

Oman Air Puts Wind in the Sails of Sultanate's Gift to Singapore

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Following an epic, five-month voyage from Oman to Singapore, the Jewel of Muscat, a traditional Arabian sailing ship built to a 9th Century design, has reached its destination.

The ship, a gift to Singapore from the Sultanate of Oman, arrived at Singapore Harbour to be met by the President of Singapore, SR Nathan, where he was presented with a kamal, a 9th Century navigational tool, by the Jewel of Muscat's Omani captain, Saleh Al Jabri.

The Jewel of Muscat was reconstructed from the design of the wreck of the only 9th Century Arabian ship ever discovered. Sponsored by Oman Air - who provided logistical support including air and freight transport - the ship took one year to construct and was hand-built without nails at Qatab Beach in Muscat, Oman. It then set sail on its historic voyage across the Indian Ocean, following the ancient trade routes between Oman and Singapore.

Oman Air's Chief Executive Officer, Peter Hill, said:

"Oman Air is delighted to have played a part in bringing to life this vital reminder of Oman's rich history. The Jewel of Muscat is a superb example of Omani craftsmanship, both ancient and modern, and it is an honour to have played a role in creating this symbol of the powerful links between the Sultanate of Oman and Singapore."



The Jewel of Muscat is a symbol of friendship between Oman and Singapore and a celebration of the close, historic ties between these two great seafaring nations. She left Port Sultan Qaboos, in Muscat, on 16th February 2010 and the journey to Singapore included stopovers in India, Sri Lanka and Malaysia, each an Oman Air destination. Arriving at Singapore Harbour at sunset on 3rd July, the ship was greeted by Singapore President SR Nathan, His Highness Sayyid Harib bin Thuwainy Al-Said and other key dignitaries from Oman and Singapore.

On the ship's arrival, President SR Nathan, said:

"On behalf of the people of Singapore, I would like to express my deep appreciation to His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said and the Sultanate of Oman for the generous and deeply symbolic gift of Jewel of Muscat."

He continued:

"Lying across the other side of the Indian Ocean, trade and friendship have long been pillars of the Sultanate of Oman. For centuries, the maritime route between Arabia and China was the longest trading route in the world. Oman lay at one end of this route. It was Oman that produced the sailors and navigators that plied this route. The extraordinary achievements of these Omani seamen have been preserved and remembered in stories such as those of Sindbad. The voyage of Jewel of Muscat adds to this rich tradition and should be remembered as a symbol of goodwill between old friends linked by history."

The Jewel of Muscat is 18-metres long and its planks, the same types of wood as were used 1,200 years ago, were sewn together with coconut fibre, through nearly 70,000 stitching holes. The project was started in 2007 by Australian maritime archeologist, Dr Tom Vosmer, working with a team of Omani specialists.

Peter Hill concluded:

"Oman Air is the modern expression of the Sultanate's centuries-old traditions of international friendship, trading and discovery. We are pleased to have been able to use our resources to put wind in the sails of this important project and to help keep this piece of Omani history alive."

The Jewel of Muscat's new home in Singapore will be at the Resorts World Sentosa's upcoming attraction, the Maritime Xperiential Museum. The museum, which will pay tribute to the maritime silk route and Asia's rich maritime history, is scheduled to open next year.

Oman Air's sponsorship of maritime sailing ventures has continued with the recent announcement of the airline's support for Oman Sail's Arabian 100 racing yacht, Majan. The yacht will participate in Cowes Week, England, before undertaking the prestigious Route Du Rhum transatlantic race between St Malo, France, and Guadeloupe, in the eastern Caribbean.

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