

# Jordan's Hidden Trails

Trip Code: JSH

Version: JSH Jordan's Hidden Trails



CULTURE



GUIDED GROUP



LEISURELY



## HIGHLIGHTS

- Explore the Roman city of Jerash and the olive groves at Ajloun
- Float in the saline waters of the Dead Sea
- Discover Petra and return for an optional candle-lit experience
- Sleep under a blanket of stars at our Bedouin camp in the desert
- Relax at the Red Sea resort of Aqaba

## AT A GLANCE

- 4 days easy walking
- Sightseeing in Petra and Jerash
- Join at Amman

## ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

- 8 Breakfasts
- 4 Lunches
- 4 Dinners
- 1 nights Ecolodge
- 2 nights Bedouin Camp
- 4 nights Hotel
- 1 nights Guesthouse

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# Introduction

With fertile valleys and Roman ruins in the north and to the south the vast, sprawling red desert sands of Wadi Rum; Jordan boasts an incredibly diversity of highlights. Journeying through its heart to discover its rich cultural and natural highlights, we will engage with Jordan's people too. Starting with tranquil walks through the olive groves of Ajloun, we will visit local cooperatives before wandering through the colonnaded streets, temples and gateways of the Roman city of Jerash. After experiencing the peculiar sensation of floating in the Dead Sea and visiting the Crusader castle at Kerak, we can stretch our legs on one of the many trails in the Dana Biosphere Reserve; taking time to drink in the panoramic views down into the Great Rift Valley and perhaps spotting a desert fox or griffon vultures overhead. We whet our appetite for Petra with a visit to its lesser-known sibling of Little Petra. From here, we set off on a stunning walk along a quiet back trail that delivers us to one of the most remarkable monuments in Petra, hidden far away from the crowds. After a full exploration of the city, we have the option to return to experience the Siq and the Treasury by candlelight.

We then drive deep into the desert of Wadi Rum, once roamed by Lawrence of Arabia, busy harrying Ottoman forces. We stay in a comfortable Bedouin desert camp, our hosts descendants of the very same tribe that guided Lawrence. Drifting off to sleep in the profound darkness and stillness of the desert under a star-lit sky is an unforgettable experience. We also spend a little time at the Dead Sea resort of Aqaba, before returning to Amman where we can explore the city's citadel and atmospheric souks.

## Is this holiday for you?

This nine-day itinerary is perfect for those seeking an active holiday to Jordan. There are a selection of leisurely day walks, which are ideal for exploring the highlights of Jordan at a relaxed and enjoyable pace. Day 5 is an exception, when we walk into Petra: this is a longer day of walking, but will be undertaken at a slow pace as we explore the atmospheric city ruins. There is opportunity to swim in both the Dead Sea and Red Sea, so confidence in the water will help to make the most of this time. The accommodation features a super variety of styles, ranging from comfortable tourist-class hotels and chalets to Bedouin fixed camps. These feature large, private tents with proper beds and there are shared facilities including solar-heated showers. Sitting around the campfire, listening to singing and storytelling, under a blanket of stars will undoubtedly be one of the highlights for many.

# Itinerary

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## DAY 1

**Meet at the group hotel in Amman. A single timed transfer from the airport is provided.**

Meet at the group hotel in Amman. A single group transfer from Amman Airport is provided. This transfer is normally in the late evening. It is a 40 minute journey to the hotel.



**Accommodation**  
Hotel

## DAY 2

**Transfer to the preserved Roman city of Jerash. Traditional lunch with a local family. Walk through orchards and olive groves between villages and visit artisanal cooperatives.**

This morning, we will drive north to the Roman city remains of Jerash. Founded at the time of Alexander the Great, Jerash flourished as a trade centre between Damascus and Petra and we can step back in time and wander along its ancient colonnaded streets and see its incredibly well-preserved temples, baths and hippodrome, complete with Byzantine mosaic floors. After exploring Jerash, we take a short transfer to Al Ayoun, a tranquil and scenic valley and one of the most beautiful in the highlands of Jordan. In the village of Orjan, we will enjoy a lunch of freshly baked bread and local Jordanian dishes, hosted by a local family for a delightfully authentic experience. After lunch, we walk on gentle trails that take us through olive groves and under the shade of fig trees. We will explore the ancient village of Rasun and see its ancient relics of Bronze Age tombs and even a Roman wine press. We visit the locally run women's artisanal cooperatives and the Soap House, where we can see (and buy) hand-made olive oil soap, scented with local flowers and herbs. Nestled in the Ajloun Forest Reserve, we will find our comfortable rustic cabins for our overnight stay.

Meals: **BLD**



**Accommodation**  
Ec lodge



**Time**  
2 hrs walking



**Distance**  
6KM

**DAY 3****Float in the mineral-rich waters of the Dead Sea. Visit Kerak Castle and continue to Dana Biosphere Reserve with time to discover the village trails.**

After breakfast, we set off south towards the Dana Biosphere Reserve. On our way, we stop at the Dead Sea. Spas around the world charge a fortune for Dead Sea mud packs, but here we can do as the locals do and have fun, scooping up the mineral-rich mud and smothering it over our skin! After experiencing floating in the strangely buoyant waters of the Dead Sea, we continue our drive to Kerak Castle. 900 years after it was built, the castle retains a sense of defiance and belligerence. Marking the extreme eastern edge of the Crusader kingdoms, it was a launchpad for attacks on trade routes and even Mecca itself. Eventually besieged and taken by Saladin in 1189, the castle was later adopted by Bedouin tribes who were revolting against Ottoman rule. Considering its violent past, it remains remarkably well-preserved. Dana Biosphere Reserve is only a short drive away, nestled amongst wind-eroded sandstone formations. At the head of a gorge, the ground drops over 1000m towards the Great Rift Valley and the views are incredible. With four distinct biomes, the area supports a wide diversity of wildlife and we are likely to see griffon vultures, hyrax and copper-blue lizards and, if we're lucky, a glimpse of a desert fox or an ibex. We will have the rest of our day at our leisure, wandering along the village trails before settling into our simple guesthouse for the evening.

Meals: **B D**



**Accommodation**  
Guesthouse



**Time**  
1 hr walking



**Distance**  
2KM

**DAY 4****Walk along to Wadi Dana. Transfer to our Bedouin camp near Little Petra.**

After experiencing the serenity of morning breaking over the reserve, we take a beautiful, rambling walk; led by a local guide to Wadi Dana. Our reward will be panoramic views across the valley and we will be treated to more wildlife watching opportunities. Our guide will be able to spot and identify animal tracks and point out medicinal herbs and plants that grow here. Our trail will wind its way back to the irrigated gardens and terraced orchards of Dana Village. After arriving back to our start point, we meet our transport and drive to the relatively unknown Little Petra. Little Petra, like its more famous sibling Petra, is a Nabataean site; with buildings and dwellings carved into the steep walls of a canyon around 2000 years ago. Visiting Little Petra is a much quieter and more intimate experience than Petra and a fabulous way of whetting our appetite for the main site tomorrow. We settle for the night at a fixed Bedouin camp nearby, nestled amongst rocky outcrops.

Meals: **B L D**



**Accommodation**  
Bedouin Camp



**Time**  
3 hrs walking



**Distance**  
5KM

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**DAY 5**
**Trek into Petra via the back trail. Discover the magnificent 'Rose City'. Option to visit Petra by candlelight at night.**

This morning, after breakfast, we set off on the back trail into Petra. This easy walk winds its way across weathered sandstone outcrops and natural terraces and balconies, contouring around the faces of cliffs. Views into the Great Rift Valley begin to open up and, eventually, we will catch our first glimpse of the imperious and towering façade of the Monastery. This is one of the most impressive monuments in Petra but, isolated as it is from the rest of the site, receives few visitors. We recommend sitting in the shade, sipping an aromatic cardamom-spiced coffee, and taking in the remarkable atmosphere. Once rested, we descend the stone steps of the Nabataean processional route down into the heart of Petra. Hidden deep within a highly inaccessible valley, it is not hard to comprehend how this Nabataean city lay undiscovered to the outside world for centuries. We will take lunch inside the archaeological site before spending the rest of the afternoon exploring the countless tombs, temples and churches. It is incredible to contemplate that only a small fraction of Petra has been excavated! Our route out takes us past the Roman theatre and, towards the end of the afternoon, to Petra's most famous and photographed monument: the Treasury. From here, we walk along the thin passages of the Siq, through tight canyons that once guarded the secrets of Petra, to the main entrance and onwards to our hotel. There is an optional evening excursion: to return to Petra after dark. Walking into the ancient city after dark, after the tourists have gone, to experience the Siq and the Treasury lit by hundreds of candles is a very special experience.

Meals: **B L**



**Accommodation**  
Hotel



**Time**  
8 hrs walking and sightseeing



**Distance**  
14KM

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**DAY 6**
**Transfer to the desert of Wadi Rum by 4x4. Explore the sand dunes and impressive rock formations. Overnight at a Bedouin desert camp.**

We set off early this morning to drive to Wadi Rum. On the edge of the desert, at Rum Village, we meet our Bedouin guides. Wadi Rum was best described by Lawrence of Arabia, who had made it his home, as being "vast, echoing and God-like". Our guides are from the Hoewietat tribe, the same tribe that guided Lawrence, over 100 years ago. Setting off in rugged 4x4 vehicles, we make our way across the seemingly endless red sands to explore soaring sand dunes, mountains and ancient petroglyphs etched into the rock face. After a picnic lunch in the shade followed by sweet herbal tea prepared the Bedouin way, we drive across the desert plains to the natural rock bridge of Jebel Um Fruth and run, bare-foot, down vast red sand dunes. We continue on our way to our desert camp. There will be time to relax and enjoy the sunset, before enjoying an authentic Bedouin feast of meat and vegetables, cooked in a zerb (an underground oven made of sand and stone). For those who want to stay up, we can lay around a campfire, sipping herbal tea. We listen to stories, talk and laugh with our Bedouin hosts under an incredible blanket of stars.

Meals: **B L D**



**Accommodation**  
Bedouin Camp

## DAY 7

### Optional camel ride. Transfer to Aqaba with free time to relax at our Red Sea resort.

Waking up in the desert is quite spectacular. Shadows slowly move across the landscape as morning breaks and the sun's rays will soon warm our faces. For those who want the full desert experience; there is an optional camel ride across the sands, a gentle way to take in the scenery before arriving back into Rum Village. Please note that camels can be unpredictable and difficult to control, and if you wish to ride, this is at your own risk. We say goodbye to our Bedouin hosts and transfer to the Red Sea resort of Aqaba, where we have the rest of the afternoon to relax on the beach, perhaps enjoying some swimming and snorkelling.

Meals: **B**



**Accommodation**  
Hotel

## DAY 8

### Spend the morning relaxing in Aqaba. Transfer to Amman for a walking tour of the souks and ancient citadel.

After a relaxed morning, we set off on the 4 hour drive back to Amman. On arrival, we should have time to take a walking tour of the souks and ancient citadel ruins. The hilltop citadel has been here since the Bronze Age and has been rebuilt, and added to, by subsequent Roman and Byzantine Empires and the Umayyad Caliphate. We will explore the souks and markets, perhaps stopping off at one of the many cafes to take in the street scenes where old men play backgammon and smoke the sweet-scented tobacco of the hubbly-bubbly pipes.

Meals: **B**



**Accommodation**  
Hotel



**Time**  
2 hrs sightseeing



**Distance**  
3KM

## DAY 9

**Departure day. A single timed transfer to the airport is provided.**

The holiday ends after breakfast. A single timed transfer to Amman Airport is provided.

Meals: **B**

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## Holiday Information

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### What's Included

- A professional and qualified tour leader
- Bedouin trekking guide
- All land transport required by the itinerary
- All accommodation as described
- Meals as per the Meal Plan
- All activities/excursions/entrance fees mentioned except where specified as 'optional'
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### What's not Included

- Travel insurance
- Visas (if applicable)
- Some meals as per the Meal Plan
- Tips
- Miscellaneous expenses - drinks and souvenirs etc. Candle-lit evening tour of Petra

### Joining Arrangements & Transfers

The group will meet at the hotel in Amman.

A single transfer from Amman Airport to the group hotel will be provided on the evening of Day 1 of the Land Only itinerary.

On the last day of the Land Only itinerary, there will be a single transfer back to Amman Airport.

Anyone may join the group transfers by prior arrangement. Travelling as a group or on public transport saves energy. If this is not practical, we can provide private transfers at an additional cost. Taxis are also available.

Hotel contact details and an emergency number will be provided with your booking confirmation.



## Meal Plan

All breakfasts, 4 lunches and 4 dinners are included in the holiday price. On the days in towns and cities where there is a variety of options, the choice is yours. This means you will pay directly for a total of 3 lunches and 4 dinners. We recommend you budget £8 - 15 for each of these meals.

## Food & Water

It is not recommended to drink untreated water from the taps. If you are on a trekking or cycling holiday, water is supplied to fill up your individual bottles. This will be boiled, filtered or provided in large jerry cans or 5 litre bottles. Additionally you should take purification tablets or a filter bottle (such as a [Water-To-Go bottle](#)) to treat your water when in towns or where water is not supplied. We do not encourage the purchasing of single use plastic bottles.

Breakfasts can vary a little with the accommodation, but typically consist of labaneh (thick sour creamy yoghurt), hummus, cheese, beans, eggs, olives, za'atar (thyme, sesame seeds, sumac and salt), tea and coffee. Lunch on some days may be in the form of a picnic (sandwiches, fresh vegetables, fruit and juice and tea) or a simple hot meal such as fresh tomato cooked with garlic, onion and olive oil. Dinner will again vary with the location, but we will aim to sample a variety of traditional Jordanian meals. Salad, rice, chicken, vegetables and yoghurt are usual dinner ingredients. In Wadi Rum, we'll get to try the Bedouin 'zarb', a meal of meat and vegetables cooked under hot sand. Complimentary water, biscuits, cakes and fruits will be offered on most days.

## Accommodation

We will stay in an interesting variety of accommodations throughout this holiday.

In Amman, Wadi Musa and Aqaba, the group will stay in comfortable hotels. At Ajloun, we will stay in beautifully situated forest cabins, which are more akin to chalets. In Dana we will stay in a rustic guesthouse. All rooms are en suite.

At Little Petra and Wadi Rum we will stay in comfortable fixed camps, with spacious Bedouin tents with proper beds and shared bathrooms with hot showers. At the Bedouin camp there is also a cosy communal tent and open air seating areas we can gather round an open fire,

Accommodation is twin share. If you are travelling by yourself, you will be paired up with another single client of the same sex. Single rooms are available for a supplementary cost. If you are planning to extend your holiday, additional nights are available on request.

## Group Leader & Support Staff

The group will be led by a professional and qualified tour leader, supported by Bedouin guides in Wadi Rum.



## Spending Money

Approximately £175-£200 (or the equivalent in US dollars or euros) should be allowed for miscellaneous expenses and the cost of your visa. You should carry your travel money in the form of cash and you should exchange the majority of this on the day of your arrival at the airport in Amman. Sterling, Euros and US dollars can easily be exchanged in Jordan. The unit of currency is the Jordanian Dinar (JD). You should also allow a total of approximately £70 for tips to your drivers, local guides and trek crew. The cost of the Petra visit is included in the trip price, although to visit Petra by candlelight requires a local payment of approximately 17JD, which is locally payable. If you are intending to buy expensive souvenirs, you should budget accordingly (credit cards can be useful in this respect). Also, if you expect to buy considerable quantities of drinks or other refreshments, you should allow for this.

## Guidance on Tipping

Tips are the accepted way of saying 'thank you' to your local guides and drivers. Tips do not form part of the wages of local staff but are seen as a personal thank you from group members. KE always pays local crews the best rates of pay, no matter what country they are in. For our part, we advise local teams that tips are not a duty or a prerequisite but are a bonus and entirely dependent on the service that was given. For your support crews, we recommend that you give a tip if you feel that their services have met your satisfaction. We recommend that tips be given from the group as a whole rather than individually and as a rough guide we suggest a contribution of £70 from each group member should provide an adequate 'pool' for tipping your crew.

## Baggage Allowance

For this holiday you should take one piece of luggage and a daypack. Luggage with wheels is useful for this holiday. For international flights please check your baggage allowance with your airline.

## Group Size & Holiday Status

For each holiday there is a minimum number of participants required to enable it to go ahead. Once the minimum number is reached, the trip status will change from 'Available' to 'Guaranteed to run'. You can check the trip status for each departure in 'Dates and Prices' table. Other than in exceptional circumstances, we will not cancel a trip once it has achieved this guaranteed to run status and so you are free to proceed with your international flight booking and other travel arrangements.

# General Information

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## Passport & Visas

The information that we provide is for UK passport holders. A passport with 6 months remaining validity at the end of your stay is generally required, and you should have at least 2 blank pages for each country that you visit.

**It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents and visas for your holiday.** Please ensure that you check for the latest advice before travel. For the most up to date information on entry requirements, please visit the [UK Government website](#).

## Health & Vaccinations

If you have a severe allergy please inform the KE office before you travel. We will do all we can to help, but we cannot guarantee an allergy free environment on KE trips. You will need to carry your own treatment for the allergy with you, as 'adrenaline auto-injectors' are not carried as standard by KE leaders and staff. You should inform your leader on arrival of your allergy, and let them know where you keep your adrenaline pen.

## Preparing for your Holiday

Getting some additional exercise before coming on an active holiday makes a lot of sense. The fitter you are, after all, the more enjoyable you will find the experience.

## Climate

The best period for walking in Jordan is from late autumn through to early spring (October through to mid April). Outside of this period, it can be very hot with temperatures rising to 40°C in July and August. During October and April, the maximum daytime temperature is likely to be in the high twenties or low thirties, falling as low as 10°C at night. Heading into November, the temperatures begin to cool and by December/January, typical daytime maximum temperatures are around 12-15°C, falling as low as 5°C at night. In December and January it can even snow in Amman.

## Travel Aware

As a reputable tour operator, KE supports the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's '[Travel Aware](#)' campaign to enable British citizens to prepare for their journeys overseas. The 'Travel Aware' website provides a single, authoritative source of advice for all kinds of travellers and we recommend that prior to travel, all KE clients visit the official UK Government website at [travelaware.campaign.gov.uk](http://travelaware.campaign.gov.uk) and read the FCDO Travel Advice for their chosen destination. North Americans can also check out the U.S. Department of State website: [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov) for essential travel advice and tips.

KE treat the safety and security of all clients as the most important aspect of any trip we organise. We would not run any trip that we did not consider reasonably safe. Should the FCDO advise against travel for any reason, we will contact everyone booked to travel to discuss the situation. We receive regular updates direct from the FCDO and are in constant touch with our contacts on the ground. If you have any questions about government travel advice, please call our office.

## Single Use Plastic

KE do not encourage the use of single use plastic items. We are ensuring that our agents all over the world are working together to reduce the problem and educate those around them. We are leading by example in our KE office by reducing our plastic use.

## Books

Seven Pillars of Wisdom - T.E. Lawrence

Petra and the Lost Kingdom of the Nabataeans - J. Taylor

## Travel Insurance

It is an essential condition of joining a holiday with KE Adventure Travel that you have a valid travel insurance policy to cover the cost of medical treatment and to protect the value of your holiday in the event of cancellation. When taking out insurance please ensure the policy you choose covers you for the activities and altitude included in your itinerary.

For appropriate insurance cover we recommend Campbell Irvine Direct. Please go to our [Travel Insurance](#) page for further information and to get a quote.

Please note that a paper copy of your travel insurance is required if you are travelling to Huaraz and the Huayhuash region.

# Equipment Information

## Equipment List

Please try to keep the weight of your baggage to a minimum. See the 'baggage allowance' section for further details.

**You SHOULD bring the following items:**

- Hiking boots / Sturdy approach shoes
- Water bottles - 1 litre x 2 (we encourage re-filling water bottles rather than single use plastic)
- Water purification tablets
- Trainers or sandals for sightseeing
- Socks
- Trekking trousers
- Lightweight waterproof overtrousers
- Underwear
- At least 1 long sleeve shirt with collar (for sun protection)
- T-shirts
- Warm jacket (eg. Fleece)\*
- Lightweight waterproof jacket
- Swimming shorts/costume
- Warm hat (for chilly evenings in the desert)
- Sunglasses and sunhat
- Daypack of approx 30 litres
- Headtorch and spare batteries
- Sun protection (including total bloc for lips, nose etc.)
- Lighter/matches - for burning toilet paper

- Washbag and toiletries
- Insect repellent
- Antibacterial handwash (note that washing water can be limited in the desert)
- Basic First Aid Kit including: antiseptic cream, throat lozenges, diarrhoea treatment (Imodium), painkillers, plasters and blister treatment, Insect repellent, and re-hydration salts (Dioralite).

**The following items are optional:**

- Shorts\*\*
- Small towel
- Sleeping bag liner
- Trekking poles (highly recommended)
- Pen-knife (note: always pack sharp objects in hold baggage)
- Repair kit - (eg. needle, thread, duct tape)
- Camera
- Spare laces
- Reusable cloth bag for shopping (to avoid plastic bags)

**Notes**

\*For the November - February trips when night-time temperatures can fall below freezing in the desert, we recommend a sleeping bag comfort rated  $-5^{\circ}\text{C}$ ) and a warmer jacket such as a down-filled jacket, and thermal baselayers.

\*\*As Jordan is an Islamic country, modest dress is preferable in the towns and cities. Shoulders should be kept covered, and full-length trousers/skirts are recommended. Knee-length shorts are OK once on trek.

**Cotswold Outdoor**



Many of the Equipment items listed above are available from [Cotswold Outdoor](#) - our '**Official Recommended Outdoor Retailer**'. When you book a holiday with KE you will receive 12.5% discount voucher from Cotswold Outdoor and other retailers. [>> Find out more](#)

## Land Only Information

The LAND ONLY dates and prices are for joining in Amman. Single timed transfers to/from Amman airport are included at the start/end of the holiday.

## Flight Inclusive Information

The FLIGHT INCLUSIVE dates and prices are based on UK flights from London to Amman International Airport. Outbound flights will depart from the UK in the afternoon, arriving late evening. Return flights will depart from Amman late morning on the last day of the itinerary, arriving in the UK in the afternoon.

# Why Choose KE

## Why KE?

We have packed this active holiday with the very best of Jordan's unmissable highlights, designed for those who like to explore at a more leisurely pace. With a perfect blend of history, culture, unique landscapes and incredibly warm hosts; this is the perfect way to experience incredible Jordan and find out why it is one of our favourite destinations.

**Please Note** This document was downloaded on 27/07/2024 and the trip is subject to change