



MAP OF OMAN



SOUTH AL BATINAH

The governorate of South Al Batinah lies west of Muscat, bordered by the Sea of Oman to the north and the Al Hajar Mountains to the south. The coastal governorate offers picturesque fishing villages, stunning beaches, medieval forts and endless date palm plantations.

HOW DO YOU REACH SOUTH AL BATINAH?

The South Al Batinah Governorate can easily be reached from Muscat by following the Al Batinah-Muscat road, passing through Barka and Al Musannah along the way and onto the Al Maladdah roundabout. A left turn here leads to Al Rustaq, South Al Batinah's central wilayat, passing through Al Awabi and Nakhal, and onwards to Wadi Al Ma'awil.

DAY 1

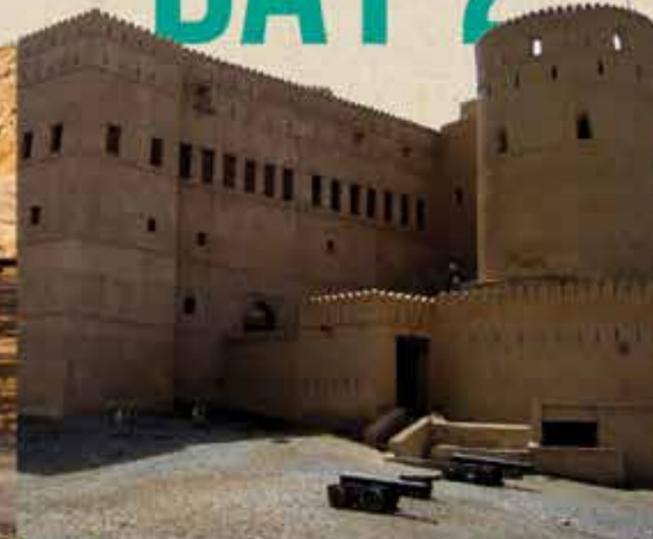


The impressive Barka Castle is located only a few hundred meters from the shore of the Gulf of Oman and the bustling fish market located close to the beach.

Just a short drive away lies the beautiful old fortified house of Bait Na'aman. For lunch, you can choose one of restaurants in the area, famous for their Omani traditional dishes, or take a picnic and rest in the shade of the lush trees and vegetation found at the Al Naseem park.

You can spend the rest of the day taking a relaxing walk and collecting beautiful shells on the soft sandy beach of nearby Al Sawadi. There you can even rent a boat to the nearby Ad Daymaniyat Islands, a location known for having one of the most spectacular marine ecosystems in the region.

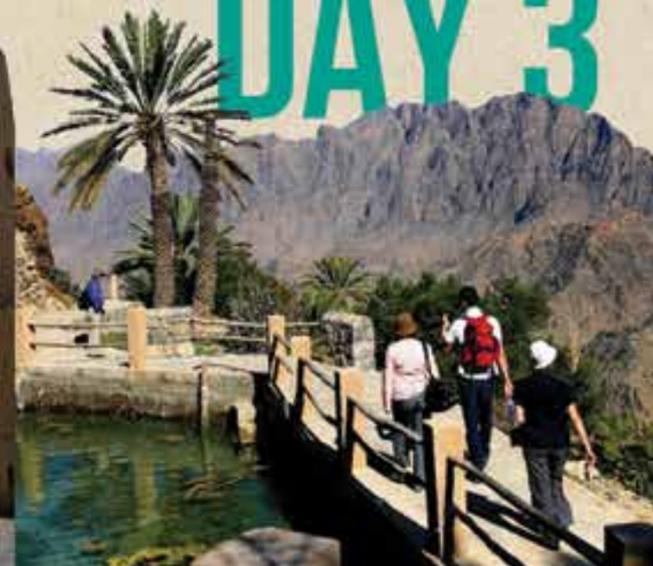
DAY 2



The Wilayat of Al Musannah is home to several historical forts and castles, each featuring its own unique architecture and design. The first of these is the Al Musannah Castle, located close to the beach. Just a short drive away, you will find the Ar Rustaq fort, a historic site well worth a visit if you wish to learn about the defensive tactics used by its early inhabitants. Look out for the cannons which are still mounted atop the tall walls of the fort. Also located nearby is the Al Hazm Castle, considered to be an intriguing example of early Islamic architecture. The intricately crafted doors, ceilings and walls, which remain intact to this day, make for outstanding photo opportunities.

For nature lovers, the area is also home to several stunning Wadis including Wadi Bani Awf, Wadi Al Hoqain, Wadi Bani Ghafir and Wadi Bani Hani. The more adventurous among you can also make their way up these Wadis right to the springs that feed them; such as Ain Al Kasfa, famous for its hot sulfuric water with temperatures approaching 45°C.

DAY 3



The village of Al Alia'a is a great place to begin your third day in South Al Batinah. Just as intriguing as the beautiful architecture of the homes in the village, are the caves and secret passages that people used in the past as an escape route in the case of an emergency.

Drive inland and find Nakhal Fort nestled at the foot of the Al Hajar Mountains adjacent to tranquil hot springs. You can even sample the waters here, putting their rumoured healing properties to the test. The mountain village of Wakan, located just a short drive from Nakhal, is a stunningly beautiful farming village where you will find apricot, grape and palm trees in abundance.

Also in the area are numerous dramatic Wadis, offering a myriad of off-road opportunities. You can end your day challenging the sand dunes at Khubat al-Ja'adan, which is easily reachable via the section of the Al Batinah Expressway that links Barka and Rustaq

DAY 4



The historical Bait Al Ghasham in the wilayat of Wadi al Ma'awel is an architectural masterpiece now transformed into a breath-taking public museum. Walking through the doors of this historical house is like stepping back 200 years into the past; offering a truly unique glimpse into Oman's eighteenth and nineteenth century history. Also nearby is the Al Safala Fort, a testament to the ingenuity and creativity of old Omani architecture.

No trip to South Al Batinah can be complete without setting eyes on local natural attractions such as Falaj Al Washihi, Al Hadeeth, Az Zourdi or Al Maliki to capture the beauty of Oman's stunning flora and fauna.

If you still have time, also stop by at Ayn Ash Shali (Ash Shali Spring) as a starting point, visiting several locations in the surrounding area, each of which is accompanied by wonderful and varied natural scenery

IMPORTANT TO KNOW

- Please observe Omani customs and dress modestly.
- Use an appropriate SUV on mountain routes and ensure proper operation of the vehicle's 4WD systems before undertaking any such trips.
- Ensure you have adequate water, food and fuel.
- Always inform a family member, friend, or acquaintance of your destination and expected date of your return.
- Do not camp in wadi beds; flash floods are a common occurrence.
- When entering private property, please ask for permission before taking any photographs or eating fruits from any nearby farms.
- Keep your environment clean by disposing of litter in the designated dustbins.

This itinerary can be shortened or extended depending on the time you have to explore the governorate.

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