



Kayaking Oman

Although the Musandam Peninsula in Northern Oman is an area of the world that rarely gets kayaked, it has a rich and varied history. The peninsula juts northwest into the Persian Gulf and creates the narrow Strait of Hormuz, a historic trading route for the countries bordering the gulf.

In January 2010, Capilano Outdoor Recreation Faculty Member Don Webster guided an exploratory sea kayaking trip in this area. ‘It was an opportunity to explore an area of the world that few people had visited – I saw pictures of the area from some friends, and quickly became intrigued with the idea. So after much planning, I joined my clients in Muscat, the capital of Oman, where we finished our planning and headed up to the northern part of the country.

The area is called ‘the fjords of the middle east’ and is characterized by sizeable desert peaks towering over remote fjords. There is no road access to most of the peninsula, and the small communities that line the inlets mostly rely on boats for transport. “These communities are quite remote and receive very few visitors. In the Village of Sayf al Bayt we stopped by for a leg stretch, and were quickly invited for a communal lunch with the villagers. They even invited us to spend the night and were worried about us camping outside. Arabian hospitality was simply unforgettable.”



Campsites were principally gravel beaches with high peaks directly behind. Given the areas long history, we regularly camped in the ruins of traditional farms and villages. In one campsite, we actually set up our tents inside the remains of a stone house to provide a windbreak. Ancient wells, Islamic headstones, and wild goats were our constant companions when camping. Other highlights included sea turtles, porpoises, yellow fin tuna, and snorkeling with many tropical fish.

Don plans to bring his experiences into the classroom to share with the students. ‘After a decade of wilderness guiding, I still find myself amazed by the experiences I have in this industry. It’s something that I try to impart to my students - the potential for exploration is only limited by yourself”.