

7-Day Oman Itinerary: Muscat, Nizwa & the Wahiba Sands

Oman in a week: Muscat's silver-domed Grand Mosque and the lantern-lit alleys of Mutrah Souq, the hilltop fort towns of Nizwa and the terraced rose gardens of Jabal Akhdar, then a run for the interior — a camel trek and a night under canvas in the Wahiba Sands, a working dhow-building yard in Sur, and a midnight watch for nesting green turtles at Ras Al Jinz — with real hotels, licensed operators, and 2026 prices for every stop.

DURATION	BEST TIME TO GO	FROM
	cooler temperatures across the coast and interior (68–86°F / 20–30°C), with Jabal Akhdar's mountain air staying mild even in the shoulder months (avoid June–August, when interior heat regularly tops 113°F / 45°C)	for 2 people

DAY 1

Arrive in Muscat

Land at Muscat International Airport and settle into the capital, with the afternoon built around the country's most photographed landmark before a first taste of Omani cooking.

Private Airport Transfer — Zahara Tours

~30 minutes · From \$45 USD, private car for 2

A licensed Muscat DMC meets arrivals at the airport with a private air-conditioned car for the 25-minute drive into the city — no need to negotiate a taxi fare after a long flight.

Zahara Tours · +968 2440 0844 · zaharatours.com

Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque

~1.5 hours, self-guided · Free entry (non-Muslim visiting hours Sat–Thu, 8–11am)

Oman's largest mosque, completed in 2001, holds one of the world's biggest hand-loomed carpets and a 14-metre Swarovski chandelier under its main dome — modest dress (covered shoulders, knees and hair for women) is required, and abayas are loaned free at the entrance.

Dinner — Kargeen Caffé

~1.5 hours · \$25–\$35 USD / person

A rambling open-air restaurant in Madinat Qaboos built around courtyards and majlis seating, serving shuwa (slow-roasted lamb) and other Omani classics beneath strung lanterns — a longtime favourite for a first night in the capital.

Kargeen Caffé · +968 9925 3351

Overnight — The Chedi Muscat

From \$480–\$620 USD / night, for 2 people

A GHM-managed beachfront resort west of the city centre, its long reflecting pools and palm gardens widely rated among the most elegant hotels on the Arabian Peninsula.

The Chedi Muscat · +968 24 52 44 00 · ghmhotels.com/en/muscat

DAY 2

Old Muscat & Mutrah

A full day on foot through the capital's old quarters, from a private-collection museum of Omani heritage to the incense-scented alleys of one of the Gulf's oldest souqs.

Bait Al Zubair Museum

~1.5 hours, self-guided · \$8 USD / person

A private family museum in a converted Muscat house tracing Omani history through weaponry, jewellery, traditional dress and a scale model of old Muscat — one of the best introductions to the country's culture before heading into the interior.

Bait Al Zubair · +968 2208 4700 · baitalzubair.com

Mutrah Souq & Corniche

~2 hours, self-guided · Free to browse

A covered maze of alleyways trading frankincense, silver khanjars and pashminas since at least the early 1900s, opening onto the harbourfront Corniche and the watchtower-studded hills above Mutrah — busiest, and most atmospheric, after sunset.

Overnight — The Chedi Muscat

From \$480–\$620 USD / night, for 2 people

Second night at the resort before tomorrow's drive into the interior.

The Chedi Muscat · +968 24 52 44 00 · ghmhotels.com/en/muscat

DAY 3

Muscat to Nizwa

A two-and-a-half-hour drive over the Hajar Mountains to Oman's former capital, home to one of the country's best-preserved forts and a still-thriving traditional souq.

Private Transfer — Zahara Tours, Muscat to Nizwa

~2.5 hours · From \$95 USD, private car for 2

A private driver-guide collects you from the hotel for the drive inland across the Hajar Mountains, with a stop en route at a roadside viewpoint over the range.

Zahara Tours · +968 2440 0844 · zaharatours.com

Nizwa Fort

~1.5 hours, self-guided · \$13 USD / person

A 17th-century circular fort and adjoining castle built to defend the town's strategic crossroads, with a maze of stairways, date stores and a rooftop gun platform looking out over Nizwa's palm groves.

Nizwa Souq

~1 hour, self-guided · Free to browse

Stalls of Omani silver, pottery, dates and halwa beneath the fort's walls — arrive on a Friday morning for the adjoining cattle and goat market, one of the region's last traditional livestock auctions.

Overnight — Falaj Daris Hotel

From \$95–\$130 USD / night, for 2 people

A long-standing hotel a few minutes' drive from central Nizwa, built around gardens fed by one of the town's ancient falaj irrigation channels.

Falaj Daris Hotel · +968 2541 0500 · falajdarishotel.com

DAY 4**Jabal Akhdar**

Up into the Hajar Mountains to the Saiq Plateau, where terraced rose and pomegranate gardens cling to cliffs above a 6,500-foot drop.

4WD Transfer — Nizwa to Jabal Akhdar

~1 hour · From \$70 USD, private 4WD for 2

The road up to the Saiq Plateau climbs more than a mile in elevation on a route open only to 4WD vehicles — Zahara Tours arranges the vehicle and driver as part of the same private-guide package.

Zahara Tours · +968 2440 0844 · zaharatours.com

Saiq Plateau Rose Terraces & Diana's Point

~2 hours, self-guided · Free

Stone-walled terraces of Damask roses (harvested each spring for Jabal Akhdar's rosewater distilleries) step down the mountainside toward Diana's Point, a clifftop viewpoint named for a royal visit, with a sheer drop into the canyon below.

Wadi Bani Habib Village Walk

~1.5 hours, self-guided · Free

A short hike down into a canyon village abandoned in the 1990s for the plateau above, its mudbrick houses and terraced fields still standing among walnut and pomegranate trees.

Overnight — Alila Jabal Akhdar

From \$520–\$650 USD / night, for 2 people

A stone-and-timber resort built directly into the canyon rim at 6,500 feet, with an infinity pool cantilevered over the gorge — regularly rated one of the best hotels in the Middle East.

Alila Jabal Akhdar · +968 25 34 42 00 · hyatt.com/alila-hotels-and-resorts/mctal-alila-jabal-akhdar

DAY 5**Jabal Akhdar to the Wahiba Sands**

Down from the mountains and east across the gravel plains to the towering dunes of the Wahiba Sands for a night under canvas with a Bedouin-guided camp.

Transfer — Jabal Akhdar to Wahiba Sands

~3.5 hours · From \$110 USD, private car for 2

The drive descends from the plateau and cuts east across the gravel desert to the edge of the Wahiba Sands, where 4WDs swap onto sand tracks for the final approach to camp.

Zahara Tours · +968 2440 0844 · zaharatours.com

Camel Trek & Dune Bashing — Oman Safaris

~3 hours · From \$85 USD / person

A late-afternoon camel trek with Bedouin guides across the Sharqiya dunes, followed by a dune-bashing drive to a high ridge for sunset over the sands — run by a local operator specialising in Wahiba Sands desert camps.

Oman Safaris · +968 9286 4776 · omansafaris.com

Overnight — Desert Camp, Wahiba Sands

From \$150 USD / person, all-inclusive (dinner, bonfire & breakfast)

A private tented camp among the dunes with a Bedouin-style dinner and bonfire under the stars, arranged through Oman Safaris as part of the desert package — expect no WiFi and some of the clearest night skies in the country.

Oman Safaris · +968 9286 4776 · omansafaris.com

DAY 6

Wahiba Sands to Sur & Ras Al Jinz

East to the coast, with a swim stop in a mountain wadi before an evening watching endangered green turtles nest on one of the world's most important turtle beaches.

Wadi Bani Khalid

~1.5 hours, self-guided · Free

A palm-lined canyon of turquoise pools fed by a spring-fed stream, roughly on the route between the Wahiba Sands and the coast — a welcome swim stop before the drive continues to Sur.

Sur Dhow-Building Yard

~45 minutes, self-guided · Free

Shipwrights at Oman's last traditional dhow yard still build the wooden trading vessels by eye and hand tool, much as Sur's sailors have for centuries — visitors are welcome to watch from the yard floor.

Turtle Watching — Ras Al Jinz Turtle Reserve

~2 hours, guided, 9pm departure · \$30 USD / person

A ranger-led night walk onto the beach at the Arabian Peninsula's most important green turtle nesting site, timed to watch females coming ashore to lay eggs (or hatchlings making for the sea, depending on season).

Ras Al Jinz Turtle Reserve · +968 9655 0606 · rasaljinz-turtlereserve.com

Overnight — Ras Al Jinz Eco-Lodge

From \$320–\$420 USD / night, for 2 people, includes turtle-watching entry & full board

Simple air-conditioned rooms and eco-tents built into the dunes just steps from the reserve's beach, run by the reserve itself so the nightly turtle walk is a short stroll rather than a drive.

Ras Al Jinz Turtle Reserve · +968 9655 0606 · rasaljinz-turtlereserve.com

DAY 7

Wadi Shab & Departure

A last stop at one of Oman's most photographed canyons before the drive back to Muscat for the flight home.

Wadi Shab

~2 hours, self-guided (45-minute hike) · Free (small boat crossing ~\$2 USD return)

A short boat ferries hikers across the wadi's mouth to a trail that climbs past turquoise pools to a hidden waterfall and cave — one of the most-photographed stops on Oman's eastern coast, best visited before midday.

Private Transfer — Sur/Ras Al Jinz to Muscat Airport

~2.5 hours · From \$120 USD, private car for 2

The final leg back to Muscat International Airport, with time built in for the Wadi Shab stop and a coffee break at the Bimmah Sinkhole if the flight schedule allows.

Zahara Tours · +968 2440 0844 · zaharatours.com

Departure — Muscat International Airport (MCT)

Self-guided

Closes the loop on a week that ran from silver-domed mosque to mountain rose terrace to desert dune to turtle beach — check international carriers' recommended arrival times, typically 3 hours before departure.