

OMAN-SULTANATE OF



Country Dialing Code (Tel/Fax): ++968

Directorate General of Tourism: PO Box 550, Postal Code 113, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman Tel: 796 527, Fax: 794 213 or 794 239

Capital: Muscat Time: GMT + 4

Background: In 1970, QABOOS bin Said Al Said ousted his father and has ruled as sultan ever since. His extensive modernization program has opened the country to the outside world and has preserved a long-standing political and military relationship with Britain. Oman's moderate, independent foreign policy has sought to maintain good relations with all Middle Eastern countries.

Location: Middle East, bordering the Arabian Sea, Gulf of Oman, and Persian Gulf, between Yemen and UAE

Map References: Middle East

Area: total: 212,460 sq km land: 212,460 sq km water: 0 sq km

Climate: dry desert; hot, humid along coast; hot, dry interior; strong southwest summer monsoon (May to September) in far south

Terrain: vast central desert plain, rugged mountains in north and south

Natural Resources: petroleum, copper, asbestos, some marble, limestone, chromium, gypsum, natural gas

Population: 2,533,389 note: includes 527,078 non-nationals (July 2000 est.)

Nationality: noun: Omani(s) adjective: Omani

Ethnic Groups: Arab, Baluchi, South Asian (Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan, Bangladeshi), African

Religions: Ibadhi Muslim 75%, Sunni Muslim, Shi'a Muslim, Hindu

Languages: Arabic (official), English, Baluchi, Urdu, Indian dialects

Economy: Oman's economic performance improved significantly in 1999 due largely to the mid-year upturn in oil prices. The government is moving ahead with privatization of its utilities, the development of a body of commercial law to facilitate foreign investment, and increased budgetary outlays. Oman continues to liberalize its markets in an effort to accede to the World Trade Organization (WTO) and is likely to gain membership in 2000.

Industries: crude oil production and refining, natural gas production, construction, cement, copper

Currency: 1 Omani rial (RO) = 1,000 baiza

Railways: 0 km

Highways: total: 32,800 km paved: 9,840 km (including 550 km of expressways) unpaved: 22,960 km (1996 est.)

Ports and Harbors: Matrah, Mina' al Fahl, Mina' Raysut

Airports: 142 (1999 est.) Airports - with paved runways: total: 6 over 3,047 m: 4 2,438 to 3,047 m: 1 914 to 1,523 m: 1 (1999 est.) Airports - with unpaved runways: total: 136 over 3,047 m: 2 2,438 to 3,047 m: 6 1,524 to 2,437 m: 56 914 to 1,523 m: 37 under 914 m: 35 (1999 est.)

Visa: Any visitor arriving in Oman without a visa or "No Objection Certificate" (NOC) will be refused entry. Visitors are not allowed to enter Oman by road unless their visa or NOC states such validity and a designated point of entry. A NOC is obtainable from the Royal Oman Police Immigration Department. Travellers who have resided in one of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries for at least one year and who hold a valid residence permit and labour card may obtain a tourist visa on arrival, provided they meet certain conditions regarding professional status.

Duty Free: The following items may be imported into Oman without incurring customs duty: 2 litres of alcoholic beverage (non-Muslims only); a reasonable quantity of tobacco products; 227ml perfume.

Health: no specific health precautions

HOTELS•MOTELS•INNS

MUSCAT

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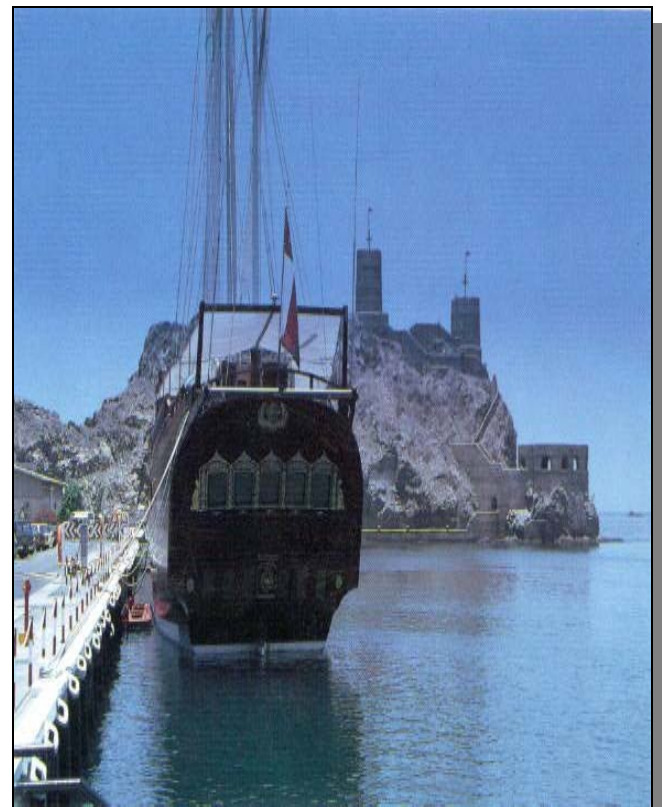
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