

Every month a new trip will be uploaded to this site: enjoy!

It is October, and the temperature is starting to cool but the sun can still be fierce, so our destination will be one with both water and shade – Wadi Mudbah, on the outskirts of Bureimi. About an hour from Al Ain, it can nicely fit into a day trip; combined with either a hike or an exploration of the surrounding area, it can be a wonderful overnight destination.



How does plunging into this pristine pool of flowing fresh water feel on a hot day?

Ask her, she knows!



Wadi Mudbah lies deep in a natural gorge, where three flowing pools are connected by waterfalls. The water runs all year long as it percolates out from under gravel beds upstream. It is freezing cold in winter!

Although firmly in Omani territory, Wadi Mudbah can be reached by GCC residents through the Al Hili border checkpoint in Al Ain without requiring visa procedures. In other words, you just show your passport, but nothing gets stamped – you do not bureaucratically exit UAE, and you do not bureaucratically enter Oman. This is a left-over from the olden days when there was an open border between UAE and Oman, and it is accurate at the time of writing (Sep 2012), but it could change.



Bureimi is a lovely and laid-back town, and definitely worth a little exploration of its souq, fort and oasis, so don't just zoom through it thinking waterfall, waterfall, waterfall....

You will need a 4×4 vehicle to get navigate the rocky trail heading to the pools. You may have heard that it is a smooth dirt track all the way, and that a regular car can drive there without difficulty. This is because there are two places known as “Wadi Mudbah” – one is the small pool at the bottom of the wadi, and the other is the waterfalls up high in the gorge. This trip is to the upper pools, and a 4×4 is required.



The Toyota Land Cruiser has earned its reputation as King 4x4, and newer generations continue to impress with engines that are both more powerful and economical, and safety features that are extremely impressive - for the UAE, this is the SUV to drive. We reached Wadi Mudbah in complete confidence and comfort though fully loaded with kids, dogs, and packed like you'd think we were moving house.

Download the KML file for your GPS by clicking [here](#). Once downloaded, you can import the file into your GPS device and take it on the road, or double-click that file and it will open automatically in Google Earth if you have that installed (all adventurers should! [Google Earth](#)).

And here is an interactive map of the route.

View [Wadi Mudbah](#) in a larger map

Your destination is a little tricky to pinpoint if you don't download the GPS track I provide. This is because most people know Wadi Mudbah as another smaller pool from down below the mountain, as that is where the sign points to.



Instead, what we want to do is reach the upper pools, and that requires turning left away from the main track and squeezing through a narrow rocky track around to the back. The photo shows what the gorge looks like from the plateau up top, and you must walk down into the crevice to reach the upper pools. Waypoint 009 is the parking point for your car and where this photo was taken from.

Wadi Mudbah is not only a miracle for us to enjoy; it is home and a source of life for many animals, from foxes to snakes. It's a good idea to throw a few rocks into the water before plunging in just to allow critters to go on

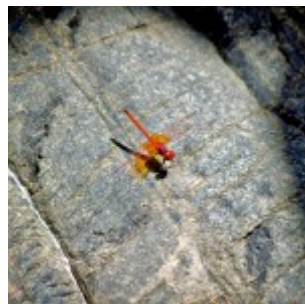
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their merry way, and of course do not leave any trash whatsoever.



A red dragonfly takes a rest on a rock. Besides flying, it is possible to climb down from pool to pool with due care.

Click the thumbnail below for a larger image.





A friendly frog hitches a ride on a thumb. The pools are also home to small fish.



A Blue-headed Agama lizard basks in the sun. The color communicates its mood - in this photo it is glaring at me angrily. Perhaps I should have asked its permission before taking the photo!



The pools can be very deep, so take care when swimming, and especially if jumping in!



Wadi Mudbah is a magical destination for the entire family: it truly is a natural wonder in the mountains of Oman.

My disclaimer is [here](#).

Please read the original article: [In Search of Water and Shade](#). Published by The National, Oct 17, 2009.

Or view a pdf file of the original article [here](#), as published in The National.