

Visitor Numbers to the Sultanate of Oman's Position Exceed Expectations

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The Sultanate of Oman's pavilion has had more than 570,000 visits in the first month of Expo 2015. There has been over 15,000 visits a day, with an average duration of approximately half an hour. More than 4,500 visitors have discovered the country through over 150 guided tours. There has been all-round satisfaction with the chosen theme for the pavilion, partly because it reflects the values of Expo 2015. But most importantly because it tells the story of an unusual, unknown country that sees water and its agricultural traditions as an asset to preserve and as a driver of sustainable development. "Heritage in Harvest: Harnessing the sea, sun and sand" is the theme. It spans over four areas representing water, oases, the sea and traditions, so it perfectly encapsulates Oman.

In the first area "Harnessing every drop of water" Oman introduces its strong tradition of water resource management. The seasonal influence of the khareef, the summer monsoon crossing the Indian Ocean, turns the desert region of Dhofar lush green, this brings Boswellia (Frankincense Tree) into cultivation resulting in Frankincense. The Kareef also feeds the Aflaj; ancient irrigation system extending into a dense network of canals and dams dating back over 2,000 years - a World Heritage Site. The country is continuously working to increase its self-sufficiency in food production in a sustainable way and this is the central theme of the pavilion. The second area "Our rich farming heritage" covers agriculture and crops for the local population and export. From honey to hazelnut, a variety of crops are grown in the mountainous region of Jebel Akhdar, the history of food production in Oman is unique. It is the story of a country that combines technological innovation and sustainable development in the harmony of a Mediterranean tropical climate. Date palms, heart of the Omani agricultural tradition, are the center of this area with the project "a million palm trees" which should be completed in 2025. In the third area "Treasures of our seas", visitors can learn about the rich marine environment and the fishing industry, which is still based on traditional techniques. The country, which has declared an intention to double the proceeds going to fishing within the next 30 years, is already involved in the activation of new regulations for the protection of marine areas and encouraging fishing for native species.

The fourth area "Welcome to our home" showcases the authentic and friendly Omani hospitality with the ritual of coffee and dates and sharing tasty and spicy foods inside the sablat, the room of the typical Omani house where the family welcomes guests at parties. The area also features typical local cuisine, with all the ingredients and utensils needed to prepare traditional dishes.

At the end of their visit, guests can take it easy on one of the most stunning terraces of Expo 2015 as they savour some traditional Omani dishes and coffee. Every day, more than 800 people gladly succumb to the temptation of the delights on offer in the restaurant and the juice bar. The flavours and aromas that come from afar bear witness to the indestructible bond between Oman and its traditions.

For more information on tourism in Oman visit www.omantourism.gov.om

For the latest news about the pavilion and full calendar of events please visit www.omanexpo2015.gov.om

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