

# Explore Jordan

## 35 Ultimate Things to Do in Jordan

Jordan is a country that's practically begging to be on your bucket list. Not only are there a number of unique experiences and sites you can only find in Jordan, but many of them are also well-known thanks to pop culture and travelers who have come before and returned home with stories that inspire you to travel – like me, with this blog!

Jordan was on my bucket list long before I visited, and I was lucky enough to tick off a few of those top things to do in Jordan on my first trip. The more I learned about Jordan though, the more I realized that my list should have been even longer! This is a country full of bucket-list-worthy experiences, which is why I sat down to write what I consider to be the ultimate Jordan bucket list.

On this list of the best things to do in Jordan, you'll find some items you recognize – like Petra and the Dead Sea – as well as others you may not even realize are experiences Jordan has to offer. As you plan your trip to Jordan, be sure to add these must-do Jordan experiences to your itinerary. Whether you visit just once or (like me) plan to return again and again, Jordan is full of incredible wonders.

## Visit the “Lost City” of Petra



It was really hard to decide what to put in the spot on this Jordan bucket list, especially as my personal desire to visit Jordan was spurred by a desire to float in the Dead Sea and visit the film locations of Wadi Rum. However, as I thought about it, the answer was obvious: visiting Petra is by far one of the most popular things to do in Jordan, so it has to be on this list!



Petra, also called the “Rose City” (for the rock’s pinkish hue) or “Lost City” (though local Bedouin groups always knew where it was) is among Jordan’s top attractions. It’s easy enough to visit – and I make sure to include it in all the Jordan itineraries I write.

## Hike to the Monastery



Speaking of hikes, Petra is also a popular hiking destination. After the short hike to the Treasury, the next most popular hike is to the Monastery – another building you might recognize. This hike will take most of the day, and can be grueling when the sun is particularly hot. However, those who love the outdoors will enjoy the challenge this hike presents.

## See Petra-by-Night



One final way to experience Petra is at night, during the Petra-by-Night tour. This semi-guided experience allows visitors to walk the Siq Trail and sit in front of the Treasury – all illuminated by candlelight. Guides then share stories of Petra’s long history while the stars whirl overhead. It’s an unforgettable experience, and one I’m really looking forward to experiencing again on my Jordan tour.

## Explore Little Petra



Also known as Siq al-Barid, Little Petra is another Nabataean site. Historians believe it was built during the height of Nabataean influence during the 1st Century C.E. and served as a suburb of Petra. As its name suggests, Little Petra is a smaller version of Petra, which lies only 12 minutes away.

Despite its size, Little Petra has its own magic and beauty. There are three spots of interest, with the Biclinium as the site's highlight. The Biclinium is a cave that houses the most important and largest example of Nabataean mural painting.

The greatest advantage of visiting Little Petra is that this site rarely is overrun by tourists, so you won't be fighting against a sea of travelers to explore each site. Oh, and it's also free.

## Float in the Dead Sea



After Petra, I knew that the Dead Sea had to be the next item on my list of things to do in Jordan. While you can also visit the Dead Sea in Israel and Palestine, Jordan is the other country bordering the "lowest point on earth" and offers an alternative.

A number of resorts dot the northeast shore of Jordan's Dead, so book yourself a stay at one of these for the complete experience. You can float on the water take a mud bath using the mineral-rich material on the shore, or splurge on a spa experience.

## Go Wild in Wadi Rum



Wadi Rum is the next must-do experience I recommend in Jordan; this site has become famous thanks to a number of movies filmed here in recent years. There are lots of ways to experience Wadi Rum, and you can do them all during a single visit.

## Take a 4×4 Tours to Enjoy Sunset Among the Red Rocks



Many people enjoy taking 4×4 or jeep tours in Wadi Rum, and it's a good way to see a large area of the massive desert biosphere in a short time. Most tours leave from whichever Wadi Rum camp you're staying at, show you the famous rock formations, and take you to a spot where you can watch the sun dip below the otherworldly landscape horizon.

## See Jordan's Famous Film Locations



As mentioned, Wadi Rum is competing for Jordan's most recognizable film location (though it'll be tough to dislodge Petra despite fewer movies filmed in the ruins). Wadi Rum has been used in films ranging from historic and cultural classics like *Lawrence of Arabia* and *Theeb* to *The Martian*, *Star Wars Rogue One*, *Prometheus*, and *Dune*. Seriously, I'm surprised that there isn't a movie being filmed at Wadi Rum all the time!

Many Jeep/4×4 guides will focus on film locations; you can always ask to have them pointed out if you're curious!

## Experience Epic Stargazing



Because of its remote location, Wadi Rum is a perfect spot for stargazing in Jordan. After an afternoon of adventure and a delicious evening dinner in camp, head out a short distance from your tent/bubble dome to let your eyes adjust and look up at the stars. You won't be able to count them all!



## Ride a Camel at Sunrise



Life in Wadi Rum begins before dawn, even for travelers on vacation. Rise early on one morning in Wadi Rum to experience a camel ride to see the sun greet the day. I don't really love riding horses, but I found riding a camel to be incredibly calming, and the whole experience was peaceful and a perfect way to start your morning

## Explore the Ruins in Jerash



Moving on from the (Petra, Dead Sea, & Wadi Rum) to other things to do in Jordan. There's tons of history in Jordan, dating back long before even the castles and palaces of Europe.



Jerash is perhaps the most-visited and certainly the largest area of Roman ruins in Jordan. The area remains from when Romans occupied the land that is now Jordan between the 1st and 8th Centuries. More incredibly, some sites in Jerash show evidence of human habitation dating back to 7500 BC – so this site has a long archaeological record and was clearly an ideal spot for settlements through the millennia.

## Visit the Citadel in Amman



The Citadel is another Roman ruin to visit during your Jordan trip. This site is actually considered to be one of the oldest continually inhabited places on earth, with evidence dating back to the Neolithic period (~12,000 years ago). There is also archaeological evidence from the Assyrians (8th century BC), Babylonians (6th century BC), the Ptolemais, the Seleucids (3rd century BC), Romans (1st century BC), Byzantines (3rd century AD), and the Umayyads (7th century AD).

## The Crusades at Ajloun Castle



Other historic sites in Jordan focus on specific chapters of the area's history, such as Ajloun Castle. This 12th Century (AD) ruin was built by the Muslims to defend themselves against the Crusaders. In the centuries since then, other groups have used the fortified building to defend against invaders; today the site is being restored. It's full of history and as a strategic hilltop site, has sweeping views of the Jordanian countryside.

## Teleferik in Ajloun



The Ajloun cable car is one of the tourist attractions in the region, providing visitors with an exceptional opportunity to enjoy the picturesque nature of the hills and mountains surrounding the city of Ajloun and enjoy the charming views that help to escape the hustle and bustle of daily life.

## Be Awestruck by the Mosaics in Madaba



The town of Madaba is mostly home to Jordanian people going about daily life – but also mosaics dating back to the 3rd-7th Century Byzantines and Umayyads who lived in the area. They left their mark through incredible, detailed mosaics that are preserved and on display for travelers today. A large, diverse collection of churches served as both archaeological sites and record-keepers of these historic relics.

## View the Promised Land from Mount Nebo



Near Madaba, Mount Nebo is another important site. It is officially noted as the site from which Moses looked out across the Jordan Valley and the Dead Sea toward Israel, the Promised Land, after leading the Israelites out of Egypt. Today there's a museum with more mosaics and other significant religious relics, as well as more modern art to commemorate the spot.

## Experience Bedouin Lifestyle



One of the main cultures in Jordan, the Bedouin people are a nomadic tribal group that stretches across the Middle East and North Africa. People today still practice traditional Bedouin lifestyles. There are a variety of ways to learn about Bedouin culture, from joining a group that offers multi-day touristic experiences to hiking with a Bedouin guide or staying overnight in a Bedouin camp.

## Marvel at the Beauty of King Abdullah Mosque



As a Muslim country, Jordan is dotted with mosques all over its territory. Yet King Abdullah Mosque is the most renowned. Built by the late King Hussein, the imposing mosque features a magnificent blue dome that has decorated Amman's skyline since 1980. This is the only mosque in Amman that's open to visitors who want to get a closer look at Jordan's religious practices. Needless to say, travelers need to follow certain etiquette to access the mosque.



## Explore the History of Christianity at the Baptismal Site of Jesus Christ



Whether you're a religious person or not, it's undeniable that religions have been intrinsic to the human experience, having marked the evolution of cultures and societies all over the world.

Al-Maghtas also features ancient Roman and Byzantine remains which reflect the religious importance of the location. Today, Al-Maghtas is a Christian place of pilgrimage and many Christians come here to be baptized and even bathe in the Jordan River despite the muddy aspect of its waters.

## Scuba Dive in the Red Sea near Aqaba



Moving on from history and culture, Jordan is also an adventurous destination. One great example is in the far southern reaches of the country, where you can SCUBA (or snorkel) in the Red Sea. Aqaba is your base for this adventurous activity; a number of outfitters offer rentals and guided dives if you want that extra support or training before exploring the reefs and ruins below the water's surface.

## Hike in the Jordanian Wilderness in Dana Reserve



There's an even better place for day hiking if that's your travel style. Dana Biosphere Reserve is Jordan's equivalent of a national park in the United States; it's a huge area of undeveloped land where you can get in touch with the wild, sometimes harsh natural landscape of the country.

Dana Biosphere Reserve has both developed and undeveloped hiking trails; using a guide since the rock formations and landscapes can be labyrinthine.



## Immerse Yourself in Jordan's Landscape at Feynan Eco-Lodge



Nestled in the heart of Dana Biosphere Reserve, Feynan Eco-Lodge is Jordan's first eco-lodge. It was designed by architect Ammar Khammash, who draws inspiration from the caravanserais on the Middle East's ancient trading routes to design this stunning place.

Feynman Eco-Lodge isn't an ultra-luxe hotel and it doesn't aspire to be one. Instead, it is a fantastic project intended to foster sustainable tourism and support the local economy. The lodge has 26 en-suite rooms, all powered by solar energy..

## Hike or Bike the Jordan Trail



A recent tourism development, the Jordan Trail has quickly become a popular way to see some of the country's top sites – by foot or two wheels! The Jordan Trail was established in the mid-2010s to connect 75 villages and towns – including many of the sites I've already mentioned on this list of things to do in Jordan.

The trail stretches some 675 kilometers (420 miles) and takes roughly 40 days to complete by hiking. Recently, some folks have started biking the trail instead, though this is less common.

## Go Canyoneering in Wadi Mujib



This is one of the things to do in Jordan that I haven't done – it's still on my Jordan bucket list. That's partly because it was closed on the day I tried to visit; Jordan tour will visit either due to the timing of when the experience opens each year. if you're visiting and Wadi Mujib is open. You can strap on a life jacket and hike up the wadi. Unlike in Petra, this one has water flowing through it and requires you to climb with the assistance of guides and ropes at times.

## Soak it all in at Ma'in Hot Springs



After all that adventure, it's time to relax and let your muscles heal. What better place than Ma'in hot springs? The resort at this naturally occurring thermal spring offers overnight stays, spa services, and a chance to soak in the mineral-rich waters. Best of all, it's not far from Madaba and the Dead Sea, which makes it easy to tack onto other things to do in Jordan already mentioned on this list.

## Practice the Art of Haggling at Amman Souks



It's widely known that haggling forms a big part of Middle Eastern culture. The best way to experience it in Jordan is by visiting Amman souks. You can literally wade through tents of stuff for hours, hearing people shouting sales and prices, and feeling the rush of them successfully haggling. souks are a perfect place to purchase souvenirs. You will find there anything that crosses your mind, including textiles, colorful paints, gemstones, papers, and even antiquities representing Palestinian and Jordanian heritage.

## Stroll down Rainbow Street



Rainbow Street is one of Amman's most beautiful and colorful streets. Located in the Jebel Amman district, Rainbow Street is dotted with funky cafés, the city's best restaurants, and chic boutiques.

It's best experienced at night as you get to listen to local Jordanian talents playing on the street, while you're sipping your Limonana (Lemon Mint) or eating your delicious Jordan dish.

## Sample Jordanian Foods Across the Country



I came home from my first trip to Jordan with an obsession for Jordanian and Middle Eastern food; don't be surprised if you feel the same after eating your way across the country during your travels.

Many traditional Jordanian foods aren't "fancy" by Western/European standards – they're hearty and flavorful and go well with one another. Even street food – like kofta (kebab) – like knafeh – are unique and delicious.

## Try Jordanian Wine



For a country where over 95% of people practice Islam, you might be surprised that there is any wine production at all. Actually, the small minority of Christians in Jordan consume wine (as part of church services) and some have created vineyards for this production.

Today there are a handful of labels you can purchase in the few liquor stores across the country, including Mount Nebo and Saint George (both pictured above).

## Enjoy a Meal & Conversation with Jordanians



Some of my most memorable moments when visiting Jordan occurred when I connected with locals – usually over a meal. These include sitting on the steps of a shop, chatting with a young Jordanian guy about where to find wine in town; sipping tea with my guide at many roadside stops.

You can wait for these experiences to happen naturally, there are also tours that create the right circumstances for you to enjoy a hearty meal and a thought-provoking conversation with the local hosts in Jordan.



## Scraping Buddy in Dead Sea



At the Dead Sea, find a nice spot and grab yourself some chairs.

We couldn't find any available chairs nearby and we didn't mind to plonk our stuff on the sand. The lifeguard noticed our chair-less selves, took a couple of muddy chairs, hosed it down and gave it us. First class service. I noticed that empty muddy chairs are promptly hosed down.

## Class boat



In general, you can make two types of boat trips in Aqaba: on the one hand, the 'classic' on board small private boats or yachts, and on the other, that of glass-bottom boats.

The boat trip on a yacht is, in general, a service that can be collective or private. This service can be hired simply to enjoy a walk by the sea, although many of the users who book a boat do so because they are expert divers and want to move to specific dive points.

## Hot air balloon in wadi rum



We got up very early to embark on the hot air balloon flight over Wadi Rum. Around sunrise, the balloon was unpacked and filled with air. Slowly we watched the balloon growing. After that hot air was added and the basket slowly tilts until it stood upright with the balloon above. Then the passengers entered to keep the basket on the ground.

## Contact us

Email: [info@jordanlandmarkstour.com](mailto:info@jordanlandmarkstour.com) | Mobile: +962795291442 | website: <https://www.jordanlandmarkstour.com>