19 NOVEMBER 2020 29



travelweekly.co.uk

travelweekly.co.uk

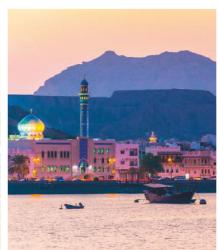
19 NOVEMBER 2020

# **DESTINATIONS**

### MIDDLE EAST | CITY ADD-ONS







CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Zipline at Ferrari World, Abu Dhabi; Muscat, Oman; Jerusalem; Al Zorah Nature Reserve, Ajman PICTURES: Shutterstock; Joanna Skladanek; Abercrombie & Kent





### **OMAN: CITY + MOUNTAINS**

Billowing desert dunes, dramatic river gorges, red-rock canyons and crumbling mountain villages – for a taste of traditional Arabia, look to Oman. Modern capital Muscat offers plenty to lure visitors, from the chandelier-bedecked Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque to the frenetic Muttrah Souk, where ribbons of incense swirl above rows of spices and gold.

But for those wanting to tag on an adventure, pair it with a stay in the Al Hajar Mountains. Anantara Al Jabal Al Akhdar Resort is perched on a mountainside and offers a host of activities from hiking and mountain biking to archery and yoga, plus a via ferrata route that has guests climbing, abseiling and ziplining their way across the plunging canyon edge.

Book it: Carrier offers a 10-night trip from £3,660 including two nights at Kempinski Muscat, five at Anantara Al Jabal Al Akhdar and three at The Chedi Muscat, with breakfast and flights from Heathrow, departing November 18, 2021. carrier.co.uk

#### AJMAN: CITY + WILDLIFE

For clients keen to go somewhere different, look to the UAE's smaller emirates. In Ajman, city highlights include the Corniche – lined with boutiques, cafes and atmospheric souks – and the 18th-century Ajman Fort, now a museum housing centuries-old weapons and other artefacts.

Yet there's plenty of life beyond the city, from hiking in the Hajar Mountains to camel riding in the desert. For an especially memorable trip, suggest kayaking in the mangrove wetlands of the Al Zorah Nature Reserve,





## NIKKI HAIN Middle East product manager, Premier Holidays

"The addition of the UAE to the travel corridor list is very exciting as it not only reopens the winter-sun market for these areas but also opens alternative routes to the Maldives and Seychelles for guarantine-free winter holidays. Interest in the Middle East was already high, with some very attractive price points out there.

"As always, Dubai takes the lion's share but we have noticed a shift over the last couple of years as clients seek a more authentic Arabian experience in the other emirates or Oman. More clients seem to want to move around the UAE now, including overnights in the deserts. It's so easy to get from one emirate to another; Abu Dhabi is less than an hour by car from Dubai, and Fujairah, at the base of the stunning Hajar Mountains, is only 90 minutes away. Agents should highlight that a holiday in this region can often be cheaper than in the Med."

where 58 species of birds nestle among the creeks and pink flamingos stand in the shallows. **Book it:** Emirates Holidays offers five nights' B&B at the five-star, beachfront Fairmont Ajman from £623, based on two sharing a Fairmont View Room and including Emirates flights from Heathrow in May 2021. Quest for Adventure offers mangrove kayaking trips from £36. emiratesholidays.com

#### ISRAEL: CITY + HISTORY

Hipster hangouts, ancient religious sites, sand dunes and Red Sea coastal resorts – Israel is full of contrasts. And nowhere is that more evident than when you hop from modern Tel Aviv, with its street food markets, trendy coffee shops and cocktail bars, to Jerusalem, where pilgrims pray at the Western Wall and hectic bazaars line cobbled alleys. Abercrombie & Kent combines both in an eight-day trip, adding visits to the ancient cities of Caesara, Bet She'an, Acre and Nazareth. Book it: Abercrombie & Kent's Classic Israel trip costs from £4,710 for eight days, including flights. abercrombiekent.co.uk TW

30 19 NOVEMBER 2020 travelweekly.co.uk