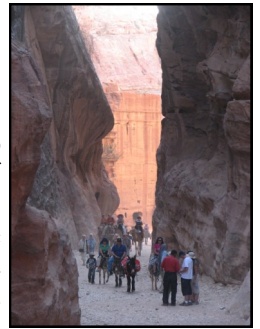
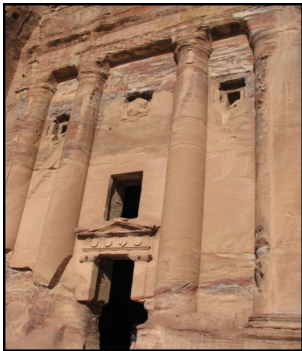


THE LOST KINGDOM OF NABATEA AND THE TRAIL OF LAWRENCE OF ARABIA MARCH 24–31, 2011

There are very few archaeological sites in the old world that excite my anticipation as much as Egypt, and *Petra* is one of them. You have to imagine an ancient city hidden away in a small Grand Canyon setting, with homes and public buildings carved deeply into the rose colored cliffside. It is accessible only by pedestrians, who must walk through a narrow canyon to get there. That limited access gave the ancient residents a very secure, easily defensible stronghold, hidden away from unwanted intruders. The narrow entrance canyon opens out into increasingly large open spaces, where visitors discover classical facades in Greek and Roman architectural style, including homes, tombs, temples, an amphitheatre & other public buildings, and the remnants of complex water projects from the surrounding hills which kept the city well supplied and lush. Photo: In the narrow entrance canyon which was used in the final scene in the movie “Raiders of the Lost Ark.” Notice the donkeys and horses, which can be hired inexpensively for those who don’t want to walk.



This remarkable place was built in pre-Christian times by an ancient culture, the Nabateans, who are now extinct but at one time Nabatea was an important kingdom and Petra was the center of valued and highly profitable caravan routes. Petra is the most significant remainder of their culture, and the most beautiful, but there are other Nabatean ruins spanning a reasonably large distance from Saudi Arabia to Syria (known then as Assyria.) As the Roman empire increased its size and grip on the Eastern Mediterranean region Nabatea eventually succumbed and lost its important monopoly on trading. It was abandoned prior to 700 AD, was eventually covered by drifting sand, and was completely forgotten. Only a few Bedouin tribes knew about it, and for 1100 years it lay buried; it wasn’t until 1812 that it was re-discovered by modern Western civilization. It is a desert time warp, a looking glass into the heart of the ancient world. These photos are just a small sampling of the many places I walked to & saw in Petra on my last visit.



Petra is of course a World Heritage Site, it has a very high ranking on most “must see” lists (Smithsonian, travel guides, etc.), and it has been voted one of the “Seven Wonders of the World” (using modern standards of evaluation), along with places such as Machu Picchu, the Great Wall of China, and the Taj Mahal. Personally I feel that it compares favorably with those places.

Petra is one of the most atmospheric places I’ve visited, and it’s perfect for people who enjoy easy walking. The long entrance canyon and the large open developed area have very minimal elevation changes, and the constantly changing colors and textures of the canyon walls contrast with the beauty of the hand-hewn creations of humans. The combination of these elements is simply stunning. There are walks up into the surrounding mountains for people who want more vigorous exercise, and the rewards from those climbs are good views and perspective, remote temple ruins, and even fewer

people. Late March is an excellent time to visit because the weather is good (cool nights and pleasant days.)

The main boulevard through the central settlement / canyon, and a close up of an especially beautiful rock wall inside one of the cave-buildings.



THE TRAIL OF LAWRENCE OF ARABIA

But there is so much more of interest in Jordan! While researching T.E. Lawrence I learned that he was frequently in Petra when he was spear-heading The Arab Revolt during WWI. In point of fact Lawrence spend as much time in what is now Jordan as he did in Arabia, which is directly South of Jordan, but the revolt began in Arabia and once the American reporter Lowell Thomas gave him that nickname, it stuck. The entire Southern region of the country was a Base camp for Lawrence and the Revolt, including one especially spectacular area called Wadi Rum, which is the location of “The Seven Pillars of Wisdom.” Lawrence later used that as the title for his definitive book about the Arab Revolt. For this tour I am delighted to include an overnight stay at a desert camp in Wadi Rum fro the first time; this is a unique inclusion which required special negotiations with the Bedouin owner in Jordan. Photo: The mountain formation that inspired the title for Lawrence’s “Seven Pillars of Wisdom.”



THE DIVERSITY OF JORDAN

Jordan has many other places which merit a visit and this tour includes some that I enjoyed on previous trips, including Greek and Roman cities, an excellent Crusader castle, Byzantine mosaics, and a unique oasis used by Lawrence as a base. Jordan is a safe place to travel: it’s like a Middle Eastern “Switzerland” with a mixture of religions, in a neutral setting. The government is pro-Western, pro-peace, and the Kings have typically chosen American or British women to be Queens. I have experienced a sincere welcome spirit while travelling there, and I never at any time felt unsafe. The hotels and restaurants met US standards, and services were provided as I had booked them. It is a civilized country with a rich history, and worth an effort to visit so I hope you will consider taking advantage of this opportunity to expand your understanding of the world.

ITINERARY

MARCH 24: Please arrive in Amman, Jordan on this day to begin the tour. (This means you must depart the US no later than March 23rd.) Travellers coming directly from my Paddlewheel Steamboat trip in Egypt are likely to arrive about 10:00 AM, so arriving before 10:00 is an ideal arrival time frame for people from North America to arrive, however arrangements for meeting & transfers from other flights can be arranged for a small supplemental charge. Please coordinate your flight schedule with me before making any irrevocable airline purchases.

We begin in **MADABA**, which is conveniently located not too far from the airport and just happens to have some excellent sites. Unique early Christian sites have attracted a population that is 50% Christian (mostly Greek Orthodox.) We’ll have a walking tour of the sites led by a Jordanian Guide. The sites include St. George’s Church (AKA The Church of the Map) which has a spectacular mosaic map of 600,000+ pieces dating from about 550. The map pre-dates the Muslim conquest so it is a rich and valuable resource for Biblical archaeologists who have used it to pinpoint ancient cities throughout the Middle East. It was covered by a floor for more than 1000 years and was only re-discovered in 1884. We’ll also see the Archaeological Park, Madaba Museum and if time allows the Church of the Apostles with another excellent mosaic created to look like embroidery. Sometime during the early afternoon we’ll have free time for a lunch stop. The evening is free with nothing planned, and there are some excellent craft stores and good local restaurants in Madaba.

Overnight **MADABA**

MARCH 25: Buffet breakfasts are included at our hotels every day so this is the last time I will mention it; just assume that breakfast is included. They typically have a good selection of hot and cold items for omnivores and vegetarians. Breakfast at the desert camp is much simpler with fewer selections but it should be very adequate.

After an early breakfast we leave for Wadi Musa (the modern town adjacent to the Petra site) using the quick moving desert highway so that we arrive before lunch time. Our hotel is the closest to the entrance of the Petra site so you will be able to walk in and out when you chose during our 3 night stay here using a 3 day Pass ticket (which includes horse for a short part of the walk if you desire.) I suggest a quick lunch at one of the local restaurants in town, or you can walk into the Petra site to begin your exploration as soon as I have purchased tickets. Sometime later (after 3 PM) you’ll check in to the hotel, unpack for a 3 night stay, relax in the hotel pool, and have dinner on your own. Overnight **PETRA**

MARCH 26: A full day to explore Petra using your 3 day pass. Many people only have a day or two to explore Petra, but it is a large site and that is hardly adequate. There are well marked pathways to sites in the surrounding hills, and I think that you will appreciate having time to see it thoroughly. A buffet Lunch is included at the only restaurant in the site so you do not have to exit the site and return. Free evening. Overnight **PETRA**

MARCH 27: A second full day to explore Petra. Lunch is again included at the restaurant in the site, and the evening is free for you to relax. By now the heated swimming pool might feel good on muscles that have been well used for a few days. **PETRA**

MARCH 28: After breakfast we are met by our Coach and driver and head South to the splendid desert area of Wadi Rum, where Lawrence spent so much time and the David



Lean movie was filmed. Upon arrival we will be met by a fleet of jeeps and we'll begin a 6 hour exploration of the desert, including a one hour stop at Barrah Canyon, where you can walk. Other stops include a Nabatean Temple, Lawrence's Spring, Jabal Khazali for ancient wall inscriptions, Burdah Bridge and Um Frouth Rock Bridge. A box lunch is included. There is traditional Bedouin food for dinner and music in the evening. Sleeping is in traditional Bedouin tents with mattresses, warm blankets and pillows. There are toilets, and plenty of small tents to accommodate various needs (couples, single women, single men,) and large tents for socializing and eating. Baggage will be stored overnight in our coach in a guarded area so a small overnight bag or backpack is all that is needed. Think of this as "soft" adventure. Overnight **WADI RUM DESERT CAMP**

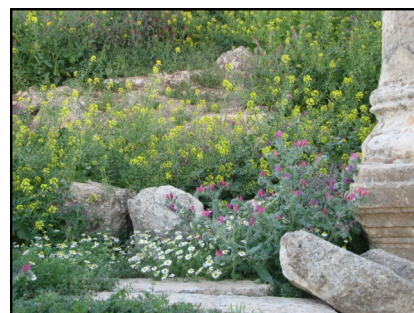
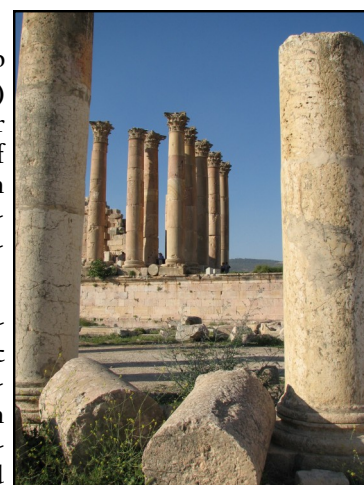
MARCH 29: We have breakfast at the desert camp then we head North on the smaller "King's Highway" to Amman, the capital of Jordan, where we will be based for our last three nights. Mid day we will stop in Karak to see the most famous Crusader castle in Jordan where our tour guide will arrange lunch for the group (included.) Even though it is 900 years old and was besieged and modified after the fall of the Crusader kingdom, it is still impressive. It's location on a high precipice with deep ravines on 3 sides gave it control of important trade routes and the view is still stunning.

We continue North and stop at Mount Nebo, where Moses is supposed to have seen the Promised Land which he could never enter. Legend has it that he is buried on the mountain somewhere. Then on to Amman where there is a free evening. Amman is safe but sort of bland but it is the best possible base for exploring. There are a few uninspiring ruins, some good shopping and cafes where you can enjoy seeing the local atmosphere. Overnight **AMMAN**

MARCH 30: A full day excursion to historical sites of the Eastern desert, including one of the best preserved desert buildings, "Qusayr Amra", which is on the UNESCO World Heritage Site list. The main attraction there are the floor to ceiling frescoes, which have captivated visitors for over a millennium. We'll also visit "Qasr Kharana", one of the most photogenic desert castles, and "Qasr al-Azraq." Lawrence and Sharif Hussein bin Ali holed up there in the winter of 1917-1918 and there are rooms marked as Lawrence's Rooms. The area around Azraq was at one time a vast oasis but overuse of the water table greatly reduced its size, however the Jordanian government is now pumping millions of gallons of water per year into the area to rebuild the water table and the oasis. We'll have an included lunch during the day and return to Amman for a free evening. Overnight Amman

MARCH 31: We shift sightseeing focus to the Classical cultures today. We'll visit two of my favorite historical sites in Northern Jordan: *Jerash* and Umm Qais (*Gadara*). *Gadara* has been an important city throughout its history, from the time of Alexander the Great, the Ptolemies, Herod, and as part of the Roman Province of Syria because of its important geographical location overlooking the Sea of Galilee and the Golan Heights. It's still important in modern times. The combination of modest ruins garlanded with wildflowers on a mountain top with excellent views and Black Kites soaring above is very satisfying.

Jerash, known in ancient times as *Gerasa*, was once a prosperous city of the Roman Decapolis (an association of semi-independent Roman city-states) and it is one of the best classical sites in the Near East. Again there is a rich history dating from Greek and Macedonian times, with surviving temples of Artemis & Zeus, and especially good Roman monuments such as Hadrian's Arch (which still makes an impressive and stately entrance to the city in our times), a Nymphaeum, Hippodrome, and a spectacular paved



street lined with reasonably well preserved buildings and monuments. It came as quite a surprise to me during my first two visits that Jerash isn't better known because it is every bit as impressive & attractive as many other better known Classical sites. I took these photos of both places on my last visit in 2008. We'll have an included lunch in Jerash and return to our hotel in Amman in the late afternoon.

The evening is free but I expect to organize a small end of trip gathering at the hotel. Two of the main flights from Amman to the US depart between midnight and 02:30 AM tonight, but for your convenience the hotel room is included even if you are departing on one of those flights so that you can clean up and pack for the journey home, and if you are departing the next morning you will of course have a hotel room too. A taxi transfer from the hotel to the airport is easy and costs substantially less than a pre-booked transfer, so I have not included those in this package.

My recent studies of T.E. Lawrence have encouraged a significant interest in seeing the Crusader Castles of Syria (which are the best anywhere,) and once I learned about the spectacular ancient cities of Palmyra & Bosra, and about the exotic,

mysterious ambience of Damascus and Aleppo, I decided to pursue a tour after this to Syria. That is in the final stages of planning and I expect to segue directly from this Jordan trip to a Syrian trip. Details of that trip should be available soon on my web page: www.reeljig.com/mcfarland/

DETAILS ABOUT COSTS, INCLUSIONS GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE TOUR AND TRAVEL IN JORDAN

The trip cost of \$1525 USD includes all of the sightseeing tickets for places listed in the Itinerary including a 3 day pass for unlimited visits to Petra, travel by chartered air conditioned coach with a certified driver and an English speaking professional Guide; lodging at the 4 star Mariam Hotel in Madaba, the 5 star Crowne Plaza Hotel in Wadi Musa (Petra), the desert camp in Wadi Rum, and the 5 star Crown Plaza Hotel in Amman. (The Crowne Plaza hotels are part of the world renowned Intercontinental Hotel Group and they are above average quality.) Breakfast is included daily (all buffets except at the Desert Camp); substantial buffet lunches on March 26 & 27 in the Petra Site, boxed lunch on 3/28 at the desert camp, and full sit down lunch at good quality restaurants on March 29, 30 and 31 when we are taking day tours. The tour cost also includes the cost of my research and planning and coordination with our guide, driver, hotels, and other service providers during the tour.

THE TOUR COST DOES NOT INCLUDE: airfare to or from Jordan, any meals or sightseeing except those specified, alcoholic beverages, laundry, internet or phone costs, trip insurance, or any other article not specified in the brochure.

RESERVING A SPACE: The group size of this trip is very limited & partially pre-booked. Please request space by email to ken_mcfarland@earthlink.net and be prepared to mail your deposit once you are confirmed. Please download a Trip Registration Form at my web page and include that with your deposit. *My mailing address is on the web page.*

DEPOSIT AND FINAL PAYMENT: A deposit of \$762.50 is required to confirm space. The final payment of \$762.50 is due in my office on October 15, 2011. All payments are non-refundable once they are made, however if you have to drop out from the tour and I am able to find a replacement of the same gender (for singles) or another couple (for couples) you can transfer your funds to any future Ken-trip. You are required to notify me immediately if you learn that you have to withdraw.

COSTS AND PAYMENTS: All prices are in US dollars and must be paid by check. Credit cards are not accepted. Costs from suppliers such as hotels have been quoted to me in Jordanian Dinars, and if there is a significant change in the rate of exchange I reserve the right to make an adjustment. (Jordan has a stable currency so that is unlikely.)

TRIP INSURANCE: Consider yourself advised to purchase Trip Insurance. There is a list of online sources for Trip Insurance on my web page. I strongly suggest it because more often than not it has good value. Unlike standard travel agents, I do not receive any kind of remuneration for suggesting that you purchase it. In the event that you are unable to join the tour due to an unpredictable act of weather or other forces of nature (such as a volcano,) or acts of War, God or any other cause that can not be foreseen, such as a strike by airline employees, no refund for any portion of the tour can be made.

DOCUMENTS: A valid Passport with at least 6 months remaining validity on the date of your proposed entry is required for entry into Jordan. A Visa is issued when you arrive with no muss or fuss.

PHYSICAL CONDITION: The Petra site is not suitable for people with a handicap or any kind of disability that restricts your ability to walk. For most people of all ages it is very accessible and does not present any difficulties.

SPECIAL DIETS AND ALLERGIES: The included meals all have vegetarian options however that is the only special diet that is likely to be available. People with food allergies have to advise me when requesting space to see if I can make arrangements for special dietary needs; I reserve the right to decline a booking if I do not feel that I can confidently guarantee a dietary request. Eating restaurant and hotel food in Jordan is very safe.

SMOKING: Please do not request space on this trip if you are a smoker. Many people (including myself) are allergic to smoke. There are many smokers in Jordan, however we will be eating in non-smoking areas of restaurants, our guide and driver will not smoke in the coach, and the hotel rooms will be designated non-smoking rooms whenever it is possible.

PLAYS WELL WITH OTHERS: Please bring your consideration and courtesy for others with you, as well as your patience in situations when service providers are not as efficient as you would like them to be.

MAILING ADDRESS AND COMMUNICATION: Make all checks payable to Ken McFarland and mail them to: 3875 Geist Road #E323, Fairbanks, Alaska 99709-3549. Because I am a one person operation and I travel often, email is the only dependable way to reach me: ken_mcfarland@earthlink.net, but you may also FAX information to (907) 456-7558