

# THE Nation. TRAVELS

## Jordan & the Politics & Culture of the Middle East

ITINERARY | **OCTOBER 14–24, 2018**

Long considered a relatively safe haven in a tumultuous region, on this tour we'll delve into the critical issues facing Jordan and its neighbors while exploring the country's unique beauty and stunning antiquities.

### DETAILS & PRICING

**B: BREAKFAST**

**L: LUNCH**

**D: DINNER**

**R: RECEPTION**



### OCTOBER 14: DEPART THE US

#### OCTOBER 15: JORDAN

**R, D**

- Arrive in Amman this evening where you will be met and transferred to the luxurious five-star **Amman Marriott Hotel**.
- Join fellow travelers for a welcome cocktail and dinner with **Mouin Rabbani**, a distinguished analyst, journalist, and senior fellow at the **Institute for Palestine Studies**.

#### OCTOBER 16: AMMAN

**B, L, D**

- The tour continues to the **National Gallery of Art**, one of the preeminent art galleries of the Middle East and home to thousands of works of art which inform cultural diversity across the Islamic and developing world.
- Explore the contemporary art scene in Amman with a guided tour of **Darat al Funun** ("Little House of the Arts") where art, archeology, and architecture combine to create and inspire artistic expression and cultural discourse. Set in six renovated historic buildings and home to Roman ruins, the foundation is a dedicated home to artists in residence and includes an archive of Arab art.
- Enjoy lunch at **Karam Beirut**, a Lebanese restaurant established by one of the leading restaurateur families in the Middle East.
- Learn of Amman's evolution with a compelling

lecture at the **Citadel**, a striking site built and rebuilt throughout the Bronze and Iron ages, and other significant periods. Spanning the city's ancient history through the 20th century, today's discussion lays the foundation for the important position Jordan plays in the Middle East today.



- Return to the hotel for a riveting lecture by **Mouin Rabbani** on the complex geopolitical issues facing the Middle East. Today's lecture focuses on the causes and consequences of the ongoing upheaval in the area.
- Over dinner at **Kan Zamaan** restaurant, engage in a dynamic conversation with a representative from **Near East Foundation**, which began in 1915 to work with Armenian, Syrian, Greek and other populations forced from their homes in WWI. It is one of the longest standing organizations serving refugees in the region.

## OCTOBER 17: AMMAN

B, L

- Start the morning with a visit to the **Jordan Museum** for insight into Jordan's history and culture. A guided tour explores Jordan's vibrant heritage, with focuses on religion, politics, agriculture and cultural exchange.
- Return to the hotel for a lecture deconstructing the Syria conflict, including the complex dynamics and relationships surrounding ISIS, Iraq and Al-Qaeda's involvement in the war. Take advantage of the opportunity to understand the intricacies of the internal and regional conflicts and power dynamics that led to the war in Syria.
- Over lunch at **Tawaheen Alhawa** restaurant, chat with professionals from **Al Hadaif**, an organization whose three-pronged approach of health, education and training demonstrates the importance of

holistic and sustaining services. **Al Hadaif** focuses on underprivileged youth, including Jordanian orphans and Iraqi refugee children.

- Visit the **Al Balad Theater**, a unique cultural center focused on providing a performance space to host Jordanian, Arab, and international artists.
- Wander through **Rainbow Street**, one of the oldest and most enigmatic areas of Amman, full of trendy items from women's collectives and other high-end Jordanian handicrafts. Follow the winding switchback alleys, witnessing residential city life, to the Souk in **Wust Al Balad**, sampling local fare, soaking in the architecture and the lively vibes of the neighborhood.
- Return to the hotel for an evening of leisure and dinner on your own.

## OCTOBER 18: NORTHERN JORDAN

B, L

- Take a 90-minute drive to **Jerash**, stopping to amble through the colorful and bustling Jerash market. Discover one of the world's best-preserved Roman architecture sites, the city of **Gerasa**, where incredible columns, arches, theaters and plazas interpret the landscape.



- Midmorning, an insightful meeting with an organization like **United Nations Relief Works Agency** provides unparalleled knowledge into the history of the Jerash refugee camp, which was set up in 1968 for over 11,000 Palestinian refugees displaced after the 1967 Arab-Israeli War. Today's conversation takes a closer look at the Palestine diaspora.
- An hour away, drive to **Irbid** to have lunch with a representative from the **Refugees, Displaced Persons, and Forced Migration Studies**



Center. The Center is housed on the campus of Yarmouk University, the second largest university in Jordan. A talk with a pioneering academic research center on displacement, forced migration and the trends and challenges in the field of research will highlight the role of academia in building awareness and critical discourse on the global refugee crisis

- Continue on to **Umm Qais**, perched high above the Jordan valley with dramatic vistas that overlook Jordan, Syria, and Israel and Palestinian territories. Over tea at Romero Restaurant, attend a poignant lecture on the Israeli and Palestinian conflict, which will provide a foundation for understanding the complexities of the dispute.
- Explore the archeological site of **Gadara**, and then explore history *in situ* with a lecture on the Six-Day War (1967) and Yom Kippur War (1973) while surveying the contested land on the horizon.
- Dinner is at leisure tonight.

## OCTOBER 19: DEAD SEA

B, L, D

- Set out early this morning on a 90-minute drive to visit the UNESCO World Heritage site, **Bethany**, world-renown as the site of Jesus' baptism by John the Baptist at the River Jordan. A historic Christian site, rich with religious significance, visit the ruins of churches, baptismal pools, a monastery and other archeological religious sites from between the 4th–15th centuries.

- Continue on to visit the Dead Sea, or **Al-Bahr Al-Mayyit** in Arabic. Relax this afternoon at the Dead Sea Spa Hotel enjoying a delicious lunch, followed by an afternoon floating in the Dead Sea or taking advantage of the sea's healing properties with a mud mask.
- This evening, depart for **Petra** on a three-hour drive through Jordan's country side. Gather with fellow travelers for dinner at **Petra Marriott Hotel**.

## OCTOBER 20: PETRA & WADI RUM

B, L, D

- Rise this morning to explore the awe-inspiring UNESCO World Heritage site, **Petra**, before the crowds arrive. On a guided tour, delve into the history of the pre-historic capital city of the Nabateans and learn how it became an economic center of trade between Arabia, Egypt, and Syria-Phoenicia.
- Later, visit a **Bedouin** community for a lecture on Bedouin culture, history and society and its unique relationship with the Petra Park in the nearby town of Wadi Musa, the "Valley of Moses."
- Enjoy an authentic Jordanian lunch at one of the best restaurants in Wadi Musa, Alqantarrah.
- After lunch, travel just under two hours to **Wadi Rum**. Tonight brings an evening under the stars in the otherworldly "Valley of the Moon." Settle into the luxurious Sun City Camp, soaking in dramatic landscape of striking sandstone mountains and barren desert, and



enjoy a sunset jeep tour before watching a demonstration of Bedouin traditional cooking, followed by a delicious meal.

## OCTOBER 21: WADI RUM & MADABA

B, L

- Catch a beautiful sunrise and indulge in an early-morning breakfast at the Bedouin camp. For those interested embracing the Bedouin nomadic culture, set out on an optional camel caravan ride through the scenic landscape.



- Return north on a four-hour drive to the beautiful town of **Madaba**, famous for its mosaics and being the oldest depiction of the Holy Land on a Byzantine-era mosaic map. On today's visit, meet with representatives from local NGOs supporting resettled Syrians and other vulnerable members of the community. A discussion on the issues regarding where support networks are successful, challenged, and struggling shine light on the fight Syrians face and the burden their presence places on Jordan's infrastructure, social services, and economy.
- Enjoy a delectable lunch at **Haret Jdoudna**, an enchanting restaurant set in a historical house built in 1905 and often visited by King Abdullah I. Delight in local delicacies and traditional fare before taking time to browse and purchase local handicrafts, including mosaics, pottery, and jewelry.
- Some of Jordan's best wines come from the **Madaba** area. Drive past the original family-owned **Zumot** vineyard, known for producing Saint George's organic wine en route to Amman. Then visit the **Zumot Winery & Vineyards** showroom in Amman for a wine tasting and to learn of the history of wine production and the challenges of

growing wine in the dry Jordanian climate.

- Return this evening to Amman for dinner at your leisure.

## OCTOBER 22: RURAL LIFE

B, L

- A full-day excursion to the countryside provides insight into the rural life in Jordan and the importance of the agricultural economy. Spend the day on an olive farm, speaking with farmers and locals gaining perspective on their daily life. The cultivation of olive trees and production of olive oil has been an important industry for 6,000 years here and in nearby Palestine and Syria.
- After harvesting olives, enjoy a picnic lunch in the fields.
- Engage in discussion this afternoon about the rural economy and the effect of refugee populations in smaller towns. According to some reports, the Syrian crisis and refugee influx has impacted the agricultural sector for the majority of Jordanians living in rural areas.

## OCTOBER 23: AMMAN

B, D

- Meet with representatives of **Human Rights Watch** in Jordan for a discussion on HRW's priority issues for the country: freedom of expression, limitations on NGO operation, refugee rights and citizenship restrictions. Learn about government policies on closing borders, counterterrorism laws and the greater impact on refugees, activists and journalists, as well as the implications of citizenship restrictions for Jordanian mothers and their children. Included as well are positive changes and evidenced commitment to progress in areas like criminal law and citizens' rights.





- Later, expand your knowledge and visit the **Middle East Children's Institute**, an organization working to support refugee women and children. Originally founded in 2007 in the West Bank, the regional office in Jordan opened in 2014 and has profoundly impacted the lives of over 3,000 children. Speak with representatives on implementing social change in the community through programs and workshops on literacy, life skills, education, and personal hygiene.
- Enjoy lunch and the afternoon at your leisure, with time to explore the city of Amman with recommendations from your guide.



- This evening, celebrate your journey through Jordan at a festive farewell dinner at **Fakhreldin Restaurant**, one of the highest acclaimed restaurants in Amman. Located next to one of the oldest neighborhoods in Amman, a lovely restaurant located in an authentic Jordanian home once owned by Jordan's first Prime Minister, enjoy delicious Levantine cuisine.

## OCTOBER 24: DEPARTURE

**B**

- After breakfast, a group transfer will depart for the Amman airport and your return flight to the U.S.

## TRIP PRICE

Double (per person): **\$ 7,995**

Single: **\$8,995**

\*Rates are based on standard accommodations.

## INCLUDED

- Accommodation, based on double occupancy, in hotels as listed
- Airport transfers on designated arrival and departure dates
- Meals as listed in the itinerary, including bottled water
- Bottled water on the bus at all times
- All sightseeing and excursions in a private air-conditioned bus
- All private events and speakers (or similar) as listed
- All entrance fees listed
- Services of an English-speaking local tour guide and ATA Tour Manager who will travel with the group from the beginning to end
- Services of local guides in certain cities
- Cocktail reception at the hotel in Amman
- Meeting rooms as listed
- Porterage
- Basic gratuity to tour manager, guides and bus drivers

## DOES NOT INCLUDE

- International airfare to and from Jordan
- Visa
- Passport fees
- Excess luggage charges
- Travel insurance
- Items of a purely personal nature
- Any item not listed