

adventurewomen

THE DESTINATION IS JUST THE BEGINNING

OMAN

A Middle Eastern Odyssey



September 17 - 26, 2023



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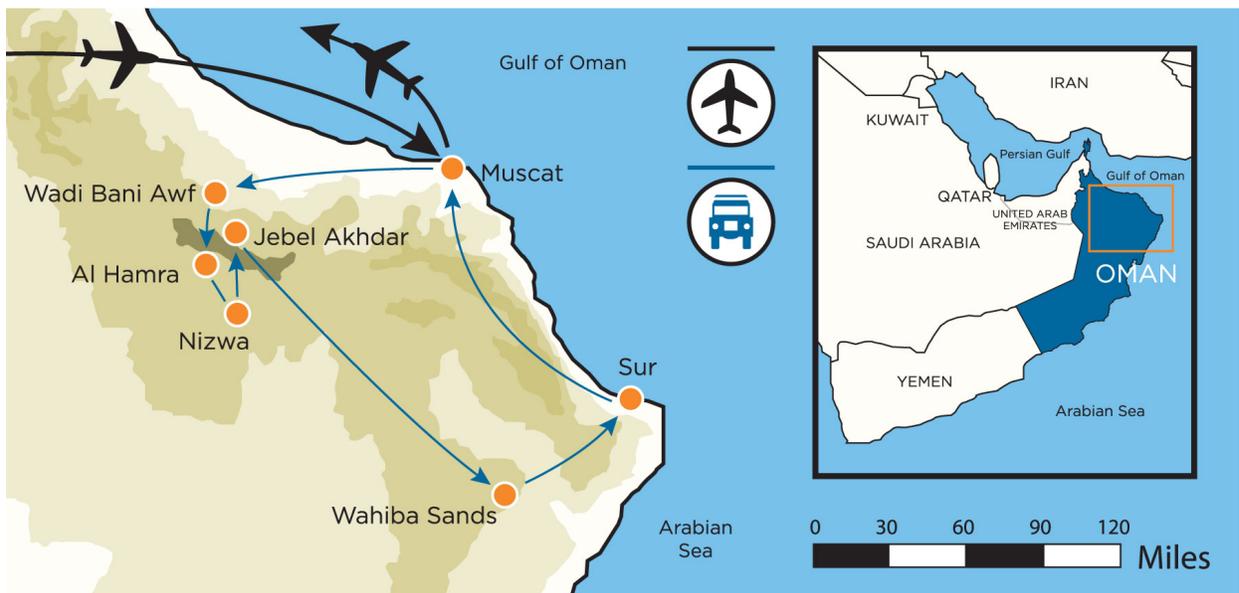
OMAN

A Middle Eastern Odyssey

TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

- ▶ Visit mosques, meet women entrepreneurs, and enjoy Omani cuisine as you learn about Oman's colorful Middle Eastern culture
- ▶ Travel through diverse landscapes from date plantations to desert sands, mountains to wadis, meeting local people along the way
- ▶ Learn about Oman's history, lifestyles, and traditions while visiting UNESCO World Heritage sites and iconic landmarks

TRIP ROUTE



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QUICK VIEW ITINERARY

- Day 1 arrive in Muscat, welcome dinner
- Day 2 visit the Grand Mosque and Omani Heritage Gallery, sunset cruise
- Day 3 visit a women's association, cooking class, explore a souq
- Day 4 explore Bilad Sayt, learn about traditional homes at the Bait al Safah Museum
- Day 5 explore Misfat Al Abrlyeen, visit Jebel Shams
- Day 6 walk through mountain villages in Jabal Akhdar, relax at your hotel
- Day 7 explore an oasis, visit a Bedouin family, sunset in the dunes
- Day 8 explore Wadi Bani Khalid, see endangered turtles
- Day 9 hike into Wadi Shab, farewell dinner
- Day 10 depart Oman

ACTIVITY LEVEL

Moderate

TRIP PRICE

Main Trip: \$5,395

Optional Single Accommodations: \$1,000

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your adventure
in depth

DAY 1
Sunday
9/17/23

Arrive Muscat

Oman is a friendly country in the Middle East filled with emerald oases, bustling local markets, and an ancient history that rivals its neighbors! Oman remains authentic and off-the-beaten path; it's the perfect adventure destination. Flourishing for over 1,000 years, Oman is modernizing, but at a pace that is mindful of heritage preservation.

During your adventure, you'll get to know your expert Omani guide, who offers in-depth insight as you explore the cities, souks, desert, and countryside. You are also accompanied by an AdventureWomen Ambassador, committed to helping make your experience a fun and personally rewarding adventure, and cheering you on as you reach beyond your comfort zone to take on new challenges in your own unique way!

Arrival Information

Arrive in Muscat, Oman (MCT) before 3:00pm. One group transfer is included (time TBD); private transfers at other times are available for an additional fee.

Pick-up and Transfer

You will be picked up at the Muscat airport by your guide and transferred to your hotel.

Welcome Dinner

Enjoy a lively welcome dinner as you get to know your fellow travelers this evening. Share stories and learn about why each woman on your trip is excited to explore Oman!

Accommodations
Park Inn

Meals Included
dinner

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DAY 2
Monday
9/18/23

Muscat

Muscat offers a unique opportunity to witness a modern commercial center existing in harmony with its traditional culture. With its natural harbor, Muscat means “Anchorage” and lies in a natural volcanic bowl.

Grand Mosque Explore the Grand Mosque in Muscat. Completed in 2001, the Grand Mosque is a beautiful building which shows that modern craftsmen have retained the skills necessary to create a wonderful traditional environment. The carpet in the mosque is one of the largest carpets in the world, and was hand-crafted by women. Women visiting the mosque are required to wear head scarves. You need to wear pants and a shirt with sleeves that cover your arms.

Omani Heritage Gallery Visit the Omani Heritage Gallery, the first non-profit in the area which was founded to help Omani artisans who create local handicrafts and preserve local heritage. The Gallery focuses on social responsibility and fair trade, and you can learn about the handicrafts made here.

Muttrah Souq Walk through the traditional narrow pathways of Muttrah Souq and see where the locals shop.

Lunch Enjoy lunch at a traditional local restaurant. Head back to your hotel to freshen up before tonight’s cruise.

Sunset Cruise Embark on a private sunset cruise on a dhow in the harbor to take in this unique setting.

Private Museum Visit and Dinner Head to the Bait Adam Museum this evening for a private visit. See the unique collection of Omani artifacts and become better acquainted with Oman’s heritage by seeing this private collection of old maps, photographs, paintings, jewelry, and ancient coins.

After your museum visit, have a traditional dinner with a local family.

Accommodations
Park Inn

Meals Included
breakfast, lunch,
dinner

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DAY 3
Tuesday
9/19/23

Muscat

As early as the first century, Muscat was known as a major trading port between the west and the east. It was ruled by various indigenous tribes as well as foreign powers such as the Persians, the Portuguese Empire, the Iberian Union, and the Ottoman Empire at various points in its history. In the 18th century, Muscat's influence even extended as far as East Africa and Zanzibar; the sultan of Oman moved his capital to Zanzibar in the mid 1800s.

Sidab Women's Association

Have an Omani coffee at the Sidab Women's Association. You'll get a chance to meet the local women and learn about their work and their lives. They are a sewing association, creating mostly handcrafted bags, as well as a few other items, which you are welcome to purchase.

Cooking Class

Go to the National Hospitality Institute for a cooking demonstration and class. You'll get to meet (and be!) the students, try cooking some local dishes, and enjoy lunch at the restaurant in the school.

National Museum

Visit the National Museum, the Sultanate's flagship cultural institution, which showcases the nation's heritage from the earliest human settlement in the Oman Peninsula some two million years ago through to the present day. The museum is dedicated to ensuring that Oman's cultural heritage is understood and appreciated, and to provide opportunities for cultural expression, innovation, and the transfer of traditional skills and knowledge between generations.

Dinner

Have dinner at a local restaurant with your group.

Accommodations
Park Inn

Meals Included
breakfast, lunch,
dinner

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DAY 4
Wednesday
9/20/23

Muscat to Al Hamra

You'll head into the interior of Oman today, to Al Hamra. Some of the oldest preserved houses in Oman can be found in Al Hamra, a town built on a tilted rock slab. Many of the houses are two, three, and even four stories, and feature ceilings made of palm beams and fronds topped with mud and straw.

Visit Bilad Sayt Depart Muscat for the interior of Oman in smaller four wheel drive vehicles. You'll stop for photos at Nakhal Fort, and then turn towards Wadi Bani Auf. The next stretch of road is steep, twisty, and can be bumpy, but the reward is worth it. You'll have some time to explore the charming mountain village of Bilad Sayt. The landscape and view are stunning.

Bait al Safah Museum The Bait al Safah Museum is an excellent way to explore a traditional Omani house. You'll see how families traditionally lived.

Settle in at Your Hotel You'll arrive at your hotel late this afternoon in time to enjoy the view and settle in before dinner.

Accommodations
The View Oman

Meals Included
breakfast, lunch,
dinner

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DAY 5
Thursday
9/21/23

Al Hamra

Jebel Shams is the highest mountain of both the Hajar Range and the country of Oman. This peak is the first location in Oman to greet the sun each day given its height.

Misfat Al Abriyeen

Wander through the small village of Misfat Al Abriyeen, passing the ruins of an old fort along the way. Meander through narrow alleyways between old stone houses, and learn about the ancient irrigation system known as Aflaj.

Jebel Shams

Head to Jebel Shams, the highest peak in Oman. You'll drive close to the top where you can take in the spectacular views. Afterwards, you'll enjoy lunch at the Jebel Shams Resort.

Afternoon and Evening

Take the late afternoon to relax at your hotel. Enjoy dinner as a group this evening.

Accommodations
The View Oman

Meals Included
breakfast, lunch,
dinner

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DAY 6
Friday
9/22/23

Al Hamra to Jabal Akhdar

Nizwa is one of the oldest cities in Oman and it was once a center of trade, religion, education, and art. Its Jama, or grand mosque, was formerly a center for Islamic learning. Set amid a verdant spread of date palms, it is strategically located at the crossroads of routes linking the interior with Muscat and the lower reaches of Dhofar.

Nizwa Cattle Market

Start early today and head to Nizwa's renowned cattle market. Only on Fridays, this market is where locals buy and trade the best livestock, including goats, cattle, and even camels! If you buy a camel, it gets delivered to your home; you have to take other livestock home with you after buying it! Immerse yourself in the dealings and trading that takes place at this weekly event.

Nizwa Souq

Explore the local souq, one of the few in Oman featuring exclusively Omani goods, including pottery, hand-carved khanjars (traditional daggers), ornamental silver jewelry, spices, and local delicacies.

Nizwa Fort

Visit the Nizwa Fort and learn about its history and architecture. Its design reflects the Omani architectural ingenuity in the Ya'rubi era that witnessed considerable advancement in military fortifications and the introduction of mortar-based warfare. The main part of the fort is its enormous drum-like tower that rises almost 100 feet above the ground and has a diameter of almost 120 feet.

Walk in Jabal Akhdar

After lunch in a local restaurant, head out to explore the village in Jabal Akhdar. You'll enjoy wonderful views and green surroundings as you walk through two mountain villages on small, old trails. The paths can have stairs, be steep, or run along irrigation channels. Learn about traditional village life.

Afternoon to Relax

Head to your resort in the middle of the afternoon where you can relax, swim in the pool, or enjoy some of the activities offered in this beautiful location.

Accommodations

DusitD2 Naseem
Resort

Meals Included

breakfast, lunch,
dinner

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DAY 7
Saturday
9/23/23

Jabal Akhdar to Wahiba Desert

The Wahiba Sands was named for the Bani Wahiba tribe. The desert has been of scientific interest since a 1986 expedition by the Royal Geographical Society documented the diversity of the terrain, the flora and fauna, noting 16,000 invertebrates as well as 200 species of other wildlife, including avifauna. They also documented 150 species of native flora. The area is occupied by Bedouins who congregate at Al-Huyawah, an oasis near the border of the desert, between June and September to gather dates.

Birkat Al Mouz Spend some time exploring Birkat Al Mouz. Walk through its oasis and date plantations before enjoying lunch at a local restaurant.

Visit a Bedouin Family Visit a local Bedouin family. Learn about their lives, homes, and traditions. Spend some time with the family so you can learn about how and if their traditions are modernizing.

Sunset in the Dunes Head out into the dunes to enjoy the desert sunset this evening.

Accommodations
Desert Nights Camp

Meals Included
breakfast, lunch,
dinner

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DAY 8
Sunday
9/24/23

Wahiba Desert to Ras Al Jinz

Ras Al Jinz Turtle Reserve has a unique natural landscape, unspoiled shorelines, golden deserts, luxuriant green oases, and rugged mountains. It is known as the site of the nesting of the endangered green turtle (*Cheloniemydas*), and is likely the most important nesting location.

Sunrise

If you're awake, hike into the dunes behind camp to see the sunrise. Make sure to ask your guide the best spot to see it.

Wadi Bani Khalid

Spend some time at Wadi Bani Khalid, a beautiful oasis in the middle of barren mountains. You'll enjoy a stop here to dip your toes in the beautiful turquoise pools (you can only swim with a very modest swimsuit). Enjoy a picnic lunch today.

Afternoon and Evening

Enjoy the afternoon and evening at the turtle reserve. Join your group for dinner at your hotel.

Turtle Watching

Gather after dinner and set out for Ras Al Junaiyz, a sanctuary for the Green Turtles. When you arrive, you'll have a thirty minute walk to the beach in the dark over uneven ground. You can use a red headlamp, but not white light. Search the beach for nests, and when you find a turtle, stay and observe it for a while. If you're lucky, you might see it laying eggs! You can take photos with no flash. This experience will be about two hours long.

As with all wildlife, sightings cannot be guaranteed. Sometimes there are only a few turtles, and sometimes there are many - it varies daily.

Accommodations
Ras Al Jinz Turtle
Reserve
Meals Included
breakfast, lunch,
dinner

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DAY 9
Monday
9/25/23

Ras Al Jinz to Muscat

Known as one of the most beautiful places in Oman, Wadi Shab is a spectacular range of narrow mountains, dotted with turquoise pools and waterfalls, which are surrounded by sandstone walls and lined with date plantations and banana palms.

Explore Wadi Shab

Hike in to Wadi Shab. The hike in is about three miles up and over uneven terrain. Wear your bathing suits this morning, as there isn't anywhere to change once you're there - the natural pools are all outdoors and completely wild. It takes some effort to get to Wadi Shab, but you'll be rewarded with one of the most beautiful swimming spots you can imagine.

Bimah Sinkhole

On your way to Muscat, stop at the Bimah Sinkhole, a spectacular limestone crater with blue-green water at the bottom.

Farewell Dinner

Have a farewell dinner with your new AdventureWomen friends. Reminisce over all of the memories you have made and celebrate the end of an amazing journey through this truly spectacular country.

Accommodations
Park Inn

Meals Included
breakfast, lunch,
dinner

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DAY 10
Tuesday
9/26/23

Depart Oman

Enjoy one last morning in Muscat.

Transfer to the Airport

Say goodbye to your new AdventureWomen friends as you transfer to the airport for your flights home.

Departure Information

Depart Muscat, Oman (MCT) after 4:30PM today. One group transfer is included (12:00PM); private transfers at other times are available for an additional fee.

Please note: AdventureWomen will attempt to adhere to the itinerary as much as possible. However, certain conditions (political, climatic, environmental, and cultural) may necessitate changes in the itinerary. AdventureWomen reserves the right to alter any itinerary at any time, if necessary. We will attempt to notify participants of changes as far in advance as possible. Costs incurred by such changes will be the responsibility of the participants.

Meals Included
breakfast

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Accommodation Details

Park Inn

The Park Inn is located in downtown Muscat, near shopping areas, ministries, embassies and historic buildings. After a day of exploring, relax and enjoy the rooftop swimming pool or its restaurants and bars.

The View Oman

This eco-resort is tucked away in a scenic valley and requires a four wheel drive vehicle to cover the last stretch of winding mountainous paths leading up to the resort. You'll be greeted with stunning panoramas of the surrounding valley that are sure to take your breath away. Enjoy comfortable outdoor seating areas, bonfires, and the swimming pool, which arguably has the best views of anywhere in the hotel.

DusitD2 Naseem Resort

Situated five minutes from the Grand Canyon of the Middle East, the DusitD2 is a contemporary hotel with modern comforts and a great view.

Amenities: Soap, shampoo, conditioner, hairdryer, safe, electricity, WiFi

Desert Nights Camp

After a long day of exploring the golden red sands of the Wahiba, relax in the fully air conditioned rooms and pamper yourself in the en suite bathrooms of the Desert Nights Camp. Drift into magical nights and feast on traditional Omani fare in the flickering glow of the campfire.

Ras Al Jinz Turtle Reserve

This hotel is situated right on the turtle reserve, giving you the easiest access to go watch turtles at night. All rooms have air conditioning and en suite bathrooms.

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Included:

- ▶ Accommodations as per itinerary based on double occupancy
- ▶ All meals as listed in the itinerary
- ▶ All ground transportation
- ▶ One group transfer on arrival and departure
- ▶ Guided sightseeing and activities as indicated in the itinerary
- ▶ Drinking water to refill personal bottles
- ▶ Gratuities for drivers, hotel staff, wait staff, and luggage porters

Not Included:

- ▶ International airfare to and from Oman
- ▶ Optional activities
- ▶ Meals not specified in the itinerary
- ▶ Alcoholic beverages (unless otherwise specified)
- ▶ Fees for passport, visas, immunizations, or travel insurance
- ▶ Cost of hospitalization or evacuation
- ▶ Items of a personal nature
- ▶ Gratuities for main guide and driver

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Cancellations and Refunds

Notification of cancellations must be received in writing. Full payment is due 90 days prior to departure date, and the registration deposit is non-refundable.

For cancellations received 61-90 days prior to the trip departure date: 50% of the total trip cost is non-refundable. For cancellations received 1-60 days prior to the trip departure date: 100% of the total trip cost is non-refundable.

You are highly encouraged to purchase trip cancellation insurance to cover emergency situations. Travel insurance information will be sent to you once you have registered for your trip.

Switching Trips

Our deposits are nonrefundable and nontransferable. If for some reason you need to switch to a different trip, please call us and we will do our best to accommodate you, but switching is not guaranteed.

No Smoking Policy

Beginning in 1995, our trips became smoke free. Please note that there will be no smoking by any participants on AdventureWomen vacations.

Health Insurance

You must have your own health insurance to participate in an AdventureWomen trip.

Adventure Travel Today

At AdventureWomen, we want everyone to understand that our excursions are adventure travel vacations and not "tours." We define "adventure travel" as travel in which one **actively participates**, as opposed to a "tour," in which one is more or less a passive observer. AdventureWomen designs and organizes vacations all over the world for women who want to **experience an active, out of the ordinary vacation, and meet new friends**. Most of all, we want our trips to be **fun!**

good-natured realist and have a sense of humor! Adventure vacations, by nature, require that participants be self-sufficient, flexible, and able to accept situations as they exist, and not just as they would have preferred or expected them to exist. The constraints of scheduled group traveling also necessitate that each of us be understanding of and sensitive to others. **Being on time** is important, and contributes to the congeniality, success and well-being of both individuals and the group!

In this spirit, the successful adventure traveler should be a