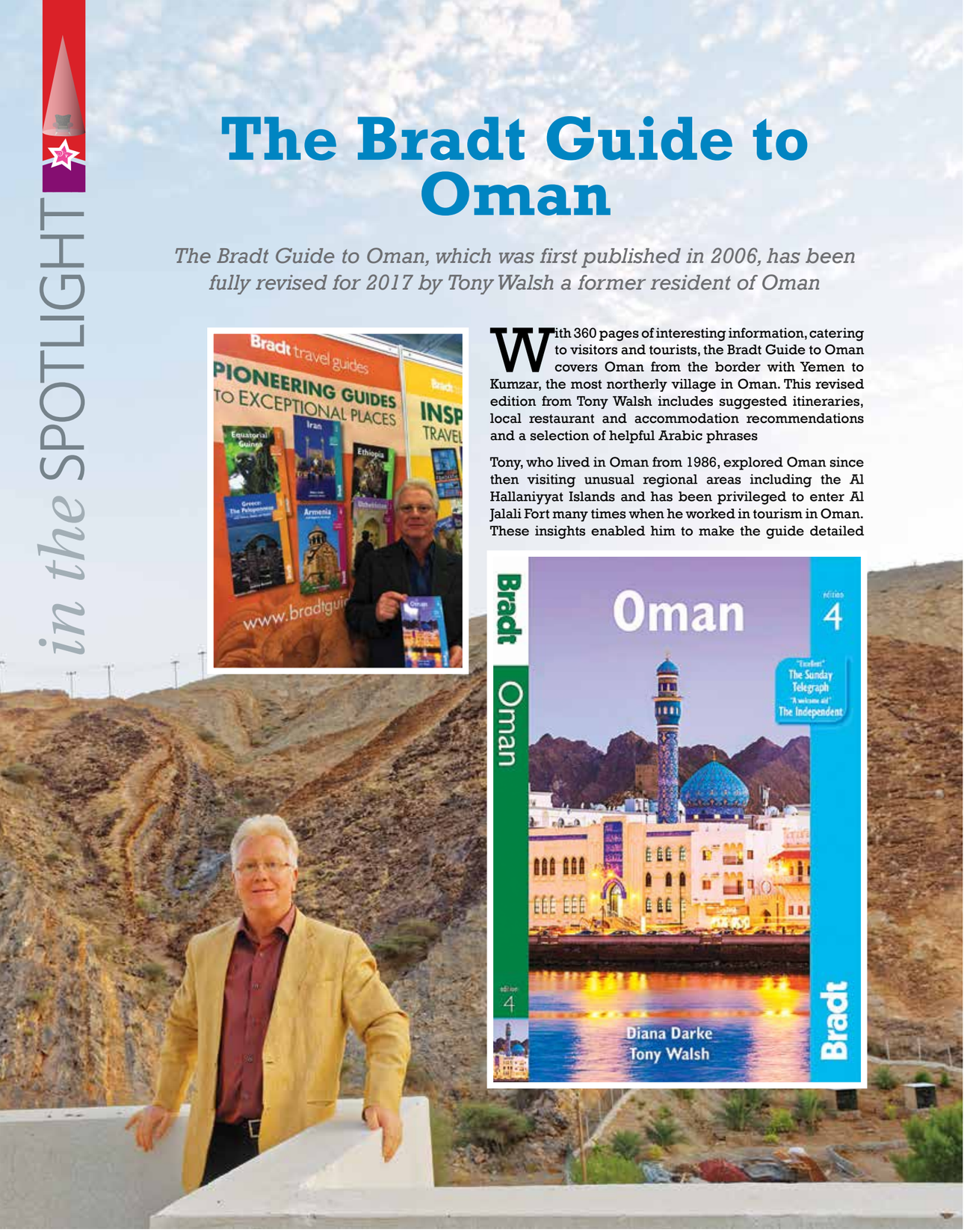
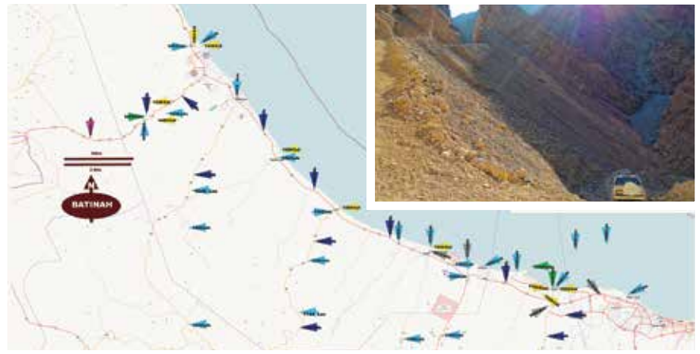
The Bradt Guide to Oman

The Bradt Guide to Oman, which was first published in 2006, has been fully revised for 2017 by Tony Walsh a former resident of Oman

With 360 pages of interesting information, catering to visitors and tourists, the Bradt Guide to Oman covers Oman from the border with Yemen to Kumzar, the most northerly village in Oman. This revised edition from Tony Walsh includes suggested itineraries, local restaurant and accommodation recommendations and a selection of helpful Arabic phrases

Tony, who lived in Oman from 1986, explored Oman since then visiting unusual regional areas including the Al Hallaniyyat Islands and has been privileged to enter Al Jalali Fort many times when he worked in tourism in Oman. These insights enabled him to make the guide detailed



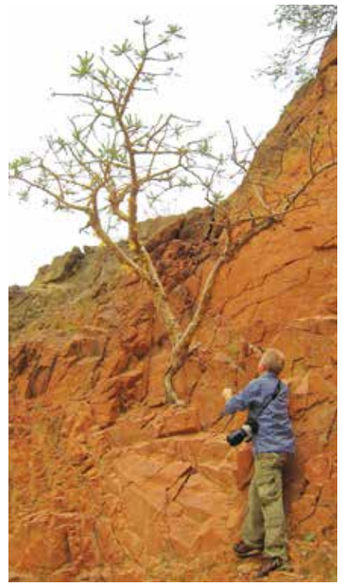


and, using the reaction of tourists as well as his own experience at specific locations, make suggestions and place inclusions and exclusions.

According to him, the multi award winning Bradt Guides is probably the largest independent guidebook publisher in the world. Based in a small English town the company's publications literally cover the world with 216 guides; it reaches the parts of the world that other publishers might only dream of. The Bradt Guide to Oman, which was first published in 2006, has been fully revised for 2017 by Tony Walsh a former resident in Oman and the book is now available in Muscat.

In an email interview with FACES, Tony said he was delighted that he could spend the summer of 2016 updating the Oman guidebook. "With new roads that had opened since the third edition, such as the Hasik to Ash Shuwaymiyyah road, there were lots of geographical updating needed. To make navigation easy place names correspond to those on Oman government maps, so Ar Rustaq rather than Rustaq and As Sib rather than Seeb, and where a location is isolated distances are given, not least to ensure petrol refilling stops can be anticipated," he explained.

The book has its own maps all of which Tony updated using the Open Street Map as their mapping base. To achieve the detail needed, many map sections were 'stitched' together in Photoshop by Tony to make a single map and the individual locations were placed on the maps and cross-referenced on a spreadsheet and then within the book's text. Tony's maps were then reformatted by Bradt Guides own graphic cartographer to their In-House style.



Tony wants the book to encourage residents and visitors to see both the main sights and off the beaten track ones. "In some cases, such as the National Museum, it was easy to include, in others, perhaps, because the routes are dangerous for inexperienced drivers, they were not. Other considerations might have been that the place was so isolated that it would not fit comfortably within the guide book's routings or even that, despite a location's attraction, it might not comfortably accommodate many visitors making a decision not to include them important," he states.

Though for many residents of Oman picnics are an ideal opportunity to eat home-cooked meal, there are many who prefer to stop at a restaurant and relax while somebody else looks after the food. The guidebook makes restaurant suggestions not only in Muscat but also along most routes. Tony has used all of them, often for more than 20 years, and though they range from Al Angham to a small two-man restaurant in Haytam they are detailed with equal pleasure.

The Bradt Oman Guide Book is available in Oman through Al Manahil Books Muscat, www.almanahil-books.com, and at the National Museum shop ■