

THE KINGDOM OF JORDAN

4 - 14 APRIL 2025

FROM
£5,940
PER PERSON

Tour Leaders: Nick & Iris Van Gruisen


The Ultimate
TRAVEL COMPANY

AN ILLUMINATING JOURNEY THROUGH DESERT AND MOUNTAIN SCENERY

Few countries are as richly blessed as the small desert kingdom of Jordan, with its magnificent archaeological remains and breathtaking desert and mountain scenery. This illuminating tour examines the country's fascinating history and explores its greatest ancient sites.

The tour begins in Amman, a fantastic blend of ancient and modern, and the finely preserved Roman city of Jerash. We continue to Madaba with its Byzantine churches and exquisite mosaics, before travelling to Mount Nebo from where Moses surveyed the Promised Land. We then follow the ancient King's Highway south to the great Crusader Castle at Kerak before reaching Petra. Here we visit one of the most spectacular sites in the Middle East – the rock-hewn 'rose red' city of Petra. We spend a night in the awe-inspiring desert and rock landscape of Wadi Rum, before ending our journey with a relaxing day by the Dead Sea.



Temple of Hercules, Amman



Mount Nebo



Hadrian's Arch Temple, Jerash

11-DAY ITINERARY, DEPARTING 4 APRIL 2025

4 April London, Amman

Suggested flight (not included in the cost of the tour) Royal Jordanian RJ 112 departing London Heathrow at 17.05 hrs arriving in Amman at 00.10 hrs. Group transfer to the centrally located Fairmont Hotel, where four nights are spent. A light snack will be provided on arrival.

5 April Amman, Jerash

Morning tour of Amman, visiting some of the city's ancient ruins and buildings, such as on Citadel Hill – one of the seven jabals (hills) that originally made up Amman – the Temple of Hercules Temple and the Umayyad Palace. Visit the Roman theatre and museum in the lower part of Amman.

Lunch at the Lebanese House Restaurant. Transfer north to Jerash, one of the best examples in the Middle East of a Roman provincial city which is remarkably well-preserved. Walk through original temples, theatres, plazas and colonnaded streets, all enclosed within the remaining city walls. Return to Amman. Dinner at Fakhreldin, one of the best restaurants in Amman.

6 April Amman, Bethany, Mount Nebo, Madaba

This morning drive south to Bethany, the site where John the Baptist baptized Jesus Christ. Continue to Mount Nebo, mentioned in the Bible as the place where Moses was granted a view of the Promised Land, and climb to the very top to

take in its spectacular views over the Jordan Valley and the Dead Sea. Continue to Madaba, known as the City of Mosaics, famous for its large Byzantine mosaic map of the Holy Land on the floor of St. George's Church, depicting all the major biblical sites of the Middle East.

Lunch at Haret Jdoudna restaurant, serving traditional Jordanian home-made dishes. Return to Amman for an afternoon at leisure. Dinner at Jafral restaurant.



Byzantine mosaic at Madaba

7 April Amman, Qasr Al-Hallabat

Drive east to visit three desert castles. Heading north-east we come to Qasr al-Hallabat, originally a Roman Fortress, constructed under Emperor Caracalla to protect its inhabitants

from Bedouin tribes. The site dates back to the second and third century AD, although there is evidence of Nabataean presence. Continue to Hamman al-Sarah. Lastly, we visit Qasr Amra, considered to be one of the most important examples of early Islamic art and architecture. This desert castle was built early in the 8th century, sometime between 723 and 743 AD by Walid Ibn Yazid, the future Umayyad Caliph Walid II.

Lunch at a local restaurant. Return to the hotel. Afternoon at leisure. Cooking demonstration followed by dinner Beit Sitti restaurant.

8 April Amman, Kerak, Shobak, Petra

Drive (with luggage) south to Kerak to visit the magnificent 12th-century Crusader fortress built by King Baldwin I of Jerusalem in 1142 AD and featured in legendary battles between the Crusaders and the Islamic armies of Saladin.



The Crusader Fortress of Kerak



Memories Aicha Luxury Camp in Wadi Rum



Dead Sea



Wadi Rum Desert

Lunch in Kerak, before continuing to the ruins of the early 12th-century Shobak Castle, formally known as 'Mons Regalis', named in honour of the king's own contribution to its construction. Continue along the Desert Highway to Petra, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Check into the Petra Marriott hotel, where three nights are spent. Located a short drive from the archaeological site of Petra, the hotel has spectacular views over the surrounding valley. Dinner in the hotel.



Petra Marriott Hotel

9 April Petra

Full day's sightseeing at Petra. Hewn from towering rust-coloured rock in the valleys of the Shara Mountains, Petra is testament to the prosperity of the Nabataeans. Walk through the narrow, winding 1.2km-long fissure, known as the Siq, with walls towering up to 200 metres overhead. At the end lies the unforgettable sight of the 'rose-red' Treasury, Al-Khazneh with

its stunning 40-metre high façade.

Lunch at The Basin Restaurant. Option to walk up to the Deir Monastery (800 steps) and back. Walk back down to the treasury and on to the site entrance. Return to the hotel. Dinner at the hotel.

10 April Petra

Drive to Little Petra, a magical spot with its own miniature version of the Siq. It is believed Little Petra was an important suburb of Petra, the entry and exit point for the trade routes to the north and north-west. As in Petra, the buildings were carved into the sandstone, used as residences, storages and tombs, with water channels and cisterns. In one of the cave buildings, you can find the remains of painted frescoes with birds, grapes and flowers, dating from the first century AD.

Lunch at a local restaurant. Return to Petra. Dinner at the hotel.

11 April Petra, Wadi Rum

Drive (with luggage) south-east to Wadi Rum – forever now associated with T. E. Lawrence – a spectacular desert landscape broken by 800-metre high mountains – rust-coloured jebels – capped with sandstone rising sheer from the wide, sandy valley floor. Check into the Memories Aicha Luxury Camp in Wadi Rum.

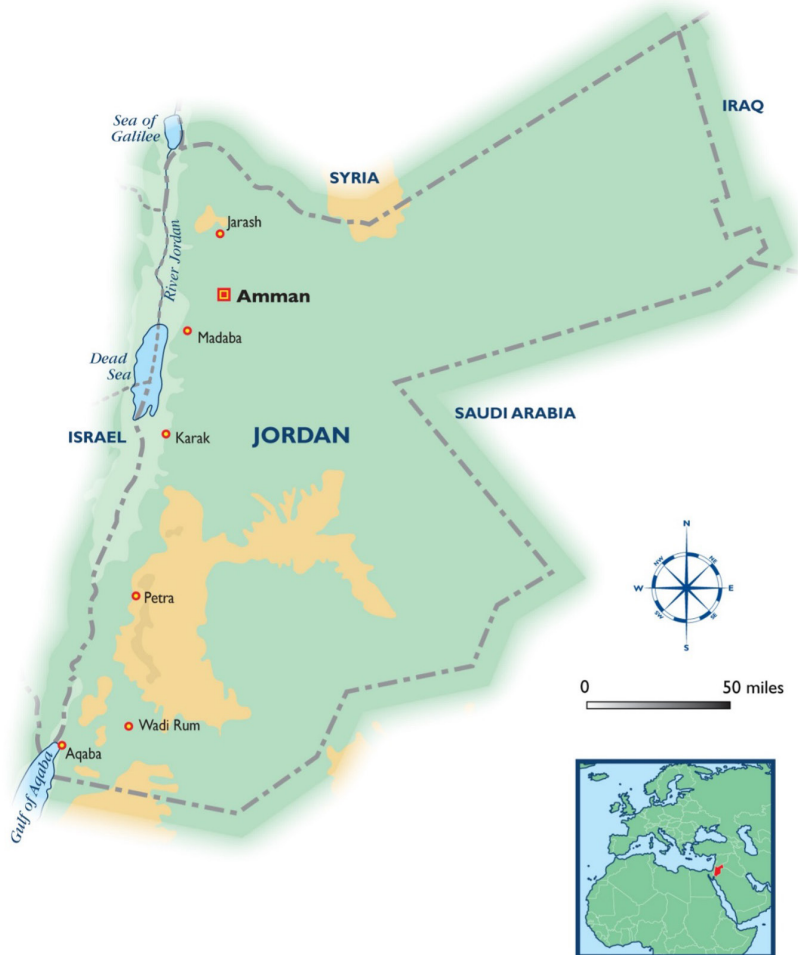
Lunch at the camp. Desert safari in 4x4 jeeps seeing the rock bridges of Jebel Burdah and Umm Fruth and the Khazali Canyon. Optional camel rides. Traditional desert dinner in the camp.

12 April Wadi Rum, Umm Ar-Rasas, Machaerus, Dead Sea

Drive (with luggage) north to Umm ar-Rasas to see the mosaics in St. Stephen's Church, one of four churches in the original village.



Petra



Look at its magnificent mosaic floor dating back to about 785 AD. Continue to the Dead Sea, the lowest point on earth, sitting at 400 metres below sea level.

Lunch at the Panorama Dead Sea Restaurant. Check into the Kempinski Hotel Ishtar Dead Sea. The resort has excellent amenities including a beach, several swimming pools and a spa and treatment centre, which offers a range of restorative treatments (payable locally). Dinner under own arrangements.

13 April Dead Sea

Free day at leisure. Lunch under own arrangements. Farewell dinner at the hotel.

14 April Dead Sea, Amman, London

Early morning group transfer (with luggage) to Amman airport for a suggested flight (not included in the cost of the tour) Royal Jordanian RJ 111 departing Amman at 12.00 hrs, arriving London Heathrow at 15.25 hrs.

TOUR PRICES PER PERSON

Tour Price	£5,940
Single Supplement	£1,790

Please note we have not included the cost of the flights in the tour price. Please contact us for prices should you wish to book them through us.

PRICE INCLUDES

- Accommodation throughout as shown in the itinerary
- Breakfast daily; 8 lunches; 8 dinners
- Snack on arrival, day 1
- One soft drink, bottled water and coffee/tea with included meals
- All visits and excursions as per the itinerary
- Group transfers and transportation as detailed in the itinerary
- All entrance fees
- Local English-speaking guide/s
- Group visa
- Gratuities in restaurants; gratuities to driver/s; gratuities to guide/s; portorage
- The services of your tour leaders throughout

PRICE EXCLUDES

- International flights
- Travel insurance
- Items of personal expenditure (e.g. telephone calls / laundry etc.)
- Government levies or taxes introduced after costing and publication of this programme on 12/12/23





YOUR TOUR LEADERS



NICK & IRIS VAN GRUISEN

Raised in Northumberland, in the 1970s Nick spent five years as a professional guide in Botswana and southern Africa. He then joined the Tiger Mountain group, pioneering cultural, trekking and wildlife holidays throughout the Indian subcontinent. He founded Worldwide Journeys and Expeditions in 1991, from which The Ultimate Travel Company emerged in 1998.

His wife Iris was born in Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia), where she lived for a few years before moving to Papua New Guinea. In the 1980s, she too joined Tiger Mountain to work at their flagship lodge, Tiger Tops, in Nepal's Royal Chitwan National Park. As well as co-leading trips with Nick, she has taken trekking groups on expeditions to Kilimanjaro, the High Atlas, Ethiopia's Simien Mountains and the Himalaya.



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