

GREAT DISCOVER OF OMAN

A tour to discover Oman differently : mountain oasis, salt desert, Empty Quarter's huge dunes, the mysterious Huqf region, Khaluf's white desert, and wild wadis... An easy tour but a true adventure in secret and secluded places...

DAY 1 *(- Lunch - Dinner)*

 **Transfer Muttrah - Al Awabi (2 hours - 200 Km)**

 **Transfer Al Awabi - Al Alya (Wadi Bani Kharus) (1 hour - 30 Km)**

✓ **Hike from Al Alya to the Palm Garden of Ad Dar (4 hours)**

We Start from Al Alya at the end of Wadi Bani Kharus. We walk in the wadi and on the luxuriant terraces of the palm garden. The path then heads along the valley, goes up to a small pass and down to Ad Dar. Ad Dar is a palm garden only accessible by foot : the inhabitants of A Alya come there every day to take care of the cultures and of the falaj (traditional irrigation system). It is a lovely place and the palm garden is so luxuriant that we have the impression to be in a tropical wet country! We come back using the same way...

- **Level 2***

- **Walking time : 2 to 4 hours**

- **Height difference : +300m/-300m**

 **Transfer Al Alya (Wadi Bani Kharus) - Bimah (2 hours 15 - 65 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

DAY 2 *(Breakfast - Lunch - Dinner)*

 **Transfer Bimah - Balad Sit (0 hour 15 - 5 Km)**

✓ **Walk in Balad Sit (2 hours)**

We start from the main valley and head to a narrow gorge. This part of the walk is just wonderful! At the end of the gorge, we discover the village of Balad Sit ('the hidden village'). Built in a small hill and surrounded by cliffs, this village is one of the most beautiful of Oman. We walk through the village and the ardens and come back through an other branch of the small gorge.

- **Level 1***

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

- **Height difference : +50m/-50m**

 **Transfer Balad Sit - Al Hamra (1 hour 30 - 50 Km)**

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

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✓ **Visit of Bait As Safah (1 hour 30)**

Bait As Safah is a traditional omani house located in the old city of Al Hamra. The women of the village welcome us in this house and show us how they make omani bread, omani coffee, carpets, and different creams and lotions made from mountain plants.

 **Transfer Al Hamra - Misfat Al Abreyeen (0 hour 12 - 10 Km)**

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

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

- **Level 1***

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

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

 **Guesthouse in Misfat Al Abreyeen**

We spend the night in a traditionl 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 alchool 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 3

(Breakfast - Lunch - Dinner)

 **Transfer Misfat Al Abreyeen - Al Khitaym (1 hour 12 - 50 Km)**

✓ **Hike on top of Arabia's Grand Canyon to Sab Bani Khamis (4 hours)**

We start the walk at Al Khitaym. The path is very easy and offers all way long wonderful views on Arabia's Grand Canyon. On the way we can see the highest point of the country. Finally, we arrive to an old village built in the cliff : Sab Bani Khamis. The village was abandoned some 15 years ago when the road was build. Some 5 to 10 families were living there, taking care of their gardens also built on the cliff and of their goats. We come back the same way. It is a very easy wonderful walk!

- **Level 2***

- **Walking time : 2 to 3 hours**

- **Height difference : +250m/-250m**

 **Transfer Jebel Shams Plateau - Nizwa (1 hour 30 - 100 Km)**

 **Al Diyar Hotel**

Medium category hotel **. Located at 5 km from Nizwa Souq, it has a swimming pool and clean rooms of international standards.

Standard Room

Each room is equipped with bath or shower, toilet, fridge and TV.. breakfast at the hotel

DAY 4

(Breakfast - Lunch - Dinner)

✓ **Souq of Nizwa (1 hour 30)**

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Nizwa is a major city of Oman located at the foot of the mountains in the interior. In the past it was the capital of the country and remains the cultural center of the country for mountain people. The Souq was rehabilitated some 15 years ago. Friday is the market day, called 'Souq Al Jumaa', and brings visitors from the nearby mountains as well as bedouins from the desert side. The livestock souq is particularly worth a visit. But you find also the fish souq, vegetable souq, meat souq, as well as some people selling mountain honey, dates, incense, and anything you might need.

✓ **Visit of the fort of Nizwa (1 hour)**

The fort of Nizwa was rehabilitated recently. It has a defensive part (the so called citadelle) and a housing part (which was designed for the Imam and the scholars). From the top of the citadelle we have stunning views over Nizwa and its palm cove, the largest of the country. The underfloor of the fort was occupied by prison cells. These have been equipped to receive a museum about local culture. The museum is small but very well done. It is worth a visit!

 **Transfer Nizwa - Fahud (2 hours - 150 Km)**

 **Transfer Fahud - Umm As Samim (1 hour 30 - 150 Km)**

✓ **Stop in the Salt Desert of 'Umm As Samim' (0 hour 30)**

In Arabic, 'Umm As Samim' means 'the mother of poisons'. It is a very dry and plain stretch of salt. It is very inhospitable for life and there is no vegetation. We stop in this weird place to have a look at the salt crust.

- **Level 1***

 **Transfer Umm As Samim - Rub Al Khali (1 hour - 80 Km)**

✓ **Short walk in the sands to see the sunset (1 hour)**

We go to have a walk across the high dunes of the Rub Al Khali (Empty quarter in Arabic), the huge and arid desert of Saudi Arabia that crosses Oman's border. We'll walk up a dune to see sunset in this unbelievable landscape...

- **Level 2***

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

- **Height difference : +150m/-150m**

 **bivouac in the Empty Quarter**

We set our camp at the foot of the huge dunes of the Rub Al Khali

Individual camping tent

DAY 5

(Breakfast - Lunch - Dinner)

✓ **Hiking in Rub al Khali (6 hours)**

Morning, we start walking from our camp. We climb several high dunes which surround us : the ascent is sometimes exhausting, but the descent is quick and fun and gives us sometimes the opportunity to have the dune sing. Around noon, we walk back to our camp and have lunch and rest under a shady place. Late afternoon, we climb another huge dune to get to its summit and enjoy a wonderful sunset at the top.

- **Level 3***

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

- **Height difference : +150m/-150m**

 **bivouac in the Empty Quarter**

We set our camp at the foot of the huge dunes of the Rub Al Khali

Individual camping tent

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DAY 6 (Breakfast - Lunch - Dinner)

 Transfer Rub Al Khali - Qarn Kibrit (3 hours - 250 Km)

✓ **Salt Dome of Qarn Kibrit (1 hour)**

We stop to see a hill completely made of cristalized salt. We also explore an ancient gallery which was used by miners.

- Level 1*

 Transfer Qarn Kibrit - Jebel Kobra (0 hour 45 - 70 Km)

✓ **Short walk in the rocky chaos of jebel Kobra (2 hours)**

We stop at the foot of the cliffs made of white lime stone. We then walk across the many small gorges which. It is a very exclusive place with unbelievable landscapes. Rocks are having very particular shapes...

- Level 3*

- Walking time : 1 to 2 hours

 **Bivouac at the fottom of the cliffs**

We set up our camp at the bottom of the cliffs, just at the beginning of a small gorge.

Individual camping tent

DAY 7 (Breakfast - Lunch - Dinner)

 Transfer Jebel Kobra - Jebel Srj (0 hour 45 - 55 Km)

✓ **Jebel Srj (2 hours)**

We stop to have a look at a strange sandstone range in the middle of an arid plane. The rock has been eroded by winds and offers very tortuous shapes

- Level 1*

 Transfer Jebel Srj - Khaluf's Desert, between rocks and sand (2 hours - 150 Km)

✓ **Walk across sand and rocks (3 hours)**

We walk across rocky outcrops covered by sand in the surroundings of the White Desert. It is a wonderful place. The sand has different colours : sometimes cream, and sometimes red. And there is a small accacia forest which gives a touch of green to the landscape

- Level 2*

- Walking time : 2 to 3 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

DAY 8 (Breakfast - Lunch - Dinner)

 Transfer Khaluf's Desert, between rocks and sand - Khaluf (1 hour - 60 Km)

✓ **Stop in Khaluf (1 hour)**

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Khaluf is a very picturesc fishing beduin village : 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 - White Desert on the sea (0 hour 20 - 20 Km)**

✓ **Short walk in the white sand dunes (2 hours)**

We have a walk in the white sand dunes. It's a very surprising and beautiful place.

- **Level 2***

✓ **Swimming in Khaluf (2 hours)**

Hard to say if we are on the bech or in the desert, since the dunes arrive in the sea... Here endless beaches strech along the Indian Ocean. The bath is just great!

 **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

DAY 9

(Breakfast - Lunch - Dinner)

 **Transfer Khaluf - Ras Ar Ruays (2 hours - 150 Km)**

✓ **Short walk in Ras Al Ruwais (1 hour)**

We stop for a walk in Ras Al Ruwais. Here sand dunes litteraly overlook the sea, set on a sandstone basement (petrified sand) erroded by the sea and the wind to form original cliffs.

 **Transfer Ras Ar Ruays - Qihayd (village at the foot of the dunes and on seashore) (0 hour 30 - 50 Km)**

 **Transfer Qihayd (village 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.

 **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, tabe, chairs. Private bathroom.. breakfast et dinner at the hotel

DAY 10

(Breakfast - Lunch - Dinner)

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

 **Transfer Bidiyah - Bidah (1 hour - 50 Km)**

✓ **Hiking and swimming in the lower part of Wadi Bani Khalid (3 hours)**

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The lower part of this valley forms a narrow and wild canyon. We start from the lovely village of Bidah and cross its palm garden to access the entrance of the canyon. We hike in the canyon between big boulders (the way is not very easy but doesn't last long) until we arrive to a splendid pool with waterfall. We have rest here and enjoy the swimming in this secluded place. For those who like jumping, a very nice 10 meters ump is possible there...

- **Level 2***

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

 **Transfer Bidah - Sumayyah (1 hour 30 - 80 Km)**

 **Bivouac surrounded by red mountains**

Individual camping tent

DAY 11

(Breakfast - Lunch - Dinner)

 **Transfer Sumayyah - Al Ghomb (4 hours - 120 Km)**

We drive off-road for a wonderful crossing of the eastern Hajar. We first drive across the low colourful hills and then start climb up the plateau. Once we arrive up drive through amazing beehive tombs built 2000 B.C and several shepherd's hamlets until we reach the village of Al Ghomb.

✓ **Walk in al Jahl (2 hours)**

We discover this remote and secluded (the access dirt track was built only in 2013!) village set in a spectacular location. It's a lush green oasis in the middle of an arid mountain!

- **Level 2***

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

 **Camping on the Plateau**

We set up our camp on the plateau, and spend a fresh night under the stars...

Individual camping tent

DAY 12

(Breakfast - Lunch - Dinner)

 **Transfer Al Ghomb - Tiwi (2 hours - 70 Km)**

✓ **Walk and unforgettable swim in Wadi Shab (3 hours)**

We start from the sea and start hiking in the wadi. After 45 minutes or 1 hour walk in this beautiful wadi we'll go to the water : we swim from pool to pool to discover an incredible place. But we don't tell you more about this, since it has to be a surprise!

- **Level 1***

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

 **Wadi Shab Resort**

The Wadi Shab resort was built on the hill overlooking the blue sea near Tiwi. It is a comfortable 3-stars hotel with swimming pool facing the sea. The hotel's main restaurant overlooks the sea and serves Omani breakfast and dinner as well as international specialties

Standard Room

This air-conditioned room offers a small seating area with a flat-screen TV. Facilities include an electric kettle and a fridge. The bathroom is fitted with a shower, toiletries and hairdryer.. breakfast et dinner at the hotel

DAY 13

(Breakfast - Lunch - Dinner)

 **Transfer Tiwi - Saymah (Wadi Tiwi) (0 hour 45 - 25 Km)**

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✓ **Full Day in Wadi Tiwi (6 hours)**

We start from a village called Saymah. We walk on an old donkey path a little up the wadi. The views are splendid. The palm trees are so dense in this wadi that they look like a green river. As we arrive to another village, we go down and walk at the bottom of the wadi, on the falaj chanel, along the river or between the boulders, We finally arrive to a nice pool surrounded by cliffs and palm trees. We enjoy a swim there and have rest. We make a barbecue for lunch, and enjoy relaxing and swimming in this lovely place. We come back the same way and stop en route to have a last bath...

- **Level 2***

- **Walking time : 2 to 4 hours**

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

🚗 **Transfer Saymah (Wadi Tiwi) - Tiwi (0 hour 45 - 15 Km)**

🚗 **Transfer Tiwi - Muttrah (1 hour 45 - 160 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, coffe and tea making facilities.. breakfast at the hotel

DAY 14

(Breakfast - Lunch -)

✓ **Muttrah fish and vegetables souq (1 hour)**

It is a very lively and typical place that is worth a visit. We only rarely see such a choice of fishes : many spieces of breams and groupers, tuna, swordfishes, kingfishes, sharks, squids, crabs, shrimps, and even parrot fishes and other multicolor fishes. Next to the fish market is the vegetable market where you'll find fruits,vegetables, dates, honey, thyme, etc...

🚗 **Transfer Muttrah - Al Khiran (0 hour 45 - 50 Km)**

✓ **Snorkeling and Boat Tour in Khiran (4 hours)**

The bay of bandar Khiran is located only 30 km east from Muscat. There, the mountains fall down to the sea and form a lot of small tiny coves. We take a fisherman's boat in the village of Al Khiran and have a tour in the bay to see mangrove, seabirds, and the many sandy coves. Finally we stop in a wonderful beach, have lunch with grilled fish, and enjoy rest on the beach and snorkeling. Among other fishes you will probably see here : surgeon fish, tigerfish, butterfly fish, angelfish, and even sometime, if we are lucky, you'll be able to swim with turtles. ATTENTION : When the sea is rough, this cove is not reachable by boat ; we go to another one which is also nice and suitable for snorkeling, but the seabed is not so rich.

🚗 **Transfer Al Khiran - Muttrah (0 hour 45 - 50 Km)**

✓ **Visit of Muttrah Souq (2 hours)**

The main building of the Souq is beatifully decorated : painted wooden roof and stained glass windows. Some smaller streets start on all sides and are full of small shops. You'll have a round in this labirynthe in search of what you want to bring back home. The souq is organized by product type : there is a place for gold, one for silver, one for gifts, one for carpets, one clothes, etc...

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🏠 Mutrah Hotel

Mutrah 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, coffe and tea making facilities.. breakfast at the hotel

📌 Difficulty level Trekking & Easy Walking

- Level 1** No difficulty. Easy and short walks. Apporprate 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