The Al Hazm castle/fort was built around the beginning of the 18th century by the Al Yarubi tribe, which was then ruling over Oman. This castle was a palace in which the imam (the head of the Ibadi Muslim religion) lived. It was built during a time of unrest – the Portuguese had recently been defeated, but Oman now faced attacks from Persia, on the outside, and rival tribes, on the inside. Therefore, while Al Hazm has the beautiful decorative elements of a castle, it was also designed to be a sturdy fortress, tough enough to withstand even a cannon attack.