First Ever Snow Village in Oman as the Annual Muscat Festival Opens

Monday 19 January, 2015

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The new-look Muscat Festival, which kicked off today and runs through to 14 February promises to be bigger and better than ever this year with the inclusion of Its first ever Snow Village as well as new sporting, entertainment and cultural activities. The festival is a month-long showcase of Oman's rich cultural heritage and attracts close to two million visitors every year. Amerat Park, Naseem Park, and Azaiba beach will all host events during the festival and visitors can expect to see juggling, parades, magic shows, exhibitions of regional arts and crafts, plus the annual Muscat Art Festival and Oman Food Festival.

New for 2015, the Snow Village in Amerat Park transports visitors to another world with its snowy mountains, ski corner and animal-themed ice sculptures. Most visitors to Oman may be surprised to see a snow village however the 3000m peaks of the Al Hajar mountain range are often covered in snow and occasional freak weather conditions, such as those in late 2014, can even bring snow to lower ground.

Sport will also play a big part in this year's Muscat Festival with a full programme of events including beach football and volleyball competitions at Azaiba Beach, horse shows, sailing races and the Muscat Marathon. Visitors can also take part in a range of fun sports games and activities for adults and children at the Télé Match Interactive Village.

As well as a range of new attractions, permanent events such as the Heritage and World Villages will still be part of the programme, offering visitors the chance to discover Omani traditions through an array of cultural and artistic events and activities. The Heritage Village, which will be based in the Amerat Park, embodies the everyday life of Omani villages with urban, coastal, agricultural and nomadic communities coming together to highlight their traditional costumes, cuisine, arts and games. Market stalls selling local crafts, perfumes and food give visitors the chance to take home a little slice of Omani life.

Families and children are well catered to in the Family Village, situated in Naseem Park. Throughout the festival, a full programme of events such as comedy shows, singing contests and educational talks will be on offer at the Child Theatre Pavilion. Other attractions include educational exhibitions on local wildlife and marine life, craft workshops, a children's photo gallery and sports-based competitions.

The Skills Arena in Naseem Park will host a variety of performance-based events showcasing Omani folklore through local songs, dances and poems. The Muscat Festival showcases cultures and traditions from all over the world as well with artists from countries such as China, France, Italy, Russia and the USA taking part in acrobatics, comedy and magic shows. At the end of each evening, the day's events are rounded off with an impressive fireworks display.

Please visit www.muscat-festival.com for further information, including a detailed schedule of events and times.

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For more information & high-res images please contact:

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