

# Walking in Northern Oman

**Trip style:** Worldwide holidays

**Destination:**  Oman

**Trip code:** MNT10-WHW10

**Grades:** 1, 3

**Carbon Footprint:**  2906kg CO2



## HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

Oman enchants with its richness of landscapes and culture-rich cities. From hidden valleys and oases, dizzyingly deep canyons, and cloud-piercing mountains to desert dunes, there's so much to discover. Venture across northern Oman by 4x4, stopping to discover standout sights and experiences. Take a walk around the rim of a canyon in Jebel Shams, explore centuries of history and culture in Muscat, Nizwa, and Sur, and watch the sunset and sunrise from the top of the dunes in Wahiba Sands.

## WHAT YOU'LL LOVE

- Exploring the souqs in Muscat
- Soaking up the views on a dhow cruise along the Muscat coast
- Walking through Wadi Shab and swimming in natural pools
- Visiting the boatyards in Sur, famous for traditional dhow building
- Stargazing and dune bashing in Wahiba Sands
- Spectacular views walking the rim of Oman's 'Grand Canyon'

## WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Return flights from London Heathrow including baggage and transfers (flights available from other airports - price may vary)
- Guided walks and sightseeing with a local leader
- HF Holidays Tour Manager
- 9 nights' touring accommodation across Northern Oman
- 1 night in a traditional Bedouin desert camp
- 11 breakfasts, 8 lunches & 8 dinners
- All sightseeing and entrance fees (as per itinerary)
- Two-hour Dhow cruise along the Muscat coast
- All in-destination transport and 4x4 tours

## ITINERARY

### Day 1: OVERNIGHT FLIGHT

Depart the UK on an overnight flight to Muscat.

---

### Day 2: ARRIVE MUSCAT

Once you arrive into Muscat we'll transfer to the hotel where you can have breakfast and check in. In the afternoon we'll make our way to the pier for a two-hour cruise along the coastline, after which we can take in the sights and shops of Muttrah Souq in the evening.

---

### Day 3: MUSCAT SIGHTS AND AL RIYAM PARK WALK

Distance: 1.5 miles (2.5km) Ascent/Descent: 660 feet (200m) We'll start the day with a city tour of Muscat, visiting the Grand Mosque (note there's a dress code to enter) and stopping for a photo at the Sultan's Palace. We'll make our way to the old city of Muscat and the Bait Al Zubair museum. In the afternoon we'll drive out to Al Riyam Park in Muttrah where we can set off on a walk up into the hills. The first part is steep (you'll need to have a moderately good fitness level), but we'll eventually reach the wadi (valley) where we can stop for a rest. You'll have time to visit Muttrah Fort, too.

---

### Day 4: WADI SHAB & WADI TIWI

Distance: 2 miles (3km) Ascent: negligible We'll set off on a coastal drive via Quriyat, stopping at the Bimmah Sinkhole in Najam Park to take in its turquoise blue waters. Once we reach Wadi Shab (meaning 'ravine between cliffs'), we'll set off on a three-hour walk to take in the spectacular deep and narrow gorge that cuts through the mountains. We'll see emerald pools, date and banana plantations, and gurgling falaj (springs). After lunch at a local restaurant, we'll drive through the Wadi Tiwi canyon before heading to Sur where we'll spend the night.

---

### Day 5: SUR & WAHIBA SANDS

Famous for building traditional dhow boats, Sur provides a fascinating insight into Oman's history. As we explore the ancient city and its boatyards, you might be able to glimpse dhows being built by hand. Then we'll set off towards Wadi Bani Khalid, a natural green pool where we'll enjoy a 30-minute walk and a swim. Next, we'll venture to Wahiba Sands, an area of vast dunes. We'll visit one of the Bedouin houses dotted along the tracks where we'll have a home-cooked lunch followed by coffee and dates. We'll go on an exhilarating drive over the sand dunes and make our way to a desert camp where we'll watch the sun set and settle in for the night.

---

### Day 6: DRIVE TO JEBEL AKHDAR

Wake up to sunrise in the desert, which you can watch from the top of the dunes. Afterwards, we'll head to Jebel Akhdar, known as the 'green mountain', stopping en-route at Birkat Al-Mawz – a village surrounded by plantations and the perfect setting for our picnic lunch. After a short walk here, we'll make our way to Wadi Al Madeen where a scenic, winding road leads us to Jebel Akhdar (2,000m above sea level), famed for its fruit orchards and roses, which are in bloom during March and April. Then we'll check in to our hotel.

---

**Day 7: THREE-VILLAGE WALK**

Distance: 2.5 miles (4km) Ascent: 330 feet (100m) Set off on an easy walk through villages and gardens, admiring the different crops that come with each season. We'll have lunch at a local restaurant before driving to Nizwa – the once-upon-a-time capital of Oman. We'll visit the fort and souq and check out the views from the top of the citadel. Enjoy dinner and a night in a heritage hotel in Nizwa.

---

**Day 8: NIZWA TO JEBEL SHAMS**

After breakfast, our destination will be Jebel Shams, visiting Jabrin castle and the 17th century fort on the way. We'll also have a photo stop at the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Bahla Fort and visit Bait Al Safah, an open house museum that displays juniper oil production, Omani breadmaking, and coffee bean grinding. We'll have lunch here before heading into the mountains and the highpoint, Jebel Shams (Mountain of the Sun), Oman's highest mountain and often called the 'Grand Canyon' of Oman, filled with hidden valleys and oases.

---

**Day 9: BALCONY 'GRAND CANYON' WALK**

Distance: 2.5 miles (4 km) Ascent: 330 feet (100m) We'll soak up the spectacular mountain landscapes of Jebel Shams, walking along the inner rim of a steep canyon to an abandoned village, Ghul. After taking in the views, we return the same way and have time this afternoon to enjoy the facilities at our unique hotel.

---

**Day 10: MISFAT AL ABRIYEEN OASIS WALK**

Distance: 2.5 miles (4 km) Ascent/Descent: negligible We'll drive to Misfat Al Abriyeen for a two-hour walk to the oasis and old village where there's a chance to see date cultivation using the falaj system of irrigation. Afterwards we'll continue driving to Wakan through the dramatic Hajar Mountains along one of the most scenic off-road routes in the country. Then we'll check in to Sama Wakan Heritage Homes, restored traditional homes, for the night.

---

**Day 11: WAKAN TO MUSCAT**

This morning we'll enjoy a short walk that explores Wakan village before we drive out to Nakhl. Close to Nakhl Fort at the end of a palm tree-lined road lies the Ain Al Thowarah hot springs, still used by locals today. Next, we'll enjoy a snapshot of 19th century life at Bait Al Ghasham museum and have lunch here. We then return to Muscat and enjoy a final dinner together this evening at a local restaurant.

---

**Day 12: DEPARTURE DAY**

Transfer to the airport for your return journey back to the UK.

---

## **Hilton Garden Inn Muscat Al Khuwair, Muscat - Oman**

With two outdoor rooftop pools to enjoy, the Hilton Garden Inn Muscat Al Khuwair focuses on comfort. Clean, modern, and air-conditioned rooms all have private bathrooms, TV, and free Wi-Fi, while mountain vistas surround the hotel.

## **Best Western Sur (formerly Sur Plaza), Sur - Oman**

This 3-star hotel in Sur prides itself on welcoming Omani hospitality. There's an outdoor pool, plus rooms are all air-conditioned and come with an en-suite bathroom and free Wi-Fi.

## **Sama Hotel, Jebel Akhdar - Oman**

There's an outdoor pool at the Sama Hotel – ideal for after a long day's sightseeing and walking. Rooms at this 3-star hotel are clean and comfortable, with air conditioning, TV, Wi-Fi, and private en-suite bathrooms.

## **Heritage Inn, Nizwa - Oman**

Located just a five-minute walk into the centre of Nizwa, the 2-star Heritage Inn is an ideal base for staying in the city. What was once a traditional family home has been lovingly converted into a characterful retreat. Expect long low sofas, covered in plush cushions, and simple yet tastefully decorated rooms furnished in typical Omani style. All rooms have air conditioning, private bathrooms, and Wi-Fi.

## **The View, Jebel Shams - Oman**

This luxury eco resort makes the most of the landscape it sits in. You need a 4x4 to reach it, but the journey rewards with wow-worthy views over the valley from 1,400m above sea level. The swimming pool and outdoor terrace provide the ultimate space to take it all in from. Rooms also come with views, plus sit-out area or balcony, fridge, tea/coffee maker, TV, and air conditioning.

## **Sama Wakan Heritage Home, Wakan Village - Oman**

Sitting 2,000m above sea level, Sama Wakan Heritage Home is not just a place to stay but also an experience. You'll stay in one of nine restored traditional homes that have the addition of new washrooms and air conditioning. A 4x4 is needed to reach the village where mountain views come as standard.

## **Bedouin Tents: Thousand Night Camp**

There's nothing quite like a stay in a traditional Bedouin camp. The experience is designed to be as comfortable as possible without taking away from the exhilarating feel of staying out in the wilderness like a real desert nomad. More glamping than camping, low-slung tents come kitted out with comfortable beds, plush rugs, power sockets, air-con and hot showers. Expect plenty of welcoming Arabic hospitality and after enjoying a delicious meal, you can sit around the campfire and relax under a ceiling of stars.