

Before or after the safari

From which port does the liveaboard start? To which airport do I have to travel?

1. Best of **Daymaniat** - Fahal and Bandar Khayran: from/to Sifah (airport Muscat - MCT) During the summer and fall, Oman Explorer operates in the central area, in the capital region around Muscat. These tours start and end in Sifah.
2. **Hallaniyat Islands**: from/to Mirbat or Hasik (airport Salalah - SLL). The winter belongs to the southern tour, which leads along the coast to the group of Hallaniyats which are probably the most diverse diving area of the Sultanate!
3. **Explore the South**: from Hasik to Duqum or vv (airport Salalah-SLL and Duqum-DQM). These special trips in spring also lead to the Hallaniyat Islands but also include some exploration around San Carlos Banks and Duqm!
4. **Transfer trip** Sifah - Mirbat / Mirbat - Sifah: The transfer trip of the Oman Explorer offers guests on board a complete insight into the diversity of the Sultanate of Oman.

For all departure ports the transfers to the nearest airport are included (1 – 2 ½ hours drive).

When is check-in or check-out on the ship?

Please note check in time on Oman Explorer is around noon. The earliest boarding time is at 12 o'clock, the latest boarding time is 5pm – Embarkation 6-7pm. So your flight must arrive before 3 pm.

Muscat trips: If you arrive before 9 AM in Muscat, you can have breakfast and use the Pool at Sifawy Hotel for a fee (currently 10 OMR, to be paid on spot). You can go to the hotel reception and ask for assistance with your luggage to board Oman Explorer any time between 11.30 AM and 3 PM.

Salalah trips: If you arrive before 9.30 AM in Salalah, you can book a pool use at Kairaba Resort (currently 10 OMR per person, excluding food or drinks, payable locally). We then collect you for boarding at the resort. For guests who do not want to do this, pick up from Salalah airport is at 10am.

If there is a consecutive trip scheduled, normally 6 nights are spent on board, the last night the guests spend in a hotel. The day before the last day/checkout day the ship arrives in the harbor. From there our guests are brought to the hotel. On the next morning we head back to the airport for the flight back home.

When will the ship return to the port at the end of the safari?

One week trips are normally scheduled from Saturday to Saturday. Usually the arrival in Sifah port is on Friday morning before noon. In Mirbat the ship arrives normally Thursday night or early Friday morning.

How am I received at the airport or do I come to the ship?

Our driver will meet you in the arrival hall with a sign that says: M/Y Oman Explorer. The drive to the port takes around one hour; from there it is a 3 min. zodiac ride to the boat.

When will my passport and flight details be needed?

Passport details are needed for the harbor clearance and flight details are needed so we can make sure you will be picked up on time or brought to the airport on time. Please send us all details together with the booking (latest one week before your arrival).

Diving

Which dive training do I need?

You only need a Open Water or CMAS Bronze certificate. Important is that you can already dive safely, and so should have at least 50 dives under your belt.

Is there a minimum number of dives I need?

You should have at least 50 dives, in order to feel comfortable during the dives.

Do I need a dive computer?

Yes, diving with a computer is mandatory. If you need to rent a computer, please let us know in advance.

How many dives are offered per day?

In general, 3 to 4 dives are offered per day, including night dives (except for the first one last day of the trip).

Are night dives offered?

Yes, we have nice spots for night diving.

Is there nitrox on board?

Yes, Nitrox costs OMR 22,- per person/week.

Is one accompanied by dive guides when diving?

Before each dive, a detailed briefing takes place, with a drawing of the diving area (except if it is an exploration dive).

A guide will happily accompany you. The ship has 2 dive guides who are familiar with the area.

Are diving courses offered on board?

It is only possible to do a Nitrox course on board. The price for the Nitrox course is OMR 45,- plus OMR 25,- certification fee per person.

What is the max. Depth and max. Dive time?

30 meters, 60 minutes. Deco dives are not allowed for your own safety.

Is the diving done by boat or by zodiac?

Diving is done by our 2 zodiacs or from the dive platform. Most dive sites are only a short boat ride away by zodiac.

Which tanks are on board?

12 litre aluminum tanks with DIN valves. Inserts are available for INT first stages.

15 litre tanks can be rented on request for 15 OMR per person/week.

Do I need a dive insurance?

Yes, a diving insurance is mandatory for the trip. We recommend DAN or Aquamed.

Are there any special safety systems on board?

First aid: emergency kit, oxygen, defibrillator

Safety: fire extinguishers, life jackets, life rafts

Navigation: radar, GPS, compass, radio, depth gauge

Satellite phone

What is the water temperature?

The water temperature ranges between 20-30 degrees Celsius and depends on the time of year and the dive area. Due to thermoclines and currents the temperature can vary up to 10 degrees from day to day and in different depth on the same day.

Daymaniat trips: Surface temperature in the summer months usually are 26 to 30 degrees Celsius. While in fall and spring they are normally around 22 to 26 degrees.

Hallaniyat trips: The water temperature in winter ranges usually around 24-26 degrees Celsius. In April it can be as warm as 28 and in October it can even drop below 20 degrees.

Are there strong currents?

You may encounter a bit of current on a few of the dive sites, however the currents are much weaker than e.g. in Indonesia or the Maldives.

How is the visibility?

Visibility can vary between 5 and 20 meters due to the nutrient-rich water and because of thermoclines, but the masses of fish here provide adequate compensation. Normally in the morning there is better visibility than in the afternoon.

The best visibility for Daymaniat trips is usually in September/October, for Hallaniyat trips in April/May.

Diving equipment

Which diving equipment do I need?

Besides weights and tanks, you may bring everything else along or rent equipment (pre-booking required). The rental gear is subject to the local dive Centers where we operate: Extra Divers Sifah and Mirbat. Our tanks are equipped with DIN valves, but tank connection is possible with DIN or INT first stages. There is no need for adapters, inserts for INT are present.

Compulsory – Equipment and documentation for each diver is:

- Diving certificate
- Logbook
- Diving medical examination (up to 40 yrs of age - valid for 24 months, over 40 years - valid for 12 months.). Alternatively, you can fill out a medical questionnaire.
- Complete diving equipment including dive computer
- Surface buoy
- Own lamp for night diving

Which diving suit do I need?

Almost all our guests are diving in long wet suits. For most people a 5 mm wet suit with a shorty on top or a vest under the suit is fine. However, since the perception of cold is very different for human beings, a 7 mm suit is recommended for more sensitive divers.

Is there rental equipment on board?

Equipment rental is possible for an additional fee (for rates please refer to the rental rates of our Extra Divers centres in Sifah or Mirbat – according to the starting port of the trip. Please reserve necessary extra equipment during booking process already in advance.

Is sidemount diving possible?

Yes, but you need to bring your own rigging set for this. If you like to dive with two tanks, the surcharge would be OMR 10 per week.

Are double tanks offered?

No.

Which valves (DIN / INT) are available?

Both DIN and INT valves are available.

Are there storage options for my camera?

The ship has two large sinks for rinsing your camera with fresh water. There is only little storage space for cameras. Big cameras we store in a box with a towel to protect the camera.

Ship

What happens when I arrive on board?

You will be greeted by the Cruise Director and the staff, install yourself and get familiar with the ship. After that a boat briefing will follow.

Which meals are offered?

We serve three meals during the day in form of buffets, plus snacks and fresh fruits.

Which drinks are served?

We carry a selection of various drinks such as Coca Cola, Sprite and Fanta. Also beer and wine are sold. The "refreshment corner" offers water, tea, coffee and juice at any time. Coffee, tea, water and juice are free of charge. All other drinks are recorded on a list and will be billed at the end of the trip.

What should be noted in the cabin?

Cabins are used for sleeping and refreshing. All cabins have their own AC and bathroom. Please do not throw the used toilet paper or other hygienic products into the toilet under any circumstances, but use the containers set up for this, as otherwise blockages of the toilets can occur.

What should be considered in the salon?

Here you'll find a library, lounge area, fish ID books, refrigerators with chilled drinks and a TV for the evening briefings and movies.

May I smoke on board?

Yes, but only outside on designated places.

Can I sleep on the deck of the ship?

Yes, however please note that nights can be chilly. Also please bring your own sleeping bag for that.

Which language is spoken on board?

English, German, Arabic, Danish.

What is the voltage? Which sockets are available?

The standard voltage on the boat and in the cabins is 220 V. Outlets are European standard.

Are there towels on board?

Yes.

Are there bathrobes on board?

No.

Is there WIFI on board?

No. But connection to the net is possible in the harbors on an Omani sim card or on roaming.

Which windows have the cabins (portholes, etc.), can the windows be opened?

The downstairs cabins number 1-6 downstairs have portholes that cannot be opened. Cabins 7-10 upstairs have portholes which can be opened, also you may open the door for fresh air. The Master cabin has two windows which can be opened in addition to the cabin door.

Is there an air conditioner in the cabin, is this individually adjustable?

All cabins have air conditioning which is individual adjustable. Also the cabins have wall mounted fans.

What kind of beds are there in the cabins?

The Master cabin has a double bed, all other cabins have single beds.

General

What does the dive safari include?

Airport transfers, full board, water, coffee, tea, diving (3-4 dives per day except first and last day)

What is not included in the price?

Visa Oman 20 OMR, please note that the visa should be bought online before arrival.

Dive permit of 4 OMR (due per diving day), 6 OMR at the Daymaniat Islands

Nitrox 22 OMR per week

15l tank 15 OMR per week

Port fees & fuel surcharge for all trips starting from August 2019:

150 USD for all 7 night trips / 180 USD for all longer trips

Beverages: Soft drinks like Coke/Fanta 0.6 OMR each/Beer 2 OMR for 0.5l can of German beer/Wine (red & white) 2 OMR per glass.

How can I pay on board?

The additional costs on board **cannot be paid by credit card**. Please pay cash in USD, EURO or Omani Rial. Please note we only take us dollars not older than 2010.

How much tip is appropriate?

We believe tips are a voluntary thing and should be based on the quality of the services. Once on board, you'll notice very quickly how hard the crew works and how your safety and satisfaction are the team's primary concern. Many of our guests give a gratuity in the amount of 5% of cruise cost, sometimes even more. But once again, we stress that this happens only on a voluntary basis! Tips are accepted only in the form of cash. If you should ever be dissatisfied with us, please let us know!

Are land excursions offered?

No.

Is there medication on board?

Yes, but only for minor injuries/sickness. If you need specific medication you need to bring this yourself.

Which clothes should I bring?

Remember to bring sunglasses, sun cream and a hoodie/hat to cover your ears. During the winter month, we recommend to bring a pair of long pants and a jumper.

Is it possible to extend the stay after the safari?

Combine your liveaboard experience on the Oman Explorer with a hotel stay, land tours or one of our Extra Divers dive centres in Oman!

Can I book two safaris in a row?

Yes. Please talk to your travel agency.

Contact number in case of emergencies or flight delays

Mirbat: Extra Divers / Kairaba Hotel +968 9825 3063

Sifah: Extra Divers / Sifawy Hotel +968 97259099

Tore Bratland +96-871755808 (Cruise Director)