

Tour Jordan: Land Of Antiquities



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Tour Summary

Tour Jordan from Amman and Jeresh, the best-preserved Roman ruins outside of Rome, on to the port of Acaba, visiting some of the most remarkable sites in the world: Madaba's ancient mosaics, Mount Nebo where Moses saw the Promised Land, the Dead Sea where no one can sink, the Jordan River site where John baptized Jesus, Wadi Feynan in Dana Biosphere Reserve, Petra, one of the New Wonders of the World carved from rose-red rock at the dawn of recorded history, and Wadi Rum, the vast desert where Lawrence of Arabia played havoc with the Turkish army during WW1.

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Jordan, Amman to Aqaba



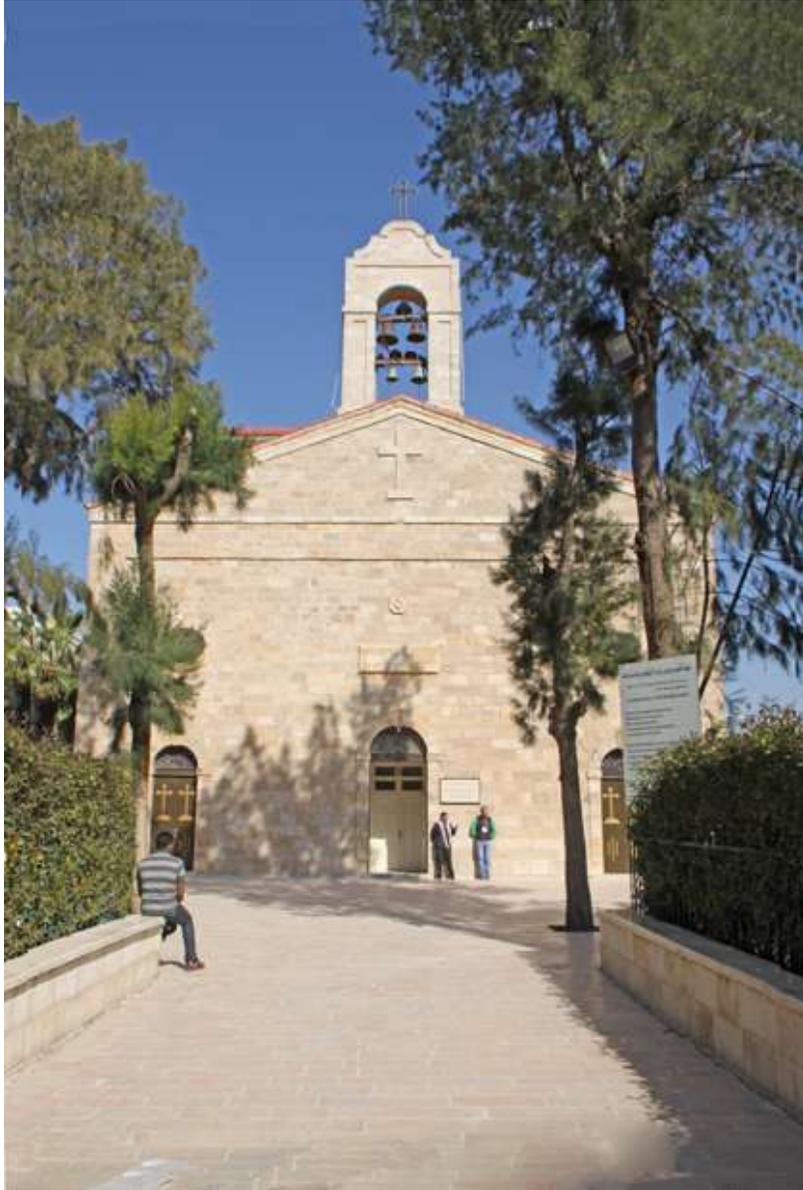


Jordan is only about 34,445 square miles, roughly the size of Indiana, but it packs a lot into those miles.

Fly into Queen Alia International Airport near Amman. One of Jordan's archeological sites towers on the highest hill over modern Amman. The Citadel was the ancient city of Rabbath-Ammon and has been occupied since the Bronze Age, around 1600 BC.



Roman Ruins at Jerash are our next stop, where you step back to a city built in 331 BC. When Rome conquered the Greeks, they rebuilt the city to their liking. Hadrian's Arch was built in 129 BC in honor of that emperor's visit. I'll show you traces of what was once a Neolithic site earlier than the city's founding.



St George's Church is a Greek Orthodox Church in Madaba. It is famous for its mosaic map of the Biblical world as it was known by the Byzantines. You have to see the detail of this mosaic to realize the

craftsmanship required to assemble it. Then it's on to glimpse the Promised Land from Mount Nebo.



You can't drown in the Dead Sea. You can't swim in it either. I tried to turn face downward and swim but no luck. The weight of your posterior keeps you floating on your back. Trying to stand is a struggle. I kicked hard to get my feet down below water level to be able to stand.



Standing on the shores of Jordan River, I realized that old hymn has a real meaning as well as a metaphorical one. You'll drive through arid desert with the lowest spot on earth on one side and rugged mountains on the other to reach the Baptismal Site. You can look at it as a religious experience or as an archaeological site.

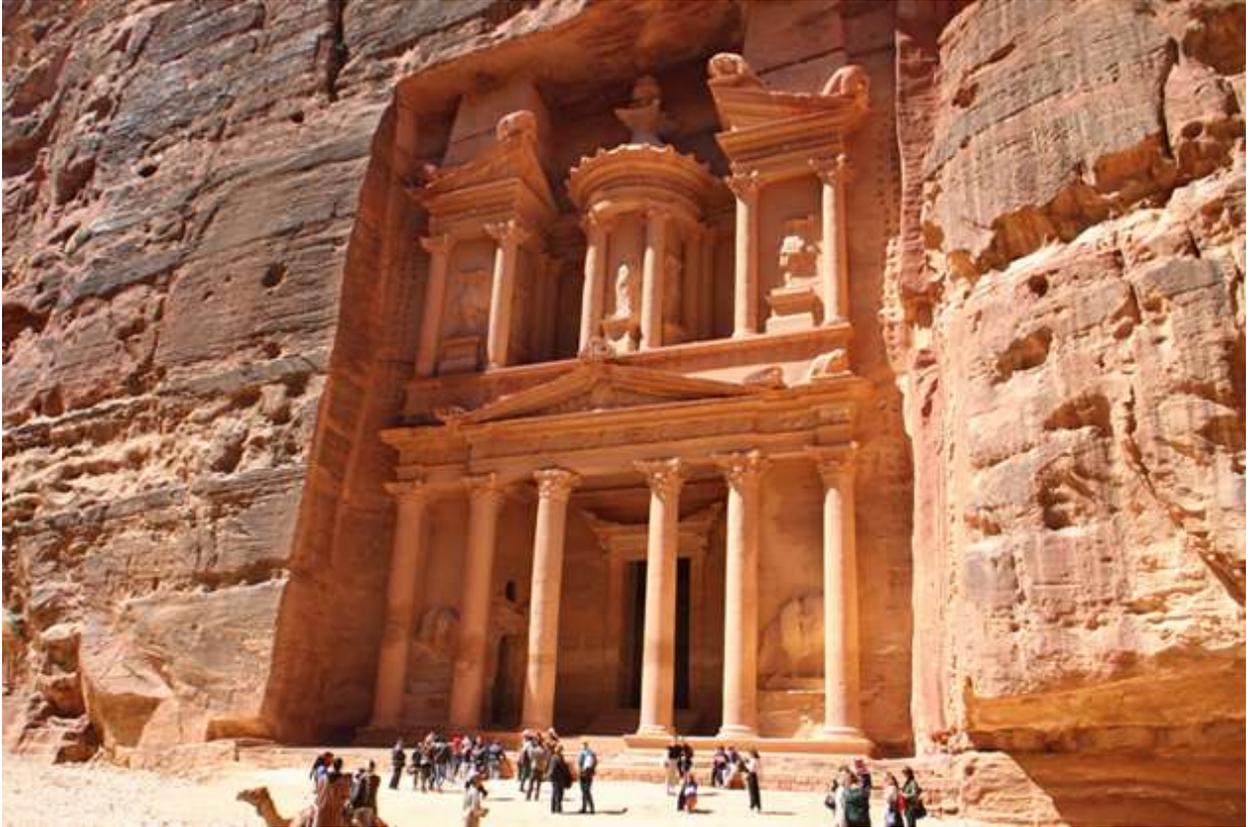


Next stop we go off the beaten trail and get into the ecology of Jordan. Feynan Eco Lodge is one of Jordan's best kept secrets that many tourists overlook. It is located in the middle of the harsh beauty of Dana Biosphere Reserve and offers a chance to get to understand this land and its native people.



One of the opportunities offered by the Eco Lodge is the Bedouin Experience. This is your chance to learn the culture of the Bedouin people as a guest in their home. Visit a Bedouin Elder as he makes coffee

for you in his tent. Watch a Bedouin lady make bread over an open fire and then taste it. Unforgettable!



Walking between the narrow walls of the Siq at Petra, I knew soon I would reach the Treasury, but when our guide led us over to look at a shape in the canyon wall, then told us to turn, I was not prepared for the sight that was framed by the canyon walls. The rose red beauty took my breath away.



After a day spent in the famed Nabataean city, Petra Kitchen just across the street will focus you on food. It's not a restaurant per se. More like going to your grandmother's to helping prepare the meal for a family occasion. That is if your grandmother was Jordanian and cooked Baba Ganue in a commercial kitchen, but you get the idea.



Wadi Rum was known as Valley of the Moon for its strange landscape long before they filmed "The Martian" here. "Lawrence of Arabia" desert scenes were filmed here as well. There are traces of the real Lawrence we will explore. Off the road, you find unending sand punctuated by eroded mountains that seem older than time.



For something really different spend the night in the desert of Wadi Rum in a goat-hair tent. Eat food cooked in the earth and experience life like a Bedouin or Lawrence of Arabia. Ride a camel back to civilization next morning.



When you leave the desert to travel to Aqaba, you are seeing Jordan's other extreme. It's Jordan's only entrance to the Red Sea and its only viable port. For the visitor, it's a beach paradise where you can rent a yacht and venture out to dive, snorkel or swim the turquoise water.

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