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WINGS OF OMAN

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Treasures from the National Museum: The Status of Camels in Oman

Here, in this edition of Wings of Oman magazine, the National Museum’s Director-General, Jamal al-Moosawi, and the Head of Curatorial Unit, Moza al-Wardi, tell us about the high status of the camel in Oman, and how these esteemed animals are rooted in the depths of Oman’s history. (With photography by Saleh al-Ruzaqi/The National Museum).

The camel culture of Oman is rooted in the depths of history; current archaeological research suggests the single-humped camel (*Camelus dromedarius*) was first domesticated in the Arabian Peninsula during the Iron Age, around 1,200 BCE. This ancient culture is richly expressed in Arabic terminology, made famous in the Noble Qur’an, and celebrated in classical Omani poetry, proverbs and song. Oman’s camel culture also involves an array of crafts industries. In antiquity, the riches of Oman – including frankincense – were transported overland by camel caravan to the far corners of the trading world. Today, camels are central to National Day and Eid celebrations, when traditional camel competitions are held across

the country. Among the most popular of these are ‘al-Muzainah’, a form of camel beauty pageant, and camel races of every kind.

The National Museum is open daily from 10:00am – 5:00pm (except on Fridays 2:00pm – 6:00pm). The ticket desk closes half an hour before the Museum’s closing times.

The National Museum: Visitor Information

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