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Oman, An Ideal Destination For Business And Leisure Holidays

Date: 13 Sep 2009



Oman's image as a peaceful nation with a stable economic and political background continues to receive further boost. The Sultanate often described, as "the custodian of authentic Arabia" undoubtedly is the prime tourist destination of the Gulf, with Oman luxury holidays becoming increasingly popular.

Highlighting Oman's stable business and economic environment, Usama Bin Karim Al Haremi of Oman Air's Corporate Communications and Media stated that Oman has been described as a popular destination for businesses because of the political stability in the country. He brought to attention the recent report released by The International Monetary Fund (IMF), which described Oman as the southeastern state in the AGCC and as a harbour of political stability for businesses.

The economy, which has decided not to copy the business models of its neighbour states the report mentioned, is set to grow in 2009 by 2.6% and 3% respectively. Initiatives to spur real estate and tourism such as real estate project The Wave, or new ferry services to Omani islands in the Indian Ocean are aimed at reducing the contribution of the oil sector to its gross domestic product to 9% by 2020 from 41.5% in 2007. "This, coupled with the stable political environment, would certainly make Oman an attractive destination for prospective investors and businesses," he said.



As well, Al Haremi highlighted a recent international report that placed the Sultanate at the highest

rank on the Arab and African level in terms of stability. "global stability index" published by the US-based Foreign Policy Magazine in its July / August issue, cited the Sultanate as the only country in the region to figure in the list of most stable countries in the world, among some of the stable countries in Western Europe, the United States, Canada, Argentina, Japan, and South Korea. While Norway - the best in terms of stability - came in 177th, the Sultanate was placed 146th. The study, which covered 177 countries, was done in collaboration with the US-based Fund for Peace. The report, Al Haremi stated, is yet another evidence of the excellent international reputation of the Sultanate, also supports the policies of the government, which aim at making the Sultanate one of the major international hubs.

It is worthwhile to mention that the Sultanate was ranked the second most peaceful Arab country and the 21st in the world, according to Global Peace Index 2009, published by the US-based Institute for Economics and Peace. The Sultanate scored 1.52 points in the index that uses 23 separate indicators to calculate the relative peacefulness of 144 countries.

Al Haremi also informed that the UK's Independent under the title "Illness abroad - the 10 best countries to be sick on holiday" highlighted on Tuesday, 18 August 2009 the recent debate on the NHS. The report reads, Many tourists the wonder about healthcare standards at their favourite holiday destination. Travel site skyscanner.net investigates the 10 best places to fall ill abroad!

Barry Smith, Skyscanner co-founder and director said in the popular Skyscanner.net website: "Getting ill in your home country is bad enough, but when you're abroad it's even more stressful, though some countries are undoubtedly better than others. In our recent survey Smith said, 11% of people said that illness spoiled their holiday, so we've looked at the countries with the best levels of healthcare where tourists can be assured of receiving high quality treatment should they fall ill whilst abroad." Oman has been named as one of the 10 best places to fall ill abroad, Al Haremi enlightened.

The report says that Oman's small population and numerous private and public medical facilities mean that long waiting lists are almost unheard of. Although some doctors and medical staff in Oman are local, the vast majority are foreign and were trained in their home countries, and visitors can expect a high level of care.

Usama Bin Karim Al Haremi of Oman Air's Corporate Communications and Media furthermore mentioned that Rachel Southwood, editorial director of UK's Wedding Ideas Magazine says in a report published in the Magazine's website: 'People are steering away from the classic beach destinations such as the Maldives and Mauritius, as they are determined to have the trip of their lives.'

'European travel is becoming more popular, particularly among couples with environmental concerns. Dual-centre trips, allowing them to combine two different destinations, are also a popular choice.' Therefore, UK's Daily Mail she pointed out picks out ten alternative destinations for the perfect honeymoon. Reasonably, Al Haremi said, Oman was among the 10 destinations recommended too, as a luxurious beach destination.

Under the title, "Revealed: The top ten alternative honeymoon destinations" the report published on 14 August 2009 reads, Jewel of Arabia: Enjoy luxury at the exclusive Al Bustan Palace in Oman.

If you are looking for luxury and unspoilt beaches but you don't want the crowds of Dubai or the forced romance of the Maldives then Oman could be the honeymoon destination for you. This quiet Middle Eastern country gives a taste of the exotic, mixing stunning beaches with one of the oldest civilisations in the Arabian Peninsula. Best of all, it's an ideal destination for anyone not having a summer wedding - the best time to visit is between October and May.

If beach boredom sets in after a few days, there are four-wheel drive tours through the desert and the mountains, and ancient souks where you can test your haggling skills. The enchanting city of Muscat is well worth a visit and the Al Bustan Palace hotel will provide the perfect escape from city life with its palm-shaded gardens and pools overlooking the beach.

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