

Oman

ITINERARY

A 7 Day Arabian Adventure

MUSCAT → JABAL AKHDAR → WAHIBA SANDS

WHERE TO STAY



THE CHEDI

A beautifully stylish boutique hotel with Moorish architecture, excellent service & three of the most spectacular pools I have ever seen.



SHANGRI-LA AL HUSN

Set in a stunning secluded cove, this adult only complex is the most of exclusive of the three hotels that make up the Shangri-La Al Jissah Resort & Spa.



AL BUSTAN PALACE RITZ-CARLTON

An opulent hotel set between the Al Hajar mountains & Gulf of Oman, this luxury hotel has a beautiful outdoor oasis & five excellent restaurants.



THINGS TO DO



- Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque
- Muttrah Souq
- Al Alam Palace
- Al Jalali & Al Mirani Forts
- Bait Al Zubair Museum
- Royal Opera House
- Daymaniyat Islands Nature Reserve
- National Museum of Oman
- Amouage Perfumerie Visitor's Centre

WHERE TO EAT

- **The Beach at The Chedi** - for epic seafood
- **Kargreen Restaurant** - a romantic, fairy-lit outdoor setting
- **Mint & Coco** - California chic with a killer brunch menu
- **Left Bank** - cocktails with a rooftop view
- **The Cave Complex** - seven restaurants in a man-made cave
- **On The Rocks** - a late night cocktail lounge
- **Al Angham** - fine dining traditional Omani cuisine
- **Trader Vic's** - a Hawiian themed cocktail bar & restaurant

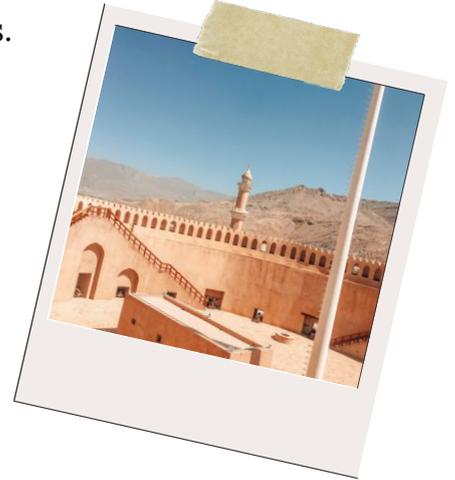


Day 4 MUSCAT TO JABAL AKHDAR

STOP 1: NIZWA

An hour and a half's drive inland from Muscat lies the ancient city of Nizwa, the capital of Oman between the 8th and 12th centuries.

- **Known as the "Pearl of Islam"** Nizwa is the location of two historic mosques, the Shawadna and Sa'al which date from the very early days of Islam and are said to be built in the 5th century
- **Explore and shop in Nizwa Souq** for anything from spices to dates and pottery; on Friday mornings they also have a very lively livestock market
- **Climb Nizwa Fort** for views across the expanse of date palms to the Al Hajar mountain range



STOP 2: BIRKAT AL MAUZ



Be transported back in time by visiting one of the many abandoned villages across Oman that are left in a state of ruin.

- Wander through the **lush & shady banana plantations** surrounding the area
- See the **ancient and sophisticated Falaj irrigation systems** that are now a UNESCO World Heritage site
- **Explore the two sets of ruins that make up the villages of Birkat Al Mauz**, just be careful when exploring as the area has not been maintained

STOP 3: WADI BANI HABIB

A beautiful & lush green Wadi up in the mountains of Jabal Akhdar.

- **Hike down the path into the Wadi** (it is dry most of the time) & explore the abandoned village of Habib clinging to the mountainside
- **Don't go into the Wadi if it is raining**, it can flood very quickly & easily (like many Wadis in Oman)
- On the way, **stop in the town of Sayq** for beautiful views, to see Damask roses, figs, walnuts & pomegranates growing up the mountainside in the Mediterranean climate & the fossils in the rock that used to once be under water



 WHERE TO STAY

Here lies two of the world's best luxury hotels, both with some of the most spectacular views you will ever see.



ALILA JABAL AKHDAR

Swim in their infinity pool that seems to spill off the side of the cliff, then grab a cocktail & watch the dramatic sunset with the sparkling lights of Nizwa far in the distance.



ANANTARA JABAL AKHDAR

Built around the famous Diana's Point, this is one of the BBC's Most Amazing Hotels. The valley below is full of Damask roses and again, you need to watch that sunset.



 THINGS TO DO

It is **the location that makes visiting the Jabal Akhdar mountains so magical** and you want to make the most of this. There isn't much by way of infrastructure up here, but both hotels above are great at providing a diverse range of activities to best take in your surroundings.

- Sunrise yoga overlooking the ravines
- Guided stargazing, the skies are incredibly clear here
- Discover abandoned villages & natural swimming pools on guided hikes & rock climbing expeditions
- Traditional Omani cooking classes
- Relax in the stunning surroundings of these hotels, they both have world class restaurants, spas & facilities



 WHERE TO EAT

One of the beauties of staying here is the remoteness of it all, so the restaurant selection is small but of very high quality. Most have those spectacular mountainside views, so get a courtyard table; the hotels will give you a blanket if it gets chilly.

- **Rose Lounge at Alila:** casual dining with a happy hour
- **Juniper Restaurant at Alila:** an international menu
- **Al Maisan at Anantara:** Asian, Omani & Indian dishes
- **Al Qalaa at Anantara:** Middle Eastern dining in a fort
- **Mountain Nights:** right next to the Anantara, a locally run, very casual and cheap restaurant serving Omani cuisine



Day 6 JABAL AKHDAR TO WAHIBA

STOP 1: WADI BANI KHALID

Set among lush date palms, this is one of the most popular Wadis in Oman to visit for both locals & tourists; you can easily spend a whole day here.

- There are **lots of places to swim**, but if you want to just wear a swimsuit rather than shorts and t-shirt, head to the smaller more secluded pools at the back
- **Bring sturdy shoes** for clambering over the rocks
- There are bathroom facilities & a casual open air restaurant that takes cash only



STOP 2: WAHIBA SANDS DESERT



Head to Wahiba Sands Desert to experience your very own Arabian Nights fantasy.

- Visit a **traditional Bedouin tribe** who are known for their hospitality & knowledge of the desert
- For **high speed adrenaline**, you can experience the thrills of dune bashing, go sand boarding or ride quad bikes
- Take part in a sunrise or sunset **camel ride**
- I would recommend you hire a driver to take you here, it is not easy driving in the sand dunes & easy to get lost

WHERE TO STAY

For a truly magical Omani experience, you want to spend a night camping in the desert beneath the stars.

WAHIBA SANDS DESERT NIGHTS CAMP

As luxury as you can get here, this is camping for those that hate camping; your "tent" has 4 walls, Wi-Fi, a hot shower & air conditioning.

1000 NIGHTS CAMP

For a Moroccan style glamping experience, there are a few accommodation options here from tents to actual houses. I hear their Arabian dinner buffet is fairly epic as well!



 STOP 1: SUR

A sleepy seaside town on the north-eastern tip of Oman, Sur was once a key trading port in the Middle East & is still known for their shipyards building dhows, traditional wooden boats.

- Visit **The Old Dhow Factory**, the last one in Oman still at work
- Take a stroll along the corniche and see the **Sur Lighthouse**
- Visit the Raz Al Jinz Turtle Reserve to **spot some turtles**
- See the **Open Air Dhow Museum** to learn of Sur's role in shipping through the ages



 STOP 2: FINS BEACH

You know those white sand beaches we see in the Maldives? Oman has ones that could rival them any day of the week.

- There are **lots of deserted spots**, so as long as no one is around, you can just wear your swimsuit
- The water is calm, clear & **safe to swim in**
- For a special treat, book a beach side picnic with **Zahara Tours**



 STOP 3: BIMMAH SINKHOLE

Rumoured to have been created by a meteor, this sparkling turquoise swimming spot is actually the result of limestone erosion, which then collapsed the surface to create a swimming hole.

- There are locals here, so stick to **swimming in shorts & t-shirt**
- The **water is very clear but deep in places**. You can use ropes attached to the sides to climb up and jump in the water
- Watch out for **tiny fish nibbling your feet!**



 STOP 4: WADI ARBAYEEN

The journey here is a little precarious, but this is a beautifully deserted Wadi set amongst the lush palms.

- For those that like to explore places off the main tourist track, come to Wadi Arbayeen for a **peacefully quiet experience**
- Take a stroll through the Omani village surrounding the Wadi to see lots of **lakes and waterfalls**



PLANNING YOUR TRIP TO OMAN



Flights

- Check airline routes & prices with [Skyscanner](#) to find the most affordable & convenient flights to Oman
- If you can't get a direct flight to Muscat, connect in Dubai or Abu Dhabi, it's only a little over an hour's onwards flight

Hotels

- For the best luxury boutique hotels around the world, a best price guarantee & a little extra treat, book with [Mr & Mrs Smith](#)
- Alternatively, check availability at [Booking.com](#), [Agoda](#) or [Hotels.com](#)

Visa & Passport

- **Apply for your visa in advance**; if you are eligible to apply for an eVisa, don't apply more than 4 weeks before your trip though. Find out more information [here](#)
- You need to have **6 months validity** on your passport on entry to Oman

Getting Around

- **By car.** Public transport is not widely embraced in Oman and if you want to leave Muscat, pretty much non-existent. You can hire a driver, or rent a car
- For a range of fantastic private tours, use [Zahara Tours](#). Alternatively, for group tour options, try [Get Your Guide](#)

Additional Activities

- **Wadi Shab:** hike for 45 minutes to one of Oman's most beautiful Wadis
- **Visit Salalah:** stay at the [Anantara](#) & explore more of that stunning Oman scenery & lots of UNESCO sights
- **Stay at [Six Senses Zighy Bay](#):** a mega luxury hotel a 2 hour drive from Dubai

Read More

- [Your Ultimate Oman itinerary](#).
- [Luxury Hotel Review: The Chedi Muscat](#)
- [Best Five Things to Do in Muscat Oman](#)
- [Road Trip: Muscat to Jabal Akhdar](#)
- [Luxury Hotel Review: Alila Jabal Akhdar](#)
- [Road Trip: Jabal Akhdar to Wahiba Sands](#)
- [Road Trip: Wahiba Sands to Muscat](#)

Top Tips

- Outside of the international hotels, **you need to dress conservatively**, ladies this means covering your shoulders & knees as a minimum & covering your hair in mosques
- **Alcohol is expensive** & not easy to get hold of outside of the big hotels
- Oman is a very expensive country & positions itself at the **luxury end of the tourism market**
- If you hire a car, you **need a 4x4 to go to the Jabal Akhdar mountains** (the police have a checkpoint to verify this) & to let the air out of your tyres when driving in the desert
- **Oman is an incredibly safe country**, including for female travellers