

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

Wadi Dham (pronounced Da-Hum) is probably the most spectacular freshwater wadi in the region, and it ranks highly even on an international scale: imagine a dramatic canyon with 100m-high cliff walls, populated with numerous large and deep pools of scintillating, crystal-clear water, home to fish and a multitude of cascading ferns. It is a 500km round trip from the Mezyad border post in Al Ain, and so it is definitely an overnight destination.



It is a deep and long canyon with a series of freshwater pools, each one more refreshing than the previous, until you reach a fantastic circular pool with ferns around the rim and gentle rivulets of fresh water dripping down.

Reaching the freshwater pools requires a thirty-or-so minute hike deep into the canyon, and some scrambling over rocks will be required, depending on how much recent rains have percolated into the pools – so be prepared with good shoes and bring a snack and a drink with you.



Here is a video of Wadi Dham found on youtube:

If you stop and take a dip as each new pool presents itself, the hike will take over an hour. We took our time and spent most of the day getting there and back.





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 Dhum](#) in a larger map

On the way there, we took the Volvo XC-90 for a romp up a few mountain tracks, stumbling across marble quarries and some lovely views. This inland detour is featured in the GPS track you can download.



The Volvo XC-90 performed nimbly off-road and evidently there is a lot more than meets the eye with this little-seen SUV in the region. The package of features is impressive, and the highway drive was smooth and fast.







These are serious mountains, and the track I propose is quite remote, so please follow the GPS track with due care or you will risk getting lost. Without a GPS device I would advise you not to try follow the map, but instead stay on the tarmac to try find the wadi entrance. If the weather turns and rain clouds appear, abort the trip immediately and without hesitating.

This is the “track” to enter Wadi Dham; it is hard to find and follow – but it is not long – and you will need to rely on the GPS track I provide. You will need a 4×4 vehicle, and the Volvo XC-90 crawled over the terrain very nicely, without scraping its belly, so your SUV probably can, too! Just go slow and place the tyres on the larger

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rocks, if they can't be avoided altogether.



We pitched our tents at the mouth of the wadi, on some “soft” gravel, and the next morning we began our walk in, following the irrigation channel and heading upstream deep into the gorge.



My daughter made some friends right away! Every trip into Oman confirms that they are one of the friendliest peoples on this planet. My respect to the Omani people, may Allah bless you and answer your prayers!







As you leave Wadi Dham, cast an eye out to your right, at the foot of the mountain with the zig-zagged top (actually, it is called “comb mountain” in Arabic) and you will see ancient domed tombs dotting the landscape.



View a pdf file of [the original article](#), as published in August 2010, or read the archived newspaper article on The National website [here](#).

Careful driving the Omani backroads in the dark on the way back – no street lights, no shoulder, and overtaking into oncoming traffic is common. My disclaimer is [here](#).