

## TRIP OVERVIEW

Unleash your inner adventurer on this stunning swimming holiday in Oman. Taking in the awe-inspiring fjords of the spectacular Musandam Peninsula, this trip gives you the chance to discover some truly breathtaking locations, many of which had never been swum in prior to SwimTrek's arrival in the area.

Often described as the 'Norway of Arabia', the Musandam Peninsula is one of the Persian Gulf's great wildernesses. Separated from the rest of Oman by the large expanse of the UAE, the peninsula lies at the extreme north-eastern tip of Arabia, where the steep red rocks of the Hajar Mountains plunge into the blue waters of the Arabian Gulf, creating a labyrinth of massive fjords (khors).

Our traditional local dhow is the perfect vessel from which to explore this area, and our swimmers are often accompanied by the friendly dolphins who frequently visit these waters.

From the towering cliffs and incredible views to the local culture and delicious cuisine, this trip allows you to experience this fascinating corner of the world from a truly unique perspective.

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## WHO IS THIS TRIP FOR?

This trip is ideal for swimmers who are looking for an adventurous swimming experience in one of SwimTrek's most unique destinations. Swimmers should have a basic understanding of open water swimming and be capable of completing the average daily swim distance of around 6km prior to the start of the trip.

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## LOCATION SUMMARIES

### Musandam

Geographically, the Musandam Peninsula juts out into the Strait of Hormuz, the narrow entry into the Persian Gulf, from the Arabian Peninsula.

### Khasab

Our base for the trip is in the sleepy town of Khasab. Lying on a plain nestled between the mountains and the sea, this is the starting point for our trip up Khor Ash Sham fjord. With Iranian traders loading up goods in the Old Souk to take back across the Strait of Hormuz, it feels like a real frontier town.

### Khor Ash Sham Fjord

Kor Ash Sham is the longest and most dramatic of the many fjords in Musandam. All the fjords (khors) are actually flooded valleys, formed as a result of Musandam's progressive decline beneath the Eurasian continental plate. Craggy cliffs litter the landscape along with small island communities which are accessible only by boat.

### Telegraph Island

Telegraph Island was once a crucial hub in Britain's link with her empire. At the centre of the telegraph line between London and Bombay, it was originally known as Zazirat al Maqlab and it offered a refuge from the potentially hostile local tribes of the mainland.



## TRIP SCHEDULE

<b>Start Point</b>	Atana Khasab Hotel, Khasab, Oman, <a href="http://www.atanahotels.com">www.atanahotels.com</a>
<b>Start Time</b>	16:00 on Day 1
<b>Finish Point</b>	Atana Khasab Hotel, Khasab, Oman, <a href="http://www.atanahotels.com">www.atanahotels.com</a>
<b>Finish Time</b>	09:00 on Day 6

### Daily Itineraries

Please note that the below daily itineraries are an example of the swims that may take place during the course of your trip, however, actual swim locations and distances will vary according to local weather and sea conditions. Your SwimTrek guides and local boat pilot will determine the most suitable swim locations each day and will communicate the plan with all guests as soon as possible.

#### Day 1

After checking into the hotel you will have some time to settle in and explore before we meet later in the evening for our welcome meeting, featuring a description of the days ahead, followed by a safety briefing. We then get out for our acclimatisation swim at nearby Bassa Beach, which is the perfect opportunity to get used to the local waters in preparation for tomorrow's day of swimming.

#### Day 2

We depart from our hotel and travel to Khor Ash Sham, the largest of the fjords in the Musandam Peninsula. As we set off towards the fishing village of Nadifi, the first thing you notice is the sheer size of what you are entering. From Nadifi, we head out on our first swim of the trip, across Nadifi Bay and then back along the khor's southern shoreline until we reach the remote outpost of Qanaha. In this isolated location, the local dialect, Kumzari, is generally spoken, which sounds distinctly more like Farsi than Arabic, and is another reminder of the wide range of influences which have helped to shape the culture in this part of the world.

After a lunch of delicious local food on board our dhow, we attempt our first crossing of the khor by swimming from Qanaha to Khor Point. It's a stunning crossing of Khor Ash Sham. In the middle of the crossing, you can see down the entire length of the khor for the first time.

On arrival back at our hotel overlooking the sea, we carry out a stroke technique session and video analysis in the hotel pool, complete with stunning views of the surrounding landscapes.

#### Day 3

We leave the hotel and head east again, passing our swim locations from yesterday. Our first port of call is to the small coastal hamlet of Maqleb. From here we swim directly across to Telegraph Island, the old British repeater station. On reaching the island we get out at the steps and explore this old symbol of the Empire. We take lunch on the island and enjoy unrivalled views along the Khor.

The swim in the afternoon starts from Telegraph Island; we swim across to Sham, one of the area's larger settlements on the north side of the khor. This part of the khor is one of the most likely areas to

spot the spinner dolphin, which is local to these fjords.

### Day 4

The morning is taken up with a five-bay hop, as we cross between peninsulas before ending up at Seebi Island, famous for its golden white sands. You can see the bottom the entire way around on our circumnavigation and there are a number of get-out points along the way.

In the afternoon we cross to the remote cove of Shisah, where a pod of the local spinner dolphins can often be found. The cove's blue azure waters are a fitting end to a wonderful day of khor swimming.

### Day 5

We're up early this morning as we travel down the entire length of Khor Ash Sham, a distance of over 20 kilometres. The red rock Hajar mountains appear as an impenetrable barrier before us. We travel to the most remote village in the khor, Seebi, where the water is generally at its clearest.

From here, we swim along the coastline, where the cliffs literally plunge down into the sea. We pass Turtle Rock as well as swim under the imposing cliff face of Mount Seebi. After lunch, taken on board the dhow, there is an opportunity to walk up the side of the narrow isthmus which separates the Persian Gulf (Khor Ash Sham) from the Gulf of Oman (Khor Najd). It is undoubtedly one of the most spectacular views in the whole of the Middle East.

After finishing our last swim we jump back onto the boat and enjoy a cruise for the final time past this magnificent land and seascape.

### Day 6

After the exertions of the week, it's time for a relaxing swim directly in front of our hotel. We head towards Bassa Beach, which is a popular spot with local swimmers. After a brief stop, we swim back to the hotel, thus bringing to an end this unique swimming trip in the fjords of Musandam.

## TRIP INFORMATION

### Essential Equipment Checklist

In addition to your daily non-swimming clothes, we also recommend that you bring the following items:

✓	Item	✓	Item
<input type="checkbox"/>	Swimming Costume x 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	Small Daypack
<input type="checkbox"/>	Swimming Goggles x 2*	<input type="checkbox"/>	Waterproof Jacket
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sun Hat and Sunglasses	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sweater
<input type="checkbox"/>	Waterproof Sun Cream (High SPF)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Walking Shoes
<input type="checkbox"/>	Towel	<input type="checkbox"/>	Aqua Shoes/Sandals
<input type="checkbox"/>	Additional layers for the evening**	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lightweight conservative outfit***

\*Try to bring one clear lens and one tinted lens for different light conditions.

\*\*It can often be quite cool on the dhow and in the evenings, so we also recommend bringing a few extra layers to put on after your swims and during evening meals.

\*\*\*Please bring an outfit that covers from your shoulders down to your knees.

Note: Your normal swimwear will be perfectly suitable for the swims but a long sleeved rash vest is always a good idea for extra UV protection!

Please note that SwimTrek will supply swim hats and provide water and electrolyte drinks in shared water bottles on your safety boat. If you prefer to use your own drink bottle, please feel free to bring one along. If you would like to use a wetsuit, rash vest or fins during your swims, please ensure that you bring these with you.

### Swimming Distances

Swim	Distance	Swim	Distance
Nadifi - Qanha	4km	Qanha - Khor Point	2km
Maqleb - Telegraph Island	4km	Telegraph Island - Sham	2km
5-Bay Hop and Seebi Island Circumnavigation	3km	Seebi Island - Shisah	3km
Mount Seebi Coastal	2km	Khasab Coastal	1km

### Swimming Conditions

Swimming in the sea is a fantastic experience, however you should be aware that certain marine life such as sea lice, jellyfish, sea urchins and coral could be present during the swims. In all cases we will work on reducing your contact with these creatures, however if you suffer from anaphylaxis, please consult the office prior to booking.

### Walking Distances

There are small walks on this trip which are mainly to get us to and from the start and finish of a swim. Most walks take place on recognised paths and tracks, however there may be cases where we walk along trails or other unsealed surfaces and care should be taken in these areas.

### Walking Distances

Walk	Distance
Khor Ash Sham – Khor Najd	1km

Due to the inaccessibility of the fjords, the walking is limited. The one walk is a steep walk up the side of the isthmus separating Khor Ash Sham from Khor Najd. Good trainers or walking sandals would be required. There is always the option of not going on the walks should you so wish.

## Temperatures

Month	Water Temperature*	Air Temperature*
February	22°C - 24°C / 72°F - 75°F	22°C - 24°C / 72°F - 75°F
November	27°C - 29°C / 81°F - 84°F	26°C - 28°C / 79°F - 82°F

\* Please note that these temperature are indicative and should be used as a guide only.

## Weather Caveat

For safety reasons, we rely on decent weather conditions when carrying out our swims. As a consequence, open water swimming holidays require a certain degree of on-trip flexibility which can result in changes to the planned itinerary. These changes often add a touch of uniqueness to your trip and will be communicated to you by your SwimTrek guides as quickly as possible.

## Group Size and Boat Support

This trip has a maximum group size of 15. The group will be split into a maximum of three groups, based on speed, with each group being accompanied by their own safety vessel/escort.

Boat support on this trip includes one main boat (a traditional local dhow) and two inflatable boats to be piloted by your SwimTrek guides and a local boat pilot. Please note that this boat support is subject to change without notice and cannot be guaranteed.

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## GETTING THERE

While there are various options for travelling to Khasab at the start of your trip, we recommend flying into Dubai and catching the SwimTrek transfer which departs from Dubai International Airport, Terminal 1, at 10:30 on Day 1 of your trip.

While we have outlined various travel options below, they are subject to change and should be used as a guide only. We suggest that you use [www.skyscanner.net](http://www.skyscanner.net) to search for alternative flight options for this trip. Whichever route you choose to take, we recommend confirming your flights and other travel arrangements as early as possible in order to avoid price rises and availability issues.

### Travel Via Dubai, UAE

To search for available flights into Dubai International Airport, please visit [www.skyscanner.net](http://www.skyscanner.net).

### Designated SwimTrek Transfer - Dubai International Airport to Khasab

SwimTrek offers a transfer from Dubai International Airport (Terminal 1) to your accommodation in Oman which leaves at 10:30 on Day 1 of the trip. The transfer takes approximately 3-4 hours, however, please be aware that this journey time can vary considerably due to possible delays at the UAE/Oman border. If you would like to join this transfer, please contact the SwimTrek office with your flight details prior to your trip. Please note that the cost of the transfer varies depending on the number of travellers and must be paid locally, using the local currency (Omani Rial). Please note that the prices below are for

a one-way transfer from Dubai International Airport to Atana Khasab Hotel, Oman.

Number of Passengers	Cost
4 Passengers (minimum required)	OMR35 per person
5-7 Passengers	OMR28 per person
8-10 Passengers	OMR25 per person
11 + Passengers	OMR20 per person

### Private Transfer - Dubai International Airport to Khasab

If your travel plans do not coincide with the designated SwimTrek transfer, it is possible to arrange a private transfer through our partners in Oman. To book a private transfer, please email the team at Dolphin Travel via: [dolphint@omantel.net.om](mailto:dolphint@omantel.net.om)

### Return Transfers - Khasab to Dubai International Airport

A return transfer from Khasab to Dubai International Airport is available on the final day of your trip and can be arranged with your fellow guests once you are in Oman. Please note that this transfer generally arrives at Dubai International Airport at approximately 12:00, however, it is subject to delays at the UAE/Oman border and your arrival time cannot be guaranteed.

Please note that you will need to allow enough time to check out of the hotel with enough time to catch this transfer back to Dubai and it may be best to arrange this with the hotel reception the night before your departure.

### Travel Via Muscat, Oman

It is possible to travel to Khasab by flying into Muscat and then catch a connecting flight or ferry to Khasab. Please note that this option is often longer and more expensive than travelling via Dubai. To search for available flights into Muscat, please visit [www.skyscanner.net](http://www.skyscanner.net).

From Muscat, you can also catch a domestic flight to Khasab with [Oman Air](http://Oman Air), which has a journey time of approximately one hour.

### Muscat to Khasab - Bus and Ferry

It is also possible to book a bus and ferry from Muscat to Khasab which takes approximately 7-8 hours. Please note that this bus/ferry service does not run every day. For schedules departures and other timetable information, please visit: [www.nfc.om](http://www.nfc.om).

## PRACTICAL INFORMATION

### Accommodation

Perched on a rock face, the Atana Khasab Hotel is a 4-star resort offering panoramic views of the Strait of Hormuz and the spectacular Musandam shoreline. All rooms are equipped with air conditioning and en suite bathrooms and are sold on a twin-share basis. There are a limited number of single supplement rooms which can be reserved during the booking process, subject to availability.

### Meals

All breakfasts and lunches are included in the price of your trip, however, please note that evening meals are at your own expense. This gives you a fantastic opportunity to either eat at the hotel restaurant or explore and experience the local cafes and restaurants of your choice over the course of your trip. The price for eating out in Khasab varies considerably depending on the restaurant. The average price of a two-course dinner in Khasab town is around 5OMR (£8) while at the hotel, the price is closer to 15OMR (£25).

### Extra Expenses

You should bring extra money with you to cover items such as dinners, drinks, entertainment, souvenirs, etc. The local currency is the Omani Rial.

### Passports and Visas

The Musandam Peninsula, including Khasab, is part of Oman. Non-Omani citizens require a full passport to enter the country, which should be valid for six months beyond the expected length of stay. All visitors require an Omani visa to enter the country. Whilst Omani visas may be available on arrival to citizens of 33 countries, including all E.U. member states, U.S.A., Canada, Australia and New Zealand, we strongly advise applying online in advance via: <https://evisa.rop.gov.om/> This will help avoid any unexpected delays to your journey.

Guests travelling via Dubai, or any other airport in the UAE, will need to obtain a UAE visa. Citizens of 33 countries, including all E.U. member states, U.S.A., Canada, Australia and New Zealand can apply for a free visa upon arrival at Dubai airport. For further information about UAE visas, please visit: Visit Dubai.

If travelling on the SwimTrek designated transfer from Dubai to Khasab, you will drive to the Oman/UAE border, where you will pass through the immigration offices of the UAE. As above, although it may be possible to obtain your Omani visa at the border, we strongly advise applying online in advance to help avoid any delays via : <https://evisa.rop.gov.om/>

**Please note, visa regulations are always subject to change and it is important that you check your own visa requirements prior to travel.**

## **Health Information and Recommended Vaccinations**

For comprehensive health information for people travelling to Oman, including all recommended and required vaccinations, please visit [www.travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries](http://www.travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries). Please note that this information is subject to change and you should re-check this site regularly prior to your trip.

## **Travel Plugs & Electricity**

For a useful source of information on the different electrical outlets, electrical plugs, and electric sockets, please visit [electricaloutlet.org](http://electricaloutlet.org).

## **Other Information**

If there is any further information that you require before your trip, or if you have any questions whatsoever, please don't hesitate to get in touch with us using the contact details at the bottom of these Trip Notes.