

Al Nahda Resort and Spa
Located near Muscat, Oman

- Dr. KC Barker, *TheSpaReview.com*



Perched on the floodplain between the ruggedly beautiful mountains and endless untamed beaches of Oman, in the neighbourhood of Muscat, is the Al Nahda Resort and Spa.

Thirty acres of green and white and spa indulgence – manicured lawns and flowering trees marching between freshly painted white guest villas scattered among all the opportunities to get fit and feel good – pools, gym, spa, tennis and volleyball courts, meditation centre, relaxation gardens, and a laughing tent (?!).

Al Nahda is not a just a destination spa or a resort with a spa, but a true spa resort in the classical European sense of the word – a retreat, set away from the diversions and complications of the city, where the total focus is health and wellness. And in Oman – a country set away from the diversions and complications of the Middle East. Al Nahda means rebirth or renaissance or renewal – a fine sentiment for a spa!

Oman is a treasure of wild open spaces, ageless stone fortresses, and the friendliest people on earth. Hospitality is a cornerstone of Omani culture, so it is not surprising that there are so many fabulous resorts to welcome the world to Oman. It seems only the northern Europeans that



have discovered that,



I'm going to tell you a

secret: Oman is gorgeous – tiers of stark mountains in the morning sun, air scented with frankincense and myrrh, people with open homes and proud hearts. Seriously, everybody waves to you in Oman – just like on Mayne Island.

When I need to clear my head, I ramble around Oman. The roads are in superb condition and extremely well signed. I was rambling between Dubai and Muscat when I remembered the Al

Nahda resort and decided to stop in. It maybe wasn't the best way to do a spa review, and I know I need to go back to learn more. I was just passing through but my hotel room charge included a massage so I got organized and added, to the massage to ease my stiff driving muscles, a facial to compensate my skin for the incredibly dry heat of interior Oman - 43° Celsius that weekend in May.

The spa menu offers every conceivable health and beauty treatment with all the common themes – Thai, Balinese, Ayurveda, aromatherapy, Moroccan, and “New Age Wonders.” Great options on the one hand, lack of focus on the other. It seems that the signature of Al Nahda is “whatever you want,

we've got it." Thirst draws me to the "Fresh and Juicy" facial - undiluted fresh fruit and vegetable pulp blended with yogurt – but I'm convinced by sage staff that I should have "The Art of Beauty" specially designed for ladies 40+. Sigh.... Yes, mature skin needs lots of care and ladies of a certain age should have a facial at least monthly – a necessity, not a luxury! Of course, skin care needs to be combined with proper nutrition and lots of drinking water to be effective.



In the early morning, I leave my super-cooled studio room and wander towards the spa – remember, this is 30 acres – so it's a long way in the heat. Luckily, the resort has a series of roaming golf carts to give guests a lift! I aim towards the 22 treatment rooms, coupled in small villas and labelled with flower names. After my two treatments, I emerge into the relentless heat and here's where I have a problem with this spa – there is no transition room. Treatment done? Off you go.... I was so

mellow that I had a really hard time focusing in the heat and hitching a ride. It just is a spa fundamental that there needs to be transition time and transition space from treatments to the cruel world – whether it is heat, traffic, noise, whatever. If Al Nahda has such a space, I didn't see it. In fact, I wasn't given a tour of the facilities even though I indicated I was from a spa review agency, and the spa manager didn't meet with me as requested, so I really need to return to Al Nahda. I didn't try out the laughing tent, but I should have...I needed the practice for later in the day when I got lost 25 km up a wadi and punctured a tire. But that's another story. And you wonder why I need to spa?



Al Nahda is a special place and I recommend an extended stay to anyone wanting a wellness fix. It is all it promises – a calming oasis where one can focus on personal health and fitness goals with epicurean cuisine for the body and cultural excursions for the mind. I don't think a week would be long enough....

Al Nahda Spa is rated by *TheSpaReview.com* as a 4 Crown Spa - the four Silver Crowns indicating that you can expect Royal Treatment. Al Nahda Resort and Spa can say:



*We are a
4 Crown Spa
rated in 2008 by
TheSpaReview.com*



