

## DISCOVER OMAN AND ITS GEOLOGY

A tour to discover northern Oman with a special focus on geology. By visiting the lowhills, the high mountains, oasis, desert, and wadis, we'll get to understand the geological background of omani mountains and its famous ophiolites.



**Level 2** Quite easy tours with easy hikes (no more than 4 hours walking and 300m height difference). These tours might include swimming but no aquatic hike nor canyoning. There is always the option, for the participants who wish it, not to do the walk ; when possible, an alternative program can be offered to them ; otherwise, they will wait in a beautiful spot.

**Length** 10 Day

**Doable in** JANUARY - FEBRUARY - MARCH - NOVEMBER - DECEMBER

 3 Nights in accomodations (hotel, guesthouse, lodge, etc...)  
 6 Nights wild camping (with tents, thick matrass, mats, dishes, cooking dear), comfortable (but with no toilets) with the assistance of vehicules. Usualy tarticipants pitch their tent by themselves while we set up the collective camp

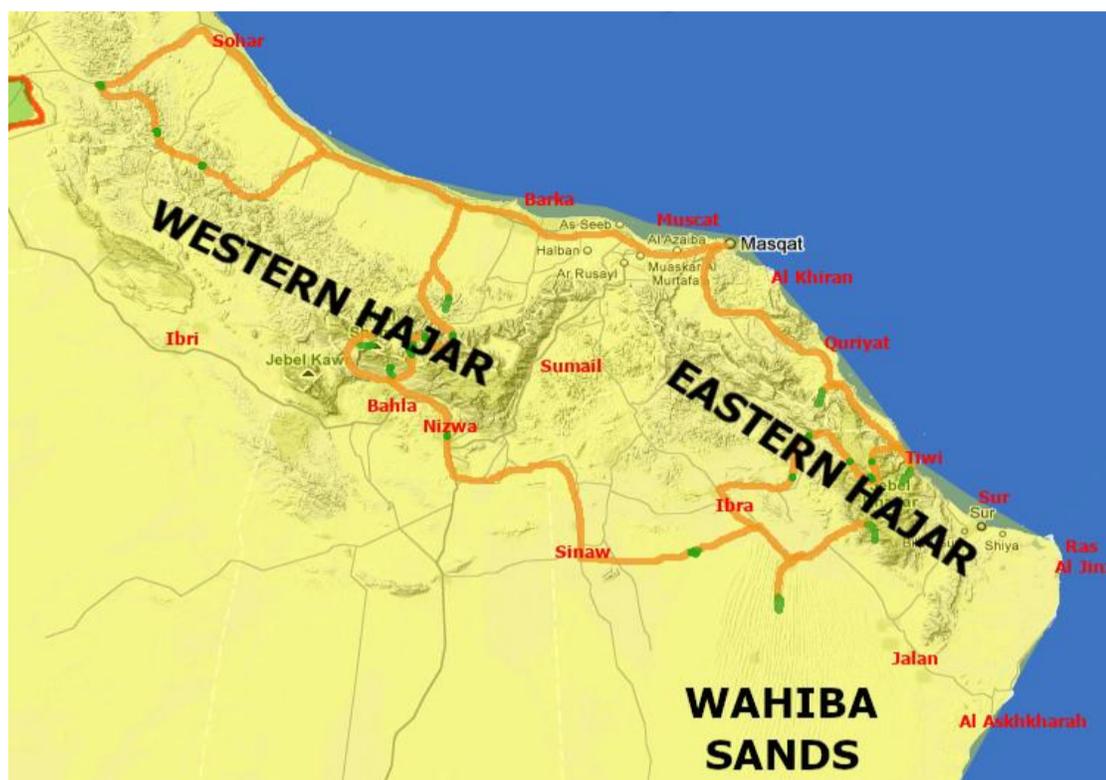
**Start** Muttrah

**Ends** Muttrah

GUESTS	PRICE PER PERSON	
2	930 OMR	2434 USD
3	730 OMR	1910 USD
4	650 OMR	1701 USD
5	720 OMR	1884 USD
6	650 OMR	1701 USD
7	600 OMR	1570 USD
8	580 OMR	1518 USD

**Itinerary**

Lowhills - Wadi Bani Kharus - Wadi Bani Awf - Al Hamra - Misfat Al Abreyeen - Jebel Shams - Nizwa - Birkat Al Mouz - Sinaw - Wadi Bani Khalid - Wahiba Desert - Eastern Hajar's Plateau - Wadi Shab - Wadi Tiwi - Wadi Al Arbeyeen

**Nota sobre la transportacion del equipaje**

We have vehicules ; so luggages are always transported by car. You only have to carry day-pack while hiking.

**DAY 1***- Lunch - Dinner*

 Transfer to Wadi Jizzi (3 hours 30 - 300 Km)

✓ **Pillow Lava wall (2 hours )**

 *Lowhills*

We stop to see the famous wall of pillow lava that made the cover of Geotimes magazine. Speech about the formation of the oceanic floor. Not far from here, we'll also see some dykes and some radiolarites.

✓ **Various stops of geological interest near Wadi Jizzi (2 hours )**

We stop to see copper menarization near the Majan copper mines, basalt columns, radiolarites, sheeted dykes, and a black smoker.

 Transfer to Wadi Al Haylayn (2 hours 30 - 180 Km)

✓ **Layered gabbros in Wadi Al Haylayn (1 hour )**

From the village of Al Haylayn we enter the wadi. After crossing nice palm gardens, we quickly find some very beautiful layered gabbros. Speech about the composition of the rocks forming the oceanic crust



**Camping in the foothills**

Wild place, surrounded by rocky hills  
*Individual camping tent*



**DAY 2***Breakfast - Lunch - Dinner*

 Transfer to a foothill wadi (2 hours - 90 Km)

✓ **Short walk in the desert near Al Abyadh (1 hour )**

 *Lowhills*

We stop for a short walk in this small desert. Here the sands cover rocky hills.  
- *Walking time : 1 to 2 hours*

✓ **Geologic excursion in Wadi Al Abyadh (3 hours 30)**

 *Lowhills*

We first stop in front of the Moho : the limit between the oceanic crust and the mantle is particularly visible here. That's what Wadi Al Abyadh is famous among geologists for. Speech about the Moho. We then walk up the wadi ; this walk is like a trip to the center of the earth : after the rocks of the oceanic crust, we discover rocks from the mantle... Sometimes, there is a wonderful pool where we can swim in.



**Camping in a wadi of the foothills**

*Individual camping tent*



**DAY 3***Breakfast - Lunch - Dinner*

 Transfer to Wadi Bani Kharus (1 hour 15 - 55 Km)

✓ **Geological excursion in Wadi Bani Kharus (1 hour 30)**

 *Wadi Bani Kharus*

We first stop at the entrance of the Wadi. From there the structure of Oman's mountain chain is well observable : ophiolite, foreign-born sediments, and autoctone sediments. Speech about the structural formation of the Jebel Akhdhar. Inside Wadi Bani Kharus, we stop to see rudists and a wonderful angular discordance. Speech about the geological layers forming the autoctone sediments.

 Transfer to Balad Sit (2 hours - 50 Km)

✓ **Short walk in the mountain oasis of Balad Sit (2 hours )**

 *Wadi Bani Awf*

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. 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**

 **Mountain guesthouse**

Simple but pleasant guesthouse in a wonderful spot

*Standard Room*

*breakfast & dinner at the accomodation*



**DAY 4***Breakfast - Lunch - Dinner*

 Transfer to Sharaf Al Alamain (1 hour - 15 Km)

This drive off-road let us climb some 1000 meters in less than 10 km. It provides us with stunning views over the valley.

✓ **Stop at Sharaf Al Alamain Pass (0 hour 45)**

 *Wadi Bani Awf*

From here we have stunning views on both mountainsides. It is ore easy to understand the forming process of the mountains of Oman. Speech about the structure of omani moutains.

 Transfer to Al Hamra (0 hour 45 - 30 Km)

✓ **Visit of a lively museum of traditional know-hows (1 hour 30)**

 *Al Hamra*

Bait As Safah is a traditional omani house located in the old city of Al Hamra. The women of the vllage 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 to Misfat Al Abreyeen (0 hour 12 - 10 Km)

✓ **Short walk in the mountain oasis of Misfat Al Abreyeen (2 hours )**

 *Misfat Al Abreyeen*

This is one of the most beautiful mountain village of Oman. It is located on the slope of a canyon. The gardens were built all around the old village on man-made terraces. Laying at an height of 800 meters, we find their a wide variety of tropical fruits : bananas, papayas, oranges, limes, dates, pomogranates, etc...

- **Level 1\***

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

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

 Transfer to Jebel Shams plateau (1 hour 20 - 50 Km)



**Camping in Jebel Shams Range**

1800m high

*Individual camping tent*



**DAY 5***Breakfast - Lunch - Dinner*

 Transfer to Al Khitaym (Jebel Shams) (0 hour 20 - 10 Km)

✓ **Geological Walk Along Arabia's Grand Canyon (4 hours )**

 *Jebel Shams*

We start from a small hamlet and walk on an easy path along Arabia's Grand Canyon to reach a troglodyte village which was abandoned in the 80's. We are on the autochthon limestone. At several places we cross fossil-rich layers. Of course, we take the time to look for them! You might find here bivalves, gastropods, lovely ursins, and the not so impressive but very interesting orbitolins.

- Level 2\*
- Walking time : 2 to 3 hours
- Height difference : +250m/-250m

 **Beautiful hotel with simple comfort**

A beautiful hotel located in an old quarter of Nizwa, just behind the souk. It's a complex of several old houses which have been renovated with a lot of taste.

*Standard Room  
breakfast at the accommodation*



**DAY 6***Breakfast - Lunch - Dinner*

➤ Nizwa

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

The fort of Nizwa was rehabilitated recently. He has a defensive part (the so called citadelle) and a housing part (which was designed or the Imam and the scholars). From the top of the citadelle e 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 equiped to receive a museum about local culture. The museum is small but very well done. It is worth a visit!

➤ Nizwa

✓ **Souq of Nizwa (1 hour 30)**

Nizwa is a major city of Oman located at the foot of the mointains 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 bedous 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 saling moutain honey, dates, incense, and anything you might need.

🚌 Transfer to Birkat al Mouz (0 hour 30 - 25 Km)

➤ Birkat Al Mouz

✓ **Stop above Birkat Al Mauz (1 hour )**

On the road, we stop to have a look at very colourful walls of Hawasina sediments. We then head to a point of view over Birkat Al Mauz. The huge palm grove and old villages are lovely. It is also a good place to see Hawasina scales on autoctone limestone.

🚌 Transfer to our campsite in a rocky desert (2 hours 30 - 170 Km)

➤ Sinaw

✓ **Short walk in hawasina hills (1 hour )**

We have a small walk in these siliceous hills. Speech about hawasina sediments.

**Camping in a rocky desert**

It's an environment typical of Oman : geologists call these rocks the "Hawasina Complex"

*Individual camping tent*



**DAY 7***Breakfast - Lunch - Dinner*

 Transfer to Wadi Bani Khalid (2 hours - 170 Km)

✓ **Hike to waterfalls and swimming (3 hours )**

 *Wadi Bani Khalid*

The lower part of this valley forms a narrow and wild canyon. We start from a lovely village in the valley 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 a swim. For those who like jumping, a very nice 10 meters jump is possible there... According to the rains and floods which change the river course, it can happen that we need to swim or hike in the water to reach the waterfalls

- Level 2\*

- Walking time : 1 to 2 hours

 Transfer to our campsite in the Wahiba Desert (1 hour 30 - 70 Km)

✓ **Sunset in the dunes (1 hour )**

 *Wahiba Desert*

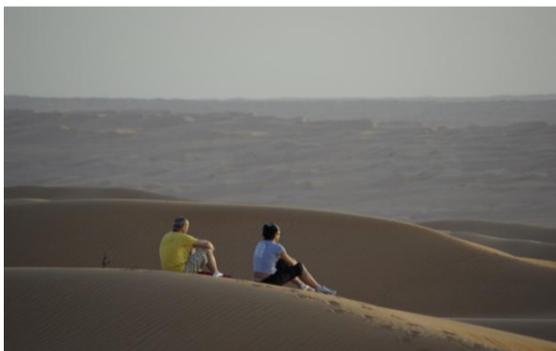
We start a walk across the dunes in late afternoon. The heat isn't too strong anymore and the sunlight is the more beautiful. The setting sun always gives changing colour to the sand and the shades. This a great unforgettable time.

- Level 1\*



**Camping in Wahiba Sands**

*Individual camping tent*



**DAY 8***Breakfast - Lunch - Dinner*

 Transfer to an oasis of the Estarn Hajar (6 hours - 200 Km)

✓ **Geological stops across the Eastern Hajar (0 hour )**

This a crossing rich in geological interest. First, at the feet of the plateau, we'll find pillow-lavas and indigenoussediments covered by transgressive limestone. Then, climbing up the plateau we'll have intersting views that will help us understand how the omani mountain range was formed and then covered in its eastern part by more recent limestone that we call 'transgressive'. On the plateau, we'll stop to look for fossils, above all numulites. As we'll go down to the seaside we'll see the numerous terraces pointing out the steps of the second surrection of the mountain range.

 *Eastern Hajar's Plateau*

✓ **Walk to a mountain oasis (3 hours )**

From the end of the dirt track, we walk down on a good path to a village, located in a very scenic place : down impressive cliffs, at the entrance of a wonderfull canyon. The place is remote and really beautiful. We can also swim in one of the first pools of the canyon.

 *Eastern Hajar's Plateau*

- **Level 1\***
- **Walking time : 1 to 2 hours**
- **Height difference : +100m/-100m**



**Camping in the mountain**

We camp at an height of about 1000m  
*Individual camping tent*



**DAY 9***Breakfast - Lunch - Dinner*

🚌 Transfer to a mountain oasis of the Eastern Hajar (2 hours - 70 Km)

✓ **Walk in a mountain oasis (3 hours )**

🚩 *Eastern Hajar's Plateau*

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\***
- **Walking time : 1 to 2 hours**
- **Height difference : +100m/-100m**

🚌 Transfer to Tiwi (1 hour 30 - 35 Km)

A great dirty track to go down from the plateau, with stunning views over the sea!

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

🚩 *Wadi Shab*

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 reach a waterfall flowing in a cave. We come back the same way. The valley, the walk, and the swim are very beautiful, but the place is now very touristic and often crowded.

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

🏠🏠🏠 **Hotel facing the sea**

A nice small hotel very well located, just before the village of Tiwi, in front of the sea, and at the entrance of Wadi Tiwi. The hotel has a swimming pool and a garden.

*Standard Room  
Modern and comfortable room with private bathroom.  
breakfast at the accommodation*



**DAY 10***Breakfast - Lunch -*

 Transfer to Wadi Tiwi (0 hour 45 - 25 Km)

✓ **Short walk and simming in Wadi Tiwi (2 hours )**

 *Wadi Tiwi*

A wonderfull valley, with a river and water pools, a huge palm grove stretching along it on terraces, villages, and scenic mountain slopes. We drive through the valley and have a short walk to go for a swim.

- **Level 2\***
- **Walking time : 1 to 2 hours**
- **Height difference : +50m/-50m**

✓ **Observation of serpentine outcrops (3 hours )**

 *Wadi Tiwi*

On the way we'll see several outcrops of ophiolites and in some places very beautiful serpentine.

- **Walking time : 1 to 2 hours**
- **Height difference : +50m/-50m**

 Transfer to Wadi Al Arbeyeen (2 hours - 105 Km)

✓ **Swimming in Wadi Al Arbeyeen (1 hour 30)**

 *Wadi Al Arbeyeen*

A the end of the track we discover a wonderful pool and a waterfall. They are located at the foot of the last village of the valley. The surroundings are fabulous and swimming there is very pleasant. For those who like jumping in the water, a 5 meters jump is possible there.

✓ **Observation of indigenous and transgressive sediments (1 hour )**

 *Wadi Al Arbeyeen*

This wadi offers us very clear examples of the transgressive limestone that covers already folded indigenous sediments.

 Transfer to Muttrah (2 hours 15 - 160 Km)



**① Difficulty level Hiking & Easy Walking**

<b>Level 1</b>	No difficulty. Easy and short walks. Appropriate for anyone walking occasionally
<b>Level 2</b>	Easy hikes with elevation gain of less than 300 meters with no big terrain difficulty
<b>Level 3</b>	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
<b>Level 4</b>	Hikes with an elevation gain from 800 to 1100 meters. For fit mountain hikers
<b>Level 5</b>	Long hikes with an elevation gain of more than 1000 meters and may require scrambling or easy climbing in some parts of the trail