

# OMAN AIMS TO ATTRACT 12 M TOURISTS BY 2020



By reducing visa fees and making deals with Dubai, Oman is set to provide a huge boost to its tourism industry.

Oman, perhaps in reaction to Qatar being chosen as a FIFA World Cup Venue country and the constant success of Dubai, is making a great effort to improve its tourism industry. **Oman has an aim of bringing 12 million visitors to its soil by 2020.** Considering it welcomed 1.6 million in 2010, this aim may seem optimistic. That is, until, one considers the measures Oman is taking to achieve such heights.

The first project involves cruise ships. It is important for Oman to improve the condition of its ports and to tempt people on cruises from other Middle Eastern countries. The sultanate has been negotiating with Abu Dhabi to improve the so-called fly and cruise trips, whereby travelers fly to Oman before making use of Dubai's superior port and cruise infrastructure. The main idea is to attract people to fly to Oman. Dubai can invest in this project as it allows for a greater flow of incoming tourism.

The sultanate of Oman is also working on its financial restraints for more tourists to be tempted to the country. **Visas used to be a major barrier in tourists wanting to come to Oman, yet a discount of 75% is now on the horizon.** As a result, a visa valid for 10 days may cost as little as \$13 and cruise ship visas could be entirely free of charge for 24 hours if the bill passes through. With such an incentive on saving, foreign nationals have all the more reason to visit Oman.

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