



DIVESHOP



# Guide/Logbook Combo **A Winner**

THE UK'S LARGEST specialist diving book distributors, AquaPress, have widened their range of books to include the Travelling Diver dive guides with integrated log books. The whole range of guides that cover most of the popular Egyptian Red Sea diving areas, together with blank log book packs are now also available to buy through AquaPress.

Daniel Ronen, Managing Director of Travelling Diver, says: "Following the success of our first year here in the UK we have a number of new guides that will be coming out shortly. So keep your eyes open on the AquaPress website!"

The dive guides are not only a useful resource with information and maps on many of the popular dive sites of the Red Sea, but are also an integrated

log book making an ideal item for baggage conscience divers to take away on holiday.

Travelling Diver is a publisher of diving guides for the recreational diver. Their popular range of logbook-integrated diving guides is gaining an international reputation for becoming the guide of choice for holiday divers. Each guide gives detailed information and maps for top dive sites in: Sharm El Sheikh; Hurghada; Red Sea Wrecks; Safaga; Marsa Alam and more coming soon! The Guides retail at £12.50.

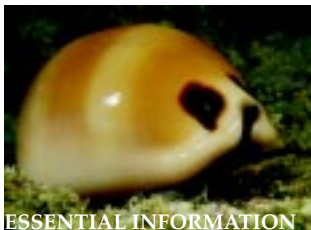
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ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

## Gordon of Arabia

ADDENDUM TO STORY IN SEPT/OCTOBER EDITION

- *Flights* KLM, Emirates and BA all fly to Muscat (Seeb Airport), KLM quoted by far the best airfare. Note that Emirates no longer allow divers 10 kg extra baggage and quoted the highest airfare.
- *Airfare* £507 economy return including tax (based on a January 2009 KLM departure from Glasgow to Seeb via Schipol).
- *Travelling time* Approximately 10 to 12 hours depending on Airline and route.
- *Currency* Omani Rial (OMR). OMR 1 = £1.3 at time of writing.
- *Visa* OMR 6, pay on arrival.
- *Time zone* GMT +4hrs.
- *Climate* Temperature and humidity can be very high in summer, cover up with lightweight cotton based clothing, wear a sun hat, carry drinking water, and use sunscreen are the basic rules. Offshore is usually quite comfortable but can actually be cool enough for a jacket or similar wind protection during the winter months. November through to March are the more comfortable months.
- *Accommodation etc* The Al Sawadi Beach Resort can provide good quality accommodation, meals and has an on site dive centre. All inclusive rates from 152 OMR (includes 2 dives). This is probably the best option for diving the Daymaniyat Islands. Check out [www.alsawadibeach.com](http://www.alsawadibeach.com).

Dive Worldwide arrange package tours to the region. They use Global Scuba based near Seeb airport for their diving operation and hotels in the Muscat area for accommodation. Typically 7 nights/10 dives from £1029 based on a London departure/arrival.

Global Scuba cover both Daymaniyat Island and Fahl Island diving along with the inshore sitwes. Check out [www.diveworldwide.com](http://www.diveworldwide.com) and [www.global-scuba.com](http://www.global-scuba.com)

## Travelling with Underwater Camera Equipment

IN 2004 while trying to purchase my entry visa to Oman my camera equipment was inspected by customs officers who insisted on knowing who I was working for (in Oman), refusing to accept that it was a holiday visit. In the end and about an hour after everyone else had cleared customs I was able to enter the country. However this was only after I parted with a deposit the equivalent of over £300 in Omani Rials, the bulk of my 'pocket money'. The money would be returned to me on the way out on production of my camera gear I was told.

A couple of weeks later after an enjoyable trip we returned to the airport. My wife went to hand back the hire car while I went to reclaim my deposit, this was about 9pm. Having taken over an hour to get out of arrivals it now took over two hours to get into departures. The customs officers on duty were very reluctant to return my deposit and language difficulties did not help. My flight was due to depart at five past midnight. They were suggesting after consulting that day's departure list that I should come back at 11am the following day with my camera gear and then I would get my deposit back. Only after raising my voice (not really recommended) and insisting that I wanted to phone the British Embassy did the two customs officers relent and check the following days flight times. To the amazement of my wife I eventually walked out of the customs office not only with camera gear and returned deposit but also my very own uniformed escort. On entering departures I was told in no uncertain terms not to go back into the main airport area.

Finally at the last security check I was one of the chosen men - 'can you please take off your shoes sir and place them on the tray' came the words. At 100 mph came a pair of trainers as I glared at the local British Airways rep my patience pretty much at an all time low.

I do not know if the customs officials concerned were 'on the take' or if there was a genuine misunderstanding. The reason for a deposit is to ensure that you do not sell on valuable equipment while you are in the country. Many countries operate a Carnet system (documentation which allows you to import/export the same equipment on a simplified and temporary basis) unfortunately Oman is not one of them.

I would certainly recommend extreme caution if you intend to take expensive underwater camera equipment into Oman. All I can suggest is that you should not give any indication whatever of the true value of the equipment and remain polite but firm in your dealings with any officials. It may help to discuss your plans in advance with your chosen dive operator.