

Tour of Oman

Discover Oman

Planned for Spring, 2012 / Friday, 30 March – Saturday, 07 April.

Groups of members, with guests, may select alternative dates.

The larger the group, the larger the discounted rates.

Children, of any age, most welcome – at parents' own discretion / responsibility.

Hotels and flights are all provisional at this stage (December 2011), not confirmed.

DAY ONE

FRIDAY – ARRIVAL TO THE SULTANATE OF OMAN

Arrival at Muscat International Airport, Meet & Assist and transfer to your hotel.

Flight details : QR 166 Departing from Doha at 0730 & reaching Muscat at 0950

OVERNIGHT AT A HOTEL IN MUSCAT

Hotel used:

Tba

Vehicle utilized:

Saloon / Mini Van

Distance covered:

DAY TWO

SATURDAY – HALF DAY CITY TOUR OF MUSCAT

After breakfast, we will take you to Azaiba, where you will find the Grand Mosque, standing in stately grandeur. A visit to this beautiful piece of architecture is a must to all tourists (**open for tourist from 8-11 am except Fridays. Dress code – Men and women should wear attire covering their arms and legs. Women should cover their heads with scarf.**)

From here we will take you into the heart of a world that has not changed in generation. The Old Souq of Muttrah awaits you with sights, sounds and aroma. We will see the old city of Muscat and catch a glimpse of the old town through the eyes of bygone travellers who left their marks and images, collected and on display at the fine galleries and museums (Bait Al Zubair) in the heart of the Old Quarter. We take a photo stop at the Sultan's Palace flanked by the 16th Century Portuguese forts of Jalali and Mirani.

Return back to the hotel

OVERNIGHT AT HOTEL IN MUSCAT

Places/activities highlights

- **Grand Mosque**
- **Muttrah souq**
- **Bait Al Zubair museum**
- **Jalali & Mirani**
- **Sultan's Palace**

Hotel used:

Tba

Vehicle utilized:

Saloon / Mini Van

Distance covered:

About 90 kilometres

Meals included: Breakfast

DAY THREE

SUNDAY- MUSCAT – QURIYAT – BIMAH - FINS BEACH – WADI TIWI – SUR - RAS AL HADD

Depart early morning at 9.00 am drive through the mountains and the coastal road through Quriyat and stop at the Bimah sinkhole, a natural geological formation of the karst topography and a scenic wonder. From here drive along the coast to the beautiful white sandy Fins beach.

From here we proceed to *Wadi Shab for some sightseeing in a beautiful wadi system. Take a hike up one of Oman's scenic wadis. At the end of Wadi Shab there is a swim through the famous keyhole into the secluded world thrilling of fantasy. Enjoy a picnic lunch after a swim at Wadi Shab.

Then drive to Wadi Tiwi. The track winds and bumps past dwellings and through date plantations. This is a nice journey through this peaceful and fertile area, where palms reach to the sky and Bananas grow in profusion. The water from the mountains flows through sparkling pools and tiny waterfalls. A wide variety of native plants thrive, including tall grasses and rushes, wildflowers and ubiquitous pink oleander. It is possible to pull off the track and indulge yourself by taking a lazy walk amongst the pools. Tiwi is known as "the gorge of nine villages."

The road ends at the village of Mybam at about 36 km which takes about an hour to reach. From here drive to Qalhat, where you will find the Tomb of Bibi Mariam, the only building left standing after the town was razed by the Portuguese in 1503. Drive along the coastal road towards Sur the old East African Port. From here drive to Ras Al Hadd and check-in at Ras Al Hadd Hotel.

Late evening drive to Ras Al Jinz to observe the nesting habits of the green turtles. Return to the Hotel just before midnight.

- **Kindly note that the wadi is strewn with rocks and pebbles which makes walking difficult. Advisable to wear sturdy walking shoes**

OVERNIGHT AT RAS AL HADD HOTEL.

Meals included: Breakfast / Picnic Lunch

DAY 4

MONDAY – RAS AL HADD - WADI BANI KHALID – WAHIBAS

After early breakfast head to the enchanting and magnificent Wadi Bani Khalid, the Lost Shangri La. The road goes through the villages of Bilad Bani Bu Ali, Bilad Bani Bu Hassan and Al Kamil. Continue to Wadi Bani Khalid, passing by the village with its endless date plantations, walk on following intricate cave passages weaving through the wadi. The pool is cool, deep and absolutely stunning.

Afternoon, drive to Wahibas the undulating golden sands of the desert. The Bedouin tribes of the Wahibas Sands are famous throughout the Arabian peninsular for breeding the best racing camels. On arrival at a Bedouin camp, enjoy a glimpse of the famous Bedouin hospitality offering Omani coffee and dates. After dinner, sleep under the stars or in Arabic tents.

OVERNIGHT AT SAFARI DESERT CAMP

Meals included: Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

Places/activities highlights

- Quriyat
- Bimah Sinkhole
- Fins Beach
- Wadi Shab
- Wadi Tiwi
- Bibi Mariam
- Sur
- Ras Al Jinz
- Turtle Watching

Hotel used:

Tba

www.sigoh.com.om

Vehicle utilized:

4WD Land Cruiser

Distance covered:
About 350 kilometres

Places/activities highlights

- Bilad Bani Bu Ali
- Wadi Bani Khalid
- Wahiba
- Dinner at the Camp

Hotel used:

Safari Desert Camp
www.safaridesertcamp.com

Vehicle utilized:

4WD Land Cruiser

Distance covered:
About 320 Kilometres

DAY 5
TUESDAY– WAHIBA – JEBEL AKHDAR

After breakfast, drive through the sand dunes and enjoy the desert with some dune bashing. We leave the desert and make our way towards the Mountains. We take a stop at the Ibra Market and the abandoned village of Al Mansfeh. From here We will make our way towards the Jabel Akhdar. Our stop will be at Birkat Al Mawz, a charming oasis, which is enchanting with its date palm trees and banana plantations.



From here we will drive up the winding mountain road to the roof of Oman, the Saiq Plateau and drive to Jebel Akhdar. True to its Arabic name of "Green Mountain" this region is one of the most verdant outside of Salalah. The use of terraces on extremely steep mountain slopes is particularly impressive. Feel the change in climate on top of the mountain. Orchards of pomegranates, apricots and walnuts are found in this region.

A walk in the Evening or Morning through the 'hanging gardens' along the falaj to savor the enchanting beauty of the landscape will be a lasting memory. Diana's point (named after the late princess of Wales who spent time here in the late 80's) provides some stunning views of the canyon below.

OVERNIGHT AT JEBEL AKHDAR HOTEL.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 6
WEDNESDAY– JEBEL AKHDAR – NIZWA.

After breakfast, We will begin our journey to the Old Capital of Oman, Nizwa.

We will seek out the village ruins of Old Tanuf, we navigate our way through narrow roads of the village, admiring the elaborate Falaj that runs along the edge of the wadi. Further we will continue on a rough track at come to a sigh declaring these are "God's Own Hills", a little garden of Eden filled with acacia sport powdery blooms of yellow, humming of bees and sweet aroma fumes the air in winter time.

Later, we will visit the beautiful rocky village of Misfat al Abrein. The mountain village is set amidst stunning landscape and has hardly changed over the years except for some developmental works like roads, electricity and telecommunication works benefiting the residents. The most striking feature of this village is the ancient houses perched on top of mountains surrounded by green date palms that run up the heights. The flourishing date palms on the mountains, is a rare sight as in most other areas they grow on the plains.

After lunch, we loop back and make our way to the Grand Canyon of Oman, Jabel Shams. As we head towards the mountains we stop at the old village of Ghul to see the abandoned Persian village. Wadi Nakhr is the bed that comes out of a canyon alongside the village. This is the start of the Wadi Nakhr Gorge and it winds for several kilometers into the jebels to become the Grand Canyon of Oman. Drive on to near Jebel Shams, the tallest peak in Oman at 10,000 feet. From the rim of the canyon you can see the village of Nakhr about 2 kilometers straight down. As you continue on your drive, You will come across the Shuwawis (mountain people) hawking their blankets and carpets. Return back to Nizwa.

OVERNIGHT AT FALAJ DARIS HOTEL

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Places/activities highlights

- **Al Mansfeh**
- **Birkat Al Mawz**
- **Saiq Plateau**
- **Hanging Gardens**

Hotel used:
Tba

Vehicle utilized:
4WD Land Cruiser

Distance covered:
About 250 Kilometres

Places/activities highlights

- **Nizwa Souk**
- **Round Fort**
- **Tanuf**
- **Misfat al Abrein**
- **Jabel Shams**

Hotel used:
Tba

Vehicle utilized:
4WD Land Cruiser

Distance covered:
About 300 kilometres

DAY 7
THURSDAY - NIZWA – BAHLA – JABRIN - NIZWA

After an early breakfast, drive back to Nizwa town and visit the Goat Market (Only on Friday morning).

We will visit the big round fort of the Al Yaruba dynasty. The Fort, which took 12 years to build, is famed for its 40m-tall round tower. It is worth climbing to the top of the tower to see the date plantation encircling the town and the view of the Hajar mountains.

We stop for lunch at a local restaurant.

After lunch, proceed to Jabrin where you can visit the famous fortress at Jabrin. The fort contains a maze of rooms with painted ceilings, impressive towers, courtyards, dungeons, secret passages, false floors, hidden corners, tunnels and escape routes. From here we back track to Bahla, one of the oldest recorded civilizations in Oman. Artefacts found here date back to 3rd Millennium BC. There is the enormous Bahla fort here, which has earned a place in the UNESCO's world heritage list of monuments.

Take a stroll in down town in the evening. The town is still a bustling centre for crafts and the silver souq is the best in Oman. Feel free to mingle with the crowd and let the Omani ambience take hold of you.

OVERNIGHT AT FALAJ DARIS HOTEL

Meals included: Breakfast / Picnic Lunch

DAY 8
FRIDAY - NIZWA – IBRI – NAKHL - MUSCAT

After breakfast, we will leave Nizwa and head to Ibri and where we come to the village of Al Ayn, where we see Bee Hive Tombs standing in a row above the Wadi Al Ayn with the Jabal Misht in the background. These tombs which are stated to be about 5000 years old and is believed to belong to the Umm An Nar period, and this designated as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO.

From here drive towards Rustaq for a photo stop of a pre-Islamic fort. Continue the drive from Rustaq to Ain Towarah to visit the mineral laden hot springs. From here, proceed to Nakhl and visit the Nakhl Fort, spectacularly perched on a rocky prominence of the Western Hajar.

Lunch stop at a local restaurant.

Return to Muscat and check-in at the Hotel

OVERNIGHT AT A HOTEL IN MUSCAT

Meals included: Breakfast / Picnic Lunch

DAY 9
SATURDAY- DEPARTURE

Breakfast at the hotel, Later picked up by an A/C Saloon / Mini Van and Transfer to Muscat International Airport for your onward journey.

(Late check-out will be provided at a supplement cost)

Flight details : QR 167 departing Muscat at 1055 & reaching Doha at 1115

End of Tour

Meals included: Breakfast

Places/activities highlights

- **Nizwa Fort**
- **Bahla**
- **Jabrin Castle**

Hotel used:
Tba

Vehicle utilized:
4WD Land Cruiser

Distance covered:
About 180 Kilometres

Places/activities highlights

- **Ibri**
- **Bat Tombs**
- **Rustaq**
- **Nakhl**

Hotel used:
Tba

Vehicle utilized:
4WD Land Cruiser

Distance covered:
About 500 Kilometres

Vehicle utilized:
Saloon / Mini Van

THIS ITINERARY IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE ACCORDING TO AVAILABILITY OF ACCOMMODATION

THE COST OF THE TOUR WILL BE DEPENDANT ON THE NUMBER OF PERSONS ON THE TOUR.

**AS A GUIDELINE, THE COST PER PERSON FOR A GROUP OF FOUR PERSONS TRAVELLING TOGETHER
= QR7900.00**

RATE INCLUDES:

- International Airfare based on Economy Class Tickets on Qatar Airways.
- Accommodation in hotels (or alternatives) as per itinerary with breakfast basis.
- Transportation in A/C 4WD's Vehicles, A/C Mini Van
- Entrance fees to Museums and Forts.
- Entrance fees to Ras Al Jinz Turtle Sanctuary
- Services of One English-speaking Driver/Guide for the lead vehicle
- Service of English-speaking drivers for the remaining vehicles.
- Mineral water and soft-drinks during the tour.
- Meals as specified in itinerary.

RATE DOES NOT INCLUDE:

- Visa charges to the Sultanate of Oman
- Alcoholic beverages
- Any expenses of a personal nature.

CONTACT DETAILS:

You may contact the Overseas Trip Co-ordinator (overseas-trips-coordinator@qnhg.org)
www.qnhg.org