



Hud Hud Travels



Land & Sea

Start your week aboard a luxury yacht in Muscat, visit some great coves, see the nature offered up by the Indian Ocean and end the week back in Muscat after a spell in the ancient towns, the majestic Hajar Mountains and the sea of dunes that is the Wahiba Sands.

Day 1

We will cruise along the coastline of Muscat with its historical forts, the Sultan's Palace and the port - well known for its important trading between the East and the West. We will reach the Daymaniyat Islands a few hours later. They are a protected and uninhabited group of nine beautiful islands 18 km off the Batinah Coast. The islands are Oman's only marine National Nature Reserve and play host to a number of native birds, as it is a successful breeding sanctuary from April through to October.

The yacht will anchor in a tranquil bay where you can swim, discover the island or just relax. Dinner will be served either on deck or on the beach.

Day 2

Whether you are in the mood to relax and enjoy the peace on board or would rather snorkel and try to spot turtles is up to you. After lunch we will continue our trip on to Bandar Khairan, a labyrinth of islands, beaches, mountains, bays and natural channels. We will stay overnight in Bandar Khairan and for those who still have energy we will offer a snorkel tour at night!

Day 3

There is no rush today and so the morning can be spent on board, watching the sea birds, Egyptian Vultures, occasional herds of goats and, if you are very lucky, deer or snorkelling among the coral. This day's tour will take us from the bays of Bandar Khairan further along the coast to the fishing town of Quriyat. At the mouth of a large wadi, this town has a prominent place in Oman's history and much of the traditional way of life is still visible.

Day 4

We will cruise down along the coastline with its 2,500 m high Hajar mountain range. A little to the west of Ras Al Hadd we enter into a natural channel, the entrance to a massive tranquil inland sea, surrounded by mangroves and acacia forests. The drive through the narrow channel is spectacular, especially if the currents are strong. We will stay overnight in the bay of the turtle beach resort. Here a car picks us up in the late night and brings us to the turtle



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reserve where we will observe the nesting and hatching of the native green turtles. A highlight for any nature loving being!

Day 5

After a good breakfast aboard, we will bid farewell to our yacht and the crew and start the next stage of our Omani adventure. We will head towards the Wahiba, a sand desert that stretches about 120km south towards the Indian Ocean. We will go via Wadi Bani Khalid, one of the most dramatic wadis in Oman, for some stunning views, great hikes and possibly the chance for a quick dip in one of the refreshing pools. Lunch will be served with the striking cliff faces as a backdrop.

By mid afternoon we leave the wadi behind us and with the sun beginning to drop, we enter the desert and drive the final stretch on sandy tracks through the russet red dunes before reaching our camp.

Our camp is in the heart of the desert, away from civilisation, light pollution and noise where the serenity and star gazing at night are breathtaking. It also provides us with the solitude and peace that is so special about the desert.

Day 6

After watching the sun rise from camp, or from the top of a dune for the more energetic, a relaxed breakfast is served in the majlis.

The desert provides a great place not only from which to learn more about the Bedouin who still rely on it for their camels and goats but also as a base from which to explore the surrounding area. There is an opportunity to visit a local Bedouin family for traditional Omani khawa (*coffee*) and dates and the nearby market town of Ibra is well worth a visit for it's well preserves old merchant's houses.

You will get the opportunity to test you driving skills 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. A well rewarded lunch will be served in camp. Sand boarding can be organised in the afternoon or, alternatively, you can just soak up the views.

Day 7

After a refreshing breakfast watching the dunes gradually change colour from a light yellow to a deep orange, we will leave our desert oasis behind us and drive towards Nizwa. There are many places worth stopping at en route such as striking wadis or some old villages that



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are much the same now as they have been for centuries. In particular, we can stop and learn about the date farming process and the use of falaj systems which irrigate the plantations. We can also stop by some of the shamagh weavers to learn more about their art. Arrive late afternoon at our camps site which is nestled in the western Hajar Mountains between Nizwa and Bahla.

Day 8

Our final day of this adventure will see us head up the steep gravel tracks on the south side of the Jebel Akhdar massif. We will descend carefully down Wadi Bani Auf through some very rugged and impressive mountain scenery, through small 'jebel' villages and often through plenty of water on the track. We usually stop at the high and tremendously beautiful, mountain village of Balad Sayt for lunch and a walk and if there is time, take in a quick swim in some refreshing mountain pools en route. Invigorated, we arrive back in Muscat in the afternoon.