

focus



Men and boys during a traditional desert trip near the western Saudi city of Taif. Saudis use such excursions to celebrate weddings or graduations. Photos Mohamed Al Hwaity / Reuters



Celebration ... Bedouin style



It is a small compromise to safety that these antique muskets are not loaded with anything more dangerous than powder.

Otherwise, this traditional Saudi dance manages to project an air of danger and excitement as it propels its participants into the air.

These performers were captured by the Saudi-based photographer Mohamed Al Hwaity near the city of Taif, in western Saudi Arabia.

Saudi dances, like those of the UAE, are shaped by the country's desert landscape, its Bedouin tradition of hunting and history of conflict.

The muskets used are known as jezail, a flint-lock used by tribesmen from Afghanistan to Central Asia and across the Middle East.

Jezail are often elaborately decorated to reflect the owner's taste, while the length of their barrels makes them very accurate. When pointed away from the shooter, that is.

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Saudi men celebrate in a Bedouin display of skills, with muskets — or jezail — loaded only with gunpowder.

