



OMAN SELF DRIVE TOURS

اكتشف عمان بسيارتك

Tour "Jebels, desert and wadis"

Discovery 4x4+ self-drive tour

8 days / 7 nights



After the visit of the capital, spectacular crossing of the Western Hajar mountains and discovery of its villages , great valleys and forts. Night among the dunes followed by the exploration of the wadis and swimming in their natural pools.

Oman Self Drive Tours

اكتشف عمان بسيارتك

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Ministry of Commerce CR number 1276308

Understand your travel proposition

Self drive tour

The travelers themselves will drive along all the road transfers detailed in the program as well as along possible additional transfers to reach an activity place (except for transfers with driver or guide).

Program type: "Freedom discovery"

Each day, a number of possible activities - cultural discoveries and strolls - are proposed. It is up to the travelers, during their trip, to choose which activity they are interested in depending on their wishes and the time available. The times given for each activity and each transfer are intended to give an idea as accurate as possible of what can be done in one day.

Driving level: 4x4+

The itinerary includes roads without specific difficulty as well as some mountain dirt roads that require self-confidence in the driving of the vehicle. The driver should not be afraid of heights, as some parts are narrow and along the edge of cliffs. These dirt roads can be very steep and a good 4x4 car is essential to negotiate them in total safety. Advices on the use of the vehicle are given at the start of the tour.

Possible activity

Activity not requiring prior reservation. The travelers are free to go for them or not. Most of them are free of charge.

Optional / Included activity

Paying activity requiring prior reservation. If it is a guided activity, it may involve transfers. In this case, such transfers will be arranged by the guide or a driver, with their own vehicle.

Variant

Road transfer longer than the reference transfer but of a greater interest in terms of landscape or possible activity.

Accommodation with surcharge

Hotel not included in the standard package, proposed as an upgrade of the accommodation already included that day.

Key

Transfers

-  Road
-  Scenic road
-  Plane
-  Ferry

|30min| Approx. time of transfer

|4x4| Dirt road: 4x4 required

|4x4+| Difficult dirt road: 4x4 and experience required


Landscapes (transfers & activities)

-  Mountain
-  Village/palm grove
-  Wadi
-  Town
-  Sea
-  Desert

Activities

-  Culture
-  Shopping
-  Viewpoint
-  Scenic road
-  Strolling
-  Walking/hiking
-  Canyoning
-  Bathing/swimming
-  Nature
-  Cruise

|1h-2h| Approx. time dedicated to the activity

 **|10min|** Approx. time up to the activity place (one way)

Meals

- RO** Room only
- BB** Breakfast
- HB** Half board
- FB** Full board
- L** Lunch (during an activity)

OVERVIEW OF YOUR TOUR

DAY 1 - Muscat

 Muscat International Airport to the Mutrah district | 30km-30min |

 Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque (Ghubrah district) | 45min-1h30 |

   Mutrah District : its corniche, souqs and fort | 1h-4h |

   Old Muscat District : Sultan's Palace & National Museum | 30min-3h |

   Bandar Khiran and the coast south-east of Muscat | 1h-3h |

 Guesthouse (Mutrah district, Muscat) | BB |

 Guesthouse (Azaiba district, Muscat) | BB |

DAY 2 - From Muscat to the Wadi bani Awf

 Muscat to Nakhl | 100km-1h10 |

 Bait al Ghasham | 1h-1h30 |

  Nakhl fort | 1h |

 Nakhl to Al Awabi | 35km-40min |

   Village of Wakan and hiking in the Wadi Mistal | 1h-5h |  30km-45min

 Al Awabi to the Wadi bani Awf mountain hut | 30km-1h15 | 4x4+ |

  Snake Canyon | 30min-2h |

 Guesthouse (Wadi bani Awf) Room Private bathroom | HB |

DAY 3 - From the Wadi bani Awf to Misfat al Abriyeen

 Your mountain hut to the Sharaf al Alamain pass | 15km-1h | 4x4+ |

   Village of Balad Sayt | 30min-2h |  2km-10min

  Sharaf al Alamain pass | 15min-1h |

 Sharaf al Alamain to Al Hamra | 30km-40min |

 Al Hamra to Misfat al Abriyeen | 6km-15min |

   Village and palm grove of Misfat al Abriyeen | 30min-2h |

 Guesthouse (Misfat al Abriyeen) | HB |

 Guesthouse (Al Hamra) | HB |

DAY 4 - The Jebel Shams

 Misfat al Abriyeen to Al Hamra | 6km-15min |

 Al Hamra to Al Khitaym : Up the Jebel Shams | 45km-1h15 | 4x4 |

   [Old village of Ghul & Grand Canyon of Arabia |30min-1h30|4x4|](#)

  [The Balcony Walk : Hike above the Grand Canyon |1h-6h|](#)

 [Al Khitaym to Al Hamra : down the Jebel Shams |45km-1h15|4x4|](#)

   [Town of Al Hamra |30min-2h|](#)

 [Al Hamra to Misfat al Abriyeen |6km-15min|](#)

 [Guesthouse \(Misfat al Abriyeen\) |HB|](#)

 [Guesthouse \(Al Hamra\) |HB|](#)

DAY 5 - From Misfat al Abriyeen to Nizwa

 [Misfat al Abriyeen to Al Hamra |6km-15min|](#)

 [Al Hamra to Nizwa |50km-45min|](#)

   [Town of Bahla |1h-3h|](#)

 10km-10min

 [Jabrin castle |1h-2h|](#)

 15km-25min

   [Wadi Tanuf and Wadi Qashah |1h-2h|4x4|](#)

 [Guesthouse \(Nizwa\) |BB|](#)

 [Guesthouse \(Nizwa\) |BB|](#)

DAY 6 - From Nizwa to the Wahiba Sands

  [Town of Nizwa |1h-3h|](#)

 [Nizwa to Bidiyah, at the edge of the Wahiba Sands |180km-2h25|](#)

   [Village of Birkat al Mouz |15min-1h30|](#)

  [Town of Manah : Oman Across Ages Museum & restored old town |1h-4h|](#)  20km-25min

 [Bidiyah to your desert camp \(guided\) |20km-30min|4x4+|](#)

 [Walking in the Wahiba desert |30min-2h|](#)

 [Desert camp ** \(Wahiba North\) |HB|](#)

 [Desert camp ** \(Wahiba North\) |HB|](#)

DAY 7 - From the Wahiba Sands to the Gulf of Oman

 [Your camp to Bidiyah |20km-30min|4x4+|](#)

 [Bidiyah to Sur : from the desert to the Gulf of Oman |110km-1h25|](#)

  [Upper Wadi bani Khalid : Muqal pool |1h-2h|](#)

 30km-40min

  [Lower Wadi bani Khalid : village and palm grove of Al Baatan |1h-3h|](#)

 15km-15min

   [Town of Sur |1h-3h|](#)

 Sur to Tiwi : Along the Gulf of Oman |50km-45min|

 Guesthouse (Tiwi) |BB|

 Homestay (Fins) |HB|

DAY 8 - From the Eastern Hajar coast to Muscat

  Wadi Shab |1h-3h|

   Wadi Tiwi |1h-5h|4x4|

 Tiwi to Muscat |155km-1h45|

  Fins beach, coastal road and gazelle reserve |30min-1h|

 10km-15min

 Mutrah district to Muscat International Airport |30km-30min|

PROGRAMME OF YOUR TOUR

DAY 1 - Muscat

Arrival in Muscat International Airport.

Welcome and briefing with our agent. He hands over the documents and equipment for the tour and assists you with the rental car pick-up.

Full day to visit Muscat and its surroundings.

Transfer



Muscat International Airport to the Mutrah district | 30km-30min |



For your first drive in Oman, you take the main highway crossing Muscat, the Sultan Qaboos Street, up to the Mutrah district. On the way, you pass by the Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque and the Royal Opera House.



Possible activity



Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque (Ghubrah district) | 45min-1h30 |

A magnificent mosque, the largest of the country and the only one allowed to non-muslim visitors. The main praying hall, famous for its huge chandelier, is truly spectacular.

Audioguides are available for an in-depth discovery (2 OMR per person).



Possible activity



Mutrah District : its corniche, souqs and fort | 1h-4h |



This historic district is the most interesting in the capital for tourists, with its beautiful sea-front (the so-called Corniche), its famous souq, its fish and vegetable market and even a short trekking path.



Possible activity

Old Muscat District : Sultan's Palace & National Museum |30min-3h|



A few kilometres from Mutrah, with its numerous mosques and government buildings, this small district is the actual capital of Oman, from which extended the whole city. You can enjoy this quiet place by a short stroll around the Sultan Palace.

This is also where the National Museum is located. Open to the public since the end of 2016, it displays rich collections describing Oman history. The artefacts, on show in bright rooms, are arranged according to the period they belong to, from prehistory to nowadays, or sorted by theme as in the Maritime Gallery.



Possible activity

Bandar Khiran and the coast south-east of Muscat |1h-3h|



Discover by car and by foot this surprising coast, meeting of the mountains and the sea, with its small coves and islands, occasionally fringed with mangrove or beaches (some from where swimming and snorkelling is possible). Bandar Khiran, the jewel of this coast, offers some very beautiful viewpoints. Sifah, at the very end of the road, has a very beautiful beach.

Note that these sites get very crowded with inhabitants of Muscat during the weekends (Fridays-Saturdays).



Accommodation



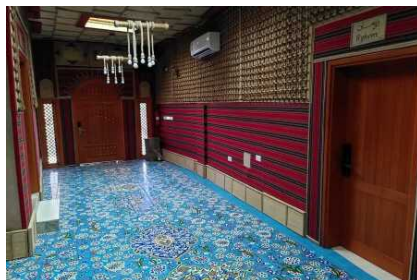
Guesthouse (Mutrah district, Muscat) |BB|

Small and comfortable guesthouse opened since the beginning of 2021. It is by far the best located one to visit the historic district of Mutrah: sitting just behind the fort, it is 250 m away from the Corniche and 600 m away from the souq main entrance.

The neighbourhood is made of old typical houses which are still inhabited. One of them was restored and converted into this guesthouse, which reconciles comfort and modern equipment with the traditional materials used for decoration.

The guesthouse has 7 rooms. Local breakfasts are served on the roof terrace, which offers a view onto the fort and the sea further down. For the other meals, you can find restaurants along the Corniche.

Please note that there is no reception: you will be given a code for self check-in (from 1 pm). The manager is nevertheless reachable by phone and an employee can come in case of problem.



Accommodation with surcharge



Guesthouse (Azaiba district, Muscat) |BB|

Two big villas converted into a guesthouse with 10 comfortable and tastefully-decorated rooms.

Located in a posh neighbourhood, it is only a 5-min walk to the Azaiba beach, where swimming wearing swimsuit is possible. Right next to it lies a small park with playgrounds as well as a café with sea view and food trucks where young Omanis sell grilled food in the evening.

It is only a 10-min drive to the airport, 15 min to the Grand Mosque and about half an hour to the historic districts (Mutrah, Old Muscat).

The guesthouse has a 22-m long swimming pool and 2 living rooms. Breakfast can be eaten al fresco close to the pool.



DAY 2 - From Muscat to the Wadi bani Awf

Day dedicated to the discovery of the north-eastern side of the Western Hajar and beginning of this mountain range crossing.

At the foot of the mountains lies the small town of Nakhl and its beautiful fort, as well as the town of Al Awabi. The Wadi Mistal, where sits the picturesque village of Wakan, flows out of the range between the 2 towns, whereas the Wadi bani Kharus arrives at Al Awabi itself.

Beyond Al Awabi, the road follows upstream the Wadi bani Awf, the only valley allowing the complete crossing of the mountains. There lie the Snake Canyon and your accommodation.

The Wadi bani Awf can also be reached by a dirt road from the Wadi bani Kharus.



Muscat to Nakhl |100km-1h10|



Leave Muscat by the motorway and carry on until you arrive at the town of Nakhl.

Possible activity along the transfer



Bait al Ghasham |1h-1h30|



Bait al Ghasham is an ancient Omani house located on the edge of the Afi palm grove and completely restored in 2016. It was built about 200 years ago but its first known owner was governor of Mutrah at the beginning of the 20th century. A member of the royal family, he and his family moved there during his retirement (the house still belongs to the family of the ruling sultan).

The rooms are well equipped with traditional furniture, utensils and decorations. The visit is lead by a guide who will tell you the story of the house and the way of life of its residents.

Near Bait al Ghasham, you can find an ancient fortified village partially restored.



Possible activity



Nakhl fort |1h|



The Nakhl fort, one of the most beautiful forts in Oman on account of its architecture and setting, overlooks the town and the palm grove from a rocky prominence. The residence of the wali (province governor), it protected commercial routes between the wadis and the coast. Thoroughly restored in 1990, it offers nice sweeping views of the surrounding landscape, the Batinah plain and the first massifs of the nearby Western Hajar.



Transfer



Nakhl to Al Awabi |35km-40min|



The road follows along the northern slopes of the Jebel Akhdar and its immense towering limestone slabs, goes past the Wadi Mistal cut and then winds its way between the low ophiolite hills along the Wadi bani Kharus.



Possible activity along the transfer

30km-45min|4x4|



Village of Wakan and hiking in the Wadi Mistal |1h-5h|



Located at the far end of the Ghubrah Bowl, large cirque formed by the Wadi Mistal and its tributaries, on the sheer slopes of the Jebel Akhdar, the tiny village of Wakan is a real jewel with its orchards - especially in February, when the peach and apricot trees blossom (at an altitude of 1500 m!).

The viewpoint upon the cirque is already exceptional from the parking at the village entrance, but the panorama from the gardens is well worth the 20 minutes of walking.

If you want to go further up, a trail climbs up to a pass of the Jebel Akhdar (2300 m high). Note it has some exposed sections.



Transfer



Al Awabi to the Wadi bani Awf mountain hut |30km-1h15|4x4+|



At the foot of towering cliffs, penetrate into the mountains along a spectacular valley fringed with palm groves. The dirt road keeps following the wadi bed up to the Snake Canyon, an impressive narrow cleft that you have to bypass by driving on the heights. The slope is steep, with sharp zigzags, but the viewpoints are superb. A descent takes you to the guesthouse, nestled in a tributary of the main wadi.



Possible activity



Snake Canyon |30min-2h|



Between the villages of Balad Sayt and Az Zammah, the Wadi bani Awf and the Wadi Bimah, one of its affluents, plunge into a deep cleft, 3 kilometre long : the "Snake Canyon", famous among canyoning lovers. Its vertical walls, sometimes 100 m high, are only a few metres apart in places!

Travelling along its whole length requires a guide and canyoning equipment, but a short walk in one of its two entrances or at its exit gives you a good idea of this natural attraction.



Accommodation



Guesthouse (Wadi bani Awf) Room Private bathroom |HB|

The only mountain hut in Oman ! In the Nepalese refuge tradition, it is a rustic, convivial and lovely place for who likes nature and simplicity.

Isolated in a small valley, it is a stone's throw from the Snake Canyon and a few kilometres from the famous village of Balad Sayt.

Simple room with a private bathroom (most rooms of the hut have sharing bathrooms).

The hut has an outside dining area. The food is prepared by the hut keepers.



DAY 3 - From the Wadi bani Awf to Misfat al Abriyeen

End of the Western Hajar crossing and discovery of the Al Hamra region, on the southern side of the mountains.

Leaving your accommodation, you drive next to the famous village of Balad Sayt. Then you exit the Wadi bani Awf by a spectacular dirt road climbing up to the Sharaf al Alamain pass, 2000 m above sea level. Going down on the southern side leads you to the town of Al Hamra and its large palm grove. The picturesque village of Misfat al Abriyeen lies just above.

Transfer



Your mountain hut to the Sharaf al Alamain pass | 15km-1h | 4x4+ |



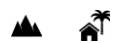
The dirt road keeps going around the Snake Canyon and passes close by the beautiful village of Balad Sayt. Then starts the long climb (1100 m of height difference) along cliffs that yet look impassable. The views get more and more spectacular up to the pass of Sharaf al Alamain (2000 m high), from where the road is tarred.



Possible activity along the transfer

2km-10min

Village of Balad Sayt | 30min-2h |



The "hidden village" is well named. Surrounded by high arid mountains and accessible by road since only 1984, it is a real jewel with its palm grove, culture terraces and its high-perched little fort. Admire it from the various viewpoints or take a walk in its gardens. You can also access the village by foot through a small gorge as was done in the old days.



Possible activity

Sharaf al Alamain pass | 15min-1h |



The Sharaf al Alamain pass, at an altitude of some 2000 m, affords breathtaking sights, in clear days, to the south over the foothills of the Western Hajar and the towns in the plain, to the north over the heart of the mountains, cut through by deep wadis.

The scenery is already exceptional from the road, but a short walk along the crest offers superb views down onto the villages of Hat and Balad Sayt, from the top of cliffs more than 800 m high!



Transfer



Sharaf al Alamain to Al Hamra |30km-40min|



From the Sharaf al Alamain pass, the road zigzags down to the foot of the mountains, offering pretty views, on clear days, of the piedmont and the towns in the plain south of the Western Hajar.

Transfer



Al Hamra to Misfat al Abriyeen |6km-15min|



The village of Misfat al Abriyeen lies just above Al Hamra, on the south side of the Western Hajar mountains. On the way you will enjoy nice views of the town.



Possible activity



Village and palm grove of Misfat al Abriyeen |30min-2h|



The old stone village of Misfat al Abriyeen, invisible from the plain, is one of the most photogenic in Oman, with its terraced palm groves on both sides of a narrow valley. Don't miss its superb viewpoint, take a stroll in the village or a walk in the palm grove.



Accommodation



Guesthouse (Misfat al Abriyeen) |HB|

Standing at the heart of the old village of Misfat al Abriyeen, this 400-year-old stone house was restored and converted into a guesthouse in 2022. Despite the authentic atmosphere, the 10 rooms have comfortable beds and private bathrooms (even if the latter, given the old architecture, are small and quite basic).

Meals are served on a rooftop terrace offering a wonderful view over the palm grove and the old village.

Please note that you have to walk a few minutes between the parking and the guesthouse.



Accommodation



Guesthouse (Al Hamra) |HB|

Large single-storey house converted in 2023 into a comfortable guesthouse with 6 rooms. Built in 1980 (beginning of the development of the country), it was inhabited by the extended family of the present owner. Located on a low ridge, just outside the adobe old town, it offers views on the latter, on the large palm grove of Al Hamra and on the Jebel Shams massif. The centre of Al Hamra is 1.5 km away.

The guesthouse has 2 "majlis" (Arab-style sitting areas), a courtyard and a rooftop terrace.



DAY 4 - The Jebel Shams

From Al Hamra, you leave towards the Jebel Shams massif. At the foot of the mountain lies the old village of Ghul, from which you can explore the bottom of the "Grand Canyon of Arabia", driving upstream along the bed of the Wadi Nakhr. Then you drive up to the plateau, about 2000 m above sea level, where await superb viewpoints from the edge of the canyon, as well as hiking paths such as the famous Balcony Walk.

You drive back along the same road, going past Ghul again.

Transfer



Misfat al Abriyeen to Al Hamra |6km-15min|



Return to Al Hamra.



Transfer



Al Hamra to Al Khitaym : Up the Jebel Shams |45km-1h15|4x4|



From Al Hamra, the Jebel Shams road first follows the Wadi Ghul, passing through a few villages. It continues past the entrance of the Wadi Nakhr, the "Grand Canyon of Arabia", guarded by an old village clinging to the side of the mountain. Then the ascent on the steep slopes of the massif offers ever more plunging views over the surrounding mountains and wadis. The dirt road comes to an end, at an altitude greater than 1800 m, on the rim of the spectacular Grand Canyon.



Possible activity along the transfer



Old village of Ghul & Grand Canyon of Arabia |30min-1h30|4x4|



The Wadi Nakhr has cut an incredible valley in the heart of the Jebel Shams, the "Grand Canyon of Arabia". Make a photo stop in front of the old stone village of Ghul, clinging to the base of the mountain, discover the ruins by foot up to a fine viewpoint or follow the wadi by car between the spectacular cliffs.



Possible activity

The Balcony Walk : Hike above the Grand Canyon | 1h-6h

The classic but nevertheless superb hike along an old donkey track to an abandoned hamlet. This balcony path follows the Wadi Nakhr several hundred meters above the bottom and provides breathtaking views of the "Grand Canyon of Arabia". This well marked path, with a few rocky stretches, gently slopes down to the hamlet nestled at mid-height of immense cliffs. It is a return walk with a total of +300m, -300m and 7.5km but you can turn back at any time.

To further enrich your experience and get off the beaten track, we propose an extension to this hike which offers even more spectacular views.



Transfer

Al Khitaym to Al Hamra : down the Jebel Shams | 45km-1h15 | 4x4

The Jebel Shams road being a dead end, return by the same way you came up, admiring the spectacular panorama again.



Possible activity

Town of Al Hamra | 30min-2h

The town of Al Hamra lies at the foot of the Western Hajar, in a small plain around the Wadi Ghul, and offers nice views of the Jebel Shams. It has a large palm grove where it is pleasant to stroll. The adobe ruins of the old town comprise some quite well preserved houses, one of which hosting an interesting little ecomuseum.



Transfer



Al Hamra to Misfat al Abriyeen |6km-15min|



Drive back to Misfat al Abriyeen.



Accommodation



Guesthouse (Misfat al Abriyeen) |HB|

Standing at the heart of the old village of Misfat al Abriyeen, this 400-year-old stone house was restored and converted into a guesthouse in 2022. Despite the authentic atmosphere, the 10 rooms have comfortable beds and private bathrooms (even if the latter, given the old architecture, are small and quite basic).

Meals are served on a rooftop terrace offering a wonderful view over the palm grove and the old village.

Please note that you have to walk a few minutes between the parking and the guesthouse.



Accommodation



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The guesthouse has 2 "majlis" (Arab-style sitting areas), a courtyard and a rooftop terrace.



DAY 5 - From Misfat al Abriyeen to Nizwa

The most direct route between Al Hamra and Nizwa first passes near the town of Bahla, famous for its majestic fort recognised as a World Heritage site, and then next to the beautiful Wadi Tanuf, which you can drive upstream to a palm grove.

Beyond Bahla lies Jabrin castle, which offers a visit full of informations. From there, another road can take you to Nizwa directly.

Transfer



Misfat al Abriyeen to Al Hamra |6km-15min|



Return to Al Hamra.



Transfer



Al Hamra to Nizwa |50km-45min|



The road between Nizwa and Al Hamra runs across the narrow plain tucked between the high Jebel Akhdar range and the much less significant ophiolite reliefs of the Jebel Hallat and passes close to Bahla, famous for its beautiful fort.



Possible activity along the transfer

 10km-10min



Town of Bahla |1h-3h|



Bahla, the second largest town of the region after Nizwa, is mainly known for its huge fort recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage site. A former capital, it is surrounded by an outer wall now fallen into ruin and has an interesting souq. It is also renowned for its potters, whose traditional workshops you can visit. The long history of Bahla is also shrouded in legends and black magic and the signs thereof are still present nowadays.



**Jabrin castle |1h-2h|**

Home of the Yaruba Imams during the 17th and 18th centuries, Jabrin castle stands out among Omani forts by its rooms beautifully decorated and fitted with carpets and ancient furniture.

Audioguides are available for an in-depth discovery.

The castle also offers Omani buffet lunch in a nice traditional setting.

**Wadi Tanuf and Wadi Qashah |1h-2h|4x4|**

The mighty Wadi Tanuf and its tributary the Wadi Qashah flow down from the Jebel Akhdar, cutting deep and beautiful valleys in the mountains. Discover them by car along a short dirt road that leads to a superb palm grove and a small canyon.

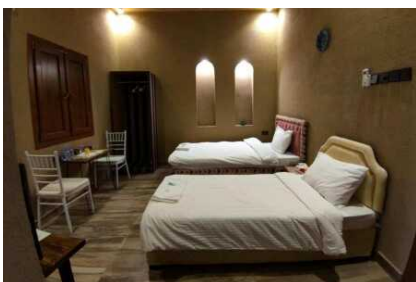
At the mouth of the wadi, the ruined mudbrick village of Tanuf is a painful reminder of the unknown "Jebel War".

**Accommodation****Guesthouse (Nizwa) |BB|**

Guesthouse opened in 2018 and located in the old town of Nizwa, right next to the souq and 150 m away from the fort. Contrary to most of the accommodations of the old town, it does not open directly onto the very lively main street and therefore it is quieter. Furthermore, it has a shaded courtyard with tables and chairs, which is a luxury in this very dense urban area.

The bedrooms are not very big but comfortable and decorated in a style both sober and local. The bathrooms are small and simple yet more spacious than in most of the other guesthouses of the old town.

The guesthouse has its own restaurant. Meals are served inside or in the courtyard. The roof-terrace offers a view upon the town and the mountains.



Accommodation



Guesthouse (Nizwa) |BB|

The palm grove of Nizwa stretches around the old town centre. Nowadays, this vast area is inhabited and recent houses stand alongside the fields. The guesthouse is made of 2 houses built on a large plot of the palm grove converted into a lush ornamental (and fruit) garden. This peaceful setting is fitted out for relaxing and has 2 small swimming pools and a children playground.

Each house has 5 spacious and comfortable bedrooms with good quality bathrooms, a living room and a modern kitchen.

The old town, the souq and the fort lie about 1 km away and are accessible by foot. There is a good Turkish restaurant 5 minutes walking away from the guesthouse.



DAY 6 - From Nizwa to the Wahiba Sands

After visiting Nizwa, you drive next to the pretty village of Birkat al Mouz and its large palm grove, as well as near the restored old town of Manah. Then the road takes you, across the arid plain, to the south of the Eastern Hajar range. From there, you go into the Wahiba Sands, where you find your accommodation.

Possible activity



Town of Nizwa |1h-3h|



Nizwa, the biggest town in the region, lies in a strategic position, at the foot of the Jebel Akhdar and on the rim of the desert, at the starting point of the main road connecting the coast and the south of the mountains.

It has historically been the capital of the interior, and even, occasionally, the official capital of the country. It also was the capital of ibadism and is still today markedly more conservative than its historical rival, Muscat. Which makes it all the more attractive to those searching for "authentic" Arabia! Its famous souq and its 17th century fort, with its unique architecture, attract many visitors.



Transfer



Nizwa to Bidiyah, at the edge of the Wahiba Sands |180km-2h25|



The road runs along the mountains for a while. Then it veers away from the high summits of the Jebel Akhdar and crosses low rocky relief areas to finally reach a narrow plain between the Eastern Hajar mountains and the dunes of the Wahiba desert.

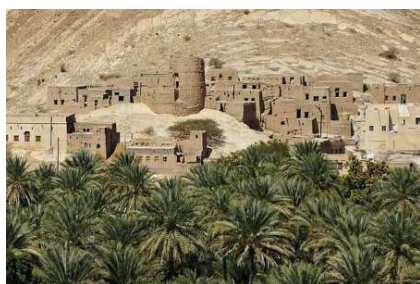
Possible activity along the transfer



Village of Birkat al Mouz |15min-1h30|



The big village of Birkat al Mouz, at the outlet of the Wadi Muaydin, has at all times been the entrance to the Jebel Akhdar range, as evidenced by its fort and numerous watchtowers. The ruins of its old village and its large palm grove, irrigated by a falaj recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage site, can be watched from a panoramic viewpoint or during a stroll.



Possible activity along the transfer

 20km-25min



Town of Manah : Oman Across Ages Museum & restored old town |1h-4h|



Harat al Bilad, the historic district of Manah, is one of the largest and most ancient towns of Oman. But what makes it a unique site is that, contrary to the other Omani old towns, it was purchased by the Ministry of Heritage and partially restored. The outer wall and about half of the 376 mudbrick houses were indeed renovated. The town has also 4 mosques, some dating back to the 16th century. To feel the atmosphere of the Oman of the past, you can stroll in the alleys and enter the houses with their typical architecture.

Since March 2023, Manah has another remarkable site: the Oman Across Ages Museum, a museum of the country history. Housed in a building with a spectacular architecture, a high-tech exhibition takes you from the prehistory to nowadays.



**Bidiyah to your desert camp (guided) | 20km-30min | 4x4+ |**

At Bidiyah, you meet a car from the camp and follow it through the desert. The 9-km drive in the dunes is a first contact with the Wahiba desert. You first proceed along "valleys", between long orange dunes about 50 meters in height, then you climb the one on top of which sits your camp.

The road to the camp is sandy, especially the last part on the dune which is a little challenging. The guide will be there to help you if you get stuck and your roadbook will include driving advices. Though, be aware that in Oman, cars are not insured for sand. If you prefer not to drive yourself, note that it is possible to do the round trip with a driver and his car (10 OMR up to 4 passengers).

**Possible activity****Walking in the Wahiba desert | 30min-2h |**

What a delight to walk out of the camp and climb up the nearby dunes to watch the sun sink behind the horizon! But the grazing light in the early morning over the orange sand undulations is most appealing too...

**Accommodation****Desert camp ** (Wahiba North) | HB |**

Small camp of only 2 tents with an authentic atmosphere, 8 km inside the sands. It is located in an unspoiled part of the desert, away from the tourist areas where most camps are. From the heights of one of the great dunes giving to the Wahiba its distinctive topography, it offers very beautiful views upon the desert as well as, on clear days, the Eastern Hajar mountains.

The large Bedouin-style tents have comfortable beds and are nicely decorated. The camp has a shared bathroom, two "majlis" (Arab-style sitting areas) – meals are served in the covered one – and a campfire space.

The power of the camp is provided by solar panels so there is no hot water.



Accommodation with surcharge



Desert camp ** (Wahiba North) | HB |

Camp of only 2 large Bedouin-style tents and 2 rooms, located about 20 km inside the sand, far away from the main tourist area. The tents/rooms have comfortable beds, are nicely decorated and have private bathrooms. The power of the camp is provided by solar panels so there is no hot water.



DAY 7 - From the Wahiba Sands to the Gulf of Oman

When leaving a sand desert, what could be more enjoyable than swimming in a wadi or strolling in the shadow of a lush palm grove? On your way to the sea, two detours can lead you to different parts of the Wadi bani Khalid. Note that the Muqal pool is particularly touristic (with visitors and locals).

On the coast lies the town of Sur, famous for its dhow factory (traditional Arab boats). Do not miss the viewpoint over this town with such a distinctive geography.

From Sur, you drive along the coast. In close proximity to your accommodation, two wadis close to each other await: Tiwi and Shab. The Wadi Shab, the most famous, is ideal for swimming, but may be very crowded by mid-morning, especially at weekends (if possible, better go early the next morning). The Wadi Tiwi, less accessible and a little less touristic, is surely wilder and more spectacular.

Transfer



Your camp to Badiyah | 20km-30min | 4x4+ |



You go back out of the dunes (on your own if drove in, with a driver if you left your car in Badiyah).



Transfer



Bidiyah to Sur : from the desert to the Gulf of Oman |110km-1h25|



Starting between the desert and the mountains, the road becomes winding while going down along a large valley. It ends at Sur, the main coastal town of the region.

Possible activity along the transfer

30km-40min



Upper Wadi bani Khalid : Muqal pool |1h-2h|



This large pool, between the Muqal palm grove and the gorge of the wadi, has been developed for tourism and is highly appreciated by locals who come there for picnics at weekends. The setting is magnificent and it is possible to walk along the wadi or go up a donkey path for a bird's eye view of the place.

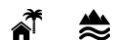


Possible activity along the transfer

15km-15min



Lower Wadi bani Khalid : village and palm grove of Al Baatan |1h-3h|



The small village of Al Baatan has a very beautiful palm grove along the Wadi bani Khalid. The walk, along a falaj winding between palm and mango trees, is very pleasant and gives access to a small natural pool. It is also possible to proceed on a rocky path up to a larger pool.



Possible activity

Town of Sur |1h-3h|



A lovely seaside city, Sur is one of the few Omani towns that is worth a visit. Its strategic position – a peninsula between the sea and a lagoon – and its old white houses with beautiful doors add up to bring about a real touch of charm. The last traditional dhow building yard is located here – a must visit! As a fishing town, its fish souq is worth a look. Finally, a watchtower perched on a hill provides a superb view of the area.



Transfer

Sur to Tiwi : Along the Gulf of Oman |50km-45min|



The highway runs along the coastline, squeezed between the Gulf of Oman and the Eastern Hajar, providing very nice views of the sea and the mountains.



Accommodation

Guesthouse (Tiwi) |BB|

New house, located outside the village of Tiwi and right next to a long pebble beach. It is made of 6 spacious and comfortable rooms, of which 2 have a view to the sea (we book these first) and it has a small swimming pool.

It is possible to swim with swimsuit in front of the guesthouse or a little further, depending on the presence of local visitors on the beach. If you have your own snorkelling equipment, the rocks at the end of the beach host many fishes.

The house is ideally situated to visit the Wadis Shab and Tiwi, only a few minutes away by car.

For dinner, you can use the shared kitchen or go and eat in one of the local restaurants in the village (the closest ones are 1.5 km away, near the Wadi Shab).



Accommodation with surcharge



Homestay (Fins) |HB|

Sophie and Hussain, a Franco-Omani couple, welcome you to their home! Their modern house, located in a recent neighbourhood of the fishermen's village of Fins, is comfortable and tastefully decorated. The house has 5 guest bedrooms, 3 of which open onto a balcony offering a view on the sea, which lies 200 m away. You will also have access to a small sitting area, a "majlis" (Arab sitting room), a dining room and the courtyard, where you will find 2 "areesh" (outdoor sitting areas traditionally covered by palm leaves).

The meals served by your hosts will be the opportunity to exchange with them. However, note that, from September 2024, Sophie and Hussain will share their time between Muscat and Fins. So they will not necessarily be present during your stay at their home (in which case the meals will be prepared by friends from the village).

Here the coast is rocky but beaches are reachable in a few minutes by car. The wadis Shab and Tiwi are a 15-minute drive away.



DAY 8 - From the Eastern Hajar coast to Muscat

Day dedicated to the discovery of the Eastern Hajar coast.

On the mountain side, apart from the Wadis Tiwi and Shab, you can make detours, on the way to Muscat, on nice dirt roads to discover the Wadis al Arbiyeen and Dayqah. The former is a spectacular valley with pools to swim in. The latter has the largest dam lake of Oman, an unexpected vision in this mineral landscape.

On the sea side, a pretty road follows the coast between the beaches of Fins and Dhabab, crossing a small gazelle reserve.

Possible activity



Wadi Shab |1h-3h|



The most famous wadi in Oman ! Leave your car right under the highway and start walking upstream on the mostly dry river bed. Marvel at this deep canyon and reach the first pools. Continue further along the base of the cliff and between the small boulders until you cannot avoid swimming... up to an incredible small pool with a waterfall hidden under some huge rocks !



Possible activity

   **Wadi Tiwi | 1h-5h | 4x4**



Discover this fantastic wadi first by car. The road, sometimes at the bottom of the valley, sometimes on the heights, offers spectacular views over the palm-fringed wadi bed and its natural pools nestled among huge boulders fallen down from the high cliffs on each side.

Thanks to several paths, including a marked trail, you can discover at a slower pace the four villages of the wadi and their palm groves.



Transfer

 **Tiwi to Muscat | 155km-1h45**



The highway, first running between the sea and the mountains, goes past the entrance of the Wadi al Arbiyeen, then veers inland to find a way around the Jebel abu Daud massif before reaching Muscat.



Possible activity along the transfer

 **10km-15min**

  **Fins beach, coastal road and gazelle reserve | 30min-1h**



Close to the fishermen's village of Fins is a superb white pebble beach with turquoise waters. The road that goes along the coast between Fins and the Wadi al Arbiyeen is worth the detour for its nice views upon the sea. It also passes through a protected area hosting some gazelles.



Transfer



Mutrah district to Muscat International Airport | 30km-30min |



Return to the airport and rental car drop-off.

PRICES / TERMS AND CONDITIONS

01/10/2024 - 30/04/2025

Number of people	2	4
Price per person in double room (in OMR)	495	345
Toyota Fortuner or similar (8 days)	1	1

Options and extras (prices per person)

Accommodation upgrade on day 1 Guesthouse (Azaiba district, Muscat) BB 	5 OMR
Accommodation upgrade on day 6 Desert camp** (Wahiba North) HB 	5 OMR
Accommodation upgrade on day 7 Maison d'hôtes (Fins) HB 	15 OMR

Prices valid at the dates and for the types of room mentioned above.

These prices are given in Omani rials (OMR).

For conversion into another currency, you can use www.xe.com. Note that these conversions do not include bank fees and transfer charges.

Note that this document is an quote and that no reservation has been made to this day.

Prices are therefore subject to changes in accordance with the availability of accommodations, vehicles and guides at the time of the reservation. Insofar as possible, we offer alternatives of equivalent quality and cost in the event of unavailability.

Proposed vehicle (non contractual photo)



Toyota Fortuner

SUV 4x4 2.7L automatic



5



5



4

The price of the tour includes:

- The VAT
- Meet and greet service and rental car pick up assistance
- Your travel documents (including your roadbook)
- A cultural guidebook
- The whole self drive tour recorded in a GPS application
- An Oman road map (and a Muscat road map if required by the programme)
- A mobile phone with credit for 1 hour of local calls
- Phone assistance by our local agency throughout your trip
- Accommodations as mentioned in the programme
- Meals at the accommodations as mentioned in the programme along with each accommodation (cf. key)
- Lunches on guided days
- Bottled water in hotels
- A small cool box
- If the programme includes wild camping on your own, the camping equipment including:
 - Tent, thick mattresses, small table, stools, large mat for a traditional set-up, lamp
 - Gas stove, cooking and eating utensils, barbecue grill and utensils (if requested)
 - Basins, water jerrycans, dishwashing liquid
 - Some basic food: rice, pasta, tea, coffee, sugar, salt, pepper, spices, oil
- Included activities as mentioned in the programme
- For each included guided activity:

- The guide
 - The car(s) and driver(s) if required for this activity
 - Safety and camping equipment (tents, mattresses, kitchenware) if required for this activity
 - Included transfers with driver or guide as mentioned in the program
 - The rental of the above-mentioned vehicle(s), for the above-mentioned period of time, with:
 - 2 possible drivers
 - Unlimited kilometres
 - Comprehensive insurance (excluding tyres and glass): zero excess in case of damage (provided you get a police report)

Caution: Damages occurred when driving off roads or off trails clearly marked on the terrain are not covered by the insurance (particularly when driving on sand).
 - Carbon offsetting for the mileage driven during your tour
- On completion of your trip, we grant our specialist partner a certain amount in order to offset the CO2 emitted during your drives. To go further, you can also offset your flight emissions through www.myclimate.org.*

The price of the tour does not include:

- International flights
 - Tourist visa fees: as at 01/09/2021 and for most nationalities, free for 14 days or visa 26B for 30 days at 20 OMR (per person)
- Check visa issuing formalities on <https://evisa.rop.gov.om/en/visa-eligibility>.
Passports must be valid at least 6 months after the return date.*
- Meals not included in the program (from 1.5 OMR per person in small restaurants or 5 OMR at hotels)
 - Beverages
 - Sleeping bags and personal camping equipment (headlight) if required
 - If the programme includes wild camping on your own, a 50 OMR deposit to be left cash at reception of the camping equipment, refundable at restitution
 - Entrance fees, if any, of the “possible activities” mentioned in the program (forts and museums: 1 to 5 OMR pp)
 - Tips to guides and drivers, if any
 - Personal expenses
 - Fuel for your self-driven car(s) (approx. 30 to 50 OMR per car and per week of tour)
 - The rental car refundable deposit: the amount of 125 OMR per vehicle is blocked on your credit card but not debited
 - Fines for driving offenses (speed cameras notably)
 - Tyre repair or replacement fees in case of puncture ; broken glass repair or replacement
 - The cost of repairing damages suffered by the rental cars if not justified by a police report
 - Your personal repatriation insurance
 - Your medical insurance