

# *Welcome to Nizwa !*



**Welcome** to the Foundation Institute at the University of Nizwa.

Following is useful information which may answer some of your questions as you settle into Oman, Nizwa and the FI. It has been put together by existing teachers for new teachers, so we think it will be helpful for you!

We'll be updating this for newcomers at the start of each semester, so if you make a discovery, want to give a warning or share a piece of information, let us know so we can add it to our 'Insider Information.' (Please note that current information about prices, phone numbers, etc., is subject to change at any time.)

## *Settling In*

When you get to the FI, you will find many people to help you get to know the town, the University and your colleagues. In addition to administrators and a coordinator, you will also have office mates you can share information with and co-workers teaching the same course. If you have questions, please don't hesitate to ask.

The coastline, deserts and mountains make Oman the perfect place for exploring. There are water sports like diving, snorkeling, sailing, fishing, wind surfing and water skiing. (See the Muscat section for information on Dive Centres that can arrange trips.) On land you can indulge in horse racing, camel racing, cricket, volleyball, football, rugby, tennis, squash, and basketball. Hiking, camping, caving and desert driving are also big here. Each region has something to offer, from UNESCO world heritage sites to modern shopping malls.

The Omani people and culture are welcoming and hospitable, as well. Enjoy your time in Oman!

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## *Welcome from the Director of the Foundation Institute*



We extend to you a warm welcome to the Foundation Institute of the University of Nizwa and to the Sultanate of Oman. You will find many helpful people, both Omani and expatriate, who will ease your transition to a new location and culture.

The information in this publication relates to adjusting to everyday life in Nizwa. The FI includes more than 90 international teachers from many nations and cultures, and this document has been written from their points of view (male/female, married/single, with/without children) to help newcomers know about living in Nizwa and Oman. The names and contact information for selected teachers and administrators are listed so that you can email them about any concerns you might have. You are most welcome to get in touch with them to answer any questions.

The information you need to orient yourself to the academic life of the FI and the university is contained in the *Policies and Procedures* manual which you will receive when you arrive at the university, along with an *Employee Handbook* provided by the Human Resources Department.

Sincere thanks go to the many people who have contributed to the *FI Insider*. We hope that this information will help you settle in to your new life in Oman. Please let us know what we can do to make your time here productive and enjoyable.

Best regards,  
Suleiman Al Hussein, Ph.D.  
Director of The Foundation Institute  
The University of Nizwa

# *Coming to Oman*

## **Preparing to Come**

Although you have probably had many communications from the Human Resources Department of the University of Nizwa to help you get ready to come to Oman, here are some practical, step-by-step tips to aid you on your way.

**What clothing should I bring?** Oman is a Muslim country with a conservative culture. Expatriates are advised by the university to dress modestly. Men should wear shirts and pants. Women should keep shoulders covered with long or mid sleeve tops and loose fitting slacks/pants, long skirts or dresses. All clothing should be loose, not form-fitting. Exposed knees and low-cut necklines are not acceptable. The weather for 6 months of the year is very hot, so light, but opaque, fabrics are advisable. Weather during the winter months is beautiful, with warm, sunny days and cool nights. You will need a light wrap/jacket for evenings.

**What else should I bring?** Most western commodities are available in Nizwa or Muscat, so, unless there is something special you can't live without, you should be able to purchase it in Oman.

## **At the Airport**

When you exit the plane, you must stop at the Travelex Foreign Exchange desk to pick up your visa before going through Immigration and Customs. Before leaving your home country, you should have made arrangements with the university through the Human Relations Department (HR) and Public Relations Department (PR) for a work visa, and it should be waiting for you.

Someone from the university will be at the airport in Muscat as you exit customs to greet you and drive you to Nizwa. If your flight is delayed or you have any problems connecting with the university representative, please call **Mr. Salam (+968 99 220 047)**. If you cannot reach Mr. Salam, try **Mr. Hamood (+968 92 589 228)**.

From the airport you will be taken to the hotel where you will stay until Mr. Salam can take you to your university accommodation. Please contact him during working hours (8am-4pm, Saturday-Wednesday) for information about getting to the university so that he can help you to meet with HR and get settled in at the Foundation Institute.

## **Getting to the University**

After you have had a chance to rest (24-48 hours after arrival), call Mr. Salam (+968 99 220 047) for directions to come to the university. If you are staying at the Safari Hotel, you will need to cross the street in front of the hotel in order to get the university bus. Once you are at the university, come to the Foundation Institute, building 5D, office 54 to meet with Mr. Salam and begin your orientation. (See campus map on page 23.)



## **Accommodation**

Mr. Salam will introduce you to university personnel and will take you to your accommodation. The university provides the flat and you are responsible for electricity, water, gas, telephone and Internet. Your apartment comes with the following furnishings:

**Appliances**—air conditioners, cooker (stove top with oven), refrigerator, and microwave, clothes washing machine;

**Furniture**—sofa, living room chairs, coffee and end tables, television and stand, dining table and chairs, desk and chair, bed, wardrobe, dressing table.

You will need to provide linens (including bedding and towels), dishes and utensils for the kitchen and other personal items. These can all be purchased locally in Nizwa or Muscat.

## **Permanent Resident Card**

Mr. Salam will escort you through the process of obtaining your resident card. The PR Department and HR will assist you with completing the application. You will need 2 color passport size photos with blue backgrounds, along with forms provided by HR and the requested authenticated documents. The entire process involves a number of government ministries and can take as long as several months to finish. The university will assist you at all stages, including taking you to the hospital for the medical checkup. Please be patient, as the time frame involved is not under the university's control.

Family members of the university employee will begin the visa process after the employee has received the permanent resident card. This may take up to several months. Any documents pertaining to joining family members (for example, marriage certificate), must be authenticated in your home country. Please get specific instructions from HR regarding these procedures before you arrive in Oman.

*Ask for help...*

Many more details about living in Oman and working at the University of Nizwa are contained in the pages that follow. If you have questions that are not answered here, these people will be happy to help you:



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Assistant Director  
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# *In and around Nizwa*

## *Communications*

### **Mobile Phones**

There are two mobile phone providers in Oman, Omantel and Nawras, which are located at opposite ends of 'Midtown' (the main drag that connects Firq to the 'Industrial Area' on the way to the Souq). For each, you must buy a SIM card, which costs about three riyals (RO 3) and may come with some credit. You need to provide your passport when you purchase a SIM card. Omantel's service is called Hayyak. You can buy pre-paid cards from service stations or shops around town.

### **Land Lines**

Omantel can provide you with a landline. Take your passport and resident card, and come prepared to describe where you live in lieu of street names and house numbers, which are nearly non-existent, so that the technician can find your apartment. You will need to fill in an application form at Omantel, which will call you when they have a line available. You then pay your money and they will arrange to install your line. You may need to check on your application several times. It costs about RO 29 to hook up the line, and RO 4 per month thereafter. In terms of specific plans, you can opt for Sahan for about RO 30 per year, which is good for incoming calls only and the Internet, or you can pay a deposit of RO 50 for national calls or RO 200 for international calls. You usually also have to provide a letter from the university proving who you are and that you work here, but it does mean that the 200 OR for the line is usually waived.

### **Internet Access**

Both Omantel and Nawras provide Internet access.

Omantel: Before getting Internet service you have to install a fixed phone line for dial-up and ADSL. ADSL is only available from the Souq to Omantel, so check for availability. The cost is RO 12 per month, plus a fee for downloading. For dial-up, a deposit is required, and you pay RO 2 per month, plus 180 baisas (bz) per hour.

Nawras offers a wireless service. You would need to buy one of their modems and a SIM card. The 3G modem costs about RO 70, and the monthly fee is RO 3, with 1G=RO 19, 10G=RO 29, and unlimited use=RO 39. Check the latest deals on [www.nawras.om](http://www.nawras.om).

### **Internet Cafes**

You may prefer to make use of one of the Internet Cafes around town: The Souq—directly across from the main mosque is an upstairs Café Midtown—a few doors down from Delicious Sweets



Firq Roundabout—beyond the Omanoil carwash is Superbrowse  
The Golden Tulip Hotel and the Falaj Daris Hotel also offer Internet access but expect to pay more (e.g., RO 1 per hour, 700bz per half hour).

### **Post**

You can receive personal mail through the university address:

The University of Nizwa—Foundation Institute  
P.O. Box 33 Birkat Al Mouz  
Sultanate of Oman P.C. 616

The post office at Birkat Al Mouz is located on the main road through the village.

The post office for Nizwa is accessible from the street entrance to an inside corner of the old part of the Souq, between the main mosque and the wadi lot. It is open from Saturday through Wednesday 8am-2pm and 4:30-7:30pm, and also on Thursdays from 8-11am. Despite the staff there being polite and helpful, delivery times for international snail mail has not been improving over the years. If you need to buy stamps during off-hours, Al Ghantaq, with the sign of a horn directly across from the main mosque, is a good bet. You can arrange to have a private post office box at any post office.

### **Personal Computer Services**

You can have your Apple computer serviced in Muscat at the Sabco complex (24 566 179). PC services are available in the Nizwa souq.

## *Household Services*

### **Utilities**

You will receive two utility bills, one for electricity, and one for water. Look for them at the entrance to your building, as there are no mailboxes. In Nizwa they are paid at Oman National Engineering & Investment Company (ONEIC) opposite the Falaj Daris Hotel in Midtown, and at Oman International Finance Company (OIFC) just before the Souq Roundabout. . Electricity can also be paid at Mezoon in Birkat al Mouz (last building on the left in the village square.) Ask for a detailed printout of your account when you arrive so that you are not charged for the previous resident's usage. Expect to pay no more than RO 15 per month, even during the hotter months, and, again, be ready to describe where you live if you must summon help to read or fix the meters.

### **Cooking Gas**

If you need a new gas cylinder, call  
Izki—Glalib 95 417 244  
Nizwa—Abdullah 99 316 829  
Birkat Al Mouz—Khalifa 92 354 084

### **Drinking Water Delivery**

Delivery of 25l jugs of drinking water can be arranged and is advised for apartments. Oman Oasis is a reliable weekly distributor, requesting a RO 3 deposit and approximately RO 1 for each jug, with packets of coupons available for further discount per jug. Contact Peter at 92 234 932. Other delivery services charge less, but have also been less reliable in the past. In terms of extracting the water from the jugs, you may opt for either a complete water dispenser with hot and cold taps, for sale at about RO 25, or a basic pump from Lulu, about RO 1. You can also use your tap water, as water filters and dispensers cost about RO 13 at Carrefour/Lulu. These last for a year, and cost RO 6-8 to replace annually.

### **House Cleaning Services**

People are available to do regular cleaning. The cost is approximately RO 5 for a small apartment (NOT PER HOUR). Ask colleagues for names and numbers of reliable cleaners.

### **Household Repairs**

Contact Mr. Sadiq Al Rashidi at 97 824 553 from the University for assistance with maintenance of your University-provided apartment.

### **Air Conditioning**

If problems with the A/C units should arise, contact

Izki/Nizwa—Forsad 99 029 371

Birkat Al Mouz—Khamis 99 479 855

### **Television**

There are a number of satellite television options. The University provides you with a basic service. To enhance your service, a subscription to an OSN contract can provide an expat with all the channels one may desire for a monthly or annual fee. Inquire at the OSN kiosks at either the Muscat or Qurum City Centers, and pick up a receiver box and satellite dish from a building near Al Khuwair Service Road. Technicians are available for installation assistance at a corner shop near the wadi lot in the Souq area. If you have problems with university-provided services, call

Birkat Al Mouz—Khamis 99 884 049

Izki—Ismael 99 355 746 or 92 910 882

Birkat Al Mouz—Vindow 96 740 127

**Please contact Mr. Salam (99 220 047) for information about any other housing-related questions you have.**

## *Education for Minor Children*

**Omani Public Schools** provide free education for students (including non-Omanis) from ages 6-18. The medium of instruction is Arabic, with English taught as a foreign language. Please go to <http://www.moe.gov.om/portal/sitebuilder/sites/EPS/English/MOE/eduinoman.aspx> for additional information.

**The Indian School Nizwa** educates students from grades Kindergarten to 12, with English as the medium of instruction. Please go to [www.isnizwa.org](http://www.isnizwa.org) for additional information. Perry Hessenauer ([perry@unizwa.edu.om](mailto:perry@unizwa.edu.om)) has first-hand experience as a parent there and is happy to answer questions about the school.

**The Pakistan School Nizwa** has classes from Kindergarten to grade 12. Angela Clegg has 2 children in the school and can give information from a parent's point of view ([angclegg@gmail.com](mailto:angclegg@gmail.com)). The school phone number is +968 254 25 487

**Future Pioneers School**, a new bilingual school for grades Kindergarten to 4, will open in September 2012. Additional grades will be added each year. For more information, email [future.pi@hotmail.com](mailto:future.pi@hotmail.com) or call +968 932 51 165.

## *Transportation*

### **The University Bus**

There is a bus that will pick you up outside your apartment. It leaves the Souq at 7am and 9am, which means that subsequent times must be estimated from that point. Currently, the bus leaves campus across from Building 9H at 3pm, 4:45pm, and 6:30pm. Salam in the FI will arrange for you to sign up for bus service. You must complete a form with the relevant information, but if it is your first time, ask the bus riders in your apartment building for the schedule. There is a RO 10 monthly charge for bus service.

### **Taxis**

Local taxis cost 200-300bz in the central Nizwa area. Prices will vary with driver and distance. Taxis to Muscat can be organized near the Firq Roundabout in front of the Omanoil petrol station. Shared taxis cost RO 2.5, while private ones cost RO 8, and they will drop you at the Clocktower Roundabout. Check with colleagues for the names and numbers of reliable taxi drivers in the Nizwa area.

### **Baisa Buses**

These are the white vans that go up and down the main roads in Nizwa and the surrounding area. The cost starts at 100bz and varies based on distance.

## **Car Rental**

There are several car rental places in Nizwa:

Near the Souq Roundabout, near the mosque across from Omantel, and in Firq.

They usually charge between RO 10-15 per day.

Long term rentals are much cheaper in Muscat. Value Plus at the airport may be the cheapest and charges approximately RO 160 per month for a compact. Contact Regit Konju at 24 510 292 or Mohammed at 99 808 004. There are various other rental places at the airport and in town, as well.

## **Car Purchase and Omani Driver's License**

You have to have a Resident Card before you can enter into any credit purchase for a vehicle. You must have a current driving license from your own country. This is valid only for three months in Oman after which you must get an Omani driving license which is valid for 10 years. It may be possible to arrange this at the same time you go for your resident card as the testing office is in the same complex.

You will need to provide:

- 2 passport photos with a blue background

- A copy of your home country's driver's license (police require the original)

- A copy of your resident card


- RO 20

- An employer non-objection letter (the University HR Department will prepare this.)

Be prepared to provide a copy of a blood test showing your blood type. If you do not have one, it can be done at a clinic across from the police station. It costs RO 2 and takes 15 minutes. You will have to have an eye test at the police station and be fingerprinted. You may get your driver's license the same day or you may have to return to pick it up.

If you decide to buy a second-hand car—**BEWARE!!** Do not buy from local car dealers no matter how much discount they offer. In this area things like regular servicing, etc., may not be a priority for many local drivers. Ask your colleagues if they know an expat selling a car, as normally they will have had their cars serviced regularly. There are some reputable dealers in Muscat. There is a row of car shops in a place called Wattiyah—between Qurum and Ruwi on the Sultan Qaboos Highway. Toyota's Best Cars are recommended for second-hand vehicles in both Nizwa and Muscat. Getting your vehicle checked out by a mechanic before you buy it is highly recommended.

Once you have your Resident Card and Omani driver's license, you can go to any car dealership and choose a car and arrange a credit deal. Most of the main dealers are represented in Nizwa. Each will quite willingly offer discounts for cash payment. If you do enter into a credit arrangement then you will be asked to pay at least 10% deposit on signing the deal. It is possible that they will still be running a Ramadan deal a couple of months after the event.



All banks have a car loan scheme. Also, car companies will offer you credit. Both sources will offer a set credit rate, usually between 4.5% - 5.5% annually. If you use the bank to buy your car, they will debit the amount monthly from your account; however, if you were to buy from a car dealer, the credit system differs from that in the West. Instead of arranging a monthly bank or credit card debit, you will be asked to provide signed cheques amounting to the period of credit; this could range from 1-4 years depending on the size of your deposit.

Once purchase has been agreed upon the dealer will arrange insurance. This is always on a comprehensive basis with new cars. The dealer will then go to the ROP (Royal Omani Police) and acquire a temporary number plate which has green letters and numerals and is valid for one month. With the keys to the car in your hand you can drive away knowing that the car dealers will arrange for your “Molkiya” to be issued. The Molkiya is a white card about the same size as your resident card that contains the details of your vehicle, date of acquisition and renewal, plus details of your insurance cover and company. Once the Molkiya is issued the dealer will call you to collect it and will also put permanent plates on the car. After this it is your responsibility to renew the card annually.

### **Insurance and Registration**

To do this, first you have to find an insurance company. Usually it is easier to go with the same one that your dealer used or you can shop around for a cheaper one. At the Insurance office you hand over the expiring Molkiya and the clerk will complete a brown form, attach the Molkiya and hand it back to you after payment. Most insurance companies only accept cash.

Insure your car at an insurance company (e.g., Dhofar Insurance Company near Omantel, and the United Insurance Company). Some dealerships will arrange it for you. Bank Muscat also offers auto insurance options. In most cases, you will find the annual rates very reasonable, around RO 100-125 for basic coverage. If you anticipate driving in the United Arab Emirates, make sure to pay the extra RO 50 or so for the insurance to cover that.

Take the receipt from the insurance company to the Royal Oman Police station in Firq, where you also get your license and register your car. This process has become streamlined in recent years and costs RO 28. You must pay with a Visa credit card; cash is not accepted.

Dealers used to be able to do this for you, but now you have to get to the ROP headquarters at Firq. You go into the complex and turn right. There is a group of small buildings on the left, the renewal office is the first on the left. There they have the same queue numbering system as banks where you take a ticket from the machine.

If you do not have a driver’s license or cannot locate yours, there are driving instructors available. Ask around for recommendations.

### **Accidents**

If you are involved in a traffic accident, it is best to contact the police immediately on 999. Leave the vehicle where it is until the police arrive to ensure that an accurate report is given, or they may fine you for moving it.

### **On the Road in Oman**

Your choice of car will limit you to the kind of activities that you want to do. For instance, if you intend exploring the mountains and desert areas you will need a 4X4 without doubt. If, however, you want a vehicle to get you to work, do the shopping or just drive around generally, then a normal two wheel drive is sufficient.

**Speed Limits and Cameras.** The speed limit on all roads outside built up areas is 120kph. In built up areas, the limit is between 40 and 100, but you will find other temporary speed limits for road works, etc. Internal town roads are usually free of cameras, but areas of Muscat, Salalah, etc., have speed cameras. The Nizwa-Muscat road has cameras 3 to 8 kilometres apart which flash when the speed limit is exceeded.

If you are unfortunate enough to have driven over the limit and be caught by a camera, what happens next? In most other countries, once you have been caught speeding, you receive a fixed penalty fine through the post which you pay either by cash or online. In Oman the system is very different. If you are caught speeding by a camera (and remember they do not always flash), you will not know until you either try to renew your Molkiya and have to pay any accumulated fines or check on the ROP website, <http://www.rop.gov.om/english>. There is a menu there that deals with fines. Input your vehicle number and either driver's or residence permit details and you will be shown what, if any, fines are outstanding. Each fine for speed exceeding 15kph over the limit will cost 10 OMR. This can be paid online via a credit card.

Whatever you do when you are driving, be vigilant. **DRIVE DEFENSIVELY!** For example, when approaching a junction look in both mirrors as drivers will try to undertake you and turn off in the same direction as you. Another general rule for animals grazing on the roadside is that as long as they have their heads down they are eating and are not likely to dash across the road in front of you, but be cautious anyway.

If you are driving from Nizwa to the university, it is best to use the Nizwa-Muscat highway rather than to take the back way—the old highway which passes the Colleges of Technology and Applied Sciences and the Sports Complex. There is more traffic on the old road and there have been a number of accidents.

### **Car Wash**

The main car wash facilities are located beside the Omanoil petrol station at the Firq Roundabout. For more specialized and detailed cleaning, there is the Al Burt Center for Car Polishing nearly adjacent to Omantel, and another similar facility in Firq, along the road to Salalah, just before the exits to the New Hospital and Muscat from Nizwa. It is illegal in Oman to drive a dirty car and you can be given an on-the-spot fine of 50 OR in Muscat!

## *Health*

If you have a health problem, you can go to the Gana Clinic, located about half a kilometer outside the University on the main road toward the highway. They can refer you to other places if necessary. You pay RO 2 for each doctor's visit. The university will provide you with a MetLife Alico health insurance card, which you can pick up from the HR Department of the university. This card *should* be accepted at most places to which you will be referred. The card expires yearly in April and is renewed automatically by the university. Although there may be a delay in delivering the new card, coverage remains in force and you will be able to receive health care under the program in the interim.

The old hospital is about a kilometer beyond the Book Roundabout along the highway to Bahla, but is mostly used for initial blood tests prior to issuance of the resident card.

The new hospital is located on the main highway just beyond the exit for Nizwa (coming from the University), along the new highway. (Take the tunnel under the highway—*another* kilometer beyond—for a u-turn.) It has modern facilities and English speaking doctors, but it is only recommended in cases of extreme emergencies.

There are also a number of clinics around town:

Badr Al Samaa Clinic at 25 447 777 has a large facility near the Firq Roundabout; Al Basmaa Clinic in Firq at 25 432 103; Dr. Mustafa at 92 727 014.

### **Private Hospitals/Surgery**

Muscat Private Hospital in Muscat at 24 592 600 has an excellent reputation, as does Muscat Eye Clinic for laser treatment.

### **Alternative Medicine**

There are several Ayurvedic clinics in Nizwa, including ones near the Badr Al Samaa Clinic at the Firq Roundabout with a massage at RO 6 per hour (25 431 902), one near the Souq Roundabout, and one near the Midtown Shell petrol station.

### **Dentistry**

In Nizwa, the Haroon Dental Clinic upstairs from Haroon Opticals, just inside the Souq from the Book Roundabout, offers complete basic dental services, at 25 412 399. Dental services are also available at Gana Clinic across from the university.

In Muscat, the Muscat Dental Clinic Service is located opposite the Second Cup in Qurum, and is very popular, so book in advance at 24 568 565. Dr. Anil Ramcrishna is an Orthodontist at the Sala Medical Complex in Al Khuwair at 24 485 153, and can do root canal therapy, crowns, etc.

## Health Clubs

There are three options for gym/swimming pool facilities and membership in Nizwa:

Falaj Daris Hotel in Midtown is the most expensive, but has two pools (heated and unheated) and a small gym. Golden Tulip is more moderately priced, has a pool and a gym, and is located well outside Nizwa, between Firq and the University. The Nizwa Sports Complex near the College of Applied Sciences is a third option.

## Hair Cuts

There are many barber shops around town, averaging RO 2 for a basic hair cut. The best Western-style beauty salons are located in Muscat, with an excellent stylist named Ziad at the Intercontinental Hotel at 24 693 577. Another good place is the Muscat Beauty Salon in the Sabco Center of the Qurum Commercial Center. Lucy at Al Asfoor Plaza (behind Sabco) (24 571 757) is very reasonable. Joanne Louise in Athaiba (Azaiba) area (99 026 050) has all British stylists. Hana's is in Madinat A Sultan Qaboos (24 697 270). Some of these places also offer massage, manicures, pedicures, facials, etc.

## *Banking*

There are a number of national banks in Oman, as well as some international ones, such as the Bank of India, the Bank of Abu Dhabi and HSBC. If you have a foreign bank account, the National Bank of Oman and HSBC ATMs are more likely to accept your debit card.

Normal banking hours are Sunday to Thursday, 8.00am-2.00pm. (But see HSBC, below.)

To open a bank account, you will need a copy of your passport, resident card and a salary letter from HR.

## Bank Muscat

The University banks with Bank Muscat, which is a government-private partnership. It has more branches than any other bank, and account holders get their salary transferred the same day. Depending on where you live, you may wish to bank at any of the following branches, but not all the branches have English-speaking staff on full time.

Firq	PO Box 794, PC-611, Nizwa	24795555	25410887
Izki	PO Box 166, PC-614, Izki	25340122	25340056
Izki, Al Manzaleah	P O Box 55, PC-614, Izki	25341236	25340008
Nizwa	P O Box 92, PC-611, Nizwa	25410545	25410949



Firq Indl. Area	P O Box 801, PC-611, Nizwa	25431796	25431857
Birkat Al Mawz		25443567	25443757

## HSBC

For international account holders, transfers seem to be most efficient through HSBC, although there is no branch in Nizwa. There are several branches elsewhere in the Sultanate (e.g., Sur, Salalah, etc.) and two in Muscat which are easy to find. All HSBC branches have English speaking staff.

### Muscat City Centre Branch

Address: P O Box 240, Ruwi, Postal Code 112 Sultanate of Oman.

Location: In Muscat City Centre, at Fashion Avenue entrance

Working Hours: Saturday to Thursday: 09.00am to 10.00pm

Sunday to Thursday, 09.00am to 02.00pm – cash services, 02.00pm to 10.00pm non-cash services

Friday 04.00pm to 10.00pm – non cash services

Tel: 80 074 722

### Al Noor Plaza-Madinat Al Sultan Qaboos

Working Hours: Sunday to Thursday – 9.00 am to 9.00 pm

Tel: +968 24 698 086

## *Shopping and Business Hours*

Shopping hours are usually 9am-1pm, and 4-10pm, except for Friday mornings. During Ramadan most shops are closed in the mornings.

Lulu Hypermarket is located near the Firq Roundabout. It is open 7 days a week from 8:30 a.m. until 11:30 p.m. and offers food, clothing, household items, electronics, etc. Khimji's Supermarket near the Al Diyar Roundabout and also in Izki is not a bad alternative, open 9am-1:30pm, and 4:30-10pm; 8-11am and 4:30-10pm on Fridays. Family Mart is next door to the Falaj Daris Hotel, and does not close in the afternoon.

The Souq is the fascinating traditional market with different departments for fish, meat and vegetables, with many small shops for textiles, frankincense, traditional Omani crafts, etc. Check out the live animal market on Friday mornings. Come early to park as it gets crowded!

There are various bakeries and cold stores around town, and many are attached to petrol stations that are open all day.

## Restaurants

Local food:

The following have all been given good reviews by various staff members:

Al Musharef Al Turkia (aka 'The Turkish Restaurant') —highly popular Midtown grill with plenty of outdoor seating

Al Diyar Hotel—reasonably priced grilled meats are a specialty  
Bin Atiq—Omani-style food with private rooms without chairs or tables near the Souq  
Delicious Sweets—for small pizzas and Egyptian-style pastries in Midtown  
Al Neil Restaurant—exceptional shawarma stand behind Omanoil at Firq Roundabout  
Al Ruban—beside the Midtown Shell petrol station with good fresh fruit cocktails  
Spicy Village—Indian and Chinese cuisine with reasonable service at Firq Commercial Center; the large, pricy portions are best shared  
Peppercorn's—impressive new addition which features South Indian food near Safari Hotel

Western-style food:

Golden Tulip Hotel—pricy but with a large variety of menu items and a good but expensive breakfast buffet  
Falaj Daris Hotel—features nightly poolside buffet during high season; also pricy breakfast  
Pizza Hut—pricy Midtown treat with a good salad bar  
Dominoes—pizza delivery outlet with a small dining room  
Hungry Bunny—burgers and fried chicken between Omantel and the Firq Roundabout

## Media

There are now four daily (or near-daily) English-language newspapers in Oman: *The Observer* is fine for international news.

*The Times of Oman* is more oriented toward the Indian expat population and features the *Thursday* magazine, full of health and beauty tips.

*The Tribune* was the first to feature more objective local and regional news.

*The Muscat Daily* is not published on Thursdays or Fridays, but is perhaps the most objective in coverage of expat as well as Omani concerns.

The weekly tabloids are:

*The Week*, published Wednesdays by *The Muscat Daily* with focus on serious local issues and international entertainment with photo pages of local gatherings, but is not always reliable as an in-depth advance guide to local entertainment.

*H!* Magazine, published Fridays and featuring more of the same in a less slick format, but with lots of in-depth international features, courtesy of *Newsday/Newsweek*.

Monthly magazines including *Y*, *Oman 2Day*, *Black and White*, and *Time Out Muscat*, generally good at providing an overall picture of the local entertainment scene.

*The Observer*, *Times of Oman* and *The Week* are also available online.

## *Muscat*

### **Qurum Hotels and the Beach**

A well-known landmark is the Crown Plaza Hotel with its terrace bar overlooking the Qurum beach and the sea. In addition, the Crown Plaza offers three good, though expensive restaurants. Further along Qurum Beach is a selection of cafes and restaurants. Just past the Intercontinental Hotel, which is very popular at the weekend, is Jawaharat Al Shatti shopping centre. This is a big draw on Thursday night and Friday morning (the car park is sometimes full) with cafes, restaurants, including the well-known Darcy's, and small shops. Carry on along the shore to the most scenic part of the beach lined with coconut palms.

On the road leading to the Intercon Hotel, and not to be missed, is the imposing structure of the new Royal Opera House, which had its first season in 2011.

<http://www.rohmuscat.org.om/home>

### **Dive Centres**

Bluzone Watersports	+968 24 737 293
Oman Dive Center	+968 24 543 002
Muscat Diving and Adventure Center	+968 24 543 002
Moon Light Dive Centre	+968 99 317 700
Capital Area Yacht Club	+968 24 737 712
Marina Bander Al Rowda	+968 24 737 288
DivEco	+968 24 602 101

### **Shopping Malls**

City Center , Seeb – This is the biggest, with Carrefour, a Marks & Spencer, and lots of other high-street names.

CCC, Qurum and Sabco, Qurum - A mix of different shops in these two centres.

Markaz Al Bahja, Seeb – Al Fair (Western style) supermarket and Matalan.

Madinat Al Sultan Qaboos, MSQ – A selection of shops and cafes, including Al Fair supermarket.

City Centre and MSQ don't close for the usual mid-day break and are open all day on Fridays.



## Cinema

**Al Bahja**, Markaz Al Bahja Mall, Muscat

+968 2454 0856

<http://www.albahjacinema.net>

**City Cinema**, Shatti Al Qurm, Muscat

+968 2469 2656

<http://citycinemaoman.com>

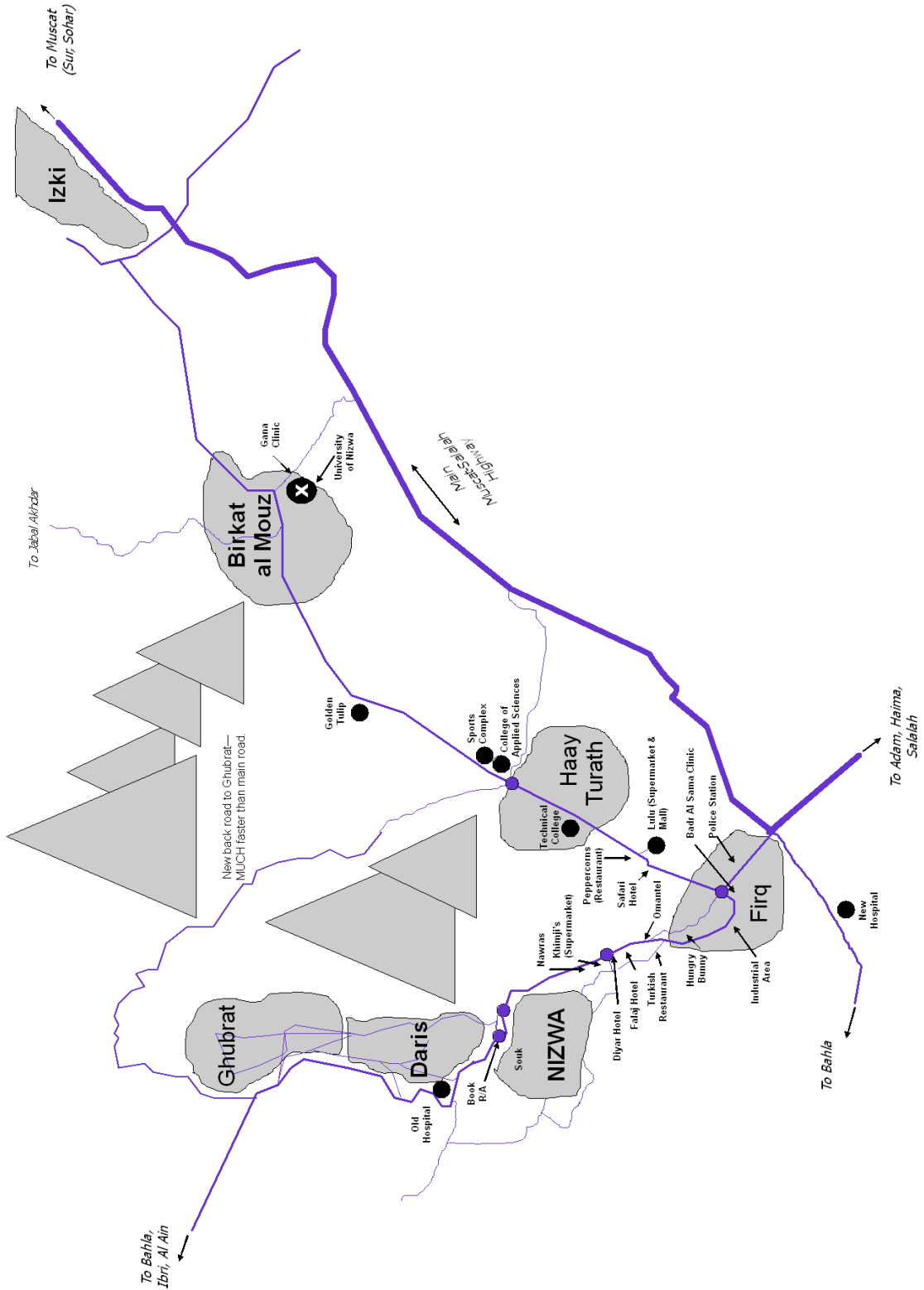
**Ruwi Cinema**, Ruwi, Muscat

968 2478 0380

## *Embassies*

Algeria	Tel: 24605 593	Morocco	Tel: 24696 152
Austria	Tel: 24793 135	Mozambique	Tel: 24594 207
Bahrain	Tel: 24605 133	Netherlands	Tel: 24603 719
Bangladesh	Tel: 24567 379	New Zealand	Tel: 24795 726
Belgium	Tel: 24562 033	Norway	Tel: 24708 304
Brazil	Tel: 24793 741	Pakistan	Tel: 24603 439
Brunei	Tel: 24603 533	Palestine	Tel: 24601 312
Chile	Tel: 24561 977	Portugal	Tel: 24561 400
China	Tel: 24696 698	Qatar	Tel: 24691 152
Colombia	Tel: 24701 264	Russia	Tel: 24602 894
Cyprus	Tel: 24590 200	Saudi Arabia	Tel: 24601 744
Denmark	Tel: 24708 304	Somalia	Tel: 24564 412
Egypt	Tel: 24600 411	Spain	Tel: 24713 253
Finland	Tel: 24701 454	Sri Lanka	Tel: 24697 841
France	Tel: 24681 800	Sudan	Tel: 24697 875
Germany	Tel: 24773 2482	Sweden	Tel: 24708 693
India	Tel: 24771 4120	Switzerland	Tel: 24568 202
Iran	Tel: 24696 944	Syria	Tel: 24697 904
Iraq	Tel: 24604 178	Taiwan	Tel: 24605 695
Ireland	Tel: 24797 083	Tanzania	Tel: 24607 065
Italy	Tel: 24564 832	Thailand	Tel: 24602 684
Japan	Tel: 24601 028	Tunisia	Tel: 24603 486
Jordan	Tel: 24692 760	Turkey	Tel: 24697 050
Korea	Tel: 24691 490	UAE	Tel: 24600 988
Kuwait	Tel: 24699 627	UK	Tel: 24609000
Lebanon	Tel: 24695 844		Fax:24609012
Malaysia	Tel: 24698 329	USA	Tel: 24698 989
Mexico	Tel: 24561 977	Yemen	Tel: 24600 815

# Local Area Map

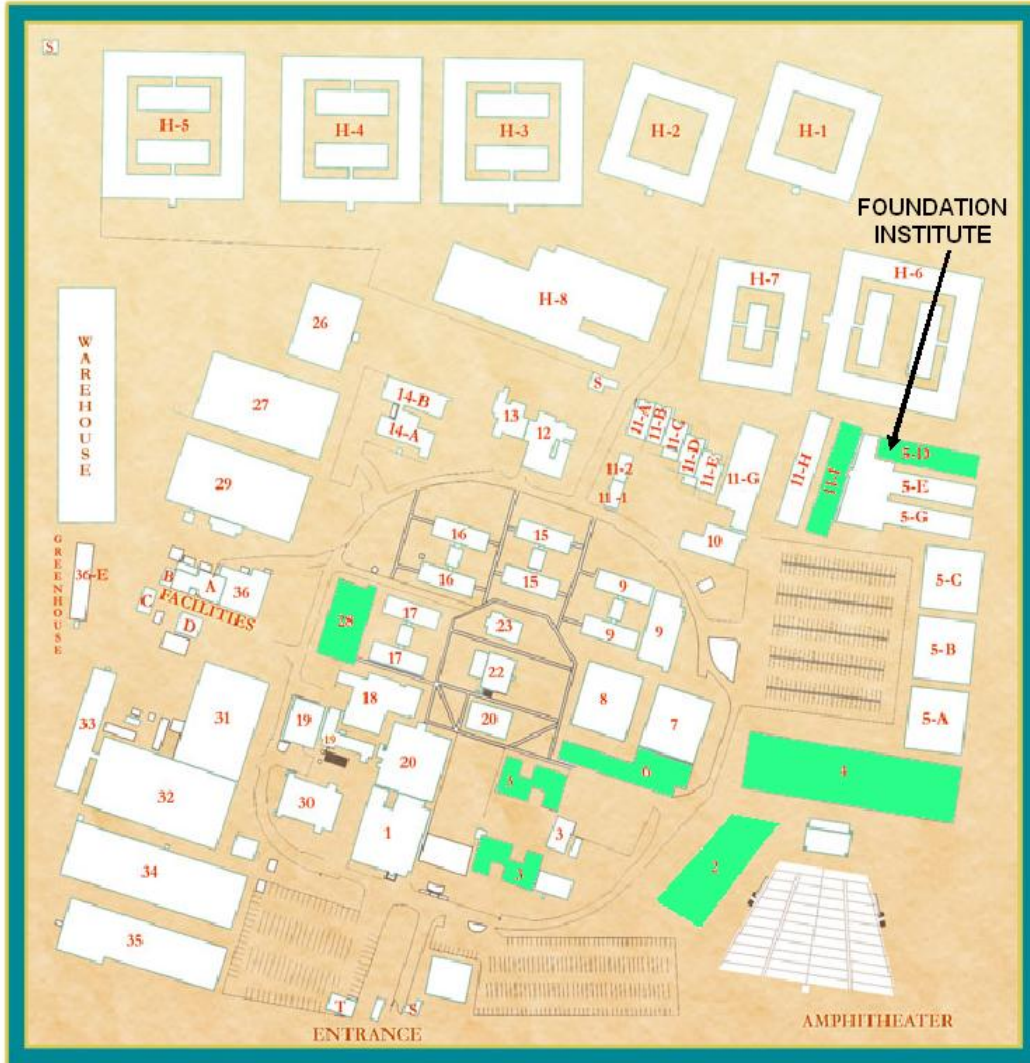




# *FI Campus*



جامعة نوى  
University of Nizwa



## INITIAL CAMPUS - BIRKAT AL-MOUZ

1	REGISTRATION AND RECORDS	12	FINANCE DEPARTMENT	30	AL-SHAHBA AUDITORIUM
3	CLASSROOMS AND LABS	13	STUDENT AFFAIRS	31	AL-FIKER HALL
4	CLASSROOMS AND LABS	14-A	CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE	31	SUPERMARKET
5	LABS	14-B	HUMAN RESOURCES	32	COLLEGE OF PHARM & NURSING
6	CLASSROOMS	15	CLASSROOMS	33	COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING & ARCI
7	COMPUTER LABS	16	CLASSROOMS	33	MA'EN FUND
8	COMPUTER LABS	17	CLASSROOMS	34	CLASSROOMS
9	COMPUTER LABS	18	FEMALE AND STAFF CAFETERIA	35	AL-HAZEM HALL
10	OFFICES	19	MALE CAFETERIA	36	MAINTENANCE AND WAREHOUSE
11A-G	OFFICES	20	LIBRARY	36-A	WAREHOUSE
11-1	CAREER CENTER	22	MOSQUE	36-B	SEWAGE PLANT
11-2	STUDENT ACTIVITIES CENTER	23	CENTER FOR INFORMATION SYSTEMS	36-D	GENERATOR ROOM
11-H	LEARNING ENHANCEMENT CENTER	23	LIFELONG LEARNING CENTER	36-E	GREENHOUSE
11-H	COLLEGES OF ECON, MNGT, INFO SYS	26	DARIS RESEARCH CENTER	H1-8	STUDENT HOSTELS
11-I	WRITING CENTER	27	PHARM & ENGINEERING LABS	S	SECURITY
11-I	LANGUAGE CENTER	29	PHARM & ENGINEERING LABS	T	TRANSPORT OFFICE