

Yourtime

Celebrity hotspot – Sydney

WHO Katy Perry takes a boat ride around the harbour.

WHY GO This cosmopolitan city has it all: great culture, delicious food and fantastic climes.

THE VIBE Low-key and happening — both at the same time. Beach bums and culture buffs will feel equally at home here.

WHERE TO STAY The Medusa is a Victorian mansion refurbished as an 18-room hotel in Darlinghurst with a vibrant, modern personality. You'll feel like you're sleeping in a Rothko painting (00 61 2 9331 1000; deluxe rooms from £120 a night, medusa.com.au).

WHERE TO EAT Quay (00 61 2 9251 5600) has a great location on the harbour, and a four-course à la carte menu (£56) featuring cuttlefish dumplings, butter-poached cod and saltwater duck breast.

WHAT TO DO The Rugby League World Cup (tickets from £14, until 22 November) is currently on at the celebrated Sydney Cricket and Sports Grounds (scgt.nsw.gov.au).

SOMETHING DIFFERENT Take to the waters like Katy Perry. You can hire a taxi boat from just £6 for a 15-minute mini-tour or £12 for a 45-minute Harbour Highlights tour (yellowwatertaxis.com.au).

TOP TIP For a great view of the city (and a workout!) head to the Sydney Harbour Bridge — you can either climb up to the summit or enjoy the sights from the safety of the Pylon Lookout.

HOW TO GET THERE BA flies round-trip from Heathrow to Sydney for £876.20 (ba.com).

FOR MORE DETAILS

sydney.com.au. **JENNIFER BARTON**



Sun-kissed: Katy Perry — with a girl, of course — likes it in Sydney

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TAKE A DHOW VOYAGE THROUGH Arabia's fjords floated our boat

WHILE the Middle East's most popular tourist destination is the United Arab Emirates' capital Dubai, it would be a mistake to overlook neighbouring Oman. A million miles from the fevered construction and hyper-modernity of its moneyed neighbour, the Sultanate of Oman is a quiet, friendly country, steeped in tradition and the inescapable musky aroma of frankincense.

BUSTLING SOUKS

THE old souks, beaches and palaces of Muscat, Oman's capital, are wonderful to explore, and all visitors to Muscat should also take in the delights of the nearby old

BY DAISY DUMAS

sea town of Muttrah. Quintessentially Arabian architecture extends around the blue bay, the fish market bustles with energy and the old souk is one of the best in the Middle East.

Shisha pipe smoke tangles with the smell of fresh mint tea, while fruit sellers, shopping mothers and promenading shebabs (young local men) all vie for the best deal. Baskets of silver trinkets, fresh dates and wooden boxes of frankincense bombard the senses — this is a truly unmissable sight of Omani life.

LUNAR LANDSCAPES

BUT the real jewel in Oman's crown is the Musandam Peninsula, 300 miles to the north, an arid moonscape of rocky mountains, punctuated by palm oases. The Musandam is an isolated and sleepy place. The first Tarmac road to its capital, Khasab, was completed only 11 years ago, but the pace of development is accelerating fast.

For now, there is only one international four-star hotel in Khasab, **The Golden Tulip** (rooms from about £80 per night, golden-tulipkhasab.com) and the town itself offers little more than a modest daily market and a few restaurants serving basic fresh fish and salads. But there are plans for a five-star hotel and diving centre — so get there before it changes too much.

The beautiful mountainous peaks of



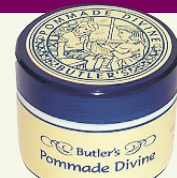
Must-see: the traditional sea town, Muttrah

Six of the best... wonder balms

Multipurpose balms to soothe lips, cuticles, dry patches and sunburn...



◀ **The Green Balm by Moa**
Old Icelandic recipe for extremely dry and sensitive skin.
£4.99 for 50ml, cultbeauty.co.uk



▲ **Butler's Pommade Divine**, £11.95 for 30ml, cultbeauty.co.uk
200-year-old recipe that's great for healing and moisturising.
£11.95 for 30ml, cultbeauty.co.uk



◀ **Eight Hour Cream by Elizabeth Arden**
Ms Arden's first product, there are two tubes sold every minute.
£19 for 50ml, Superdrug

▶ **Rodial Glam Balm**
The celebrity favourite — even 50 Cent uses this.
£62 for 50ml, Harvey Nichols



▶ **Fragrance Free Baby Balm by Balm Balm**
100% organic, great for those sensitive to fragrance.
£5.99 for 30ml, Boots



▶ **Winter Wonder Balm by Badger Balm**
Cinnamon-infused for the effects of winter weather.
£3.99 for 21ml Whole Foods/Fresh & Wild

