

# The Muslim World

## An ideal adventure travel destination

London-Karen Dabrowska

A school girls outing to Nichol Fort in Oman by Jill Barsley was one of the winners of the Daily Telegraph Travel Photography Awards. And, as the Telegraph's Adventure Travel and Sports Show illustrated beyond any doubt, Oman is an unparallel success story in the annuals of adventure travel.



Hand glide

الطيران الشراعي



Climbing

التسلق

"This month the hotels are booked out and we have been told not send any more people", Nizar Ahmed the Tours Manager of Mohamed Abdul Rahman al Kindy Trading LLC, told Islamic Tourism, hardly able to contain his excitement. "It's a new market which is becoming very popular in the Far East, South Korea and Taiwan. Oman has five thousand years of history and a well preserved living culture. But we will not have mass tourism – the sultan insists there will be no high buildings and eco-tourism is very important". Recent advances in the tourist infrastructure have made Oman a new destination for divers, wildlife and nature enthusiasts, hikers and visitors who relish the pristine waters, mountain ranges, stunning

desert and fascinating souks.

The Arab and Muslim world was very well represented at this year's Daily Telegraph Travel and Sports Show held in London's Olympia Exhibition Centre from January 14th – 16th.

Iran is taking its first steps in promoting itself as an adventure travel destination. It is a land of huge mountains, vast deserts and dense forests. The Zagros and Alborz Mountains cover 4,000m and more than 10 percent of the country is covered by forests. The Kavir and Loot Desserts hold hidden treasures and ancient oases, underground aqa-ducts and pre-historic fossils. According to Iranian-born Ali Hendessi, who set up Kootch Adventure Travel, the first

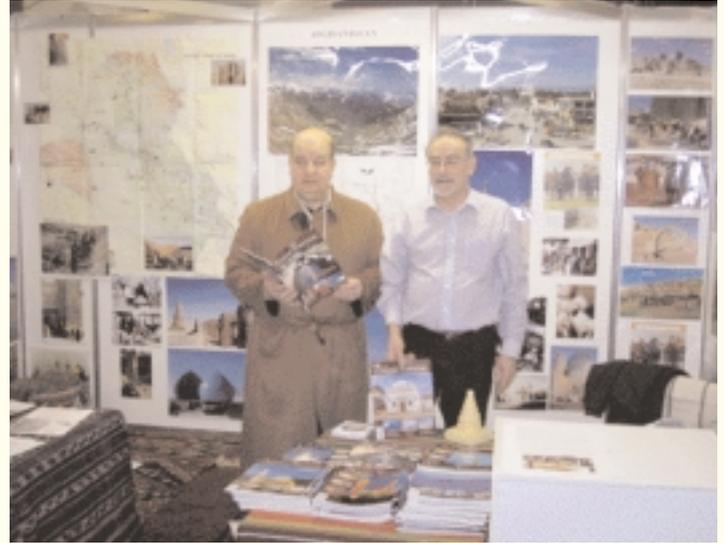
western company offering extensive trekking and mountain biking adventures to Iran, there are amazing possibilities for adventure activities throughout the year.

Trekking in Kyrgyzia is the specialty of Dostuck Treking set up in 1991 by John Ducker. The country has gigantic mountains with the most northerly peaks reaching up to seven thousand meters. Visitors are greeted with melting glaziers. "It is like Switzerland without the people and although it is not a mass tourist market it is very popular with mountaineers". Kyrgyzia is an ideal stand alone destination for adventure travel or can be combined with a trip to China and Uzbekistan. An amazing 94 percent of the country is covered with mountains and it ➤



Sri Lanka

جناح سري لانكا



Islamic Tourism Stand

جناح السياحة الإسلامية



بدون تعليق



Diving

الغوص

is famous for its warm lake where the water never freezes. White swans spend the winter at the lakes.

Sundowners offered an impressive number of tours on the Trans-Siberian Railway, Mongolia and the Silk Road including a 15-day discovery tour of the Gobi desert and an introduction to the nomadic way of life of the Mongolian Steppe.

While the Central Asian Republics have been welcoming adventure tourists since the break-up of the Soviet Union, Siberia is new to tourism. But Hamish Wheeler from Hove in East Sussex, UK, is undeterred. He set up Taiga Travel, named after the Siberian silver

birch forest, eight months ago and has already organised two trips to Siberia.

The Sahara is the traditional stomping ground of adventure travelers but Libya's tourist glasnost has added a new dimension to desert travel.

Veteran Iraqi traveler, Geoff Hann of Hinterland Travel did not let the security situation in the country beat him. He has replaced his traditional Iraq tours with an exploratory trip to the mountains of Iraqi Kurdistan which starts in Diyarbakir and encompasses Zakho, Dohuk, Dokan Lake, Suleimaniyah, Kirkuk, Eribl, Mosul and Aleppo. He is also taking people to Kashmir.

Overland tour companies, outdoor clothing manufacturers and publishers of travel guides and travel magazines made the most of the show with special offers. There was even a simulated ice wall where would-be climbers could test their nerve.

But the organisers focused on travel photography. Not only did the Daily Telegraph display the works of the winners of its first travel photography awards; the Travel Photographer of the Year competition took up most of the ground floor where photos of the centuries old library in Chinguetti, Mauritania attracted a lot of interest as did images of the Dhab el Dakhla in Egypt's Western desert. ■