OMAN

DETAILED ITINERARY

DUBAI AND ABU DHABI

Aug 19/26



Oman - a stunning contrast of beaches, mountains and deserts, is one of the hidden treasures of the exotic Middle East. Add over a thousand ancient forts, castles and watchtowers, lively souqs, the Bedouin culture, and you have an unforgettable traditional Arabian experience. Mix in the extravagance and architecture of Dubai and Abu Dhabi and you have a unique Arabian experience filled with surprise and contrast.

We begin our journey in the United Arab Emirates, in the city of Dubai. We explore the city's architectural marvels and also take in the sites of nearby Abu Dhabi, including the stunning Sheikh Zayed Mosque. Travel by traditional dhow in the stunning fjords of Musandam. Explore Oman's thriving capital of Muscat. Visit the Grand Mosque, the largest in Oman and its bustling Muttrah souq. We cross the "Grand Canyon of Arabia" and hike to the remote village of Wadi Nakhr in the Jebel Shams. Hike in the Jebel Akhdar - the "Green Mountains"- and visit a palm tree oasis and the town of Bahla, once known for its black magic and "jins", and now a pottery making center.

FACTS & HIGHLIGHTS

• 20 land days • Start in Dubai, U.A.E. and finish in Salalah, Oman • all meals included • Includes 2 internal flights • Explore the sites of Dubai, Abu Dhabi & Muscat • Sail in the fjords of Musandam by dhow • Enjoy a desert adventure - Bedouin tents, camels and dunes • Hike in the Hajar Mountains • Visit the "Grand Canyon of Arabia" • Watch sea turtles laying eggs on the beach • Walk inside of wadis (dry river beds) • Explore the southern province of Salalah/ Dhofar • See famous frankincense trees • Visit the tallest building in the world, the Burj Khalifa in Dubai

DEPARTURE DATES & PRICE

Oct 28 - Nov 16, 2027 - $10995 USD

Oct 26 - Nov 14, 2028 - $10995 USD

Activity Level: 2-3

Comfort Level:

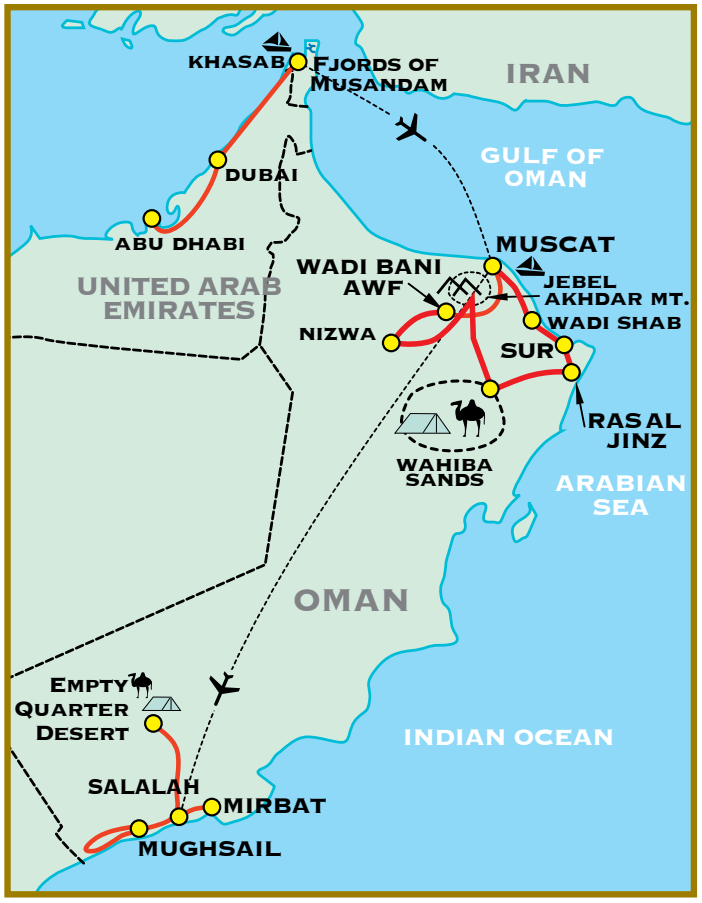
Travel is partially by microbus, 4 wheel drive landcruisers & traditional dhows. Roads can be rough and some off-roading may be required.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Comfortable hotels/lodges. 1 night in Bedouin tents with twin beds and private bathrooms; 1 night in simple tented camps in Empty Quarter with shared bathrooms.

We travel into the Great Wahiba Sands, where the amber-hued dunes meet the Arabian Sea, and an overnight in a traditional Bedouin camp awaits us. Travel along the coast to Ras Al Jinz, where we have the unique opportunity to see the endangered green turtles coming ashore at night to nest.

Flying to Salalah, we explore the southernmost province of Oman, known for its frankincense, the tomb of the Prophet Job, the natural titanic blow holes at Mughsail, and traditional Omani mud houses. We explore the "Lost City of Ubar" spending a night in the dunes of the Empty Quarter, as described by adventurer Wilfred Thesiger, before ending our journey in Salalah, the "garden city" of the south.



DAY 1 ARRIVE IN DUBAI

Upon arrival a transfer will be waiting for you at the airport. Day is free to rest or explore on your own. In the evening, meet your tour leader and fellow travelers for a welcome dinner and orientation.

Overnight in Dubai.

DAY 2 ABU DHABI SITES

Abu Dhabi is close enough to Dubai to make it a perfect day trip. In Abu Dhabi, the first destination is the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque, one of the largest and most impressive mosques in the world.

We continue our exploration of the city through the well laid out roads, surrounding lush greenery, beautiful parks, and rows and rows of trees until we reach Abu Dhabi's oldest building, Al Husn Palace, built in the 18th century.

Enjoy a magnificent view of the city by driving along the beautiful corniche and make a photo-stop at the breakwater. We then visit the Heritage Village and



journey to the past, to experience life before oil was discovered.

Also during our visit of Abu Dhabi, we will visit a falcon hospital. Falcons have been a part of UAE's culture, as falcons were traditionally used for hunting. This is a fascinating encounter with falcons up close, including the peregrine falcon, the fastest animal which has been clocked at 389 km/h (242 mph).

We return to Dubai for overnight.

DAY 3 DUBAI SITES

Today we set out on a full day tour of this fascinating city. We begin in Dubai marina before heading towards Palm Jumeirah, the famous palm shaped man-made island. We drive around the Palm passing the Atlantis Palm Hotel, built around the myth of the lost continent of Atlantis. We then head to the Burj Al Arab Hotel, the world's only seven star hotel, for a photo stop. Pass by Jumeirah Mosque, a spectacular example of modern Islamic architecture.

After lunch we visit Al Bastakiaya's old Al Fahidi Fort, home to the Dubai Museum, and take in views of the cannons and fortified walls. We cross Dubai's central waterway, Dubai Creek, in a traditional water taxi called an "abra" towards the Deira side. Here we soak up the colors and perfumes of the spice souq before heading to Dubai's legendary gold souq.

Later that evening, we visit the Burj Khalifa, the highest building in the world at 2,719 feet (829 meters) before enjoying dinner, while taking in the famous Dubai Mall Fountain show.

Overnight in Dubai.

DAY 4 DUBAI, TO KHASAB, FORTRESS

Today we say goodbye to the extravagance of Dubai and UAE and head towards Khasab, Oman. After lunch in a local village, we head out on a city tour of Khasab. Built at the beginning of the 17th century by the Portuguese, Khasab's natural harbor was perfectly situated to provide shelter from tough seas. Unlike many forts built for defensive purposes, Khasab was designed as a supply point for dates and water for Portuguese ships sailing through the strait. We visit Khasab fort and museum and explore the area's unique history.

Dinner and overnight in Khasab.

DAY 5 FJORDS OF MUSANDAM - DHOW CRUISE

Today we enjoy a full day cruise through the fjords of Musandam on board our traditional Omani dhow, where you can sit comfortably on cushions and carpets while feasting your eyes on the striking scenery. A dhow trip to the fjords offers an insight into its fantastic landscape. During the dhow cruise you can cruise into the fjords of Musandam and discover different villages. The dhow is anchored at the famous Telegraph Island as well as Seebi Island, where you can swim and snorkel in the clear waters. There is also the possibility to see humpback dolphins along the way. Lunch, refreshments, snorkeling equipment and towels will be provided.

We return to Khasab for dinner and overnight.

DAY 6 FLY TO MUSCAT, MUTTRAH SOUQ

Today we fly to Oman's capital city of Muscat. This afternoon we drive along the waterfront corniche and visit the famous old Muttrah souq. The colorful souq will take you back in time, allowing you to



browse, shop and practice your bartering skills.

After having enjoyed your time at the souq, you have a short walk along the corniche with lots of photo opportunities. The "frankincense burner" is a delight to watch at night with its full illumination. Dinner in local restaurant.

Overnight in Muscat.

DAY 7 MUSCAT SITES

Today we explore Muscat. With its natural harbor, Muscat means "anchorage" and lies in a natural volcanic bowl. Our exploration of the city starts with the visit to the Grand Mosque. The third biggest mosque in the world covering 416,000 square meters, it is a very good example of modern Omani architecture. The Grand Mosque, until recently, was home to the largest Persian carpet in the world.

Please note that women are required to cover their heads with a scarf and wear clothing that fully covers arms and legs. Shorts or sleeveless tops are not permitted. Men are also expected to be fully covered, and slip on shoes are recommended.

We have lunch at the National Hospitality College where we can cook and interact with local Omani students who are studying the hospitality industry.

After lunch, we explore the old section of town. Our first stop is at the Bait Zubair Museum to trace Oman's history and development, while seeing a wonderful display of historic photos and traditional furniture. Later we head to Al Alam Palace, the official palace of his Majesty Sultan Qaboos, and then visit the outside of the 16th century Portuguese forts, Mirani and Jalali.

Dinner and overnight in Muscat.

DAY 8 HOUSE OF AMOUAGE, TO NIZWA VIA NAKHAL FORT AND STUNNING WADI BANI AUF

Today we leave Muscat behind and head towards the mountains of Oman as we drive towards Nakhal. On the outskirts of Muscat, we visit the House of Amouage. Now in its 28th year, the House of Amouage creates some of the most expensive perfumes in the world for both men and women. Here in the headquarters, the blending of some

of the finest ingredients takes place, including frankincense and myrrh, found only in Oman and Yemen, using rose from Taif in Saudi Arabia and Arabian amber.

We continue to Nakhal Fort and sparkling springs (the fort may be closed for renovations but ElderTreks is monitoring its re-opening.) We visit to Wakan village, famous for its terrace farming. We then cross Wadi Bani Auf, a 70km stretch of graded road with many switchbacks, offering spectacular views. We will enjoy a picnic lunch enrolee.

We visit the charming mountain village of Bilad Sayt where we can take in the beauty of its landscape.

Dinner and overnight in Nizwa.

DAY 9 NIZWA CATTLE MARKET, JABAL AKHDAR

Our day starts with a visit to Nizwa's renowned cattle market. Taking place every Friday, this is where locals buy and trade the best livestock, from goats to cattle, directly from the herders. It's a fascinating event to experience as you immerse yourself in the dealings and trading that takes place. From here, we take some time to explore the Nizwa souq, one of the few souqs in Oman featuring exclusive traditional Omani goods, including pottery, intricately hand-carved "khanjars" and ornamental silver jewelry. We also explore the Round Tower Fort, built in the 17th century.

We then drive to the mountain range of Jabal Akhdar, known for its labyrinth of river valleys and terraced orchards; where pomegranates, apricots, and roses grow in abundance due to its mild climate. Upon arrival, we will enjoy lunch followed by a walk to take in the views.

Dinner and overnight in Nizwa.

DAY 10 JEBEL SHAMS AND THE GRAND CANYON OF ARABIA

We begin our day driving to the impressive Jebel Shams, or Mountain of the Sun. As the highest point in Oman (3,000 meters/9,842 feet) we will enjoy a view of Wadi Nakhr, otherwise known as the Grand Canyon of Oman. From there it is a short drive to where we will commence the Balcony Walk in the village of Al Khutim.







The Balcony Walk (2-3 hours), considered one of the most impressive in Oman, takes us along the canyon walls, offering dramatic views of the valley below. This unique trail has its challenges but may be one of the most rewarding-hikes you will ever take. After lunch we will return to our hotel in the mountains with a stop at the village of Wadi Ghul. Built over a thousand years ago this village is also known as the "cave houses" of Oman, built in the pre-Islamic time by Persians. We end our day with a drive/walk to Wadi Nakhr offering some of the most impressive views in Oman.

Dinner and overnight in Al Hamra

DAY 11 AL HAMRA, BAHLA FORT, JABRIN CASTLE

Today we will start our day exploring the village of Al Hamra with a visit of a typical Omani house, which has been turned into a museum. There you will learn about the customs of an Omani village along with ginger tea and Omani bread.

Departing al Hamra we next stop at Bahla Fort (UNESCO) and visit Jabrin Castle. The oasis of Bahla owes its prosperity to the Banu Nebhan tribe, which dominated the area from the beginning of the 12th century to the end of the 15th century. The ruins of this immense fort with its walls and towers of unbaked bricks and stone foundations are remarkable examples of the power of this region and its importance in Omani history. We then visit Jabrin Castle, the finest of Oman's Castles built in the 17th century. The castle became a primary influence in Omani learning and displays the highest achievement of Omani ceiling paintings and beautifully executed woodcarvings.

Dinner and overnight in Al Hamra

DAY 12 GREAT WAHIBA SANDS & BEDOUIN TENTS

After breakfast, we begin our journey into the desert. The Great Wahiba Sands are longitudinal sand dunes that run south from the Eastern Hajars to the Arabian Sea. The dunes are 100-150 meters high in stunning shades of orange and amber.

The area is also home to the Bedouins and their many camels, with camps along the tracks and trails. We stop to visit a Bedouin family and enjoy some Bedouin hospitality with qahwa (Omani coffee) and dates, before reaching our tented camp.

In the evening we go on a sunset dune walk before enjoying a traditional Arabic dinner, complete with Omani music and dancing.

Overnight camping in traditional Bedouin tents, with private, open-air washroom facilities.

DAY 13 DESERT EXPERIENCE, TURTLE WATCHING

Today we experience the thrills of dune driving in the desert. We cross the desert to Quahed on the coast. Afterwards we enjoy a picnic lunch by the beach.

We then pass through the old fishing village of Al Ashkara before reaching Ras al Jinz, the easternmost point in Oman, and the natural nesting beach for endangered green turtles. Oman is a vital area for green turtles in the Indian Ocean, being heavily protected by the government. In fact, over 275 of the Sultanate's beaches double-up as nesting grounds for five of the seven recognized species of sea turtles, the most common being the green turtle.

After dinner tonight, we are led to the beach by an ecologist to (hopefully) see the females return to their beach to lay eggs. (Please note that the main nesting season is Jun-Aug, at other times of the year, there may not be turtles every night.)

Dinner and overnight in Ras al Jinz.


مقهى قلعة نزوى
NIZWA FORT COFFEE SHOP
ANTIQUE HOUSE

DAY 14 SUR, DHOW BUILDING YARDS; WADI TIWI

After breakfast we proceed to Sur. Our first stop is the lighthouse of Sur which affords a magnificent view of the harbor. Continuing on we visit the dhow building yards, where we get to see these wooden boats being built by hand. We later stop in Qalhat, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of Oman's most ancient towns, dating from the 2nd century AD.

Our day ends in Wadi Tiwi, a spectacular deep and narrow gorge carved out of the mountains, running between towering cliffs right down to the sea. It's old traditional villages, surround by lush plantations of dates and bananas are a great example of how the network of "aflaj" irrigation systems still work to this day.

Dinner and overnight in Wadi Shab.

DAY 15 WADI SHAB, MUSCAT BY NIGHT

We spend the day exploring Wadi Shab. Known as one of the most beautiful places in Oman, Wadi Shab is a spectacular range of narrow mountains with turquoise pools and waterfalls, surrounded by sandstone walls lined with date plantations and banana palms. Our hike today is a mix of trekking and swimming in "wadi" pools. We will return to the hotel for lunch before heading to Bimmah Sinkhole.

Later in the evening, we enjoy a sunset cruise along the Muscat harbor. We embark on a traditional dhow and see the Muscat coast through the eyes of ancient seafarers. We stop at a natural cove and pass by the spectacular Al Bustan Palace Hotel before we return back to the marina. Tonight we enjoy a traditional Omani dinner at a private Omani museum.

Dinner and overnight in Muscat.

DAY 16 FLY TO SALALAH, TOMB OF THE PROPHET JOB, MUGHSAIL & FRANKINCENSE

Today we fly to Salalah, the capital of the southernmost province of Dhofar. We begin with a visit to the ancient tomb of the Prophet Job, situated in the scenic green mountains of the Salalah Plains. (May be undergoing renovations, but ElderTreks will continue to monitor the re-opening.)

We continue on to Mughsail Beach where "Blow-holes" - (perforations in the limestone rock) through which sea water gushes during high tide. Experience the hairpin bend roads for approximately 15/20 kms, before arriving at a wadi. The views are breathtaking due to heights involved. This is the road that takes you to the Yemen border. At the nearby bird sanctuary, one may see seasonal birds. Enroute, the stark shape of leafless Frankincense Trees dot the landscape. Once traded as a commodity more precious than gold, frankincense harvested in Dhofar is rated the best in the world.

Dinner and overnight in Salalah.

DAY 17 TAQAH CASTLE, SUMHARAM & MIRBAT

Our day begins with a visit to the fishing village of Taqah, famous for the manufacture of dried sardines and its traditional Dhofari stone houses. We visit the old Taqah Castle, the former official residence of the Wali governor of the region, and obtain a glimpse into the rich history of the region. (The castle may be closed due to renovations but ElderTreks will continue to monitor the re-opening.)

We proceed onward to Khor Rori creek, the site

of the ruined city of Samhuram (UNESCO) and capital of ancient Arabia's frankincense trade. Excavations have produced evidence of an ancient city with trade links by sea to Far Eastern destinations and with even distant Greece. We enjoy a lecture by an archaeologist on site

After lunch, we explore Mirbat, the ancient capital of Dhofar and where the frankincense trail began. In the 9th century it was the most important trading point for horses, slaves and frankincense. We explore the town, taking notice of the unique architecture and old houses famous for its woodcarvings, and visit one of Dhofar's best known historic sites, Bin Ali's Tomb. The tomb of Mohamed Bin Ali, who died in 1135 AD, is a fine example of medieval architecture.

Dinner and overnight in Salalah.

DAY 18 THE LOST CITY OF UBAR, EMPTY QUARTER CAMPING

We begin the day by exploring Salalah's Souk al Samak where we can interact with the locals in an authentic and exotic atmosphere. Travelling north we visit the largest wadi filled with over 30,000 Frankincense trees and recognized as a UNESCO site in 2001.

After lunch, we begin our journey into the Empty Quarter in search of the lost city of Ubar, or the Atlantis of the Sands. Known as the lost city deep in the sands of Arabia, Ubar is thought to be the fabled center for the rich frankincense trade thousands of years ago. We walk along the Wadi Dawka, dotted by frankincense trees and then drive along the old frankincense trade route to Shisr, an Iron Age site, thought to be the infamous "Lost City of Ubar". From here, we follow Wadi Hadhef to our camp in the dunes of the Empty Quarter (Rub-al-Khali) evocatively described by Wilfred Thesiger.

Tonight we enjoy a true adventurous experience as we have the Empty Quarter just to ourselves. Individual tents and mattresses are provided. Shared bathroom facilities are on site.

DAY 19 RETURN TO SALALAH

For those wishing to rise early, a sunrise walk is a great way to start the day. After breakfast we begin our return journey back to Salalah. After lunch you will have time to relax around the pool or on the beach.

Later afternoons visit the Al Balid Museum located in the archaeological site. Lecture by the Archeologist at the Site.

We also visit the largest Frankincence souk in the country, which connects with the Sultan's private beach and palace. We conclude the day with a visit to a local farm growing tropical fruits such as bananas, papayas and coconuts. Our evening ends with a farewell dinner in a local restaurant in Salalah.

Overnight in Salalah.

DAY 20 DEPART SALALAH

We say a fond farewell to Oman with a transfer to the airport for our departure flights.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

1. HOW BIG ARE THE GROUPS?

Each group is limited to 16 participants. Small groups are an important ingredient in adventure travel. Small groups allow for more interaction and more personalized service throughout the itinerary.

2. WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THE TOUR PRICE?

All accommodations throughout; all meals, starting with dinner on day 1 and finishing with breakfast on departure day (i.e. the last day of the ElderTreks tour); bottled drinking water throughout the trip; all internal transportation; airport transfers on day 1 and departure day (i.e. the last day of the ElderTreks tour); all day trips and entrance fees as outlined in the itinerary; tips for hotels (porterage), national guide, restaurants and spot guides; services of a trip leader.

3. WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE TOUR PRICE?

International flights, tips to ElderTreks tour leader, alcoholic drinks, visas and travel insurance.

4. ARE THESE "EDUCATIONAL" TOURS?

Yes, in the broadest sense of the word, "educational". We visit museums and local villages. We also have talks and discussions on many aspects of the history and culture of Oman, but this is only one aspect of what we do. We believe that it is equally educational to meet new people on a non-commercial basis, visit their homes and even try to learn a few words in the native language. Sometimes the most "educational" moments are spent having a cold drink with locals in a street market.

5. HOW DO WE TRAVEL DURING THE TOUR?

All local transportation is included in the land price of the trip. The majority of our travel is by 4x4s, with some micro-coach travel and 2 internal flights. We also travel by traditional dhow and camel.

6. WHAT ARE OUR ACCOMMODATIONS LIKE?

We stay in comfortable accommodations with private bath. One night in the desert in traditional bedouin tents with two single beds with mattresses and bedding, sitting area, private open air facilities, toilet, sink and shower. One night in the desert in a tented mobile camp, with mattress and bedding and shared toilet and shower facilities.

7. WHAT ABOUT THE WEATHER?

Omani winter is from the middle of November to the middle of March, the best time of the year to visit. Average temperatures in Muscat in Jan/Feb/Mar are highs of 83°F (28°C) and lows of 65°F (18°C). The south has cooler average daytime highs around 77°F (25°C), during Jan/Feb/Mar with a slightly higher humidity. In the interior temperatures are cooler, which can get as low as 55°F (12°C).

8. WHEN IS PAYMENT DUE?

A non-refundable deposit of $500 USD (plus insurance if you desire it) is due as soon as you decide to go and will reserve your place on the tour. The balance of the land payment is due 120 days before departure. Cancellation charges are applicable and these are outlined in the "Terms & Conditions" section of our bro`chure.

9. IS MEDICAL INSURANCE REQUIRED?

Insurance coverage is not included in the cost of your trip. Please note that medical insurance is not required for this adventure but is recommended. ElderTreks offers comprehensive travel insurance and we are happy to provide you with a quote if you call our office. If you are purchasing insurance elsewhere, please ensure you provide the details to ElderTreks as soon as possible.

****Please note those travelers with pre-existing medical conditions must take out travel insurance at the time of deposit***

10. WHAT MEALS ARE INCLUDED?

All meals are included, starting with dinner on day 1 and finishing with breakfast on departure day. In many cases, we simply order a number of shared dishes, so that we can try everything.

11. WHAT SHOULD I TAKE ON THE TOUR?

There is a detailed "What to Take" list in our Trip Kit, which we will send to you after you have booked the trip.

12. CAN YOU ARRANGE MY FLIGHTS?

We would be happy to take care of your air arrangements. ElderTreks offers personalized flight itineraries, not group flights. Stop over enroute, come in a few days early, or extend your stay. Call us for a customized itinerary.

13. WHAT IF I WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION?

If you have any further questions about the adventure, please call our office for more details. A Trip Specialist will be happy to answer your questions. A Trip Kit containing further details on the destination will be sent to you once you have booked the trip.







