



OMAN SELF DRIVE TOURS

اكتشف عمان بسيارتك

Tour "Hiking in the Western Hajar"

Hiking 4x4+ self-drive tour

8 days / 7 nights



Discover by foot the Western Hajar range: its high massifs - Jebel Akhdar and Jebel Shams -, its small perched villages - Misfat al Abriyeen, Balad Sayt -, its hidden palm groves and its deep valleys. The bravest can walk up to the highest point in the country, overlooking the "Grand Canyon of Arabia". Cross the mountain range by a spectacular dirt road.

Oman Self Drive Tours

اكتشف عمان بسيارتك

PO Box 1178, PC 130, Al Azaiba, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman

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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 hiking"

Each day, a number of possible activities - walks and hikes - 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 |

  Saruj beach

 Guesthouse (Mutrah district, Muscat) | BB |

 Aparthotel *** (Ghubrah district, Muscat) | BB |

 Guesthouse (Azaiba district, Muscat) | BB |

DAY 2 - From Muscat to the Jebel Akhdar

 Muscat to Fanja | 50km-45min |

 Fanja to Birkat al Mouz : the Samail Gap | 90km-1h |

  Wadi Qurai | 15min-2h |

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

 Birkat al Mouz to Saiq : Up the Jebel Akhdar | 40km-50min | 4x4 |

  Walk in the upper Wadi Halfayn | 1h-1h30 |

 4km-10min

 Guesthouse (Al Aqr - Jebel Akhdar) | HB |

 Guesthouse (Soqrah - Jebel Akhdar) | HB |

DAY 3 - Hiking on the Jebel Akhdar

 Saiq to Aqbat al Biyut | 25km-45min | 4x4 |

 Hiking in the Wadi Kawar (+650m -650m 10km) | 5h-6h |

 Aqbat al Biyut to Saiq | 25km-45min | 4x4 |

 Guesthouse (Al Aqr - Jebel Akhdar) | HB |

 Guesthouse (Soqrah - Jebel Akhdar) | HB |

DAY 4 - From the Jebel Akhdar to Misfat al Abriyeen

  The rose villages | 1h-2h |

 Saiq to Birkat al Mouz : Down the Jebel Akhdar | 40km-50min | 4x4 |

 Birkat al Mouz to Al Hamra | 65km-50min |

   Wadi Tanuf and Wadi Qashah | 1h-2h | 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 the Jebel Shams

  **Hike from Misfat al Abriyeen (+500m -500m 5km) |3h30-4h30|**

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

 Al Hamra to the Jebel Shams Plateau |40km-1h|4x4|

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

 **Hotel *** (Jebel Shams Plateau) Room Standard |HB|**

 **Guesthouse (Jebel Shams Plateau) |HB|**

DAY 6 - To the top of the Jebel Shams

 **Hike to the summit of the Jebel Shams |5h-12h|**

 **Hotel *** (Jebel Shams Plateau) Room Standard |HB|**

 **Guesthouse (Jebel Shams Plateau) |HB|**

DAY 7 - From the Jebel Shams to the Wadi bani Awf

 Jebel Shams Plateau to Al Khitaym |5km-10min|4x4|

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

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

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

  **Sharaf al Alamain pass |15min-1h|**

 Sharaf al Alamain to Wadi bani Awf mountain hut |15km-1h|4x4+|

  **Snake Canyon |30min-2h|**

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

DAY 8 - From the Wadi bani Awf to Muscat

 **Hike between the Wadi bani Awf villages (+600m -550m 8km) |4h-5h|**

 Your mountain hut to Al Awabi |30km-1h15|4x4+|

 Al Awabi to Nakhl |35km-40min|

 Nakhl to Muscat International Airport |80km-1h|

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

Saruj beach



Along the long beach of Muscat, it is around the Saruj district that swimming is the most enjoyable. Contrary to the Qurum beach further east, it is not much visited by locals (except on Friday and Saturday afternoons) and Western men and women can wear swimsuits.

Strolling along the sea is pleasant too.

Accommodation



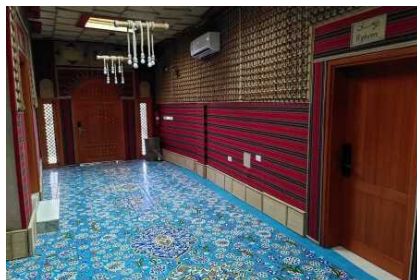
Guesthouse (Mutrah district, Muscat) |BB|

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.



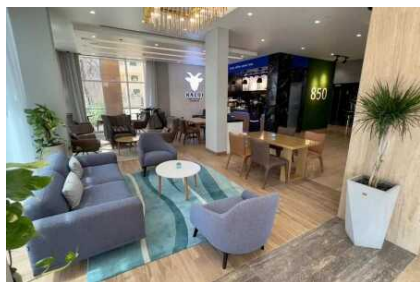
Accommodation



Aparthotel *** (Ghubrah district, Muscat) |BB|

Hotel with a good comfort opened in 2020 and located in the middle of the city of Muscat. It is one of the best-situated accommodations to visit the Grand Mosque, which lies only 1 km away and is reachable by foot. The historic districts and the airport are less than 20 minutes drive away.

The hotel has a rooftop swimming pool, a restaurant and a fruit juice bar. The neighbouring area has many restaurants and shops accessible by foot.



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 Jebel Akhdar

You drive along the Western Hajar mountains, going past the small town of Fanja and the Wadi Qurai. At the south of the range lies the pretty village of Birkat al Mouz and its large palm grove. From there, you drive up to the Jebel Akhdar plateau, 2000 m above sea level, where await small villages, beautiful viewpoints and hikes. Some sites are quite touristic (the rose villages, Wadi bani Habib), others are off the beaten path (Wadi Halfayn, Wadi Qashah).

Transfer



Muscat to Fanja | 50km-45min |



From Muscat, the highway goes south and passes between the first low mountains of the Samail Gap.

Transfer



Fanja to Birkat al Mouz : the Samail Gap |90km-1h|



The highway runs through valleys separating the two great mountain ranges of northern Oman. Historically used to connect the coast and the inland regions, this passage, called the Samail Gap, features many villages, palm groves and watch towers. It also offers nice views of the steep side of the Western Hajar.



Possible activity along the transfer



Wadi Qurai |15min-2h|



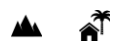
The Wadi Qurai has dug out a deep valley into the abrupt side of the Western Hajar. A small road running between palm groves provides nice views of this wadi from a distance. Walking up the wadi will take you to a few nice small pools of pristine water (but swimming there is not allowed).



Possible activity



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.



Transfer



Birkat al Mouz to Saiq : Up the Jebel Akhdar |40km-50min|4x4|



The road enters the mountains by the Wadi Muaydin and then climbs up for 1500 m to the Saiq Plateau, where Saiq Katenah, the only (small) town of the massif is located.



Possible activity along the transfer

 4km-10min



Walk in the upper Wadi Halfayn |1h-1h30|



Short hike up to a breathtaking viewpoint overlooking the whole valley of the Wadi Halfayn, going down from the Jebel Akhdar to the plain, more than 1000 m below.



Accommodation



Guesthouse (Al Aqr - Jebel Akhdar) |HB|

Very beautiful guesthouse in ancient stone houses of the village of Al Aqr, one of the three "rose villages" built on the edge of the Jebel Akhdar Plateau. The hiking path linking these villages starts right next to the guesthouse. The 12 rooms are not very spacious due to the ancient architecture but they are comfortable. They are split in 3 houses several hundreds of years old, which were renovated with respect for the original architecture. Each house offers superb views upon the valley and the other villages.

The guesthouse supports the community: all the staff is from the Jebel Akhdar and the meals are prepared by local families. The waste water of the guesthouse is recycled and reused for crops irrigation.



Accommodation with surcharge



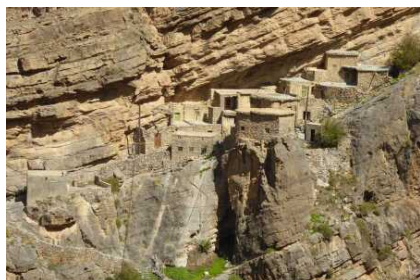
Guesthouse (Soqrah - Jebel Akhdar) | HB |

An exceptional guesthouse with a unique location and atmosphere. It has 8 rooms, renovated in houses of the small ancient village of Soqrah, hanging at the base of a high cliff. The houses are built on a ledge, several tens of meters high.

The old village was recently abandoned for modern houses on the other side of the valley, reachable by car. The access to the guesthouse is an old stone staircase descending down to the gardens in the wadi and climbing uphill on the other side (10-minute walk).

All the bedrooms have private bathrooms but some are in a separate building.

The simple meals are taken on a covered terrace with a view on the valley.



DAY 3 - Hiking on the Jebel Akhdar

Superb day hike from the plateau to the gardens of Masirat al Jawamid, hidden at the bottom of the Wadi Kawar. The access dirt road offers spectacular views over the Wadi Qashah canyon.

Transfer



Saiq to Aqbat al Biyut |25km-45min|4x4|



From the Sayq Plateau, you climb a little more, passing near the hanging village of Soqrah. Then a dirt road takes you along the deep Wadi Qashah and offers nice views down to the plain, 1500 m below. It ends at the small remote village of Aqbat al Biyut, sitting on the edge of Wadi Hijri.



Possible activity



Hiking in the Wadi Kawar (+650m -650m 10km) |5h-6h|



This great walk takes you down from the plateau into the deep valley of Wadi Kawar. There awaits the abandoned village of Masirat al Jawamid and its hidden palm grove : a real jewel surrounded by arid cliffs.

The path, still used by villagers going to look after their gardens with their donkeys, is good. It was marked for hikers in 2016.



Transfer



Aqbat al Biyut to Saiq |25km-45min|4x4|



Drive back to the Saiq Plateau.



Accommodation



Guesthouse (Al Aqr - Jebel Akhdar) |HB|

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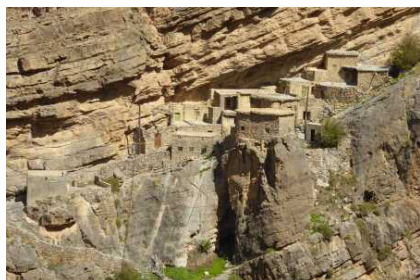
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All the bedrooms have private bathrooms but some are in a separate building.

The simple meals are taken on a covered terrace with a view on the valley.



DAY 4 - From the Jebel Akhdar to Misfat al Abriyeen

Day dedicated to the discovery of the south of the Jebel Akhdar.

From the plateau, you go back down to Birkat al Mouz with its old stone village and its large palm grove. Then the Wadi Tanuf is the opportunity to go for a nice hike out of the beaten path.

You eventually reach the beautiful village of Misfat al Abriyeen, where you stay for the night.

Possible activity



The rose villages | 1h-2h |



The Jebel Akhdar is known for its pomegranate and rose water production. The fruits and roses are especially grown on the terraces of three villages, linked by a marked path. Along the edge of the plateau, the way overlooks the Wadi Salut.

The best time to go for this walk is April, when the roses are blooming, but it is possible to do it year-round.



Transfer



Saiq to Birkat al Mouz : Down the Jebel Akhdar |40km-50min|4x4|



The Jebel Akhdar road being a dead end, return by the same way you came up, enjoying the plunging views down to the plain again.



Transfer



Birkat al Mouz to Al Hamra |65km-50min|



The road runs westward along the south slopes of the high Jebel Akhdar range. It goes past a few large wadis that flow downstream from the mountains and have dug out huge valleys through the limestone slabs.



Possible activity along the transfer



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



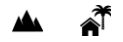
The mighty Wadi Tanuf and its tributary the Wadi Qashah flow down from the Jebel Akhdar, cutting deep and beautiful valleys in the mountains. Discover them by car along a short dirt road that leads to a superb palm grove and a small canyon.

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



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|



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.



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 5 - From Misfat al Abriyeen to 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.

Possible activity



Hike from Misfat al Abriyeen (+500m -500m 5km) |3h30-4h30|



Loop hike around the Misfat al Abriyeen wadi. From the old village, you cross the wadi and climb along ledges on the opposite side, which offers very beautiful bird's eye views upon the palm grove. This part is not paint-marked but the path is easy to follow with the map and the GPS. The way down is on a good paint-marked path ending along the palm grove.



Transfer



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



Return to Al Hamra.



Transfer



Al Hamra to the Jebel Shams Plateau |40km-1h|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.



Accommodation



Hotel *** (Jebel Shams Plateau) Room Standard |HB|

Hotel fully renovated in 2017 located on the Jebel Shams plateau, more than 2000 m high. The viewpoints over the Grand Canyon of Arabia are next door and the start of the Balcony Walk only a few minutes away. The hike to the summit starts right next to the hotel.

The hotel has a restaurant using as much local products as possible.

The Standard rooms have very simple bathrooms.



Accommodation with surcharge

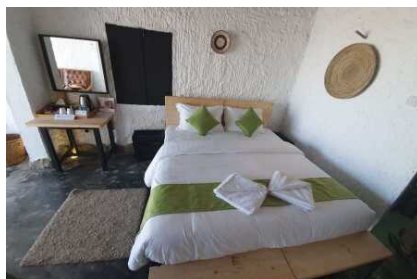


Guesthouse (Jebel Shams Plateau) |HB|

Small charming guesthouse, opened since 2021 and including 7 rooms. Set in old houses of the hamlet of Al Khitaym, it is the best located accommodation of the Jebel Shams Plateau: at almost 1900 m above sea level, it sits right on the edge of the Grand Canyon of Arabia and offers breathtaking views. The start of the famous Balcony Walk path is only a few metres away from the guesthouse.

The restaurant has large bay windows and a terrace to make the most of the setting.

The bedrooms and the bathrooms are narrow but comfortable and tastefully decorated in a traditional Omani style and using noble materials - stone and wood.



DAY 6 - To the top of the Jebel Shams

Day for hiking along the Grand Canyon of Arabia and to the country's highest point.

Possible activity



Hike to the summit of the Jebel Shams |5h-12h|



Hiking to the highest point of the country is not for the occasional hiker: 10 to 12 walking hours, nearly 25 km back and forth, 1500 m of elevation gain and as much in vertical drop.

However, there is no obligation to reach the summit and two shorter itineraries along the same route can be contemplated. They are appreciably more difficult than the popular "Balcony Walk", but can be inviting alternatives for hiking enthusiasts.

Whatever the option, sceneries are stunning, on the first portion with sights of the Grand Canyon and the neighboring mountains (Jebels Misht, Misfah, Khawr, Waalah), and at the end with superb views of the prodigious Sahtan Bowl and the whole Western Hajar range.



Accommodation



Hotel *** (Jebel Shams Plateau) Room Standard |HB|

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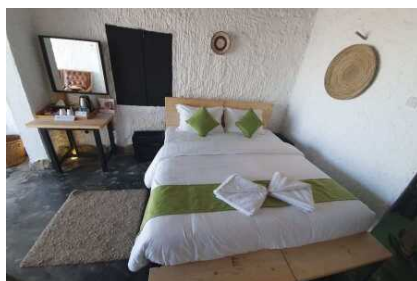


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DAY 7 - From the Jebel Shams to the Wadi bani Awf

Beginning of the crossing of the Western Hajar mountains.

From the Jebel Shams, you drive back down to Al Hamra passing by the entrance of the Wadi Nakhr (the Grand Canyon). From there, the road goes up to the Sharaf al Alamain pass, 2000 m high. On the northern side, a spectacular dirt road leads down to the bottom of the Wadi bani Awf. There lies the famous village of Balad Sayt: a detour is a must!

Your mountain hut awaits you a few kilometres further, next to the impressive Snake Canyon.

Transfer



Jebel Shams Plateau to Al Khitaym |5km-10min|4x4|



The dirt road runs along the Grand Canyon up to the hamlet of Al Khitaym.



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.



Transfer



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



Cross Al Hamra and its palm grove with prosperous-looking houses before taking the road that goes uphill up to the pass. It offers nice views, in clear days, of the piedmont and the towns in the plain.

The Sharaf al Alamain pass, at an altitude of 2000 m, discloses the spectacular panorama of the Wadi bani Awf valley.

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 Wadi bani Awf mountain hut | 15km-1h | 4x4+ |



At the pass of Sharaf al Alamain, the dirt road starts its long descent down to the Wadi bani Awf (1100 m of height difference) and offers spectacular views on the surrounding mountains. It passes close by the beautiful village of Balad Sayt and goes around the Snake Canyon to arrive at the mountain hut, 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 8 - From the Wadi bani Awf to Muscat

From your guesthouse, you hike up to the famous village of Balad Sayt. Then you finish crossing the Western Hajar and keep driving up to Muscat.

Possible activity

Hike between the Wadi bani Awf villages (+600m -550m 8km) |4h-5h|



You leave by foot directly from the mountain hut, walking on the pebbles and rocks forming the wadi bed. Then a rocky path, marked but little maintained, leads you to an abandoned hamlet and its nice palm grove, before climbing to a small pass that offers the first bird's eye views of Balad Sayt. You head down to this superb village and finish off traversing a little gorge that reconnects with the road, where a driver took your car.



Transfer

Your mountain hut to Al Awabi |30km-1h15|4x4+|



From the mountain hut, the dirt road keeps going around the Snake Canyon and reaches the bed of the Wadi bani Awf. The slope is steep, with sharp zigzags, but the viewpoints are superb. The road keeps going at the bottom of the wadi until it exits the mountains by a spectacular valley fringed with palm groves, between towering cliffs.



Transfer

Al Awabi to Nakhl |35km-40min|



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





Nakhl to Muscat International Airport | 80km-1h|



From Nakhl, the road reaches the highway that follows the coast up to Muscat airport.
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)	525	370
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 2 Guesthouse (Soqrah - Jebel Akhdar) HB 	15 OMR
Accommodation upgrade on day 3 Guesthouse (Soqrah - Jebel Akhdar) HB 	15 OMR
Accommodation upgrade on day 5 Guesthouse (Jebel Shams Plateau) HB 	10 OMR
Accommodation upgrade on day 6 Guesthouse (Jebel Shams Plateau) HB 	10 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