



Ministry of Tourism



مسقط عاصمة السياحة العربية ٢٠١٢  
Muscat Arab Tourism Capital 2012

# NEWS RELEASE

## **SWEEPING VISA CHANGES WELCOMED BY OMAN'S TOURISM SECTOR**

- **The Sultanate of Oman has made sweeping changes to visa arrangements and fees to lure more tourists to Oman.**
- **The new arrangements include an OMR 5 fee for a single entry tourism visa for up to 10 days, and OMR 20 for a single entry for stays between 10 days and a month. Cruise ship arrivals up to 48 hours are free, and OMR 5 for multiple visits.**
- **His Excellency Sheikh Abdulmalik Al Khalili, Oman's Minister of Tourism said "this is great news for Oman's tourism industry and our trade network. The changes will build business across all markets and lure more stopover, short break, incentive and business travel to Oman. We will see more convention and meetings organizers looking at Oman as a conference location" he said.**
- **The visa reforms follow the launch of the Oman Tourism's global awareness campaign on BBC Worldwide television and web sites, the Arab League Tourism Ministers' declaration of Muscat as Arab Tourism Capital in 2012, and the recent launch of Oman's *1 Free Night in Oman*\* stopover promotion with national carrier Oman Air.**

**Muscat, Sultanate of Oman, 20 February 2012.** The Sultanate of Oman has made sweeping changes to its visa arrangements to lure more tourists.

The new arrangements include an OMR 5 fee for a single entry tourism visa (Group 1 countries) for up to 10 days, and OMR 20 for a single entry for up to a month. Cruise arrival visas are free up to 48 hours or OMR 5 for multiple visits. The new arrangements commence immediately.

His Excellency Sheikh Abdulmalik Al Khalili, Oman's Minister of Tourism said "this is great news for Oman's tourism industry and our international travel and tourism trade partners. The government has moved proactively to improve Oman's competitiveness in stop-over, short-stay and conference tourism. The changes also encourage travel to Salalah and other regional destinations, and conference organizers to consider Oman as an event location" he said.

The Ministry of Tourism sees the new arrangements as an important structural change to boost Oman's tourism performance. In the short-term, the Ministry expects a lift in leisure and short stay visits from the GCC market. Oman Air's rapidly growing passenger transit market is also of interest to Oman's tourism operators. For the year ending September 2011, the transit market is estimated at around 787,000 passenger movements and growing at around 19% per year. This includes around 80,100 premium travelers.

Oman is also seeing a boom in cruise ship activity and the new visa arrangements strengthen the case for cruise lines to consider Muscat for crew and passenger exchanges.

His Excellency, the Minister said the "changes will be welcomed by the global travel and tourism trade. The changes make Oman very attractive for the growing stopover, business and cruise passenger segments - areas of great potential. The changes also open up possibilities for a wide range of trade and consumer tactical campaigns, including our stopover campaign with Oman Air" he commented.

The reforms follow the launch of the Ministry's Oman global awareness campaign on BBC Worldwide television and web sites, the Arab League Tourism Ministers' declaration of Muscat as Arab Tourism Capital in 2012, and the launch of Oman's *1 Free Night in Oman*\* stopover campaign with Oman Air.

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**Notes to Editors:**

- Oman Tourism see: [www.omantourism.gov.om](http://www.omantourism.gov.om)
- Muscat 2012 see: [www.muscat2012.om](http://www.muscat2012.om)
- 1 Free Night in Oman\* campaign see: <http://holidays.omanair.com/wy/oman-air-holidays/oman-stopover>