



Abingdon School: Jordan and Israel History in the Holy Land: March 2013

We hope you will join us on a fascinating adventure to the Holy Land. We will travel deep into the heart of Jordan, visiting the magical ancient city of Petra, the Crusader Castles, the Dead Sea and Mt. Nebo. After a night in the stunning desert landscapes of Wadi Rum, we cross the Allenby Bridge into Israel where we will visit many places important to both recent and not-so recent Israeli history. The following is the itinerary we plan to follow:

Day 1: Fly from London Gatwick to Amman - Following our flight with EasyJet, we transfer to our accommodation in the heart of Jordan's capital, Amman.

Day 2: Kings Highway, Mt Nebo, Madaba, drive to Petra

Today starts early with a short city tour of Amman after which we proceed to Mount Nebo and Madaba; In Madaba we visit the Basilica of St. George. In the floor of the church is the remarkable 6th century mosaic map – its two million pieces of coloured stone depicting the hills, valleys and towns of the Holy Land. Next we travel on to Mount Nebo, 800m above sea level, where you can stand on the site where Moses looked out over the "Promised Land".

Tell Al-Kharrar (St. Elijah's Hill), is named after the Prophet of Elijah. It is from this hill that he ascended to heaven in a chariot of fire. Within an hour's drive from Madaba along the picturesque Kings' Highway, is Mukawir, the hilltop stronghold of Herod the Great. Upon Herod's death, his son Herod Antipas inherited the fortress and it is from here that he ordered John the Baptist to be beheaded after Salome's fateful dance of the seven veils. Mukawir is an hour away (about 45 Km) from Madaba on the Kings' Highway. We continue south along the King's Highway to the best preserved crusader castle in Jordan - Karak. Our final destination today is Petra. Check in to hotel for dinner and overnight.

Day 3: Petra

Today you will make your way to the fabled well-concealed 'Rose Red City' of Petra where a full day allows you to explore the Treasury, Monastery and the many other amphitheatres for which this amazing site is famed.

Although it is a tiring walk up the 800 steps, it is well worth making the hour or so ascent up the rocky path, which leads to the Monastery, a vast structure rivalling even the Treasury and boasting fantastic views stretching out over the valley below. If you have some energy remaining, time should also allow you to climb to one of the High Places, the mountain-top altars where ritual sacrifices were made; from here there are spectacular views of the mountains, valleys and canyons below. To explore Petra properly is a full day's walk. Good walking shoes or light weight boots are recommended as the terrain and paths are rough in places.

Day 4: Wadi Rum

This morning we head to the magnificent desert landscapes of Wadi Rum, about an hours drive from Petra. We transfer to 4WD vehicles which enable us to explore this stunning desert environment. (continued over)



Day 4 Continued:

You camp at the edge of the Wadi Rum protected area, with a backdrop of high mountains and sand dunes and in true desert fashion you sleep in a traditional Bedouin tent or under the stars. As the sun sets on the rocky outcrops, an astonishing transformation takes place - the sandstone changes hue, passing through a spectrum of yellow, gold, orange, red and finally purple, as the shadows lengthen and the stars come out - the skies are clear and stars stand out brightly. The Milky Way, satellites and shooting stars can be clearly seen - the perfect opportunity for star-gazing. *Bedouin-style camp (communal sleeping arrangement)*

Day 5: Dead Sea, Jericho & Bethlehem

After our night in the desert, we return to our coach and transfer approximately 3 hours north to the Dead Sea for a brief swim/float in the salty waters. Transferring from the Dead Sea we cross into Israel at Allenby Bridge, we then continue to Jericho for a view of Mount Temptation. Our final stop is Bethlehem where we overnight.

Day 6: Bethlehem, Bethany and Jerusalem

This morning we take a short tour of Bethlehem to visit the Nativity Church, Milk Grotto and Shepherd Field, before proceeding to Bethany to visit house of Martha and Maria & tomb of Lazarus. We then drive to Jerusalem and have the afternoon free to explore this amazing city. Overnight in Jerusalem.

Day 7: Jerusalem

Starting our tour of Jerusalem at the Mt. Of Olives (Observation point), we then visit the Church & Garden of Gethsemane, Western Wall, Via Dolorosa from the 5th station and the Church of Holy Sepulcher. We will also visit the room of the Last Supper & King David's Tomb. Overnight in Jerusalem.

Day 8: Amman, fly home

We head back to Allenby Bridge the crossing point back to Jordan and head to the airport for our return flight back to the UK.

We have enlisted the services of **The Specialist Travel Consultancy** (STC) to help us arrange this trip. The STC is an independent niche travel agency specialising in adventure holidays, tours and expeditions for schools, families and individuals.



Using the STC helps ensure that the arrangements are of the highest order, and that we get the best possible value for money. Based on our requirements and their knowledge of the marketplace, the STC are recommending that we arrange this trip through The Adventure Company.

For more information on the STC, visit www.thestc.co.uk

The Adventure Company is one of the most recognised names in adventure travel and have been taking clients, including previous school groups, to Jordan and desert environments for many years. Consequently, they have finely tuned their operations so that groups gain maximum benefit from the places they visit along the way, making maximum use of the time available.



The Adventure Company are dedicated to providing tours that enable you to see the scenery and culture of the country you are visiting in close-up, and in a way which both respects and benefits local people, their culture and the environment.

They have been independently assessed as being compliant to BS8848 - recognised as the highest standard of safety management for overseas tours.

