

# DISCOVER Treasures of Oman's Heritage

## Bait Al Zubair Museum

### THE HOUSE THAT BECAME A MUSEUM

#### A monument in time

**Bait Al Zubair** (House of Al Zubair) is a private museum that opened its carved wooden doors to the public in 1998. It is totally funded by its founders, the Zubair family. In 2005 the family established the Bait Al Zubair Foundation as the cultural and social arm of the family-owned business, The Zubair Corporation. The Foundation manages Bait Al Zubair Museum and projects relating to culture and heritage, the arts, the community, history and publishing.

The museum displays the family's collection of Omani artefacts that spans a number of centuries, and is considered to be the finest that is privately owned. Its ethnographic artefacts reflect highly specialised inherited skills that define Oman's society, both past and present. It is one of country's architectural icons and in 1999 was the proud recipient of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos' Award for Architectural Excellence, the first time it was awarded in Oman. The museum complex consists of four separate buildings (Bait Al Bagh, Bait Al Dalaleel, Bait Al Oud and Bait Al Nahdhah) as well as a garden with a number of traditional features.

**Bait Al Bagh** (house of Gardens) is the main museum building that was originally founded as a family home in 1914 by Sheikh Al Zubair bin Ali, who served three former Sultans as a minister and advisor. It was a gathering place for the elite, while today it was rebuilt to suit its function as a museum, though still reflecting traditional elements of Oman's architectural heritage and the original house. Exhibits include information regarding the Al Busaidi dynasty; with portraits of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al Said and various other Sultans. There are also four galleries on the ground floor that exhibit excellent examples of *khanjar* (Omani dagger), male and female attire, traditional swords and firearms, antique jewellery and household articles. On the first floor there is an area for temporary exhibitions and a research library (available by appointment). The garden features a *barasti* (palm frond) hut, a *falaj* (ancient water distribution system), a souq area, a boat display and stone houses.

**Bait Dalaleel** (house of the Dalaleel district) is an adjacent house that has been carefully restored and renovated and symbolises the true essence of vernacular architecture in Oman. This attraction allows visitors to step back in time and experience how Omanis lived over 100 years ago. It has a *majlis* (guest lounge), bedroom and domestic date store to discover.

**Bait Al Oud** (grand house) is a three-storey building designed to reflect the family's former principle residence in Muscat, where Sheikh Ali bin Juma (Sheikh Al Zubair bin Ali's father) and his family lived in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, until the house was demolished in the 1940s to provide more space for vehicle access to the palace. This part of the museum contains a large temporary exhibition hall and reception area on the ground floor. The first floor includes early European maps of the Arabian Peninsula and typical Muscati furniture. The second floor includes early prints of the Arabian Peninsula and East Africa, early photographs of Muscat and an exhibit of historic cameras.

**Bait Al Nahdhah** (house of the renaissance) pays homage to the Renaissance (Al Nahdhah) period led by His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said. It is dedicated to the promotion of the arts. There are four floors where an ever growing art collection can be viewed. On the first floor there is also a multi-purpose hall with a stage and state-of-the-art audio visual equipment. Exhibited is the work of over 30 Omani artists that form part of the museum's permanent collection. It includes artwork by some of Oman's leading and developing artists together with international artists. There are a vast range of themes and concepts. Artworks have been collected over a number of years and some Omani artists also produced special pieces. A series by Mohammad Al Zubair called 'Our Beautiful world' is also exposed in a series of photographs. Bait Al Zubair foundation is proud that this art collection, together with its collection exhibited in the main building of The Zubair Corporation and throughout Shangri-La's Barr Al Jissah Resort & Spa forms the largest art collection of Omani artists in the Sultanate of Oman.

**Mission** the Al Zubair family are committed to preserving, protecting, presenting, promoting and advancing Oman's rich cultural heritage through their carefully assembled collection.

**Banquets & Events** can be booked within the traditional setting of Bait Al Zubair Museum with traditional Omani dancers, musicians, artisans and henna artists if desired. The museum has hosted memorable feasts and private tours, staff parties and away days, training, press conferences, meetings and work shops, commercial exhibitions, incentive groups, private conferences, product, car and book launches, lectures, fashion show's and children's parties. To visit and find out more information about our amazing and versatile setting please contact: [museum@baitalzubairmuseum.com](mailto:museum@baitalzubairmuseum.com) or call us on 00968 24736688.

**Temporary Exhibitions** are frequently organised and aimed at promoting local, regional and international culture, history and art.

**Education** is a core activity offering complimentary services for schools, colleges and universities. All educational booking must be made in advance please contact: [museum@baitalzubairmuseum.com](mailto:museum@baitalzubairmuseum.com) or call us on 00968 24736688.



**The Gift shop** offers a special range of handicrafts, books, postcards, jewellery, scarves, clothing and perfumes. It is a destination in itself for the perfect gift or souvenir.

**OPENING TIMES** are from 9.30 am 6.00 pm from Saturday to Thursday. Special timings apply during holidays and the Holy Month of Ramadan. There is a nominal entry fee; however admission to children below 10 years old, pre-booked official delegations and educational groups is free. Entry fees are doubled for special openings of the museum and during national holidays. Photography is not permitted within the museum in order protect the collection, and cameras should be left at reception. Visitors are asked to refrain from eating, drinking or smoking within the galleries. Refreshments can be found in the coffee shop and restrooms are available.

For more information contact tel +968 24736688 fax +968 24740913 or E-mail [museum@baitalzubairmuseum.com](mailto:museum@baitalzubairmuseum.com) or visit the website [www.baitalzubairmuseum.com](http://www.baitalzubairmuseum.com)

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