



SIGNATURE PERSIAN GULF PASSAGE CRUISE TOUR

This Signature Cruise Tour transcends time, taking you from the days of caravans and frankincense through the transformation into modern cities that have become world power brokers. Learn about the days when black pearls, fueled the local economy, and visit mountain villages where they still use irrigation methods developed by their ancestors. Dine on Bedouin-style carpets and marvel at falcons and belly dancers as you spend the night in the desert. And enjoy the contrast of past and present living side by side as you admire the views from desert dunes and the world's tallest skyscraper, shop in traditional souks and the world's most chic shopping malls, walk the passageways of ancient forts and modern museums, and take in the natural beauty of spectacular fjords and the engineering marvel of manmade islands. On this extraordinary Cruise Tour you'll have time to relax under the palms at desert oases and in the spas of elegant 5-star hotels, savoring the incredible luxury and diversity the Persian Gulf has to offer both before and after your cruise. Recommended to bring: Sunglasses, sunscreen, a hat, and your swimsuit Please note: Ladies visiting mosques are required to cover their heads with a scarf and not wear shorts, beachwear, or sleeveless outfits as they are to be fully covered. Men are also to be fully covered though short sleeve shirts are allowed. No eatables are allowed.



ITINERARY

Day 1 Arrive in Dubai

Meet your English-speaking guide and transfer from the airport to the 5-star Sofitel Obelisk Hotel. Spend the rest of the day as you wish. Cool off at the swim-up bar, browse the adjoining shopping mall, or relax with a treatment in the spa. (Includes transfer from the airport, overnight at Sofitel Oblisk Hotel.)

Day 2 Old Dubai & New Dubai

Today we explore Al Bastakiah Quarters, one of the oldest areas of Dubai. Admire the traditional homes and visit the Shindagha Museum for a look at Emirati life past and present. Stop by the Perfume House before experiencing the unique Sheikh Mohammed Center of Cultural Understanding where you'll enjoy an authentic Emirati lunch with a local, seated on Bedouin-style



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carpets and pillows. A traditional abra boat ride brings you to the souks of Old Dubai. Contrast this with our next stop, Dubai Mall, with its state-of-the-art aquariums and unique dancing fountains – a great introduction to the Modern Dubai portion of our day. Enjoy a 360-degree view from the 124th floor observation deck of the Burj Al Khalifa, the tallest building in the world, before heading to the iconic manmade Palm Island and photo stops at the water-themed Atlantis Hotel and sail-shaped Burj Al Arab. Explore the ultra-stylish Madinat Jumeirah Mall on the way to a photo stop at Jumeirah Mosque, a magnificent example of neo-Islamic architecture. After dinner at a local restaurant, return to the hotel. (Includes breakfast, lunch, dinner, and overnight at Sofitel Obelisk Hotel.)

Day 3 Sharjah & Bab Al Shams

After breakfast it's just a short drive to Sharjah, recognized by UNESCO as the Cultural Capital of the Arab World. Interact with local guides as you explore the Sharjah Heritage Museum, focusing on Emirati customs and traditions. Visit a few old souks on the way to Bait Al Naboodah. Built in 1845, this was once the home of a prominent pearl merchant. Note the traditional design elements from carved teak columns to wind catchers and coral walls. After lunch, proceed to the Museum of Islamic Civilization to learn about the Bedouin lifestyle and culture. End your tour of Sharjah with a stop at Souq Al Markazi, also known as the Blue Souq, remarkable for its mix of modern and traditional Islamic architecture and the eclectic variety of goods. Now it's time to make your way to Bab Al Shams for an amazing desert experience – a feast under the stars at Al Hadeerah with mesmerizing entertainment including dancers, musicians, falconers, and camel riders then back to Bab Al Shams to overnight. (Includes breakfast, lunch, dinner, and overnight at Bab Al Shams.)

Day 4 Transfer to Yacht & Dubai, UAE

Following breakfast meet your English-speaking guide this morning for your transfer to the yacht and embarkation. (Includes breakfast and transfer to yacht.) In Dubai, sports run the gamut from camel races in the desert to an indoor ski mountain. Architecture spans Bedouin tents and Arabian wind towers to the world's tallest building, the Burj Khalifa. Archipelagos miraculously appear in the image of palm trees and planets. It's a lot to take in. By all means, add some extra days here to get your head around this amazing city that seems to be all things to all people.

Days 5 - 6 Doha, Qatar

The sparkling city of Doha boasts gleaming skyscrapers and mosques with intricate carvings, extravagant shopping malls and a 4-mile Corniche. Lose yourself in narrow alleyways of the oldest souk in Qatar amidst the raucous noise of bartering. Find the Museum of Islamic Art, resembling a giant sandcastle and appreciate the beauty of the sea and coastline.

Day 7 Manama, Bahrain

Manama is best known as a trade, financial, and commercial center; and the seat of numerous banks. The lovely skyline is decorated with modern glass and steel spires. Manama has a thriving nightlife with popular bars and clubs and although an Islamic country, alcohol is legal there. A visit to the famous Bab el-Bahrain Souk will yield narrow stalls with a wide variety of perfumes, spices and gold.

Day 8 At Sea

Day 9 Sir Bani Yas, UAE



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Sir Bani Yas Island is famous for its ancient archaeological sites, geological features and man-made attractions, dominated by the Arabian Wildlife Park, a savannah-like reserve for over 16,000 animals including roaming giraffes, cheetahs and gazelles. See flocks of flamingos on the white-sand beaches and the ruins of an ancient Christian monastery. They operate the region's first wind turbine and work to protect their delicate ecosystem.

Days 10 - 11 Abu Dhabi, UAE

The capital of the United Arab Emirates sits off the mainland on an island in the Persian Gulf and connects to the mainland by a short bridge. It is one of the nation's two most prosperous emirates because of its rich oil fields, both onshore and in the Persian Gulf discovered in 1958, and one of the world's highest per capita incomes. Among the many sites to see are Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque Center, Louvre Abu Dhabi Art Museum, Emirates Palace, The Corniche and Yaz Mall.

Day 12 Ras Al Khaima, UAE

The most northerly of the seven Emirates, Ras Al Khaima (RAK City) is known for its slower pace, rich culture and beautiful beaches. Through the centuries RAK City was an important trading post known for magnificent pearls. Sites to see here include the National Museum with a comprehensive collection of local artifacts and the Al Jazirah Al Hamra, an intact traditional pearling village abandoned in the mid-20th century.

Day 13 Khasab

Known as the Norway of Arabia with its spectacular fjords, Khasab sits isolated on Oman's northern coast. Exploring the impressive coast by boat may result in encounters with friendly bottlenose and humpback dolphins. Check out Khasab Castle,

built in the 17th century with its museum of local life back through the ages. Not far away are Bedouin villages and the Khawr Najd viewpoint with sweeping views of the impressive fjords.

Day 14 Muscat, Oman

In a land steeped with history, Muscat, Oman's port capital, is a mix of upscale shopping malls, modern high-rises and 16th century Al Jalali and Mirani, Portuguese forts. The city has numerous mosques including modern, marble-clad Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque, with its 164 foot (50m) dome and prodigious Persian carpet, and that can accommodate 20,000 people. Wander the lively fish market and busy Mutrah Souk. There are plenty of soft sand beaches leading to pristine Gulf of Oman water full of fish and turtles. Meet your guide at the yacht and proceed to Muscat's Grand Mosque, a perfect blend of modern design and traditional craftsmanship. Admire the handmade carpets, elegant chandeliers, and the ceiling of the great dome in the main prayer room. At the National Museum, browse thousands of artifacts showcasing Oman's history and culture. Take a few photos of Al Alam Palace on your way to Jebel Akhdar Hotel. (Includes transfer from the port, lunch, dinner and overnight at Jebel Akhdar Hotel)

Day 15 Nizwa, Wahiba

Our first stop this morning is the Nizwa Fort, built in the 1650s. The fort and nearby Nizwa Souq give you a glimpse of old Oman. During a brief break at Birkat Al Mauz, walk through a classic oasis with date trees. Then it's on to Wahiba with its incredible sand dunes up to 300 feet high. If you're feeling adventurous, ride over the dunes with an experienced driver. Visit a local Bedouin house before arriving at Desert Camp in time for a spectacular desert sunset and dune driving before dinner.

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(Includes breakfast, dinner, and overnight at Wahiba Sands.)

Day 16 Sur, Muscat

Our route to Sur takes us through Wadi Bani Khalid, a beautiful oasis with spring-fed lagoons, pools, and waterfalls. Sur played a pivotal role in Oman's maritime past and still produces traditional wooden vessels known as dhows. Stop by a dhow factory to see how these historic ships are made. Continue on to the Bimmah Sinkhole with its incredible turquoise color. In Muscat, drive along the waterfront corniche to Mutrah Souq to one of the oldest markets in Oman before checking in to your hotel for dinner and overnight. (Includes breakfast, lunch, dinner and overnight at hotel.)

Day 17 Transfer to Airport

After breakfast at the hotel, check out and transfer to the airport for your flight home. (Includes breakfast and transfer to the airport.)

Please Note:

Itineraries are subject to change.



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