

# FOOTBALL FAN FESTIVAL GEARS UP FOR TOURNAMENT FINALS

THOUSANDS FROM ACROSS THE SULTANATE AND BEYOND VISIT THE FAN FESTIVAL

EXCITING GAMES, ACTIVITIES, CONTESTS, ENTERTAINMENT, AND CUISINE FROM ALL CORNERS OF THE GLOBE KEEP ATTENDEES ENGAGED

TICKETS ARE AVAILABLE AT [WWW.FOOTBALLFANFESTIVAL.OM](http://WWW.FOOTBALLFANFESTIVAL.OM)

**Muscat, Sultanate of Oman, 11 December 2022** | Since it opened its doors on 20 November, the Football Fan Festival, a part of the 'Oman World Cup Programme', has drawn in tens of thousands of football fans from all over the country and abroad. This number is expected to increase further as the tournament enters the final knockout stages, with the highly anticipated final match taking place on 18 December 2022. Outside of the match broadcasts, a wide variety of contests, activities, competitions, food stalls, and more will keep visitors entertained for the remainder of the festival.

Commenting on the festival's success, Shabib Al'Maamari, Managing Director - Visit Oman, said, "We are incredibly pleased with the overwhelmingly positive response to the Football Fan Festival so far. It is very encouraging to see such promising results after so much time, dedication, and effort continue to be put into this project by several teams, volunteers, contractors, and small businesses. Now, with the tournament heating up and the anticipation building for the finals, we are looking to ramp up the festivities even higher."

Speaking about the Football Fan Festival Sultan Almasroori said: "This is my second visit to the festival. I thoroughly enjoyed my first visit, so I decided to bring my family this time so that they could enjoy the same fun experience I had. This event is perfectly suitable for families, and I would like to commend the organisers' efforts in setting up the place and providing such a wide variety of entertainment, activities, and restaurant options suitable for all tastes. In the future, I hope to see more events on the same level as this festival, since we lack comprehensive and diverse entertainment, activities, events and restaurants here. I also hope this festival will serve as a stimulus for other institutions to host events that better reflect the aspirations of visitors."

Speaking on the festival's positive impression on them, Maher Al Ajmi and his son, Ali AL Ajmi, said that the festival's activities and children's football games helped stimulate children's love for football and help them showcase their talents. They also touched on the diversity of restaurants and entertainment options available at the festival. Ali further emphasised his desire to take his children to events like this and watch even more football games together.

Giorgio Buffoni, who was visiting the festival with his family, said, "I think the Fan Festival is really nice; it's very well organised. We feel this is much better than the other places we visited. There is more things to do, especially with the children. We tried out The Panna Cage as soon as we got in, and the kids loved

it. Even just looking at the food alone, there are some really good options. In terms of a family setup, this is perfect because kids can play and enjoy themselves while adults can watch the games. We look forward to exploring the festival more and perhaps even coming again for future matches."

Commenting on his visit, Nasser Alderai said, "My first visit to the festival was a delight. I was fascinated by the fun atmosphere, the professionalism with which it was organised, and the variety of events and activities aimed at a range of age groups. The Festival's organisation is clearly driven by innovative and forward-thinking people. Perhaps the most captivating aspect of such events is the sheer number of people that gather together. I would love to see more integrated events that bring smiles to the faces of families and children as the Football Fan Festival has done. As for the World Cup, my intuition tells me that Brazil will be crowned champions."

A new daily prize draw for visitors is the latest addition to the Football Fan Festival activities. It runs each match day until the end of the tournament. All daily visitors who get their tickets scanned at the Football Fan Festival are entered into a draw to win exciting prizes. The winners are announced on social media daily and are also contacted by email. There are various prizes on offer, including vouchers for Grand Medical Care treatments, night stays at luxury four- and five-star hotels throughout Oman, vouchers for food and beverage outlets and culinary experiences at various hotels, tickets to performances at the Royal Opera House, Muscat, and many more fun activities.

The knockout stage matches (round of 16) of the Football Fan Festival's E-sports competition will also take place at the festival grounds starting on 14 December, followed by the quarter-finals on 17 December. The national e-sports contest, organised in partnership with Golden Joystick kicked off online on 4 December and saw more than 140 e-gamers compete online in the qualifying matches. The semi-finals and the final game will also be at the festival grounds, broadcasted live on the big arena screen in the afternoon of 18 December.

The festival will also host the award ceremony of the Football Fan Festival Championship for Students of Muscat Governorate Schools 2022, organised in collaboration with the Directorate General of Education in the Governorate of Muscat. 96 teams (960 students) from all Muscat government KS1 schools competed in the tournament that started on 21st November. The prize-giving ceremony will be held on the festival's main stage on 18 December, after the tournament's final match takes place at Sultan Qaboos sports stadium.

The Football Fan Festival features a specially constructed fan village catering to fans and non-fans, their families, and people of all ages. It has been divided into several zones, each catering to one core aspect of the celebrations, ranging from dining to activities and matches. These include a 'Food zone' showcasing cuisine and tastes from all corners of the globe, two 'Activity Zones' that feature over 22 interactive football-themed mini-games and a dedicated five-a-side football pitch, as well as the 'Football Theatre' where all 64 matches of the World Cup are being broadcasted live, in partnership with beIN Sports.

The Football Fan Festival also includes a licensed VIP Football Fan Festival area at the Crowne Plaza OCEC gardens, where guests can book individual tickets or their own table to watch the match in style. Hayya

Card Holders are offered free entrance at both the VIP Football Fan Festival and the Football Fan Festival at the OCEC.

To ensure the event is accessible for everyone to enjoy, the entrance fee has been set to only OMR 2 per person (free entrance for children four and below). This ticket price includes unlimited free access to all games, shows, entertainment, challenges, and contests. There are, however, only a limited number of tickets available each day. Therefore, it is highly recommended that all fans and their families pre-book tickets via the festival's website. This is especially true for the upcoming semi-final and final matches that are selling out fast. The festival grounds, accessible only on World Cup match days, will open one hour before the day's first game and close after the day's final one.

For more information on the Football Fan Festival or to book your tickets, please visit <https://www.footballfanfestival.om>.

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### **About Oman's Football Fan Festival**

The Football Fan Festival in Muscat, sponsored by the Sustainable City – Yiti, Coca-Cola, Lulu Hypermarket, and Grand Medical, is set to be the largest celebration of football in Oman, spanning an area of over 9,000 square metres. It will take place in the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre (OCEC) gardens between 20 November and 18 December 2022, in a specially constructed, family-friendly fan village. Visitors to the Festival will be able to watch all World Cup 2022 matches and engage in everything from creative activations to interactive games, live performances, and food and beverage outlets serving local and international cuisine.

### **About The 'Oman World Cup Programme'**

With its 'Oman World Cup Programme', the Sultanate of Oman seeks to provide an unparalleled experience for all Hayya cardholders who choose to visit Oman at any time during the world cup. Alongside a series of promotional campaigns coinciding with the tournament, all Hayya cardholders will be offered unique experiences and be able to take advantage of a wide range of special visa, flight, transportation and accommodation offers. The Programme is being overseen by the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth, Royal Oman Police, OMRAN Group, Oman Air, and Oman Airports.