



From  
**\$11,311** NZD

Single Room  
 \$13,605 NZD

Twin Room  
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Prices valid until  
 30th December 2023

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13 days  
 Duration

Oman  
 Destination

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Level 1 - Introductory to  
 Moderate  
 Activity

# Discover Oman

Oct 19 2023 to Oct 31 2023

## Discover Oman | Small Group Tour

Odyssey offers easy, convenient, and relaxed escorted small group tours across Oman and the Middle East. We explore Oman's natural beauty along its coast, and its Persian heritage, its World Heritage Sites, with some truly spectacular scenery along the way. This and more is all waiting to be explored on one of Odyssey's small group tours of Oman, designed for the senior traveller, and led by experienced, and enthusiastic like minded people.

The Oman small group tour explores the Sultanate of Oman, a country of diverse natural beauties and fascinating human history. Oman



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boasts medieval forts and watchtowers, Bedouin villages, spectacular fjords, bustling markets, date palm plantations, sand dunes, natural pools in the mountains, and a beautiful coastline. Oman enjoys an unspoiled culture and traditional lifestyle in almost every aspect. So even in modern times, Oman is distinctly Arabian and offers a glimpse of many unique old-world wonders.

During the Oman small group tour, participants experience the country's sense of timelessness. Together, we explore the ancient interior city of Nizwa, the coastal towns of Sur and Musandam, the capital city of Muscat, and the rich and fertile southern city of Salalah. All provide intriguing insights into the rich history and culture of Oman.

## Tour highlights

### Khasab Fort

One particular highlight of our educational tour is a visit to Khasab Fort. This picturesque stronghold was built in the 17th century by the Portuguese, who were seeking dominion over the maritime trade in the Strait of Hormuz. The fort was erected to prevent coastal attacks. Teak wood from India was used in its construction and its roof was fashioned from palm leaves and clay. The fort's low, crenelated walls contain a large central tower, which may predate the fort itself. The structure that exists today is the result of extensive restoration work completed in the late-20th century. Due to the fort's location, it offers excellent views and spectacular photo opportunities.

### Wadi Tawi

Another highlight is our journey to Wadi Tawi, where we explore prehistorical rock paintings depicting camels, ships, and warriors. Here, we also take a 4WD Mountain Safari to Jebel Harim. The drive takes in spectacular scenic routes through mountain and valleys, reaching a height of 1,784 metres above sea level with attendant panoramic views. We also visit the centuries-old village of Bait Ul Kufal and the lush natural park of Khalidiya with its many acacia

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trees.

## Fjords of Musandam

Further highlights of our small group tour include exploring the spectacular fjords of Musandam, referred to as “Norway of Arabia,” due to its turquoise waters and white limestone cliffs. We also learn about the myths and legends of Salalah, which date back to biblical times. Our educational tour also includes a visit to a Bedouin house, where we enjoy coffee with the locals. We also experience a walking tour of Muscat, Oman’s capital city, a unique blend of ancient and modern culture.

The escorted Oman small group tour draws from some of the best local guides who share their knowledge of the contemporary and historic culture of Oman. The tour is ideal for the senior or mature couple or solo traveller seeking to explore and learn in a small group environment.

You can learn more about [Oman](#) with our country profile. For more details about this tour, click the ‘Top 5’ or ‘Itinerary’ buttons above! If you’re keen to experience this tour, [please call](#) or [send an email](#). Or, to book, simply fill in the form on the right hand side of this page.

## Tour Notes

- Group size is limited to a maximum of 16 participants.

## Highlights

1. Explore the spectacular fjords of Musandam, referred to as "Norway of Arabia" with its turquoise waters and white limestone cliffs.
2. Experience Oman's sense of timelessness in the ancient city of Nizwa.
3. Visit unique local markets including the Women only market.

4. Discover Muscat, Oman's capital city, a unique blend of the ancient and the modern.
5. Visit a Bedouin house and enjoy coffee with the hospitable residents.

## Itinerary

### Day 1

**Locations:** Dubai

**Overview:**

After making our own way to the hotel, we meet for a program orientation and welcome dinner.

(D)

**Accommodation:**

1 night at Dubai hotel.

### Day 2

**Locations:** Dubai - Khasab

**Overview:**

This morning, we transfer by private coach to our hotel in Musandam. Separated by the United Arab Emirates, Musandum is the northernmost part of Oman, jutting out into the Strait of Hormuz at the entrance to the Persian Gulf. The mountains rise straight out of the sea, giving rise to the fjord-like appearance of the coastline that is superbly visible from air.

Lunch today will be served at our hotel. Afterwards, the remainder of the day is at leisure. We come together again in the evening for a group dinner at the hotel.

(B,L,D)

**Accommodation:**

3 nights at Golden Tulip Resort or similar

### Day 3

**Locations:** Jebel Harim & Khasab Town

**Overview:**

This morning, we enjoy an excursion through the town, which provides an introduction to parts of the Musandam Peninsula and its capital of Khasab.

One highlight of the day is our visit to Khasab Fort. This picturesque stronghold was built in the 17th century by the Portuguese seeking dominion over the maritime trade in the Strait of Hormuz. The fort was erected to prevent attacks from the sea. Teak wood from India was used in its construction, and its roof was fashioned from a mix of palm leaves and clay. Within its low, crenelated walls, the fort contains a large central tower, which is thought to predate the fort itself. The structure that exists today is the result of extensive restoration work carried out in the late 20th century. The fort's location offers excellent views and spectacular photo opportunities. Later on, we drive to Wadi Tawi, where one can see prehistorical rock paintings depicting camels, ships, and warriors.

In the afternoon, we enjoy a 4WD Mountain Safari to Jebel Harim. The drive takes in spectacular scenic routes through mountain and valleys, reaching a height of 1,784 metres above sea level with attendant panoramic views. We also visit the centuries-old village of Bait Ul Kufal and the lush natural park of Khalidiya, with its many acacia trees.

(B,L)

**Accommodation:**

Golden Tulip Resort or similar

### Day 4

**Locations:** The Fjords of Musandam

**Overview:**

Today, we enjoy a half-day Dhow Cruise. This excursion will have great appeal for travellers who enjoy unusual experiences. After boarding our traditional Omani Dhow pier side, the cruise takes us towards Musandam's longest and most spectacular fjord, which is often referred

to as “Norway of the Arabia” due to the calm, turquoise waters that contrast with the creamy white limestone cliffs. Along the way we pass small fishing villages and perhaps even encounter dolphins.

The Dhow will anchor in the vicinity off Telegraph Island, allowing us to enjoy a swim or just sit back and enjoy soft drinks, tea, or coffee while admiring the breathtaking views of mountains rising in the distance to over 2,000 feet.

Dhows are motorised and very basic. There is the possibility of swimming off the Dhow, but caution is advised when getting in and out of the water via the Dhow’s ladder. Swimwear is acceptable for this tour only. Shady seating is available aboard the Dhow.

Lunch will be served on board the dhow or at local restaurant. In the afternoon, we are free to explore the quaint village of Khasab at our own pace.

(B,L)

**Accommodation:**

Golden Tulip Resort or similar

**Day 5**

**Locations:** Khasab - Muscat

**Overview:**

After breakfast, we transfer to Khasab Airport for our flight to Muscat. Our English-speaking guide will meet us at the arrival hall. We then transfer by private coach to our hotel in Muscat. This short drive to our hotel provides us with the first impressions of a clean and green capital. The rest of the day is at leisure.

(B)

**Accommodation:**

2 nights at Park Inn By Radisson or similar

## Day 6

**Locations:** Muscat

### Overview:

Today we explore Muscat, Oman's famous capital city. A unique blend of the ancient and the modern, Muscat is a beautiful, pristine city, which lies in the middle of a maze of brown pleated mountains, lulled by the Arabian Sea. The city has undergone dramatic development in the past two or three decades, but has never lost its strong heritage and culture.

We start our tour with a visit to the Grand Mosque, an architectural marvel that is perhaps the new landmark of the city. We then continue our drive through the ministries area, where we have the chance to see a number of modern buildings with touches of Islamic architecture.

Later on, we travel along the corniche to Old Muscat. Here we visit the Bait Al Zubair Museum / Bait Al Baranda Museum, where we learn about Omani history and culture. We pause at the magnificent Al Aalam Palace (the official residence of Sultan Qaboos), which is flanked by the twin Portuguese forts of Mirani and Jalali.

Lunch today will be at a local restaurant.

This evening is reserved for a special tour of one of the most popular places of Muscat, the enchanting Muttrah Souq, with its narrow covered alleys where the exotic smells of mounds of spices, coffees, ancient remedies, and enticing perfumes fill the air. This is our chance to explore the winding and zigzag alleys for a good bargain!

We then visit an Omani house to enjoy the hospitality of the Omani family. Our journey continues with a visit to the "Sidab Women's Sewing Group (SWSG)" for dinner. SWSG is a non-profit community organization inspired and run by local women. The group helps women from this fishing village develop sewing skills so that they can create the handicrafts that earn them an income. This visit reflects of our desire to support and promote responsible tourism in the country. The women's creations are colourful and reflect Omani culture, and we can choose to buy whichever product we like from their impressive gallery. Dinner tonight will be served on the terrace of the Sidab Women's Sewing Group, where we will have the opportunity to interact with the



craftswomen during dinner.

Women visiting the Grand Mosque are required to cover their heads with scarves and not wear shorts, beachwear, or sleeveless outfits. They will need to be fully covered, from hands until wrist and legs until foot. Men visiting the Grand Mosque should wear long trousers.

(B,L,D)

**Accommodation:**

Park Inn By Radisson or similar

**Day 7**

**Locations:** Muscat - Nizwa

**Overview:**

Today we travel through the fertile Batinah coast, which is dotted with beautiful beaches, forts, fishing villages, and sites famous for camel racing and bull fighting. The town of Nakhl lies in a secluded glen below the lofty mass of Jebel Nakhl.

While here, we visit Nakhl Fort, a 350-year-old fortress set in a gorge and surrounded by a mountain enclave. In 1990, restoration work began, using traditional building materials and period furnishings. The carved master gate is believed to date back to the 1830s, during the reign of Sayyid Said bin Sultan.

After visiting the fort, we continue on to the hot water springs. We commence our journey by ascending the Western Hajjar Mountains, which sit at just over 2,000 metres. On the way, we see beautiful villages with terraced farming. The mountain areas are also where Omani honey is produced. Beekeeping has been practised in Oman since ancient times. Here, the plants and trees flourish and provide honeybees with the nutrients they require: palm trees, coconut palms, cereals, limes, vegetables, sugar cane, frankincense, and gum trees. The specialist beekeepers of northern Oman are highly skilled in obtaining honey and propagating bee colonies in ways that are sustainable. In Northern Oman, the larger honeybee was traditionally kept in hollowed out trunks of date palms, locally known as *tubl*. When beekeepers require honey, they cut from the back of the *tubl*. Modern methods of beekeeping have now been introduced into Oma, which has



increased honey production. Our guide will take us to one of the beekeepers, though the availability of honey depends on the season.

After our picnic lunch, we continue our drive across the mountain landscape and arrive at Nizwa. Dinner tonight is at our hotel.

(B,L,D)

**Accommodation:**

2 nights at Golden Tulip Nizwa Hotel or similar

**Day 8**

**Locations:** Nizwa

**Overview:**

After breakfast, we travel to Jabreen, which was originally built as a defensive stronghold. Jabreen is perhaps the finest example of an Omani castle, and includes dungeons, passages, rooms, and ceilings decorated with fine carvings and paintings.

We continue our journey to the Western Hajar Mountains, which rises over 2,000 metres. We pause at Al Hamra, where 400-year-old mud houses are still standing and occupied.

Later on, we stop for lunch at Bait Al Safah, a very old Omani house which is the cradle of heritage and history. Here, we learn about the history of ancestors who lived here, as it is a living example of how life was in Al Hamra during ancient times.

We also visit the mountain village of Misfah, and explore the stone dwellings and terrace farming in the village of Wadi Ghul. We continue to Jebel Shams, mountain of the Sun, the tallest peak in Oman at a height of 3,010 metres offering spectacular views of the surroundings. In the late afternoon, we return to Nizwa.

(B,L)

**Accommodation:**

Golden Tulip Nizwa Hotel or similar

## Day 9

**Locations:** Nizwa - Wahiba Sands

### Overview:

Today we visit Nizwa Fort and the Nizwa Souq. The 17th-century round fort and Souq are famous for silver jewelry. Built on a solid base of rock, the huge tower was designed to withstand an attack from 24 cannons. A cattle auction takes place here every Friday. Forts and castles are Oman's most striking cultural landmarks, and together with towers and city walls, they have historically been used as defensive bastions. It is estimated that there are over 500 forts, castles, and towers in Oman.

Today we witness the diversity of Oman's landscape, from the dunes of Wahiba to oasis towns. Our drive takes us through a cross section of Oman's arid lands, wadis, and oasis villages. After travelling through the town of Ibra, where there is a women's souq every Wednesday, we get a glimpse of the amazing sand dunes. Lunch today will be at a local restaurant.

On the inland side of the great mountainous backbone of the Sultanate of Oman, where sands lap at the thresholds of farmlands, a string of border towns marks the zone of transition between nomadic and villagers. In the oasis villages of Oman, desert and village economies have merged for mutual benefit. Living along the sands are approximately 3,000 pastoralist Bedouins from different tribes (mainly herders of goats and camels). On our way, we stop at a Bedouin house where we will be welcomed with traditional Omani hospitality including an Omani "kahwa" and dates.

Running south from the Eastern Hajar Mountains to the Arabian Sea, the Wahiba Sands, described a sand sea, stretch almost 200 kilometres in length and 100 kilometres in width. The dunes rise above 100-150 metres in different shades of colour and shifting sands. Here

we enjoy a roller-coaster ride over the dunes.

Weather permitting, we enjoy a spectacular sunset over the dunes before our BBQ dinner.

(B,L,D)

**Accommodation:**

1 night at Desert Nights Camp.

**Day 10**

**Locations:** Wahiba Sands - Sur

**Overview:**

The early morning provides a fantastic opportunity to explore the dunes by foot or to just watch the shifting colours of the dunes before our departure.

We then take the winding road up to Wadi Bani Khalid. The walk to the pools of Wadi Bani Khalid is fascinating, and traces along the falaj (small irrigation canals) past mango trees and other crops. On arrival, we have a refreshing break where we will be able to enjoy a swim.

We continue our drive towards Sur and enjoy lunch at our hotel. We then visit a Dhow building yard. Regrettably, in recent times, the amount of Dhows being built has significantly decreased.

We also visit the village of Ayja, a small town on the other side of Sur that lured by the sea and quite charming with quaint houses on both sides of narrow alleys. Goats and sheep wandering the streets, and we will have time for a relaxing walk around the village.

(B,L)

**Accommodation:**

1 night at Sur Plaza Hotel or similar

## Day 11

**Locations:** Muscat

**Overview:**

After breakfast, we drive along the picturesque coastal road to Muscat. Our first stop is at Qalhat, one of the oldest towns and seaports in Oman. However, only the remnants of the city walls remain today. We visit the ruins of the tomb of the holy lady, Bibi Miriam, which stands high up on the cliff top.

We then continue to Wadi Tiwi, where we enjoy a walk through the narrow roads that lead us to lush plantations and pools with clear water. Here, we enjoy a packed lunch under the shades of palm trees. Our next stop is at the white sandy Fins beach for a swim, before we travel to Bimah Sinkhole, a spectacular limestone crater with blue green water at the bottom.

(B,L,D)

**Accommodation:**

2 nights at Park Inn by Radisson or similar

## Day 12

**Locations:** Muscat

**Overview:**

After breakfast, we visit the Omani Womens Association. The remainder of the day is at leisure, until our farewell dinner, which will be at a local restaurant.

(B,D)

**Accommodation:**

Park Inn By Radisson or similar

## Day 13

**Locations:** Muscat

**Overview:**

After breakfast, we say our farewells and the tour draws to a close.

## Inclusions / Exclusions

### What's included in our Tour

- Transport, lectures, and field trips as indicated.
- Services charges, hotel gratuities, and all local taxes.
- All domestic sightseeing and travel by first class air-conditioned vehicle.
- Domestic economy class air travel from Khasab to Muscat.
- Services of a Tour Leader throughout the tour.
- Applicable entry fees and services of local English-speaking guides.
- Detailed tour information booklet.
- 12 breakfasts, 9 lunches, and 6 dinners.

### What's not included in our Tour

- Items of a personal nature, such as telephone calls and laundry.
- Return economy class international airfare and departure taxes.
- Comprehensive travel insurance.

### Level 1 - Introductory to Moderate

Participants must be able to carry their own luggage, climb and descend stairs, moderate walking on uneven surfaces for 3 - 5 kilometres per day. Suitable for most fitness levels.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any requests for further information about this tour or any others offered by Odyssey Travel.