

Trip Dossier for Jordan – Crusaders & Camels

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The hospitable people of this Middle East kingdom will offer a warm welcome to you and your family. Adventure will come from the stunning desert scenery - this is Lawrence of Arabia territory, and the highlight of our journey may well be the desert landscape of Wadi Rum - where the movie 'Lawrence of Arabia' was filmed. You'll spend your time in this fantastic wilderness on jeep safaris, camel trekking and star-gazing from our atmospheric camp. Explore the incomparable rock cut city of Petra, whose beautiful red rose treasures were hidden for centuries, and children can roam across centuries of history both here and at the majestic crusader castle of Kerak. See one the best preserved Roman cities at Jerash, and watch their new legionary display, and dip your toes or float on the shores of the Dead Sea – a relaxing end to an action packed trip to this fascinating country.

Day 1 Fly to Amman

Depart from London to fly to Amman, arriving shortly before midnight. On arrival you will be met by our local guide and transferred to your hotel in Amman. **Hotel 2 nights (breakfast)**

Day 2 Tour of Amman; visit to Jerash (45 mins each way)

Built on a series of hills, Amman is a complex mix of old and new. It's a city of the 21st century but its roots are clear to see as well. At the centre of the city is a hill known as Jabal al-Qal'a, with some of Amman's most important ancient remains and excellent views to the Roman Temple of Hercules below. Late morning you'll set out for Jerash a 45-minute drive north of Amman. Second only to Petra in terms of antiquity, it is one of the ten great Roman cities of the Decapolis League. Hidden for centuries under the sand it has slowly been excavated over the last 70 years revealing a distinct blend of Roman and Greek influences in a formal Roman provincial city. After walking around Jerash you have time to watch The Roman Army experience (optional), featuring legionaries in full armour in a display of Roman Army drill and battle tactics, Roman gladiators fighting "to the death" the audience deciding the losers fate, and several Roman chariots competing in a classical seven lap race around the ancient hippodrome. **(breakfast)**

Day 3 Wadi Rum (4 hours drive)

You set off and drive south passing Mt Nebo; the biblical resting place of Moses overlooking the Promised Land, and Madaba famous for its 6th Century mosaic map. Continue on the Desert Highway to the protected area of Wadi Rum (*wadi* is the Arabic word for a dry riverbed that fills with water when it rains – which is rare in these parts). It's here that the true desert experience begins as you head out to your night-stop in a Bedouin-style camp. You will visit to the nearby Wadi Rum Visitor Centre to help you understand what you're about to see. Tonight you can sleep in tents if you want but we recommend dragging your mattress outside for at least part of the night and sleeping out under the stars. The night sky is simply unforgettable. If it's clear – and it generally is - you'll see more stars than you've ever seen before! Sleeping in the desert also provides a chance to see or hear some of the wildlife that manages to survive in the parched sandy spaces: hyrax, hares, foxes, gerbils or maybe even gazelle and ibex. **Desert camp (breakfast & dinner)**

Day 4 Wadi Rum; afternoon drive to Petra (2 hours drive)

After breakfast you'll have a chance to experience the desert nearby on foot but perhaps the best way to see it is from the back of a camel, so take a one-hour camel trek to find out just what it feels like. Make sure you hold on tight when it gets up! Then you will travel by four-wheel-drive vehicle and head out into the moon-like landscape of pinkish sand and rocky mountain. In prehistoric times there was much more water here and this was a land of plenty. There is evidence that early man hunted abundant wildlife here; many examples of rock paintings or engravings can be found in the nooks and crannies of the mountains. You'll also see spectacular rock formations created by the action of wind and water eroding the soft rocks over the ages. Wadi Rum was made famous by the exploits of the legendary Lawrence of Arabia who, during World War I, assembled a force and encouraged the Bedouin to attack the Ottoman Turks in Aqaba. Have a picnic lunch in the desert and in the afternoon you'll drive to Petra. **Hotel 2 nights (breakfast & lunch)**

Day 5 Full day guided tour of Petra

Today you'll enter the hidden world of the ancient Nabateans as you explore the spectacular rose-red city of Petra with your guide. There is much to see here. The Petra basin consists of over 100 square kilometres (38 square miles) of limestone and sandstone mountains, interspersed with narrow valleys and broad plains. The approach to Petra is through the narrow gorge known as the *siq*, the main route into the site. You'll follow the *siq* as it twists and turns through the mountains for just over a kilometre. At times you'll be walking over Roman paving stones, but if you look up you can see the many different layers of natural rock. At the far end of the *siq* you are treated to one of the most dramatic views you'll ever encounter as you suddenly emerge onto the great



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plaza in front of Petra's most famous monument, the Treasury (*al-Kazneh*), which you'll recognise immediately from the film "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade". According to legend, the Nabateans hid the treasure they amassed from controlling trade routes here – but no-one has found it yet! You'll have a chance to photograph Bedouin tribesmen with their typical red and white *kaffiyeh* head-dress, fine Arabian horses and riding camels, and policemen in their distinctive uniforms. Further inside the site you'll see the remarkable 7,000 seat outdoor theatre that was refurbished by the Romans when they conquered the city, and can also visit the Royal Tombs, where the Nabatean Kings were supposedly buried. If you're feeling energetic while you are here, we highly recommend the 45-minute climb up a steep rocky path from the museum area to *ad-Dayr*, the Monastery – another astonishing monument cut from a sheer face of red sandstone. From here you can visit viewpoints which offer dramatic vistas over the surrounding mountains. Alternatively you may prefer to avoid the climb and stay in the lower part of the site to simply soak up the atmosphere of the temples and tombs. At the end of the visit you make your way back through the *siq* – if you're feeling tired by that time it may be possible to negotiate (extra) a ride back to the entrance on a mule or two-seat horse-drawn buggy to save your legs. Outside the site, in Wadi Musa town, there are plenty of shops packed with souvenirs to lure you inside. **(breakfast)**

Day 6 Drive to Kerak Crusader Castle en route to the Dead Sea (3½ hours drive)

Today, you'll head north again through hilly countryside to the market town of Kerak. Here you can explore its magnificent castle, built in the twelfth century by the crusaders who came from all over Europe to protect the holy city of Jerusalem from the great Moslem ruler Saladdin. The castle is extremely well preserved and it's easy to imagine what life must have been like during the crusades – an enlightening learning experience for adults and children alike. After exploring the castle, you'll continue west to the Dead Sea the lowest point on earth (over 400 metres below sea level). **Spa Resort with Swimming pool – two nights (breakfast)**

Day 7 Dead Sea

The Dead Sea has been famous over the centuries for its minerals and natural healing powers: Cleopatra reputedly had her cosmetics factory here, and Mark Anthony had to step in and conquer the area for her to safeguard it. It is unique with its combination of climate, enriched oxygen atmosphere, mineral-rich salt sea, mud and hot springs. You can experience the unusual sensation of floating while reading a book in the salty water – it's impossible to sink in this viscous saline solution! Make sure you don't get any water in your eyes though, as it's so salty that it can really sting – so no splashing! There are many treatments on offer that you may wish to try – how about a massage followed by a mud pack, and the children can enjoy the swimming pools and water-slide complex – a great way to end your holiday.

Day 8 Fly to London via Amman

This morning you will be transferred to Amman airport for your flight to London.

This itinerary includes our group flights from London. If you are making other flight arrangements, please refer to your Confirmation Invoice and Joining Instructions for details of the start or end of the trip. Please remember international flights and trip dates do occasionally change, so please always purchase flexible tickets. Each itinerary is planned many months in advance and although it is our intention to operate the itinerary as printed in the brochure and detailed here, it may be necessary to make some changes as a result of alterations to flight schedules, climatic conditions, limitations of infrastructure or other operational factors which are beyond our control. As a consequence, the order or location of overnight stops may vary from those outlined but we will always endeavour to keep you informed of any such changes. Included meals are indicated in the daily itinerary.

Optional Extras

Jerash – Roman Army Experience

£15 (£6 children 5-12)

These prices are per person and can be booked and paid locally

Is this right for your family? Jordan is an easy country to travel in, with good roads, comfortable hotels and friendly people. Travelling distances are relatively short (3-4 hours max). Our stay in the desert at Wadi Rum is in an Eco friendly camp in a remote area, our camp has basic facilities and no electricity; lighting is by candles. Meals are prepared with local organic products from the Bedouin community. You will sleep on simple wooden beds with mattresses and sheets in goats' skin tents. Toilets are dry and there is water for washing only – no showers.

Climate The best time of year to visit Jordan is in spring and autumn, when the days are usually warm to hot and the nights cool to mild. Humidity is very low and little or there is little or no rain at this time. During the winter

months (December to February), it can get very cold in the early morning and evening, with fog and freezing temperatures, so and warm clothes are essential then.

Average monthly temperatures in Amman

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Max C	12	13	16	23	28	31	32	32	31	27	21	15
Min C	4	4	6	9	14	16	18	18	17	14	10	6
Rainfall (mm)	69	74	31	15	5	0	0	0	0	5	33	46

Lone Parents Single parents or other adults travelling alone with children should be aware that some countries, including the UK, require documentation confirming that the individual has authority to travel with the minor. It is crucial that you contact the relevant country embassy for further information on exactly what may be required.

These details can be found on the Foreign & Commonwealth Website under the appropriate country

www.fco.gov.uk/travel

Accommodation The hotels used throughout this trip are of 3 star standard, and are booked on twin share basis. All are modern, clean and comfortable and offer friendly service and rooms with private facilities. The desert camp is more basic but still offers clean, well-maintained and comfortable accommodation with bed linen provided. The indication of a swimming pool at a hotel should not be taken as a guarantee but rather an indication. You should also be aware that swimming pools at the hotels are often unheated and so can be cold in the winter months or even closed.

Food and Drink Included meals are indicated in the itinerary. Breakfast is generally continental in style – with some local additions – served with tea or coffee, the picnic lunch (where applicable) is simple but adequate; dinner tends to consist of a buffet with a selection of Arabic and Western dishes; there is always one or more vegetarian options. Meals in the desert camp are hygienically prepared. For meals not included in the itinerary you should allow £10-15 per person day to cover lunch and dinner. It is possible to eat quite cheaply in Jordan, but if you choose to eat in expensive restaurants you should allow a little more. Your local tour leader will be on hand to make personal recommendations. We recommend you drink plenty of bottled water during your trip. If you have any special diets please advise Families Worldwide in advance and make your tour leader aware while on the tour.

Currency The unit of currency is the Jordanian Dinar (JD). At the time of writing UK £1 = JD1.20 and US \$1 = JD0.70 (Aug 2009). We are increasingly advising against the use of Travellers' Cheques due to the widespread number of ATMs. Credit cards are readily accepted in banks and larger hotels, and some souvenir shops, but not in the desert camp. We recommend that you change at least some money at the airport.

Local Costs

A small bottle of mineral water (500ml)	£0.50
A large bottle of mineral water (1 litre)	£1.00
A can of coke (soft drinks)	£0.50
A carton or bottle of fruit juice	£1.30
A bottle of beer	£3.50
A light lunch time snack – sandwich for example	£3.00
A two course meal* - excluding drinks	£7.00
A three course meal* - excluding drinks	£10.00
A three course meal at Dead Sea Spa – excluding drinks	£20.00

*Based on a mid range tourist restaurant.

Tipping is a recognised part of life and although at your discretion you will be expected to reward good service. It should be remembered, however, that over-generosity could lead to jealousies in poor countries. Please remember that all tips should be a way for individuals to thank staff for good service. As a guideline each person should allow £1-£2 per day to cover the tips for local services and £2-£3 per day to cover the group leader/guide and driver.



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RAMADAN 2010

11th August – 8th September (dates not fixed but dependent on the lunar calendar): Please note that Ramadan is a month of fasting observed by Muslims throughout the world, during which time the followers of Islam should not eat or drink between sunrise and sunset. There may be some limitations to services and disruptions to schedules during Ramadan, but generally our tours still operate effectively during this period and food is available to non-Muslims throughout the day in most countries. Please be aware of the local sensitivities during the day and bear in mind that the evening breaking of the fast is usually an exciting and celebratory period!
(1st August to 29th August 2011)

Language Arabic, although English is quite widely spoken.

Security Whilst the vast majority of travellers never experience anything untoward it is worth taking precautions particularly in urban areas. You should take sensible precautions in crowded areas such as street markets and airports, where pick-pocketing is common, and keep clear of any street disturbances. Don't wear jewellery, never leave your bags unattended, keep large amounts of money, cameras and cell phones out of sight when walking in town centres, and avoid walking in city centres after dark. Keep copies of important documents, including passports, in a separate place to the documents themselves, together with details of credit cards. Leave copies at home with a friend too. Safeguard valuables, important documents and cash and deposit them in hotel safes, where practicable.

Visa British Nationals need a visa to visit Jordan. This can be obtained easily on arrival for JD10 per person. Your passport should be valid for 6 months beyond your departure date. Non British passport holders should check current requirements with their embassy.

Time Jordan is GMT +2 hours / GMT +3 hours in summer (end of March to end of October)

Glossary

Good morning	Sabah el Khair	Please	Laosmahat
Good evening	Masaa el Khair	What is your name?	Esmak Eh?
Good	Helw	My name....	Esmey....
No	Laa	How are you?	Exaiak
Yes	Naam	Fine	Kwais
Hello	Ahlan	How much	Bekam
Thank you	Shockrun	Goodbye	Ma' el Salama



Clothing & Equipment List for Jordan – Crusaders & Camels

Although Western clothing is quite acceptable, Jordanians are generally more traditional in the way they dress. Out of respect for local culture please dress conservatively i.e. no sleeveless or low cut tops etc. Although shorts are accepted in main tourist areas, they (and skirts) should reach at least to the knee. Women should cover their heads, arms and legs when entering religious buildings. At night in the desert, or during drives in open jeeps (especially from October to March) it can get surprisingly cold, so pack warm and windproof clothing.

This packing list is to be used as a guide, with our suggestions of items you may wish to pack.

CLOTHING	NUMBER PER PERSON	Check	EQUIPMENT	Check
Walking shoes	1 pair		Soft side bags – 50-80 litres	
Trainers or strong sandals	1 pair – all purpose wear		Lightweight daypack – 25 litres	
Socks	3+		A variety of large plastic bags	
Windproof jacket	1		Sunglasses	
T-Shirts	3+		Personal First Aid Kit	
Long trousers or skirt	2+		Large water bottle	
Short trousers	2		Torch and batteries	
Long sleeve shirt	1+		Camera, memory card and accessories	
Track Suit Bottoms or Similar	Optional		Reading material	
Thick Fleece	Not essential in summer		Loo kit (in small bag) loo paper/ tissues	
Warm jacket	1		Washing kit – including “dry” hand-wash & wet wipes	
Thin fleece or sweatshirt	1		Bicycle helmet – recommended for children riding camels	
Sunhat / baseball cap /	Essential (styled to shade face, ears & neck)		Ear Plugs	
Towel or sarong	1		Warm hat & gloves – for winter in desert	
Swimwear 1	1			

ITEM	Check	ITEM	Check
Passport/ Visa		Universal travelling adapter	
Air Tickets		Insect Repellent & bite cream	
Money/Travellers Cheques		Guide book & map	
Cash Cards/Visa		Cereal bars	
Insurance Documents		Sunscreen – lots of it, not in hand luggage	
Trip Information & Itinerary			

For details regarding **hand luggage restrictions** please visit www.baa.com