

## Best of Jordan

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**Country(ies):** Jordan

**Tour type:** Small Group

**Transport:** A/C minivan/minibus/coach & Bedouin jeeps in Wadi Rum

**Group size:** Min: 2 | Max: 18

**Days:** 7 Days

**Start location:** Amman, Jordan

**End location:** Amman, Jordan

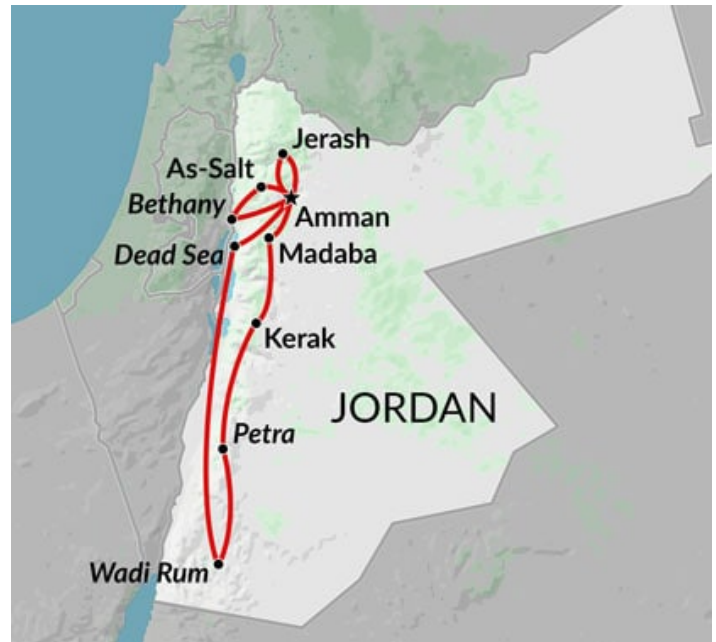
**Departs On:** Sunday

**Meals:** Breakfasts - 6, Lunches - 1, Dinners - 1

**Highlights:**

Amman, Bethany Baptism Site, As-Salt Harmony Trail, Jerash Roman ruins, Madaba mosaics, Mt Nebo views, scenic King's Highway, Kerak crusader castle, Full day in Petra, Wadi Rum jeep safari & Bedouin camp.

**Places Visited:** Amman, As-Salt, Bethany, Jerash, Madaba, Mt. Nebo, Kerak, Petra, Wadi Rum & Desert Castles



# Itinerary

## Day 1: Welcome to Jordan! Hotel transfers included

Your Jordanian adventure starts in the busy capital city of Amman. We'll be there to meet and greet you at the airport before we transfer you to your hotel in the city. You have the rest of the day free to explore Amman on your own.

**OVERNIGHT:** Amman hotel

**MEALS:** None

**EXTRAS:** Extra day in Amman - pre tour || Superior hotel upgrade (JOSHWJ) || Single room supplement (JOSHWJ)

## Day 2: Exploring the Harmony Trail & the Baptism site at Bethany

We start the day with a visit to the hilltop town of As-Salt, which once served as a trading link between the Jordan Valley and the Eastern Desert. As-Salt is known for its impressive old Islamic architecture which was built using yellow limestone.

Today, the town serves as an example of the religious and cultural friendship between the local Muslim & Christian population. To learn more about As-Salt, we'll head out on a walking tour of its 'Harmony Trail', which will give you greater insight into the lives of the locals.

We'll have lunch with a local family today, giving you your first taste of Jordanian cuisine (this is group size dependent, if the group is too large, we will head to a local restaurant).

After lunch, we make our way to the Baptism site at Bethany, which is an excavated site believed to be the place where John baptised Jesus Christ. Many churches, caves and pools dating back to Roman & Byzantine periods have been found here. We'll also visit three of its most important sites: Tell Mar Elias, the Baptism Pools and John the Baptist's Church.

We'll return to our hotel in Amman where we'll spend the night.

**OVERNIGHT:** Amman hotel

**MEALS:** Breakfast, Lunch

**EXTRAS:** None

## Day 3: Amman & Jerash

Today we head out on a city tour of Amman, taking in its rich history which dates back many millennia. We'll start with a visit to the Citadel - the former home of the ancient temple of Hercules, the Umayyad Palace, Byzantine Church and the ancient Roman theatre, which is still being used today to host various cultural events.

Next, we make our way to Jerash, one of the most well-preserved Roman architecture sites on the planet. Jerash was hidden underneath sand for centuries and over the past 70 years, archaeological work has uncovered that Jerash was once a fine example of Roman urbanism, boasting paved and colonnaded streets, hilltop temples, public squares and plazas.

**OVERNIGHT:** Amman hotel

**MEALS:** Breakfast

**EXTRAS:** Amman evening food tasting tour

## Day 4: Travel the King's Highway to Petra

We leave Amman today, driving along the scenic King's Highway to Petra. We'll drive slowly, giving you time to take in the beauty of your surroundings as we pass through deep wadis, olive groves and rural villages.

We'll stop at Madaba to see the Greek Orthodox Church of St. George, which is famed for its 6th century-old Byzantine mosaic map of the Holy Land. We'll also visit Mount Nebo, which is known to be the burial place of Moses.

Next, we'll stop at the Kerak Castle, which is one of a few Crusader Fortresses spread across Jordan. The castle was built in the 12th century and provides breath-taking views of the surrounding hills and plains.

There is an option available tonight to get a first taste of the rose-red city by booking the Petra by Candlelight tour. If this is something you would like to experience, please chat to your travel consultant.

**OVERNIGHT:** Petra hotel

**MEALS:** Breakfast

**EXTRAS:**

## Day 5: Exploring Petra. Overnight camp in Wadi Rum

Today is all about exploring the Nabatean site of Petra. It was once the ancient capital of the Nabataean commercial empire until the Romans finally took over in 106AD. For a long period of time, Petra was forgotten - except by the local Bedouins - before it was rediscovered in 1812 by Swiss explorer Johann Ludwig Burckhardt. Petra can be found at the edge of the Wadi Aruba desert, where canyon walls and towering hills make it virtually impossible to reach, except via a narrow cleft in the rock, known as the Siq. There are very few free-standing buildings in Petra, as the Nabateans chose to carve their dwellings into the multi coloured sandstone cliffs. Petra has become one of Jordan's main tourist attractions and the Jordanian Government is well aware of this. The tourism infrastructure in the adjoining village of Wadi Musa is booming, though, thankfully, once you enter through the Siq, the site is protected, there aren't that many touts or souvenir sellers, and all the building feels miles away.

We have most of the day available today to explore this ancient city (2-3 hour guided tour, then free time to explore independently). We start by making our way through the Siq, which rises to 200 metres above us and narrows to just 2 metres wide in certain sections. Keep an eye out for the ancient Nabatean water channel which is still visible on one wall and there are remnants of the terracotta pipes that brought water into the city as well. We'll turn a corner and suddenly - one of the most familiar sights of Petra will be in front of you - The Khazneh (Treasury) comes into view. Our guide will explain how this, and the other buildings here, are mainly elaborate facades carved into the rock from the top down, and also discuss the spiritual significance of the building style.

From the Treasury, the valley opens out, and you'll see tombs carved into the rock on both sides. You'll get a glimpse of the ruined Roman amphitheatre and colonnaded streets and during your free time, you can walk up a steep and narrow winding gorge to the towering 'Monastery' - which is 50 metres high and 45 metres wide, giving you breath-taking views of the Wadi Aruba desert and the Jordan Valley. Another climb takes you to the High Place of Sacrifice, and Lion Fountain. All in all, this is a full and tiring exercise, but hugely rewarding day touring one of the world's most famous ancient sites.

Walking distances today are an absolute minimum of 3km through the Siq to the Treasury and back and to see a few tombs, 8km to take the trail on as far as the main basin, plus an additional few km to the Monastery and back (over 800 steps up and down). For those with less mobility or who are worried about the distance, horse carriages are available for around 20JD (USD 28) to take you on the 1.2km journey through the Siq to the Treasury and back again at an agreed time. They will also take you further in through the site for an extra fee. We do not recommend riding the horses that are available. Donkeys are available for the steps up to the Monastery - if you want to use them, we'd recommend doing this on the way up, not on the way down.

Later in the afternoon, we leave Petra and drive into the spectacular desert scenery of Wadi Rum where friendly

Bedouin hosts are ready to greet us at a comfortable camp beneath the towering rocks and cliffs. We spend the evening and night relaxing at the camp, watching the stars and enjoying a delicious traditional Jordanian meal.

**OVERNIGHT:** Bedouin camp in Wadi Rum

**MEALS:** Breakfast, Dinner

**EXTRAS:** None

## Day 6: Wadi Rum Jeep safari & visiting the Dead Sea

We start the day with a jeep safari, exploring the rugged desert scenery of Wadi Rum. Look out for the copper-coloured rocky jebels, which mesmerised TE Lawrence during his visit to the desert during the Arab Revolt and was later featured in the movie, Lawrence of Arabia.

We leave Wadi Rum later today and make our way towards the Dead Sea, which is the lowest point on earth coming in at 400 metres below sea level. The Dead Sea is also one of the world's most spiritual landscapes, filled with dramatic, natural wonders.

Numerous rivers run into the Dead Sea, including the River Jordan. Once the water reaches the Dead Sea, they become land-locked and eventually evaporates, leaving a dense, rich mixture of salt and minerals behind.

We'll stop to enjoy a 'swim' in the Dead Sea's salty waters, which will be a unique experience as the salinity makes it virtually impossible to swim but rather to float or sit in its waters. We finish the day back at our hotel in Amman.

**OVERNIGHT:** Amman hotel

**MEALS:** Breakfast

**EXTRAS:** Amman evening food tasting tour

## Day 7: Free time in Amman, airport transfer included

You have the day free to explore Amman before being transferred to the airport.

If you would like to squeeze in some more sightseeing, we can assist with optional day trips such as a visit to Aljoun Castle.

If you wish to extend the tour, we can arrange a transfer to Tel Aviv either by flight or overland for people wanting to connect this tour with our Biblical Israel tour departure which starts on Sunday.

**Note:** options and extensions are subject to flight departure times and may require extra days adding to your tour.

**OVERNIGHT:** N/A

**MEALS:** Breakfast

**EXTRAS:** Pella and Umm Qais || Extra day in Amman - post-tour

## Included

- Accommodation in 3-star hotels (upgrades are available)
- 1 night in a comfortable Bedouin camp in Wadi Rum
- All transport and transfers in AC minibus/coach
- 24-hour airport arrival & departure transfer service
- Professional local tour guide escorts groups of all sizes
- 4x4 jeep safari in Wadi Rum
- Entrance to Dead Sea beach with towel & showers
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary (all breakfasts, one lunch & one dinner)

## Excluded

- International flights (available on request)
- Visa fees (free visa included as part of your Jordan Pass)
- Entrance fees (included with your Jordan Pass, obtained in advance for JD78, approx. USD110)
- Travel insurance (compulsory, [available from Encounters Travel](#))
- Meals not indicated in the itinerary
- Hotel gala dinner supplements if applicable (24 & 31 Dec)
- Drinks, snacks and other personal expenses (e.g. laundry)
- Tips
- Any other items not mentioned above

# Options

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Our tours are designed to include all that you need to enjoy a really special time in the destination you're visiting.

However, we do also offer some extra options to complement the tour and add some additional sightseeing or activities, or some extra time at either end of the tour.

All accommodation based options (e.g. Single supplements, extra nights, cruise upgrades) should be booked and paid for in advance so that we can make the appropriate arrangements.

Other options may either be booked and paid for in advance or while you are on the tour, though we recommend booking in advance to ensure there are no issues with availability.

Many options are priced the same throughout the year, but some may incur single or high season supplements - full details are given on the tour reservation form or on request.

## Extra day in Amman - pre-tour

**Min numbers:** 1

This option adds an extra day to the start of your tour, staying in the same hotel as the main tour itself (subject to availability). Your airport arrival transfer is still included. Prices shown are per person and based on two people sharing. Note: Single room and peak season supplements apply.

**Price:** \$50

## Extra day in Amman - post-tour

**Min numbers:** 1

This option adds an extra day to the end of your tour, staying in the same hotel as the main tour itself (subject to availability). Your airport departure transfer is still included. Prices shown are per person and based on two people sharing. Note: Single room and peak season supplements apply.

**Price:** \$50

## Desert Castles and Nature Reserves tour

**Min numbers:** 1

After breakfast we leave Amman and head east to visit several of Jordan's Desert Castles - a fantastic reminder of its early Islamic art and architecture. These 'castles' were located on the old trade routes created during the Umayyad era and are more a combination of forts, bath houses and palaces than true castles. You can still see some mosaics, frescoes, carvings and illustrations on show, moulded by Persian and Graeco-Roman traditions, giving an insight into life during the 8th century. We'll explore the desert castles of Qasr al-Kharrana, Qal'at al-Azraq and Qseirr Amra and also visit two important nature reserves run by the Jordanian Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN). The Aqraq Wetland Reserve is a uniquely precious oasis located in the heart of Jordan's eastern desert, between a limestone desert in the west and a basalt desert in the east. The reserve features lush marshland, and glittering pools and streams that are a haven for migratory birds on the African-Eurasian flyway. The Shaumari Wildlife Reserve was initially created as a breeding and reintroduction centre for globally threatened and locally extinct wildlife, particularly the Arabian Oryx. These efforts continue and now a wide variety of rare animals make their home in the reserve, including Ostriches *Struthio camelus*, Goitered Gazelles, and Persian Onagers. Also found in the area are red foxes, wolves, striped hyenas, Caracals and wild cats, while bird sightings can include Imperial Eagles, Pallid Harriers and Egyptian vultures. There is a good visitor centre on site and guided safaris may be available into the reserve before we return to Amman depending on the time we have available and the reserve's current arrangements. For your last evening, why not head into Downtown Amman for a final taste of Jordanian food, perhaps giving Jordan's national dish of Mansaf a go, or the classic falafel and hummus, with a taste of Knafeh, a popular sweet desert to finish. This optional tour runs on the last day of the main tour and will normally require an extra night in the hotel in Amman is added tour, unless you have a late evening/night departure. A supplement will apply if there is only one person on the tour. &nbsp;

**Price:** \$140

## **Amman evening food tasting tour**

**Min numbers:** 1

This evening tour of Amman provides a great taste of traditional Jordanian food. We take a walk down Rainbow Street and through Downtown Amman, checking out the various local restaurants and street food available. Your guide will give you plenty of explanations of what is on offer, and what are the local favourites. During the tour we'll try several different dishes, starting with a snack of either Manakish (with its various toppings of egg, white cheese or za'atar) or a classic falafel sandwich. Then in Downtown Amman we'll try a main meal, perhaps the Jordanian national dish of Mansaf, slow cooked lamb with rice and yoghurt sauce. Finally we'll try one of the cities famous desserts like Knafeh from one the popular local sweet shops. Three dishes are included in the price of the tour, plus transfers to and from your hotel and your guide, but you'll need to pay for your own drinks. Meat dishes will be substituted with vegetarian options on request.&nbsp; Note. This option is available on any evening while you are in Amman. The tour can also be booked and paid for locally. If you are a solo traveller we recommend waiting until you are in Amman to book this, as the pricing is based on a minimum of two travellers. If you are two or more and know you want to do it, we recommend booking in advance so that we can have the guide and transport arrangements planned for you well in advance.&nbsp;

**Price:** \$70

## **Single room supplement**

**Min numbers:** 1

This tour is based on twin-share accommodation, with single bookers paired up with another traveller of the same sex in the group. If the final group make-up means that no room share is available, you do not need to pay this supplement. However, if you would like to guarantee yourself a single room throughout the tour, then please add this option to your booking. Note: Single supplement prices may vary seasonally.

**Price:** \$185

## **Superior hotel upgrade (Best of Jordan)**

**Min numbers:** 1

This option upgrades all your hotels on the tour from the local 3-star level up to 5-star. Your tent in Wadi Rum is upgraded to a private, deluxe en-suite tent (Pasha tents at Captains Desert Camp or similar if we are using a different camp on your departure). The specific hotels used may vary on different dates but include the Le Grand and Landmark hotels in Amman, and the Old Village or Hyatt Zaman in Petra. Prices are based on 2 people sharing a twin/double room. Single room supplements apply - please check the website reservation form for prices to match your preferred dates.

**Price:** \$465

# Tour Notes

## 1. Note

We use good quality mid-range hotels on this tour. Accommodation is based on twin or double en-suite rooms with air conditioning. All couples will stay in a private double room.

An upgrade is also available to local 5-star hotels in Amman and Petra if you would like a more luxurious stay. These can be considered basic international 5-star level in Amman, and decent 4-star level in Petra. Typical hotels used are the Landmark or Le Grand in Amman which are modern style hotels, and the Old Village Resort or Hyatt Zaman in Petra which are more traditional characterful properties.

In Wadi Rum we use a comfortable Bedouin camp located on the desert sands, against the cliffs. Accommodation is in permanent traditional goat hair tents with their own bathroom, proper beds and all bedding provided. You can also bring a sleeping bag if you wish, and find a sheltered spot on the rocks on the edge of the camp and sleep under the stars.

Please check the Single Room Supplement option for details on room sharing options and charges for solo travellers on this tour.

## 2. Transport

Our trips feature a mix of different transport options. We want you to feel like you're really experiencing the country you're travelling through, but at the same time we want you to finish journeys refreshed enough to enjoy the next stage of the tour. The small distances involved in Jordan mean that we use private vehicles throughout this tour. These will be minivans, minibuses or coaches, depending on the number of travellers in the group.

The jeeps used in Wadi Rum are provided by the local Bedouins we work with, and while suitable for your desert safari, they may fall below the normal safety and quality standards for vehicles we use during the rest of our tours.

## 3. Transfers

Your airport transfers are included on the first and last day of the set tour itinerary, plus on any additional days if you book your hotel room with us. If you make your own arrangements for additional accommodation at either the beginning or the end of the tour then you will need to arrange your own airport transfers on these days. We will provide detailed instructions of where to meet us in the airport, along with international and local emergency contact numbers, when we send you your final tour confirmation voucher about 2 weeks before departure.

On some of our group tours we do offer an optional upgrade to a higher level of hotels. If some people in the group take this upgrade, this will mean that there may be two pick-ups and drop-offs each day. We do endeavour to ensure that all hotels used are close to each other and to streamline and time arrangements to limit any extra driving time as much as possible.

## 4. Note

As one of our Small-Group tours, maximum group sizes are restricted to 18 people, while the tour is guaranteed to



depart with a minimum of just 2.

A professional licensed guide accompanies all groups of 5 or more throughout the whole tour. For groups of 2-4, one of our experienced English speaking drivers will escort the group with specialist local site guides used for the tours in As-Salt, Bethany, Jerash, Amman (Citadel), and Petra.

Travellers on our Jordan Express tour will join this trip on Day 2.

At Encounters Travel we aim to only use local Jordanian guides and reps. We feel this gives you the best experience of the country and the sites you are seeing as well as supporting the local population and economy.

## 5. Entrance fees & Jordan Pass

The tour price does not include entrance fees to the sites visited on the tour.

We strongly recommend that you purchase a **Jordan Pass** prior to your travel to Jordan. This is a special package that has been designed by the Jordanian Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities for tourists visiting Jordan. As well as including a discounted package of entrance fees covering all the sites in Jordan that you will visit on this tour (plus many others), the Jordan Pass also provides free downloadable digital brochures on each attraction, plus a free tourist visa for entering the country (40JD if obtained on arrival in Jordan). It also allows us to speed up our entry to each site as if everyone has the Jordan Pass we won't need to queue for tickets.

A handful of sites that we visit on our tours are not covered by the Jordan Pass (eg. Mt. Nebo, St. George's Church at Madaba, and the Shawmuri & Azraq Reserves), so to keep things simple for you while you are in Jordan, where these are visited in our itineraries, the entry fees are included in your tour price. If you visit any other sites not covered by the Jordan Pass during your free time or on additional tours you arrange while in Jordan, you will need to pay the entrance fee at the site.

The cost for the **Jordan Wanderer Pass** which is suitable for all our tours which visit Petra on one day is JD70 (approx. US\$99). You should also check if your tour visits the Baptism Site at Bethany and if it does, add on the supplement for this site (an extra JD8, discounted from the JD12 payable at the site). Passes are available by completing a simple online form before you travel, taking care to make sure your passport details are entered correctly as this doubles as your visa application. Your Jordan Pass will then be emailed to you as a pdf document, which you should print out and bring with you. You will then need to show this print out at the immigration desk on arrival in Jordan to obtain your free entry visa, and also at each attraction where it will be scanned to confirm your entry. [Obtain your Jordan Pass here](#)

If you do not obtain the Jordan Pass before arriving in Jordan, you will need to pay the entry fees when you arrive at each site and also pay JD40 for your Jordan visa when you enter the country (or arrange your visa in advance).

[More information about the Jordan Pass.](#)

## 6. International Flights

We want to give you as much flexibility as possible when it comes to booking your holiday with us. So, to take account of people with varying travel plans, we don't include your international flights in the main tour price. We are however very happy to suggest flights to go with the tour. Please contact us with your preferred dates and departure airport and we'll give you a selection of airlines, times and fares to choose from.

Your airport arrival & departure transfers are included on the first and last days of the tour.

Nearly all our Jordan tours start and finish at Amman airport (AMM). Private and tailor-made tours may also start or finish in Aqaba (AQJ).

We do also sometimes advertise flight inclusive packages from selected airports. Where these are shown on our website, prices are correct at the time of quoting, but are subject to continued availability of the fare used. Prices will

be reconfirmed at the time of booking, and we will also provide the flight times and airline details before tickets are issued.

Flight inclusive prices are based on the cheapest Economy ticket class available which is generally non-refundable and non-changeable unless the flight is cancelled for reasons such as Covid-19, in which case the airlines are more flexible. More flexible ticket options, as well as Premium Economy and Business Class tickets are available on request for an additional supplement. Any changes made to flight inclusive bookings will be subject to the airline rules on your ticket.

## 7. Passports and Visas - Jordan

Passports should be valid for at least six months after your departure from the country. Please do not bring an almost full or almost expired passport. Visa arrangements are the responsibility of the traveller, and requirements are subject to change by the local authorities.

To promote tourism to the country, the Jordanian government has designed the **Jordan Pass**. This provides adults of most nationalities with a free single entry Jordan visa (for stays of 3 nights or more), a discounted package of entrance fees, and free digital brochures for the various sites in Jordan. Please check the Jordan Pass tour note for more information.

Double or multi entry visas for Jordan are no longer available and you will need to arrange two visas if you are doing a combination tour (eg. with Egypt and/or Israel) that visits Jordan more than once. Exceptions may occur if you are crossing to and from Israel via the King Hussein Bridge - please contact us for details.

If you wish to arrange your visa separately in advance, or if your stay will be shorter than four days/3 nights, then a visa fee of 40JD (approx. USD 57) will be due.

Families with children under 12 are recommended not to purchase the Jordan Pass as entrance fees are not charged in Jordan for children under 12. Our Jordan Family tour prices include your entrance fees and we will also arrange a free visa for you on your arrival into Amman airport.

Other nationalities may require a visa prior to arrival and to obtain this in advance, please contact your local Jordanian embassy or consulate or a visa agency for details. In addition, if you plan to enter Jordan via the southern Wadi Araba crossing (Eilat-Aqaba) or the Allenby Bridge/King Hussein border with Israel in the north, you will need to obtain your Jordan visa in advance as these are not available on arrival at the border.

## 8. Money - Jordan

The local currency in Jordan is the Jordanian Dinar (JD). You do not need to arrange to bring any Jordanian Dinar with you to Jordan as exchange facilities are available in the international airports and in most hotels, banks and bureau de changes in major towns. You should try to obtain and keep hold of small denomination notes or coins on you during the tour as these are useful for toilets, tips and small purchases. ATMs are readily available in major towns and many local shops will accept VISA/Mastercard or Amex, but may charge fees of up to 10% - check before you pay. Travellers cheques are not recommended as they can not be changed in many places now, and can incur high fees.

While in Jordan you will need sufficient funds to cover meals not included in the itinerary, drinks, snacks, souvenirs and personal expenses such as laundry. These should generally all be paid for in Jordanian Dinar, though tips for guides and drivers may be paid in hard currency (GBP, USD, EUR).

It is difficult to recommend a level of personal spending money which will suit everyone as this can differ greatly, but as a guideline, we would suggest allowing USD 15-25 per person per day as a minimum. Allow more if you plan on doing lots of shopping, or buying many alcoholic drinks.

## 9. Tipping

Tipping for services provided is part of the local culture in Jordan, is often expected, and will be very gratefully received. While the amount you tip is subject to your satisfaction with the services provided and your personal budget, we are often asked for help and guidelines and can therefore suggest that you allow approx.:

Tour guides: US\$8-10 per person per day

Drivers: US\$3-5 per person per day

Restaurants: 10% or leave the change

Petra horse boys: US\$2-5 (we recommend against riding the horses for animal welfare and safety concerns, but the boys may still expect a tip)

## 10. What to take

**Luggage:** Suitcases, rucksacks or fabric holdalls are all fine to bring with you to Jordan. You should also bring a small daypack/bag to take out during the day. Your main luggage will normally be left in the hotel during your sightseeing trips - you will not need to carry it far, and there are nearly always hotel porters to assist.

**Luggage limits:** There is no luggage limit for this tour. However, most airlines restrict you to between 20kg and 25kg for your hold luggage and between 5kg and 10kg for hand luggage. Please check with your airline before travelling to the airport.

**Clothing:** The climate in Jordan varies widely from hot days in the summer to cool and sometimes wet days in the winter months. At night, especially in the deserts, the temperatures can drop quite dramatically. So you must pack for cool conditions. Formal dress (eg. suits & ties) is not required. Modesty rates highly in Jordan, especially for women, so to respect the local culture and people, please ensure all clothes are loose fitting and not revealing. Shorts (not hot-pants) are OK in tourist sites, as are T-shirts, but these should not show too much bare flesh (we suggest that your shoulders should remain covered). When visiting any mosques, legs and arms should be covered.

**Other items:** If your tour includes an overnight Bedouin camp then bedding is provided but we recommend bringing a light sleeping sheet or sleeping bag liner for comfort all year round (even with the best efforts, sand does find its way pretty much everywhere). In the winter months, or if you think you would like to sleep under the stars instead of in your tent, then we recommend you bring a sleeping bag with you as it can get very cold at night. We also recommend you bring a sun hat, sunscreen, sunglasses, a basic first aid kit, toiletries, money belt, small torch, camera & charger.

## 11. Health and Vaccinations

You should ensure you are fully insured for medical emergencies including emergency evacuation and repatriation.

Recommended vaccinations and other health protection measures vary according to the country you are visiting and where you are travelling from. We recommend you contact your GP/medical practitioner or a travel clinic for current information on vaccinations needed for your destination. You should ensure that you are up to date with vaccines and boosters recommended for your normal life at home, including for example, vaccines required for occupational risk of exposure, lifestyle risks and underlying medical conditions.

In addition, additional courses or boosters normally recommended for the countries in this region are:

Egypt: Tetanus, Typhoid, Hepatitis A

Jordan: Tetanus, Hepatitis A

Israel: Hepatitis A, Poliomyelitis

Lebanon: Diphtheria, Hepatitis A

Malaria is not generally present unless it has been contracted abroad; you do not need to take malaria prophylactics.

More information is available here: [Egypt](#), [Jordan](#), [Israel](#), [Lebanon](#)

Note: We are aware of some places in Egypt using 'black henna' instead of pure brown henna. Black henna contains a chemical dye PPD (paraphenylenediamine) which can result in severe allergic reactions and resultant scarring. To be safe we recommend avoiding any henna tattoos while in Egypt unless you are certain they are using pure brown henna.

## 12. Time

The time in Egypt, Jordan, Israel and Lebanon is GMT plus 2 hours and in UAE GMT plus 3 hours. Daylight saving adjustments have historically been applied in some years but not others. At present it appears that there will be no daylight saving changes in Egypt 2016 and beyond, though this may change at short notice (with a resulting impact on flight times and schedules). In Jordan and Israel, daylight saving of one hour is generally applied between the end of March and the end of October, making it GMT plus 3 hours. Exact dates vary from year to year and sometimes the changes may be scrapped altogether.

## 13. Voltage

Sockets are two round pronged and 220 volts (Type C). Universal adaptors are available in most airport shops if you don't have one already. Standard European adapters will work fine, though sometimes they may feel a little loose in the sockets. All hotel rooms have electrical sockets where you can re-charge cameras, phones etc. Hair dryers are normally available on request from the hotel reception if not in your room already.

If you have US appliances (110 volts) you will need a voltage converter as well as a plug adapter.

## 14. Note

We run regular departures on this tour starting on Sundays throughout the year. All departures are guaranteed to run with a minimum of 2 participants. Departure dates & prices are given on our website (please check the website for up-to-date prices & special offers). Note: On some dates the tour will start on a Saturday instead of the usual Sunday. On these dates the Desert Castles day trip will move from the end of the tour to the start of the trip. Everything else remains the same.

## 15. Booking & Payment

If you would like to book a place on this tour, please complete the online reservation form on our website (via the Dates & Prices tab on the tour page). You may make a deposit or full payment online, or just hold a reservation if you prefer (full payments are due 8 weeks before departure). We will then contact you with more details about how to complete your booking. Payments may be made by debit or credit card (subject to a card processing fee), or by making a bank transfer, or posting us a cheque/bank draft. Full details will be provided in your booking confirmation email. Please [contact us](#) if you would like any more information or have any questions before making a booking.

## 16. Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is compulsory on all of our tours and needs to cover personal accident & liability, medical expenses and repatriation, travel delay & abandonment. We also strongly recommend that you take out cover against cancellation and lost/stolen baggage. Personal medical insurance does not normally provide sufficient cover and is generally not suitable for travel on our tours. You will not be able to join your tour if you have not provided us with details of your insurance or if you arrive without cover in place (no refunds will be due in this event). [More information...](#)

You may arrange your own insurance, or you can take advantage of a comprehensive policy that we can arrange for you through Endsleigh Insurance which has been designed to be suitable for our tours. The policy is available to travellers of all nationalities and you do not need to live in the UK to take out the policy. For full details of cover provided, prices and to apply for one of our policies, please complete [travel insurance application form](#).

Note: Any country that borders the Mediterranean is considered as 'Europe' for the purposes of travel insurance (including Turkey, Israel, Egypt and Morocco). If you are doing a tour that visits one country in 'Europe' and one that is 'Worldwide' (for example, an Egypt and Jordan tour), then you need a 'Worldwide' policy. When completing the form you should enter your travel dates including any extra days involved in overnight flights or connecting travel between your home and the tour. Our policies are not able to cover any extra time or activities other than your tour and options booked with us and your travel to & from home.

Note - to comply with insurance sales regulations, our travel insurance policies are only available to customers booking directly with us. If you have booked through a travel agent you will need to arrange your own insurance.

If your tour includes car hire, or if you plan to arrange a hot air balloon flight locally or do some scuba diving during your tour, you should check the small print in your policy to make sure these are covered (these are covered in our policy). Please also check the maximum altitude that you will be reaching and that full cover including emergency evacuation is provided up to this altitude.

If you are taking expensive camera gear or other electronic equipment with you then please check the coverage and the fine print of your policy to ensure that you have sufficient cover.

*IMPORTANT: We must have your travel insurance details (policy number and type of insurance) before you depart or you may not be allowed to join the tour. If you haven't told us already, please let us know the details when you can. You should take a paper copy of your insurance policy with you as you may be asked to show this at the start of the tour.*

### **Covid-19**

**Before purchasing any travel insurance, please check the coverage provided for situations related to Covid-19, and for the rules about government travel advice. Your normal policy may not be suitable. Details about our own policies cover levels are given [on our website](#).**

## **17. Financial Security**

We are a UK registered company and are committed to providing our customers with financial protection to provide peace of mind and to allow you to book with confidence.

We have therefore partnered with Trust My Travel Ltd., which provides financial protection services to over 2000 partners around the world. Funds paid to us by our customers are protected via an Insurance policy held by Trust My Travel. Each traveller and the description of services sold is declared against Trust My Travel's insurance policy directly against our financial failure. In the event of our insolvency, you will be refunded for any unfulfilled products and/or repatriation to the UK (where applicable). Please see [our website](#) or [booking conditions](#) for more information.

## **18. Responsible Tourism**

It is impossible not to have an impact on the local environment, cultures and eco-systems when you travel. However, it is very possible to try and ensure that these impacts are as limited, or positive as possible. We are committed to ensuring that we try to leave our host countries in a better state than we found them and encourage and assist our travellers to help us with this.

The following are a few simple tips that require very little effort on your part but which will help ensure that any effect you have on the locations you visit is positive rather than negative.

- Don't prejudge: Things in different countries will almost certainly be different. That doesn't make them worse or inferior, just different.
- Communicate: Don't expect locals to speak your language. Take the trouble to learn a few words or phrases of the local language. Don't worry about sounding silly. Most locals are patient and accommodating and appreciate you making the effort to communicate in their language.
- Conserve energy: Be careful not to waste valuable resources. Use local resources sparingly. Switch off lights, air-conditioning and fans when you leave the hotel room and don't waste water. Remove superfluous packaging. Many countries have far less efficient waste disposal systems than ours. Remove packaging from newly acquired items before leaving home.
- Don't litter: No matter how untidy or dirty the country you're travelling in may look to you, avoid littering, as there is no need to add to the environment's stress. Many of the countries we visit have a tough challenge dealing with rubbish and waste. Please consider taking home as much plastic waste as you can (e.g. water bottles).
- Choose environmentally friendly products: By using environmentally friendly (bio degradable) sun creams, shampoos and detergents you can help reduce pollution.
- Respect local customs and traditions: As you are a guest in these countries, you should also comply with the local customs. If you are friendly and well mannered, the locals will reciprocate and it will only enhance your experience. It's important to follow dress and behaviour guidelines especially when visiting religious or sacred sites (your tour leader will advise you how best to do this).
- If a client commits an illegal act the client may be excluded from the tour and Encounters Travel shall cease to have responsibility to/for them. No refund will be given for any unused services.

All porters are employed and equipped following guidelines set by the International Porter Protection Group (IPPG).

## 19. Follow Us Online

You can stay in touch with us online by following us on Facebook and Twitter. We post updates on relevant travel news in our destination countries, special offers and discounts and other interesting travel related news and information.

[www.facebook.com/encounterstravel](http://www.facebook.com/encounterstravel)

[www.twitter.com/encounterstravl](http://www.twitter.com/encounterstravl) (yes, without the 'e')

## 20. Before you travel

It is important when considering and preparing to travel anywhere in the world that you have a good understanding of the country you are visiting, its laws and customs, and the possible risks and situations that may occur. This includes specific risks related to your itinerary (eg. does it involve water & can you swim, are you fit enough for the activities included), as well as more general risks such as terrorism and natural disasters.

General details and links to more information about health risks, visa requirements, money, and travel insurance are given in these tour notes. We recommend that you re-read all these before your departure as well as the small print of your travel insurance policy so you know exactly what is covered and what is not.

You should take copies of your important travel documents with you and ideally also store them online securely as a

backup. Make sure that you have given us your emergency contact details and told that person where and when you are travelling. Ensure you take enough money with you and that you have access to emergency funds.

Finally, you should read through and stay updated with the current [official government travel advice](#) for your destination. We are registered partners with the UK Foreign Office's '[Travel Aware](#)' campaign which provides further useful and invaluable information.

## 21. Entrance Fees & Jordan Pass

The tour price does not include entrance fees to the sites visited on the tour.

We strongly recommend that you purchase a **Jordan Pass** prior to your travel to Jordan. This is a special package that has been designed by the Jordanian Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities for tourists visiting Jordan. As well as including a discounted package of entrance fees covering all the sites in Jordan that you will visit on this tour (plus many others), the Jordan Pass also provides free downloadable digital brochures on each attraction, plus a free tourist visa for entering the country (40JD if obtained on arrival in Jordan). It also allows us to speed up our entry to each site as if everyone has the Jordan Pass we won't need to queue for tickets.

A handful of sites that we visit on our tours are not covered by the Jordan Pass (eg. Mt. Nebo, St. George's Church at Madaba, and the Shawmuri & Azraq Reserves), so to keep things simple for you while you are in Jordan, where these are visited in our itineraries, the entry fees are included in your tour price. If you visit any other sites not covered by the Jordan Pass during your free time or on additional tours you arrange while in Jordan, you will need to pay the entrance fee at the site.

The cost for the **Jordan Wanderer Pass** which is suitable for all our tours which visit Petra on one day is JD70 (approx. US\$99). You should also check if your tour visits the Baptism Site at Bethany and if it does, add on the supplement for this site (an extra JD8, discounted from the JD12 payable at the site). Passes are available by completing a simple online form before you travel, taking care to make sure your passport details are entered correctly as this doubles as your visa application. Your Jordan Pass will then be emailed to you as a pdf document, which you should print out and bring with you. You will then need to show this print out at the immigration desk on arrival in Jordan to obtain your free entry visa, and also at each attraction where it will be scanned to confirm your entry. [Obtain your Jordan Pass here](#)

If you do not obtain the Jordan Pass before arriving in Jordan, you will need to pay the entry fees when you arrive at each site and also pay JD40 for your Jordan visa when you enter the country (or arrange your visa in advance).

[More information about the Jordan Pass.](#)

### Egypt:

In Egypt, the tour price does not include entrance fees to the tourist sites mentioned in the itinerary. Please check the Exclusions section for a guide to the amount you should allow for this tour (a 50% discount for minors or ISIC card holders is often, but not always available and prices are changed from time to time). For your convenience, your guide will normally collect payment for all the entrance fees in cash at the start of the tour, and pay them for you as you go along.

## 22. International Flights

We want to give you as much flexibility as possible when it comes to booking your holiday with us. So, to take account of people with varying travel plans, we don't include your international flights in the main tour price. We are however very happy to suggest flights to go with the tour. Please contact us with your preferred dates and departure airport and we'll give you a selection of airlines, times and fares to choose from.

Your airport arrival & departure transfers are included on the first and last days of the tour.



On tours combining Jordan and Egypt we do not include the connecting flight between the two countries in the tour price (normally between Amman (AMM) and Cairo (CAI) - see the inclusions/exclusions or extension option sections for details). This flight can often be built into your main international flight ticket, or we may be able to book this flight for you separately if you prefer - please contact us and we will advise you on available airlines, times and prices.

We do also sometimes advertise flight inclusive packages from selected airports. Where these are shown on our website, prices are correct at the time of quoting, but are subject to continued availability of the fare used. Prices will be reconfirmed at the time of booking, and we will also provide the flight times and airline details before tickets are issued.

Flight inclusive prices are based on the cheapest Economy ticket class available which is generally non-refundable and non-changeable unless the flight is cancelled for reasons such as Covid-19, in which case the airlines are more flexible. More flexible ticket options, as well as Premium Economy and Business Class tickets are available on request for an additional supplement. Any changes made to flight inclusive bookings will be subject to the airline rules on your ticket.

## 23. Tipping

**Jordan:** Tipping is common practice in Jordan, as a sign of appreciation for services provided. You may therefore wish to tip your guide and driver at the end of the tour. You should not feel obliged to tip any particular amount, and should consider your personal budget. We are often asked to provide a guide however, and can suggest that approx. US\$3-8 per person per day would be appropriate.

**Egypt:** Tipping is also very much a part of Egyptian culture and customs, and many people you meet along the way will expect and make it clear they are waiting for a tip. To make it easier for you to budget and to remove much of the stress and hassle of tipping lots of people as you go along, we collect a 'Tipping Kitty' at the start of your time in Egypt. Your guide will manage this as the tour goes along and ask one or more of the group members to assist and make some of the payments. The kitty provides tips for a wide range of people you'll meet along the tour including hotel porters, train and station staff, drivers, site guards, local reps etc. Please check the Excluded section below the tour itinerary for a budget for this tour. Your Egyptologist guide is not included in this kitty and you may tip them at the end of your tour subject to your satisfaction with and appreciation of the service they have provided. Again you should not feel obliged to tip any particular amount, and should consider your personal budget. As a guideline, approx. US\$3-8 per person per day would be appropriate.

## 24. What to take

**Luggage:** Suitcases, rucksacks or fabric holdalls are all fine to bring with you to Egypt and Jordan. You should also bring a small daypack/bag to take out during the day. Your main luggage will normally be left in the hotel during your sightseeing trips - you will not need to carry it far, and there are nearly always hotel porters to assist.

**Luggage limits:** There is no luggage limit for this tour. However, most airlines restrict you to between 20kg and 25kg for your hold luggage and between 5kg and 10kg for hand luggage. Please check with your airline before travelling to the airport.

**Clothing:** Most of your time in Egypt will be in a hot weather, while the climate in Jordan varies widely from hot days in the summer to cool and sometimes wet days in the winter months. However, at night, and especially in the deserts, the temperatures can drop quite dramatically. So you must pack for cool conditions. Formal dress (eg. suits & ties) is not required on the cruise boats or in 4 or 5-star hotel restaurants. Long sleeves are recommended to protect from mosquitoes if you are on the felucca. Modesty rates highly in Egypt and Jordan, especially for women, so to respect the local culture & people, please ensure all clothes are loose fitting and not revealing. Shorts (not hot-pants) are OK in tourist sites, as are T-shirts, but these should not show too much bare flesh (we suggest that your shoulders should remain covered). In the centre of Cairo and Amman, and when visiting any mosques, legs and



arms should be covered.

**Other items:** We recommend that you bring a sun hat, sunscreen, sunglasses, a basic first aid kit, toiletries, small towel, money belt, small torch, camera & charger. If you will be travelling on a felucca sailboat in Egypt then we recommend bringing a light sleeping sheet or sleeping bag liner all year round for comfort, and a light sleeping bag in the winter months (November to February). If your tour includes an overnight Bedouin camp in Jordan then bedding (sheets, blankets, pillow) is provided but we recommend bringing a light sleeping sheet or sleeping bag liner for comfort all year round (even with the best efforts, sand does find its way pretty much everywhere). In the winter months, or if you think you would like to sleep under the stars instead of in your tent, then we recommend you bring a sleeping bag with you as it can get very cold at night.

**Footwear:** For tours that are going on board a felucca sailboat, or walking on the Siq Trail in Wadi Mujib, we recommend that you bring some footwear that you don't mind getting completely wet. As there is a fair amount of walking involved on many of our tours in Jordan and Egypt, whether that be just sightseeing or some hiking, we recommend you bring comfortable walking shoes with you. You do not need any smart dress shoes, unless you want to visit some fancy restaurants and to dress up accordingly.

## 25. Transfers

Our Egypt and Jordan tours include a 24-hour airport meet & assist service in Amman and Cairo airports, your arrival and departure airport-hotel transfers and all other transfers.

On arrival in Jordan our representative will meet you in the immigration hall of Amman airport, before passport control. They will assist with visa formalities and then help you with your luggage and take you to your hotel.

On arrival in Egypt, our representative will meet you in the immigration hall of Cairo airport before you get to passport control. They will assist with visa formalities before helping you collect your luggage and taking you to your hotel.

Your airport transfers are only included on the first and last day of the set tour itinerary, plus on any additional days if you book your hotel room with us. If you make your own arrangements for additional accommodation at either the beginning or the end of the tour then you will need to arrange your own airport transfers on these days.

On our Shoestring group tours we do offer optional hotel upgrades in Jordan. This may mean that additional pick-up and drop-offs are required each day. We do endeavour to ensure that all hotels used are close to each other and to streamline and time arrangements to limit any extra driving time as much as possible.

## 26. What to take

**Luggage:** Suitcases, rucksacks or fabric holdalls are all fine to bring with you to Israel and Jordan. You should also bring a small daypack/bag to take out during the day. Your main luggage will normally be left in the hotel during your sightseeing trips – you will not need to carry it far, and there are nearly always hotel porters to assist.

**Luggage limits:** There is no luggage limit for this tour. However, most airlines restrict you to between 20kg and 25kg for your hold luggage and between 5kg and 10kg for hand luggage. Please check with your airline before travelling to the airport.

**Clothing:** The climate in Israel and Jordan varies widely from hot days in the summer to cool and sometimes wet days in the winter months. At night, especially in the deserts, the temperatures can drop quite dramatically. So you must pack for cool conditions. Formal dress (eg. suits & ties) is not required. Modesty rates highly in Jordan (and parts of Israel), especially for women, so to respect the local culture & people, please ensure all clothes are loose fitting and not revealing. Shorts (not hot-pants) are OK in tourist sites, as are T-shirts, but these should not show too much bare flesh (we suggest that your shoulders should remain covered). When visiting any mosques, legs and arms should be covered.

**Other items:** At the Bedouin camp bedding is provided but we recommend bringing a light sleeping sheet or sleeping bag liner for comfort all year round (even with the best efforts, sand does find its way pretty much everywhere). In the winter months, or if you think you would like to sleep under the stars instead of in your tent, then we recommend you bring a sleeping bag with you as it can get very cold at night. We also recommend you bring a sun hat, sunscreen, sunglasses, a basic first aid kit, toiletries, money belt, small torch, camera & charger.

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**Note:** Please [download an up-to-date copy](#) of these tour notes shortly before you travel as itineraries and information does change from time to time.

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