The Sultanate Of Oman Ministry Of Tourism Marks Its 45th Renaissance Anniversary At WTM 2015 (Stand ME500)

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The Sultanate of Oman is celebrating the 45th Anniversary of its Renaissance and the evolution of the tourism industry, ranging from desert expeditions to adventure travel, luxury and cruise experiences. Her Excellency Maitha Al Mahrouqi, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Tourism is joined at WTM by a delegation from the ministry and 24 companies from the Oman private sector including the cupcake celebration taking place on Monday, the first day of the exhibition. The 45th anniversary of the glorious Renaissance marks an era of progress and prosperity under the wise leadership of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said. Both Salalah and Muscat International Airports are under development with a planned capacity of 1 million passengers and 12 million passengers per annum respectively, they are expected to be the new gateways to the Sultanate of Oman.

The Sultanate of Oman began to flourish since the dawn of modern renaissance on July 23, 1970. Since then it has brought about radical transformation in the life of Omani citizens whose lifetstyle evolved into a modern, forward-looking society, in a country that has witnessed continuous development, with a wide range of award-winning five-star and boutique hotels. However, Oman remains genuine and authentic and wherever you go to Oman, you will still find traditional Arabian hospitality, arts and crafts, as well as historical heritage.

The Star Middle East Tourist Office Award for the UK office, will be presented for the second consecutive year to Her Excellency, Maitha Al Mahrouqi at this year's exhibition.

Part of the celebration of the 45th Anniversary is the crossing of the Empty Quarter Project (CEQ). From Salalah on the Indian Ocean coast of Oman, through the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, to Doha the capital of Qatar, a team of Omanis is taking on the challenge – leading British explorer Mark Evans across the desert. Mark Evans will be following in the footsteps of, Bertram Thomas, the intrepid British explorer who set out to travel Arabia's vast Rub Al Khali desert, one of the world's most extreme and inhospitable environments, which took place 85 years ago.

Private sector representatives are attending WTM as an opportunity to promote Oman's hotels, attractions and tourism services including recent openings such as the Six Senses Spa opens at The Al Bustan Palace, a Ritz Carlton Hotel. Nizwa Fort will re-open on 06 November 2015.

Further properties in the pipeline to be opened in 2016 include: The Anantara Jabal Al Akhdar Resort, a rare jewel in the rocky contours of the vast Saiq Plateau on Oman's fabled Green Mountain, magnificently perched almost 3,000 metres above sea level on the curving rim of a great canyon; the Anantara Salalah Resort, situated between a beach and natural lagoon on the south coast of Dhofar in Salalah, Oman, The Kempinski Hotel and Residences at Muscat's Al Mouj resort. Muscat has seen recent growth in the MICE market and this is anticipated to grow even faster with the opening of the new Oman Convention and Exhibition centre.

Both Salalah International Airport and Muscat International Airport are under development and with extensive plans in place will be the new gateway to the Sultanate of Oman within the next few years. Salalah International is expected to have a capacity of 1 million passengers per annum whilst Muscat International will have a more substantial capacity of 12 million passengers per annum. Both airports will be able to accommodate the world's largest aircraft, the Airbus A380 and will be designed with the latest state-of-the-art technology. There are further plans to subsequently expand Muscat International in three phases, ultimately boosting the airport's capacity to 24, 36 and 48 million passengers per annum.

The Sultanate of Oman stand is the ideal spot for WTM visitors to take a short well deserved break during the show where they will find Omani coffee and dates served in traditional Omani style. Visiting travel agents will have the chance to see traditional Omani weaving and get a Henna tattoo. Travel Agents can also receive a key ring or banner pen if they send their selfie with the Omani dolls hidden on the stand to Tourism UK on Facebook or @Oman_Tourism_UK on twitter.

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Notes to Editors

New figures from Oman's National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI) reveal that 93,465 Brits

visited the Sultanate between January and August 2015 an increase of 1%. In total, more than 1,667,000 tourists visited Oman during the eight-month period.

Nizwa Fort will be officially re- opened to the public on the 6th November 2015

WTM EVENTS ON THE OMAN STAND, Monday 02 November 2015:

2.45pm 45th Renaissance Anniversary - 45th Anniversary reign of His Majesty The Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al Said.

3pm - Announcement of Mark Evans expedition: Crossing of the Empty Quarter in the footsteps of Bertram Thomas.

For more information & high-res images please contact:

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