

# The Gulf Experience-- Emirates and Oman

This tour will be personally led by Donald and Lynne King, owners of King's Travel Service and Crossbridge Tours, who have resided in the Middle East for the last 10 years.)

Call 888-836-5464 for more information. (We can arrange your airfare also)

## Day-by-Day Itinerary

### Friday, January 21

Check your documents one last time and depart your gateway city for Dubai.

### Saturday, January 22

Arrival at Dubai International airport. You will be met by a Crossbridge Tours representative and transfer to your hotel. Get a good night's sleep. The adventure is about to begin.

### Sunday January 23

After breakfast, our tour starts with photo stop at Burj Al Arab, the world's tallest hotel, and Jumeira Mosque. Then we move towards the Batakiya region of Dubai where we will see the old wind-tower houses, and close by stands the Al Fahidi Fort, now housing the Dubai Museum. Later we will stop to sense the magical aromas of the Spice Souq and the dazzle of the Gold Souq.

In the afternoon, we'll take you to the core of Dubai for a visit of the world's tallest building, Burj Khalifa. Visit the observatory at the 124th floor, from where you can see the rest of the metropolis 800m under your feet. Later on, an exciting shopping tour. Famous for its luxury malls, Dubai is undoubtedly the shopping capital of the Middle East.

A dhow cruise dinner is set for the evening. Enjoy 2 hrs cruise with the best view in town-- Dubai's illuminated skyline under the open stars, while dining accompanied by live music on board Return to your hotel.

### Monday, January 24

After breakfast, we drive towards Abu Dhabi, capital of the UAE and only slightly more than an hour away. First we visit the Grand Mosque, one of the world's largest mosques. We will pass by the Presidential Palace of Sultan Khalifa Bin Sayeed Al Nahyan. Next, we proceed for a photo stop at the Emirates Palace, believed to be the most expensive hotel ever built in the world.

The tour includes a visit to the Heritage Village, overlooking the corniche, that will take us to the traditional life of Abu Dhabi. Next, we stop at Ittihad Square for a photo stop, and later to the Abu Dhabi Cultural Foundation, a modern complex with traditional design. We will end our tour by strolling around at the Marina Mall. Drive back to Dubai.

### Tuesday, January 25

Transfer to Dubai International airport for your flight to Muscat.

Arrival at Muscat International Airport. Meet & greet and transfer to the hotel.

Your afternoon will be at your own leisure.

### Wednesday, January 26

After breakfast leave on an air-conditioned 4WD along the coastal road to Sur. On the way, we stop at the Bimah Sinkhole, a geological scenic wonder. From here it's a short distance to Fins Beach. Later we move to the beautiful Wadi Shaab, for a short hike into its deep gorges. A short distance from here is Qalhat where we see Beebi Miriam's tomb, the last building left standing after the Portuguese razed it in the 16th Century. Picnic Lunch. We then move to Sur, the old East Africa Port. Visit dhow yards where dhows are still being made by hand.

Check in at the hotel. After dinner, we move to Ras Al Jinz to witness a spectacular event: the Green Turtles nesting.

#### **Thursday, January 27**

After breakfast, we drive towards Wadi Bani Khalid, the lost Shangri-la and a beautiful wadi with crystal clear pools. Once there, you will hardly resist to jump in one of the pools for a refreshing swim. Later we move to Wahiba Sands, a vast mass of undulating sea of sands. Indulge in dune bashing, sand surfing or an optional camel ride. After a BBQ dinner, enjoy the night under the stars or in the huts at the desert camp.

#### **Friday, January 28**

After breakfast, we leave for Nizwa and will seek out the Palaces of yesteryear from which sovereign Lords surveyed their kingdom at Nizwa, the old capital of Oman. Nizwa is a fascinating city which clusters around an imposing circular-towered fort built during the mid-17th century. Nizwa Souq, which some travelers prefer to Muttrah Souq, sits at the base of the fort.

Shop for *khanjars* (Omani daggers) and other handicrafts. After lunch we will drive to Bahla, a delightful town and take a look at Bahla Fort, a UNESCO Heritage Site, the oldest fort in Oman with foundations possibly as old as 1500 years. Nearby is Jabrin Fort, which is not properly named, for it was built primarily as a residence, not as a fort, and is one of the best preserved structures in Oman, is famous for its ceiling paintings and wood carvings, the best extant examples of those ancient Omani crafts. We'll return to Nizwa for dinner and overnight.

#### **Saturday, January 29**

After breakfast, just few minutes drive from our hotel, we visit the magnificent Jibreen Castle, Further on is Bahla, the oldest recorded region of civilization in Oman. There is the enormous Bahla fort here, which has earned a place in the UNESCO's world heritage list of monuments. Today, Bahla is the pottery capital of Oman. Return to Muscat for an afternoon city tour

#### **Sunday, January 30**

Today goodbyes are in order... to friends we have made and to this special destination. However, we are certain a portion of both will remain in your heart forever. But we will have some free time in case you need to make some last-minute purchases of souvenirs, then a visit to the Grand Mosque before we transfer to the airport.

***\$2580 per person double occupancy including visa fees, all transfers, portorage, 2 meals per day in Muscat, 20 total meals, all transportation, all entrance fees, all tour fees and all guide fees. Single supplement (if available) \$600. Airfare and insurance are not included.***

*Call 888 836-5464 for more information.*

A Musandam 3-day extension is available. Call for more information.