

South Al Batinah Governorate

From Oman's Shoreline to the Hanging Mountain Villages



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Discover Oman

And experience a journey like no other

Situated at the southeastern tip of the Arabian Peninsula, the Sultanate of Oman is a captivating blend of tradition and modernity. A land of striking contrasts, Oman boasts towering mountains and vast seas, sandy deserts and crystal-clear wadis, offering environmental diversity that is just waiting to be explored. From the bustling charm of traditional souqs to the sophistication of modern markets and the serenity of green parks, you can find the perfect spot for both relaxation and leisure.

Oman's 11 governorates offer a kaleidoscope of distinct landscapes and captivating tourist attractions, each with its own unique charm from lush oases and dramatic deserts to historic forts and bustling souqs.

Here, history is deeply rooted in every corner, while unspoiled nature invites you to unwind and reconnect. The country's

extensive coastlines, stretching for thousands of kilometers, are a haven for marine enthusiasts and tranquility seekers alike, offering both serene beaches and thrilling water-based adventures.

The towering mountains provide a refreshing escape during the hot summer months, while the seasonal climate is ideal for those in search of pleasant weather. Experience the thrill of swimming in vibrant wadis or feel the adrenaline rush of exploring the vast, desert dunes.

At the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism, we are committed to enriching the tourism experience, crafting unique journeys across the governorates of the Sultanate of Oman. Together, we strive to cultivate innovative, modern tourism that fulfills your aspirations and surpasses your expectations. We are thrilled to have you with us - let's explore Oman together!

South Al Batinah stretches from the coastline along the Sea of Oman to the high peaks of the Western Hajar Mountains, intersecting with Al Dakhiliyah and Al Dhahirah governorates and sharing Oman's two highest peaks, Jebel Shams and the Green Mountain. This unique geographic location makes South Al Batinah an ideal destination for travellers seeking a blend of heritage, history, nature, adventure, and marine tourism.







Wakan Village



The governorate encompasses six wilayats, each offering distinct experiences ranging from pristine beaches and lush plains to dramatic wadis and serene palm oases. Nestled between four neighboring governorates—Muscat, Al Dakhiliyah, North Al Batinah, and Al Dhahirah—South Al Batinah serves as a vibrant hub for numerous tourist routes.

History lovers will be fascinated by the governorate's forts, castles, and towers which stand as architectural testimonies to its rich heritage. Exploring these landmarks provides a glimpse into Oman's storied past, showcasing the evolution of Omani architecture across several eras.





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Wilayat Barka

The Beating Heart of Commerce





Barka Fort



Barka is the commercial heart of South Al Batinah, distinguished by its charming souq, serene beaches along the Sea of Oman, and its iconic forts adorned with intricate architectural carvings.

Begin your journey with a visit to **Barka Fort**, built in the 18th century as part of an integrated defense system to protect the coastline.

The fort's multi-level interior rises to an impressive octagonal tower, overlooking the bustling Barka fish market, where early-morning activity always creates a lively scene.

Experience the vibrant atmosphere of the fish market near the shore, where the early morning buzz of buyers and the rich variety of fresh seafood create an unforgettable scene. Barka Market thrives with energy in every corner, offering a diverse range of shops catering to all needs, along with cafés and restaurants serving delicious meals—especially the most beloved Omani specialties.



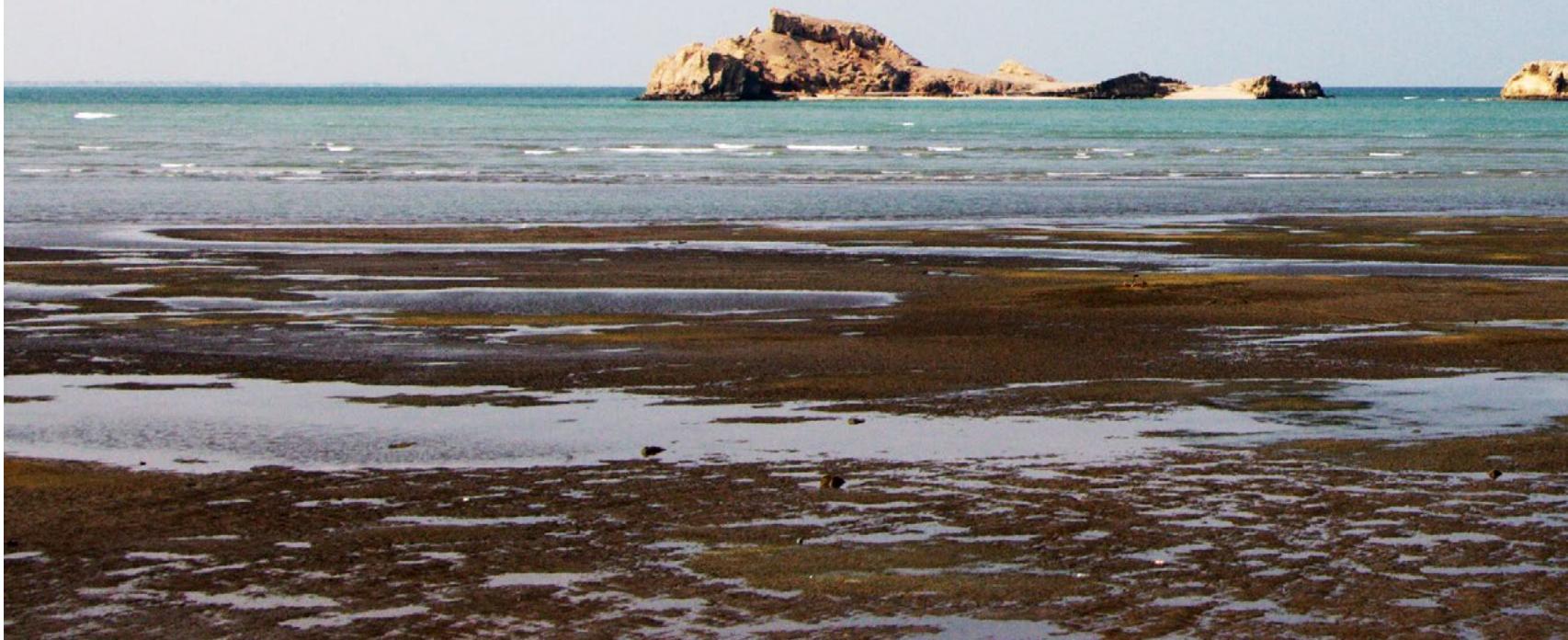


Just a few kilometers from the town center lies **Bait Al Na'aman**, a fortified mansion from the late 17th century surrounded by extensive agricultural fields. Its decorated rooms and narrow staircases lead to a rooftop view of swaying palm trees and the shimmering Al Sawadi Islands on the horizon.





Al Sawadi Beach is a stunning destination known for its unique pink-shell shores and tranquil atmosphere. This picturesque beach offers visitors a chance to explore the nearby islands by boat, adding an element of adventure to the serene surroundings.







Al Sawadi Beach



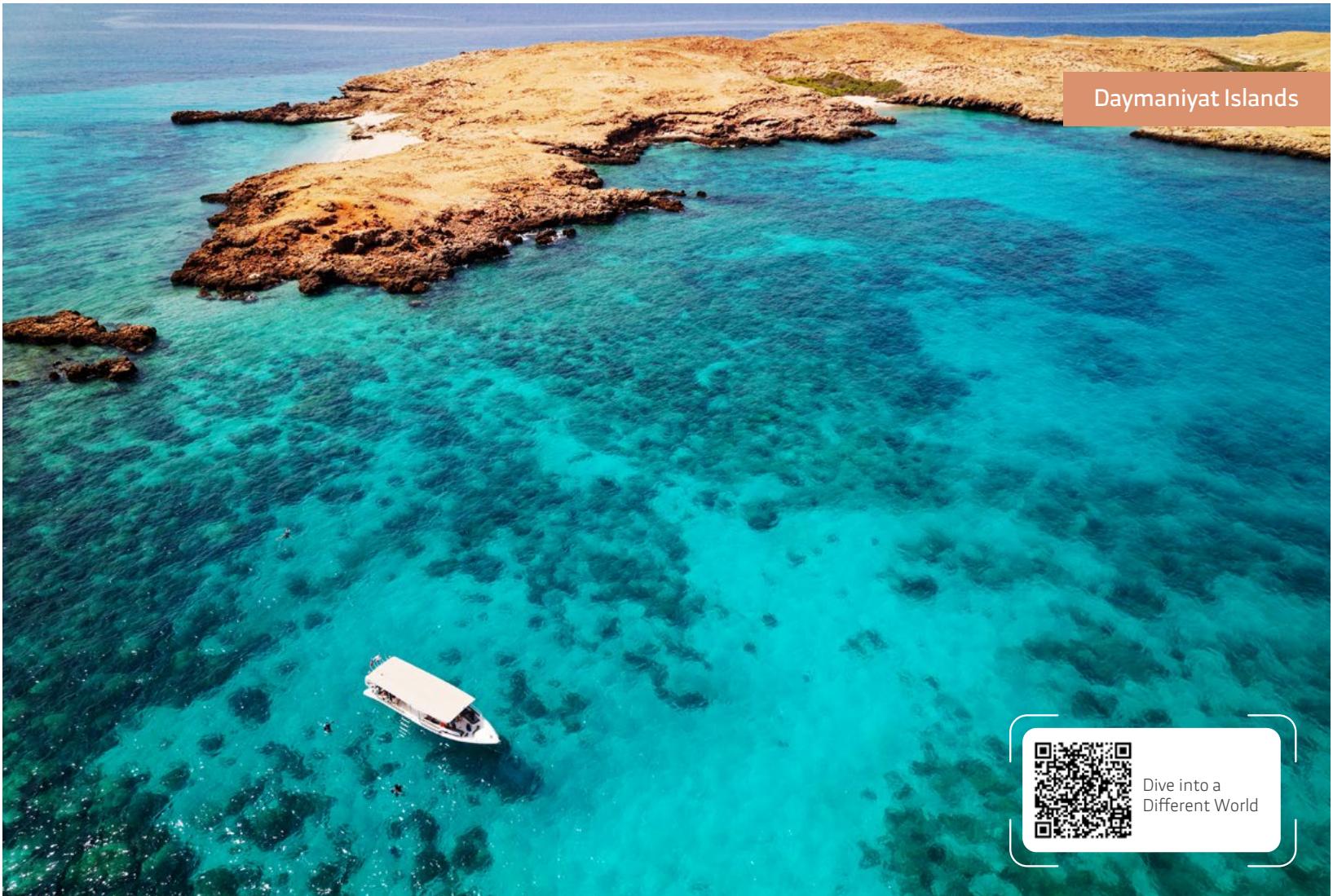
Dive enthusiasts will find the underwater world here particularly enticing, with vibrant coral reefs and diverse marine life creating a spectacular aquatic experience.

diving spots and diverse marine life. Don't miss the chance to enjoy exciting water activities such as snorkeling with colorful fish, jet skiing, kayaking, and even camping in this stunning reserve, surrounded by breathtaking scenery.

Explore the **Daymaniyat Islands**, located about 50 kilometers northwest of Muscat, a protected natural reserve made up of over nine islands. The area is home to a variety of pristine coral species, both hard and soft, and is renowned for its excellent



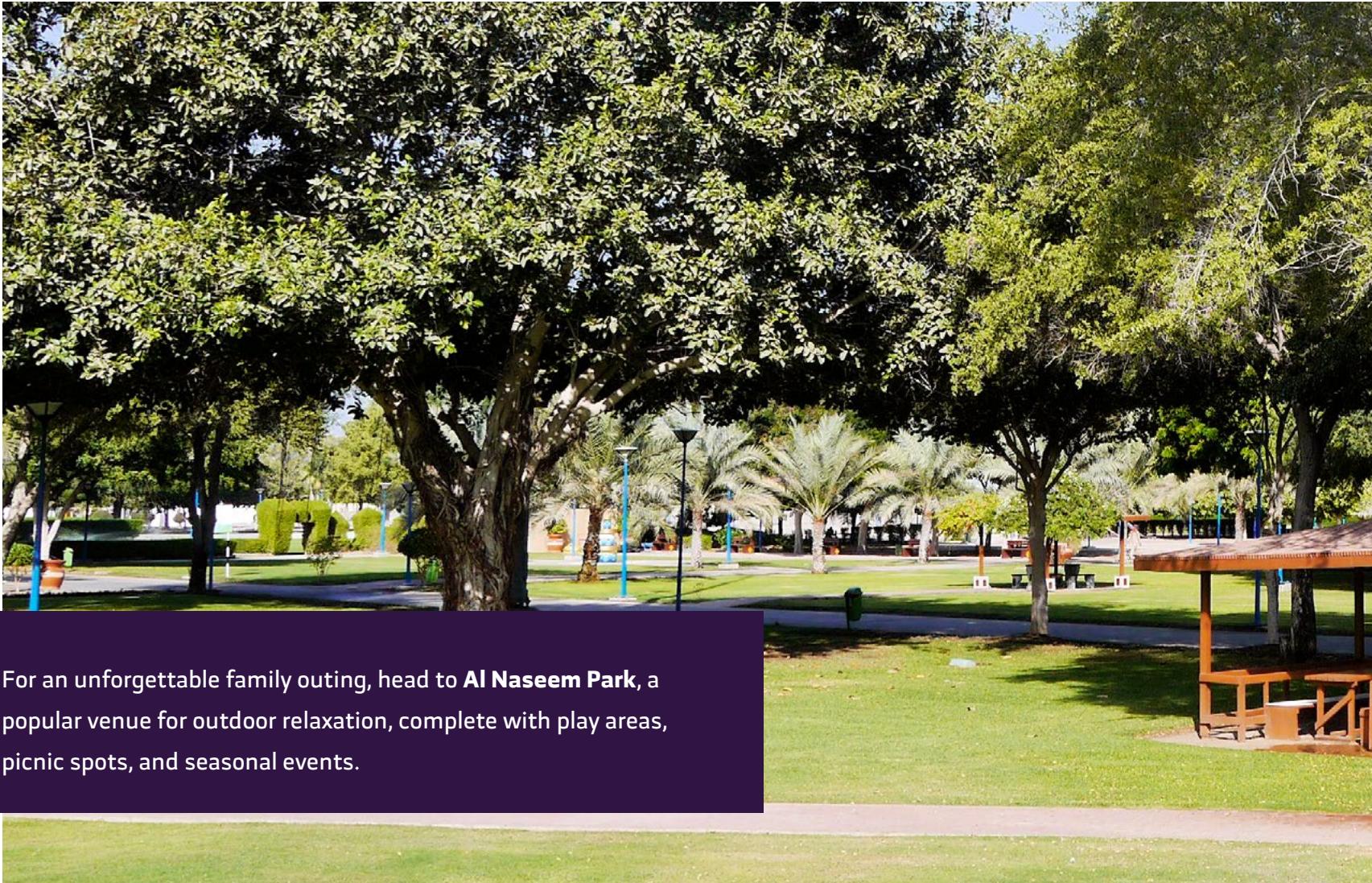
Daymaniyat Reserve



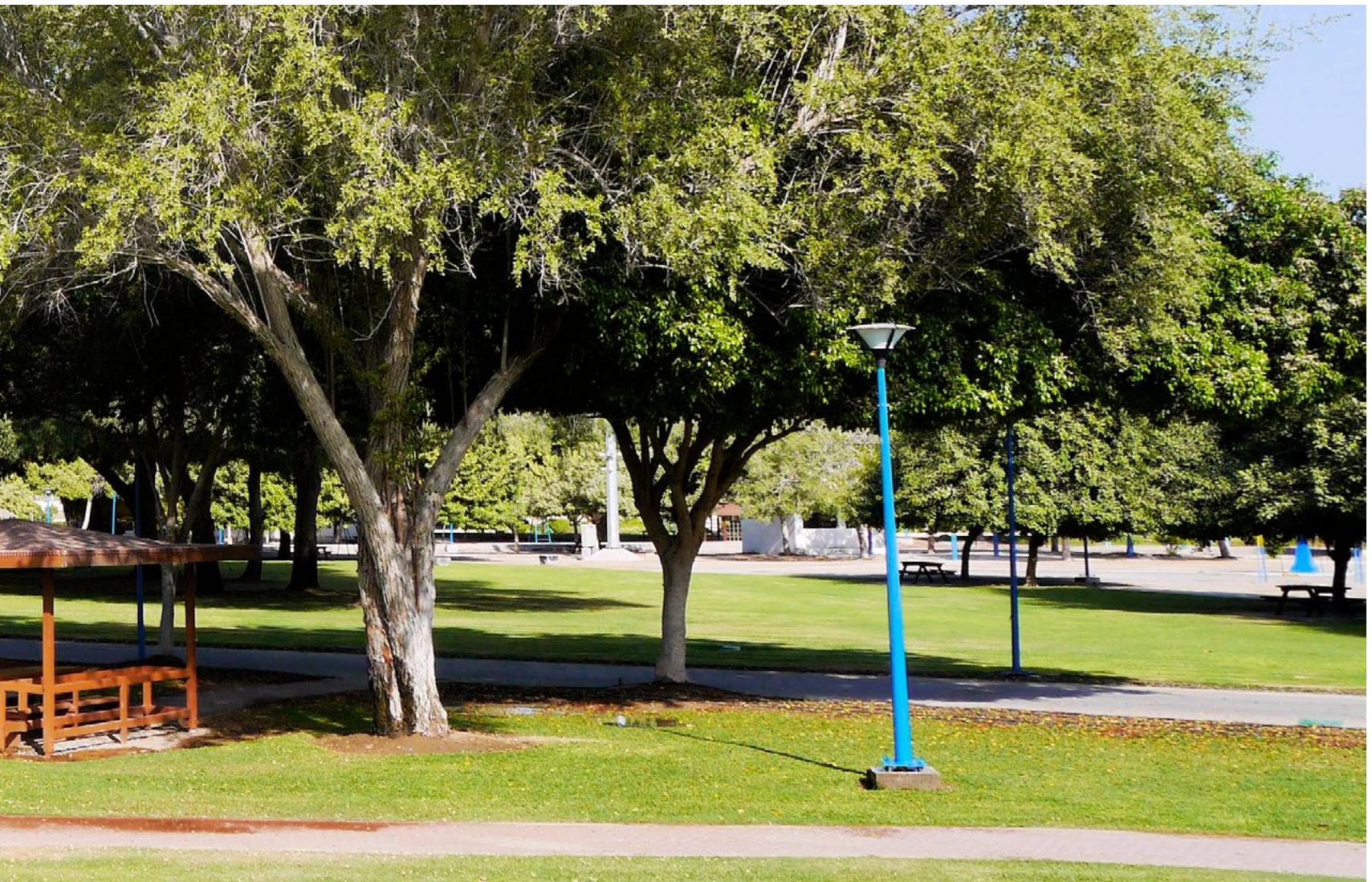
Daymaniyat Islands



Dive into a
Different World



For an unforgettable family outing, head to **Al Naseem Park**, a popular venue for outdoor relaxation, complete with play areas, picnic spots, and seasonal events.



Wilayat Rustaq

A Passion for Adventure and
Heritage Blended with Modernity

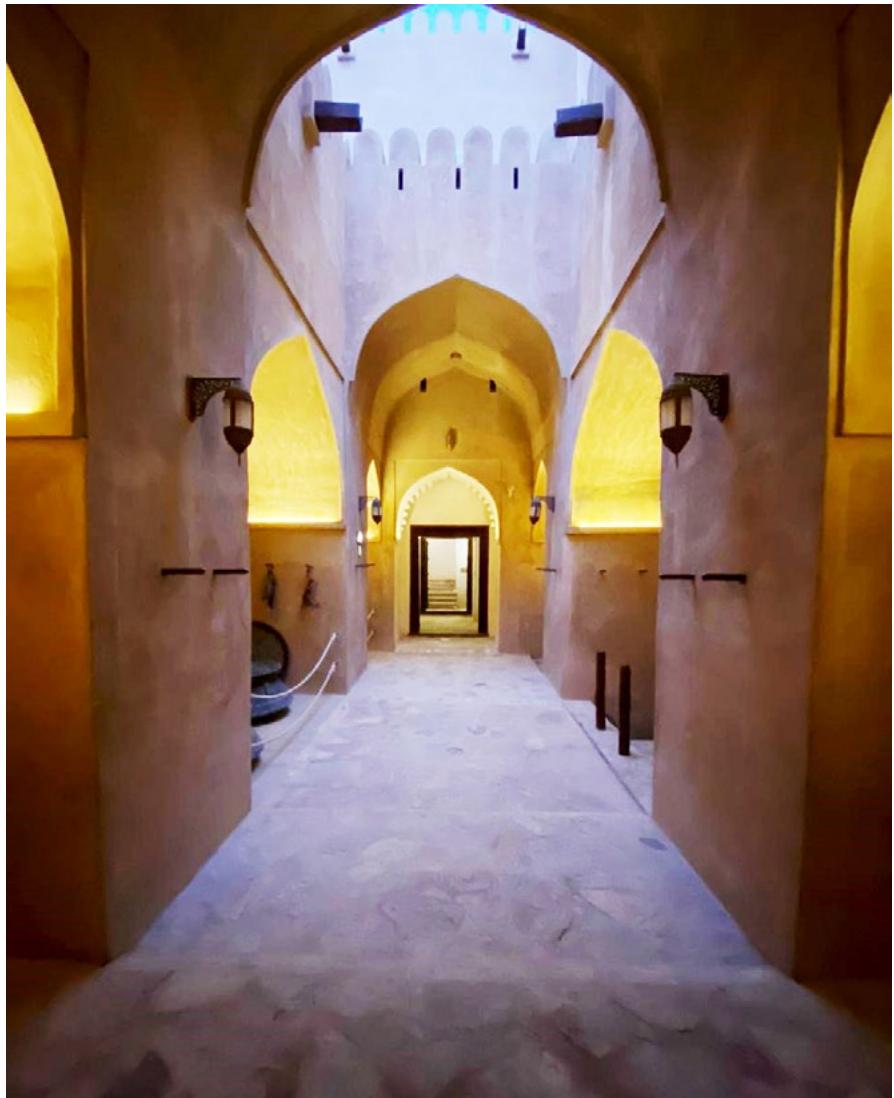




The Wilayat of Rustaq stands as a testament to Oman's ancient civilization, offering a wealth of historical and cultural landmarks.

This historic region is a treasure trove of tourist attractions, where forts, castles, valleys, villages, and towns narrate tales of its rich heritage.

Begin your exploration at the iconic **Al Hazm Fort**, a marvel of Omani architecture and one of the country's most magnificent forts, renowned for being one of the few forts built in a single era. Constructed during the reign of Imam Sultan bin Saif Al Ya'arubi II in the early 18th century, this fort is distinguished by its impressive architecture, protective features, and striking geometric design, including ambush openings and secret passages. It comprises three levels and features two cylindrical towers connected to the main structure.









Continue exploring Rustaq's historical treasures with a visit to **Al Mansour Fort**. Located in the village of Jama, about 20 kilometers off the main Rustaq/Al Musanna road, this fort offers a glimpse into Oman's rich heritage and its agricultural roots.

This small building dates back to the early 19th century and was constructed as a fortified country palace during the reign of Imam Said bin Ahmed Al Busaidi, surrounded by a vast agricultural oasis at the southern edge of Jama.

The majestic **Rustaq Castle**, with its towering walls, is situated in the heart of a beautiful oasis bearing its name. It is one of the most beautiful castles in Oman, with the oldest parts dating back to the Sassanian period, preceding the advent of Islam.

Over the centuries, the castle has undergone numerous additions and renovations, and it was chosen by Imam Nasir bin Murshid Al Ya'arabi as the center of governance during his leadership in the first half of the 17th century (1624–1649), lasting 25 years. Imam Ahmed bin Said Al Busaidi, the founder of the Al Busaidi dynasty, also used it as his administrative capital during his 39-year reign from 1744 to 1783. The castle witnessed significant expansions and enhancements during both periods to accommodate its role as the center of governance.





Next, take in the striking beauty of **Wadi Al Sahtan**, one of Oman's most awe-inspiring valleys. Carving its way alongside the rugged peaks of the Western Hajar Mountains, this valley offers visitors an unforgettable journey through dramatic landscapes.

As you navigate the wadi, you'll encounter stunning sedimentary rock formations, towering cliffs, and a variety of terrains that create a mesmerizing backdrop. The route takes you past the hot spring in Al Khadra village, where you can enjoy the soothing natural waters. Beyond this, the valley widens and stretches over several kilometers, culminating in the mountain-top villages of Wajma and Al Far'ah. These high-altitude settlements provide breathtaking views of the surrounding landscapes, including spectacular sights of Jebel Shams, Oman's tallest mountain.





Explore the
Most Beautiful
Valleys





For adventure enthusiasts, the journey doesn't end there. From Ain Amq, take an exhilarating 4x4 drive along a rugged route to **Wadi Bani Auf**. This thrilling path showcases even more of the region's natural beauty, from narrow canyons to hidden trails, promising a truly immersive experience in Oman's wilderness.

Wadi Bani Auf is located less than 12 kilometers southeast of Rustaq and can be accessed via the road linking Rustaq and Al Awabi. This winding wadi flows through deep rock cavities and is known as the "Snake Valley" due to its serpentine path. It is among the most famous valleys for adventure tourism, stretching over 15 kilometers until you reach the junction leading to Wadi Al Sahtan in the northwest. As you approach the village of Bilad Sayt, you will be treated to stunning panoramic views.

The **village of Bilad Sayt** in Wadi Bani Auf is one of the most beautiful villages in the Sultanate of Oman. It serves as a link between South Al Batinah Governorate and Ad Dhakliyah Governorate. The village offers a beautiful view of palm tree fields and terraced agriculture dedicated to seasonal crops such as barley and garlic. From the top of the nearby hill, a small castle built for protection and observation overlooks the area. On one side of this village, you will see a slope with a pathway stretching 2000 meters to the summit of Al Alamayn.







Ain Al Kasfa

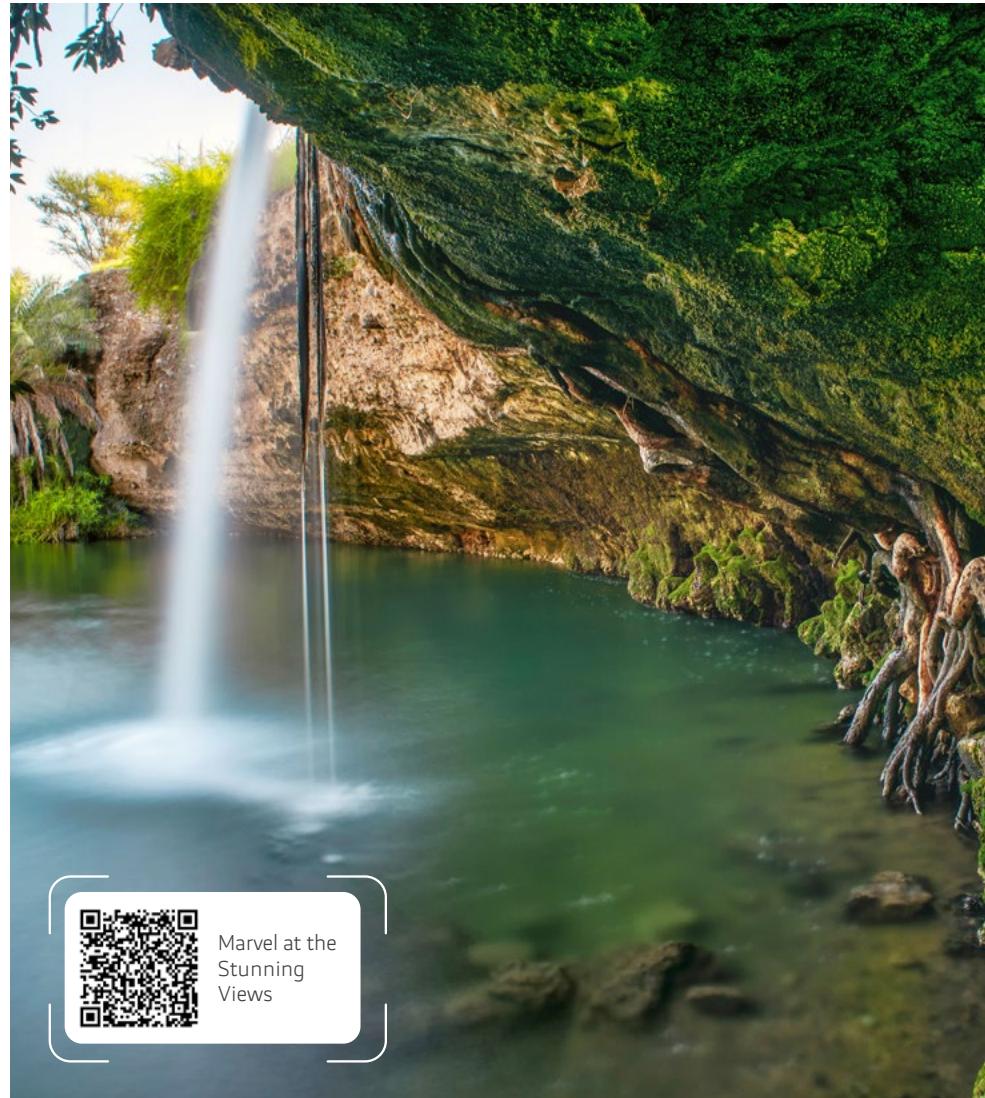


On your return from Wadi Bani Auf, head to one of the most famous hot springs in the Sultanate of Oman, **Ain Al Kasfa**, renowned for its sulfuric hot waters resulting from the friction with underlying volcanic rocks, with surface temperatures reaching 45 degrees Celsius. Ain Al Kasfa is located just 1500 meters west of Rustaq Castle and serves as the main water source for irrigating the palm farms surrounding the spring.

Ain Al Kasfa boasts the largest water volume among all springs in Northern Oman and is known as a destination for natural healing, attracting visitors seeking recovery in its hot sulfuric waters.

Next, head to **Wadi Al Hoqain**, famous for its constantly flowing water pools, making it an ideal spot for relaxation and swimming, particularly in the well-known pools known as "the trenches." The wadi is surrounded by dense palm oases, with rugged ophiolite rocks lining its course. It is characterized by its flowing waters and beautiful waterfalls, drawing visitors during the rainy season.

After exploring the beauty of Wadi Al Hauqin, continue your adventure by following the road to **Wadi Bani Hani**. This picturesque valley is lined with charming villages and lush agricultural pathways that stretch along its banks. As you traverse the road, you'll be surrounded by a harmonious blend of fertile farmland, vibrant greenery, and traditional Omani settlements.



Marvel at the
Stunning
Views







Wadi Al Haymili stands as one of Oman's most geologically significant valleys, offering a remarkable showcase of the diverse rock formations within the famed ophiolite series. Here, you'll encounter an extraordinary array of geological features, including Moho layers, volcanic gabbro rocks, and striking rocky barriers, creating a dramatic and visually captivating landscape.

The valley's mineral-rich soils, derived from these ancient rocks, support thriving agricultural communities, providing fertile ground for a variety of crops. Adding to its allure are the rock inscriptions and carvings that adorn its rugged surfaces. These inscriptions serve as a historical record, documenting significant events and stories from the lives of the valley's inhabitants over the centuries. They offer a fascinating glimpse into the cultural and historical fabric of Oman.

Falaj Al Maysar, recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is a testament to the ingenuity of Oman's ancient irrigation systems. This falaj originates in the southeastern part of the Rustaq oasis, near the imposing Mazara'a Tower, and stretches less than 400 meters west of the Rustaq/Nakhl road.

Its waters meander gracefully through a winding canal that traverses residential areas and agricultural fields. The journey culminates at the iconic Rustaq Castle, a magnificent landmark that adds a historical and architectural charm to the entire landscape.







Wilayat Nakhal

A Tourist Destination for All Seasons



Towering high above the peaks of Wadi Mistal is the mountainous terrain of Wilayat Nakhl. At the heart of the Wilayat of Nakhl stands the majestic **Nakhl Castle**, perched atop a rocky promontory that dominates the surrounding landscape. Overlooking the region's main entrances and nestled near lush palm oases, this castle is celebrated for its unique architectural design and meticulously planned internal divisions.

The castle's origins trace back to the Sassanid era in Oman, predating the arrival of Islam. Over the centuries, it has undergone numerous enhancements, with significant additions from the 9th, 14th, 16th, and 19th centuries, each contributing to its grandeur and historical significance.

Though the climb to the top of Nakhl Castle presents a challenge, the effort is richly rewarded and visitors are treated to panoramic views of the sprawling palm oases below.









Nakhl Castle



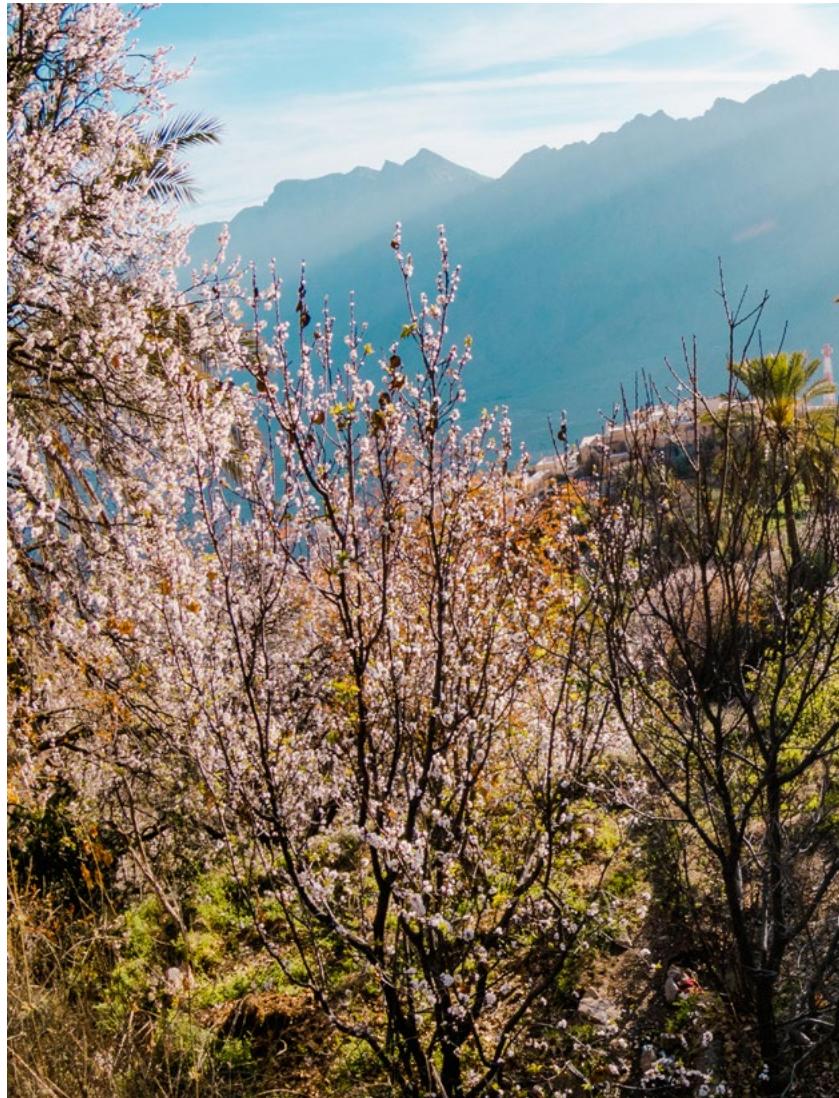


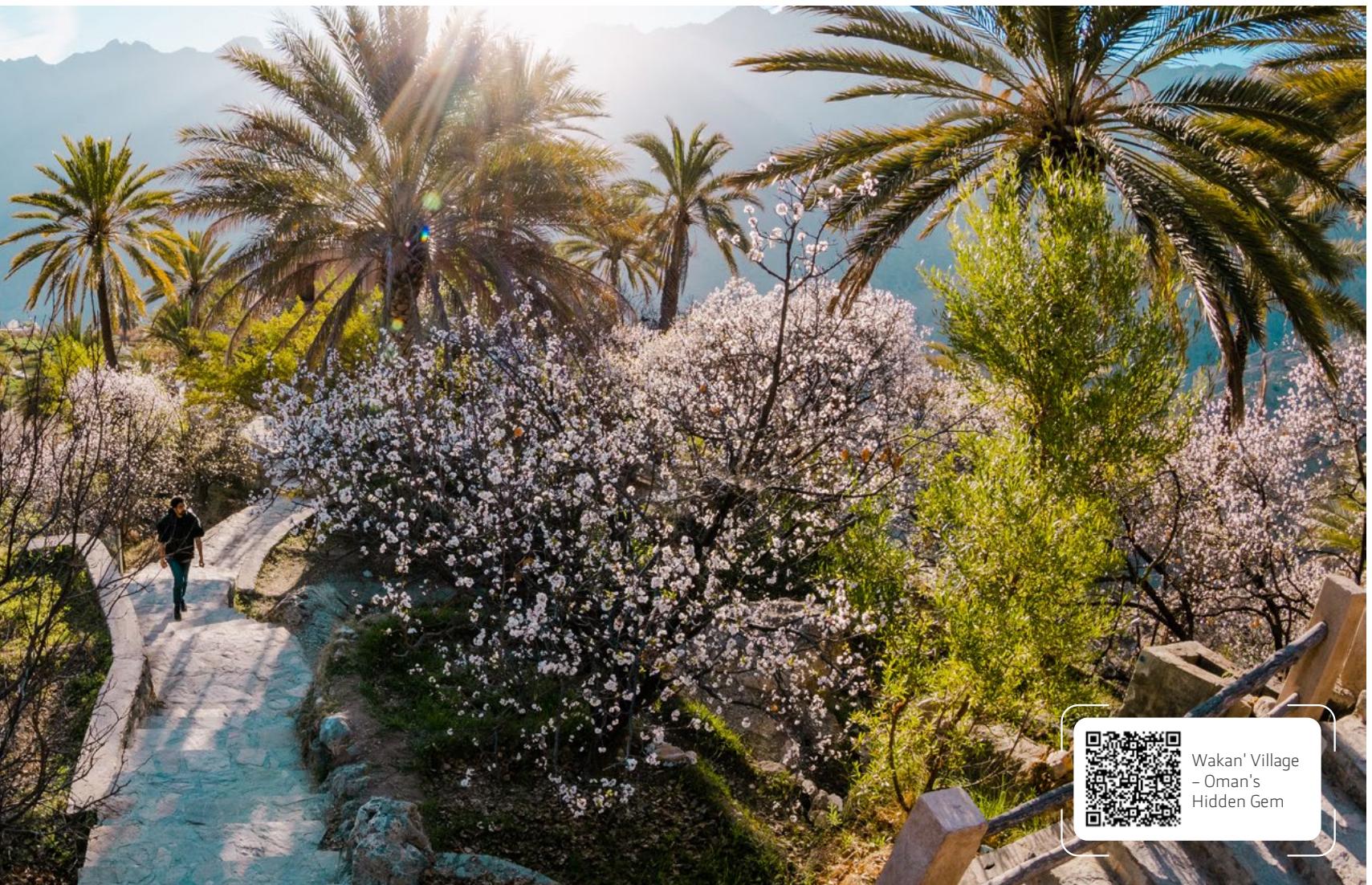
Continue your journey through the lush palm oases of Nakhl, following a winding path that leads to **Ain Al Thawara**, a serene and popular destination for those seeking relaxation and natural beauty. This tranquil spot is renowned for its stunning agricultural oases, where vibrant green palm groves stretch out as far as the eye can see.

At Ain Al Thawara, water flows from hot springs, feeding into the falaj canal that meanders along both sides of the valley, providing vital irrigation for Nakhl's famed palm oases.

For those with an adventurous spirit, a walk down the valley heading south offers an exciting opportunity to immerse in the rugged natural beauty of the area. A stroll of several hundred meters reveals the raw, untouched landscapes of Nakhl, with rocky outcrops and desert terrain enhancing the sense of calm.

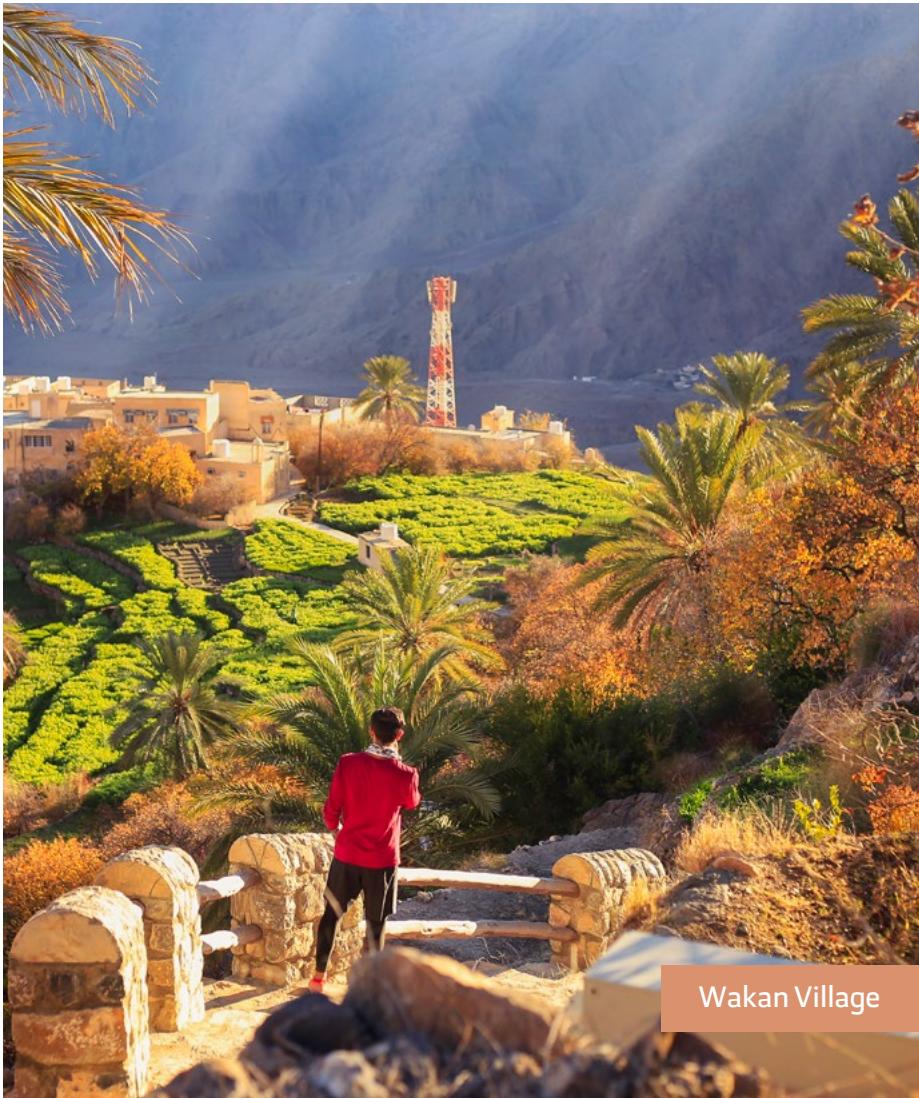
If you enjoy driving in mountainous terrain, before arriving at the center of Wilayat Nakhl via the road connecting the Wilayats of Al Awabi and Nakhl, you can turn right towards Wadi Mistal to visit one of the most beautiful mountain villages in Oman, the **village of Wakan**, perched at an altitude of 2000 meters above sea level. You will be captivated by its proximity to the mountain peak and the agricultural path shaded by pomegranate and apricot trees, accompanied by the sound of flowing water. The village enjoys a mild climate in the summer and cold winters.





Wakan' Village
– Oman's
Hidden Gem





Wakan Village

Wakan Village, perched at a high altitude, has been thoughtfully developed to offer both comfort and adventure to its visitors. The Ministry of Heritage and Tourism has prepared parking spaces, a tourist information office, and an ascending agricultural path that leads to the top of the village. This path, which stretches over 1 km, consists of 650 steps interspersed with resting spots shaded by trees, providing an enjoyable and engaging journey through the village's landscapes.

For those wishing to extend their stay and fully experience the beauty of Wakan, the village offers a guest house where visitors can spend the night, allowing them to wake up to the cool mountain air and stunning views. The village is known for its agricultural terraces, unique climate, and serene atmosphere, making it a perfect retreat.

Wakan is also a prime destination for adventure tourism, featuring ancient hiking trails that link it to Jebel Akhdar and neighboring villages like Hadash and Al Qura. These trails offer a chance to explore the dramatic landscapes of Oman, passing through ancient terraced farms, valleys, and lush green plantations.

Hadash village, located in Wadi Mistal in Wilayat Nakhl, lies opposite Wakan and reflects the architectural style of mountainous Omani villages. Due to its elevated position, it enjoys a moderate climate in summer and cold winters, making it a well-known destination for ancient hiking trails.

From Wadi Mistal, head to Wadi Al Abyad to experience a wonderful adventure among the surrounding palm oases and explore the wadi adorned with ophiolite rocks. The wadi offers tranquil camping spots close to the constantly flowing water pools. Conclude your day with adventure on the sand dunes at **Al Abyad (Khabat Al Jaadan)**, and spend your evenings under the open sky. The easiest access route is via the Batinah Highway, linking the Wilayats of Barka and Rustaq.





Wilayat Al Musannah

A Global Destination for Water Sports





Al Musannah is a stunning coastal wilaya along the Sea of Oman, renowned for its handicrafts and rich maritime heritage. This area is home to numerous vibrant coastal villages, each with unique names influenced by the region's geography. Known internationally for water sports and championships, Al Musannah hosts an annual calendar of events supported by Oman Sail and will soon be home to an integrated sports city designed to host international championships.

Al Musannah Fort is one of the historic landmarks built in the late 18th century to monitor the coast along the Sea of Oman. This exceptional fort was constructed using rocks sourced from distant mountainous regions. In the village of Al Shu'aibah, the recently restored **Al Khamis Tower** and Wall stands amidst residential neighborhoods, offering visitors a unique experience.









Al Qurum Creek, located at the mouth of Wadi Al Ais, is named after the abundant mangrove trees along its banks. This area attracts numerous migratory and native birds, including the black-winged stilt, red-winged lapwing, western reef heron, great white egret, and common sandpiper.

Al Musannah Beach, with its long stretches of sandy shores, is a popular destination for recreational activities. The Barcelo Al Musannah Resort, with its prime location overlooking the Sea of Oman, offers a relaxing and family-friendly environment, with entertainment options suitable for all ages.





Endless
Choices
Await You



Wilayat Al Awabi

Serene Green Oases

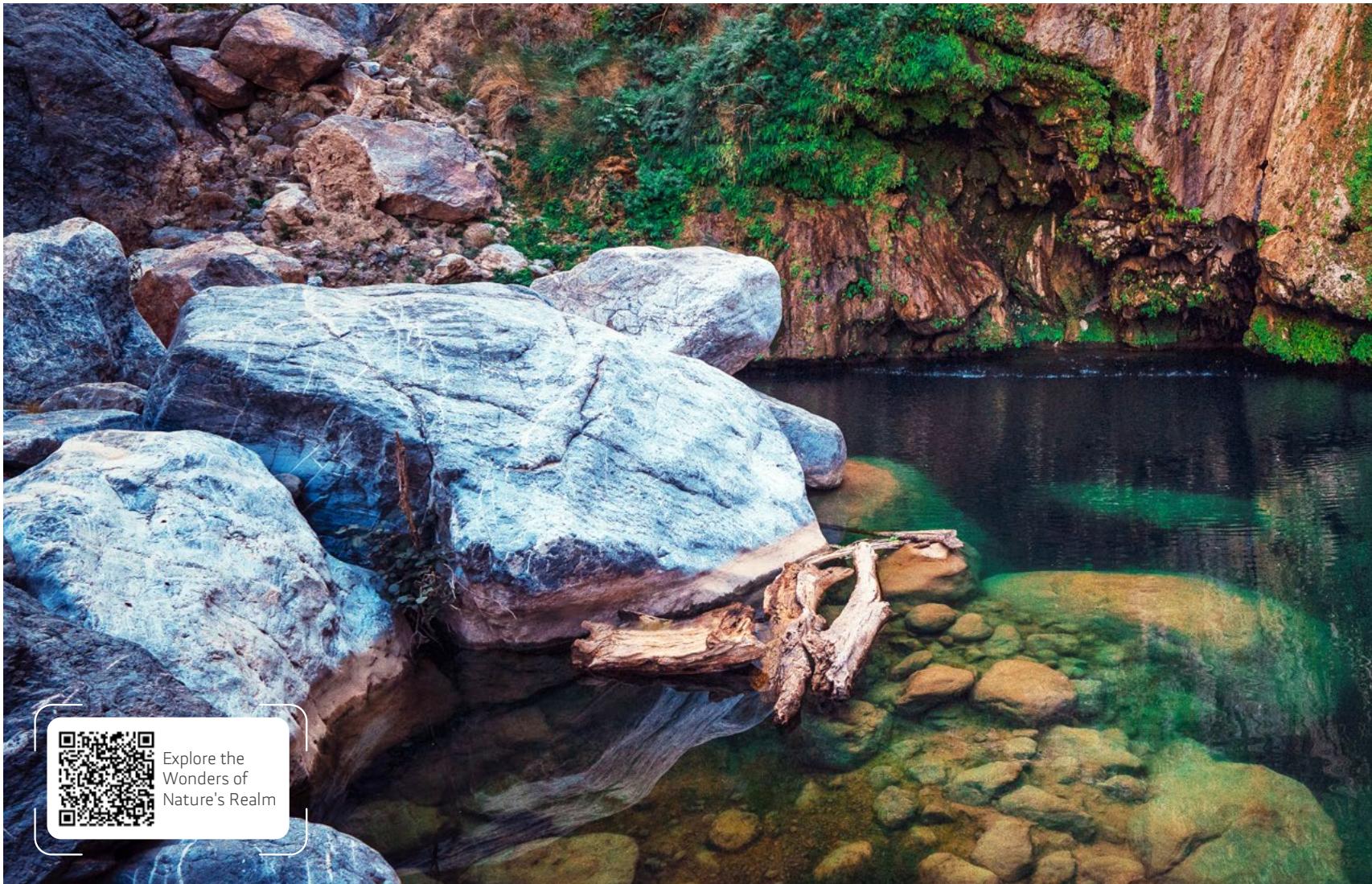


Al Awabi is centrally located within South Al Batinah Governorate, bordered by Al Rustaq to the north, Al Jabal Al Akhdar to the south, and Nakhal to the east. Al Awabi is home to numerous historical landmarks, including forts, towers, and old houses.

A visit to Al Awabi isn't complete without a stop at **Al Awabi Fort**, built in the early 19th century to protect the route leading to Wadi Bani Kharous and the old walking trails to Al Jabal Al Akhdar. The fort features two towers strategically placed for monitoring the surrounding directions.







Explore the
Wonders of
Nature's Realm



Wadi Bani Kharous, a center of civilization and agricultural production for centuries, reveals 90-million-year-old limestone formations at its entrance and 600-million-year-old rocks further in.

One of the scenic villages in Al Awabi is the **village of Stayl**, about 12 km from the city center, known for its beautiful green landscapes and ancient landmarks, including Al Najur Tower and the Salout mosques.







A Dreamy
Village to
Soothe Your
Soul



Al Hajir, nestled within the villages of Wadi Bani Kharous, offers an unforgettable glimpse into the past. To reach Al Hajir, follow the road that starts near Al Awabi Fort. One of the village's highlights is its falaj system, which stretches over 1.5 km and is lined with ancient stone structures. A distinctive feature of this village is **Al A'jamah**, where falaj water flows through natural rock pathways and caves, creating a mesmerizing scene that connects the village to its rich heritage and the life-giving water that has sustained it for centuries.

A newly constructed mountain road now connects Al Awabi to Wadi Bani Auf via Al Hajir, offering visitors a scenic drive through breathtaking mountain vistas. This road provides a perfect opportunity to admire the rugged beauty of the region as you make your way from one charming village to the next.

After visiting Al Hajir, continue your journey to **Al Alya village**, located at the end of Wadi Bani Kharous Road. Here, you will experience the tranquil lifestyle of the village, where traditional homes are perched atop hills, offering stunning views of the lush orchards below. Al Alya is known for its peaceful atmosphere, with a walking path meandering through the farms, allowing visitors to take in the beauty of the fertile land.

Along the walking path, visitors can enjoy a leisurely stop at one of the cafes, where they can sip a drink while surrounded by the beauty of greenery and agricultural life.







Wilayat Wadi Al Ma'awil

Timeless Heritage and Omani Architectural Ingenuity







Wadi Al Ma'awil is bordered by Barka to the north, Al Awabi to the south, Nakhal to the east, and Al Rustaq to the west. The wilaya is home to numerous tourist attractions, including forts, towers, and aflaj (ancient irrigation channels) that nourish its lush date palm oases.

Begin your journey in the historic heart of the region at **Al Sifalah Fort**, a remarkable example of Omani craftsmanship and architectural ingenuity. This fort is not just a structure but a living testament to the unique decorative styles that define Omani fortifications, offering visitors a glimpse into Oman's rich history.

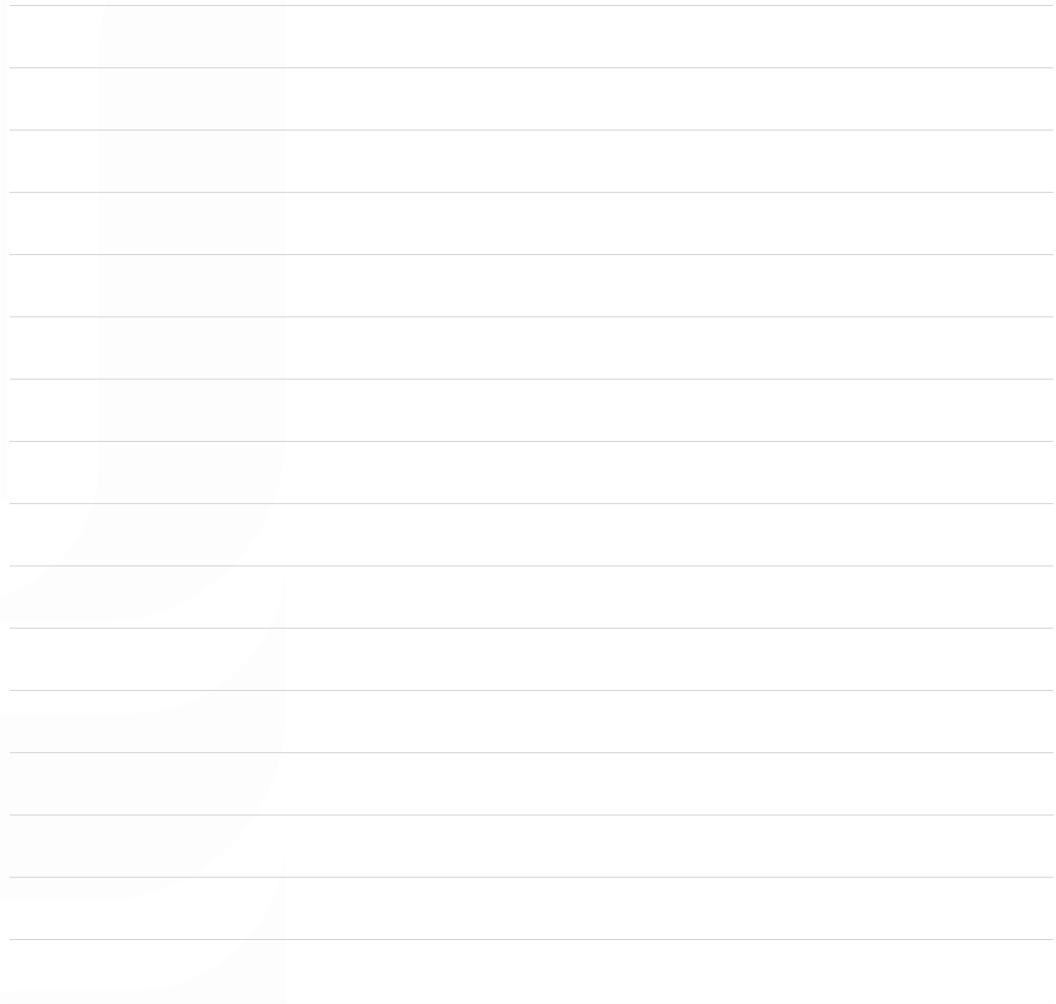
The Bait Al Ghasham Museum is a historical treasure, showcasing Omani heritage and culture. The museum is housed in a beautifully preserved building, reflecting traditional Omani architecture. As you explore its rooms, you'll encounter various sections, including the Al Sabah, Al Seblah, and several fortified areas complete with observation towers that offer stunning views of the surrounding landscape.

The museum highlights the history of Wadi Al Ma'awil and Oman's heritage, with a library and an open-air theater that hosts various events, including national and religious celebrations, lectures, plays, and television interviews.





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Beauty Has An Address
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