



SPARKLING SANDS & CITIES OF THE PERSIAN GULF

Glide past bronze desert coastlines punctuated by 500-hundred-year-old Portuguese fortifications and shimmering, contemporary city skylines. The Persian Gulf is a cultural enigma rich in contrasts, abundant in both modern and ancient destinations bound by timeless traditions. Ride camels or air-conditioned 4x4s across endless golden sand dune crests. Wander amid masterpieces by European and Asian artists in the new Louvre Abu Dhabi, a breathtaking domed architectural marvel that hovers above the sea. Savor succulent lamb and local fish throughout regional cuisine, admire contemporary coastal havens, and experience friendly and authentic Middle Eastern culture in seaside desert surroundings unmatched anywhere in our world.



ITINERARY

Day 1 Dubai, UAE

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 2 - 3 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 4 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 Babel-Bahrain Souk will yield narrow stalls with a wide variety of perfumes, spices and gold.

Day 5 At Sea

Day 6 Sir Bani Yas, UAE

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 7 - 8 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 9 Ras Al Khaimah, 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 10 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 11 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.

Please Note:

Itineraries are subject to change.



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