

# NOMAD'S ROAD: Overlanders for Life



## Episode 4: Travelling through history in Jordan

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We arrived in Jordan nearly a month ago, but unfortunately our first week was spent waiting around thanks to some logistical problems. On the positive side, we were welcomed by a local couple who helped us to discover how Jordanians live. After getting back our vehicle and spending two days making final preparations, we were at last able to hit the road again.

We started our trip in the eastern part of the country, discovering the desert and a few monuments, such as Qasr Amra, a desert castle which was built in the 8th century. After stopping to take in this UNESCO World Heritage Site with its wonderful frescoes, we slowly drove to the Northern part of the country, visiting a few other desert



castles which had been well preserved. Arriving in northern Jordan, near the Syrian border, the landscape became hilly and we began to climb in altitude and see hills covered with olive groves. We went to archeological site of Umm Qays, north of Irbid, where you can see (when the weather permits) the Sea of Galilee and the Golan Heights of the Levant; a breathtaking landscape. The site of Decapolis, which has been the center of Greek culture in this region, was also interesting to visit. We made a stop to visit the 12th century well-preserved Ajloun Fort, located at the top of the hill with 360° views of the green region. The most interesting site in North Jordan was the ancient Greco-Roman city of Gerasa in the middle of the current city of Jerash. A lot buildings and monuments are still standing, such as the theaters, hippodrome, the oval forum and all the huge gates and columns, in addition to the well restored Zeus Temple and Artemis Temple.

After a stop in the capital city to visit the Citadel, we drove south to Aqaba, the Jordanian port on the Red Sea. On the way we made several stops to visit all the main historic and natural sites. Some of them were completely deserted by tourists despite their historical and archeological importance.



Others, however, were invaded by the local population, especially during weekends. It was really interesting to see the difference between the days of the week and the weekend at the same tourist site, as it added another dimension to the place, gifting you with either serenity or the tumult of the crowd.

One of the places we couldn't miss in this area was the fabulous Dead Sea, which at 400 meters below sea level and with really salty water means that you are able to float without any difficulties and even lay in the water to read a book. It's really impressive! Then after this experience we drove up to Karak at 1000 meters to see the fort, which was built during the Bronze Age. The weather was not ideal, with strong rains that forced us to stop for a few hours because of land slides.

We then stopped at Madaba, the key place to visit for churches and to see old mosaics, but also to discover the weaving project which provides a resource to large parts of the population in this area. Next, Dana Valley, a biosphere reserve, was a nice place to stay for a few days to have a rest or do some hiking.

Our last visit of historic and archeological sites was Petra and Little Petra. We spent two



full days discovering Petra and its surroundings. We will remember for life the moment when we arrived at the end of this long corridor called As-Siq and discovered the Treasury, known all around the world. In this moment you really do understand why Petra is one of Wonders of the World. But Petra is not only The Treasury. It's a huge site where there are a lot of buildings, tombs and monuments, such as the Monastery, which can be visited after climbing 800 steps. However, it's well worth the climb and not to be missed!

The Jordan Pass is highly recommended, as it includes the Entry Visa fee and access to 43 monuments and sites including Petra. There are three options available, but it really does depend on how many days you want spend in Petra. We recommend a minimum stay of at least three days. The Jordan Pass will really help your budget, particularly if you



are keen to visit as many sites as possible. We are currently in Wadi Rum, one of the best wadis we have been lucky enough to visit on the Arabian Peninsula. It's a peaceful place with a dramatic landscape where you can spend a lot of time climbing, trekking or simply visiting by car, camel or horse. Local Bedouin guides know all the main points of



interest in this region. Our adventure in Jordan is nearly finished. In a few days we will take the ferry to Nuweiba in Sinai from Aqaba, the unique port of Jordan, before we head over to Egypt and then Sudan.

The Trastours is a family that has been overlanding the planet for as long as they can remember! Made up of Greg and Magali as well as their daughters Natasha and Anastasia, The Trastours is a family filled to the brim with an unstoppable sense of adventure for the ultimate goal – to explore the world. You can check out their next stop at [www.nomadsroad.com](http://www.nomadsroad.com) or look for Nomads Road on Facebook and Twitter.

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