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# Tour Notes

**Jordan – Desert and History**

**Tour Duration – 8 Days**



## Tour Rating

Fitness ●●○○○○ | Off the Beaten Track ●●●○○ | Culture ●●●●○ | History ●●●●● | Wildlife ●●○○○

## Tour Pace

Busy

## Tour Highlights

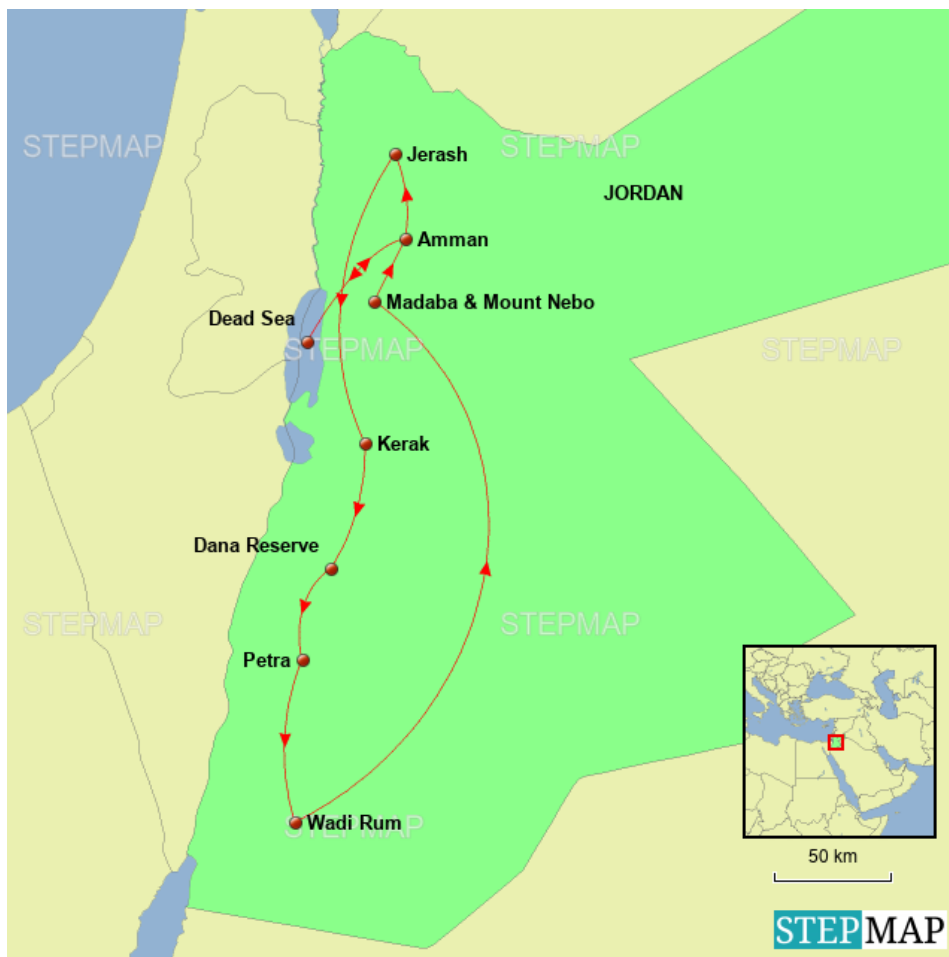
- ✓ Explore the fascinating city of Amman, a city of contrasts where old meets new
- ✓ Stand before some of the best preserved Roman architecture at Jerash
- ✓ Take a walk amidst stunning scenery at Dana
- ✓ Marvel at the red-rose city of Petra (UNESCO)
- ✓ Immerse in the incredible landscape of Wadi Rum (UNESCO) and stay in the desert
- ✓ Observe exquisite mosaics at Madaba
- ✓ Enjoy breathtaking views from the important Christian pilgrimage
- ✓ Float in the mineral rich Dead Sea, 8 times saltier than the ocean
- ✓ Cook traditional food with the Iraq Al Ameer Women Association





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## Tour Map



## Tour Essentials

- Accommodation:** Mixture of comfortable tourist class small scale hotels with private bathrooms  
**Included Meals:** Daily breakfast (B), plus lunches (L) and dinners (D) as shown in the itinerary.  
**Group Size:** Minimum 2 - Maximum of 12  
**Start Point:** Amman – you can arrive any time on day 1  
**End Point:** Amman – you can depart any time on day 8  
**Transport:** Minivan or Minibus depending on group size  
**Countries:** Jordan





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## Jordan – Desert and History

*In a region of geopolitical turmoil, Jordan is a safe and welcoming land of remarkable contrast. Dense with history, full of natural wonders and historical sites, a bridge between sea and desert, east and west and linking ancient and new civilizations. It is essentially an open air museum in almost all its entirety. On this comfortable small group tour, marvel at astonishing Roman amphitheatres, Crusader castles and Christian mosaics. Imbibe in the splendid desert isolation of Wadi Rum Protected Area and wander open mouthed amongst the pink sandstone and rock hewn antiquities of the Lost City of Petra (UNESCO). Village visits allow for opportunities to experience the legendary warmth of the Jordanian people and assist in the preparation of tasty local dishes with the Iraq Al Ameer Women's Association. No visit to Jordan is complete without a float, rather than a dip in the ultra-saline Dead Sea set against other-worldly backdrop. This journey through Jordan is a must for those that wish to experience an exciting combination of rich history and stunning landscapes.*

### Tour itinerary notes

While our intention is to adhere to the day-by-day itinerary as printed below, a degree of flexibility is built in. Overnight stops may vary from those suggested and on occasions alternative accommodation, of a similar standard to that named below, will be used.

### Tour Guide

Our guides are a key strength, chosen for their knowledge of and passion for the areas in which they work. All of our guides are carefully hand-picked, and are not just passing through these countries, but are usually locally born. Unlike some companies it should be noted we do not send a guide or tour leader from Undiscovered Destinations in the UK as we have every confidence in our locally appointed representative who is responsible for operating the tour on our behalf. Where possible you will have the same guide throughout your trip but on occasions it may be necessary to change the guide at one or more points during the tour. Smaller groups of 5 or less will have an English-speaking local tour leader who will also be the driver and then the services of local guides will be used at the various sites on tour.

# Itinerary

## Day 1 - Arrival Amman

Arrive in Amman and transfer to your hotel. Depending on your time of arrival, there may be time to explore the city at leisure. No guided services are provided today. Overnight Larsa Hotel or similar.

### Amman

A fascinating city of contrasts, Amman is a unique blend of old and new situated on seven hills between the desert and the Jordan Valley. It is one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world, with a 1994 excavation uncovering homes and towers believed to date from the Stone Age, circa 7000 BC. The city was named Philadelphia after the Ptolemaic ruler Philadelphia in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Century BC. After coming under the Roman vassal of King Herod in 30 AD, the city became part of the Decapolis League. During the Byzantine period, Philadelphia was the seat of a Christian bishop, and several expansive churches were built. After the Great Arab Revolt secured the state of Transjordan, Emir Abdullah bin-al Hussein made Amman the capital in 1921 and since the city has grown into a city of over 1 million inhabitants.

## Day 2 – Amman – Jerash (Approx. Overall Driving Time - 2.5 hrs)

After a breakfast tour briefing at the hotel, depart for a tour of Amman which includes the outstandingly preserved and restored Roman amphitheatre, the Citadel and the Jordan Museum. Visit the atmospheric souk before this afternoon continuing to Jerash to explore the incredible ruins of the remarkably well preserved Roman complex. Overnight Amman Hotel or similar (B)







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## Jerash

Considered to be one of the largest and well preserved sites of Roman architecture outside of Italy, Jerash boasts colonnaded streets, baths, theatres, plazas and arches much of which remains in exceptional condition. Within the city walls, archaeologists have unearthed the ruins of settlements dating back to the Neolithic Age, indicating human occupation at this location for more than 5000 years. The history of Jerash is a blend of the Greco-Roman world of the Mediterranean basin and the traditions of the Arab Orient.

### Day 3 – Jerash – Kerak – Dana Biosphere Reserve – Petra (UNESCO) (Approx. Overall Driving Time - 5 hrs)

Today is a busy day and so we have an early breakfast. Travel the King's Highway, the world's oldest continuously used communication route to Kerak and on arrival explore the fortress, a fine example of Crusader architecture. Continue to Dana and enjoy a short and easy but picturesque hike above Dana village, walking amongst terraced gardens and local craft workshops, meeting local residents, observing Ottoman architecture and learning about Dana's rich history. We will have a picnic lunch today in this beautiful environment. Later we continue to Petra in anticipation of experiencing one of the new Seven Wonders of the World tomorrow. Overnight Petra Moon Hotel or similar (BL)

**Note – The walk is around 1 hour and is of an easy grade.**

## Kerak

Kerak lies on the ancient caravan routes that used to connect Egypt to Syria and its' commanding position almost 1000 meters above the Dead Sea Valley made it a strategic asset of great importance. The city was the ancient capital of Moab and was also used by the Greeks and Romans. Kerak reached its full splendour in the 12th century with the arrival of the Crusaders. The major attraction at Kerak is the magnificent Crusader fortress of Kerak, which made Kerak the new capital of the province; superbly situated on the King's Highway where it could control all traffic from the north and the south and grow rich by the imposition of road-tolls. This castle soars above its' valleys and hills like a great ship riding waves of rock; an excellent example of the Crusaders' architectural military genius.

## Dana Biosphere Reserve

Jordan's most impressive eco-project, ranges in elevation from sandstone cliffs of over 1500m to the Wadi Arabi desert at 50m below sea level. It is home to many species of plants and animals, the park is the perfect place to go hiking or just to relax.

### Day 4 – Petra (UNESCO)

Spend a full day of exploration at the incredible and wondrous site of Petra. The feeling of winding through the atmospheric 'Siq' to then be faced with the stunning 40 metre façade of the iconic Treasury is likely to live long in the memory. During the day you will have ample opportunity to explore the site. Continue through the Red Rose City passing by the Nabataean Theater, and other fascinating tombs, until you reach the central zone next to the Museum. For those that wish there will then be the opportunity to continue through the site ascending a nearly 800 step path (approx. 40 minute walking time) from the basin to reaching the exquisite Monastery "El Deir", a quite astonishing building carved out of rock, arguably one of the most iconic monuments of the whole site. At the end of your visit, make your way back to the entrance. Although much has been written about Petra, nothing really prepares you for this amazing place. It has to be seen to be believed! Overnight Petra Moon Hotel or similar (B)

## Petra (UNESCO)

Designated a World Heritage Site since 1985, Petra is one of the world's greatest historical sites and one of the world's seven New Wonders - an ancient rock city that was the capital of the Nabatean Kingdom. Built around 2,300 years ago, the imposing rose-stone palaces are an impressive testament to the power and influence of the Nabateans who controlled trade around the area in the 3rd century BC. Petra is surrounded





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by hills in which tombs have been carved into the pink sandstone. The site includes some 800 structures. Petra is sometimes referred to as the 'Lost City' as after the 14<sup>th</sup> Century it was completely lost to the western world. It was rediscovered in 1812 by the Swiss traveller, Johann Ludwig Burckhardt, who tricked his way into the fiercely guarded site by pretending to be an Arab from India wishing to make a sacrifice at the tomb of Prophet Aaron.

#### **Day 5 – Petra – Wadi Rum Protected Area (Approx. Overall Driving Time - 2 hrs not including Wadi Rum jeep tour)**

Travel to the timeless desert space that is Wadi Rum, also known as 'The Valley of the Moon'. The beauty of this place is breathtaking, natural sunlight offering an every changing kaleidoscope of colour against the remarkable rock formations. On arrival we will meet a local Bedouin native and enjoy the local hospitality over some tea. Later soak up the desert by way of a 4WD jeep tour where we can take in some of the astonishing natural vistas of the protected area culminating in what hopefully will be an unforgettable sunset. Overnight Luxury Rum Magic Camp (BLD)

**Note – The Wadi Rum camp in this magnificent desert wilderness comprises of Bedouin style tents which are furnished and comfortable inside but basic. It is possible to have your own tent if you are paying the single supplement but bathrooms facilities are in a separate unit and are shared.**

#### **Wadi Rum**

Wadi Rum is a valley cut into the sandstone and granite rock in south-west Jordan. It has been inhabited by many human cultures since prehistoric times and is dotted with massive rock formations. It is virtually untouched by humanity and its destructive forces. Here, it is the weather and winds that have carved the imposing, towering skyscrapers, so elegantly described by T.E. Lawrence as "vast, echoing and god-like". Much of David Lean's Lawrence of Arabia was filmed in Wadi Rum.

#### **Day 6 – Wadi Rum – Madaba – Mount Nebo – Amman (Approx. Overall Driving Time - 5hrs)**

Travel this morning from Wadi Rum to Madaba and visit the Church of St. George in the middle of town. The church is the home of the Mosaic Map of Palestine, which represents the Holy Land and its surrounding regions. From here we then drive to Mount Nebo (the spot from where Moses is believed to have been shown the Promised Land just before his death). Continue to Amman. Overnight Larsa Hotel or similar (B)

#### **Madaba**

Located 30 kilometres southwest of Amman, Madaba is most famous for its exquisite 6th-century mosaics. Its history dates back at least 3500 years, however. *Madaba*, which was known in the Bible as the Moabite town of Madaba, is mentioned in the Old Testament account of Moses in Exodus (Numbers 21: 30). The most well-known mosaic lies on the floor of St George's Church, depicting a map. However, the city is home to a number of tiled art displays, which many believe are even more complete and vibrantly colourful than the latter. Join a walking tour of the market town to discover these rarely visited works of art and listen to the bells summoning Christians to pray before dawn and bid Orthodox Christians to rise at first light, in this surprisingly religiously tolerant town.

#### **Day 7 – Amman – Dead Sea – Iraq Al Ameer Cooking Experience – Amman (Approx. Overall Driving Time - 2 hrs)**

After a leisurely breakfast continue to the Iraq Al Ameer Women Association and take part in preparing traditional dishes which you will then enjoy for lunch. After lunch, continue to the area known as al Aghwar reaching the lowest point on earth at around 410 metres below sea level. Take the opportunity to float in the exceptionally salty water in this most dramatic of barren landscapes. Return to Amman where any remaining time will be at leisure. Overnight Larsa Hotel or similar (BL)



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### **Dead Sea**

Without a doubt one of the world's most amazing places, the Jordan Rift Valley is a dramatic, beautiful landscape which, at the *Dead Sea*, is over 400m (1,312 ft.) below sea level. The lowest point on the face of the earth, this vast stretch of water receives a number of incoming rivers, including the River Jordan. Once the waters reach the Dead Sea they are land-locked and have nowhere to go, so they evaporate, leaving behind a dense, rich, cocktail of salts and minerals that supply industry, agriculture and medicine (The Dead Sea is thought to contain curative properties) with some of its finest products. The Dead Sea is flanked by mountains to the east and the rolling hills of Jerusalem to the west, giving it an almost other-worldly beauty. Although sparsely populated and serenely quiet now, the area is believed to have been home to five Biblical cities: Sodom, Gomorrah, Adman, Zebouin and Zoar (Bela).

### **Day 8 – Depart**

The final day is at leisure until your airport transfer. If your flight is late evening do let us know if you require any further additional guided services. (B)

## *Tour Inclusions/Exclusions*

### **Inclusions**

Arrival and departure airport transfers  
All accommodation as per the itinerary or similar  
Land transportation in minibus/minivan or similar vehicle  
Services of an English-speaking guide/tour leader – note smaller group sizes have driver and local guides  
Meals as listed (B – Breakfast, L – Lunch, D – Dinner)  
Jordan Pass (includes all entrance fees and also waives visa on arrival fee)

### **Excluded**

International flights  
Travel Insurance  
Items of a personal nature  
Drinks  
Tips (discretionary)

## *Important Information*

### **Foreign Office Travel Warnings**

We constantly monitor the advice posted by the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO). In particular we will always advise clients of any travel warnings. At the time of writing there are no travel warnings in place for areas that we visit in Jordan.

It should be noted that this information applies to British citizens. Other nationals are asked to check the current position of their respective government.

### **Accommodation and Meals**

### **Hotel Check-in Times**

As a general rule most hotels will allow guests to check-in from 2pm. Please note that the price of your tour does not include guaranteed early check-in. Therefore please advise us if you would like to ensure that your







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room is available for an earlier arrival. This is particularly relevant on the first day of the tour and for early morning arrivals. One option is to pre-book and pay for an extra night at the beginning of your tour which will guarantee your accommodation is available irrespective of what time you arrive. Please contact us for information and costs.

It should also be noted that on many of our tours we have set-aside Day 1 of the itinerary as an 'arrival day'. For this reason and because tour participants are likely to be arriving at different times, and often from different countries, guided sightseeing or other activities are not included. If you are arriving early or before the start date of the tour and would like to organise some extra arrangements on a private basis please contact us.

### **Tippling – Guide and Drivers**

Tippling is common practise in the Middle East. If you have been happy with the services of your guide and driver, then a reasonable amount to tip would be \$5-10 per day for the guide and \$3-5 for the driver, if you are travelling on a group tour. If you are travelling privately then around double this amount would be reasonable.

### **Foreign Exchange**

**ATM Availability:** ATMs found in the main cities only

**Credit and Debit Card Acceptance:** Cards are widely accepted at throughout Jordan

**Local Currency:** Dinar

**Recommended Currency for Exchange:** GBP or US Dollars

**Where to Exchange:** Your guide will advise you

### **Joining your Tour**

#### **Flight Information**

Our advertised prices do not include the cost of international flights. Please contact us if you would like a quotation to book a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

#### **Travel Insurance**

It is a condition of booking with Undiscovered Destinations that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country and be valid for the entire duration of your holiday.

#### **Visa Information**

Many nationalities including British, US, Canadian, Australian, New Zealand and EU passport holders can routinely obtain a visa on arrival for Jordan for 1 month for a fee. However included in the cost of your tour is the Jordan Pass which includes all entrance fees and also the cost of the visa on arrival. We require a copy of your passport at the time of booking.

Regulations do frequently change though, so we advise that you check the current requirements with your nearest embassy.

#### **Passports**

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, valid for at least six months after the date of return to the UK.



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We strongly advise that your passport contains a minimum of two blank pages, as this may be a requirement of the local immigration authorities. In addition certain countries will stipulate that the two blank pages are opposite each other. If you are unable to meet these requirements you may be refused boarding by your airline or denied entry by the immigration authorities.

Evidence of a previous visit to Israel like an Israeli entry/exit stamp in your passport does not normally cause any difficulties when entering Jordan. It is, however, for the Jordanian authorities to determine the right of entry into the country.

For specific information about the requirements for your destination please check with the country's embassy or consulate. Alternatively UK citizens can visit [www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice](http://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice)

### **Vaccinations & Protection**

For the visitor of Jordan, there are no compulsory vaccinations. However, we strongly recommend that you contact your Doctor's surgery or a specialist travel clinic for up-to-date information, advice and the recommended vaccinations.

## *Preparing for your tour*

### **Climate**

Jordan can be visited year round although the hottest months are June to August especially on the coast. Away from the coast temperatures are more pleasant in the more mountainous inland areas. During the winter months temperatures are usually mild on towards the coast but can be cold in land and snow is rare but not unheard of at higher elevations. Spring and autumn are usually particularly pleasant times to travel. From May – October, Jordan experiences very little rain although it is not unheard of in the mountains. Rain is more common in the winter months and early spring.

### **Clothing**

When it comes to clothing it is usually recommended that lighter clothes are worn through the day, and warmer ones at night. A hat is also advised to be worn through the day to protect from the sun, along with at least one piece of waterproof clothing for any days that the weather may be wet although this will be rare in summer. For the inland and more mountainous areas particularly from November – March, it is advisable to bring warmer clothes especially for night time and early mornings. Wadi Rum being a classic desert environment can get very cold at night as can Petra. Jordan is in general quite a liberal country so wearing t-shirts is fine. Shorts can be worn but should be at the knee or below.

### **Equipment**

The first thing on your list should be a first aid kit. Whilst there is no undue cause for alarm, travellers are best advised to travel well-prepared and to be adequately immunized. A good insect repellent and bite cream is advisable. Suncream/sunblock is a must – please ensure you bring enough as it may not be available locally. Insect repellent, including a bite spray will also be useful to have. It is recommended to also bring a torch (flashlight) or head torch for any dimly lit areas.

### **Driving times**

The driving times stated in the itinerary are given in the best of faith. Driving times may on occasion be longer due to unforeseen circumstances such as poor weather, road construction activity, mechanical problems etc.







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### **Footwear**

Comfortable walking shoes are recommended when visiting the various sights during the tour. Sandals are fine when travelling.

### **Luggage on tour**

Your luggage should not exceed 20kgs (44lbs). One large rucksack, and one small hand luggage rucksack is acceptable.

### **Electric Supply & Plugs**

### **Itinerary Versions**

Please ensure that you have an up-to-date copy of these tour notes immediately before you travel, as from time to time our itineraries may be amended, either for operational reasons or in response to feedback from customers. You will be informed of any major changes to your tour but small changes may just be added to these tour notes. These tour notes were updated 19 July 2023.

