



RIDE WORLD WIDE
Jordan
Exploring the Land of Lawrence of Arabia
with Rose Webb-Carter
17th to 26th November 2018

Jordan is a country that will constantly surprise even the most seasoned traveller. It is a leading light in the Arab world, yet at the same time, it is part of the Holy Land. Today its traditional Bedu past is complemented by a host of outside influences and it is a very open and easy-going country to travel in where hospitality is a matter of course. This ride explores the south of Jordan around Petra and the Wadi Rum, which has to be one of the world's most striking desert areas and was made famous by Lawrence of Arabia. It includes a visit to the fascinating lost city of Petra, 'rose red city' of the Nabateans and one of the 7 New Wonders of the World, followed by several days riding through the Wadi Rum desert.



The ride will be accompanied by English host, Rose Webb-Carter who first rode in Jordan with her father in the early 2000s following the route taken by T E Lawrence in 1917 when he crossed the desert to seize the port of Aqaba. With her well-thumbed copy of 'The Seven Pillars of Wisdom' to bring it all to life, Rose will help you get under the skin of Lawrence of Arabia whilst your local guide, Hashem who grew up in Wadi Mousa and has worked with horses since he was 8 years old, will provide an invaluable insider's knowledge of the modern country and the desert environment.

The Horses The horses used are mostly pure Arabs originating from Jordan, Iraq and Syria, with some Arab crosses. The majority are mares, although there are a few geldings and occasionally a stallion may be used for riding. They are well cared for, tough and strong, living in the desert year round. They are fairly small, averaging about 15hh, are generally quite narrow and lightly built (typical desert Arabs) with quite a lively, spirited temperament. They feel full of energy and are responsive and fast to ride but are also sensitive and sensible which makes them easy to handle. Saddles are English GP or endurance style, either leather or Wintecs, with saddle blankets that have pockets for personal belongings, cameras, water bottle etc. They are good quality and comfortable although the desert environment is hard on tack and you should not expect it to be 'as new'! The horses are mainly ridden in snaffles with pelhams occasionally used (the Bedu traditionally ride their horses in a bit-less bridle, a bit only being used for races, battles or for a 'difficult' horse) but they are used to a loose contact with the bit at a walk and trot, responding best to light use of hand and leg, and to the rider's weight. The usual rider weight limit is 13 stone 5lbs / 85 kgs, although some heavier riders may be accepted if horses are available - if you are over or close to this weight please contact us to discuss availability of horses for the dates you have in mind.

Riding The ride will include riding on 6 days, generally with 4 to 6 hours in the saddle each day although riding hours may vary with the weather. The first few days may follow a route riding from Petra through the mountains to the Wadi Rum desert, or may be adapted slightly if it is cold in the mountains, with horses moved by truck into the Wadi Rum after visiting Petra. The ride will be lead by Hashem, an experienced desert guide who speaks fluent English, with luggage, camping equipment and supplies transported by 4 wheel drive back-up vehicle and local staff will be on hand to set up camp and help with the horses although riders will also be asked / encouraged to help groom and tack up / untack their own horse before and after riding. There may be some walking, leading horses, each day during rides - generally for 5 minutes or so to warm them up in the morning before starting and again to cool them off at the end of the day. You may also be asked to get off to lead for short stretches during the ride to give horses a rest, to cross the Highway, or if the ground is rough or sand, deep.



Pace Overall the pace of the rides is expected to be moderate, but it will vary with the going in different areas. The open and flat going in the Wadi Rum provides some good opportunities for long trots and canters although the amount of fast work here will depend on the weather, conditions for the horses and also the ability of the group as a whole. Great care is taken to ensure horses are relaxed and calm and that everyone feels in control - the desert is a vast open environment with no barriers or fences! When riding in the mountains, if the going is rough or stony, the sand deep, or if it is very hot, the pace will be slow and in places you will be asked to ride one behind the other. You may also be asked to ride in a '2 x 2' formation for canters, or to head off singly or in pairs rather than as one group.

Riding Experience These rides are aimed at reasonably experienced, confident riders. To join them you must be comfortable, secure and relaxed in the saddle on a fairly spirited horse at a walk, trot and fast canter. You should also be used to riding at these paces outside, with a group of horses, in an open environment. The horses are sensible, but they feel energetic and have a lively and sensitive temperament, so they suit confident, relaxed and sensitive riders. They are best ridden with a light contact with the mouth and light use of the leg rather than 'on the bit'. You will also enjoy your trip much more if you are fairly fit - both riding fit and with a reasonably good level of general fitness as there will be some walking each day in sandy terrain which can be hard work, particularly if it is hot! If you do not ride regularly at home, we recommend concentrated training before you go to get used to the hours you will spend in the saddle.



Terrain The landscape on the rides will vary from day to day. Around Petra there are rolling sand and gravel hills, with some cultivation and some areas of dense mountain peaks; in central Wadi Rum the landscape overall is flatter and although 'desert', the scale of the rocks makes the riding landscape varied. Wide sand valleys are framed by mountainous monoliths, gravel tracks wind between huge boulders or through canyons, adjacent to immense cliff faces. To the north are wide, completely unobstructed clay flats of several kilometres (used as a training ground for Arab endurance horses) and to the east, vivid green, agricultural land, where crops are grown. Close to Petra you follow winding, sometimes stony paths through the hills, but overall the terrain on the rides is good for horses, generally compacted sand that is soft, but not too deep, and dry but forgiving clay. En-route you may pass nomadic Bedu in traditional camps and see several of the area's historic landmarks, both natural and man-made, many of which are described by Lawrence of Arabia in his book, 'The Seven Pillars of Wisdom' and there will be plenty of chances to delve into the history of the area.

Accommodation Accommodation will be in a combination of hotels and simple desert camps. Hotels are simple but adequate, equivalent to an international 2* - 3 * standard. Rooms have private bathrooms and ride rates are based on twin / double (or occasionally triple) occupancy. Single travellers will be asked to pay the single supplement to book a single hotel room (although if you are prepared to share AND there is a willing sharer, this will be waived (see price information below). The meeting point for the rides will be Amman airport and the first night will be at a hotel in Madaba; one night will be at a hotel in Wadi Mousa, the modern town at the entrance to Petra (Edom, Amra Palace, La Maison or similar); 5 nights are spent camping; the penultimate night is at a hotel in Aqaba (My Hotel or similar), and the last night is back at the hotel in Madaba. Camping accommodation is fairly basic but you should be reasonably comfortable. Usually, assuming the weather is warm, temporary 'fly' camps will be set up with small two man pop-up tents (or individual tents for those travelling alone) and comfortable foam mattresses for sleeping (you will need your own sleeping bag) - or you can sleep on your mattress under the star-studded sky. Camps do not generally have a 'mess' tent - they are carefully positioned for protection from wind and sun - and meals are eaten around the fire in a sheltered spot. They have a separate, simple washing "shower" tent (jugs of water provided for washing); loos are "open air"! You will be expected to put up your personal tent (these are very easy!) and to carry your own luggage etc. but a cook travels with you and staff prepare meals, heat water on request and carry out other camp 'chores'.



Meals You can expect food to be very good - a mixture of local and European style - and plentiful. When camping you will have the opportunity to sample the Bedu lifestyle (with several added comforts!) and meals are often served from the traditional large, communal plate or 'Mansef' laid out on a table for you to help yourself. You then eat in traditional style on a carpet or mat sitting cross-legged on the floor. A typical breakfast would be a choice of boiled eggs, yoghurt, honey, fresh cheese and warm pitta bread, accompanied by 'chai' - delicious sweet tea usually flavoured with sage or cardamom - or coffee. Lunch when riding is a picnic, perhaps a freshly prepared spicy vegetable curry with salads and warm bread, followed by fresh fruit. Tea keeps you going after your ride until dinner, usually a speciality of the area, such as fish from the Aqaba Gulf in spices; chicken and potatoes or lamb and rice served with yoghurt and pitta. The hotels used have restaurants and breakfast is normally a buffet, whilst dinner might be a choice off the menu or a selection of dishes served buffet-style. There is usually enough variety to cater for vegetarians but if you have any specific dietary requirements please let us know in advance so we can try to make special arrangements. Mineral water, tea & coffee when camping are included in the ride cost but not other soft or alcoholic drinks - you might like to buy some duty free to take, or in Amman or Rum village on arrival (although this is rather expensive). When staying at hotels, wine, beer and other drinks can be bought from the bar.



Weather Seasons in Jordan are the same as Europe with summer months June to September and winter, November to February. Jordan has a desert climate that is pleasant and warm but often with a large temperature difference between day and night, shade and sun. Spring and autumn (March to May and October / November) are usually the best times for riding with long, warm days and mild nights. Summer days can be very hot with temperatures rising to 38 or even 40 degrees C. In winter, days are usually warm and clear, though can be cold (sometimes down to 0C in December / January), rain is not unheard of and temperatures drop sharply when the sun goes down.

What to bring - We will send you a list of things we suggest you bring when you book.

Example itinerary - The following is an example of the riding itinerary planned although **please note** that day by day arrangements are a guide only and, as desert conditions are unpredictable, the itinerary may be changed if the weather or local conditions require. The order of events, may also change, for instance with the visit to the Dead Sea at the beginning, followed by the visit to Petra and then the ride. This is left to the discretion and experience of your guides.

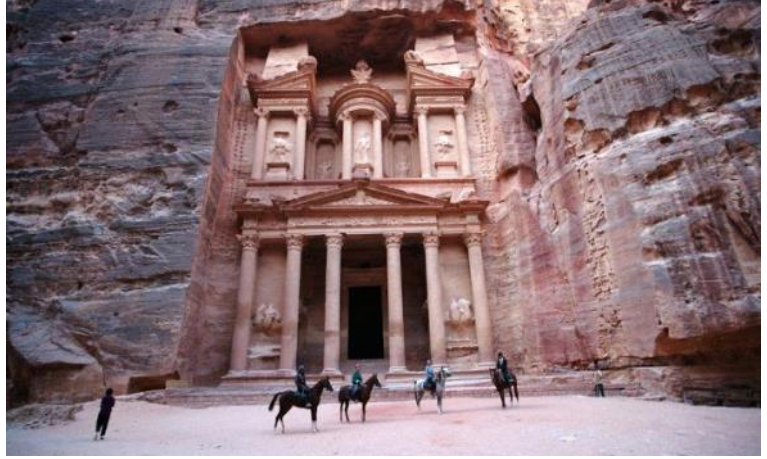
Petra & Wadi Rum - Example itinerary

Saturday 17th November - Arrive Queen Alia International Airport, Amman, where you will be met and driven to a hotel in Madaba. Depending on your arrival time, dinner may be available. Overnight Mosaic Hotel (or similar).

Sunday 18th November - After an early breakfast, you will be collected around 07.30 and driven approximately 3 ½ hours to Beidha to meet Hashem (your guide) and the horses. Mount up and set off riding through the Beidha area, a beautiful place to start the ride. There is a chance to visit the ancient city of Little Petra before lunch and in the afternoon the ride continues for about 2 hours around Djebel Haroun mountain. The prophet Aaron, older brother of Moses, was buried here by Moses himself and at 1350 meters, Djebel Haroun is the highest summit in the whole Petra region. Full of legends, it was jealously guarded by the Bedu and until quite recently, non-muslim travellers were forbidden to climb the peak. Ride on to the first campsite for dinner and the night. (B,L,D)

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Monday 19th November - An early start and, after tacking up, set off riding towards Petra. Arriving on the Roman Road and passing the Roman theatre, you reach the famous 'Al- Khasneh' - The Treasury - by around 7.30 am. Then following the 'siq', the winding, narrow canyon made famous in "Indiana Jones; The Last Crusade", ride out of the ruins before the gates open to other tourists. Leave your horses with the back-up team and a short walk to your hotel for breakfast. The rest of the day is free to visit the ancient city of Petra, 'rose red city' of the Nabateans. A guided tour (2 to 3 hours) with a local English speaking guide will be organised in the late morning and the rest of the afternoon is free to explore at your leisure. The "Treasury" and the "Monastery" are the most notable facades but the ruins are spread over a huge area with many wonderful rock carved buildings that can keep you busy for hours or days. Own arrangements for lunch. Dinner and night at hotel in Wadi Mousa (La Maison Hotel or similar). (B,D)



Tuesday 20th November - After breakfast you will be driven to meet the horses at Humaime. Ride east through curious little canyons, following the ancient spice routes that crossed the deserts between Egypt and Arabia, Palestine and Syria. Pass the village of old Thogra and then, dismount to lead the horses across the Desert Highway, the main road between Amman and Aqaba which continues to Saudi Arabia. Continue east through a long valley to the lunch stop. In the afternoon, eastwards again riding towards the sandstone cliffs of Wadi Rum where you should be able to see the natural rock arch 'Karaze' before reaching camp. Dinner and night in camp. (B,L,D)

Wednesday 21st November - Breakfast in camp and mount up to ride beneath majestic sandstone cliffs, stopping to see the famous inscriptions made by the Thamudic and Nabatean people centuries ago. Then ride south east towards the agricultural village of Chakria stopping for lunch on the edge of the famous mud flats. In the afternoon ride onto the flats, which are perfect for a long exhilarating canter. Overnight in Um Ishrin valley. Dinner and night in camp. (B,L,D)

Thursday 22nd & Friday 23rd November - The next 2 days are spent in the heart of the Wadi Rum reserve. Continue riding towards the Disi area, through the beautiful valley of Um Ishrin, passing by the red sand dunes in the valley of Anafishia and the ruins of "Lawrence's house". Dinner and nights in camp. (B,L,D)



Saturday 24th November - The last riding day. Set off through the beautiful Barrah canyon, where there are several famous Thamudic engravings on the cliff faces depicting camels and other animals. Stop for a picnic lunch and in the afternoon ride to Disi. Here say goodbye to the horses and transfer about 1 hour by car, to Aqaba on the Red Sea. Dinner and night at the My Hotel Hotel (or similar) in Aqaba. (B,L,D)

Sunday 25th November - Breakfast and then you will be driven to the Dead Sea. A relaxing day swimming, floating & relaxing by the Dead Sea, trying a famous mud wrap if you wish! Own arrangements for lunch and in the late afternoon you will be driven back towards Madaba passing Mount Nebo (site only as the church is currently closed for renovations) at sunset. Dinner and night at the Mosaic Hotel (or similar) in Madaba. (B,D)

Monday 26th November - Breakfast and transfer to Queen Alia International airport (about 30 minute drive) (B)



Rate - £1905 per person
Single supplement £155

Price quoted assumes a minimum of 6 riding guests on the ride.

Rates INCLUDE all riding and services of English speaking riding guide & private tour guide, twin accommodation (see note below re: single rooms), entrance fee to Petra as per itinerary, meals as indicated, tea, coffee and mineral water when camping, collection from and transfer back to Amman airport at standard times on the first and last days.

Rates EXCLUDE International flights and travel to / from Amman and taxes, airport transfers outside set days / times, visa fees, personal medical insurance (which you must have), dinner on the first night, lunches in Petra and at the Dead Sea, wine, beer, other alcoholic and bottled drinks when camping, all drinks at hotels, personal extras (laundry, telephone calls etc) and any tips you wish to leave staff.

Single travellers - Rates quoted assume twin-shared accommodation. Single tents are provided when camping for those travelling alone but a single supplement is charged for single bookings to cover single hotel rooms. If you are travelling alone and are prepared to share with another (same sex) guest on the ride to save paying the supplement, we can sometimes arrange this - let us know and we will see if we can find a sharer - if there is no-one, the supplement will be charged.

Travel arrangements / Flights - The meeting point is Amman airport and the first and last nights will be spent in Madaba about ½ hour's drive from the airport. There will be one or possibly 2 set transfers from the airport on each arrival day but please contact us before booking flights so that we can co-ordinate arrival times for all participants. You will be taken back to the airport on the last day (26th November) in the morning. British Airways and Royal Jordanian both have daily direct flights to Amman from London Heathrow with fares around £550 to £700 per person economy return, depending on the time of year. Easyjet have flights 3 times a week (usually Thursday, Sunday & Tuesday - subject to change) so if you use these you will probably need extra nights in Jordan (we can help you book). KLM and Air France have flights via Europe, but a change of plane is usually involved.

Please note that ALL airlines seem to change their flight times to Amman once or twice during the season and arrival / departure times are not always all that convenient! Flight times may also mean you have a very short night or a long wait before check-in at the hotel is possible (we will do our best to help and can easily book extra nights to avoid this, although at extra cost).

Please call us for more travel information or if you would like us to book flights (our ATOL number is 6213).

General visa and health information (NB this is a brief outline - further information will be sent to you if you make a confirmed booking.)

Visas If you hold a British Passport, currently a visa **IS** required to visit Jordan. This can be obtained on arrival at Amman airport (this is usually quick and easy) or you can apply in advance to the Jordanian Embassy ('The Embassy of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan') in London.

Health No jabs are required as a condition of entry from the UK and Europe although The Hospital for Tropical Diseases in London recommends that you ensure you are up to date with Tetanus inoculations for travel to Jordan. Hepatitis A, Rabies and Typhoid may also be recommended in some cases. If you are planning a long stay, visiting other places before or after your ride that are particularly remote or very rural then you should talk to a GP or specialist travel clinic before departure.

(DRAFT 27/09/2018)

