporary Saudi Practices and French Craftsmanship

Set in the unique context of Burgundy, a region renowned for its rich artisanal traditions, the residency offers a distinctive opportunity to explore the dialogue between French craftsmanship and Saudi cultural practices.

Participants will engage with French artisans and draw inspiration from local techniques, fostering meaningful professional exchanges. Each week, the selected designers will take part in introductory workshops dedicated to artisanal techniques, conceived as immersive sessions for exploration and research. These workshops will allow participants to experiment across various tableware-related disciplines, including textiles, woodwork, ceramic arts, and metalwork.

At the end of the residency, under the artistic direction of Gaël Charbau and Thomas Dariel, one of the creations may be selected for production and presented as Villa Hegra's first tableware collection, marking the launch of its retail activity as well as its presentation in international exhibitions.

"We are delighted to initiate these exchanges between Saudi designers and the professionals at Campus Mana, whose demanding approach, combining innovation and tradition, perfectly aligns with the values we aim to promote through our residency programs," said Fériel Fodil, Executive Director of Villa Hegra.

About Villa Hegra

Villa Hegra is the first institution dedicated to fostering intercultural dialogue and creative exchange between France and Saudi Arabia, established in AIUla, Saudi Arabia.

Created as part of an intergovernmental agreement signed in 2021, Villa Hegra develops residency programs and public initiatives in the fields of visual arts, cinema, research, performing arts, and, more broadly, the creative industries, with the aim of building sustainable collaborations between the French and Saudi cultural ecosystems.

Villa Hegra encourages encounters between local practices, emerging generations, and international perspectives, contributing to the development of AIUla as a leading cultural destination. Its programs are

structured around innovation, knowledge transmission, and collaboration, inviting audiences to actively engage in the creative process.

In 2025, Villa Hegra opened its premises in the center of AIUla. Spanning over 2,300 square meters, the site includes AIUla's first indoor cinema and its first performing arts studio, alongside residency spaces, artists' workshops, educational studios, and exhibition areas.

Villa Hegra is part of the international Viva Villa network of residencies, alongside Villa Medici (Rome), Villa Kujoyama (Kyoto), Casa de Velázquez (Madrid), Villa Albertine (United States), and Villa Swagatam (India).

About Campus Mana

Founded by French designer Thomas Dariel and partner Sophie Dariel, Campus Mana is located in the heart of Burgundy on a 37-hectare site just two hours from Paris, embodying a visionary project brought to life.

As both a living and creative space, Campus Mana stands out as a unique laboratory in France where craftsmanship, design, innovation, and architecture converge, bringing together professionals from around the world.

Equipped with carefully designed infrastructure, the campus features state-of-the-art technical workshops, including facilities dedicated to wood, metal, ceramics, color, and other techniques. This provides participants with access to professional tools and environments that encourage both practice and excellence. Training programs integrate multiple craft disciplines in synergy, offering full immersion in the world of creation, where tradition and innovation are in constant dialogue. Campus Mana is certified Qualiopi for its training programs.

Seamlessly integrated into the landscape of Puisaye, the site promotes the exploration of French savoir-faire, making it a source of inspiration for those seeking to reconnect architecture with nature.

About the Culinary Arts Commission

Founded in 2020, the Culinary Arts Commission is leading the further development of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia culinary arts sector. By driving investment and building robust regulatory frameworks, the Saudi Culinary Arts Commission is supporting the next generation of Saudi chefs and hospitality professionals as they aspire to reach their full potential.

Together with the Ministry of Culture, the Commission is working to unlock a thriving cultural sector to preserve and elevate the culinary traditions that make the Kingdom unique.

To learn more about the Culinary Arts Commission, please visit <https://culinary.moc.gov.sa/en> and the commission's pages on Instagram [@mocc culinary](#) and X [@MOCCulinary](#)

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