

## MOUNTAINS AND DESERT

*A moderate trek in 2 parts : first the steep mountains of the Western Hajar and then the white sanddunes of Khaluf's desert. The aquatic hike in Wadi Bani Khalid on the way back completes the overview of Oman's landscapes!*

**DAY 1** ( - Lunch - Dinner)

 **Transfer Muttrah - Ar Rustaq (2 hours - 190 Km)**

 **Transfer Ar Rustaq - A hamlet in Wadi Sahtan (1 hour - 35 Km)**

✓ **Hike across villages in Wadi Sahtan, under the northern face of Jebel Shams (4 hours )**

Wadi Sahtan is an impressive valley with Jebel Shams towering over it. Its north face is a 2000m cliff which gives himalayan feelings. We walk along centuries old paths linking remote villages built over the mountain. We pass 3 villages before arriving to our camp. The path sometimes goes through scree which might be a bit difficult.

- **Level 3\***

- **Walking time : 3 to 4 hours**

- **Height difference : +200m/-400m**

 **Bivouac in Wadi Sahtan**

A wonderful campsite with unbelievable views over the north face of Jebel Shams  
**Individual camping tent**

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**DAY 2** (Breakfast - Lunch - Dinner)

✓ **Hike across villages in Wadi Sahtan, in the heart of the bowl (6 hours )**

We start hiking from our campsite and walk up and down several valleys. Almost each valley hosts a village which has its own charm. Palm gardens, aflaj, terraced fields, beehives... We hike in traditional Oman. Some few passages might be a bit difficult.

- **Level 4\***

- **Walking time : 4 to 5 hours**

- **Height difference : +700m/-800m**

 **Transfer A hamlet in Wadi Sahtan - Bimah (1 hour - 30 Km)**

 **Mountain hut Bimah**

A very nice and pleasant place to stay, located in the heart of Wadi Bani Awf, only a few steps from the Snake Canyon and 5 minutes drive (or 5 hours hike) from Balad Sit. It's a rustic but beautiful mountain hut with 4 dormitory (4 to 10 persons on bunkbeds), 2 private rooms, and 3 bathrooms with hot shower. Located in a natural and peaceful environment, you'll find in the garden many places to chill and relax after hiking...

**Dormitory**

*Dormitories from 4 to 10 persons with bunkbeds and A/C. breakfast et dinner at the hotel*

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**DAY 3** (Breakfast - Lunch - Dinner)

✓ **Hike From Bimah to Balad Sit (5 hours )**

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We start in Bimah and walk up the wadi until the village of Selmah where only 3 families (3 brothers) are living. We then walk our way up through the palm gardens and go on until a very narrow path. From there we see Balad Sit, another bigger village. We walk down to the village and enjoy a tour in the gardens. We finally find a very narrow gorge which we follow until we find the car.

- **Level 3\***

- **Walking time : 4 to 5 hours**

- **Height difference : +600m/-500m**

 **Transfer Balad Sit - Misfat Al Abreyeen (1 hour 45 - 60 Km)**

We Cross the mountain through Sharaf Al Alamain Pass. That's the only pass which allows to cross the Western Hajar by car. There is tarmac road on the southern slope, but on the northern side, a steep track goes down to Wadi Bani Awf offering stunning views...

 **Guesthouse in Misfat Al Abreyeen**

We spend the night in a traditional Omani house that was rehabilitated recently : we find here the ancient architecture and modern comfort. Located inside the palm garden, it is an enchanting place... The guesthouse is located a few minutes walk away from the parking ; so, please plan a small bag with only the stuff you need for that night. Also, to respect the inhabitants of the village, it is forbidden to bring alcohol in the village and to smoke inside the house ; we thank you in advance for respecting these rules!

**Standard Room**

rooms with A/C and a simple and rustic decoration typical of mountain houses. Shared bathroom.. breakfast et dinner at the hotel

**DAY 4**

(Breakfast - Lunch - Dinner)

✓ **Short walk along the gardens of Misfat Al Abreyeen (2 hours )**

Misfat Al Abreyeen is one of the most beautiful mountain villages of Oman. It is located on the southern side of the mountain, on the slope of a canyon. The gardens were built all around the old village on man-made terraces. Lying at an altitude of 800 meters, we find there a wide variety of tropical fruits : bananas, papayas, oranges, limes, dates, pomegranates, etc... The old village is here still inhabited.

- **Level 1\***

- **Walking time : 1 to 2 hours**

- **Height difference : +100m/-100m**

 **Transfer Misfat Al Abreyeen - Khaluf's Desert, between rocks and sand (4 hours - 400 Km)**

✓ **Sunset between White desert and rocky hills (2 hours )**

We walk up a small plateau next to our camp. On the one side we perceive the white desert which we will cross the day after. On the other side, the sun sets on rocky hills.

- **Level 1\***

- **Walking time : 1 to 2 hours**

 **Bivouac in the desert**

We set up our camp at the start of the sand dunes.

**Individual camping tent**

**DAY 5**

(Breakfast - Lunch - Dinner)

✓ **Hike across sand dunes and rocky outcrops (6 hours )**

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A very beautiful day : we walk across sand dunes and meet on the way many rocky outcrops. The sand is sometimes red, and sometimes white. We arrive at our camp around noon and enjoy some rest under the shade. Late afternoon, we walk to the top of the sand dunes to see sunset over this spectacular landscape with trees, rocks, and sand...

- **Level 2\***

- **Walking time : 4 to 5 hours**

### **Bivouac Desert**

We set up our camp in the sand, in an 'acacia forest'. Around us are some rocky hills and Sanddunes

**Individual camping tent**

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**DAY 6** (Breakfast - Lunch - Dinner)

#### ✓ **Hike across White desert (6 hours )**

We have a long hike in a wonderful and unexpected landscape. We start from our campsite where the sand is red. We cross several small plateau. Between them we find sand ; the more we walk the whiter is getting the sand. Finally we discover wonderful wholly white sand dunes. Irreal landscape... We walk across the dunes and arrive to the sea around noon... We set up our camp, have lunch, and enjoy swimming in the indian ocean. Late afternoon, we start walking again across white sand dunes to enjoy sunset.

- **Level 2\***

- **Walking time : 3 to 5 hours**

### **Bivouac in the White desert, next to the sea**

We set up our camp in the first dunes of the white desert, just 50 meters from the sea. This place is magical and unusual : on one side we have pure white dunes, whereas on the other side we have the Indian Ocean...

**Individual camping tent**

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**DAY 7** (Breakfast - Lunch - Dinner)

#### **Transfer White Desert on the sea - Khaluf (0 hour 36 - 21 Km)**

We go to the fishermen's vilage of Khaluf. On low tide we drive all the way on the beach and we see hundreds of seabirds

#### ✓ **Stop in Khaluf (1 hour )**

Khaluf is a very picturesc fishing beduin vilage : feelings to be t the far end of the world where old 4WD cover with algae and shells tow small boats coming back from fishing.

- **Level 1\***

#### **Transfer Khaluf - Qihayd (vilage at the foot of the dunes and on seashore) (3 hours - 300 Km)**

#### **Transfer Qihayd (vilage at the foot of the dunes and on seashore) - Our Camp in Wahiba sands (4 hours - 180 Km)**

A spectacular crossing of the Wahiba desert by 4WD. The track is usually well marked, but sometimes sand blown by the wind covers it. We start at the sea and cross the desert towards the North. The more we drive, the higher are the longitudinal dunes.

#### ✓ **Sunset in the dunes (1 hour )**

We start a walk across the dunes in late afternoon. The heat isn't too strong anymore and the sunlight is the more beautiful. The setting sun always gives changing colour to the sand and the shades. This a great unforgettable time.

- **Level 1\***

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### **Safari Desert Camp**

A very nice camp which lays the middle of the sand dunes, in a quiet and wild area. There is no electricity, which makes this camp more authentic. Tea, coffee, water and soft drinks are complimentary. There are also some nice lounges where you can relax and smoke sheesha.

#### **Arabic Tent with private bathroom**

*Arabic tent nicely equiped as an hotel room : bed, carpets, table, chairs. Private bathroom.. breakfast et dinner at the hotel*

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**DAY 8** (Breakfast - Lunch - )

 **Transfer Our Camp in Wahiba sands - Bidiyah (0 hour 30 - 30 Km)**

### ✓ **Aquatic hiking in Wadi Bani Khalid (5 hours )**

An easy aquatic hike in one of the most beautiful wadis of Oman. We start from the village of Bidah. We walk across its luxuriant palm garden to reach the entrance of the garden. We then walk between large boulders to arrive to 2 wonderful pools with waterfalls. In one of these we can jump from 10 meters. We keep on walking in the water and the swim several long pools (until 300 meters). The valley then widens and we discover Seeq's garden which we cross to arrive in the village.

- Level 1\*

- Walking time : 3 to 5 hours

 **Transfer Seeq (Wadi Bani Khalid) - Muttrah (3 hours - 280 Km)**

### **Muttrah Hotel**

Muttrah Hotel is the first hotel built in Oman. It is only 20 minutes walking from the Souk and Corniche. This hotel offers comfortable rooms each with its own decoration and character. The hotel has Wifi, Laundry service, minibar in the room, 4 bars, and a restaurant.

#### **Standard room**

*Comfortable and well decorated room. In room facilities : minibar, 24 hours room service, Satellite TV, iron, hair dryer, coffee and tea making facilities.. breakfast at the hotel*

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## **Difficulty level Trekking & Easy Walking**

**Level 1** No difficulty. Easy and short walks. Appropriate for anyone walking occasionally

**Level 2** Easy hikes with elevation gain of less than 300 meters with no big terrain difficulty

**Level 3** Hikes with an elevation gain from 300 to 800 meters. Appropriate for those who are used to walk in the mountain. The hikes mentioned Level 3 with a lesser elevation gain present terrain difficulties

**Level 4** Hikes with an elevation gain from 800 to 1100 meters. For fit mountain hikers

**Level 5** Long hikes with an elevation gain of more than 1000 meters and may require scrambling or easy climbing in some parts of the trail

## **Difficulty level Canyoning & Aquatic hiking**

For this activity, it is mandatory to be able to swim at least 100m

**Level 1** Aquatic hiking not requiring any jump or abseiling

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- Level 2** Easy and short canyon descent with jumps of less than 3 meters which can be avoided abseiling
- Level 3** Canyon descent with few meters high jumps and little technical abseiling
- Level 4** Canyon descent lasting more than 5 hours with several meters high jumps and technical abseiling in waterfalls

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