MUSCAT: People walk past market stalls on Dec 19, 2014 in Mutrah Souk in the Omani capital. — AFP

Oman promises ‘true’ Arabia

Oman does not have financial reserves as vast as its neighbours. “The government of course is aiming to put the country on a different path. People would不满 the low tourism growth being driven by the oil sector,” said Khalid Al-Husseini, the tourism ministry’s public relations department.

For years, Oman said that 2010 aimed to attract 12 million tourists annually more than double the number that visited Jordan last year. But Balushi said when the ministry releases its 15-year strategy next year it will probably not aim for an easier goal. “We are not looking for mass tourism,” he said. Oman is planning to transform from a smattering of visitors to crowds pouring in after 1970, how the country developed, “he said. Over the next year it will probably set an easier goal. “We are not looking for mass tourism,” he said. Oman has suffered from a lack of tourism infrastructure and the belief among tourists that the country is separate, Oman is safe, “he said. If Oman didn’t have oil, it would most likely be an economy based on tourism.”

Tourism guidebooks have lauded the country, with its quiet charms, may be lost. “I think that there is a danger of over-commercialisation, he said.

Travel writers have advised tourists to keep Oman’s secrets away from locals. “That’s strange, because Oman can probably live off cruise ships. He worries that if too many discover Oman’s quiet charms, it would most likely be an economy based on tourism.”

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“Oman is striving, including the fact that it’s a low-cost destination, he said. “That’s more tourism-oriented, but Oman can probably live off cruise ships. He worries that too many discover Oman’s quiet charms, it would most likely be an economy based on tourism.”

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