

Jordan – a Woman’s Journey

March 10-21, 2020



JB
Journeys



What is life like for a woman in Jordan?

On this interesting itinerary designed for women travelers only, we’ll take a look behind the hijab or the burqa to learn about a woman’s life here and hopefully, to find commonalities. No visit to Jordan would be complete without time spent at Petra, the UNESCO World Heritage site, a city carved in sandstone. In addition, we will visit the archaeological site Umm el-Jimal and meet members of the UJ Women’s Cooperative Society. We’ll explore some of the Desert Castles and sleep under the stars, visit craft

co-ops, and finally – we’ll end our whirlwind visit to Jordan in the most relaxing way – by floating on the Dead Sea!

Day 1 - March 10 – Tuesday Pick up from the airport and drop off at your hotel in Amman. We will meet our fellow travelers this evening for a traditional dinner.

Overnight: The Art Hotel (B)

Day 2 – March 11 – Wednesday - Breakfast at the hotel and then head out for a morning tour of Amman, passing by the old Citadel and the Temple of Hercules, followed by a visit to the downtown area and the Roman Amphitheater. Afterwards, we will have a traditional lunch at Hashem Restaurant. Some say you haven’t been to Jordan until you have eaten here. And more – we’ll have dessert at Habiba for the best local *Kanafeh*, a traditional Arab dessert made with thin noodle-like pastry, soaked in sweet, sugar-based syrup, and typically layered with cheese.



In the afternoon we will visit the [Tiraz Widad Kawar](#), a spectacular collection of Arab dress. Many of you know our fascination with textiles and we look forward to seeing this, the largest collection of Palestinian and Jordanian traditional costumes, weavings, home utensils and jewelry, dating from the 19th and 20th centuries. The center opened only in 2015 but Widad has been collecting the pieces for decades and until recently, accepted visitors to her home where she stored the textiles. With wars and resettlement in the Arab lands, this important collection is both a geography and history lesson of the area and the women who created these pieces.

In the evening we will go to **Beit Sitti**, which means ‘my grandmother’s house’ for a cooking class and dinner.

Overnight: The Art Hotel (B, L, D)

Day 3 – March 12 – Thursday After breakfast at the hotel, we will drive towards Ajloun Castle in northwestern Jordan, a Muslim fortress built to protect against invasions by the Crusaders.

After dropping off the luggage and checking into the lodge, we will go on a brief hike to explore the beauty and the lush forests of the Ajloun Forest Reserve. Springtime should be beautiful with wildflowers in bloom and our walk should offer great views of the Jordan Valley.

Dinner will be had at a local homestay in Ajloun.



Overnight: RSCN Ajloun Lodge (B, L, D)

Day 4/5 – March 13/14– Friday/Saturday After breakfast we will drive to [Umm El-Jimal](#), about a 1.5-hour drive from Ajloun. Umm el-Jimal (*Mother of Camels*) is located in northern Jordan and is home to almost two thousand years of fascinating history and culture—as well as a vibrant modern community. The best-preserved Byzantine town in the Southern Hauran region, archaeological investigation has been underway on location for over a century. From *Archaeology* magazine:



Umm el-Jimal is an exceptional example of a prosperous agricultural town on the frontier of the successive Roman, Byzantine, and Islamic empires. Its ruins include more than 150 structures (some intact for up to six stories), a Roman city wall and praetorium (an official governor's residence), and a remarkable system of water channels and reservoirs that extend up to three miles into the surrounding countryside. The site also has a wealth of inscriptions in Nabatean, Greek, Latin, and Arabic. Today, a modern village inhabited by about 6,000 Mesaeid Bedouin has grown in and around the ancient site.

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The archaeological research is directed by Dr. Bert de Vries of Calvin College. (For those of you who have traveled with us to Guatemala and visited the Community Cloudforest Conservation project in the central part of the country, Dr. de Vries is the father of Tara Cahill). The project now has a holistic approach and includes sustainable tourism as part of its mission. We look forward to meeting members of the Women's Cooperative Society, formed in 2010 to bring opportunities for women to earn and to maintain their ancient and modern cultural heritage.

Touring the archaeological site and the interpretive center will take up much of the first afternoon. Together with the women at UJ, we'll assist in cooking a Zarb, a traditional meal that is cooked underground, and also learn about the Bedouin culture of the Hauran people. Our accommodations will be in home stays within the village. (Rooms have two beds and private baths, no singles available here).

Overnights: Umm el-Jimal homestay (B, L, D)

Day 6 – March 15 – Sunday After breakfast, drive to the historic town of **Madaba**, famous for its Ottoman-style houses and beautiful Byzantine-era mosaics, including the 6th-century mosaic map of Jerusalem and the Holy Land at St George's Church. Other mosaic masterpieces found within churches and the Archaeological Museum depict a rampant profusion of flora and fauna, as well as scenes from mythology and daily life. Literally hundreds of other mosaics from the 5th to 7th centuries are scattered throughout Madaba's churches and homes.



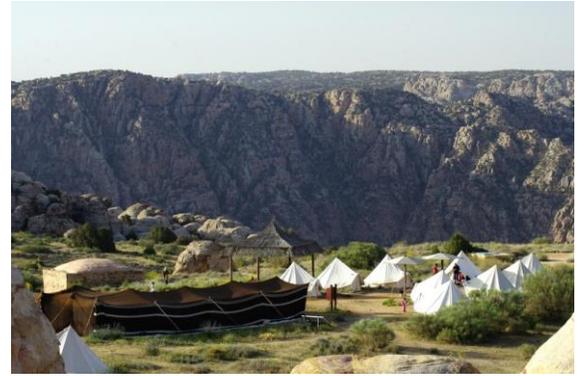
Next we go to **Mt Nebo**, the spot where the prophet Moses is said to have seen the 'promised land' and is believed to be buried. From there we will head to our hotel for check-in and lunch on your own.

Dinner tonight will be at Haret Ejdoudnah, meaning ‘our ancestors neighborhood restaurant’, for excellent authentic food.

Overnight: Mariam Hotel, Madaba (B, D)

Day 7 – March 16 – Monday

We’ll leave the hotel after an early breakfast. On the way we will stop at **Karak Castle** to visit an old and impressive crusader fortress, and have our lunch in the town of Karak, well known for the typical Jordanian dish called *mansaf*, a typical Jordanian dish with lamb. Afterwards, we will continue to our campsite in the **Dana Biosphere Reserve**. We will start preparing a campsite dinner, that we will then enjoy around a bonfire.



Overnight: Rummana Campsite (B, L, D)

Day 8 – March 17 – Tuesday

After breakfast at the campsite, we will transfer to the beginning of our day-hike from Dana’s Old Village to Feynan, an area of ancient Roman copper mines. The trail is about 8 miles, mostly downhill and groomed, descending through beautiful scenery along **Wadi Dana**, (*Wadi: oasis or stream bed*) eventually arriving at the Feynan Eco Lodge, where we can enjoy a delicious vegetarian lunch. Non-hikers will be transferred to the lodge, where we will all meet up to watch the sunset from an excellent view point. In the evening, we will have a stargazing session with the local Bedouins of the area. This is an activity not to miss!

Overnight: Feynan Eco Lodge (B, L, D)

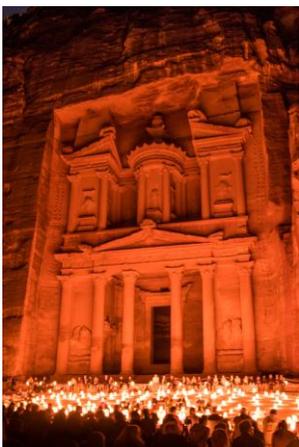
Day 9 - March 18 – Wednesday

We leave the Eco-Lodge after breakfast, hop in 4X4s to get back to the main road and meet our van for the drive to **Petra**. Our guide in the Petra area is Mahmoud, who will lead us around the spectacular Nabateans ruins for about 3-4 hours. After the tour, we will check-in to our hotel to freshen up and rest a bit.

In the evening we will go to Fatimah’s house, Mahmoud’s wife, for dinner and to learn more about Bedouin culture and way of life.



Overnight: Sunset Hotel (B, L, D)



Day 10 – March 19 – Thursday After breakfast, we will drive to **Little Petra**, also known as *Beida* to visit more Nabataean ruins, in addition to a Neolithic farm from around 9,000 years ago. We will also include camel riding around the area, and lunch will be served at the Ammarin Bedouin Camp; a family owned campsite. We will be able to sit with some of the elderly and learn more about their stories and history.

Return back to the hotel for some free time in the evening and dinner. At 8:00 PM we will leave for the **Petra-By-Night**.

Overnight: Sunset Hotel (B, L, D)

Day 11 – March 20 – Friday

This morning after breakfast we will drive along the King's Highway. Time permitting, we can make a stop at Lot's Cave and the Sugar Mills in Ghor El Safi. While at Ghor El Safi, we will visit the women of **Safi Crafts**, who have brought back the ancient art of indigo dyes and are now selling lovely textiles. Archaeological records show that indigo was grown and used here back to Islamic period, but in the early 1900s that all disappeared when synthetic dyes were introduced. A group of local women fought to form their own coop and to bring indigo seeds from India, and today are producing the famous deep blue color much as it was done thousands of years ago.



From here we'll continue to the **Dead Sea**. The shores of the Dead Sea are at the lowest land elevation on Earth, at more than 1300 feet below sea level. The name is due to the high salinity level (nine times that of the world's oceans) so that very few microorganisms can live in its waters. Here we'll have time to relax and float or you can opt to visit a spa. Our final dinner will be at the hotel.

Overnight: Movenpick Hotel (B, L, D)

Day 12 – March 21 – Saturday Breakfast, checkout and then transfer to the airport, about 1.5 hours drive.

Itinerary subject to change due to weather, road conditions, situations beyond our control.

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COST:

- \$2895 per person in double occupancy with 14 participants. (With 12: \$3095, with 10: \$3250, with 8: \$3495; with 6: \$3595).
- Single \$450. Singles are very limited and are not available for 2 nights at Umm el-Jimal. Single rooms are either a smaller room or a double at single rate.
- Minimum 6 to operate, maximum 14 participants.
- To confirm your spot, please [complete the reservation form on-line](#).
- Deposit \$750 to hold space; final payment will due Dec 10, 2019.
- Cancellation policy – up to 120 days prior to departure, \$250/person. 119-60 days, 25%. Inside 60-non-refundable

INCLUDED:

- Driver & transportation as listed by van or coach, depending on group size
- 11 nights hotel, lodge or home stay
- Bilingual guide through with local guides at sites
- Entry fees to sites listed
- Taxes
- Meals as listed
- Basic gratuities for hotels, meals, local guides & driver
- **Jordan visa**

NOT INCLUDED:

- Airfare (to and from Amman)
- Bar bill
- Laundry
- Personal expenses
- Travel Insurance
- Tips to main guide

*Suggested tipping for guide:

→ lead guide: \$10-15 per person/per day