



Hud Hud Travels



Ten Nights Land and Sea itinerary with Muscat, Bandar Khayran, Ras Abu Daud, Wahiba Sands, Bar Al Hickman & Jebel Akhdar

A stylish comfortable safari, encompassing ten nights and eleven days in beautiful northern Oman taking in much of Oman's impressive scenery and covering Muscat, desert, coast, mountains, beach, traditional towns, forts and souks. Accommodation is a combination of 2 nights at a hotel in Muscat, followed by 2 nights on Hud Hud's Luxury Modern Dhow Ibra followed by 2 nights each spent in your very own private Hud Hud Camp in the Wahiba Sands and on the stunning beaches of Bar Al Hickman, ending with 2 nights at a hotel on Jebel Akhdar.

The Ibra can comfortably accommodate 8 guests for an overnight charter in 4 guest cabins (2 Double + 2 Twin). Each cabin comes with Italian style spacious bathrooms, equipped with a shower, wash basin, toilet and storage shelves. There are several comfortable seating areas to relax and enjoy the beautiful landscape; a large air-conditioned indoor lounge with ample seating and a dining table and 3 outdoor seating areas, including sun lounges and an outdoor dining table. Meals will be cooked fresh by the onboard chef.

At the camps, sleeping tents vary according to the location but are always appointed with proper mattresses, crisp cotton linen, feather pillows and traditional furnishings. Each sleeping tent has its own private bathroom tent, open to the skies and furnished with soft towels, basin, shower and a selection of soaps and lotions.

The camps will offer a large, evocative majlis, decorated in a style in keeping with the ambiance of the environment, with cushions and rugs, topical books, boules, board games and yoga mats. At the desert camp we will offer sandboarding and at the beach camp there will be 2 Stand Up Paddle Boards. Dining is at a properly laid table under the stars beside a crackling fire. Food is, as far as possible, locally sourced, freshly prepared by our camp chef and always delicious. We use limited electric light, and the emphasis is on preserving the atmosphere through natural lighting provided by candles, oil lamps and camp fires.



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Day 1

Arrival at Muscat International Airport, optional meet & greet service by Primeclass with immigration fast track before meeting the hotel driver for a short transfer to your Muscat hotel (for early arrivals it is possible to book a guaranteed early check-in).

Rest of the day at leisure to enjoy the hotel facilities.

Overnight at your hotel in Muscat

Day 2

After breakfast, meet your guide at the lobby of the hotel and set off to explore Muscat. We will first head to the Grand Mosque (please note the Mosque is not open to the public on Fridays), a stunning example of a modern mosque that has been designed in a subtle, unimposing way with traditional Arabic and Islamic features.

From the Mosque, we visit the Royal Opera House. Built on the royal orders of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos, this magnificent building reflects contemporary Omani architecture, and has a capacity to accommodate a maximum of 1,100 people. The opera house complex consists of a concert theatre, auditorium, formal landscaped gardens and an art centre for musical, theatrical and operatic productions.

Next we can head to Muttrah. There is plenty to see here from the cornice with its traditional souq and bustling fish market. The souq here hosts a labyrinthine of alleys and quirky stalls selling anything from plastic pots to antique Martini rifles.

After lunch at a local restaurant, we can continue to Old Muscat to visit a museum. We can visit the Bait Al Zubair; a collection of traditional houses which have been refurbished to highlight Oman's traditional architecture and now contains a very interesting museum. There are various exhibitions displaying a mix of different cultural and historic artefacts, all of which tell the history of Oman and the ties it once had with the different civilisations around the world. Alternatively we can visit the National Museum, which opened in 2016 and was designed to be the Sultanate's flagship cultural institution, showcasing the nation's heritage from the earliest human settlement in the Oman Peninsula some two million years ago through to the present day. The total area of the building is 13,700 sqm, including 4,000 square metres for 14 permanent galleries in which it houses over 7,000 objects with each gallery covering a different aspect of Oman's cultural heritage. A further 400sqm are allocated for temporary exhibitions.

For those interested in Art we can also visit the Bait Muzna Gallery in Old Muscat or the Stal Gallery & Studio in Madinat Al Sultan Qaboos

Overnight at your hotel in Muscat



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Day 3

Today we transfer to the Shangri-La Marina to embark on the Ibra, Hud Hud's luxury modern dhow, which after a full renovation allows us to bring our Hud Hud style, comfort, service, and gastronomy that our camps are renowned for to the sea.

We will sail for about 45 minutes to nearby Bandar Khayran, a labyrinth of islands, beaches, mountains, bays and natural channels, where we will spend the night. The Ibra will anchor in a tranquil bay where, after a delicious lunch served onboard, you can swim, snorkel, discover the different bays by Stand Up Paddle Board or just relax.

Bandar Khayran is also known for its diving spots and we can arrange for a diving boat to meet you there if you would like to go on a dive.

Dinner and overnight on the Ibra at Bandar Khayran

Day 4

Today we leave Bandar Khayran behind to venture further along the coast towards Quriyat for our second destination of Ras Abu Daud. Less known than Bandar Khayran, this is another great location for swimming, snorkelling and exploring. Breakfast, Lunch and dinner will be served on board.

Dinner and overnight on the Ibra at Ras Abu Daud

Day 5

This morning we will sail a little further to the coastal town of Quriyat, before we say farewell to the Ibra and her crew and begin the next part of our journey with a Hud Hud guide. We continue, by car, along the coast and before long we turn away from the sea and head up the northern face of the eastern Hajar Mountains. Following a steep gravel track that, in a short time, takes us to the peak of the impressive Selmah Plateau over 2,000 m above sea level. Views to the north are of the Arabian Sea and, to the south in the hazy distance, the Wahiba Desert.

This track passes ancient villages that were, until a couple of years ago, only accessible on foot or by donkey. This long, west facing ridge is spectacularly lined with numerous beehive tombs built by the Umm Naa people in around 2500BC. Here we will stop for a delicious and freshly prepared picnic lunch.

By mid afternoon we leave the mountains behind us and head through Ismaiyyah. Passing the 18th Century fort at Mudayrib, we leave the tarmac road behind to enter the desert and drive the final stretch on sandy tracks before reaching our camp, set-up with the russet red dunes.

The Wahiba Sands is a stunning desert of parallel valleys of sand dunes stretching north to south. Bedouin live, mostly on a seasonal basis, in the dunes tending to their camels. Our camp will be nestled deep within the desert, away from other tourists and light pollution from streets and villages at the desert's edge. The skies are crystal clear and covered with stars.



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After settling in at our private camp, your guide will take you for sunset viewing. Return to the camp for a delicious freshly cooked dinner by your private chef.

Overnight at your very own Private Hud Hud Desert Camp in the Wahiba Sands

Day 6

Watch the sunrise over the imposing Sharqiya Sand dunes from camp, or for the more energetic, make your way to the top of a dune.

After a relaxed breakfast, we drive out of the desert to Wadi Bani Khalid, one of the greatest, most dramatic wadis in Oman, a green oasis spectacularly set against a mountain backdrop. The village still farms in a traditional manner growing dates, bananas, mangoes and papaya. A walk through this remote and little visited community provides an insight into the lives of Omanis now and in many ways as they have always been. The wadi flows out of the village and into a dramatic and steep sided canyon, which winds up from its entrance, occasioned by rock pools ideal for a quick dip. The route is a combination of boulders, hiking and swimming that is great fun. After the visit of the Wadi, we will serve a Hud Hud picnic lunch in a shaded spot.

On the way back to the camp you could try your hand at a little off road driving in the sands when we put you behind the wheel of a 4x4. Under the expert tutelage of our seasoned Omani drivers, you will be given little tips and tricks about how to rescue even the most deeply embedded vehicle. Sand boarding can be organised in the late afternoon or, alternatively, you can just relax and soak up the views before enjoying a fantastic dinner served beside a crackling log fire.

Overnight at a Private Hud Hud Desert Camp in the Wahiba Sands

Day 7

After breakfast there is an opportunity to visit a local Bedouin family for traditional Omani kahwa (coffee) and dates. This brief meeting provides a means of better understanding how the people work and live, in what can be perceived as an extremely harsh environment.

We then jump into our 4x4s for a 100km crossing of the Wahiba sands and an opportunity for you to further hone your sand driving skills. Depending on which route we take we can have our lunch and take a quick dip where the dunes meet the sea at the fishing village of Qihayd and continue south along the coast or have lunch in the desert before continuing further south. Once we reach Bar Al Hickman, we will cross a 40km salt flats before reaching our final camp, set on a white sand beach at the Indian Ocean. Bar Al Hickman is a large salt pan that is home to a vast community of sea birds as well as a host of migratory birds.

Overnight at a Private Hud Hud Beach Camp at Bar Al Hickman



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Day 8

We will enjoy a leisurely day on the beach with fishing, beach driving, snorkelling and Stand Up Paddleboarding or perhaps we can visit the local towns and buy fresh fish if we don't succeed in catching our own, which our chef can prepare for dinner.

Alternatively we can drive to Filim to see the flamingos and onwards to Khalouf village and the nearby Sugar Dunes where we can have a swim before returning to our camp (this will be about 2 hours each way).

Overnight at a Private Hud Hud Beach Camp at Bar Al Hickman

Day 9

After a relaxed breakfast on the beach we wind our way north and our route takes us through the small market town of Sinaw. This is where the Bedouins come to do business and the souq, particularly on a Thursday, can be a thriving and fascinating affair with all the hustle and bustle of a Middle Eastern market at its finest. Sinaw souq is amongst one of the oldest preserved souqs in Oman and one of the few places you can find traditional silver Bedouin jewellery.

Another tasty picnic lunch will be served on the way.

If we leave early from camp we can make a stop at the new Oman Across the Ages Museum in Manah.

From here, we continue our journey towards the foothills of Jebel Akhdar and here stands the beautiful village of Birkat Al Mauz. Shaded date plantations are overlooked by the ruins of the original village of Birkat, which was evacuated during the Jebel wars. Here we can take a short walk along the afalaj, which is incorporated into the UNESCO World Heritage site of the Afalaj Irrigation Systems of Oman, which consists of five afalaj systems representatives of some 3000 systems still in use in Oman and which are believed to have been used in agriculture and farming for many centuries.

We then start our ascent of Jebel Akhdar and wind up 2,000 m to the Saiq Plateau, reaching the hotel in time to view the sunset over the magnificent Hajar mountain range.

Overnight at your hotel on Jebel Akhdar

Day 10

We can spend today exploring Jebel Akhdar, its small mountain communities, farms, rose terraces and abandoned villages. Due to its temperate climate, roses, pomegranates and a variety of other fruit and vegetables are grown here. The 3-village walk and Wadi Bani Habib are easy to explore on relatively easy walks.



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Jebel Akhdar also has great importance in Oman's military history and British RAF relics can still be found here. The geology is fascinating and best explored by one of the great hikes in this area.

We can also add in some activities at the hotel (via Ferrata, Spa, Mountain Biking) or we can take the easy walk to the village of Sogra, only accessible by foot and a great location for a tasty home cooked lunch.

Overnight at your hotel on Jebel Akhdar

Day 11

Today we make our way to Al Hamra, a 400-year old town, which is home to some of the oldest preserved houses that can be found in Oman.

Winding up the rocky hillside, is the small ancient village of Misfat al Abriyyin with its picturesque collection of ochre-coloured stone buildings, giving it a somewhat medieval feel. A walk through this pretty village of twisting lanes and covered passages brings you to the falaj (irrigation system), which runs below the village, surrounded by lush bougainvillea, banana palms and other greenery.

After lunch at a local restaurant, we make our way towards Balad Sayt, a beautiful mountain village, from where we continue our descent through the impressive Wadi Bani Auf. This route takes us through the Hajar Mountains, with a steep descent and is considered by many one of the greatest and most memorable off-road drives of Oman. We pass through some very rugged and extraordinary mountain scenery, through small jebel villages and often through plenty of water on the track.

We exit near Rustaq and take the tarmac road to Muscat, passing the village of Nakhl, home to a fort surrounded by date palms and Ain a'Thawwarah hot springs.

Invigorated we arrive back to Muscat in the late afternoon.