

## Rapid progress in tourism

If there is one part of the Oman economy that has seen the greatest changes in 48 years then that has to be the tourism and hospitality industry. From small beginnings it has grown rapidly over the last few years providing tourists with a whole range of different hotels and locations to stay whilst in the sultanate.

Most importantly, we have seen a dramatic increase in the number of Omanis working in this thriving new sector and, despite many challenges, we can see incremental growth each year as more and more young Omanis see this development as an opportunity for their future.

Hospitality or 'hotel and catering', as it was in my day, provides great opportunities for young people to cut their teeth on a whole range of experiences which stand them in great stead later on in life - no matter what field they go into. The skills in dealing with people - quick decision making - team work and general life skills are part of the University of life and there are few leaders of industry, commerce and politicians



**Robert Maclean**

Principal, National  
Hospitality Institute

who have not experienced this in their early years.

Here in Oman, we have seen some wonderful examples of Omanis climbing the ladder of success in an industry that does not let you climb unless you can! This is not just an employment win but a consolidation of the appeal of Oman where the tourists who come here want to see local culture as it is sold in the brochures. They want to see the unique dress code and the variety of cultural habits that make the Omanis stand out from the rest.

Tourists are often very grateful when they do have this experience as they will have come across the wonderful and unique friendliness of a people designed for tourism.

