



# Hud Hud Travels



## Jebel Akhdar & Wahiba Sands

A stylish comfortable mobile safari, encompassing five nights and six days in beautiful northern Oman taking in much of Oman's impressive scenery and covering desert, coast, mountains, traditional towns, forts and souks.

Accommodation is a combination of three nights spent at a hotel on Jebel Akhdar and two nights in your very own private camp in the desert.

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

Each camp 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. Dining is at a properly laid table under the stars beside a crackling fire. Food is, as far as possible, locally sourced and is 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.

### Day 1

We will head out of Muscat after breakfast travelling along the Al Batinah coast before turning inland towards Nakhl, home to a restored fort surrounded by date palms and close to Ain a'Thawwarah hot springs.

From here we continue in direction of Rustaq and into the entrance of the exposed and impressive Wadi Bani Auf. This route takes us over the Hajar Mountains, a climb of over 2,000 m 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 stop at the beautiful mountain village of Balad Sayt for a delicious and freshly prepared picnic lunch before we continue on the breathtaking track up and over the spine of the Hajar, where the views are magnificent. From here we descend to Al Hamra, a 400-year old town, is home to some of the oldest preserved houses that can be found in Oman.



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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.

From here we continue to the foot of Jebel Akhdar and wind up 2,000m to the Saiq Plateau, passing luscious juniper, fig and olive trees, before we arrive at the hotel.

Overnight at the hotel on Jebel Akhdar

## Day 2

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.

Jebel Akhdar also has great importance in Oman's military history and British RAF relics can still be found here.

Overnight at the hotel on Jebel Akhdar

## Day 3

Today we can do some activities with the hotel (via Ferrata, Spa, Mountain Biking) or we can continue to explore Jebel Akhdar with our guide. 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 the hotel on Jebel Akhdar

## Day 4

After a relaxed breakfast we wind our way down Jebel Akhdar to explore the village of Birkat Al Mauz. We can walk through the palms and along the aflaj (irrigation system), learning more about the date farming process. We then head to Nizwa where we have time to explore Nizwa's imposing fort and souk. From here, we will start to make our way towards the Wahiba Sands. The road to the desert passes the market town of Ibra, which contains some well-preserved merchant houses and the historic village of Mudayrib, which is today as it has been for many centuries. Lunch will be at a local restaurant enroute. Leaving the tarmac road behind, we 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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Chance to go for sunset viewing from a nearby dune before having a scrumptious dinner cooked by your camp chef.

Overnight at a Private Hud Hud Desert Camp in Wahiba Sands

## Day 5

For the early risers, 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, mangos 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 Wadi Bani Khalid we will have a tasty picnic lunch in a shady spot.

On the way 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 Wahiba Sands

## Day 6

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.

The onward journey passes some very dramatic terrain to the coast near the fishing town of Sur. There are many fishermen and a thriving fish industry that has existed for centuries. There is a small dhow factory where the traditional sailing boats that have taken Omani explorers, traders and colonialists to the furthest reaches of the Indian Ocean, are still made.

We will then continue our route up the coast on the sea-side of the Hajar range, stopping at one of the luscious Wadis such as Wadi Mibam, Wadi Shab or Wadi Tiwi for a walk and a swim. Invigorated, we arrive back in Muscat in the late afternoon.