



Oman ranked in the top 10 countries to visit in 2017

It was the only Middle East country to make the Lonely Planet list.

[Neil Churchill](#) January 13, 2017

The tourism boards at every country in the world begin each year with renewed pleas to entice visitors to their lands. But it helps to have some independent verification.

Which is why Oman Tourism must have been jumping for joy when it saw the sultanate included in Lonely Planet's top 10 countries to visit in 2017. Named in eighth place, it is the first time Oman has featured in the [Best in Travel](#) guide since 2009, and is the only Middle East country to make the list. In fairness, the travel publication keeps the top 10 diverse and it was unlikely to feature more than one country from the region. But its inclusion serves as further proof, if any was needed, that Oman is the Gulf's jewel.



The travel guide weighted much of the country's addition to its new luxury hotels. The website says: "Oman has been the ace in Arabia's pack for a while, but with more flights than ever before and high-end hotels popping up all over the place, the sultanate looks ready to raise its game yet again. "Luxury accommodation, including the award-winning duo of Six Senses on the Musandam Peninsula and Alila in the Hajar Mountains, has long had a foothold here, but glitzy properties from Anantara, Kempinski and other high-end names are also slated to open soon."

Lonely Planet also mentioned the new \$120 million futuristic theme park, Majarat Oman, that's due to open this year.

The sultanate has also taken a leaf out of neighbouring UAE's tourism strategy by hosting a number of global sporting events, including the professional cycling race The Tour of Oman every year since 2010.

Last year it created history by becoming the first Middle East country to host the Louise Vuitton America's Cup World Series – which [EDGAR attended](#). It also held EFG Sailing Arabia, which for two weeks saw world-class sailors racing around the Gulf.

In 2015, golf's European Challenge Tour's annual rankings were renamed the Road to Oman – lifted straight from Dubai's playbook. It also went extreme in 2012, holding a leg of the Red Bull Cliff Diving Series in Wadi Shab, with an unbelievably tight and rocky drop.



And it's all paid off. Oman had two million visitors in 2015 with plans for five million by 2040, which if anything seems quite conservative.

It's not just Lonely Planet singing the country's praises either. Last year the World Economic Forum ranked the country 9th globally in terms of safety and security in its Travel and Tourism report. If you've never been, or even if you have, it certainly seems like 2017 is the year to visit Oman.

Lonely Planet's top 10 countries to visit in 2017

- Canada
- Colombia
- Finland
- Dominica
- Nepal
- Bermuda
- Mongolia
- Oman
- Myanmar
- Ethiopia







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