

OMAN SELF DRIVE TOURS

اكتشفى عمان بسيارتك

Tour "Mountains and canyons of Oman"

Hiking 4x4 self drive tour

15 days / 14 nights

2020 - 2021









A challenging tour taking you from high massifs to deep canyons! Start with beautiful hikes on the Jebel Akhdar before launching into the complete ascent of the Jebel Shams, the highest mountain in the country, in two intense walking days. Continue by Nizwa and the Wahiba desert. Then guides lead you on superb aquatic hikes in the wadis. End your tour on the seaside.

Oman Self Drive Tours اکتشف عمان بسیار تك

PO Box 1178, PC 130, Al Azaiba, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman Phone: +968 97 04 61 61 – email: contact@omanselfdrivetours.com Ministry of Commerce CR number 1276308

Understand your travel proposition

Self drive tour

The travelers themselves will drive along all the road transfers detailed in the program as well as along possible additional transfers to reach an activity place (except for transfers with driver or guide).

Program type: "Freedom hiking"

Each day, a number of possible activities - walks and hikes - are proposed. It is up to the travelers, during their trip, to choose which activity they are interested in depending on their wishes and the time available. The times given for each activity and each transfer are intended to give an idea as accurate as possible of what can be done in one day.

Driving level: 4x4

The itinerary includes dirt roads without major difficulty but requiring a 4x4 vehicle. Under normal conditions, anybody can drive on these roads as long as he/she respects the basic safety rules. However, unpredictable events, especially weather-related, can make these dirt roads harder to negotiate.

Possible activity

Activity not requiring prior reservation. The travelers are free to go for them or not. Most of them are free of charge.

Optional / Included activity

Paying activity requiring prior reservation. If it is a guided activity, it may involve transfers. In this case, such transfers will be arranged by the guide or a driver, with their own vehicle.

Variant

Road transfer longer than the reference transfer but of a greater interest in terms of landscape or possible activity.

Accommodation with surcharge

Hotel not included in the standard package, proposed as an upgrade of the accommodation already included that day.

Key

Transfers

 \blacksquare

Road

Scenic road

X Plane

Eerry

[30min] Approx. time of transfer

|4x4| Dirt road: 4x4 required

|4x4+| Difficult dirt road: 4x4 and experience required

Landscapes (transfers & activities)

4

Mountain

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Village/palm grove

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Wadi Town

Sea

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Desert

Activities

1 Culture

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Shopping

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Viewpoint

Scenic road

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Strolling

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Walking/hiking

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Canyoning

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Bathing/swimming

Nature Cruise

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|1h-2h| Approx. time dedicated to the activity

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|10min|

Approx. time up to the activity place (one way)

Meals

RO Room only

BB Breakfast

HB Half board

FB Full board

L Lunch (during an activity)

OVERVIEW OF YOUR TOUR

DAY 1 - Muscat Muscat International Airport to the Azaiba district | 10km-10min | ⑪ Mutrah District | 1h-4h | •\ 戊 血 Old Muscat District and the Sultan's Palace |30min-1h| m The National Museum (Old Muscat district) |1h-3h| ⑪ Royal Opera House (Qurum district) | 20min-30min | Guesthouse (Azaiba District) | BB | DAY 2 - From Muscat to the Jebel Akhdar ⑪ Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque (Ghubrah district) |45min-1h30| Muscat to Fanja | 50km-45min | •⋹ Town of Fanja | 20min-1h30 | 8 Fanja to Birkat al Mouz : the Samail Gap | 90km-1h| ***** Wadi Qurai |15min-2h| Birkat al Mouz to Saig: Up the Jebel Akhdar | 40km-50min | 4x4 | 俞 发 The rose villages |1h-2h| Ĥ Hotel *** (Saig Katenah) Room Deluxe |BB| DAY 3 - The Jebel Akhdar 8 Saig to Agbat al Biyut | 25km-45min | 4x4 | **'** Hiking in the Wadi Kawar (+650m -650m 10km) |5h-6h| Aqbat al Biyut to Saiq | 25km-45min | 4x4 | *⅓* •€ ⋒ → 5km-20min Hanging village of Sograh | 45min | Hotel *** (Saiq Katenah) |BB| Ĥ DAY 4 - The Jebel Akhdar Saig to Al Magal road | 20km-35min | 4x4 | **'**Å' Loop hike on the heights of the Wadi Qashah (+700m -700m 14km) |5h-6h|

DAY 5 - From the Jebel Akhdar to Misfat al Abriyeen

Al Magal road to Saig | 20km-35min | 4x4 |

Hotel *** (Saiq Katenah) |BB|

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		5	Saiq to Birkat al Mouz : Down the Jebel Akhdar 40km-50min 4x4	
	•	'	Walk in the upper Wadi Halfayn 1h-1h30	4km-10min
<u>m</u>	ķ	•	Village of Birkat al Mouz 15min-1h30	
		\$	Birkat al Mouz to Al Hamra 65km-50min	
ķ	•	<u>π</u>	Town of Al Hamra 30min-2h	
		\$	Al Hamra to Misfat al Abriyeen 6km-15min	
'Å /	•	$\widehat{\mathbf{m}}$	Walk in the palm grove of Misfat al Abriyeen 30min-2h	
			Guesthouse (Misfat al Abriyeen) Room Private bathroom HB	
DAY 6	5 - Hil	ke up	to the Jebel Shams Plateau	
		5	Misfat al Abriyeen to Al Hamra 6km-15min	
		\rightleftharpoons	Al Hamra to Ghul 10km-15min	
		'À /	Hiking from Wadi Ghul to the Jebel Shams plateau (+1200m 7km) 4h-5h	
		Ĥ	Hotel *** (Jebel Shams Plateau) Room Mountain View HB	
DAY 7	7 - To	the t	op of the Jebel Shams	
		'À /	Hike to the summit of the Jebel Shams 5h-12h	
		Ĥ	Hotel *** (Jebel Shams Plateau) HB	
DAY 8	3 - Fro	om th	e Jebel Shams to Nizwa	
		\$	Jebel Shams Plateau to Ghul (with a driver) 30km-50min 4x4	
			Ghul to Al Hamra 10km-15min	
		≅	Ghul to Al Hamra 10km-15min Al Hamra to Nizwa 50km-45min	
	•\		Al Hamra to Nizwa 50km-45min	□ 10km-10min
' *\	_	\$	Al Hamra to Nizwa 50km-45min	≘ 10km-10min
'.	_	S	Al Hamra to Nizwa 50km-45min Bahla Fort 1h-2h	角 10km-10min
	\$		Al Hamra to Nizwa 50km-45min Bahla Fort 1h-2h Wadi Tanuf and Wadi Qashah 1h-5h 4x4	角 10km-10min
	\$		Al Hamra to Nizwa 50km-45min Bahla Fort 1h-2h Wadi Tanuf and Wadi Qashah 1h-5h 4x4 Guesthouse (Nizwa) Room Suite BB	➡ 10km-10min
	\$	Som Ni	Al Hamra to Nizwa 50km-45min Bahla Fort 1h-2h Wadi Tanuf and Wadi Qashah 1h-5h 4x4 Guesthouse (Nizwa) Room Suite BB izwa to the Wahiba desert	□ 10km-10min
) - Fro	Som Ni	Al Hamra to Nizwa 50km-45min Bahla Fort 1h-2h Wadi Tanuf and Wadi Qashah 1h-5h 4x4 Guesthouse (Nizwa) Room Suite BB izwa to the Wahiba desert Town of Nizwa 1h-3h	□ 10km-10min
DAY 9) - Fro		Al Hamra to Nizwa 50km-45min Bahla Fort 1h-2h Wadi Tanuf and Wadi Qashah 1h-5h 4x4 Guesthouse (Nizwa) Room Suite BB izwa to the Wahiba desert Town of Nizwa 1h-3h Nizwa to Al Wasil : To the Wahiba desert 170km-2h15	□ 10km-10min
DAY 9) - Fro		Al Hamra to Nizwa 50km-45min Bahla Fort 1h-2h Wadi Tanuf and Wadi Qashah 1h-5h 4x4 Guesthouse (Nizwa) Room Suite BB izwa to the Wahiba desert Town of Nizwa 1h-3h Nizwa to Al Wasil : To the Wahiba desert 170km-2h15 Izki old town 30min-1h	☐ 10km-10min

DAY 10 - Aquatic hiking in the Wadi bani Khalid Your camp to Al Wasil | 15km-15min | 4x4 | Al Wasil to Romail | 25km-25min | **₹** 25km-30min Guided aquatic hike in the Wadi Bani Khalid |5h| Romail to Al Wasil | 25km-25min | Al Wasil to your camp in the desert |15km-15min|4x4| Desert camp *** (Wahiba) | HB| DAY 11 - From the Wahiba desert to the Gulf of Oman Your camp to Al Wasil | 15km-15min | 4x4 | Al Wasil to Sur: From the desert to the Gulf of Oman | 130km-1h45| •**€** ★ **m** Town of Sur |1h-3h| Sur to Fins : Along the Gulf of Oman | 60km-55min | **₹** Wadi Tiwi |1h-5h|4x4+| Homestay (Fins) | HB | DAY 12 - Aquatic hiking in the Wadi al Hail Fins to Dhabab | 25km-25min | **∀**♦ **\$ ←** 15km-40min Guided aquatic hike in the Wadi al Hail |6h-7h| Dhabab to Fins | 25km-25min | Homestay (Fins) | HB | DAY 13 - Between sea and mountains Fins beach, coastal road and gazelle reserve |30min-1h| 8 Fins to Al Hajir | 115km-1h15 | *€* /⁄ **∑** Wadi Dayqah |2h-3h|4x4| Al Hajir to Yiti: The Wadi Mayh | 20km-30min | 4x4 | lacksquareYiti to Qantab | 10km-15min | Guesthouse (Qantab) | RO |

DAY 14 - Day to relax at your guesthouse

Æ	'	\$ South Muscat coastline 1h-3h
		Guesthouse (Qantab) RO

DAY 15 - Day to relax at your guesthouse and departure



Qantab to Muscat International Airport |45km-50min|

PROGRAMME OF YOUR TOUR

DAY 1 - Muscat

Arrival in Muscat International Airport.

Our agent welcomes you, hands over the travel documents to you and assists you in picking up your rental car.

Full day to visit the Omani capital and its surroundings.

Transfer



Muscat International Airport to the Azaiba district | 10km-10min |



Along the sea, short drive from the airport to Azaiba, a residential district in the western side of the capital city.



Possible activity











This historic district is the most interesting in the capital for tourists, with its beautiful sea-front (the so-called Corniche), its famous souq, its fish and vegetable market and even a short trekking path.







Possible activity





Old Muscat District and the Sultan's Palace |30min-1h|





A few kilometres from Mutrah, with its numerous mosques and government buildings, this small district is the actual capital of Oman, from which extended the whole city. You can enjoy this quiet place by a short stroll around the Sultan Palace. This is also where the National Museum is located.







Possible activity

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The National Museum (Old Muscat district) |1h-3h|

Open to the public since the end of 2016, the National Museum displays rich collections describing Oman history. The artefacts, on show in bright rooms, are arranged according to the period they belong to, from prehistory to nowadays, or sorted by theme as in the Maritime Gallery.







Possible activity



Royal Opera House (Qurum district) | 20min-30min |



Guided visit of the magnificent Royal Opera House Muscat.

Officially opened in 2011, it was the only opera house in the Arabic peninsula until 2016, opening year of those of Dubai and Kuwait City. It owes its existence to music-loving Sultan Qaboos. An ultra-modern building with an Oriental style, it hosts concerts, ballets or operas performed by European as well as Arab artists.

For more informations on the performances scheduled during your stay, you can visit www.rohmuscat.org.om/en/performance/calendar.







Accommodation



Guesthouse (Azaiba District) | BB |

Two big villas converted into a guesthouse with 10 comfortable and tastefully-decorated rooms.

Located in a posh neighbourhood, it is only a 5-min walk to the Azaiba beach, where swimming is possible. Rights next to it lies a small park with playgrounds as well as a restaurant and food trucks where young Omanis sell grilled food in the evening.

It is only a 10-min drive to the airport, 15 min to the Grand Mosque and about half an hour to the historic districts (Mutrah, Old Muscat).

The guesthouse has a 22-m long swimming pool and 2 living rooms. Breakfast can be eaten al fresco close to the pool.







DAY 2 - From Muscat to the Jebel Akhdar

Discover the Samail Gap. Without any detour, you can make photo stops at Fanja, hike in the Wadi Qurai or explore the very different old towns of Izki and Birkat al Mouz.

Next is the drive up the Jebel Akhdar plateau, 2000 m high, where awaits your accommodation.

Possible activity



Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque (Ghubrah district) | 45min-1h30|

A magnificent mosque, the largest of the country and the only one allowed to non-muslim visitors. The main praying hall, famous for its huge chandelier, is truly spectacular.

Audioguides are available for an in-depth discovery.









Muscat to Fanja |50km-45min|





From Muscat, the highway goes south and passes between the first low mountains of the Samail Gap.

Possible activity



Town of Fanja |20min-1h30|



Just south of Muscat, the small town of Fanja extends on both banks of the wadi with the same name, at the foot of the Jebel Nakhl. Its old quarter, with its large palm grove and watch towers, offers a beautiful scenery.







Transfer



Fanja to Birkat al Mouz : the Samail Gap | 90km-1h|





The highway runs through valleys separating the two great mountain ranges of northern Oman. Historically used to connect the coast and the inland regions, this passage, called the Samail Gap, features many villages, palm groves and watch towers. It also offers nice views of the steep side of the Western Hajar.



★ S Wadi Qurai |15min-2h|







The Wadi Qurai has dug out a deep valley into the abrupt side of the Western Hajar. A small road running between palm groves provides nice views of this wadi from a distance. Walking up the wadi will take you to a few nice small pools of pristine water (but swimming there is not allowed).







Transfer



Birkat al Mouz to Saig: Up the Jebel Akhdar | 40km-50min | 4x4 |



The road enters the mountains by the Wadi Muaydin and then climbs up for 1500 m to the Saiq Plateau, where Saiq Katenah, the only (small) town of the massif is located.



Possible activity

₹ The rose villages |1h-2h|





The Jebel Akhdar is known for its pomegranate and rose water production. The fruits and roses are especially grown on the terraces of three villages, linked by a marked path. Along the edge of the plateau, the way overlooks the Wadi Salut.

The best time to go for this walk is April, when the roses are blooming, but it is possible to do it year-round.







Accommodation

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Hotel *** (Saiq Katenah) Room Deluxe |BB|

Hotel opened in April 2018. It is comfortable and very well located on the edge of the Saiq plateau, 2000 m high. The terrace, where lie the (heated) swimming pool, the jacuzzi and the children playground, offers superb views over the valley and the famous Rose Villages, only a few hundreds of metres away.

It has two restaurants with outdoor seating (international cuisine and barbecue).

The Deluxe rooms are divided between the 3 floors of the main building, half on the valley side and half on the town side. We obviously request the first ones whenever possible.







DAY 3 - The Jebel Akhdar

Full day to discover the Jebel Akhdar.

Superb day hike to the hidden gardens of Masirat al Jawamid. The access road passes near the hanging village of Sograh.

Transfer



Saiq to Aqbat al Biyut | 25km-45min | 4x4 |



From the Sayq Plateau, you climb a little more, passing near the hanging village of Soqrah. Then a dirt road takes you along the deep Wadi Qashah and offers nice views down to the plain, 1500 m below. It ends at the small remote village of Aqbat al Biyut, sitting on the edge of Wadi Hijri.







Possible activity

' Hiking in the Wadi Kawar (+650m -650m 10km) |5h-6h|







This great walk takes you down from the plateau into the deep valley of Wadi Kawar. There awaits the abandoned village of Masirat al Jawamid and its hidden palm grove : a real jewel surrounded by arid cliffs.

The path, still used by villagers going to look after their gardens with their donkeys, is good. It was marked for hikers in 2016.







Transfer



Aqbat al Biyut to Saiq | 25km-45min | 4x4 |

Drive back to the Saiq Plateau.







Possible activity along the transfer

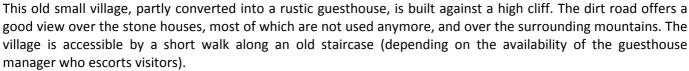


→ 5km-20min | 4x4 |



Hanging village of Soqrah |45min|











Accommodation



Hotel *** (Saiq Katenah) | BB |







DAY 4 - The Jebel Akhdar

Full day to discover the Jebel Akhdar.

Superb day hike on the heights of the Wadi Qashah. The access road passes near the hanging village of Soqrah.

Transfer



Saiq to Al Maqal road | 20km-35min | 4x4 |



From the Sayq Plateau, you climb a little more, passing near the hanging village of Soqrah. Then you take a dirt road leading to the remote village of Al Maqal, above the Wadi Qashah.

Possible activity



Loop hike on the heights of the Wadi Qashah (+700m -700m 14km) |5h-6h|





In Oman, the options of day loop hike are few. On the plateau and the ridges overlooking the deep canyon of the Wadi Qashah, good marked paths can be used for such an excursion. The walk is varied, going past two villages and the ruins of ancient hamlets, crossing small valleys and following the top of Wadi Qashah impressive cliffs. To return to the starting point, you walk on a little-used dirt road that offers panoramic views upon the plain south of the mountains.









Al Maqal road to Saiq | 20km-35min | 4x4 |



Drive back to the Saiq Plateau.

Accommodation



Hotel *** (Saiq Katenah) | BB|







DAY 5 - From the Jebel Akhdar to Misfat al Abriyeen

Day to discover the Jebel Akhdar: the classic Rose Villages or Wadi bani Habib (the latter can be crowded from mid-morning), the lesser-known hanging village of Soqrah or the off-the-beaten-path Wadi Halfayn. Then you leave the heights to settle in the beautiful village of Misfat al Abriyeen.

Transfer



Saiq to Birkat al Mouz : Down the Jebel Akhdar | 40km-50min | 4x4 |



The Jebel Akhdar road being a dead end, return by the same way you came up, enjoying the plunging views down to the plain again.



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• Walk in the upper Wadi Halfayn |1h-1h30|





Short hike up to a breathtaking viewpoint overlooking the whole valley of the Wadi Halfayn, going down from the Jebel Akhdar to the plain, more than 1000 m below.



Possible activity





Village of Birkat al Mouz | 15min-1h30 |





The big village of Birkat al Mouz, at the end of the Wadi Muaydin, has at all times been the entrance to the Jebel Akhdar range as evidenced by its fort and numerous watch towers. Its large palm grove and the ruins of its old districts can be watched from a panoramic viewpoint or during a stroll.



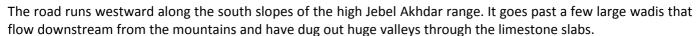


Transfer



Birkat al Mouz to Al Hamra |65km-50min|







Possible activity

立 ・ ♦ 大 Town of Al Hamra |30min-2h|





The town of Al Hamra lies at the foot of the Western Hajar, in a small plain around the Wadi Ghul, and offers nice views of the Jebel Shams. It has a large palm grove where it is pleasant to stroll. The adobe ruins of the old town comprise some quite well preserved houses, one of which hosting an interesting little ecomuseum.







Transfer

Al Hamra to Misfat al Abriyeen |6km-15min|





The village of Misfat al Abriyeen lies just above Al Hamra, on the south side of the Western Hajar mountains. On the way you will enjoy nice views of the town.



Possible activity

• 🖒 Walk in the palm grove of Misfat al Abriyeen |30min-2h|





The old stone village of Misfat al Abriyeen, invisible from the plain, is one of the most photogenic in Oman, with its terraced palm groves on both sides of a narrow valley.







Accommodation



Guesthouse (Misfat al Abriyeen) Room Private bathroom | HB |

Small guesthouse at the entrance of Misfat al Abriyeen, next to the beautiful palm grove of the village.

Ancient stone houses have been converted into bedrooms. They are small and the comfort is basic (mattresses on the floor), but what a setting!

Meals are taken on a terraced roof overlooking the palm grove and the old village. The "majlis" (sitting area) offers the same view.







DAY 6 - Hike up to the Jebel Shams Plateau

You leave your car at the village of Ghul, located at the foot of the Jebel Shams massif. From there, a hiking path climbs up to the Jebel Shams Plateau, where you find your accommodation.

Transfer



Misfat al Abriyeen to Al Hamra | 6km-15min |





Return to Al Hamra.



Transfer



Al Hamra to Ghul |10km-15min|





Following the Wadi Ghul, the road runs along the southern side of the Jebel Shams. It quickly arrives at the village of Ghul, located at the confluence with the Wadi Nakhr, the "Grand Canyon of Arabia".

Possible activity

† Hiking from Wadi Ghul to the Jebel Shams plateau (+1200m 7km) |4h-5h|





From the bottom of the Wadi Ghul and the village with the same name, one-way hike to the Jebel Shams plateau. The ancient donkey trail, nowadays marked, follows the upper edge of the Grand Canyon of Arabia and offers increasingly spectacular views along the way up.

Arrival in Al Khitaym, the first hamlet on the plateau, located almost 1900 m above sea level. From there, a driver can take you to your hotel in about 10 minutes. If you prefer to walk the whole way, count an extra 2 hours and 5 km (partly on the dirt road).







Accommodation

H Hotel

Hotel fully renovated in 2017 located on the Jebel Shams plateau, more than 2000 m high. The viewpoints over the Grand Canyon of Arabia are next door and the start of the Balcony Walk only a few minutes away. The hike to the summit starts right next to the hotel.

The hotel has a restaurant using as much local products as possible.

The Mountain View rooms are built of local stones and have a shaded balcony looking at the mountains.

Hotel *** (Jebel Shams Plateau) Room Mountain View | HB |







DAY 7 - To the top of the Jebel Shams

Day for hiking along the Grand Canyon of Arabia and to the country's highest point.

⅓ Hike to the summit of the Jebel Shams |5h-12h|

Hiking to the highest point of the country is not for the occasional hiker: 10 to 12 walking hours, nearly 25 km back and forth, 1500 m of elevation gain and as much in vertical drop.

However, there is no obligation to reach the summit and two shorter itineraries along the same route can be contemplated. They are appreciably more difficult than the popular "Balcony Walk", but can be inviting alternatives for hiking enthusiasts.

Whatever the option, sceneries are stunning, on the first portion with sights of the Grand Canyon and the neighboring mountains (Jebels Misht, Misfah, Khawr, Waalah), and at the end with superb views of the prodigious Sahtan Bowl and the whole Western Hajar range.







Accommodation

Hotel *** (Jebel Shams Plateau) | HB|







DAY 8 - From the Jebel Shams to Nizwa

With a driver, you go back down from the Jebel Shams massif to Ghul, where you find your car.

On the way to Nizwa, you pass near the majestic Bahla fort, recognized as a World Heritage site, and the beautiful Wadi Tanuf.

You settle in your hotel in Nizwa, which souq comes to life in the evening.

Transfer

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Jebel Shams Plateau to Ghul (with a driver) | 30km-50min | 4x4 |



A driver takes you from your hotel on the Jebel Shams down to the foot of the massif, at the village of Ghul. The road offers plunging views over the surrounding mountains and wadis.









Ghul to Al Hamra | 10km-15min |





Drive back to Al Hamra.

Transfer



Al Hamra to Nizwa |50km-45min|



The road between Nizwa and Al Hamra runs across the narrow plain tucked between the high Jebel Akhdar range and the much less significant ophiolite reliefs of the Jebel Hallat and passes close to Bahla, famous for its beautiful fort.



Possible activity along the transfer



A 10km-10min

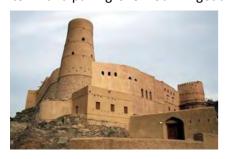


Bahla Fort |1h-2h|





The only Omani fort recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage site, the Bahla fort is also the largest and one of the oldest of the country. Enclosed in high walls dotted with many watch towers, it majestically dominates the old town and palm grove. You will get a spectacular panoramic view of the fort and surroundings from a nearby hill.











Wadi Tanuf and Wadi Qashah |1h-5h|4x4|





The mighty Wadi Tanuf and its tributary the Wadi Qashah flow down from the Jebel Akhdar, cutting deep and beautiful valleys in the mountains. Discover them by car along a short dirt road that leads to a superb palm grove and a small canyon. A donkey path allows experienced hikers to go even further inside the valley.

At the mouth of the wadi, the ruined mudbrick village of Tanuf is a painful reminder of the unknown "Jebel War".







Accommodation



Guesthouse (Nizwa) Room Suite | BB |

Nice and comfortable guesthouse, opened since 2018, with a very good location in the Nizwa palm grove, only 5 minutes walking away from the souq and the fort. This old house, tastefully renovated in a style both modern and local, has 4 rooms including 3 suites. Each suite has a bedroom, a living room (that can be used as a second bedroom) and a bathroom.

The house opens directly on the palm grove plot of the owning family, where it also keeps some goats. You can enjoy this peaceful setting from the courtyard equipped with garden tables.

An agricultural worker is always present and he takes care of the guests when the owners are away.

Please note that a new building, presently being built on the site, will soon host more rooms.







DAY 9 - From Nizwa to the Wahiba desert

Day dedicated to the transfer from the mountains to the desert.

The morning spent in Nizwa is the opportunity to explore the souq, very busy at this time of the day and the fort. Then, before leaving the Western Hajar, you can make a short detour to discover the old towns of Birkat al Mouz and Izki (see descriptions in the previous days).

The road then takes you, across the arid plain, to the foot of the Eastern Hajar range. You eventually spend the night among the dunes of the Wahiba.

Possible activity



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Town of Nizwa |1h-3h|





Nizwa, the biggest town in the region, lies in a strategic position, at the foot of the Jebel Akhdar and on the rim of the desert, at the starting point of the main road connecting the coast and the south of the mountains.

It has historically been the capital of the interior, and even, occasionally, the official capital of the country. It also was the capital of ibadism and is still today markedly more conservative than its historical rival, Muscat. Which makes it all the more attractive to those searching for "authentic" Arabia! Its famous souq and its 17th century fort, with its unique architecture, attract many visitors.







Transfer



Nizwa to Al Wasil: To the Wahiba desert | 170km-2h15 |







The road runs along the mountains for a while. Then it veers away from the high summits of the Jebel Akhdar and crosses low rocky relief areas to finally reach a narrow plain between the Eastern Hajar mountains and the dunes of the Wahiba desert.

Possible activity along the transfer











The town of Izki, at the south entrance of the Samail Gap, is one of the oldest town in Oman. Its ancient walled town is among the most worth visiting of the country. Even if its mudbrick houses are now ruined, it boasts two nice traditional mosques.







Al Wasil to your camp in the desert |15km-15min|4x4|

1

The dirt road leaves the town and takes you between the beautiful dunes to the camp.







Accommodation



Desert camp *** (Wahiba) |HB|

Superb tented camp located 5 km inside the desert. Contrary to many camps built in the interdunal valleys, it sits on the heights of one of the great dunes giving to the Wahiba its distinctive topography. This is why it offers very beautiful views upon the desert as well as, on clear days, the Eastern Hajar mountains.

The 25 guest tents are very comfortable and tastefully decorated. Each has its own separate bathroom.

The camp has a "majlis" (Arab-style sitting area) and a large dining tent. Meals are partly cooked in a traditional Bedouin style.







DAY 10 - Aquatic hiking in the Wadi bani Khalid

From the desert, you drive to the foot of Eastern Hajar mountains, where you leave your car. Your guide leads you for a great aquatic hike along the canyon of the Wadi bani Khalid, before driving you back to your car. Then you go back to your desert camp.

Transfer



Your camp to Al Wasil | 15km-15min | 4x4 |

A1

Drive back out of the dunes.









Al Wasil to Romail | 25km-25min |







Short transfer along the narrow plain between the dunes and the mountains. Meet your guide at the turnoff to Wadi bani Khalid and leave your car there.

Included activity



25km-30min



Guided aquatic hike in the Wadi Bani Khalid |5h|







Your guide drives you to the mountains and the village of Bidah, where the hike starts.

You first walk through the beautiful palm grove of the village. Then, you enter the impressive canyon and hike down to its other end.

You follow the wadi bed, walking on pebbles and boulders, sometimes using your hands to scramble on the rocks. You find lovely natural pools, walk in the water and, where the canyon narrows, swim through these pristine pools.

You eventually arrive to another palm grove and walk on the falaj among the trees for a while, until you reach a village and your guide's car. A very peaceful end!

Your guide drives you back to your car.







Transfer



Romail to Al Wasil | 25km-25min |



Short transfer along the narrow plain between the dunes and the mountains.

Al Wasil to your camp in the desert |15km-15min|4x4|

1

The dirt road leaves the town and takes you between the beautiful dunes to the camp.







Accommodation



Desert camp *** (Wahiba) | HB|







DAY 11 - From the Wahiba desert to the Gulf of Oman

When leaving a sand desert, what could be more enjoyable than bathing in a wadi or strolling in the shadow of a lush palm grove? On your way to the ocean, two different routes can lead you to the Wadi bani Khalid. On the coast awaits the lovely town of Sur. From there, a highway follows the seaside and goes past two wadis close to each other: Tiwi and Shab. The latter, the most famous, is ideal for bathing, but it may be a bit crowded by mid-morning, especially at weekends. The former, wilder and less accessible, is certainly more spectacular. Shortly after, you reach the fishermen's village of Fins, where sits your accommodation.

Transfer



Your camp to Al Wasil |15km-15min|4x4|

1

Drive back out of the dunes.









Al Wasil to Sur: From the desert to the Gulf of Oman |130km-1h45|





Starting between the desert and the mountains, the road takes you to Sur, the main coastal town of the region, passing by Al Kamil and its typical fortified houses.

Possible activity



於 • ◆ Town of Sur | 1h-3h |





A lovely seaside city, Sur is one of the few Omani towns that is worth a visit.

Its strategic position - a peninsula between the sea and a laguna - and its old white houses with beautiful doors add up to bring about a real touch of charm. The last traditional dhow building yard is located here – a must visit! As a fishing town, its fish souq is worth a look. Finally, a watchtower perched on a hill provides a superb view of the area.





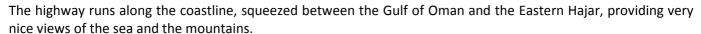


Transfer



Sur to Fins: Along the Gulf of Oman |60km-55min|











Wadi Tiwi |1h-5h|4x4+|







Discover this fantastic wadi first by car. The road, sometimes at the bottom of the valley, sometimes on the heights, offers spectacular views over the palm-fringed wadi bed and its natural pools nestled among huge boulders fallen down from the high cliffs on each side.

Walking on a marked trail is also possible to discover the wadi at a slower pace.







Accommodation

Homestay (Fins) | HB |

Sophie and Hussain, a Franco-Omani couple, welcome you to their home! Their modern house, located outside the fishermen's village of Fins, is comfortable and tastefully decorated. The house has 5 guest bedrooms, 3 of which open onto a balcony offering a view on the sea, which lies 200 m away. You will also have access to a small sitting area, a "majlis" (Arab sitting room), a dining room and the courtyard, where you will find 2 "areesh" (outdoor sitting areas traditionally covered by palm leaves).

The meals cooked by your hosts will be the opportunity to exchange with them.

Here the coast is rocky but you can swim from a small beach lying 300 m away from the house.







DAY 12 - Aquatic hiking in the Wadi al Hail

From Fins, the road goes along the coast up to the village of Dhabab. From there, a dirt road follows the beautiful valley of the Wadi al Arbiyeen. You find your guide at the end of the dirt road. He then leads you on a superb return aquatic hike along the Wadi al Hail.

Once back at your car, you return to Fins.

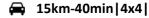


Fins to Dhabab |25km-25min|



Beautiful road along the seaside, offering also views on the northern slopes of the Eastern Hajar mountains.

Included activity







Guided aquatic hike in the Wadi al Hail |6h-7h|



From the seaside, you enter the mountains by the dirt road following the spectacular Wadi al Arbiyeen and its beautiful palm groves. Your guide awaits you at the last village. From there, you walk upstream along the Wadi al Hail, a tributary of the former, which forms a deep valley in the limestone plateau.

You walk on the wadi bed, on pebbles and boulders, sometimes wading, sometimes using your hands to scramble on the rocks. Where the valley narrows into a canyon, you swim through long natural pools.

You eventually reach an area of huge boulders that you manage with a rope. Shortly further awaits a large pool with a superb waterfall. You enjoy this magical place before heading back along the wadi to your car.





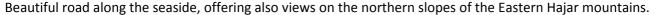


Transfer



Dhabab to Fins |25km-25min|





Accommodation

Homestay (Fins) |HB|







DAY 13 - Between sea and mountains

Day dedicated to the discovery of the wadis of the Eastern Hajar and the coast between Tiwi and Muscat. In addition to the Wadis Tiwi and Shab, you can make detours, on the way towards Muscat, on nice dirt roads to discover the Wadis al Arbiyeen and Dayqah. The former is a spectacular valley with a few pools to refresh and swim (one is just a few steps away). The latter boasts the largest dam lake of Oman, an unreal vision in this mineral landscape.

Finally, you cross the Jebel abu Daud to reach the coast and your accommodation.

Possible activity



Fins beach, coastal road and gazelle reserve |30min-1h|



Close to the fishermen's village of Fins is a superb white pebble beach with turquoise waters. The road that goes along the coast between Fins and the Wadi al Arbiyeen is worth the detour for its nice views upon the sea. It also passes through a protected area hosting some gazelles.







Transfer



Fins to Al Hajir |115km-1h15|



The road, first running between the sea and the mountains, goes past the entrance of the Wadi al Arbiyeen, then veers inland to find a way around the Jebel abu Daud massif.





1 \$

Wadi Dayqah |2h-3h|4x4|







A scenic dirt road going through a very arid landscape leads you to the Wadi Dayqah. Discover its large palm groves and its huge dam lake, an astonishing contrast with the surrounding bare mountains. An easy walk along the wadi bed takes you to a pool.







Transfer



Al Hajir to Yiti: The Wadi Mayh | 20km-30min | 4x4 |





Cross the Jebel Abu Daud mountains via the spectacular Wadi Mayh. First a narrow canyon, the valley widens and you discover small villages and their palm gardens. You cannot believe you are so close to Muscat!



Transfer



Yiti to Qantab | 10km-15min |





From the Wadi Mayh, the road keeps crossing the coastal massif up to the cove where lie the fishermen's village of Qantab and its pretty beach.



Accommodation



Guesthouse (Qantab) | RO |

Small private house located in the fishermen's village of Qantab, only 50 m away from the beach. It is an old Omani house, beautifully restored, made very comfortable and decorated in a local style.

The house has 2 bedrooms (one of which may be locked if you do not need it), a living/dining room, a kitchen and 2 bathrooms. The manager, a European lady who has lived in Oman for many years, stays next door. A beautiful shared courtyard has an outdoor sitting area and offers a nice view upon the sea.

The main beach is used by the fishermen but there is a second smaller beach, only 250 m away from the house, where you can swim with greater privacy.

No meals are served at the house: you can prepare your own meals in the well-equipped kitchen, order at the coffeeshop (very basic restaurant) of the village (700 m away from the house) or go to one of the restaurants in the nearby hotels, in the village of Sidab or in Muscat (respectively 10, 15 and 20 min driving).







DAY 14 - Day to relax at your guesthouse

Full day to enjoy your guesthouse and the area.

Possible activity





South Muscat coastline |1h-3h|





Discover by car and by foot this surprising coast, meeting of the mountains and the sea, with its small coves and islands, occasionally fringed with mangrove or beaches (some from where swimming and snorkelling is possible). Bandar Khiran, the jewel of this coast, offers some very beautiful viewpoints.







Accommodation



Guesthouse (Qantab) |RO|







DAY 15 - Day to relax at your guesthouse and departure

Day to enjoy your guesthouse and the area.

Then transfer to the airport and departure.

Transfer

Qantab to Muscat International Airport |45km-50min|





Drive back to Muscat and the airport using a nice coastal road then crossing the whole capital city from east to west.

Rental car drop-off.



PRICES / TERMS AND CONDITIONS

01/10/2020 - 30/04/2021

Number of people24Price per person in double room (in OMR)contact usToyota Fortuner or similar (15 days)11

Prices valid at the dates and for the types of room mentioned above.

These prices are given in Omani rials (OMR).

For conversion into another currency, you can use www.xe.com. Note that these conversions do not include bank fees and transfer charges.

Note that this document is an quote and that no reservation has been made to this day.

Prices are therefore subject to changes in accordance with the availability of accommodations, vehicles and guides at the time of the reservation. Insofar as possible, we offer alternatives of equivalent quality and cost in the event of unavailability.

Proposed vehicle (non contractual photo)



Toyota Fortuner

SUV 2x4/4x4 2.7L automatic



The price of the tour includes:

- Meet and greet service and rental car pick up assistance
- Your travel documents
- The whole self drive tour recorded in a GPS application
- An Oman road map (and a Muscat road map if required by the programme)
- A mobile phone with credit for 1 hour of local calls
- Phone assistance by our local agency throughout your trip
- Accommodations as mentioned in the programme
- Meals at the accommodations as mentioned in the programme along with each accommodation (cf. key)
- Lunches on guided days
- Bottled water in hotels
- Included activities as mentioned in the programme
- For each included guided activity:
 - The guide
 - The car(s) and driver(s) if required for this activity
 - Safety and camping equipment (tents, mattresses, kitchenware) if required for this activity
- Included transfers with driver or guide as mentioned in the program
- The rental of the above-mentioned vehicle(s), for the above-mentioned period of time, with:
 - 2 possible drivers
 - Unlimited kilometres
 - Comprehensive insurance: zero excess in case of damage (provided you get a police report)

 Caution: Damages occurred when driving off roads or off trails clearly marked on the terrain are not covered by the
- Carbon offsetting for the mileage driven during your tour

insurance (particularly when driving on sand).

On completion of your trip, we grant our specialist partner a certain amount in order to offset the CO2 emitted during the transfers.

The price of the tour does not include:

- VAT: nonexistent to date, it may be implemented in 2020 at the rate of 5%
- International flights

- Tourist visa fees: as at 01/01/2019, 5 OMR for 10 days or 20 OMR for 30 days (per person)

 Check for visa issuing formalities on https://evisa.rop.gov.om/en/visa-eligibility. Passports must be valid at least 6 months after the return date.
- Meals not included in the program (from 1.5 OMR per person in small restaurants or 5 OMR at hotels)
- Beverages
- Entrance fees, if any, of the "possible activities" mentioned in the program (forts: 0.5 OMR pp; museums: 2 to 5 OMR pp)
- Tips to guides and drivers, if any
- Sleeping bags and personal camping equipment (headlight) if required
- Personal expenses
- Fuel for your self driven car(s) (approx. 30 to 50 OMR per car and per week of tour)
- The rental car refundable deposit: the amount of 125 OMR per vehicle is blocked on your credit card but not debited
- Fines for driving offenses (speed cameras notably)
- Tyre repair or replacement fees in case of puncture
- The cost of repairing damages suffered by the rental cars if not justified by a police report
- Your personal repatriation insurance
- Your medical insurance