



TIMELESS

TOURS & TRAVEL

FOR THE DISCERNING TRAVELLER

CULTURAL OMAN

9 Days 8 Nights Private Program with Daily Departures

All prices are in Australian Dollars unless otherwise stated

27/10/20

Day 1 Arrive Muscat

Arrival at Muscat International Airport then meet and assist transfer to your hotel. Check-in then rest of day at leisure.

*Two nights: Radisson Blu Hotel 4**

Day 2 Full Day Muscat City Tour

At 0830 you'll be met in the hotel lobby by your English speaking guide to start a full day city orientation tour. Start with the Grand Mosque, one of the largest in the world. Marvel at the rich Arabian architecture which is a must for tourists to Oman. (Open daily for visitors between 0800-1100 except Fridays). *Dress code – Women should wear attire covering their arms and legs and should cover their head with a scarf. Men should wear normal shirt and trousers).*

From here you will head to The Royal Opera House Muscat (ROHM) which is Oman's premier venue for musical arts and culture. Built on the orders of Sultan Qaboos, Oman's ruler, the Opera House reflects contemporary Omani architecture and can accommodate up to 1100 people. The one hour Opera House tour includes concert hall, auditorium, formal landscaped gardens and cultural market with retail, luxury restaurants and an art centre for musical, theatrical and operatic productions. (Open daily for visitors between 0830-1730 except Fridays/holidays, during performance dates or practice sessions).

You will have lunch at a local restaurant in Muttrah then visit the Sultanate of Oman's National Museum (Open for visitors between 1000-1700 Saturday-Thursday, Fridays between 1400-1800 and may close on public holidays). Established by royal decree in 2013 and opened in mid-2016, this is the Sultanate's flagship cultural institution showcasing the nation's heritage from the earliest human settlement some 2 million years ago through to the present day. The museum is located in a purpose-designed building in central Muscat and has 14 permanent galleries, areas for temporary exhibitions and also offers 43 digital immersive experiences, a fully equipped Learning Centre, conservation facilities, an ultra-high definition cinema, and discovery areas for children. It also houses the region's first open-plan museum storage concept, where visitors can learn about the various processes that artefacts go through before they are put on display.

Take a photo stop at the Sultan's Palace opposite the museum and flanked by the 16th Century Portuguese forts of Jalali and Mirani. Finally, proceed along the Corniche to visit Oman's largest indoor shopping market – Muttrah Souk. There you will find exquisite silver jewellery, intricately hand-made 'Khanjars' (daggers) and other handicrafts. Your guide will take you to the best of the old and new shops and help you bag a few bargains. Transfer back to the hotel for an evening at leisure.

Day 3 Muscat – Nakhl – Wadi Bani Awf – Nizwa

0900: After breakfast, check out of the hotel and start your journey to Nizwa via Wadi Bani Awf. First stop is the town of Nakhl which lies at the foothills of the mountains near an abundant source of natural spring water which irrigates extensive date palm plantations. Visit the 17th century Nakhl Fort set on a rocky outcrop surrounded by date palms. The origin of this fort is pre-Islamic with major contributions by the Yar'ubi and Al Bu Said dynasties.

The adventurous Wadi Bani Awf drive is very picturesque and involves off-roading and mountain driving. It is considered to be one of the best off-road driving terrains in Oman and takes you past the scenic local mountain villages of Hat and Blad Sayt which lie in the foothills of the Hajar Mountains. The palm groves and terraced



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gardens between stone walls in these beautiful villages are a treat to eyes as you ascend. You'll come across some of the locals living in these mountains and understand their day to day lifestyle in the harsh climate. Break for a picnic lunch in this beautiful landscape. After this full day program, we reach Nizwa, Oman's cultural heart and check-in at the hotel. Rest of the evening on your own.

Three nights: Falaj Daris Nizwa 3 (B/PL)*

Day 4 Nizwa – Bahla – Jabrin – Wadi Tanuf – Nizwa

0900: After breakfast at hotel head out for a full day heritage tour. Nizwa clusters around its historical buildings, traditional Souk and the imposing circular-towered fort built during the mid-17th century by Imam Sultan bin Saif Al Yar'ubi. At the Souk, built in traditional style, you will find exquisite silver jewellery, intricately hand-made "Khanjar" (daggers), copper and other handicrafts. Then travel to the village of Bahla known for its rich tradition of pottery and weaving. Visit the famous Pottery Centre and Bahla Fort, one of the oldest in Oman, built in the late 17th century on much earlier Persian foundations. More notably, Bahla has been placed on the list of UNESCO's World Heritage Sites for its cultural antiquity. Continue towards Jabrin Fort, also built in the late 17th century and originally designed as a residence. It displays the highest achievement in Omani ceiling painting and beautifully executed woodcarvings. It is one of the most magnificent forts of Oman with its painted ceiling, dungeons and hidden passages. Break for lunch at a local restaurant (*cost excluded*). On the way back to Nizwa, visit the beautiful Wadi Tanuf known for its scenic location and surrounding landscape. (B)

Day 5 Full Day Grand Canyon (Jebel Shams) Tour

Start from Nizwa towards mighty Jebel Shams. First stop to visit Al Hoota cave which is estimated to be over 2 million years old, located at the foot of Jabal Shams. After reaching Al Hamra region, see the old abandoned Persian village of Ghul then visit Misfat Al Abrein, a picturesque village strapped to the mountainside. Walking around this beautiful village where time has come to a standstill, you will be moved by the peoples' simplicity and friendliness. Proceed to Wadi Nakhr which is a river bed emerging from a canyon alongside the village. This is the start of Wadi Nakhr Gorge winding several kilometres into the Jebels to become the Grand Canyon of Oman. After the Wadi Nakhr off-road climb to Jebel Shams, Oman's highest peak (10,000'). From the canyon rim you see Nakhr village 2km directly below. You'll meet the Shuwawis (mountain people) hawking blankets and carpets. Later, through a beautiful mountain sunset before returning to Nizwa. Evening at leisure. (B)

Day 6 Nizwa – Ibra – Mansfah – Mudhayrib – Wahiba Sands

After breakfast, start towards the old town of Ibra, one of Oman's oldest cities famous for its old mosques and castles. Ibra was once a centre of trade, religion, education and art. Visit Al Mansfah ruins located in Ibra then go on to the abandoned village of Mudhayrib for some photos before lunch at a local restaurant (*cost excluded*). After proceed to the majestic Wahiba Sands, a romantic desert with rolling sand dunes varying from deep red to a rich honey colour and stretching to the horizon. The desert is home to the Bedouin, a hardy spirited people who know how to survive in these conditions. Visiting a Bedouin family house allows you to learn about their lifestyle and the challenges of living in the Sands. Traditional Omani coffee and dates will be served during the visit. Later enjoy exciting dune bashing over mighty sand hills before reaching camp where you will experience a traditional BBQ style dinner at the camp under the starlit sky.

Overnight: Safari Desert Camp (B/D)

Day 7 Wahiba Sands – Wadi Bani Khalid – Al Ayjah – Sur

Check out after breakfast, leave the desert and head for fun and adventure at enchanting Wadi Bani Khalid, one of Oman's most scenic wadis. We'll drive past the village's endless palm plantations to reach the magnificent cool, deep and absolutely stunning pools with their crystal clear waters. A swim in this cool stretch of water is rejuvenating. Lunch (*cost excluded*) will be at the Wadi or a local restaurant en route. Continue to the old African port of Sur and stop at the old village of "Al Ayjah" to see some beautiful Omani architecture. In Sur, visit the



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famous Dhow building yards where these traditional boats are built by hand by expert craftsmen without the aid of drawings. Check-in at your hotel and enjoy the rest of the evening on own.

Overnight: Sur Plaza Hotel 4* (B)

(Optional evening Turtle Watching Tour at Ras Al Jinz Centre, suppl. applies)

Day 8 Sur – Coastal Road – Muscat

After breakfast, check out and start your journey to Muscat along the scenic Coast Road offering ample photo opportunities. Visit Wadi Tiwi, known for its location and great surrounding landscape. After breaking for a picnic lunch en route, drive past Fins Beach – one of Oman’s most beautiful white sandy beaches and a popular camping spot. Next stop is at the Bimah sink hole - a geological formation and natural wonder. Later, proceed through the town of Quriyat to reach Muscat by early evening. Check-in at your hotel. Rest of the evening at leisure.

Overnight: Radisson Blu Hotel 4* (B/PL)

Day 9 Depart Muscat

Breakfast at hotel then transfer to Muscat International Airport for your departure flight. (B) End of tour.

Rate per person based on:	1 passenger	2 passengers in twin/double	3 passengers**	4 passengers in 2 twins/doubles	single ** supplement
October 2020 – April 2021	\$8452	\$4558	\$3597	\$3193	\$914
May 2021 – September 2021	\$8231	\$4472	\$3529	\$3135	\$895

**There are no triple rooms so single supplement applies to the third passenger using a single room.

Cost includes:

- Accommodation (or similar) as mentioned in the itinerary in standard rooms
- 6 days guided tour by 4WD, half-day Muscat City tour and airport transfers by saloon car or 4WD
- All tours with the assistance of English speaking guide cum driver
- Meals as mentioned in the itinerary (B – breakfast, PL – Picnic Lunch, D – Dinner)
- Entrance fees to forts, Opera House, National Museum and Al Hoota cave
- Soft drinks and bottled water during all the tours
- Guide meals and accommodation during the tour
- Applicable taxes and fuel costs

Cost excludes:

- Optional supplement of \$112 per person (minimum 2 pax) for Turtle Watching Tour at Ras Al Jinz Scientific & Visitors Centre incl. entrance fees and transportation
- Expenses of a personal nature; visa fees; meals other than those mentioned in the itinerary

Important Notes:

- All services are subject to availability at the time of actual booking
- Rates are subject to festival/holiday supplements during eg Eid, Christmas, New Year etc.
- Mandatory Christmas Eve and New Years Eve dinner supplements apply at some hotels
- Normal hotel check-in time 1400, check out time 1200. Early check-in or late check out subject to availability and cost

Program is operated daily on a private basis and can be adjusted as necessary.

Valid to 30 September 2021



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