



## Sample Jordan Itinerary

Although a small country in the Middle East, Jordan is widely regarded as the cradle of civilisation. Jordan has a history dating back thousands of years, being at the crossroads between Christianity and Muslim religions and was used as the 'caravan trading route' by traders through the ages taking their wares from East to West. Through time this small country has been called 'home' by many different civilisations; the Greeks, Romans and Nabataeans to name a few, each leaving their own piece of history.

Naturally Petra is a major reason to visit Jordan – it is truly an amazing site. However, Jordan is so much more – diving or snorkelling on the Red Sea, floating effortlessly in the Dead Sea, star gazing under the skies of Wadi Rum and travel along the oldest highway still in use – treading the same route as biblical figures to visit Crusader Castles high on hilltops.

An extremely safe and friendly country, you'll find the locals want to engage in conversation and are very proud of their country. National flags fly from every official building and pictures of the King and Royal Family adorn the walls of shops and hotels.

### International Flights

There are daily direct flights to Jordan from London Heathrow to the capital Amman with either British Midland or Royal Jordanian. The Queen Alia Airport is situated about 45 minutes South of the City making it easy to reach from both the Dead Sea and Madaba.

If you would prefer to fly to Jordan from your local airport, the best routing is via Paris with Air France. I have based the following option on the Royal Jordanian Flight times.

**Depart London Heathrow 1705**

**Arrive Amman, Jordan 2359**

Total flying time: 4hrs 54mins

**Depart Amman, Jordan 1210**

**Arrive London Heathrow 1545**

Total flying time: 5 hrs 35mins

Flights start from around £450pp including taxes. Naturally the cost depends on season and availability. It is often cheaper to purchase flights online rather than through me and if you'd prefer to do this, I can suggest which flight to get and organise your ground arrangements to fit in with your flight schedule.

## Itinerary

### **Day 1: London – Amman**

On arrival in Amman, you will be met at the airport and assisted in obtaining your Jordanian visa. Once you've collected your cases, you will transfer to your hotel.

The capital city of Jordan is **Amman** and is one of the oldest continually inhabited cities in the World. Built over 7 hills, Amman has several ancient ruins and museums that are worth a visit but can generally be seen in one day. The City is divided into two halves – downtown and up town.

- **Overnight Amman International Hotel, Amman, 4\*BB**  
Located north of the capital in the green surrounding of the Jubayha district minutes from the Jordan university, King Hussein Sports city, The Royal Culture Center & Amman's stately business & diplomatic district. 35 minutes from Queen Alia International Airport. To the heart of the city the main Souk "market", Roman Amphitheatre and the temple of Hercules are only a short distance from the hotel.
- **Kempinski Hotel, Amman, 5\*BB**  
Just two years old this modern city centre hotel has superb facilities. Excellently situated in the city for visiting restaurants and bars, the hotel has both indoor and outdoor swimming pool, 24 hour gym with aerobics room and salsa classes (!), business centre, full leisure centre with bowling, cinema and shopping. Also available is a sauna, steam room and Jacuzzi open daily from 7am-10pm.

### **Day 2: Amman – Jerash – Amman**

After breakfast, you will depart for Jerash, situated in the North of Jordan – about 45 minutes from the Capital. An ancient Roman city that, it is said, is the best preserved Roman ruins outside of Italy. Jerash can boast an unbroken chain of human occupation dating back more than 6,500 years.

Jerash came under Roman rule after being conquered in 63BC and was widely regarded as one of the great ten Roman cities.

Originally known as Gerasa, the city was hidden for centuries under sand before excavations started just 70 years ago. There is still so much more left to discover but what has been found and restored to date will take your breath away. Grand, formal Roman streets, beautiful theatres, large open plazas, baths and fountains – you can almost picture what life was like all those years ago. On visiting one of the amphitheatres, stand in the very middle square (you'll see it is more worn than the others) and see how your voice is carried as if using a microphone!

An English speaking guide will be with you throughout your visit to Jerash. Return to your chosen hotel for overnight.

### **Day 3: Amman – Dead Sea**

After breakfast depart from Amman for the Dead Sea. En-route, you'll stop and visit Madaba and Mount Nebo.

St. George's Greek Orthodox Church, Madaba contains a remarkable mosaic map that portrays the entire ancient Holy Land dating from 560 AD. The mosaic was only discovered in 1897 when a flat area on a hill was chosen on which to build a church.

There are several theories as to why Madaba's map of the Holy Land was depicted in mosaic on the floor of a Christian building in a remote provincial town of the Roman Empire. Some

have suggested that the map may have been useful to pilgrims, to help them find their way from one holy place to another.

Close to Madaba is Mount Nebo and the single most biblical site in Jordan. Mount Nebo offers excellent views across the Jordan River Valley and Jericho on the opposite bank and (on a clear day) the towers on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem. It is said that Moses was buried somewhere on Mount Nebo. Continue your journey onto Petra.

- **Overnight Dead Sea Spa Hotel, 4\*BB**

The Dead Sea Spa Hotel is less than one-hour drive from the International Airport and from Amman. The hotel has good facilities with a large pool and direct access to the Dead Sea itself. You'll find showers on the beach and at the entrance to the hotel when leaving the beach area in order that you can wash your skin of mud and salt deposits.

Around the pool, there are plenty of sun loungers and there is also a full spa treatment centre available. As with most hotels in Jordan, the food is excellent.

- **Movenpick Dead Sea Hotel, 5\*BB**

Situated right on the banks of the Dead Sea, this hotel offers excellent facilities and supreme comfort. Walking through the main foyer you can see views across the Dead Sea. The rooms are built in the style of a Bedouin Village and the gardens are full of fragrant plants and flowers.

With a choice of 9 café bars and restaurants there is something on offer to suit all tastebuds and 6 different swimming pools, including an infinity pool and a childrens pool. The hotel has an excellent Spa, Zara Spa, that offers many different treatments. The Spa even has its own 'Dead Sea Pool' with the same water/salt ratio as the actual sea.

#### **Day 4: Dead Sea**

The leading attraction at the Dead Sea is the warm, soothing, super salty water itself – some ten times saltier than sea water, and rich in chloride salts of magnesium, sodium, potassium, bromine and several others. The unusually warm, incredibly buoyant and mineral-rich waters have attracted visitors since ancient times, including King Herod the Great and the beautiful Egyptian Queen Cleopatra and now the Hartley Family!

It is a most bizarre sensation yet one everyone should try, luxuriating in the Dead Sea, floating effortlessly on your back whilst soaking up the water's healthy minerals along with the gently warming rays of the Jordanian sun.

Called the Dead Sea as it is impossible for any creature or plant to survive its salty waters, around the shore line you'll see clusters of white salt crystals. However, the water level of the Dead Sea is dropping by about a 30cm (1 foot) per year and Scientists predict that the sea may be dried up by the year 2050.

#### **Day 5: Dead Sea – Petra**

A free morning at the Dead Sea before departing for Petra. En-route to Petra, you'll drive along the Kings Highway – the oldest road in the world, and visit Karak Castle. The Castle was built on the orders King Baldwin of Jerusalem to form a vital link in the line of Crusader castles stretching from Aqaba to Turkey. As each empire took its turn in ruling Jordan, they all added their own 'bit' to the Castle! Due to its strategic position, the Castle soon became the capital of the district collecting taxes from the surrounding countryside and passing caravans.

Continue to Petra.

- **Overnight Taybet Zaman, Petra 4\***

This charming hotel was actually once a Bedouin village and is situated about 20 minutes from the main entrance to the Petra Site. A charming hotel, bursting with character where the bedrooms are original Bedouin houses with their own courtyard. All built in authentic sandstone and furnished in keeping with the Jordanian style of rustic wood and carpets, the Taybet has wonderful views across Wadi Musa (Moses Valley). All 106 rooms have en-suite facilities.

As part of this 'village' hotel, there is a small souk, which has several different shops, bars and restaurants. The hotel also has a pool, opens at the beginning of April each year. The restaurant serves authentic Jordanian food.

- **Movenpick Hotel, Petra 5\***

The Movenpick Hotels are a Swiss chain and, as you would expect, offer excellent service and facilities throughout their hotels. The Movenpick Petra is no exception. The lobby is decorated in an Arabian style with huge lanterns and water feature. The only 5\* hotel in Petra, the hotel has standard rooms, superior rooms with balcony, interconnecting rooms and a Royal and Presidential Suite. Breakfast, lunch and dinner is buffet style but there is also an a la carte restaurant. The hotel boasts a roof garden, swimming pool and gym and steam room.

## **Day 6: Petra**

Much has been written about Petra but on actually seeing it for the first time, it really does take your breath away. Carved from the soft sandstone rock over 2000 years ago, you enter the site by walking through a huge crack in the rock – called a Siq, and for over 1km you'll pass by carvings in the walls, see how the ancient Arab settlers got water to their city via a series of jars connected together and marvel at the different colours and rock formations along the way. When you turn the last corner and see The Treasury through the gap in the rock, corny but you get goosebumps!

Now officially one of the seven Wonders of the World, Petra is a vast, unique city, carved into the sheer rock face by the Nabataeans, an industrious Arab people who settled here more than 2000 years ago, turning it into an important junction for the silk, spice and other trade routes that linked China, India and southern Arabia with Egypt, Syria, Greece and Rome.

Another high point – literally, is The Monastery. Reached by walking over 900 steps up through a gap in the rocks, The Monastery was used as a place of worship by the Nabataeans.

An English speaking guide will be with you throughout your visit to Petra.

## **Day 7: Petra**

A further full day touring Petra. This will include entering the city by a completely different route. Once again, an English speaking guide will accompany you.

If time allows, you must visit Petra by night. This is when this ancient city is purely lit by candlelight and you make your way down through the Siq to the Treasury. The walk starts at 7pm but you do not have to join the hordes of others doing the walk. I would suggest maybe going into Petra an hour/45 mins later when the main body of people have already walked through. It will be quieter and more atmospheric doing this on your own!

Petra by Night is each Monday, Wednesday and Thursday.

### **Day 8: Petra – Wadi Rum**

After breakfast depart for the desert region, Wadi Rum. Known as 'The Valley of the Moon', this desert Bedouin landscape is like no other. Huge monolithic rock scapes rise up from the valley floor and create a bizarre landscape. Used for thousands of years as part of the 'caravan route', you'll see drawings etched into the rocks that gave directions for travellers of old.

This is the place where Prince Faisal Bin Hussein and T.E. Lawrence based their headquarters during the Arab Revolt against the Ottomans in World War 1, and their exploits are intrinsically woven into the history of this amazing area.

During the daytime you can enjoy walks through the desert, explore canyons and water holes and climb the endless number of sand dunes. Camping overnight in the desert is a must. Watch the sunset before enjoying a Bedouin feast laid on before you while you sit around the fire and star gaze.

#### **Overnight camping, Dinner and Breakfast**

### **Day 9: Wadi Rum – Aqaba**

Jordan's splendid Red Sea resort is its only beach and sea port. Ideal for a few days on the beach at the end of your stay in Jordan, Aqaba, is Jordan's only port and gateway to the Red Sea.

This is the Red Sea so naturally the diving and snorkelling are excellent. The temperate climate and gentle water currents have created a perfect environment for the growth of corals and a teeming plethora of marine life. Night dives reveal the nocturnal sea creatures, crabs, lobsters and shrimp, as they search for a midnight snack.

There are several dive centres in Aqaba. All offer well-maintained diving equipment, professional instructors, and transport by boat to a variety of dive sites. For those who prefer to keep their feet dry, there are glass bottomed boats and submarines to view the underwater world.

- **6 nights Intercontinental Hotel, Aqaba, 5\*BB**

Inter Continental Aqaba is an ideal hotel to recharge your batteries and have some serious R&R! The Hotel has a private beach, luxurious accommodations and a large pool, a gym and water sports. The swimming pool runs like a mote around the hotel.

- **6 nights Movenpick Hotel, Aqaba, 5\*BB**

A beautiful hotel, very tastefully designed. Throughout the hotel artwork adorns the walls. The hotel has excellent facilities including 7 restaurants and bars offering every kind of food and beverage you can imagine. To reach the private beach, you walk along a covered walkway bridge from the main hotel and through the hotel's gardens. Walking through the gardens you are confronted by the beautiful scent of all the plants and flowers.

### **Day 15: Aqaba – Amman**

Return journey to Amman and Queen Alia Airport for your international flight home.

**Prices will depend on where and duration of your stay.**