ARABIAN ODYSSEY

Wild wadis, an untouched coastline, spectacular deserts, 16th century forts and castles and dramatic mountain scenery – Oman is the best kept secret in the Middle East.

Tailor-Made Journeys, Suggested Itineraries

North Africa & Arabia, Oman
3 days, from AU$9,410
Private
Journey Overview

Wild wadis, an untouched coastline, spectacular deserts, 16th century forts and castles and dramatic mountain scenery – Oman is the best kept secret in the Middle East. It is also one of the oldest civilisations in the Arabian Peninsula. Combining a fascinating ancient heritage with all the trappings of modernity, stunning accommodation and year-round sunshine, Oman is a surprising and unspoiled destination.

Journey Highlights

• Uncover the friendly and vibrant city of Muscat
• Stay at exquisite eco-hotel and experience its unique mountain location
• Explore Wahiba Sands, a vast mass of undulating red and white sea of sand
• Enjoy traditional Bedouin hospitality in a desert camp set beneath the stars
• Marvel at the soaring walls and towers of Nizwa Fort
Itinerary

Day 1: Arrive Muscat

A warm welcome to the Omani capital where you are met by A&K and transferred to your luxury accommodation. Located on the Arabian Peninsula, Muscat has a rich and vibrant culture and is a remarkably laid-back capital city with a friendly atmosphere. The rest of the day is yours to explore – wander through one of the city’s many souks and the fascinating port area or take a simple stroll along the beachfront in front of your hotel.

_The Chedi Muscat (Chedi Deluxe Room)_

Day 2: Muscat

Explore the enchanting port city of Muscat with your private guide. Tour the lavish Royal Opera House, built in 2011 which combines world class acoustics with Middle Eastern elegance. Stroll around the magnificent Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque, a stunning example of contemporary Islamic architecture containing the second largest hand loomed Iranian carpet in the world. It is the only mosque in Oman open to non-Muslims. From its minarets, large golden dome, arches, engraved walls, decorated interior, unique lamps and central crystal chandelier, the mosque is an architectural wonder. Drive along the corniche, visit the fish market and enjoy a lunch of traditional Arabian cuisine.

After lunch discover the rich treasures inside the museum and cultural complex known as Bait Al Zubair Museum. Formerly a private home, it is now a showcase for traditional Omani crafts and culture from across the country. The treasure trove of exhibits includes black and white photographs of desert tribes, ornate and ancient khanjars (Omani swords), and headdresses and necklaces laden with pearls, lapis lazuli and turquoise. Be sure to see the permanent exhibition of local dress, which explains the purpose of each item of traditional clothing, from the waqaya (women’s head scarf) to the wazar (the wrap that men wear under their full-length dishdasha). Later explore the old Muscat area and finish with a visit to the souk, a traditional market on the corniche, with small shops selling Omani products such as colourful fabric, traditional clothes, silver and gold jewellery, and souvenirs.

_The Chedi Muscat (Chedi Deluxe Room) | Meals: BL_
Day 3: Muscat – Jabal Akhdar

Start the day with a perfume immersion when you visit the Amouage perfumery before leaving the city behind as you travel by 4WD to Bilad Sayt, one of Oman's quaintest villages, at the foot of the towering and dramatic Hajar mountain ranges. The route continues to wind through mountains all the way to the village of Al Hamra, characterised by its mud houses and date plantations. Arrive at Jabal Akhdar (Green Mountain) named for the areas of greenery and plantations which cover the rocky terrain, and your extraordinary resort, which blends seamlessly into the rugged landscape.

*Alila Jabal Akhdar (Horizon View Suite) | Meals: BL*

Day 4: Jabal Akhdar

Proceed to the legendary Nizwa Fort at the foot of the Western Hajar mountains. In the ninth century, a stronghold was built to protect the town from marauding forces, and Nizwa Fort with its imposing sandstone structure has been added to and adapted ever since. Search out the metal spikes, booby traps and ‘murder holes’ (through which boiling hot date syrup was poured on to intruders) that made Nizwa so impenetrable. Make your way to the rooftop, where dozens of cannons would have once stood, for excellent views of the city.

The Nizwa souk is one of the oldest in the country and you’ll have time to wander through it, taking in the fresh produce and livestock (Friday mornings only) with excellent photographic opportunities. Continue to Jabrin, the finest of Oman’s castles, built in the late 17th century which became a seat of Omani learning. The castle displays the highest achievement in Omani ceiling painting and beautifully executed woodcarvings. Stop at the terrace farming village of Wadi Ghul before continuing to Wadi Nakheer located in the depth of Oman’s deepest canyon. At Wadi Nakheer get a chance to meet locals and weavers before returning to your hotel.

*Alila Jabal Akhdar (Horizon View Suite) | Meals: BLD*

Day 5: Jabal Akhdar

Enjoy a day at leisure relaxing and soaking up the tranquillity of this inspirational location or taking in a spa treatment. Should you wish, an optional tour of Jabal Akhdar, considered the fruit bowl of Oman, can be arranged (additional cost). See the orchards laid out terrace-style along the mountain slopes and the traditional aflaj irrigation systems.

*Alila Jabal Akhdar (Horizon View Suite) | Meals: BD*

Day 6: Jabal Akhdar – Wahiba Sands

Today’s destination is Wahiba Sands, a vast mass of undulating dunes, some as high as 200-metres, whose ever-changing patterns are a photographer’s delight. Travel through Wadi Bani Khalid, a mountain area of small villages and waterfalls. The wadi (valley) is in the Al Sharqiyah Region and has several water pools as well as a spring that keeps water flowing inside the wadi all year long. Arrive at your Beduoin camp in time to see the changing colours of the desert during a golden sunset before dinner.

*Desert Nights Camp (Deluxe Tent) | Meals: BLD*
Day 7: Wahiba Sands – Muscat

Experience the thrills of dune driving and observe the surprisingly wide array of flora and fauna found in the desert sands. Head out of camp to Sur, one of the few places that still produces traditional wooden dhows. Watch the craftsmen as they go about their highly skilled work. Journey to Fins beach for a swim and then drive onto the Bimah Sinkhole, a spectacular limestone crater filled with blue green water. Continue along the coast back to Muscat and on a clear day you may see sharks in the deep blue water or fleet footed gazelle sprint across the landscape.

*Shangri-La's Al Husn Resort & Spa (Deluxe Sea View Room) / Meals: BL*

Day 8: Depart Muscat

Farewell Oman as you transfer privately to the airport for your onward journey.

*Meals: B*
Extraordinary Experiences

Our in-country presence allows our Journey Designers to include exceptional activities and experiences that are beyond the reach of the average traveller. Here are just a few examples.

**Explore the Magnificent Harbourside City of Muscat**

Muscat is Old Arabia at its most evocative. Dramatic mountains loom over this port city on the Gulf of Oman, where the Portuguese forts of al Jalali and al Mirani guard the harbour. Explore the bustling souk, the Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque and dine on seafood at the marina restaurants.

**Traverse the breathtaking landscapes of Wahiba Sands**

The Wahiba Sands is a vast area of golden undulating dunes, home to some 3,000 Bedouin and a wide array of flora and fauna. The ever-changing patterns and breathtaking landscapes are a photographer’s delight.
Discover Handcrafted Curios in the Oasis City of Nizwa

The oasis city of Nizwa is packed with history, and surrounded by the dramatic Al Hajar Mountains. The city’s immense palm oasis stretches for eight kilometres along the course of two wadis. Discover Nizwa’s 17th century fort, and bustling souk where you can buy exquisite copper and jewellery among other crafts.

Trek the Majestic Mountains and Canyons of Oman

Retreat to the cool foothills of the Al Hajar Mountains in Oman. Your local guide will lead you on an exhilarating trek to the country’s highest peak and down into the deepest canyons and wadis by air-conditioned 4WD. You’ll also visit ancient mountain villages, and Nizwa Souq, renowned for its antiques and silver jewellery.

Dolphins in the Arabian Sea

Observe playful dolphins in the waters of the Arabian Sea from the comfort of your boat off the rugged coast of Muscat. Keep your camera poised for sightings of the majestic humpback whale or passing turtles, a perfect family experience.

Be Dazzled While Desert Stargazing in Oman

Marvel at the dazzling Arabian night-sky when you stay in one of A&K’s luxury desert camps in Oman. Free of light pollution and bathed in silence it is the perfect place to gaze up at the twinkling stars once the sun has disappeared over the ripple of golden sand dunes.
Roam the Picturesque Musandam Peninsula

Dubbed the ‘Norway of Arabia’ for its beautiful rocky inlets, small villages, fjords and dramatic, mountain-hugging roads, the Musandam Peninsula is a scenic and cultural gem, isolated from the rest of Oman by the east coast of the U.A.E. Dolphins cavort in the turquoise blue waters which lap the rugged mountainsides, Arab dhows ply the coastline and Bedouin villages wait to be explored.

Cocoon in Island Luxury at Zighy Bay

On your way to or from Europe or Africa or as an add-on to a Middle Eastern exploration, this extraordinary hideaway is a perfect place to unwind. Just two hours from Dubai yet in an utterly remote part of northern Oman, Six Senses Zighy Bay combines just the right amount of seclusion with as much indulgence and adventure as required.

Be Enchanted by the Tropical Charms of Salalah

Salalah’s coconut-fringed beaches and plantations of bananas and papayas are more reminiscent of its Zanzibari heritage than its Arabian Desert location. This colourful, subtropical region is unexpectedly green and fertile thanks to its summer rains, known as the khareef, which transform the area into a haven of lush vegetation and thundering waterfalls.
Accommodation

The Chedi Muscat

The Chedi Muscat is one of Oman's finest resorts. A short drive from the international airport, this luxury hotel offers 156 rooms and suites, three swimming pools, a water garden and stunning stretch of private beach. Choose to stay in a Serai Room, Deluxe Room, Deluxe Club Room or Chedi Club Suite; each beautifully appointed room features high ceilings and a refined Asian style décor. We particularly love the Chedi Club Suites with their sumptuous sunken bath tub, separate living area and private terrace looking out over tranquil ponds and landscaped grounds and some with sea views.

The iconic palm-fringed Long Pool and beachfront Chedi Pool are both adult only while the pool near the hotel's bar is available to all. Those looking to keep in shape can work out in the hotel's well-equipped fitness centre or on one of the two tennis courts. As evening falls, retreat to the lobby lounge for pre-dinner cocktails and canapés before watching the talented chefs at work in the one of The Restaurant's open plan kitchens. Food at the Chedi is exquisite, and those looking for a more intimate dinner can enjoy one of the eight private dining rooms, perfect for special occasions. Complement your meal with a vintage bottle from their award-winning wine list. Experience dining with a view at The Beach Restaurant, which serves innovative seafood dishes. The Beach Restaurant now offers authentic Omani cooking classes.

Why we like it
The Chedi is set along a beautiful beach overlooking the unbroken blue waters of the Gulf of Oman. Most of the rooms have views looking out across the gulf and the resorts landscaped gardens. Dining options include Arabic, Mediterranean, Asian and Indian cuisine. The Spa has seven elegant treatment rooms, including four suites with sunken baths. The hotel has three swimming pools.

Alila Jabal Akhdar

Nestled high in the majestic Al Hajar Mountain range on the A'roos plateau, Alila Jabal Akhdar's location is second to none. Situated in the cusp of a gorge some 2000m above sea level, each room provides a perfect vantage point to experience one of the World's lesser known tourist attractions. The resort itself is just 150km or a 2 and a half hour drive from the Oman capital Muscat, and is an ideal stopover when travelling to the ancient city of Nizwa or onwards to Wahiba Sands.

Built using traditional Omani techniques, the hotel is a unique fusion of Arabia's old and new architectural styles, and harmoniously blends into the natural surroundings preserving the areas beauty and wild environment. Accommodation comprises of 78 Suites, 6 Loft Suites and 2 Jabal Villas with private pools. The interiors are minimalist yet rustic in design reflecting the countries interesting culture and heritage.

At the Arabian restaurant, Juniper, you can enjoy all day dining next to panoramic floor-to-ceiling windows looking out to the mountainous landscape. As evening calls, retreat to the cosy comforts of Rose Lounge to enjoy a soothing sundowner.

We love the superb hospitality of the Leisure Concierge. With a philosophy following 5 distinct themes, they will help you to explore the region through outdoor sports, arts & crafts, culinary classes and cultural learning. The canyon walks are an experienced not to be missed.
Why we like it

- Residing high in the rugged Al Hajar Mountain range, the newly opened Alila Jabal Akhdar Resort is perfectly positioned to explore the surrounding landscape.
- Promoting conscious living, the resort is dedicated to an eco-friendly philosophy in order to preserve the region’s natural beauty.
- 84 Suites and 2 Villas are designed with traditional Omani style.
- Facilities include indoor and outdoor pools, a modern fitness centre and renowned Alila Spa.
- Ideal for adventure travellers and nature lovers.

Shangri-La’s Al Husn Resort & Spa, Muscat

The Shangri-La Al Husn Resort & Spa redefines Omani elegance and offers fine Asian hospitality. Guests at the Al Husn hotel enjoy exclusive dining and beach areas and available butler service, as well as exclusive access to Mahhara Beach Bar, on the private, 100-metre beach.

Set around a central courtyard with palms and fountains, its 170 rooms and suites are among the largest and most luxurious in Oman, with a warm décor inspired by royal Arabian palaces and accented by authentic Omani artworks. All offer direct views of the turquoise waters of the Gulf of Oman, with some enjoying a panorama of the resort and the surrounding coastline.

The resort has three expansive, cooled swimming pools and a lazy river. Other facilities include a health club, tennis courts and a water sports centre.

Why we like it

- The Al Husn is at the heart of the Shangri-La’s Barr Al Jissah Resort & Spa.
- All rooms and suites have direct views of the turquoise waters of the Gulf of Oman.
- Al Husn does not cater for children under the age of 16 years.
- Dining options include Sultanah, a stylish restaurant with a luxury cruise theme, and Shahrazad, the only authentic Moroccan restaurant in Muscat.
CHI, The Spa, is the largest and most luxuriously appointed spa in the Sultanate of Oman

Desert Night Camp, Omani Desert

The luxurious Bedouin styled tents are ready for those seeking the ultimate desert adventure. They are equipped with a bedroom and sitting room, individually controlled air-conditioning, en suite bathroom with amenities, tea & coffee maker and a mini-bar. All tents open have a cosy sit-out which offers a panoramic view of the golden Sharqiya Sands. The fragrance of frankincense and myrrh transport you back in time to the medieval world.

Choose between a Deluxe Tented Suite perfect for couples, the Deluxe Family Suites with two bedrooms and a living room or one of the attached Suites great if you are travelling as two couples and want to share a living area.

The abundance of activities you can indulge in range from camel safaris, dune bashing and even a going for a spin on a quad bike.

Why we like it

- In the heart of the Omani desert sprawled across 10-acres of silken sands
- 30 luxurious Bedouin style tents opening out to spectacular views of the golden red Wahiba sands of the desert
- Relax under the stars with Arabian music from the traditional Bedouin band accompanied by an 'Oud' player
- Enclosed and open dining options at the multi-cuisine Two Dunes Restaurant
- Experience the sands by camel, bike, sand board or on foot
Call Us Now on 1300 851 924 within Australia

Melbourne Office:
T: +61 (0)3 9536 1800
F: +61 (0) 3 9536 1805
E: contact@abercrombiekent.com.au

Address
Level 3, 290 Coventry St
South Melbourne, VIC, 3205

International:
New Zealand Call: 0800 441 638
Asia Call: 800 4747 7700
EARN QANTAS POINTS ON YOUR LUXURY HOLIDAYS

Abercrombie & Kent has been pioneering experiential luxury travel since 1962 and is delighted to be partnering with Qantas Frequent Flyer.

Qantas Frequent Flyer members will earn 1 Qantas Point for every dollar spent on an A&K private touring itinerary of seven nights or more* (excluding taxes and credit card fees). Whether you’re travelling on an 8 day safari in Tanzania, an 11 day itinerary sailing around the Galapagos Islands or a 10 day Wonders of Eastern Europe holiday, members will earn points.

Start exploring today and you could be closer to your dream reward, whether it be a flight to an exotic destination, a retail shopping voucher or the many other rewards available through the Qantas Frequent Flyer program.

*You must be a Qantas Frequent Flyer Member to earn and redeem Qantas Points. A joining fee may apply. Membership and the earning and redemption of Qantas Points are subject to the Qantas Frequent Flyer Terms and Conditions, available at qantas.com/terms

Sanctuary Swala, Tanzania
'Tanzania Under Canvas' Itinerary

Call 1300 851 925 or your local travel agent for more information • abercrombiekent.com.au