



JORDAN UNCOVERED

Ancient history and biblical sites vie with beautiful desert landscapes in this compact country where you can wander down ancient Roman streets, dine on traditional cuisine and marvel at some of the starriest skies on earth.

Tailor-Made Journeys, Suggested Itineraries



North Africa & Middle East,
Jordan



10 days from AU\$12,315 pp



Private

Journey Overview

Ancient history and biblical sites vie with beautiful desert landscapes in this compact country where you can wander down ancient Roman streets, dine on traditional cuisine and marvel at some of the starriest skies on earth. The hospitality of the Bedouin will win you over and you'll be amazed to discover a 60-year-old wine industry. Unexpected delights abound in this extraordinary desert kingdom.

Journey Highlights

- Discover Petra, the Rose Red City, lost for centuries to the outside world
- Walk through and marvel at Roman history in Jerash
- Explore the lunar landscapes Wadi Rum by 4x4 Bedouin vehicle
- Float in the salty waters of the Dead Sea at the lowest point on earth
- Hike through Dana Nature Reserve, Jordan's largest
- Relax in an eco-lodge and experience a night by candlelight



Itinerary

Day 1: Arrive Amman

On arrival in the Jordanian capital you are met and transferred to your downtown hotel. After time to settle in, step outside and wander on your own through the city's most affluent neighbourhoods just a short stroll from the hotel. Search out Jordan's most famous dish, Sufra, a tasty combination of cooked rice, yoghurt and lamb. Alternatively relax at the hotel and enjoy the diverse range of gastronomical experiences on site.

Four Seasons Amman

Day 2: Amman

Travel north to Jerash, an extraordinarily well-preserved ancient city, acknowledged to be one of the best-preserved Roman provincial towns in the world. Explore the iconic temple of Artemis at the highest point of the city, the long colonnaded street, with its original stone paving, and the monumental Hadrian's Arch built to celebrate a visit by the emperor himself - all which were hidden for centuries in the sand before being excavated and restored some 70 years ago.

After lunch return to the modern, bustling capital and discover Tiraz, an intimate museum housed in a converted villa, with an extensive collection of Palestinian, Jordanian and Arab dresses and costumes. Meet the curator, share a tea in the garden and gain a glimpse into Jordan's disappearing heritage. Continue to an exclusive wine tasting experience. Established in the 1950's, Jordan River Wines boasts the country's finest state of the art winery. The climate and basalt desert combine to provide one of the world's most distinctive terroirs growing more than 40 grape varieties, which are handpicked and crafted into more than 20 wine varieties.

Ritz Carlton Amman | Meals: BL

Day 3: Amman

Journey west today to the nearby valley of Wadi Essair, where you visit the ancient caves of Iraq El-Amir and the important Hellenistic ruins of Qasr El-Abd (Palace of the Slave). Spend some time exploring before an inspiring visit to the Iraq Al-Amir Women's Cooperative. Founded by the Noor Al-Hussein Foundation in 1993, the centre helps local women become financially independent, raising living standards and preserving local heritage. Enjoy a delicious lunch prepared by the women including flat breads and dishes featuring local grown vegetable and spices.

After lunch venture up to the citadel, situated on one of the seven hills that originally made up Amman, a good place to begin a tour of the city's archaeological sites: the regal columns of a Roman temple in silhouette against the sky, the elegant capitals of a Byzantine church, endlessly inventive carvings in the Umayyad Palace, and digs and ruins everywhere you walk. Spend time wandering through the National Archaeological Museum, home to a collection of artifacts which date from prehistoric times to the 15th century. Take a seat in the magnificently restored 6,000 seat Roman Amphitheatre built during the reign of Antonius Pius in 138-161 CE. Lastly today, stroll through Darat al Funun arts centre, housed in a series of restored sandstone residences and warehouses, which provides a collaborative platform for contemporary Arab artists.

Ritz Carlton Amman / Meals: BL

Day 4: Amman - Dana Reserve

Leave the city behind as you begin your adventure to an idyllic and isolated ecolodge on the south western edge of Dana Biosphere Reserve. Travelling south along the King's Highway, stop en route at Mount Nebo, where Moses is said to have gazed upon the Promised Land, and which has since become an important pilgrimage site. Accompanied by your expert guide, visit the "Church of Moses", built by the first Christians, which houses some beautiful mosaics and marvel at the breathtaking views over Jordan, the Dead Sea and Israel. Next stop is Madaba, the "City of Mosaics", which perches on a 4,000-year-old archaeological site.

Step inside St. George's Church which houses a world-famous mosaic floor containing a large mosaic map of Palestine, which also features a detailed map of Jerusalem as it was during the sixth century. At the Church of the Apostles, at the southern entrance of the city, a mosaic floor can be found attributed to the craftsman Salamanios, depicting the sea, with the central figure of a woman encircled with a selection of creatures, vegetation and an inscription.

Savour a traditional Jordanian lunch in a restored Ottoman house in the village of Haret Jdoudna before continuing to Dana Reserve and your overnight stop. Following dinner, relax on the rooftop terrace for some incredible stargazing. A powerful telescope reveals incredible views of the constellations.

Feynan Eco Lodge / Meals: BLD

Day 5: Dana Reserve - Petra

Lace up your walking boots this morning for a hike to the old copper mines admiring the impressive hill of Khirbet Feynan, with its Byzantine churches and graves along the way. Return to the lodge where a well-earned lunch will be served before heading onwards to Petra, the country's most famous archaeological site and one of the New Seven Wonders of the World.

This evening, enjoy a Chef's Table experience that will take you on a journey of the palate to learn the fine art of Jordanian cooking. Led by your masterful chef, you'll plan and cook an authentic three-course meal, learning time-honoured skills you can take home forever. Listen in as your teacher reveals culinary traditions, paying special heed to the history of Jordanian spice, from cardamom and cloves, to cumin, ginger, cinnamon, pepper and chilli. The mouth-watering Chicken Maqloubeh is a showstopper for the celebrated tradition of flipping the pot and serving the dish upside down. Afterwards, feast on your fare as you look out over the Petra Hills.

Movenpick Resort Petra / Meals: BLD

Day 6: Petra

Explore on foot the many wonders of the 'Rose-Red City', one of the most famous UNESCO World Heritage Sites in the world. Established as the capital of the ancient Nabataeans, it was an important stop on the caravan route between Asia, Arabia and Europe. Discover tombs, temples and exquisite monuments hewn out of the surrounding mountains. Whilst the entire site is extraordinary, the most well-known structures include the Treasury, accessed through the narrow 'siq' - a naturally occurring geological rift between the mountains, the Roman Theatre, the Corinthian and Palace Tombs and the Roman Road.

Refuel with lunch at the Basin Restaurant amidst the ruins before continuing your explorations. Climb the 1,200 steps to one of the ancient city's most awe-inspiring monuments, the Monastery. With a massive facade almost fifty metres square, carved out of the mountain, the summit offers spectacular views.

Movenpick Resort Petra / Meals: BL

Day 7: Petra - Wadi Rum

Your morning is at leisure or alternatively, you may like to venture back into Petra for a chance to continue exploring. Perhaps climb up to the High Place of Sacrifice to see The Treasury from above.

Leaving town early afternoon, drive to Little Petra, a miniature version of the great site containing a number of notable tombs as well as some excellent viewing points. Like Petra, it is believed the site here dates back to the first century and may have been a suburb of the larger city where the merchants lived. Continue south to Wadi Rum, setting for the epic 1962 film *Lawrence of Arabia* and more recently *The Martian*.

Discover impressive red desert landscapes, huge rock formations, narrow canyons and Bedouin tents on a 4x4 excursion before enjoying a sundowner.

Discovery Bedu Camp / Meals: BD

Day 8: Wadi Rum - Dead Sea

Wake early and witness the changing colours of the landscape. After breakfast, experience the desert landscape of Wadi Rum in an unforgettable way on camelback as explorers and Bedouin have done for centuries.

Continue your journey across an arid landscape with strangely shaped mountains to the lowest land-based point on the earth's surface, the Dead Sea. At more than 430m below sea level, it is known for its highly salty waters. Spend time in arguably the most luxurious resort on the Dead Sea and take the opportunity to bathe in the mineral-rich waters.

Kempinski Hotel Ishtar Dead Sea | Meals: B

Day 9: Dead Sea - Bethany - Dead Sea

Embark on a visit to Bethany where excavations have uncovered a first century A.D. settlement with plastered pools and water systems that were used almost certainly for mass baptisms, as well as a 5th-6th century Byzantine settlement with churches, a monastery, and other structures catering to religious pilgrims. Famous for where John the Baptist both started his mission and ended his life, Bethany 'beyond the Jordan' was an important stop on the sacred route linking Jerusalem, the River Jordan and Mount Nebo.

Continue to Salt to explore the Abu Jaber House, one of the oldest houses in Al-Salt and now a museum before setting off on foot along the two-kilometre Harmony Trail. You will learn about both Muslim and Christian history as you stop off at Al Ein Plaza, Qaqish House and The Great Mosque as well as the English Evangelical Hospital Complex and Al Khader Orthodox Church. Afterwards, return to your hotel.

Kempinski Hotel Ishtar Dead Sea | Meals: B

Day 10: Dead Sea - Depart Amman

Your A&K journey concludes with a private transfer to Amman and the airport for your onward journey.

Meals: B

Map



Accommodation

Feynan Eco Lodge, Dana Reserve



Adventure through the bumpy desert tracks of Jordan's Dana Biosphere Reserve to the quiet village of Wadi Feynan where you will find an unusual sand-hued retreat nestled in the heart of the valley. The Feynan Eco Lodge boasts an open-plan dining area, lounge with library and tranquil courtyards and terraces, complete with hammocks. There are just 26 rooms with en suite bathrooms; we recommend the Deluxe Rooms as they offer the most space and private balcony with stunning views. Be sure to visit the lodge's leather and candle workshops where you will find local artisans at work.

Dedicated to protecting Jordan's natural landscapes, Feynan Eco Lodge follows an ethos of responsible tourism in order to leave as little impact as possible on the surrounding environment. The entire complex is solar-powered, but you may find yourself enjoying traditional Arabian cuisine by candlelight out on the terrace.

Feynan is the ideal place to retreat to the serenity of nature. With no internet or televisions, you can admire spectacular desert sunsets and incredible starry skies to compensate. Dana Biosphere Reserve is the only reserve in Jordan to boast four different bio-geographical zones, and the obliging staff will be more than happy to organise guided or self-guided tours through the rugged terrain. Your expert guide will teach you about the local flora and fauna as well as the Bedouin culture and history. There are

also many archaeological sites close by.

Why we like it

- Arabesque lodge situated in the heart of the mountainous Dana Biosphere Reserve
- Hailed as one of top 50 Eco Lodges in the World by National Geographic
- Member of the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature
- Activities include hiking, canyoning and mountain biking
- Sip traditional mint tea while learning about the Bedouin culture

Mövenpick Resort Petra



With its prime location a stone's throw from the entrance to the historic city of Petra, the Mövenpick Resort Petra is a perfect retreat from a day's exploration. Recently refurbished, it is decorated with handcrafted Oriental wood and embroidered cushions and has a fun, buzzing atmosphere that caters for all age groups. Dine in the award winning Al Iwan restaurant, which serves delicious Mediterranean delicacies against the backdrop of the central marble fountain.

Why we like it

- The modern guest rooms and suites boasting state-of-the-art technologies
- The lush Al Ghadeer roof garden offers an exotic Arabic setting with argileh (water pipes), live Arab musical entertainment and glorious sunset views
- The Fun Factory offers billiards and games for children and teenagers
- The Wellness Centre has an outdoor pool, steam bath and fully equipped gym
- Don't forget to enjoy Mövenpick Premium Ice Cream on the pool terrace

Kempinski Hotel Ishtar Dead Sea



In true Kempinski style, the Kempinski Hotel Ishtar Dead Sea is elegant and contemporary in design with direct access to the Dead Sea. Quiet enclaves set amidst gardens, lagoons, winding rivers and waterfalls are ideal places to snatch a quiet moment, whilst the terrace provides stunning views of the Dead Sea - especially at sunset as you relax with a classic cocktail in hand. Kempinski Hotel Ishtar Dead Sea is beautifully appointed, based on a Babylonian-inspired theme - carved in natural stone and styled with contemporary fittings. There is a real sense that every detail has been pored over to create an immaculate living space.

Why we like it

- The longest private beach in Jordan
- All rooms offer enchanting sea view balconies
- Four restaurants serve delicious Thai, Italian and world cuisine
- The Ishtar Spa by Resense, tennis court, bowling centre and Children's Club ensure guests are well occupied
- The Health Centre is full of whirlpools, steam rooms and saunas, also has meditation and yoga rooms

Abercrombie & Kent

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