From times biblical to Byzantine, Roman to recent, the land of Jordan has offered visitors a dazzling diversity of sights. Encounter wonders of both nature and man—enhanced by traditional hospitality and excellent lodgings. From lively Amman, head north to Ajlun to see the impressive Roman ruins of Jerash. Then head south to the rose-red city of Petra, the ancient capital of the Nabataeans. Take a sunset jeep ride through the lunar-like landscape of Wadi Rum, and enjoy excursions to biblical Bethany Beyond the Jordan and to Madaba, “City of Mosaics,” before concluding with the restorative powers of the Dead Sea.

**STUDY LEADER:** Carlos E. Díaz-Rosillo, PhD, is a lecturer on government at Harvard and Allston Burr Assistant Dean of Harvard College, Dunster House. His academic research focuses on presidential leadership, public policy, campaigns and elections, and comparative chief executive politics. His work examines the different instruments of power that chief executives have at their disposal to affect policy. He has won numerous teaching awards at Harvard and has extensive travel experience throughout the Americas, Africa, Asia, Australia, and Europe.

**GROUP SIZE:** 12-24 guests

**PRICING:** Based on per person double occupancy

- $4,272 Air Inclusive from Boston/ JFK/Houston ($3,695 air & land inclusive plus $577 airline taxes and departure fees)
- $3,295 Land only rate
- $995 single supplement

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**SCHEDULE BY DAY**

*B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner*

**THURSDAY, MARCH 10**
**ARRIVE AMMAN**

Arrive in Istanbul and connect with your flight to Amman. Upon arrival in Amman late this evening, meet your tour director and transfer to the hotel.

*Overnight: Grand Hyatt Amman*

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 9**
**DEPART U.S. FOR AMMAN, JORDAN, with a connecting flight in ISTANBUL, TURKEY.**
FRIDAY, MARCH 11
AMMAN
This morning attend a trip briefing followed by a walking tour to get acquainted with this lively Middle Eastern capital in the fertile Jordan Valley.

Begin with a visit to the Wild Jordan Centre, a non-governmental organization run by local Jordanians engaged in enhancing and maintaining the beauty and economic growth of Jordan’s nature reserves. The Centre also offers an opportunity to purchase unique hand-crafted items such as nature-inspired silver jewelry and decorated ostrich eggs.

Continue to the Ottoman-style King Hussein Mosque, rebuilt in 1924 on the site of an ancient temple in the heart of downtown Amman; then through the busy streets and vegetable markets to the Nymphaeum, a 2nd-century fountain hidden behind private houses and shops.

Stop at another 2nd-century landmark, the 6,000-seat Roman Theatre—still used today for sporting and cultural events; and the ancient Citadel (El-Qala), which offers excellent views of the city from atop Jabal al-Qala’a, one of Amman’s signature seven hills.

For lunch, dine in the home of a local Amman family.

Enjoy some leisure time at the hotel before tonight’s welcome dinner at a local restaurant.

Overnight: Grand Hyatt Amman (B, L, D)

SATURDAY, MARCH 12
AJLOUN / JERASH
Travel north through scenic pine forests and olive groves to the town of Ajloun, site of the well preserved Qalaat Errabadh (“Hilltop Castle”) built in 1184. The Muslims built this Crusader-style fortress during the 12th century to protect themselves from actual Crusader invasions.

Continue on to the Roman ruins of Jerash, dubbed the “Pompeii of the East” for its splendid state of preservation. Jerash flourished during the reign of Alexander the Great. Because of its location on popular trade routes, it became part of the Holy Roman Empire’s Decapolis (the 10 major Roman cities of the East). After the Persian invasion in 614 CE and a series of earthquakes, Jerash survived as nothing more than a small rural village until its rediscovery in 1925.

After lunch, explore the colonnaded streets, theaters, churches, and temples that comprise the largest Roman site outside Italy.

Return to Amman late this afternoon. Dinner tonight is on your own.

Overnight: Grand Hyatt Amman (B, L)

SUNDAY, MARCH 13
AMMAN / PETRA
Travel to Petra today, stopping en route in Madaba, “City of Mosaics,” whose chief attraction is a mosaic map of Jerusalem and the Holy Land dating to the Byzantine era. It took more than two million colored stones to create this ancient masterpiece, and each one remains in place today.

After an early lunch, continue to the important pilgrimage site of Mt. Nebo, where Moses was buried overlooking the Jordan Valley. See the site’s 4th- and 6th-century Byzantine churches, the first of which was built to commemorate Moses’ death. The churches are closed for renovations, but you can view the Jordan Valley and catch glimpses of Jerusalem’s rooftops in the distance.

Next, visit the imposing 12th-century fortress at Shobak, the Crusader castle perched atop a rocky mountain overlooking vast lands dotted with fruit trees. Built by King Baldwin I of Jerusalem to protect the road between Egypt and Damascus, Shobak remains one of Jordan’s most important early sites.

Arrive at your hotel in Petra in time for dinner.

Overnight: Mövenpick Resort Petra (B, L, D)

MONDAY, MARCH 14
PETRA
Today explore Petra, the “rose-red city half as old as time” and a UNESCO World Heritage site. See the red-hued temples, tombs, and
civic buildings—an entire city carved into the sheer rock face of the Sharah Mountains. One of the “New Seven Wonders of the World,” Petra found wealth as a trade route linking China in the East with Rome in the West. However, after Rome conquered this desert outpost in 106 CE, trade routes were diverted and the city began to face a steady decline. Even though there is evidence of sparse habitation from the 13th through 15th centuries, Petra was largely forgotten until its “rediscovery” in 1812 by a Swiss traveler.

Entering Petra through the Siq, the long, narrow rock chamber that leads to the Nabataean city first inhabited more than 2,000 years ago; spend the day exploring the site. The dramatic Treasury (a key backdrop in the movie Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade), the Monastery, a 3,000-seat theater, colonnaded streets, rock-cut tombs, temple façades, shrines, and funerary halls. Lunch will be at the Basin Restaurant in the heart of the Old City, with beautiful views of the surrounding area.

Return to the hotel late this afternoon. Dinner tonight is on your own.

Overnight: Mövenpick Resort Petra (B, D)

TUESDAY, MARCH 15
PETRA

This morning, return to the ruins at Petra for further exploration of this “lost city.”

The afternoon is at leisure for independent exploration or to relax by the hotel pool or in the spa.

Dinner tonight presents a special opportunity to participate in the preparation of a typical Jordanian meal alongside local women and a chef at Petra Kitchen where the furnishings, décor, and tableware are handcrafted by Jordanians artisans.

After dinner there may be time to visit the Gallery of Jordanian Crafts where you can find traditional paintings, sculptures, and jewelry.

Overnight: Mövenpick Resort Petra (B, D)

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16
PETRA / WADI RUM

Travel to nearby Al Beida (“Little Petra”), an ancient suburb with a collection of tombs, temples, houses, and waterways that resembles Petra itself. Here caravans from Jerusalem and the Phoenician coast would settle, engage in trade, and later continue on to Petra. These residences carved directly into the mountains and rocks are thought to be more than 9,000 years old.

Stop for lunch at a local restaurant before the two-hour drive south to Wadi Rum and your private tented camp. Along the way, witness the dramatic landscape of pink and white sands, ancient valleys, and towering sandstone monoliths worn smooth by desert winds, rising from the desert floor.

These scenes of natural beauty were created by erosion, wind, and time. This vast empty region served as headquarters to T.E. Lawrence and Prince Faisal bin Hussein during the Arab Revolt against the Ottoman Empire in 1917–18—and here David Lean filmed parts of his 1962 Academy Award-winning epic Lawrence of Arabia. Now a UNESCO World Heritage site, it also is the Bedouin homeland, where this formerly nomadic people, who now live mostly in protected villages, once roamed. Take a jeep ride through this other-worldly moonscape late this afternoon.

Spend the night in the desert at a rustic but comfortable private tented camp. Enjoy dinner at the camp.

Please note: Because of limited space at the tented camp, you will need to bring with you a smaller, soft sided bag in addition to your one piece of checked luggage. This bag should be small and flexible enough to fit inside your checked luggage.

Overnight: Wadi Rum Private Tented Camp (B, L, D)

THURSDAY, MARCH 17
WADI RUM / DEAD SEA

Today’s journey is to the Dead Sea, believed to have been the site of five biblical cities, including Sodom and Gomorrah. Along the way, stop at the Dead Sea Panorama, a
geological museum and restaurant with panoramic views that extend far beyond the Dead Sea. This salt lake, lying between Israel to the west and Jordan to the east, ranks as the world’s deepest hypersaline lake and second-saltiest body of water. At the Dead Sea Panorama, learn about this rare geographic phenomenon that also represents the lowest point of elevation on Earth.

Arrive at the hotel early in the afternoon. The remainder of the day is free to “float” in the therapeutic salt waters and enjoy the hotel’s spa facilities. Lunch and dinner today are on your own.

*Overnight: Marriott Dead Sea (B)*

**FRIDAY, MARCH 18**
**DEAD SEA / BETHANY BEYOND THE JORDAN**

The Bible comes to life today on the excursion to the Jordan Valley. Explore the Baptism Site at Bethany Beyond the Jordan. Since 1996, archaeologists have unearthed at least 20 churches, caves, and baptismal pools here dating from the Roman and Byzantine eras. The New Testament states that when John the Baptist baptized Jesus, he was living here along the Jordan River opposite Jericho. The nearby hill of Tell Mar Elias marks the spot where Elijah the Prophet ascended to heaven in a whirlwind on a chariot of fire, having parted the waters of the Jordan River and walked across it with his anointed successor, the Prophet Elisha.

Depart the Jordan Valley mid-day and return to your hotel, where the afternoon is at leisure.

Tonight gather for a farewell dinner at the hotel.

*Overnight: Marriott Dead Sea (B, D)*

**SATURDAY, MARCH 19**
**DEPART FOR U.S.**

Depart this morning for the Amman airport and your connecting flights to the United States. *(B)*

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**FOR GUESTS TAKING THE OPTIONAL POST-TOUR EXTENSION TO ISTANBUL**

**SATURDAY, MARCH 19**
**AMMAN / ISTANBUL**

Fly to Istanbul this morning. Upon arrival, transfer to your hotel with some time at leisure and for lunch on your own. Late this afternoon meet the tour director for a short briefing and an orientation walking tour of the area around your centrally located hotel. Tonight enjoy a welcome dinner at a local restaurant with Turkish fare.

*Overnight: Divan Istanbul Hotel (B, D)*

**SUNDAY, MARCH 20**
**ISTANBUL**

Explore Old Istanbul, home of splendid mosques and magnificent palaces. Sites include the ancient Hippodrome, where chariot races once took place; the marvelous Blue Mosque, topped by six slender minarets, and the famed Hagia Sophia, which was the world’s grandest cathedral when it was built in 537 CE (it was converted into a mosque in the 16th century). Following lunch, encounter fabled Topkapi Palace, former home of Turkey’s sultans, whose treasures include priceless paintings, jewel-encrusted swords, and delicate porcelains. Dinner tonight is on your own, and your tour director will be happy to offer recommendations.

*Overnight: Divan Istanbul Hotel (B, L)*

**MONDAY, MARCH 21**
**ISTANBUL**

Visit the vast Grand Bazaar, one of the world’s largest covered markets with some 5,000 shops and stalls selling goods of all kinds, including jewelry, pottery, leather, and Turkish delicacies. Continue to the Spice Market, with exotic spices, nuts, and dried fruits from around the world. After lunch on your own, take a cruise on the Bosphorus Strait, the waterway that separates Europe from Asia. This afternoon toast our journey with a farewell drink. Dinner tonight is on your own.

*Overnight: Divan Istanbul Hotel (B)*

**TUESDAY, MARCH 22**
**DEPART FOR U.S.**

This morning transfer to the airport for your flights to the U.S. *(B)*