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## Oman Amongst The Top 10 Destinations The Lonely Planet Publishes Its Picks For 2009

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Oman's aspiration of becoming a top-class attraction for holidaymakers worldwide has received further boost being among the Top 10 picks within The Lonely Planet's Best in Travel 2009 guide. The world's most famous travel guide written by destination-expert authors, has published its picks for 2009. Lonely Planet's Best in Travel 2009 features the best places to go and things to do all around the world in the upcoming year. Drawing on the knowledge, passion, and miles travelled by Lonely Planet's staff and authors, Lonely Planet's Best in Travel 2009 has a year's worth of inspiration to take travelers out of the ordinary and into some unforgettable experiences.

Usama bin Karim Al Haremi, Head of Corporate Communications and Media of Oman Air, said that this is a further shot in the arm for Oman's tourism industry. Media outlets, websites around the world published the news sent out via Reuters and other international news services last month, highlighting LP's top 10 picks for 2009. Oman once more, distinguishes its self into 2009 as a top destination, he added. Formerly known as Lonely Planet's Bluelist, Lonely Planet's Best in Travel 2009 is crammed full of all new content featuring over 850 of the world's hottest travel trends, destinations, journeys, and experiences diverse, and 165 stunning photos to inspire travelers for the year ahead. Lonely Planet Publications (usually known as Lonely Planet or LP) is one of the largest travel guidebook publishers in the world.

Al Haremi heightened that BBC Worldwide, which owns a 75% share, now controls The Company. On 1 October 2007, BBC Worldwide, the commercial arm of the British Broadcasting Corporation, purchased a 75% stake in the company. Today, Lonely Planet has offices in Melbourne, London, and Oakland, with over 500 staff members and 300 authors. LP is renowned for its first-hand approach, up-to-date maps, and commitment to providing the best information for travellers.

2008 was a good year for Oman too he further conforms. Travel experts, media outlets, and specialised websites as well, recommended Oman as a hot destination for 2008. To name but just a few, Al Haremi recalled Vogue's Oracle 2008, where Oman was exclusively listed being The Destination for 2008. "A shining new alternative to Dubai, the state of Oman attracts eco-tourists with its lush wadis, diverse markets, and rich culture. Unlike its better-known neighbour, it is relatively undiscovered, with a wonderful climate during our winter, glorious mountains, spectacular deserts, medieval cities and a thousand-odd miles of seaside.

Vogue's 'endorsement' of the Sultanate follows soon after London's Sunday Telegraph picked the

Gulf state as one of the 'Top Dozen Desirable Destinations'. In its article, the newspaper had described Muscat as a 'gracious and accessible face of Islam', and predicted that the county would be one of the top global destinations of 2008. The article, which was published in the December 31 issue of the paper, author Mark Jones observed that the country that had done most to "give tourism a good name in the Middle East is undoubtedly Oman".

concierge.com, the travel website of American Condé Nast Traveller, one of the world's most prestigious and influential travel publications, noted that Oman was becoming the destination of choice for the more eco-minded, adventurous and sophisticated traveller. The mix of beautiful beaches with sublime year-round weather, traditional cities that retain a genuine desert culture and one-of-a-kind hotels was unbeatable.

On the heels of concierge.com's accolade came similar approval from NBC's hit morning news program The Today Show, USA's most popular and well-known morning news and talk show for decades. Travel editor Peter Greenberg, also known as the 'Travel Detective' is considered America's pre-eminent expert on travel named Oman as an exciting and affordable destination for 2008 in spotlighted Oman in a review of hot travel destination around the world. Greenberg, considered as USA's pre-eminent expert on travel, referred to Oman as "one of my favourites". "You can fly directly in, but my favourite route is to go to Dubai first, the drive through the Emirates into Oman and the beautiful Musandam peninsula, and go swimming in the Arabian Sea with the dolphins" he said. Describing Salalah, he added, "Although now a very modern town, Salalah has retained great charm and character. There are fantastic beaches along the coastline near Salalah, many of which are near perfect, with pristine, white sands and a crystal-clear, warm turquoise sea."

"The list goes on and on, but each and every one seem to be in agreement, that His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said has in fact, turned the "Jewel Of Arabia" as often described by writers, into a safe modern travel destination, combining the traditional values of an ancient and rich civilisation with the attractions of up-to-date luxury," Al Haremi said in conclusion.

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