

The capital of Oman, Muscat is the most dynamic location in the country. With major banks, hotels, businesses located here, it is an integral part of Oman's economic and social scene. The metropolitan area of Muscat spread out on 15,000 square kilometers houses a population of 600,000 people.

# Muscat *urban guide*

## Dining

### O Sole Mio

This Italian restaurant is known for its extensive and authentic menu. The restaurant specialises in home made pasta, local seafood and its famous tomato sauce. From its deliciously different culinary delights to its stylish interiors O Sole Mio has an innovative style with a contemporary touch.

### Mumtaz Mahal

Recipient of the Best Indian Restaurant award Mumtaz Mahal, is one of the oldest restaurants in Oman. It has an elaborate menu of typically spicy dishes. The place is generally crowded, especially around dinner time. So book your table in advance to avoid waiting for your turn.

## Hotel

### Chedi Hotel

Situated in Al-Khuwair, the Chedi Hotel is strategically located facing the magnificent Boushar beachfront with the imposing mountain range in the back. The hotel is about 15 kilometers from the international airport and is very conveniently accessible from other parts of the city. The two restaurants serve a variety of cuisines. You can also pamper yourself with some special spa treatments in one of the seven spa rooms in the hotel. North Ghubra 232 Way N.3215 Street 46 964, Al Khuwair Muscat Oman. Tel: 96824524400. Call: 9662-6633333

## Escape

### Rustaq Hot Springs

Like the entire Batinah region Rustaq has many streams that come down from the mountains. Therefore the land has fertile soil to grow vegetables and fruits. In Rustaq you can experience a rare and fascinating face of nature in the shape of the Rustaq Hot Springs. These springs are beautiful with a range of colours making them unique. The most popular is the Ain Al Kasafa.



## Place

### Muttrah Area

Muttrah has a lively corniche, a traditional fish market and a bustling souk. Look around for ethnic silver jewellery or brass and gold ornaments, kohl boxes, incense burners, amulet holders and hair ornaments. The souk trades in a wide range of fabrics, traditional jewellery and conventional Omani arts and crafts. It is also known to be the local fragrance bazaar. The smell from the incense sticks give a mystical feel to the shopping experience. Oman is globally well-known for the rare frankincense. The Omani dagger or 'khanjar' is another special souvenir that you can shop from here.

## Sightseeing

### Qantab Beach

Gifted by nature Muscat offers a wide range of options for nature lovers. While in Muscat a visit to its beautiful beaches, especially Qantab is obligatory. Situated around 15 kilometers from the city of Muscat across the serene Gulf of Oman, the Qantab beach is lined by rocky mountains. Perfect for long walks it will help you to disconnect from the bustle of city life and enjoy its serene atmosphere. The blue waters along the rocky atolls with the surrounding cliffs make for great clicks. This is also a perfect getaway with kids as you can help them discover nature closely. For those on the lookout for traditional adventure, try some angling. The local fishermen give out their boats for trips around the bay. The bay is also a perfect spot for swimming and snorkelling.

## Shopping

### Amouage Perfume

Amouage Perfumes, a signature brand have been created by Amouage Perfumery. This initiative was taken up by His Highness Sayyid Hamad bin Hamoud al bu Said at the request of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said, the ruler of the Sultanate of Oman. The intention behind this request was to ensure that the rich traditions of the Omani culture were preserved and promoted through the creation of the best perfumes.

### Omai Halwa

The Halwa is one of Oman's most popular local desserts. It is so deeply embedded into the regional traditions and customs of Oman that no celebration is complete without the Halwa. This local sweet also known as 'Omani Halwa' is famous for its unique taste across the Arabian Peninsula. Made easily at home its ingredients include white sugar, brown sugar, wheat flour, rose water, saffron, cardamom, almonds, nutmeg and water. The process involves continuous heating of a mixture of these ingredients. The final quality of the product depends on the appropriateness of the mixture and the heating. The traditional halwa in Oman comes from the Wilayat of Barka.



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