



Socotra Trek

The Island time forgot

PIONEER EXPEDITIONS



Itinerary

Socotra • The Island Time Forgot

11 Days • 10 Nights

Hadibo – Mountains of Haghier – Dimalah – Dihazhaz – Darhoo – Dirhor Canyon – Dixsam – Scant – Qalansiyah – Dihamri – Hoq Cave – Rosh marine protected area – Ar-Ar Beach

HIGHLIGHTS

-  Trek through the beautiful Haggier Mountains
-  See dragons blood trees
-  Swim with dolphins in Qalansiyah
-  Visit fantastic Arabian caves and trek by the nearby mountains.

TOUR ESSENTIALS

Tour Style	Scenic Island Adventure
Tour Start	Hadibo
Tour End	Hadibo
Accommodation	Hotel & Camping
Included Meals	11 Breakfasts, 10 lunches, 10 Dinners
Difficulty Level	Difficult

Some places seem to hover on the edge of the imagination. The remote, exotic island of Socotra, located south of the coasts of Yemen and Oman in the Indian Ocean, is just this. Known by ancient Indian, Arabian and Greek seafarers as an entrepôt for myrrh, frankincense and dragon's blood, Socotra has been biologically isolated for several million years. Being virtually isolated from the rest of the world for such a long period, Socotra remains one of the most fascinating places on earth, and has Arabia's greatest plant and animal diversity. This extraordinary journey will introduce you to the natural wonders of an island sometimes dubbed 'the other Galapagos'.



Pioneer Expeditions

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Overview

Our journey begins in Hadibo, the Socotran capital. Here begins a memorable eleven days of discovery, as we explore the rich wildlife, scenery and local customs of this amazing island. The centerpiece of this journey is a trek through the interior of the island, dominated by the wildly beautiful and verdant Haghier Mountains. Here, set in a landscape of unimaginable beauty, are a collection of unique flora and fauna straight out of Alice-in-Wonderland – other worldly Dragon’s Blood trees, bizarre bottle trees and the bulbous Socotran Desert Rose. Natural cascades tumble down from the rain-fed peaks, and the bottle trees grow in such profusion that entire hillsides turn pink following winter rains.

Most of the people here are Bedouin nomads and, when not camping in the wilderness, we camp in the confines of small nomadic settlements.

We start off with a 3 day trek in the Haghier mountains. Here we will get a chance to visit traditional villages as well as the wadi of Dihazhaz, which is a small paradise where we will be able to see the unique flora, fauna & bird species of Socotra.

The next part of our journey will take us to Scand, an area known for its very rich and diverse flora and fauna, where we will spend the day trekking. From here we head to Qalansiyah on the north west of the island and then to the marine reserve of Dihamri where we can will be able to explore the magnificent Hoc Cave system.

A short drive takes us back to Hadibo for an overnight stay before for the flight back home on the final morning.

Itinerary



DAY 1: ARRIVE TO SOCOTRA AIRPORT - TRANSFER TO HADIBO (B,L,D)

Arrive in Socotra, considered the Galapagos of the Indian Ocean. Drive along the coastal road to a hotel for lunch, afternoon excursion to, explore the unique flora, see some of the unique birds & wonder around the natural cascade, dinner.

Overnight at Socotra hotel



DAY 2: TREK WITH CAMEL TO HAGJHER MOUNTAIN - DIMALAH (B,L,D)

Early in the morning we set off on foot to the mountain of Haghier with local cameleers, whose camels carry our camping equipment. The scenery is amazing as we trek along the mountain and arrive in Dimalah. At the top of the mountain we see a lot of different varieties of plants and birds, and from the high cliffs we see the northern part of Socotra.

Overnight camp in Dimalah

DAY 3: TREK WITH CAMEL TO DIHAZHAZ - DARHOO VILLAGE (B,L,D)

We continue our extraordinary trek after breakfast as we set off down to the wadi of Dihazhaz. This is a small paradise where we will be able to enjoy the unique flora, fauna & bird species of Socotra. After lunch among the trees and streams we set off towards the village of Darho passing through some more traditional villages along the way.

Overnight camp near Darho

DAY 4: DARHO - DIRHOR CANYON (B,L,D)

This morning after breakfast (and washing using well water) we say goodbye to our cameleers and set off on a trek to Rokeb Farmhin forest of dragons blood trees where we'll have plenty of stops along the way to take photos and enjoy the forest surroundings. We will stay overnight in a traditional village within the forest. Our last point of call is the largest canyon on Socotra, known as Dirhor, where we will have a chance to swim in the fresh water pools and hike along the canyon.

Overnight camp



DAY 5: DRAGONS BLOOD TREE FOREST - DIXSAM (B,L,D)

Today we get the chance to explore deeper into the Dragons blood tree forest and see more of the flora of the area as well as visiting some of the local nomads who live here.

Overnight camp near to the plain at Dixsam

DAY 6: DIXSAM - TREK TO SCANT HIGHEST PEAK FOLLOWED BY DRIVE TO QALANSIYAH (B,L,D)

Following an early start this morning we will be able to see the Bedouin herding up their sheep, goats and cows for feeding and milking. We can then enjoy breakfast before we meet our local Bedouin guide who will accompany us on the Scant trek along the Haghier Mountains up to one of the highest peaks on the island, an area known for its very rich and diverse flora & fauna. Here is some of the most breathtaking scenery. If we are lucky and the weather is clear we will be able to see the mountain we crossed with camels a couple of days before. We then meet up with our 4x4 to head for the coast for some much needed relaxation at Qalansiyah on the north western coast of the island. Qalansiyah is



famous for its sandy lagoon and its spectacular landscape, sting rays can be seen in the lagoon, so take care when swimming. As the lagoon is in the western part of Socotra it is the best place to watch the sunset.

Overnight camp in Qalansiyah

DAY 7: EXPLORE QALANSIYAH WITH OPTION FOR BOAT TRIP TO SHOUB BEACH (B,L,D)

In the morning we can walk along the beach and after breakfast we may wish to take a ride on a boat to Shoub (an optional extra provided the weather is good) to visit the village of mangrove trees where you can swim with dolphins if they are not feeling too shy, and observe the seabirds of the island and to fish with the local fisherman. Or you don't like to ride a boat we can just chill out in the surrounding area.

The boat trip is highly recommended as the west coast is spectacular.



Overnight camp in Qalansiyah

DAY 8: DIHAMRI MARINE PROTECTED AREA (B,L,D)

In the morning we will get up and have breakfast and say our goodbyes to the scenic beauty of Qalansiyah and drive directly to Hadibo to buy things we need or if someone feels the need to make contact with civilization via the internet. Then we go to Dihamri marine protected area which is well known for its coral reef. We will have lunch there and go snorkeling in the sea – a place where there is a tremendous variety of fish and marine activity.

Overnight camp in Dihamri

DAY 9: DIHAMRI - HOQ CAVE - ROSH MARINE PROTECTED AREA (B,L,D)

After breakfast we explore Hoc Cave, a spectacular 2.5 Km of stalactites and stalagmites, one of the biggest caves in Arabia, and enjoy the beautiful scenery and unique experience of ancient history & gorgeous rock formations small water pools and ancient writing. The trek takes around 3 hours followed by lunch at the bottom of the mountain, and then the driver will take us to Arher where we can see the highest sand dunes on Socotra. It is a magnificent view with freshwater streams flowing from the mountains to the sea. We will have a chance to climb the dunes which are around 200 meters high and bath in the hot water springs.

Overnight camp in Dihamri

DAY 10: AR-AR BEACH AND SAND DUNES - ARSEL END OF THE ISLAND, THEN BACK TO HADIBO (B,L,D)

This morning after breakfast we will go to Arher where you can see the highest sand dunes on Socotra. We will go on as far to the eastern end of the island as time allows and see more of the coastline and local fishing communities. On our way back to Hadibo we will visit Socotra's only folk museum. We will also visit a nursery that is leading Socotra's plans for reforestation programme.

Overnight hotel in Hadibo



DAY 11: HADIBO - TRANSFER TO SOCOTRA ISLAND AIRPORT (B)

We will enjoy a fairly early breakfast and do some last minute shopping before going to the airport for the flight home.

What our clients have said

'I would rate this holiday in my top 5 - bearing in mind my number 1 is Antarctica'

-A. Roberts

'I am reborn! Simply the best holiday I have ever been on!'

-P. Daruwala

Important Information

INCLUDED

- 🌍 Transfer to / from airport
- 🌍 All accommodation on twin-share basis
- 🌍 Camping in small dome tents 2 persons per tent
- 🌍 All meals including bottled water
- 🌍 All transportation in Socotra
- 🌍 All sightseeing activities as specified
- 🌍 English Speaking local guide throughout
- 🌍 Porters

NOT INCLUDED

- International and domestic airfares and taxes
- Personal expenses (telephone calls etc)
- Tips and gratuities (budget for around total USD100 per person, keep local notes for tips and think little and often except for your guides and drivers who you can tip at the end).
- Visa
- Snorkel and flippers
- Travel & Medical Insurance



Additional Information

ACTIVITY DURATION	5-7 hours
MAXIMUM ELEVATION	The maximum elevation in Socotra is approximately 1700 meters.
SEASON	September - March
BEST TIME TO GO	November - May
GROUP SIZE	2-8 pax
TRIP COMMENTS & STYLE	<p>This is an introduction to the diverse ecosystem of Socotra, and is ideal for those who are interested in the natural world in a truly remote location.</p> <p>Fully supported by guides and vehicles, this is predominantly a camping trip with two hotel stays at each end of the trip. The standard of accommodation is basic because Socotra's tourist facilities are very limited so hotels are not the same standard as European hotels but they do have running hot and cold water (when it works)! All guests should pay particular attention to dress; the local people will be far more open to invite you for tea if one respects the local customs.</p> <p>We trek for 4-5 days in the wilds of Socotra for about five to eight hours a day, with all other exploration being done by 4WD and short walks. We would recommend this trip for people of reasonable fitness or above, who has experience of, or wants to try travelling under more simple conditions. The terrain (on foot and by 4WD) can be rough and uneven; with several sections through natural undergrowth, so long sleeves and trousers are a must. However, most of the terrain is not overly steep. The camping style on Socotra is basic, with only a few areas having fixed bathroom facilities.</p>
FOOD	Food is based around the staples of rice, noodles, chicken, salad stuff, mutton, goat meat and milk products and flat breads. Food may be repetitive in places, but always wholesome and tasty. There will generally be an option available for vegetarians. Guests are recommended to carry snacks of seeds, dried fruit and cereal bars if they are concerned about their diet. On Socotra, as there are only 2 internal flights a week and 95% of consumables are imported, meals will be limited to what is available on the day, but with some great fish and lobster in places. This is part of its uniqueness and you are guaranteed some truly memorable meals, even if it's just due to the location!
INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS	We can help you organise your flights if you are departing from the UK and the connection between Dubai to Socotra, which can be a little challenging. Please contact us for information and a quote.
PASSPORT & VISA INFORMATION	It is your responsibility to ensure that your passport has a minimum of 6 months validity at the date of your return from travel and that your visa requirements are met. If you would like some advice on acquiring your visa we are pleased to help. Please note that new Yemen government regulations, means that all travellers to the Yemen and Socotra must have invitation letters from recognized tour operators and we provide these letters as part of our service.
INSURANCE	Travel and medical insurance is compulsory for this trip, and it is highly recommended to include emergency air evacuation as standard. Travelling without insurance can result in extremely high medical or repatriation charges in



the event of an accident; check your policy inclusions and exclusions care fully. We can introduce you to our insurance agent who can provide for trips to non FCO approved destinations such as the Yemen if you require. We will require proof of insurance before you travel. It is also very useful to keep this information on our files in the unlikely case of an emergency during your trip, where we may be required to provide administrative assistance.

IMMUNISATION

Standard overseas travel immunisations are fine for Socotra and you do not need anti-malarial tablets as malaria has been pretty much eradicated.

EXPEDITION SCHEDULE

Group departures in April and November (based on 2014), Tailormade departures to suit your dates from September to March

DIFFICULTY LEVEL

Our grades have been designated based on our perception of the degree of physical activity you are likely to require to enjoy the adventure. These are only a guideline. This itinerary has a 'difficult' level (5 – 7 hours per day). This means that you will need more than a basic level of fitness and some specific training may be required.

