



PRESS RELEASE



ALILA JABAL AKHDAR LAUNCHES SIGNATURE ALILA EXPERIENCES

Hiking, driving and cultural guided tours are now available to guests, giving the chance to get under the skin of the untapped regions of Oman



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The recently opened Alila Jabal Akhdar, located in the Al Hajar mountains of Oman has now launched a wealth of Alila experiences, allowing guests the chance to discover Jabal Akhdar through its traditions, environment, the roots of its people and daily rituals. The experiences are led by Alila's Leisure Concierges - local experts who know the region well and are passionate about sharing their knowledge and stories. From tailored treks reaching Oman's highest peaks, to castle and fort tours as well as desert driving from Muscat to Jabal Akhdar, there are 'surprisingly different' experiences to suit all.

EXPLORING ON TWO FEET...

A MIRAGE IN THE MOUNTAINS

Starting from the wadi (dry waterway), just a few minutes from the resort, The Mirage in the Mountains walk takes approximately three hours and is the perfect way to get a close look at the natural wadi system, learn about the various bushes and trees around this fertile part of the mountain as well as observe the various rock formations. Alila Jabal Akhdar's Leisure Concierge will guide guests on a climb up to discover the local 'mirage', the village of Sarab, which is the nearest abandoned village to the resort and the original home of the members of the community, some of whom are associated with the resort. The area can be freely explored and guests can visit each 'house' and marvel at the basic way of life lived here without electricity or running water, just 15 years ago. The walk ends close to a natural stone formation that forms a water cascade during rainy periods.

HOW? The Mirage in the Mountains experience takes three

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hours and costs from £10 per person.

SPLENDOUR OF SAIQ PLATEAU

The Saiq Plateau is where guests can embark on the most well known local hike, dubbed 'The Village Walk'. This walk is suitable for all levels of fitness and winds through the villages of Al Ayn and Shoraihiyah, bringing guests up close to the terraced farmlands that grow the region's prized Damask roses and pomegranates, as well as the intricate irrigation system known as 'falaj'. Guests will have the chance to engage with local farmers and learn about the rose water distillery process. Those keen on extending this hike can continue the village walk by following route 18A to the abandoned village of Wadi Bani Habib, and walk among the remains of houses that offer a glimpse of traditional life in these valleys.

HOW? The Saiq Plateau experience includes a picnic lunch and costs from £22 per person for the five-hour tour and £31 per person for the six-hour tour.

MISFAT AL ABRIYYIN & JEBAL SHAMS

The Misfat Al Abriyyin is an ancient donkey trail, starting at the village of Misfat Al Abriyyin, 950 metres above sea level and following a path through the mountain terrace to Aqbat Al Hamra. The trail continues 1,500 metres upwards to Hayl Al Jawari from where guests can follow a 3.5 kilometre walk to Sharad Al Alamayn or even higher to the top at 2,197 metres. This hike takes approximately five to six hours to ascend and four hours to descend, offering spectacular views of Wadi Bani Awf and the surrounding mountains. The truly adventurous can rise to the challenge and hike up the well-known 'Summit Walk' trail to reach the Jebal Shams, (Mountain of Sun) the highest point in Oman at 2,997 metres high.

HOW? The Misfat Al Abriyyin and Jebal Shams full-day experiences cost from £50 per person departing Alila Jabal Akhdar at 6:00am.

OR ON THE ROAD...

A WORLD ABOVE THE MOUNTAINS

For those who prefer an off road adventure, Alila Jabal Akhdar's 4x4's offer the chance to explore the A'roos and Saiq Plateaus. From discovering abandoned villages such as Sarab, witnessing life in local communities and passing by local farming areas, guests will have the chance to take in the full beauty of the region from spectacular vantage points. The area is home to the largest and oldest trees on the Arabian Peninsula - majestic 2000 to 3000-year-old juniper trees that stand in the dust bowl on the upper Saiq Plateau. For an off-road experience, guests can be taken to Juniper Village, which offers panoramic views of deep valleys, nature walks and juniper trees. From there, drive to the village of Sogra, following ancient paths through the canyons to the walnut groves and pomegranate fields and see

the stone houses plastered against the steep mountain slopes. For those up for more, continue on to Managkher and the village of Al Ayn, stopping for a picnic dinner with panoramic views and then finish the day by driving through Al Aqr or A'roos.

HOW? The World About the Mountains experience cost from £34 per person per half day or from £50 per person for full-day tours.

CULTURAL LEARNINGS...

FORTS & SOUKS OF NIZWA

Nizwa is the birthplace of Islam in Oman and the country's ancient capital, reached by a drive down the mountains from Alila Jabal Akhdar. One of Oman's most popular tourist destinations, Nizwa was once a centre of trade, religion, education and art due to its strategic location at the crossroads of key caravan routes and is the site for many historic castles and forts. Alila's Forts and Souks trip takes guests to the most formidable of these, the imposing 17th century Nizwa Fort – visited recently by Prince Harry – that is the largest fort in the Arabian Peninsula, offering views of the city and surrounding plantations from its circular tower. The trip also takes in the Nizwa Souk, famous for its Bedouin silver jewellery and bustling with vendors selling everything from fresh produce and spices to pottery and leather goods. On the return journey to the resort, guests will have the chance to stop by Misfat Al Abriyyin, a medieval village built into the rock face.

HOW? The Forts & Souks Of Nizwa experience is a half-day tour and costs from £34 per person.

FRIDAY GOAT MARKET & BIRKAT AL MOUZ

There is no better time to visit Nizwa than during the lively Friday Goat Market, where local farmers gather early in the morning to trade livestock – mainly goats, cows and sheep – by auction. Alila guests can join the crowds for a truly unique opportunity to observe this traditional local custom before exploring the Fort before the crowds. On the way back to the resort guests have the option to walk through the village of Birkat Al Mouz. Meaning 'Pool of Bananas', where bananas as well as date palms grow in abundance at the base of the mountains, the village is home to the ruins of old houses that appear to emerge right out of the rocks and has one of the best examples of the ancient 'falaj' water systems.

HOW? The Friday Goat Market & Birkat Al Mouz experience is a half-day tour and costs from £34 per person.

CASTLES & FORTS - JABREEN & BAHLA

As castles and forts are among Oman's most distinctive cultural landmarks, the Castles & Forts experience is one guests will not want to miss. Visit the town of Jabreen, home to Jabreen Castle, built in 1670 as a palace for the Imam and his family, featuring

five floors and 55 rooms and distinguished by authentic Omani craftsmanship found in its ceiling murals, carved doors and the inscriptions and frescoes that adorn its walls. This trip also takes in the sights of Bahla, which lies about 20 kilometres from Jabreen, renowned for its ancient UNESCO-protected Bahla Fort with its mud-brick walls and towers on stone foundations.

HOW? The Castle & Fort experience is a half-day tour and costs from £34 per person.

Rooms at Alila Jabal Akhdar start from £180 per night based on two people sharing and including breakfast.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:

For more information visit

www.alilahotels.com/jabalakhdar/alila-experiences

About Alila Jabal Akhdar

Developed in partnership with Omran, a prominent operator and asset manager of tourism in Oman, the resort is one of the country's most sustainable, built to EarthCheck standards and gold certified. Designed to minimise impact on the surrounding environment, whilst maximising on the area's outstanding natural beauty, the resort has used locally sourced materials and traditional artisanal craftsmanship. The resort has drawn inspiration from its Oman location in all aspects – from its architecture and interiors, to the specially crafted 'Islamic Mediterranean' cuisine, with the famous juniper and roses that grow locally, featuring prominently throughout the menu. The interiors of the 78 suites and villas have been inspired by the fragrant pink roses, which blanket the mountainside in springtime. Each come complete with their own balconies or terraces perfect for sunsets and stargazing, whilst the infinity pool stretches out over the gorge. The two Jabal Villas, named Jowz and Rummanah after the walnuts and pomegranates found in the region offer guests the ultimate in privacy with two en-suite bedrooms, large living spaces, private pool and terraces. For more information visit www.alilahotels.com/jabalakhdar