



ATTRACTIONS, INVENTORY AND MAPPING
FOR ADVENTURE TOURISM

JORDAN





This publication has been produced with the financial assistance of the European Union under the ENI CBC Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme. The contents of this document are the sole responsibility of the Official Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Services and Navigation of Barcelona and can under no circumstances be regarded as reflecting the position of the European Union or the Programme management structures.

The European Union is made up of 28 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders.

The 2014–2020 ENI CBC Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme is a multilateral Cross-Border Cooperation (CBC) initiative funded by the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI). The Programme objective is to foster fair, equitable and sustainable economic, social and territorial development, which may advance cross-border integration and valorise participating countries' territories and values. The following 13 countries participate in the Programme: Cyprus, Egypt, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Palestine, Portugal, Spain, Tunisia. The Managing Authority (JMA) is the Autonomous Region of Sardinia (Italy). Official Programme languages are Arabic, English and French. For more information, please visit: www.enicbcmed.eu

MEDUSA project has a budget of 3.3 million euros, being 2.9 million euros the European Union contribution (90%).

CONTENTS

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4
2. ATTRACTION INVENTORY FOR ADVENTURE	6
2.1 ATTRACTION LIST AND MAPPING	7
2.1.1 MAP SUMMARY	7
2.1.2 NATURAL RESOURCES	7
2.1.3 CULTURAL RESOURCES.....	11
2.1.4. ADBVENTURE ACTIVITIES.....	15
2.2 ATTRACTION LIST AND MAPPING IN PILOT AREAS	39
2.2.1 IRBID.....	39
2.2.2 BALQA	44
2.2.3 MADABA.....	50
2.2.4 KARAK	55
2.2.5 TAFILEH.....	59
2.2.6 AQABA	65
3. ADVENTURE TOURISM ECOSYSTEM	73
3.1 INFRASTRUCTURE AND MOBILITY.....	74
3.1.1ARRIVING IN JORDAN.....	74
3.1.2 GETTING AROUND.....	77
3.2 SERVICE OFFERED TO VISITORS	79
3.3 DESTINATION MANAGEMENT AND MARKETING ENTITIES	80
3.4 STAKEHOLDERS AND TOUR OPERATORS INVOLVED IN ADVENTURE TOURISM	81
4. CONCLUSION	82
4.1 FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS	86
ANNEXES	88
ANNEX 1: TOURISM AND COVID-19.....	88
ANNEX 2: GENERAL REVISION OF ADVENTURE TOURISM	92
5. RESOURCES.....	104
ACRONYMS.....	110



1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Adventure travel describes trips that provide experiences (both mental and physical) to places which are novel or unique to the traveler, emphasize the natural environment, and provide challenge through experiences of culture, activities that promote physical health, and excitement. In 2019, the global Adventure Tourism market size was US\$988.8 million and it is expected to reach US\$3150.3 million by the end of 2026, with an expected compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 17.8% between 2021-2026.¹ –The development of the travel & tourism sector fosters the growth for adventure tourism market demand. These above projections will naturally have been impacted by the effects of Covid-19. However, 46% of those asked, who traveled for adventure in the past year said their first trip post-COVID would be an adventure trip. Adventure travelers are 33% more likely than non-adventure travelers, to say they'll travel again “as soon as possible”. When tourism bounces back, adventure travel is likely to be one of the first to recover and grow.

Jordan is a blossoming tourist destination and is well known for The Rose Red City of Petra, the Dead Sea, the lowest point on earth, as well as several unique UNESCO Heritage sites, including Wadi Rum Desert. With its rich culture, welcoming people, and an abundance of diverse and beautiful natural vistas, adventure tourism has been picking up speed in recent years. The country boasts a myriad of attractions and experiences, endless miles of trails, wadis and canyons, a distinctive natural beauty and a rich cultural history which are the main elements of

adventure tourism. Served by a robust national airline, well-developed tourism infrastructure and hallmark hospitality, Jordan is in a position to exploit the strong potential that Adventure Tourism has to offer.

Key findings of this research show that Jordan is currently still in its infancy in terms of adventure tourism. However, the Kingdom has the potential to embrace the lucrative adventure tourism niche. The proposed route to growth will include detailed mapping and addressing gaps, while building on past successes, experiences and best practices by key stakeholders and relevant bodies, and focusing on sustainable destination management and marketing with sound environmental and local community engagement practices as the key development principles of adventure tourism.

An in-depth review of the legal framework, business enabling environment including investment mobilisation, is recommended. Dedicated focused professionals are needed to build an effective, sustainable and resilient product and to unleash its full potential. Effective measures and frameworks will allow Jordan to both compete as well as collaborate, with other, fast developing adventure tourism destinations, as partner countries within the MEDUSA Southern Mediterranean region.

Jordan has a significant opportunity to become a first-class adventure tourism destination regionally as well as on a global scale.

1. <https://www.marketreportsworld.com/global-adventure-tourism-market-14316948>



2. ATTRACTION INVENTORY FOR ADVENTURE



2.1 Attraction List and Mapping

Jordan is a blossoming tourist destination, with its rich culture, welcoming people, and an abundance of diverse and beautiful natural vistas. The country is in no shortage of potential for a myriad of attractions and experiences, with adventure tourism picking up speed in recent years. However, it is in need of a drizzle of attention and support in order to flourish.

This report focuses on six out of twelve governorates, highlighting and exploring the great adventure tourism potential within them as pilot areas. These include: Irbid, Balqa, Madaba, Karak, Tafleleh and Aqaba. The aim is to obtain useful, operational and implementable steppingstones to help nourish the future of adventure tourism in the country, independently, and more broadly in conjunction with efforts in the Mediterranean region.

2.1.1 Map Summary

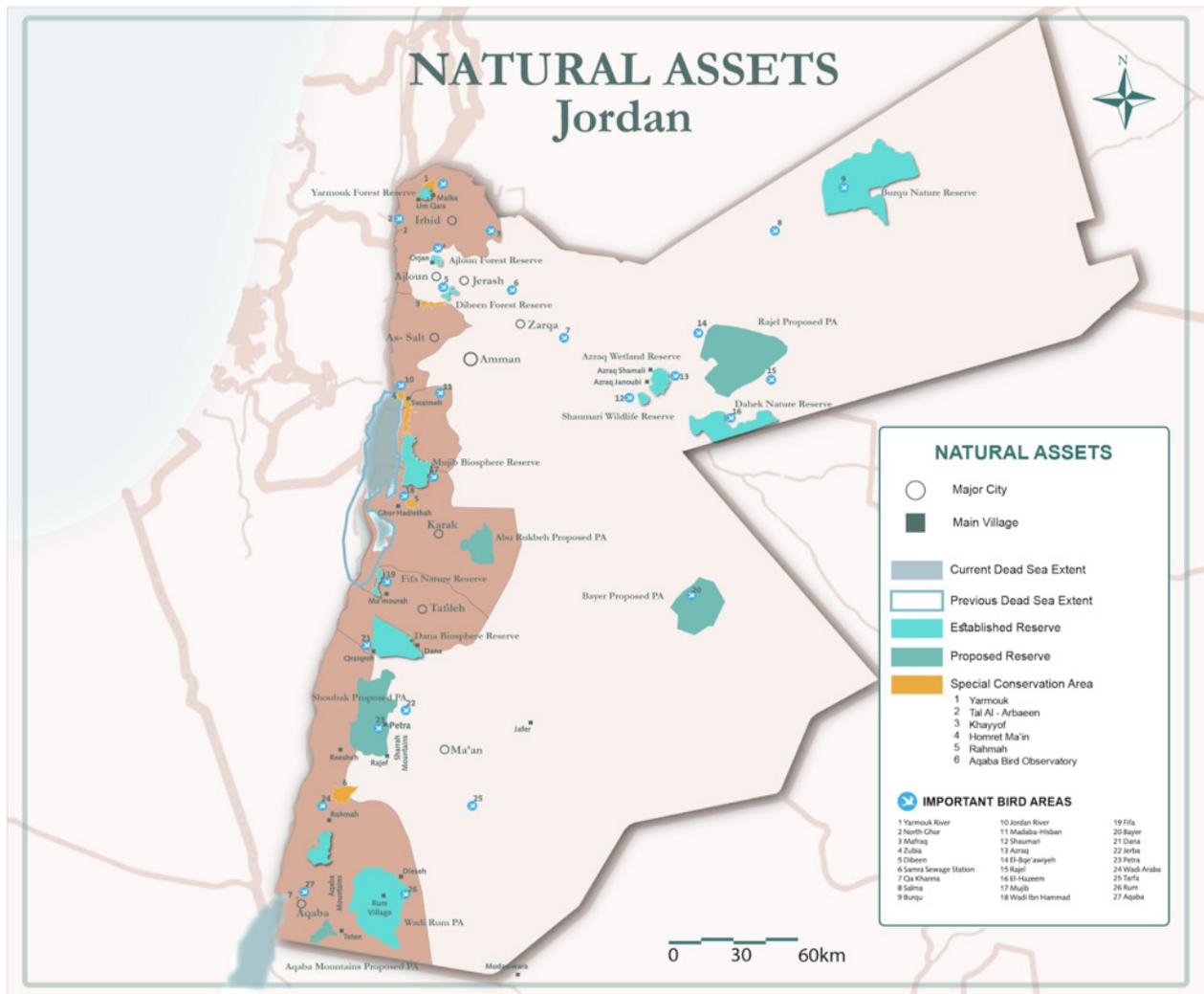
Jordan currently boasts a great deal of natural and cultural assets, as well as a wide range of adventure activities and experiences. In addition to an array of tourist services and accommodations on offer for a variety of needs and desires, Jordan is home to many unique destinations. These have been mapped out accordingly, first on a national level and then specific to the six pilot areas; Irbid, Balqa, Madaba, Karak, Tafleleh and

Aqaba each of which is unique in climate, biodiversity, landscape, topography and history, all of which come together to make Jordan such a mystical destination. The elements have been mapped out and identified throughout this report, however so much potential within the country remains unrealized. Once thoroughly and sustainably addressed Jordan has the capacity to be a unique and powerful player in the global adventure tourism playfield.

2.1.2 Natural Resources

Jordan is buzzing with a rich biodiversity and boasts an abundance of natural wonders. The remarkable biodiversity is a result of its diverse physical characteristics which have yielded an unusual case of richness in landforms and biological diversity in terms of landscapes, ecosystems and species. At the intersection of three continents, Jordan encapsulates four biogeographical regions: Mediterranean, Irano-Turanian, Saharo-Arabian, and the Sudanian Penetration. All four transform into 13 vegetation types which, in turn, embrace over 4,000 species of terrestrial, freshwater, and marine fauna and flora.

NATURAL ASSETS JORDAN



In Jordan, there is no evidence of categorising national parks, nature reserves and protected areas separately. Over the years, RSCN has established and is managing twelve nature reserves in Jordan.

No.	Name of protected area	Year established	Area – km sq.
1	Shaumari Wildlife reserve	1975	22
2	Azraq Wetland Reserve	1978	72
3	Mujib Biosphere Reserve	1985	212
4	Ajloun Forest Reserve	1987	12
5	Dana Biosphere Reserve	1989	320
6	Wadi Rum UNESCO World Heritage Site	1997	729
7	Aqaba Marine Park	1997	2.5
8	Dibeen Forest Reserve	2004	8.5
9	Yarmouk Forest Reserve	2010	21
10	Fifa Nature Reserve	2011	26
11	Burqu Nature Reserve	2018	906
12	Dahik Nature Reserve	2018	265

Of these reserves, the following are located in the pilot areas:

- Dana Biosphere Reserve (south-central), Jordan's largest biosphere reserve
- Mujib Biosphere Reserve (Eastern shore of the Dead Sea), lowest biosphere reserve in the world
- Wadi Rum Reserve (south of Jordan), UNESCO World Heritage Site
- Fifa Nature Reserve (southwest of Jordan).
- Yarmouk Forest Reserve – (far northwest part of Jordan to the South of Yarmouk River, at the border with the Golan Heights)
- Aqaba Marine Park – (south of Jordan)
One of the main attractions in Aqaba is the pristine coral reef, which is all part of the well-protected Marine Park.

Other Natural Resources within the pilot area include:

Hot Springs

Jordan is rich in hot springs along the rift valley. Tourists and wellness travelers bathe in the springs to treat chronic physical ailments, including circulation, bone, joint, muscle, skin and back pains. It is also said that the mineral-rich waters help with the treatment of many chronic diseases including rheumatism, arteriosclerosis, anemia, the treatment of fertility and other conditions.

3. http://www.kinghussein.gov.jo/geo_envl.html

Dead Sea

Located at 400 meters below sea level, the Dead Sea is the lowest point on earth. Reaching temperatures of close to 40°C in the summertime.³ The Dead Sea is effectively a lake and is located in the Great Rift Valley which runs from Ethiopia to Turkey.

The name of the Dead Sea is due to the uniquely salty water. Virtually no marine life is able to live in these conditions. Where usual seawater is made up of around three to four per cent salt; The Dead Sea is about ten times saltier at thirty per cent. The River Jordan feeds into the Dead Sea as it flows south from the Sea of Galilee. The lake has no outflow. The water evaporates at a number of millions of liters a day. This leads to crusts of salt deposits on the shoreline as well as a thick balmy haze that appears to filter out the harmful UVB rays of the sun, allowing people to tan but without burning.

Wellness travelers seek the medical benefits of the Dead Sea water as well as the mud, which have proven benefits. The salt content of the water is 31.5% making the water so buoyant that it is impossible for the visitor to sink. The water also contains 21 minerals including

high levels of magnesium, sodium, potassium, and bromine and 12 of these minerals are found in no other body of water in the world. Studies have shown the combination of the Dead Sea water and the rich black mud found along the shoreline to have significant health benefits including increasing circulation, easing discomfort from arthritis, healing allergies, and revitalizing skin.⁴

Being the lowest site on earth, the Dead Sea is distinguished by natural oxygen enrichment, low humidity, high barometric pressure (800 mm Hg), and temperature with increased bromide and magnesium concentrations in the inspired air. The air is also dry, virtually allergen free and the high concentration of bromine and magnesium in the air relaxes and relieves tension.⁵

4. <http://international.visitjordan.com/whattodo/LeisureWellness.aspx>

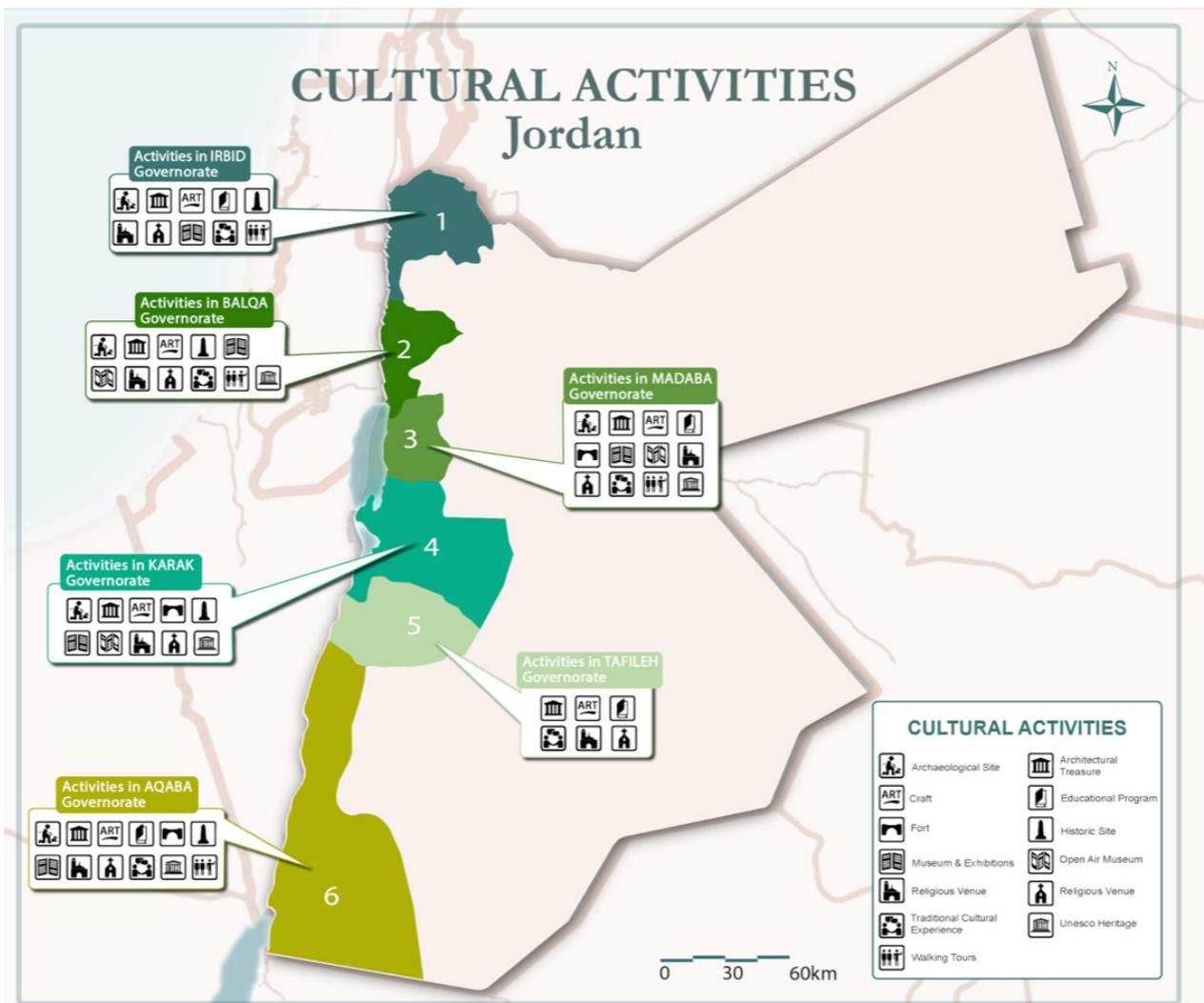
5. [https://www.ajconline.org/article/S0002-9149\(98\)00873-X](https://www.ajconline.org/article/S0002-9149(98)00873-X)

2.1.3 Cultural Resources

Jordan has a rich and vibrant history and culture, thus some of Jordan's significant tourist experiences include visiting cultural, historical and religious sites. Along with an array of various museums and exhibitions, tourists can

engage in walking tours, cultural and rural community experiences including interactive culinary activities, arts and crafts, and others that showcase the renowned hospitality of Jordanians fully.

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES JORDAN





ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

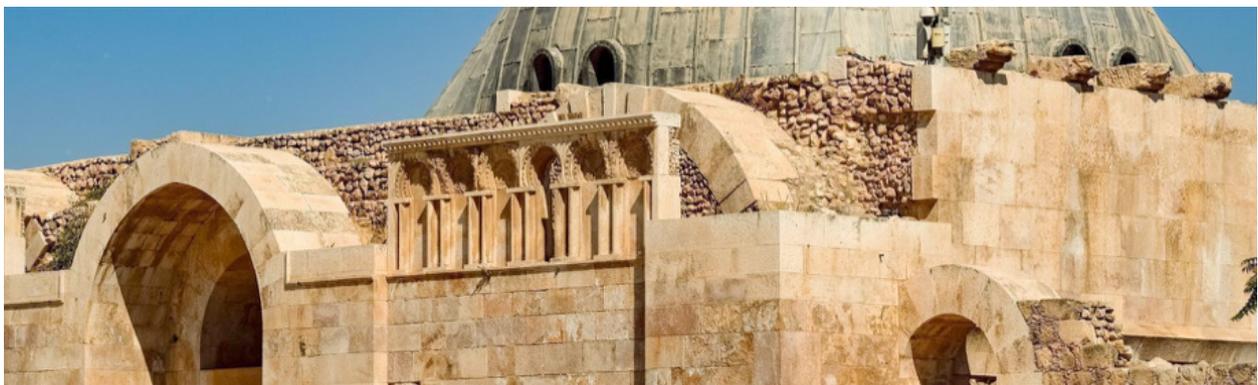


Given its rich and diverse history Jordan is home to many ancient sites, from prehistory through to the Ottoman period. Some historic sites are well known as spectacular tourist destinations like Petra. Others have yet to fulfill their potential as cultural and economic assets.

The online database, MEGA Jordan, boasts an extensive inventory of ancient sites of Jordan, lists over 14420 archaeological sites in the country. From an Adventure Tourism perspective, there is an incredible abundance of locations to explore.⁶



Historic Buildings



The ancient lands of the country have been captivating travelers and civilizations for centuries. This is evidenced in the numerous historical sites and buildings that are scattered throughout. Roman amphitheatres, crusader castles, and

historic buildings set against magical desert landscapes make Jordan one of the most unique and alluring places in the world, with its buildings and structures embodying a deep history and heritage.

6. <http://megajordan.org>



Museums



Jordan boasts historical, military, cultural, artistic and community museums that showcase its importance across consecutive historical eras and civilizations. These museums also document the path of prosperity and achievements in Jordan since the establishment of the state under the Hashemite leadership. Generally, each archaeological site hosts at least one

museum. Furthermore there are several specialized museums that are spread across the country that showcase the ancient and the modern history of Jordan, artefacts, traditional and military costumes, weaponry and machinery used in battles, as well as ancient coins and banknotes, jewellery, artwork and certificates of scientific achievements.⁷



Architectural Treasures



The architectural treasures within the country and the pilot areas are mainly historical and have been included under archaeological sites or religious sites or

have been transformed into museums. More recent architectural remains however are highly visible in the old town of As-Salt city dating to the end of the

⁷ <https://rhc.jo/en/jordan-and-jordanians/jordan%E2%80%99s-museums>

19th and early 20th century as well as in parts of the capital Amman. Many of these buildings are still in use today either by their owners or are being re-used for

various tourism related projects, however different parts of the country hold witness to many scattered buildings that date to the 18th and early 19th centuries.



Religious Sites



Throughout history, Jordan has been the site of notable events in Islam and Christianity. Although Islam is the national religion, Jordan has a native Christian population who practice their

religion freely. Jordan is a land of religious coexistence, and as a result, the country protects and maintains sites for faith-based travelers as well as those with historical and cultural interest in the sites.



UNESCO World Heritage Sites



Jordan counts five places listed as world heritage sites, which are Petra, Umm ar-Rasas, Wadi Rum, the Baptism Site (Bethany) and Qusseir Amrah. Within the pilot areas, there are three UNESCO World Heritage sites; Wadi Rum Protected Area,

located in the governorate of Aqaba, Umm ar-Rasas, located in the governorate of Madaba and The Baptism Site in the governorate of Balqa.

Additionally, the historical city of As-Salt in Balqa has been nominated for a UNESCO status. There are also 15 sites on the tentative list including Dana Biosphere

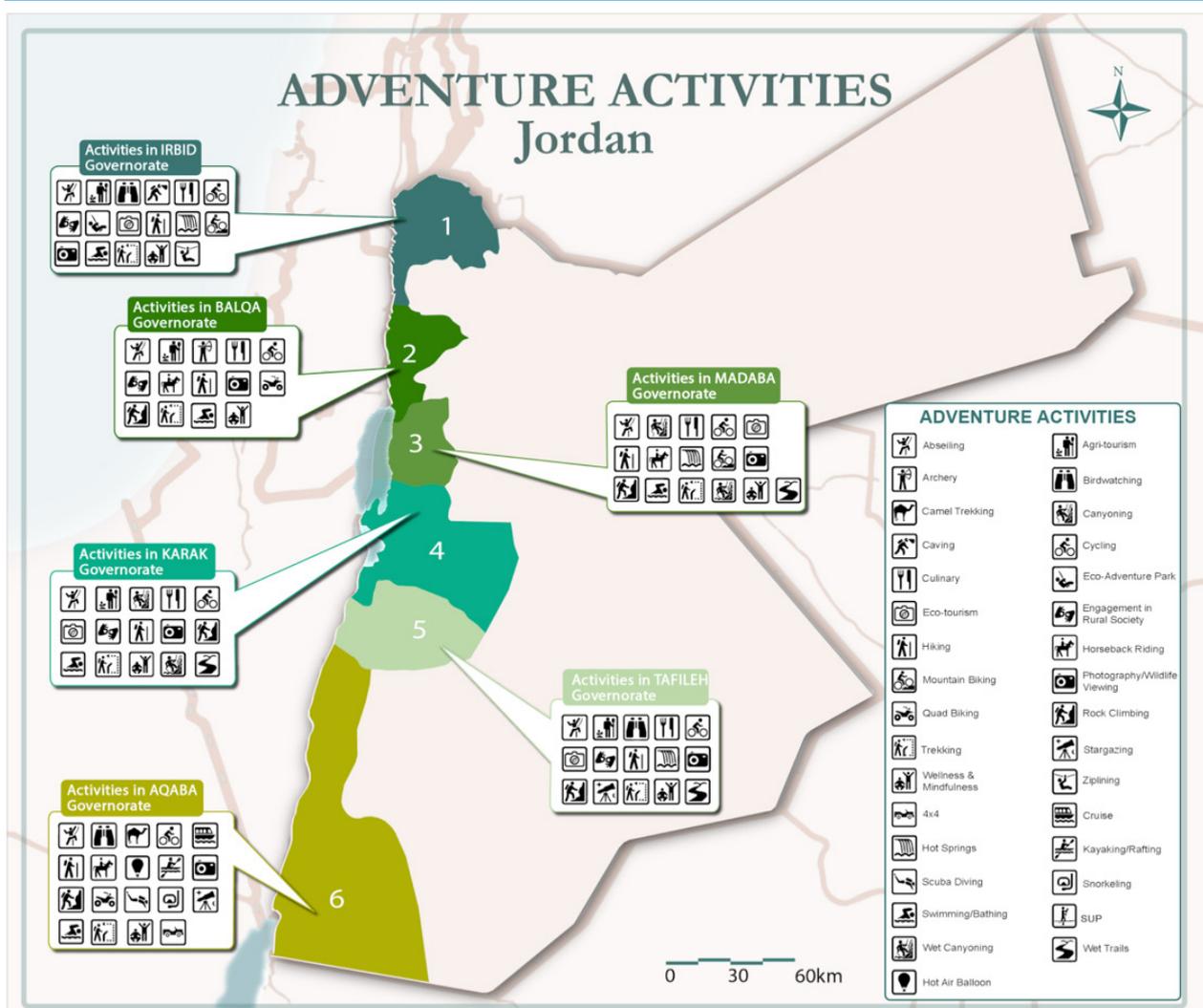
Reserve, Mujib Biosphere Reserve, Shobak Castle and Pella, to name a few.⁸

2.1.4. Adventure Activities

With all its mystical deserts, glistening seas, rocky mountains and canyons, Jordan offers an abundance of opportunities for adventure and exploration for all levels of fitness, skills and interests.

Adventure tourism has recently picked up speed in Jordan, with the country successfully placing itself on the global and regional adventure tourism map.

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES JORDAN



8. <https://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/jo>

TOP 5 ACTIVITIES



HIKING / TREKKING



Hiking is defined as walking a long distance, especially in nature as a recreational activity. To hike is to engage in a leisure-like activity on pre-made trails and/or roads⁹.

Hiking is considered the broadest and most prominent adventure tourism activity in Jordan. Jordan's nature offers hiking trails to suit all levels of fitness and experience and a huge diversity of landscapes from mountains, to deserts, forests and fields. For nature lovers Jordan offers a variety of options inside and outside nature reserves allowing for the immersive experience of the stories the landscape has to offer from scenic views, biodiversity and historical significance.

The RSCN offers numerous hiking trails in all of its reserves, ranging from short trips (2-4 hours) that can easily fit into any itinerary or longer ones that can span from 6 hours to several days. These hikes are a great opportunity to experience the country's natural landscape and biodiversity in the most immersive way possible. These include both guided and

self-guided hikes and different difficulty levels.

Dana Biosphere reserve is a hotspot for some of the most intriguing and awe-inspiring trails, ranging from easy to extremely difficult, appealing all interest and fitness levels. The natural reserves include trails such as the White Dome Trail, the Feynan Plants hike, the Nawatef Trail, the Archaeological Treasures hike, the Wadi Dana Trail and the full day Wadi Dathneh and Wadi Ghwair Trails among others. Hiking is also a crowd favorite in the other reserves as well, with options such as the Ibex Trail in the Mujib Biosphere Reserve, and the Arqoub Romi, Al-Shreif Mountain and Muntamra Valley Trails in the Yarmouk Forest Reserve. All of which enable the visitor to experience and engage with Jordan's rich and varied natural landscapes and biodiversity.

Trekking on the other hand is going on a long demanding journey, typically by foot. At the most basic level, hiking is walking a long-distance while trekking is a multi-day activity and requires

⁹. <https://www.britannica.com/sports/hiking>

planning ahead. This is a more rigorous outdoor experience that is meant to test your ability and sanity. The Jordan Trails is the country's most extensive trek, offering a unique experience of its natural and cultural assets.

The Jordan Trail is a 730 km trail, divided into 8 segments starting in the very north of Jordan from Umm Qais to Aqaba, in the very south. Offering 40 days of hiking over more than 650 kilometers of trail and travelling through 52 villages and towns on its way. The trail traverses the diverse landscapes and vistas of the country, from the rolling wooded hills of the north, the rugged wadis and cliffs overlooking the Jordan Rift Valley, the rose rock of Petra, the dramatic sands and towering mountains in Wadi Rum, to the crystal waters of the Red Sea. For thousands of years, ancient paths and trade routes have cut across the land that today constitutes the state of Jordan. Jordan was the center of the King's Highway, a trade route stretching from Egypt to Aqaba, and then north to Damascus. Divided into eight separate sections, the trail leads through Jordanian forests, canyons, deserts, and along the shores of the Red Sea offering overnight stays in guesthouses, home stays, and Bedouin campsites. It's believed that Jesus, Moses, and Mohammed all walked this path. The Jordan Trail was chosen in 2018 by National Geographic as one of the places you 'Must Visit'. These trails beautifully intersect with the RSCN's reserves allowing for a truly immersive experience of the country's biodiversity.

Umm Qais to Ajloun - Spanning 80km and taking approximately 4 days to complete this part of the trail runs through Ruins of Roman Decapolis cities at Umm Qais and Pella , ecopark at Wadi Ziglab,

Byzantine monastery ruins at Tel Mar Elias, traditional birthplace of the prophet Elijah, Community tourism and rural scenery in the Al-Ayoun villages and the Medieval mountaintop site of Ajloun Castle.

Ajloun to As-Salt - The 62.4 km trail taking approximately 4 days to complete, makes its way through Burma village, King Talal Dam, Rmeimeen village, Town of Fuheis and finally the City of As-Salt.

As-Salt to Wadi Zarqa Ma'in- The 84.4 km routes taking around 4 days, start of in the city of As-Salt and makes its way through Fuheis, Iraq Al-Ameer, Roman Road before ending at The Dead Sea canyons of Wadi Zarqa Main and Wadi Wala.

Three Wadis to Karak- This 75km trail, taking about 4 days to complete, passes through Wadi Mujib, and the Ruins of Magdelina before ending at the Karak Castle.

Karak to Dana - Running around 83.2 km this trail starts at the Karak Castle and makes its way through Khirbet Ainun village, Tor al Taboun crags, Wadi Hasa, Mi'tan and Buseira villages and Edomite ruins, Dana Village and the Dana Biosphere Reserve. The trail takes about 4 days to complete.

Dana to Petra - Taking around 4 days to complete, this 84.5 km trail starts off at the Dana Biosphere Reserve and makes its way through countless other natural wonders such as the Feynan ruins and ancient copper mines, Feynan ecolodge, the hidden stream and waterfall in Wadi Feid, Little Petra, and finally ending in Petra, the ancient Nabatean capital and wonder of the world.

Petra to Wadi Rum - This route which spans 90.6km taking 5 days to complete starts out in Petra crosses through Jebel Haroun (mountaintop burial place of Aaron, off-route), Humeima, ancient Umayyad ruins, Sandstone mountain "islands" in a sea of sand, ending in Wadi Rum.

Wadi Rum to Aqaba - The longest segment of the trail at 112 km and taking approximately 6 days to complete this

route starts out at Wadi Rum (World Heritage site) making its way through some dramatic desert scenery - sandstone domes and granite and basalt striated mountains, changing color constantly throughout the day, Bedouin encampment the Village of Titen and finally making its way to the Red Sea in Aqaba.¹⁰



CYCLING / MOUNTAIN BIKING



Cycling is one of the unique and adventurous ways to experience some of Jordan's most beautiful sights. This is available to do either solo, by the most experienced and adventurous riders or assisted/guided by local service providers in the pilot areas. In addition, RSCN offers biking and cycling experiences in most of its reserves.

The Jordan Bike Trail is a 730km, mixed-surface bike route that crosses the entire length of the beautiful Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Starting from the North in Umm Qais and ending in the Southern port of Aqaba, it passes through an impressive variety of historical and natural wonders.

The trail begins with rolling hills, olive groves, and farms in the North; continues across the dramatic canyons of the Dead Sea region; meanders through the remarkable landscapes of Dana, Petra, and Wadi Rum - before finally splashing into the Red Sea. The trails' difficulty range between easy to very difficult, noting that most of the trails in the cycling and mountain biking trails in the pilot areas are rated at difficult (4/5) to very difficult (5/5) by the Jordan Bike Trail

¹⁰ <https://jordantail.org/>

Example biking trails in the pilot areas include:

Umm Qais to Kufr Rakeb - Starting from the remains of the Decapolis city of Gadara (today, Um Qais) moving to a bracing descent toward Al Arab Dam. From there, the trail offers a climb on paved and dirt roads through a number of smaller villages, before another long descent to the Jordan Valley – at -200m the low point of the trip. The trail rolls for a few easy kilometers along the King Abdullah Canal before climbing to Pella, where one encounters the remains of another Decapolis city. From Pella, it's a long, slow climb to Kufr Rakeb. 4/5 Challenge – 63,2 km, 5-6 hours.

Madaba to Diban - This trail presents a challenge of crossing two of Central Jordan's major wadis: Wadi Zarqa-Ma'in and Wadi Hidan. While the route sounds difficult, one will actually encounter less total elevation gain today than any other day up to this point. The trail starts descending from Madaba through Wadi Zarqa-Ma'in, before embarking on a steep (but paved) climb to Makawer and Jabal Bani Hamida. From there, it heads straight back down into Wadi Hidan – allowing one to stop and enjoy the views on the way down. Shade trees in the wadi bottom offer a nice break (or camp) spot,

before the long ascent out of Wadi Hidan to Dhiban. 4/5 Challenge – 60,1 km 5,5-7 hours

Karak to Ais - Starting from Karak and encountering the impressive views of the city's castle on the way out of town. The trail continues along a number of kilometers of dirt road through small Jordanian villages and shepherds' tents on the way to Wadi Al Hasa, the last of the major wadis on the journey. The long descent to the wadi bottom prepares the rider for a long ascent to the canyon's far rim. 4/5 Challenge – 70km – 5-6.5 hours.¹¹

¹¹. <https://jordanbiketrial.com/>



CANYONING/ WET CANYONING



Consisting of venturing into dry wet canyons, jumping, swimming and abseiling. Canyoning is the perfect way for thrill seekers to experience the challenges and beauty of Jordan's best and most spectacular canyons carved by rivers and other offbeat nature experiences.

Wadi Bin Hammad - Adventurers can explore hidden gorges, rappel, jump and slide down waterfalls as well as the hot streams of this beautiful Wadi north of Karak. It ranges in altitude between 800 m a.s.l. and 380 m. b.s.l.¹² Rocky mountainous slopes are cut by a wadi running to the Dead Sea at Ghor Haditha. These allow the area to support many threatened plant species including *Epipactis veratrifolia* as well as *Moringa peregrina*. The area supports a number of rare animals like the Hyena and Blanford Fox. The presence of several springs create a habitat for the nationally endemic fish species *Gara ghorensis* and *Aphanius dispar*, making for an exciting and educational hike.¹³

Mujib Biosphere Reserve - located at 410 m above sea level. Surrounded by rugged mountainous terrains, bordered by the thrilling Red Sea water coasts, it accounts as the best place to go canyoning in Jordan. The fast, furious waters of the

reserve make it an experience that should be on the top of your canyoning bucket list. The all year river flow hosts immense biodiversity endemic to Jordan. The Mujib Biosphere Reserve has 300 plant species and several species of migratory birds and carnivores animals. Adventurers will hike, scramble, wade, abseil, climb and swim through the breathtaking sandstone canyons of Wadi Mujib Biosphere Reserve, the lowest natural bio reserve on Earth.

The Siq Trail; The trail starts at the Visitor Center near the Mujib Bridge, taking the cantilevered walkway over the dam and following the course of the river between towering sandstone cliffs to the base of a large waterfall. Depending on seasonal rainfall levels, the gorge may contain pools deep enough for swimming. This is an ideal walk to take slowly and enjoy the cool water and shade, especially in the heat of the summer. Easy to moderate depending on the season. Must be 18. 2-3 hours.

Other canyon hikes included in the pilot areas that pass by waterfalls and water streams that may or may not include abseiling are: Wadi Mukheiris hike - Wadi Zarqa Main - Canyoning Wadi Karak - Wadi al Hasa - Wadi al Hidan to name a few.

12. A.s.l. - Above sea level / b.s.l. - below sea level

13. <https://www.rscn.org.jo/content/ibn-hammad-0>



ROCK CLIMBING / ABSEILING



Jordan's diverse terrain and landscape belie its actual size. Divided into ridges by valleys and gorges, and a few mountainous areas, demonstrating a variety that makes for a rock climber's paradise. Wadi Rum, a vast, echoing labyrinth of brick-red sand and castellated cliffs in southern Jordan.¹⁴ Wadi Rum is all about traditional (trad) climbing—where climbers use their own gear to protect from falls before removing it. There are a few bolted or sport-climbing routes, where anchor points and protection are permanently installed. This is desert alpinism, with intricate scrambles up low-angle ramps to spectacular 1,800-meter summits via traditional Bedouin routes. The climbing is spectacular. The mountaineering and climbing are world-class and the bouldering unexplored.

Although Wadi Rum is Jordan's rock-climbing hub, the country has no shortage of climbing challenges from North to South for the amateurs and enthusiasts alike. With new cliffs being bolted in Fuheis in Balqa and Dur Mursud near Irbid. However, it is a sport with a lot more potential especially considering the country's topography and landscape.¹⁵

14. http://www.kinghussein.gov.jo/geo_env1.html

15. <https://www.thecrag.com/en/climbing/jordan>



BIRDWATCHING



Jordan is uniquely located at the tip of the Arabian Peninsula where 3 continents meet; Asia, Africa and Europe, making the Kingdom a migratory mecca for birds. Because Jordan is located on the main migration route, more than a hundred million birds are estimated to pass or stop over each spring and autumn. During the spring migration, huge flocks of raptors can be observed, such as the Steppe Buzzard, Honey Buzzard, Steppe Eagle and Levant Sparrowhawk. In the autumn migration flocks of Steppe Eagle use the Jordan Valley to continue their journey from Europe to Africa, in addition to hundreds of Montagu's Harrier and Pallid Harrier, which cross the eastern desert plateau. With 27 Important Bird Areas (IBAs) and hundreds of species. The IBAs cover an area of 7600 km² or 8.5% of

Jordan's surface area. The IBAs include a variety of natural habitats that are being conserved to sustain significant bird populations in the country. Bird watching holidays are typically arranged for smaller groups during the migratory and breeding seasons. Jordan has enormous potential to be a bird watching destination. With existing locations such as the Yarmouk Forest Reserve in Irbid, and the Aqaba Bird Observatory in the pilot areas, in addition to the Azraq Wetland Reserve where one can get up close and personal with some of the 390 species of birds which reside in Jordan or use it as an annual migratory stop.¹⁶

16. <http://www.jordanbirdwatch.com/>

LAND ACTIVITIES



HORSEBACK-RIDING



Horseback riders can take a few days to retrace the segments of the ancient Spice, Silk, and Frankincense Routes. Various horse-riding trekking options are available. Riding trips range between short day trips, and can last as long as 6 days, making the trip from Petra to the depths of Wadi Rum. It must be noted that some of these trips can be very demanding and require a guide and seasoned riders.

Horseback-riding is also available in some of the pilot areas such as Balqa and Madaba through specialized centers and equestrian clubs. Horseback-riding in these centers is a lot more family friendly and open to all levels of skills, interests and experiences. They are also an interesting way to take in the various sites around Jordan.



CAMEL TREKKING



Camel Trekking is one of the most popular activities in the country and makes for an adventurous and engaging travel experience. Travelling around Wadi Rum by camel is highly recommended.

Apart from it being ecologically sound, it enables one to authentically experience Wadi Rum as the Bedouin have for centuries and to appreciate the silence and splendor of the desert.



MOUNTAINEERING



Mountaineering refers to ascending a mountain. Depending on the difficulty and technical aspects of the mountain itself, this ascent could be accomplished by hiking or climbing. As previously noted, Jordan's diverse topography makes for an interesting and adventurous climbing and mountaineering experience. At 1,854

meters, Jabal Umm Ad-Dami is Jordan's highest mountain, and Jabal Rum is the second highest, standing at 1,734 meters. Here mountaineers can climb sheer granite cliffs that retain the inscriptions of local climbers who were there 5,000 years ago and more.



4X4 EXPLORATION



Jordan has many roads that are 'off the beaten track' and a 4WD will allow adventurers to explore those routes and maximize their time in Wadi Rum. Allowing them to meet local Bedouins in the desert, drink the traditional Bedouin tea, and try sand boarding in the hills.

Following dry riverbeds all the way up to the spring emerging from the rose-red mountains. Offering them a chance to enjoy breathtaking views of the barren landscapes, combining adventure with the highlights of the rich Jordanian history and nature.



QUAD BIKING



With so many trackless roads Jordan is a hot spot for Quad Biking adventure. Nothing provides a greater sense of the everchanging desert dunes and vast landscapes in Wadi Rum and near the

Dead Sea. This activity is perfect for the adrenaline junkie and adventurers, allowing for a unique and timeless experience



ZIPLINING



Ziplining consists of a pulley suspended on a cable, usually made of stainless steel, mounted on a slope. The Jordan EcoPark in Irbid boasts the first zip-line in the Middle East, and the longest zip-line

in Jordan (550m). Adventurers can enjoy the adrenaline rush and the magnificent views of the Ziglab dam and surrounding areas when riding the zip-line



PHOTOGRAPHY/ WILDLIFE VIEWING



Spotting wildlife is an exciting activity for nature lovers, and Jordan is home to some of the most endangered and rare wildlife in the Middle East. Such as the magnificent Arabian Oryx, a species that was once on the verge of extinction. In addition to ostriches, onagers and graceful desert gazelles.

The Dana Biosphere Reserve is home to a diversity of wildlife; a melting pot of species from three continents: Europe, Africa and Asia. Such a combination of natural communities in a single area is unique, and many of Dana's animals and plants are very rare. So far, a total of 700 plant species, 190 bird species, 37 mammal species and 36 reptile species have been recorded, of which 25 are known to be endangered, including the Sand Cat, the Syrian Wolf, the Lesser Kestrel and the Spiny Tailed Lizard. Without special care, some of these could disappear from Earth forever, which makes the Dana Biosphere Reserve a place of global importance.

Mujib's complex river system and all-year water flow enable it to support

a rich biodiversity. To date, over 300 species of plants, 10 species of carnivores and numerous species of resident and migratory birds have been recorded. Some of the mountain and valley areas are difficult to reach and offer safe havens for rare species of cats, mountain goats (Ibex) and other mountain animals.¹⁶

Yarmouk Forest Reserve has four vegetation types: Deciduous Oak, Mediterranean non-forest, Hydric, and planted Aleppo Pine. There are 546 plant species belonging to 72 families and 309 genera, among them: Deciduous Oak, which is the national tree in Jordan, Atlantic Pistachio, White Willow, Oriental plane, Orchid papilionacea and Aleppo Pine. With 20 recorded mammalian species, among them: Arabian Gazelle, Stone Marten, Rock Hyrax, Egyptian Mongoose, and Asiatic Jackal. A total of 111 Bird species were recorded which count for 14% of Jordan's bird population in addition to 15 herpetofaunal species were recorded at Yarmouk Forest Reserve, among them the Green Toad and the Palestinian Viper.¹⁷

17. The Royal Society for Conservation of Nature

Although not included in the pilot areas, the Shaumari Wildlife Reserve is a notable breeding center for endangered or locally extinct wildlife. Today, following breeding programs with some of the world's leading wildlife parks and zoos, this small, 22-square-kilometre reserve is a thriving protected environment for some of the most rare species of animals in the Middle

East. Oryx, ostriches, Onagers (an Asian wild ass) and gazelles, which are depicted on many local 6th century Byzantine mosaics, are rebuilding their populations and reasserting their presence in this safe haven, protected from hunting and habitat destruction that nearly wiped them out.

SEA ACTIVITIES



SCUBA DIVING / SNORKELLING



Aqaba offers a full range of facilities for speed boating, scuba diving, snorkeling, sailing, fishing, swimming, water skiing, windsurfing, or simply loafing and sunning in the warm crystal-clear waters of the Red Sea.

The sea in the Gulf of Aqaba is almost invariably calm with water temperatures varying between 19° C in winter months to 26°C in summer. Diving is shore based as Aqaba offers a fringing reef which

commences at the shoreline. The soft and hard coral formations are attractive to visitors, and there are many species unique to this area. Multiple dive centres offer diver training, recreational, shore, boat, deep, night diving, nitrox, diving for physically challenged persons, bubble maker, scuba diving, snorkeling, equipment servicing, equipment sale/ rental.



SUP / KAYAKING



Stand up paddle boarding (SUP) and Kayaking offer a fun way to play on water, with the added benefit of a full-body workout. They are great sports when there is little wind and waves. They're easy to

learn and are great for people of all ages. These sports have been newly introduced to Aqaba and make for a great experience for adventurers and nature lovers alike as there are a lot of corals and sea life to see.

AIR ACTIVITIES



HOT AIR BALLOONING



Only available in Wadi Rum, visitors can float above breathtaking natural rock formations, giving them a chance to see

the seven pillars of wisdom and the natural dunes of the desert and the distant red sea from 6,000 feet in the air.



ULTRALIGHT/ MICROLIGHT



Run by the Royal Aero Sports club of Jordan, these trips allow one to discover Aqaba or Wadi Rum, Lawrences' springs,

the 7 Pillars of Wisdom, the Dead Sea or follow the ancient incense route from the comfort of a two-seat aircraft.



SINGLE OR TWIN-ENGINE AIRCRAFT



Amateurs and enthusiasts have the chance to enjoy the wonderful skies of Aqaba and Wadi Rum in the modern fleet

of single or twin-engine Diamond Aircraft. Gliding and private plane rentals are also available from Marka Airport in Amman.



FLOATING AND MUD BATHS



The Dead Sea sits more than 450m below sea level, making it the lowest point on the face of earth. This vast stretch of water receives a number of incoming rivers and streams, including the River Jordan. Although sparsely populated and serenely quiet now, the area is believed to have been home to five Biblical cities: Sodom, Gomorrah, Adman, Zebouin and Zoar (Pella). The leading attraction at the Dead Sea is the warm, soothing, mineral-

rich water, which is some ten times saltier than seawater and rich in chloride salts of magnesium, sodium, potassium, bromine and several others. The unusually warm and incredibly buoyant waters have attracted visitors since ancient times. The Dead Sea's salt concentration fluctuates at around 31.5%. This causes a water density of 1.24 kg/l, which allows people to float on the water's surface, rather than swim.¹⁸

18. <https://earth.esa.int/web/earth-watching/change-detection/content/-/article/the-dead-sea>



YOGA & MEDITATION



Jordan boasts some of the world's most spiritual and mystical sites but young tourism professionals are seeking to expand the menu of the kingdom's attractions to include the new trend of "meditation tourism." Meditation tourism started to emerge around 2014 with a strong influence by the Jordan Meditation Club (JMC).¹⁹

With its many sites perfect for meditation, contemplation, introspection movement and yoga, Jordan offers visitors an opportunity to be in touch with the elements of nature and oneself. Wadi Rum in the south, and the Dead Sea and the forest landscapes in the north have great potential to become among the best meditation adventure and wellness destinations. Currently there are some efforts being undertaken in this regard, with meditation and yoga retreats taking place in different spots around the country.

¹⁹. <https://thearabweekly.com/meditation-tourism-new-trend-jordan>



HOT SPRINGS



The hot springs are heated by hot water that comes from the top of the basaltic mountain and are dotted with waterfalls, painting a panoramic picture of nature and the depth of religious and historical heritage. The country is rich in hot springs such as the Ma'in Hot Springs also known as Hammamat Ma'in located between Madaba and the Dead Sea, the Afra Hot Springs in Tafileh, Al Himma to the north in Irbid, and those along the Jordan Valley.

The hot springs are an important station on the map of therapeutic tourism which thrives especially in the winter due to the warm climate of the region and its hot waters. Thousands of visiting bathers come each year to enjoy the mineral-rich waters of these hyper-thermal waterfalls. The healing powers of hot springs have been used for thousands of years and have been widely accepted as natural treatment options for various common ailments.²⁰

²⁰. <http://international.visitjordan.com/Whattodo/LeisureWellness.aspx>

CULTURAL & CULINARY



FOOD TOURS / COOKING EXPERIENCES



Jordan is diverse, but if there's one thing that unites everybody, it's food. Food is a language of its own, one that embodies years of culture and tradition. It's a great way to break down barriers and bring people together to make and share a meal with love.

Visitors are given a chance to immerse themselves completely in Jordanian culture by taking a cooking class or sharing a meal with a local family. These experiences are a great way to get to know the locals and the culture and go home with new skills and stories to share. Whether it be learning how to bake bread, manakeesh or local desserts, make cheese, jams and pickle olives or

even dive into the deep end with some of Jordan's most famous local dishes, such as Mansaf, Zarb and Gallayeh (local tomato dish).

Spices are an important part of the Jordanian cuisine, with many herbs and condiments grown and packaged locally. A tour of the spice shops, or an experience with local women in traditional food and medicinal herbs and spices would enrich anyone's quest for culinary secrets. Culinary experiences in Jordan include a variety of home cooking, fruit and vegetable picking, tours of the 'souk' – traditional markets, traditional 'jameed' making and simply savoring the local flavors in a traditional surrounding.



AGRI-TOURISM AND ENGAGEMENT IN RURAL SOCIETY



Agri-tourism experiences are ones that involve visitors getting up close and personal with the lives of Jordanians and the land. Benefitting not only one family but the whole community. Agritourism is still a novelty in Jordan but with massive potential. Jordanian culture is famous for its hospitality and with agri-tourism one can really go behind the scenes and get a chance to experience that hospitality first hand.

Several genuine and authentic agri-tourism experiences are available through the RSCN or private service providers that allow visitors to spend a day with a farmer in the north or a Bedouin in the south. Getting hands-on experience and digging deeper to the roots of the Jordanian culture.



CRAFTS



Jordan has many beautiful and interesting handicraft traditions that reflect its unique culture and history. These can be experienced through the RSCN and other independent providers. Certain parts of Jordan are known for specific crafts. The

north of Jordan is famous for its ceramics and pottery, rug making, weaving and textiles. As well as its production of natural olive oil soap, produced from local olive oil.

Central Jordan is the handicraft hub, with many traditional artisanal cities and towns such as Madaba and Salt located in the center of the country. In particular, mosaics, ceramics, textiles and embroidery, wood carving, mother of pearl carving, painted glass, modern and traditional jewelry, traditional dresses, sculptures, arabesque furniture, paintings and many more forms of artistic crafts.

The south of Jordan is known for its textiles, weaving and leather craftsmanship produced by local Bedouin communities, as well as high quality ceramics and pottery and silver jewelry craftsmanship. Artisans in the south are known for creating mouth blown glass and for sand art and sand bottles.

ACCOMMODATIONS



FAMILY HOMESTAYS



In some towns and villages, local families host travelers in their homes. Hikers are likely to be invited into the visitors' room in the house, where they can rest, visit with the host family, and share meals. Women might be invited into the private

area of the family's home. Sleeping arrangements may vary—one may sleep in a guest room or on foam mattresses in the shared visitors' room—and bathrooms can be basic. Homestays include supper and breakfast.



TRADITIONAL HOSPITALITY



In some towns and villages, local families host travelers in their homes. Hikers are likely to be invited into the visitors' room in the house, where they can rest, visit with the host family, and share meals. Women might be invited into the private

area of the family's home. Sleeping arrangements may vary—one may sleep in a guest room or on foam mattresses in the shared visitors' room—and bathrooms can be basic. Homestays include supper and breakfast.



HOTELS AND HOSTELS



Jordan boasts a large number of hotels of different star ratings, especially in larger towns and in tourist areas, such

as the Dead Sea and Aqaba. In addition to hostels, although they are not as prominent and popular in the county.

	1*	2*	3*	4*	5*
Hotels	67	68	63	35	37
No of Beds	3,288	4,807	6,518	7,117	5,103

Source: MOTA



CAMPING



From a legal perspective, it is generally allowed to camp in Jordan, with specific sites set up to accommodate campers. However, campers must avoid private property and note that camping is not allowed in the Royal Society for

Conservation of Nature (RSCN) Protected Areas outside of the defined and existing accommodation sites. Camping is still new in Jordan, and it is still fairly culturally unwelcome to find female campers camping out alone.



ACCOMMODATION OF CHARM



Jordan boasts a unique array of accommodations of charm, these could include the see through bubbles, caves and even upgraded cars. These spots

have become a new crowd favorite for their fusion of authenticity and romanticism. They offer an experience that is unlikely to be replicated anywhere else in the world.



CABINS/CHALETs/ECO-LODGES



These spaces are easily accessible, and offer guests an atmosphere of calm, where life slows down to the rhythms of nature providing a unique combination of comfort and connection. The RSCN provides small, intimate lodges at many

of its nature reserves. Guests are assured of comfort and unobtrusive attentiveness, combined with an intimacy with nature. In addition to reserves there are a number of independent projects as well.



GUEST HOUSES



These are places designed to intrigue and inspire the visitor, making them feel at home. They are spaces that reward the curious. More of an experience than an accommodation. These houses tell a

story, the more curious one is, the more they'll get out of the story. They are a great way to experience the beauty and magic of Jordan.

2.2 Attraction List and Mapping in Pilot Areas

2.2.1 IRBID

Natural Assets

Yarmouk Forest Reserve - is located in the far northwest part of Jordan to the South of Yarmouk River, at the border with the Golan Heights. The total area of Yarmouk Forest Reserve is 20 km². It contains two main topographic areas: Mountains which are covered by deciduous oak up to 500 m high above the sea level, punctuated by valleys of small and medium descent towards the Yarmouk river. The reserve has two vegetation types: Deciduous oak forest and freshwater vegetation.

The Al Himma Hot Springs - in Irbid are located around 10km north of Umm Qais and were once highly regarded by the Romans for their therapeutic benefits. Aiding everything.

Cultural Activities

Archaeological sites

Umm Qais (Gadara)

The ruins of the Decapolis of the City of Gadara is located in the northwestern tip of Jordan at the crossroads of Jordan, Syria, the Palestinian Territories / Israel, encompassing the Golan Heights and the Sea of Galilee. Roman and Ottoman

ruins are extensive and made from black basalt rock. Umm Qais is at the forefront of community-based tourism in Jordan. Hiking, biking and beekeeping, as well as foraging and cooking classes, are offered near in the vicinity.

Pella (Tabqat Fahel)

The ancient city of Pella is one of the cities of the Roman Decapolis. Surrounded by fertile valleys, Pella has been inhabited from the Stone Age to medieval Islamic times. The ruins are spread out, and many of the relics remain unexcavated.

Gadara Aqueduct

Archaeological surveys indicate that Gadara was occupied as early as the 7th century BC. The Roman tunnel in Umm Qais is the longest Roman aqueduct known in the world, extending to 170 km from Jordan to Syria. The tunnel system of the later known as Qanat Fir'aun (canal of the Pharaoh) is by far the longest built structure of antiquity and one of the most important engineering achievements of that era, and can now be visited in a guided tour.²¹

21. <http://www.romanaqueducts.info/aquasite/gadara/index.html>

Historic Buildings

Al Nabulsi House - which sits on the south west corner of the Fuara bus complex is a fragrant reminder of ancient Arabella. The building, which was built in 1921, belonged to the Nabulsi family but has since been acquired by the municipality for preservation and restoration as one of the architectural and historical landmarks of Irbid.²²

Museums

Dar al-Saraya Museum - is located in a building that dates back to the Ottoman period. Originally built as a fortress, it's chronologically arranged exhibits introduce Jordan's civilisation through works of mining, sculpture, mosaics, seals, jewellery, as well as Thamudic and Arabic inscriptions.

Museum of Jordanian Heritage - is located in the Faculty of Archaeology and Anthropology at Yarmouk University. The aim is to show the story and history of humankind in Jordan.

Umm Qais Archaeological Museum - is located within the ancient ruins of Umm Qais. The museum displays mosaics, columns, ceramics, tombs, and statues dating from the Hellenistic to the Islamic period.

Adventure Activities

Hiking

Yarmouk Forest Reserve - There are 4 guided and self-guided trails in and around the reserve that range from easy to moderate. With some taking 1-2 hours and some taking up to 7 hours and each offering unparalleled views of the surrounding areas.²³

Ziglab Dam - There a variety of walking tours, both to explore within the borders of the park, and in the surrounding region and communities.²⁴

Umm Qais - Hikers are spoiled for choice in Umm Qais, with eight trekking routes to pick from, all varying in terrain and level of difficulty.²⁵

Pella - The hike is a healthy walk around the oak-dotted limestone hills of Pella near the archaeological site of Tabaqat Fahl. With sweeping views of the Jordan Valley, there are Byzantine and Roman ruins as well as evidence of Bronze and Iron Age settlements spread throughout the area.²⁶

Cycling/Mountain Biking

Cycling in Umm Qais - Umm Qais has a number of light, intermediate and advanced cycling trails to pick from. Each trail has a different view of the natural landmarks which surround this hill-top village located at the edge of Jordan.²⁵

22. <http://alrai.com/article/10505834/%D9%85>

23. <https://www.wildjordan.com/destinations/yarmouk-forest-reserve>

24. <http://jordanecopark.com/activities>

25. <https://barakadestinations.com>

26. <https://hiking-in-jordan.com>

Cycling near Ziglab Dam - Bike trails can be found throughout the park, and for those who seek a longer ride, biking in the local village is also quite pleasant.²⁴

Cycling in Yarmouk Forest Reserve - 1,240 feet (378 m) above sea level and boasting the country's one and only oak tree forest, the reserve is a beautiful destination for cycling. Cycling is allowed in the reserve, but local experts strongly recommend hiring a cycling tour guide.²⁷

Rock Climbing

Wadi al Arab - Caves that are shady for most of the day, making for a perfect place to work on an overhang.

Ziplining

Ziplining near Ziglab Dam - Visitors can zip across the longest zipline in Jordan 70m above the Ziglab Dam.²⁴

Eco-Adventure Park

EcoPark near Ziglab Dam - located in the northern part of the Jordan Valley (north of Jordan) covers an area of 2.7 square kilometer with diverse Mediterranean bushland ecosystem and the Ziglab dam, which is the first dam in Jordan - established in the 1960s, and it's surrounded by farmland and Bedouin goat herders. The design of the EcoPark is based on permaculture principles where residents participate in the growing of food, recycling, and a community spirit of sharing. The park features many opportunities for adventure, most notably the longest zipline in Jordan.²⁴

Culinary

Jordanian Local Food Experience in Umm Qais - Visit the home of a local chef for an authentic experience with great farm to table dishes that represent Jordan and the rich culture and biodiversity of the northern region.²⁵

Cooking Classes in Umm Qais - Umm Qais's rich biodiversity makes for a unique set of local ingredients. Visitors will learn how to put these together to make a magical meal which is representative of Jordan and the northern region.²⁵

Cheese-making in Pella - An immersive fresh cheese-making experience, with a local cheesemaker. involving milk. The experience involves milking goats and producing cheese at the home of a family owned enterprise.²⁵

Agri-tourism and Engagement in Rural Society

Beekeeping/Honey Harvesting in Umm Qais - An opportunity to learn about the fascinating queendom of beekeeping, and help in making some naturally sweet and additive-free honey.²⁵

Olive Picking and Pressing in Umm Qais - Umm Qais is inside Jordan's fertile crescent. According to an August, 2017 report from Jordan's Department of Statistics, Irbid is the country's largest producer of olives. In 2015, 2,383,686 trees produced 71,853 tons of olives and 11,611 tons of olive oil. This makes it Jordan's most important olive-growing region, and a natural destination for food tourism.

27. <https://theculturetrip.com/middle-east/jordan/articles/spectacular-places-to-cycle-in-jordan/>

Foraging in Umm Qais - Umm Qais is a lush garden with many edible plants, fruits, and vegetables that can be found on the hills that surround the village, making it an ideal place for foraging.²⁵

Seed Bombs Making in Umm Qais - There are hundreds of wild plants that are essential to the area's ecological diversity and of high medicinal value. One of which is wild Za'atar (*Origanum syriacum* L) that has long been part of ancient civilizations' food culture. Planting Zaatar in Umm Qais is of high conservation value, as the species has been evaluated as nationally threatened. Visitors will learn how to make seed bombs of propagated wild Zaatar seeds. The final product can then be dispersed into nature and will grow into plants naturally once it rains.

Pomegranate picking and community engagement in Jdeita village - In collaboration with Zikra Initiative, a socio-ecological tourism project called Rummana was born. Visitors can hike through Bergesh Forest, pick seasonal pomegranates and engage with the local community over a traditional Jordanian meal of the Northern parts and indulge in kunafa making.

Shepherds Experience Pella - A three hour long experience with a local shepherd, accompanied by an enjoyment of the views of Pella's landscapes over breakfast and tea.²⁵

Craft

Stone Masonry in Umm Qais - Stone

Masonry is an ancient Roman art, used for centuries for different art works and documentation purposes. This experience revives this ancient and high precision art technique.²⁵

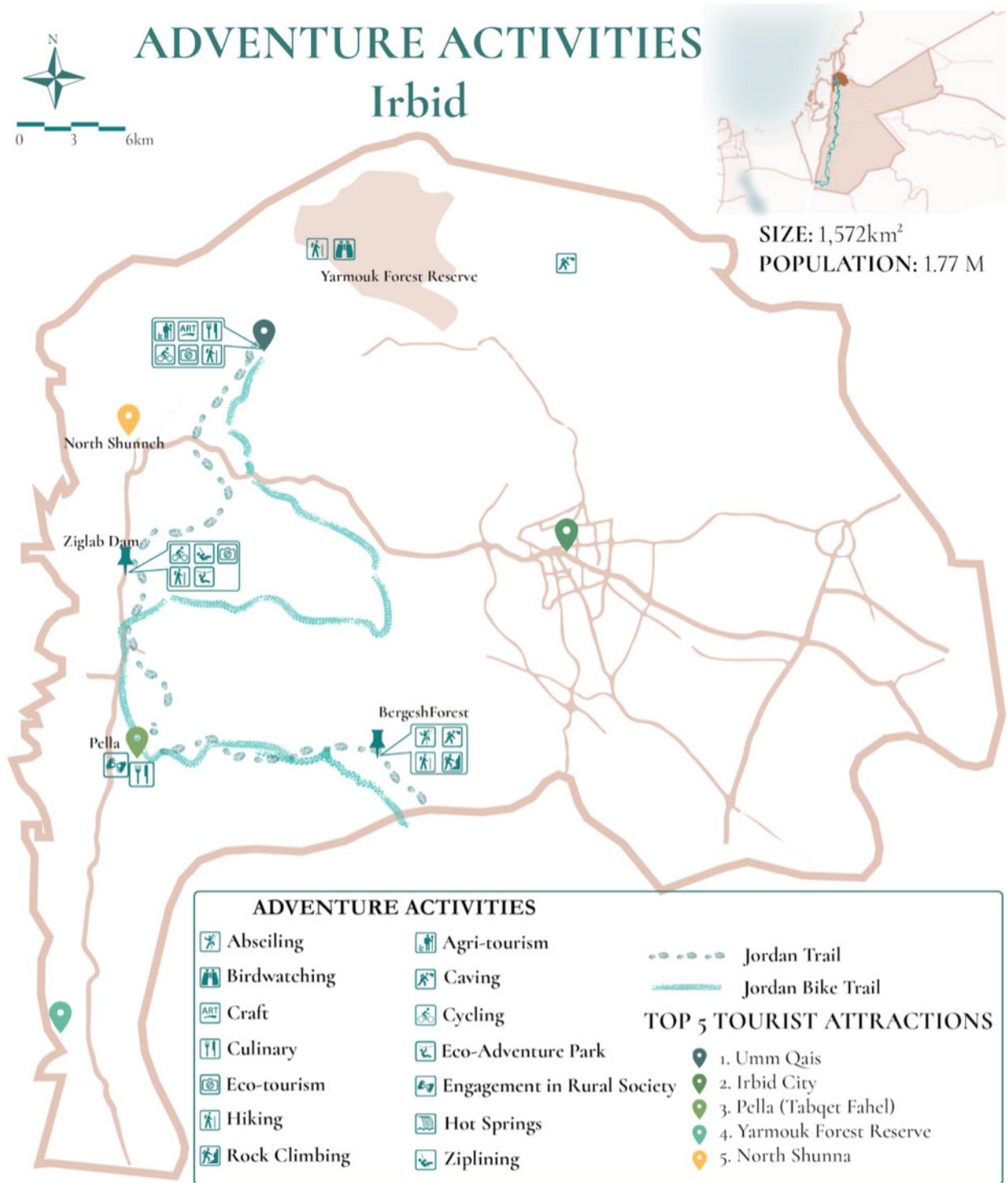
Hadab Making in Umm Qais - Visitors are given a chance to learn how to weave and embroider a Hadab - the traditional Jordanaian scarf alongside skilled local artisans.²⁵

Basket Weaving in Umm Qais - Weaving with banana leaves, palm, and straw is a tradition that has deep roots within Jordan & the Yarmouk Valleys. Visitors learn how to weave a coaster or basket with the help of a local artist. Uncovering the techniques that've been used for generations and leave with a memento of their stay.²⁵

Bird Watching

Yarmouk Forest Reserve - The Yarmouk Valley is one of the 27 Important Bird Areas in the country. It is a great spot to observe species such as the Black Kite, Black Stork, Greater Spotted Cuckoo, Honey Buzzard, Pallid Harrier, Syrian Woodpecker and the White Stork.²⁸

28. <https://www.pathsofjordan.net/birdwatching-in-jordan>



2.2.2 BALQA

Natural Assets

Dead Sea - Located at 400 meters below sea level, the Dead Sea is the lowest point on earth. The water, which is some ten times saltier than regular sea water is rich in minerals and trace elements including magnesium, bromine, sulphur, calcium and bitumen. The unusually warm, incredibly buoyant and mineral-rich waters have attracted visitors since ancient times, all of whom have luxuriated in the Dead Sea's rich, black, stimulating mud and floated effortlessly on their backs while soaking up the water's healthy minerals along with the gently diffused rays of the Jordanian sun. Given its location, the air is very dense in oxygen, offering another health benefit for those staying at the Dead Sea.

Cultural Activities

Archaeological Sites

Baptism Site of Jesus Christ, also named Al Maghtas, meaning 'immersion' in Arabic. The site includes two critical areas of archaeological importance. Elijah's Hill boasts the remnants of a monastery. In an area close to the River Jordan, there are ruins of pilgrim and hermit dwellings, churches and baptism ponds.

Ayyubid Fortress There are also remains of the Ayyubid fortress that once thrived in the area. To showcase and display many artifacts and treasures from the past, an Archaeological and Folklore Museum in As-Salt offers an exciting look at the past.

Historic Buildings

As-Salt City boasts a very rich architectural heritage. Hundreds of historical buildings dot the hills of As-Salt. The houses typically feature tall, arched windows. The ornamental details are characteristically fine. Multiple restoration projects have been carried out to preserve the heritage and reinvigorate As-Salt as a destination of interest.

Al Hammam Street (As-Salt), meaning 'The Bath Street' used to be the street where the Turkish bath was located. The traditional Ottoman stone buildings surrounding the street were restored, bringing the place back to its ancient beauty.

Museums

Using the Japanese experience in promoting eco-museums, the city of Salt adopted this concept in developing and promoting As-Salt as an open-air museum that enables visitors to visit houses that represent certain traditions or eras, with residents dressed in costumes reflecting that and serving food typical of the era or tradition in question. The concept sees the whole old city center of As-Salt as a museum. With the focus on 'Living Heritage', As-Salt's traditional lifestyle is integrated into the cultural experience.

29. <http://international.visitjordan.com/Wheretogo/TheDeadSea.aspx>

As-Salt Historical Museum (Beit Abu Jaber) – built between 1892 and 1906. The house provides a clear example of a nineteenth-century merchant residence in the region. The various rooms of the house offer information that tells the story of the city of As-Salt. The views from the house are spectacular.

As-Salt Archaeological Museum (Beit Touqan) – located in a restored Ottoman-era building. The exhibit focus is on pottery and glass spanning the Roman, Byzantine, and Islamic eras. The exhibition mainly showcases local crafts, dress and traditional farming activity tools as well as fragments of mosaics from churches around As-Salt.

Dead Sea Museum – En route to Mai'n, it hosts the geology, history and environment of the Dead Sea.

Religious Sites

The Baptism Site – also known as 'Bethany beyond the Jordan (Al-Maghtas) is considered the original location of the place where Jesus was baptised by John the Baptist and as a result a site of significant importance, in particular, for faith-motivated travelers.

Prophet Joshua Shrine – To the west of As-Salt, lies the shrine of Prophet Joshua. An apprentice of Prophet Moses, he later became the successor of Moses.

Prophet Shuaib Shrine – This tomb is believed to be that of Shuaib. He is regarded as being the father-in-law of Moses and was sent to the people

of Madyan, who were merchants who controlled the great trade routes between Yemen and Syria, and between Iraq and Egypt.

Saint George's Church in As – Salt is also known as 'the green one' (Al Khader Church). It is most likely the only place of worship where Muslims and Christians pray alongside each other. Miraculous healings of difficult diseases are linked to the location. The 300-year-old church, poised on top of one of Salt's hills, has been built around a small cave where St George appeared to a farmer.

Walking Tours

As-Salt: Harmony Trail and Al-Maidan Street Guided Walking Tour – Visitors can enjoy a guided walking tour of the Harmony Trail that fuses between Muslims and Christians. They are given the chance to explore the Al Ein Plaza, the English Evangelical Hospital Complex, and many other significant landmarks of the city. The tour ends at Al – Maidan Street and tourists can visit the Al – Hammam Street Shops where they can shop at their leisure.

UNESCO World Heritage

Baptism Site 'Bethany Beyond the Jordan' (Al-Maghtas) The site is believed to be the place where John the Baptist baptised Jesus. The Roman and Byzantine ruins include chapels and churches, caves, baptism pools and a monastery. The Baptism Site is a very significant and important place for Christian pilgrimage.³⁰

³⁰<https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1446>

As-Salt City has been nominated for UNESCO world Heritage status for its rich history and cultural magnificence.

Adventure Activities

Hiking

Gilead near Zai, As-Salt - Hiking in Nature is good for the body, mind and soul. Visitors can get acquainted with the unique flora and fauna and enjoy hikes in the lovely forests around Gilead. A selection of different hikes from easy to hard are available.³¹

Wadi Shuaib - This refreshing valley 2.5 km SE of As-Salt boasts a few hiking trails and interesting caves to explore.³²

Cycling and Mountain Biking

Gilead near Zai, As-Salt - Visitors can explore the area on two wheels, with cycling routes being developed alongside professionals.³¹

Canyoning/ Wet Canyoning

Travelers Seeking an activity with a shot of adrenaline need only look to just a little further inland on the Dead Sea highway to find themselves amidst a wealth of waterfalls, wadis (valleys and canyons) carved by rivers and other offbeat nature experiences that feel far removed from the languid seashore below.

Quad Biking

Dead Sea - This is a great opportunity for

adventures to experience the Dead Sea's off road paths on the back of a quad bike or ATV.

Horseback Riding

Gilead near Zai, As-Salt - Children six years of age and above can visit, pet, groom and experience pony rides.³¹

Gilead, As-Salt - This equestrian center is located in one of the most beautiful areas of As-Salt Gilead. Offering visitors inspiring views and the enjoyment of pure horseback riding.³³

Archery

Gilead near Zai, As-Salt - Archery is known to be the ultimate Zen sport and budding Robin Hoods can now feel at one with nature and practice this ancient sport with the help of instructors in a dedicated and safe area.

Aerosports

The Royal Aerosports Club of Jordan (RASCJ) has new experiences for aerosport enthusiasts including flying over the Dead Sea in their new gyrocopters. The club also has 1 ultralight aircraft: A Remos G3. The aircraft uses a Rotax 912 uls 100 hp engine. The aircraft takes 1 passenger and can be hired for pleasure/sightseeing flights or for aerial photography. Additionally, they are scheduled to start offering tandem skydiving experiences from the sky zone over the Dead Sea as well.³⁴

31. <https://mountainbreeze.jo/activities>

32. <https://www.lonelyplanet.com/jordan/salt/activities/wadi-ash-shuaib/a/poi-act/1442960/1298985>

33. <https://www.allspots.com/jo/directory/-Jordan+Country+Side+Center>

34. <http://www.rascj.com/>

Yoga & Meditation

Dead Sea - With its soft blue waters, therapeutic floating capacity and healing minerals. The Dead Sea is the ideal location to relax, unwind and connect with oneself and the wonders of the natural world.

Culinary

Jameed Processing - An authentic Jordanian experience isn't complete without a side of mansaf; the country's traditional dish. A key ingredient of which is Jameed, strained goat's milk yogurt. Visitors can observe how goat milk is strained and transformed into dried Jameed balls through a traditional and fun process, and learn about its secret ingredient, the Hawayej, comprising 23 wild herbs collected during the Summer season.

Maamoul Baking - Maamoul is a popular dessert made with semolina and stuffed with dates, pistachios or walnuts, usually for a celebration or holiday. Making this dessert is a popular family tradition that brings together women from the same family and their neighbours to join forces in producing the intricate Maamoul. Visitors can engage with or observe this socio-cultural tradition and get some deeper insight into the Jordanian heritage.³⁵

Halaweh Making - Halaweh is a traditional and popular Middle-Eastern dessert prepared with sweetened tahini and mixed with pistachios. Visitors are given the chance to learn the art of making this local sweet through a local family's special recipe.³⁵

Firewood Knafeh Making - Knafeh is a traditional Middle Eastern dessert, made of sweet filo pastry or semolina dough stuffed with cheese. This experience provides the opportunity to observe and learn how to prepare this delicious dish, cooked on the oldest cooking fuel in the history of mankind; firewood.³⁵

Manakeesh and Zaatar Making in As Salt - A chance to learn about one of the most essential spice blends in Mediterranean cuisine. Helping mix the dried thyme with sesame and sumac, a blend that is then mixed with olive oil and spread on dough to be baked in an outdoor oven. During the process visitors will learn about the benefits of all the ingredients and see how sumac is extracted before being added to the mixture.³⁵

35. <http://bookagri.com/>

Agri-tourism and Engagement in Rural Society

Beekeeping/Honey Harvesting in As-Salt – Beekeeping is a very interesting activity, and the true joy behind it lies in the harvesting of the golden crop. The quality of which heavily depends on the surrounding environment. This experience is an opportunity to learn how to harvest this natural goodness, and how to differentiate between pure honey and adulterated honey.³⁵

Tree Planting – Trees are vital for our survival, and planting is a great family activity that teaches kids and adults about responsibility and the importance of caring for the environment. It is a great way to add more trees to Jordan's woodlands and create hope for a better future.

Volunteering at Peace Wadi – A date and Moringa farm in South Shunneh where volunteers and visitors are always welcome to work around the farm and gardens – watering, weeding, harvesting, small construction work or DIY to improve the farm, cook and prepare food or spend time with visitors.

Farmer Living As Salt – This is a chance to learn about the local traditions and culture of Jordanian farmers by participating in their daily chores while enjoying unconventional activities in the outdoors. The hands-on experience includes collecting free-range eggs, chasing chickens, milking goats, learning

how to make goat butter, feeding orphan lambs, baking Saj bread made from full grain wheat, riding a tractor, playing marbles, planting barley or wheat and harvesting when in season.³⁵

Dinner with a local family in As Salt – The perfect finishing touch for a day out in As Salt. Visitors can have dinner with a local family. They'll meet them at their home, help prepare the food and learn how to prepare a traditional dish, and then eat dinner together. This is a great way of meeting locals, learning from them and discovering new food.

Craft

Henna Experience in As Salt – Henna has been known since ancient times, it has a kind of sanctity in many cultures for its use in cosmetics; thanks to its safe quality in dyeing the hair and body. First used by the Nabataeans, this experience helps revive an ancient and beautiful art and tradition.

Pottery Making in As Salt – Pottery has long had a valuable place in Middle Eastern and Jordanian culture, and is greatly representative of the place and its people. Visitors can experience every step of the process of hand making pottery.³⁸

36. <https://peacewadi.com/volunteering/>

37. <https://in2jordan.com/10-things-to-do-in-salt/>

38. <http://www.visitas-salt.com/en/Experinces/>



2.2.3 MADABA

Natural Assets

Hot Springs – South of Madaba City, in the Governorate of Madaba, the Ma'in hot springs are located 58 km south of Amman. Whilst elevated above the Dead Sea; the springs are still at 120 meters below sea level. There are a total of 63 springs in the Ma'in region. The water contains different essential elements including hydrogen sulfide, calcium, chloride, sodium and carbon dioxide, with a similar chemical composition, including sodium, calcium, chloride, radon, hydrogen sulfide and carbon dioxide and many other minerals. The water can run very hot from the spring and exceeds 50 degrees Celsius.

Cultural Activities

Archaeological Sites

Apostles Church Museum – The original ruins of the Byzantine church date back to 568. It was restored in 1993. The church features massive arches that span approximately sixteen meters. A floor mosaic depicts a woman emerging from the sea. She is surrounded by mythical aquatic creatures as well as exotic vegetation, parrots but also rams and bulls, the mosaic is known as 'Personification of the Sea'.

Madaba Archaeological Park – includes the ruins of several Byzantine buildings, among which the Church of the Virgin,

dating back to the late sixth century. The church features one of the first mosaics in Madaba, identified by scholars in 1887. A school specializing in the conservation of mosaics is housed adjacent to the park.

The Madaba Mosaic Map, which forms part of the floor of the St. George's Church is of significant historical importance, features the oldest map of Palestine. It features over 150 Greek captions depicting important biblical sites from Palestine to Egypt. The original size of the map was around 15 to 25 meters in length with a width of 6 meters and contained more than two million stone mosaic pieces.

Mount Nebo Museum – is located in a church which forms part of a functioning Franciscan monastery. The small museum is situated on top of Mount Nebo and was built on the fourth-century foundations of a former church. It is believed that Moses was shown the Holy Land as well as his resting place from this spot.

Museums

Madaba Museum (Al-Twal House) – was established in 1978. The museum is housed in several old residences built on mosaic floors and divided into The Archaeological Museum and the Folklore Museum. Featuring archaeological, mosaic, and folkloric collections dating back to the Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine, and Islamic periods.

39. <https://www.alhakaya.com/>

40. <http://www.haretjdoudna.com/index.html>

41. <http://www.jordantimes.com/news/local/geophysicist-turns-cave-discovery-restaurant-madaba>

42. <http://www.findglocal.com/JO/Madaba/337479690244621/Dar-Al-Saraya-Hotel-and-Restaurant>

43. <https://beit-shuwayhat-heritage-house.business.site/>

La Storia Museum (Al Hakaya) - Strategically located on a hill overlooking Madaba, and 2km before Mount Nebo. Al Hakaya is an immersive culture center where people can take an exciting journey through history to explore Jordan's religious, historical and cultural heritage as a strategic nexus between different civilizations from the past to the present.

Historic Buildings

Jmeian House (Haret Jdoudna) - Now a lively and attractive restaurant, Haret Jdoudna was previously an ancient historical house located in Roman Madaba; the host of the unique and precious mosaics.

Mrah Salameh - Jordanian geophysicist's passion towards educating people about caves and their history prompted him to build a hub for cave enthusiasts. Mrah Salameh is a traditional restaurant in the heart of Moabite caves; it lies in a neighborhood on the west side of Madaba where natural caves have evolved over the past decades. Such caves have witnessed several civilizations (i.e. Moabite, Nabatean, Ghassanids, Omayyad, and the Abbasid).

Dar Al Saraya - Built in the late 19th century as the administrative centre of the Ottomans, this grand old building was subsequently used as the headquarters of the British administration in 1922. It has been beautifully restored and has the potential to be utilized as a hotel and restaurant.

Beit Shuwayhat - This Shuwayhat Heritage Detached House, was built in 1937 and during the British mandate, where Jordan got its independence in 1946.

Religious Sites

St George Greek Orthodox Church - The modest 19th century Greek Orthodox church, located in the centre of the City of Madaba, houses a mosaic treasure of early Christianity. The extraordinary mosaic map, crafted in AD 560, is said to be the oldest map of Palestine and depicts all the major biblical sites of the Middle East, from Palestine to Egypt.

Mount Nebo - is set high up on the hill before the sharp descent to the Rift Valley below, allowing for far-reaching views. It overlooks the Dead Sea, the Jordan River Valley, Jericho and Jerusalem beyond. From here it is said that Moses viewed the Holy Land of Canaan, the promised land, but would never enter. In the 4th century, a small church was built to commemorate the end of Moses' life. Following extensions in the 5th and 6th centuries, the current basilica features a stunning array of Byzantine mosaics. Subsequently, Mount Nebo became a pilgrimage site and gained more attention following the Pope's pilgrimage visit back in 2000.

Moses Springs - is located approximately 1 km from Mount Nebo, as mentioned in the Bible. It is believed that the Prophet Moses struck a rock and water came from that spot, where now eucalyptus trees grow.

Fort

Mkawer – (Mukawir – Machareus) is said to be the dramatic site of the fort of the Roman- appointed ruler Herod during the time of Jesus Christ. On this hilltop, overlooking the Dead Sea, Herod imprisoned and beheaded John the Baptist after Salome’s fateful dance of the seven veils.

UNESCO World Heritage

Umm Ar-Rasas - With most of the city now in ruins, Umm Ar-Rasas, originally inhabited by the Romans to protect trade routes from the Arabian Peninsula to the Levant, is now an Archaeological site perfect for those who love history. Listed on the UNESCO World Heritage list in 2004 because of its diverse Roman and Islamic influences.¹⁵

Adventure Activities

Hiking

Wadi Khashabah is a 4.8 kilometer out and back trail located near Thiban, Madaba, that offers scenic views and is rated as moderate. The trail is primarily used for hiking and nature trips.

Machaerus and the Memorial of the Prophet Yahya is a 1.6 kilometer loop trail located near Dhiban, that offers scenic views and is good for all skill levels. The trail is primarily used for hiking and nature trips.⁴⁴

Muheros Canyon is a 17.9 kilometer out and back trail located near Thiban, that features a lake and it is rated as difficult. The trail is primarily used for hiking and nature trips.¹⁵

Cycling

Madaba - A 25 kilometer two hour ride out on quiet, scenic back roads towards Mount Nebo, with views of the Dead Sea. From Mount Nebo the trail goes south into the Wadi Jadid, where one can get off to look around a field of early Bronze Age dolmens: 5000-year old burial chambers built from huge stones and found nowhere else in the Middle East.

Canyoning/ Wet Canyoning / Climbing

Wadi Hidan - Located in Karak Governorate, but the way to reach it thru Madaba city , this canyon continues alongside King’s Highway. It’s 4 km canyon that can be extended to 9 km depending on the physical ability of hikers. A beautiful black basaltic canyon filled with narrow gorges, fresh natural pools, mesmerizing green vegetation and wildlife.⁴⁵

Wadi Zarqa Ma’in - Just off the Dead Sea Highway 12km south of Sweimeh, this 3.5km hike is a great way to appreciate the rugged rock walls of the valley, dotted with ferns and palm trees that cling to the cliffside.

Wadi Attun Hot Springs - This is a small, pleasant Wadi between Mujib and Ma’in. It is a simple, straightforward hike with a few boulders to scramble over. There are multiple small waterfalls, many of which

44. <https://www.alltrails.com/trail/jordan/madaba/wadi-khashabah?ref=result-card>

have carved slides through the bedrock.⁴⁷

Agri-tourism and Engagement in Rural Society

Olive Picking and Pressing - Historically, the Olive tree has symbolized lots of meanings for the Jordanian community, and culturally speaking, it is one of the most valued trees in the Levant region. This is a chance to live out the tradition and connect with locals on one of the most memorable experiences.

Craft

Mosaic Art in Madaba - Mosaic is the decorative art of creating images with an assemblage of small pieces of colored glass, marble or other materials, and Madaba is home to some of the most beautiful works that dates back to the Roman and Byzantine-Umayyad period. Visitors can tour the sites or take a workshop and learn about this ancient and decorative art form. Additionally, tourists can visit the Madaba Institute for Mosaic Art and Restoration (MIMAR). Founded in 2007 as a regional center of excellence for preserving mosaics as a unique component of Jordan's cultural and historical heritage, and providing skilled and professional graduates for employment in the restoration and

production of mosaic art and stone presentation.⁴⁸

Weaving - The Bani Hamida Women's Weaving Project revived traditional Bedouin rug weaving, helping to maintain the social fabric of the Mukawir area. Using home-made ground looms and wooden spindles, the project rejuvenated the unique warp-faced flat weave in pure wool, along with the colours and particular designs representing Jordan's unrivalled traditional rug making.⁴⁹

45. <https://www.experiencejordan.com/trek-walk/wadi-hidan/>

46. <https://www.lonelyplanet.com/articles/hiking-jordans-dead-sea-coast>

47. <https://www.wikiloc.com/hiking-trails/wadi-attun-13131043>

48. <http://www.mimarjordan.org/>

49. http://www.alhakaya.net/product.php?id_product=49

ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES – MADABA



ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES		Jordan Trail	Jordan Bike Trail	TOP 5 TOURIST ATTRACTIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absciling Craft Culinary Cycling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hiking Horseback Riding Hot Springs Rock Climbing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Swimming Wellness & Mindfulness Wet Canyoning Wet Trails 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mount Nebo 2. Madaba Archaeological Park 3. Ma'in Hot Springs 4. Mkawer 5. Moses' Spring 	



2.2.4 KARAK

Natural Assets

Fifa Nature Reserve - Fifa Nature Reserve is home to two important plant patterns: the salt plant pattern and the tropical plant pattern. In addition to these, the reserve protects seven endangered plant and animal species, such as the Arak plant, lynx and hyena. Sudanese characteristics prevail throughout the reserve with its semi- desert system and high temperatures. The biodiversity of the flora and fauna has been able to survive the difficult conditions. The reserve is home to 4% of all plant species and 8% of the animal species in Jordan.

Mujib Biosphere Reserve - Mujib-Hidan River System is a permanent running water riverine system that is enabling Mujib Biosphere Reserve to host rich biodiversity. To date, over 400 species of plants, 10 species of carnivores and almost 200 species of resident and migrant birds have been recorded. Some of the mountain and valley areas are difficult to reach and offer safe havens for rare species of cats, mountain goats (Ibex) and other mountainous animals.⁵⁰

Wadi Bin Hammad - The area lies north of Karak, ranging in altitude between 800 m a.s.l and 380 m.b.s. Rocky mountainous slopes are cut by a Wadi running to the Dead Sea at Gour Hadith, allowing the area to support many threatened plant species including *Epipactis Veratrifolia* as well as *Moringa peregrina*. The area

supports a number of rare animals like the Hyena and Blanford Fox. The presence of several springs holds the presence of the nationally endemic fish species *Gara ghorensis* and *Aphanius dispar*. The area is part of a larger IBA also named Wadi Hammad – Haditha, where large numbers of migrant raptors pass every year.⁵⁰

Cultural Activities

Archaeological Sites

Karak Crusader Castle. The impressive Crusader Castle dominates the city of Karak, at 900 meters above sea level. The castle lies within the walls of the old city and dates back to the 12th century, though it has been a fortress since biblical times.

Historic buildings

Karak is home to many historic buildings in need of renovation, amongst these buildings are: the Karak Secondary School, which was built in 1899, and the Latin Monastery School which was built in 1874, , in addition to the neighborhoods of Al Souaoub, Al Habashneh and Al-Masehia (Christian quarter).⁵¹

Museums

Karak Archaeological Museum - is located in the west wing of the Karak Crusader Castle, which used to be the living quarters for soldiers during the Mamluk period. This museum houses ruins, dating back to the Neolithic, Moabite, Nabatean, Islamic, and Crusader periods.

50. The Royal Society for Conservation of Nature (RSCN)

51. <https://en.royanews.tv/news/16534/Heritage-houses-in-Karak-in-need-of-renovation>

Al-Mazar Islamic Museum – is located next to the site of the early Islamic battle of Mu'ta near Karak. The museum showcases a collection of architectural pieces, carvings, coins, ceramics, and sculptures dating to the Mamluk period.

The Museum at the Lowest Place on Earth at Safi – It currently houses 22 exhibition cases and information panels including material from prehistory to the present. Some of the highlights include finds from the Sanctuary of Lot excavations (on which site the museum is located), evidence of a newly discovered medieval sugar factory, rarely preserved Graeco-Roman clothes and over 500 Greek inscriptions.⁵²

Religious sites

Prophet Noah's Tomb – On a hilltop in Karak, there lays an important religious shrine dedicated to the Prophet Noah. The Prophet Noah is of importance in the Bible, Holy Quran and Torah. The memorial in Karak is one of the speculated locations of Noah's tomb. As a result, it is of importance to faith motivated travelers.

Lot's Cave is surrounded by the ruins of a small Byzantine church (5th to 8th centuries), a reservoir and some mosaics, which were excavated by the British Museum. Remains from the cave date to the early Bronze Age (3300–2000 BC) and an inscription in the cave mentions Lot (Abraham's nephew) by name.⁵³

Adventure Activities

Hiking

Mujib Biosphere Reserve

Ibex Trail – the trail begins at the Visitor Center and follows the Dead Sea Highway before ascending into the Reserve. Diverging to the south, the trail runs parallel to the Dead Sea, which provides a startlingly blue backdrop for the entire hike. The hike then continues along a number of dry wadis to the Raddas Ranger Station, where you may see Nubian Ibex. It is also where the famous rock "statue" of Lot's wife can be seen. After a rest at the Station, the trail continues along a road for about one hour until reaching the Reserve entrance near the Visitor Center – 4 hours.

Canyoning/ Wet Canyoning / Climbing

Karak has an abundance of hidden gorges, wadis and canyons perfect for canyoning, including:

Wadi Bin Hammad – An 18 km gorge that crosses Jordan parallel to Wadi Hasa, flowing from Rakin and Batir on the kings highway road to Gour al Haditha on the Dead Sea shores. Its beauty lies in its warm springs. The canyons sediment on the top creates a tunnel canyon. The walls of the canyon are painted with natural colors from the minerals that the water contains.

52. http://www.hsnes.org/news_item002.htm

53. <https://www.lonelyplanet.com/jordan/lisan-peninsula/attractions/lot-s-cave/a/poi-sig/1105926/1332384>

Wadi Mujib - Siq Trail - The trail starts at the Adventures Center near the Mujib Bridge taking the cantilevered walkway over the dam and following the course of the river between towering sandstone cliffs to the base of a large waterfall. Depending on seasonal rainfall levels, the gorge may contain pools deep enough for swimming.

Culinary

Jameed Processing - Jameed is the key ingredient in Jordan's traditional dish; mansaf. It is made of strained goats milk and a special blend of spices. Jordan's most famous Jameed is the Karak one.

Agri-tourism and Engagement in Rural Society

Tomato picking and community experience in Gour Al Safi - Tomatoes are widely produced in Jordan and it is one of the staple vegetables Jordanians consume daily. This experience engages with local women who produce and harvest tomatoes, in the Gour Safi region of Karak.

Craft

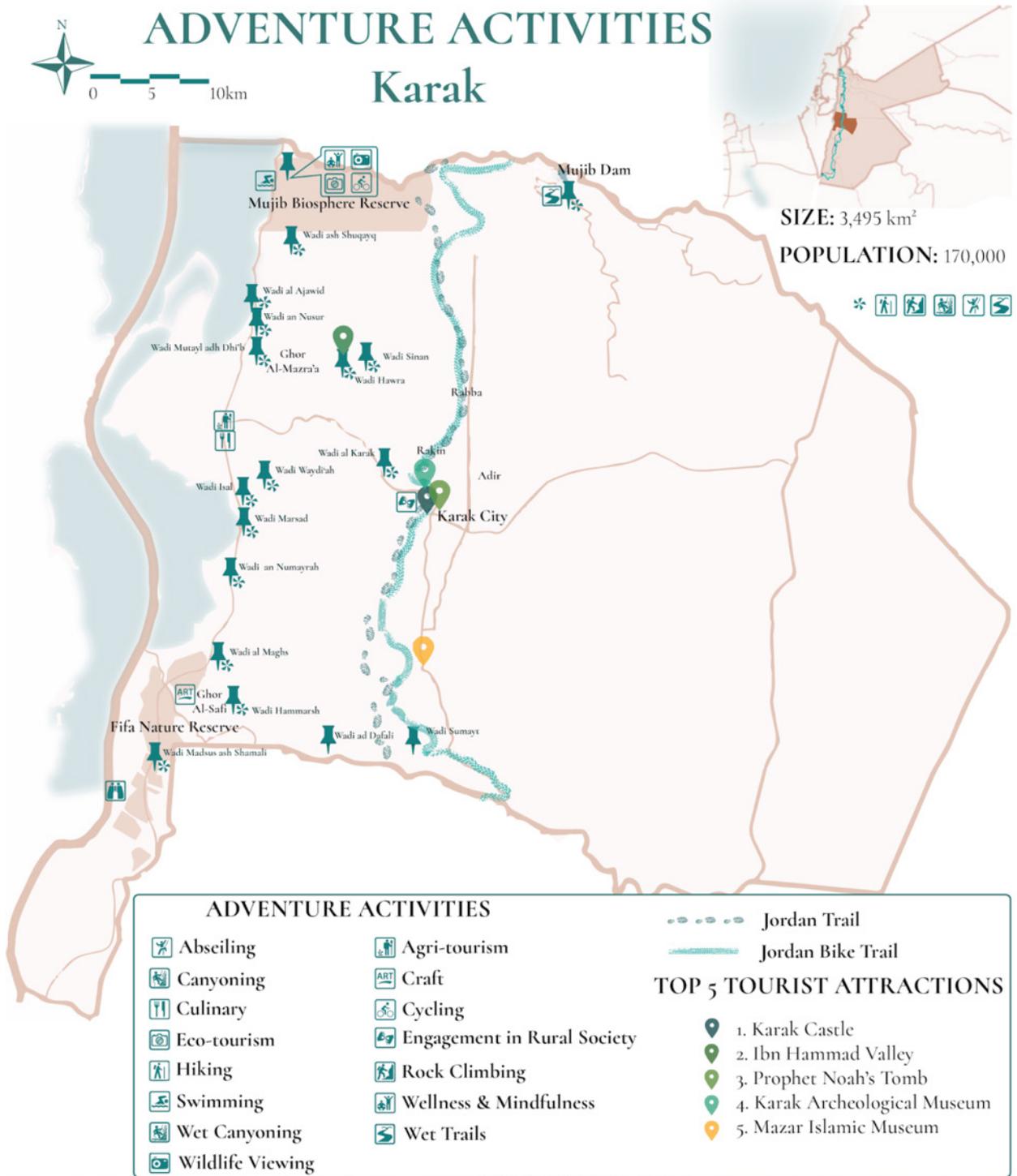
Gour al Safi - The Safi Crafts brand was created in 1999, when a group of 14 women from the village began an embroidery and soil-dyeing project. Using native plants to generate the dyes straight from earth, Safi Crafts produces unique contemporary designs. Each piece tells its own story, reflected by the personal hardships and ambitions of each of the women of Gour Al Safi.⁵⁴

Mujib Silver Making Workshop - Fine handcrafted items, handmade by the local women in Mujib. The fauna and the flora of the area have inspired all the designs.⁵⁵

Mujib Sandblasting Workshop - Artisans sandblast artistic designs into lake stone and basalt. Visitors can choose from the many available designs, or customize their order.

54. <https://www.saficrafts.org/>

55. <https://www.wildjordan.com/content/mujib-biosphere-reserve-0>



2.2.5 TAFILEH

Natural Assets

The **Afra Hot Springs** are not as well known as those in Ma'in. The Afra Springs are located 26 km north of Tafileh City. The medical benefits match those of Ma'in Hot Springs. The water temperature reaches 45-48 degrees Celsius.⁵⁶

Dana Biosphere Reserve - The Dana Biosphere Reserve is Jordan's largest biosphere reserve, covering some 320 square kilometers of spectacular mountains and Wadis along the face of the Great Rift Valley. It is home to a diversity of wildlife; a melting pot of species from three continents: Europe, Africa and Asia. Such a combination of natural communities in a single area is unique and many of Dana's animals and plants are very rare. So far, a total of 700 plant species, 190 bird species, 37 mammal species and 36 reptile species have been recorded, of which 25 are known to be endangered, including the Sand Cat, the Syrian Wolf, the Lesser Kestrel and the Spiny Tailed Lizard. Without special care, some of these could disappear from Earth forever, which makes the Dana Biosphere Reserve a place of global importance.⁵⁷

Cultural Activities

Archaeological Sites⁵⁸

Chirbat ed-Darih temple - The temple complex consists of public buildings and an oil press, a large palace as well as a

number of smaller houses. The Nabatean settlement was developed over the Byzantine and early Islamic times when the houses were built, and a small temple became a church and then turned into a stable.

Ruins of Sela - Sela was the capital of Edom, according to the Bible, situated in the Great Rift Valley. Buildings are both forged in rock and made of stone and were constructed during the times of the Nabateans and the Edomites

Gharandal - Palaestina Salutaris corresponds with the current Gharandal in Tafileh. The city was probably founded by the Nabateans, and the city gained the third place of importance amongst provincial cities during Byzantine times. In Gharandal one can find traces of the Nabatean temple and fragmented relics of the Byzantine church

Bozrah (Buseira) Ruins - This archaeological site covers an area of 8 hectares. According to the Old Testament, this iron age settlement was the capital of Edom. Evidence of early settlement from 9th Century BC was found. Two palaces were discovered on the city acropolis. The younger palace is typical of Assyrian times as are the local red and black coloured ceramics which testify to the Assyrian influence.

56. <https://en.royanews.tv/news/13336/3-Natural-spots-in-Jordan-with-medicinal-healing-powers>

57. <https://www.wildjordan.com/destinations/dana-biosphere-reserve>

58. *Archaeology in Jordan* - <https://www.jstor.org/stable/507108>

Adventure Activities

Hiking

Dana Biosphere Reserve⁵⁹

Campsite Trail – This circular walk around the Rummana campsite is a great place to see birds, especially during migration seasons. The scenic viewpoints along the trail offer picturesque views of the Dana Mountains 1,5 km – 1 hour.

The Cave Trail – Starting at the Rummana campsite, this trail passes by the unusual sandstone formations of Shaq al Kalb (Wadi of the Dog) to a group of small caves, believed to have been a religious retreat or hermitage 1,5 km – 1,5 hours.

Rummana Mountain Trail – This circular trail starts from the campsite and ascends to the top to Rummana Mountain, where the views of Wadi Araba are breathtaking. Highlights on the trail include magnificent sandstone and limestone formations, birds of prey, and beautiful views of the nature reserve – 2,5 km – 2 hours.

Dana Village Tour – Starting from the Dana Guesthouse, this trail winds above the Dana Village and through the terraced gardens and local craft workshops. Visitors can meet the local residents, see original Ottoman architecture, and learn more about Dana's rich history. 2 km – 1-1,5 hours.

Nawatef Trail – This circular trail begins from the Al-Barrah area and takes visitors to beautiful mountains, springs and ancient ruins in the Nawatef Area. 2 km – 2 hours.

Sunrise hike from Feynan Ecolodge – Start off a great day in the wilderness with this challenging sunrise hike. Depart from the lodge at dawn with one of our local Bedouin guides to climb into the mountains just as Bedouin shepherds do with their goats each morning. This hike involves negotiating Bedouin shepherd trails atop the ridgelines of steep hills and cliffs that surround the lodge – 2 hrs – 2 km.

Sunset hike – Every evening, guests are invited to join the lodge's guides on a 20-minute stroll to the top of a gentle outcrop to watch a sunset like no other. Against the dramatic backdrop of rugged, multi-coloured mountains, the sun descends, spreading vivid ambers, violets and reds across the canvas of the evening sky. Take this rare opportunity to witness the end of the day in the Bedouin camps below. 1,5 km – 2 hours.

Wadi Dathneh Trail: Perfect for adventure lovers who have no fear of heights, this trail descends through Wadi Dathneh, past an oasis, and through Wadi al Hamra to the Feynan area. Distance 19 km – 8-10 hours.

Within the Dana Biosphere Reserve there are more trails available including: White Dome Trail; this trail contours the huge escarpments of Wadi Dana between the Rummana campsite and Dana Village. Passing through the terraced gardens of the village, the trail offers breathtaking views of the canyon-like Wadi Shaq Al Reesh Trail; This circular trail traverses from Al-Barrah, through a breathtaking siq, and to Shaq al Reesh.

59. <https://www.wildjordan.com/destinations/dana-biosphere-reserve>

Feynan Plant Hike; Visitors can discover the hidden uses of the plants of the Dana Biosphere Reserve whilst learning how the Bedouin use different plants as soap, herbs, medicines and treatments for their animals.

Copper Mines; A chance to explore deep, long-forgotten mine shafts and visit nearby sites to see how the copper was transported and refined, leaving vast slag formations from the smelting process that are still visible today. Other hikes included: Archaeological Treasures, Wadi Dana Sampler, Wadi Ghwayr sampler and Rock Rose Trail.

The Rift Valley Mountain Trek (RVMT) is the first long-distance discovery hiking route in Jordan, linking Dana Biosphere Reserve and Feynan lodge with Petra through the Shobak heights. Extending approximately 100km from Dana old village to little Petra, the altitude varies from one section to another, starting from 1,300m to 320m above sea level and reaching again to 1665 m above sea level at the halfway point. While crossing mountains and plateaus, visitors can explore the magnificent landscape with its breathtaking geological forms and enjoy the awe-inspiring Rift Valley viewpoints. Interacting with the local population during this spectacular crossing, visitors have the phenomenal experience of camping in real goat hair Bedouin tents. This is a 4 – 6 days trek.

Cycling/Mountain Biking

Dana/Feynan cycling trails:⁵⁵

Archaeological treasures - Visitors can uncover the remarkable history of Feynan through the many archaeological treasures that dot the surrounding

landscape. They can ride to Khirbet Feynan, a Roman (and later Byzantine) town destroyed by earthquakes where the remnants of early Byzantine churches still stand. From there, they can journey on to the Roman reservoir that supplied water to run a grinding mill. Portions of the mill are still clearly visible. Finally, follow tracks to a Neolithic village that dates back over 11,000 years and illustrates the shift from nomadic way of life to a settled life of permanent dwellings and agriculture.

Village Tour - This tour allows the visitor to explore the local villages, passing by archaeological treasures on the way through both on-road and off-track routes. Off-road tracks lead through Bedouin communities to the two nearby villages, where one can weave in and out of the narrow roads and gain an authentic sense of the daily activities and life of the villagers.

Copper Mines Tour - This guided off-road tour offers the chance to examine some of the oldest copper mines in the world. Discover how copper was mined, transported and smelted. Descend deep into thousand year old mine shafts that have provided copper to many civilizations over the millennia.

Canyoning /Wet Canyoning / Climbing

Wadi al Hasa - The canyon runs for some 24km and would need to be paced over two days. There is a good spot for bivouacking about 10km in, but all necessary materials must be carried. The trail is easily divided into two: the upper reaches are in a gorge, often narrow and with ample water. No ropes are necessary, but wetsuits definitely are. The lower reaches are a much easier and pleasant walk alongside or sometimes even in

a stream and among bushes, palm trees and often hanging gardens. Wadi al Hasa's rich nature and biodiversity provides a magnificent trek for nature and adventure enthusiasts alike.

Wadi Ghweir - This trail stretches along the gravel river bed of the Wadi, alongside a flowing stream, to the entrance to Wadi Ghweir. Very similar to the famous Siq in Petra, the trail leads through magnificent sceneries of different stone formations and many unique plants and trees on both sides of the river. The scenery is so breathtaking it has been known to cause visitors to forget about everything else - including how long they have been hiking.

Photography/ Wildlife Viewing

Dana Biosphere Reserve⁵⁵ - Spotting wildlife is an exciting activity for nature lovers, and Jordan is home to some of the most endangered and rare wildlife in the Middle East. Such as the magnificent Arabian Oryx, a species that was once on the verge of extinction. In addition to ostriches, onagers and graceful desert gazelles. The Dana Biosphere Reserve is home to a diversity of wildlife; a melting pot of species from three continents: Europe, Africa and Asia.

Culinary

Baking earthy "Arbood" bread in Feynan Ecolodge - Arbood is the staple food a Bedouin would have for lunch while shepherding his/her herd of goats in the wilderness. A local Bedouin walks visitors through how to bake Bedouin bread from only flour, salt and water kneaded and baked in ash.

Local Cooking Class at Feynan Ecolodge - Offering visitors the opportunity to take a little bit of Feynan home to their kitchen. Local chefs assist visitors in making a vegetarian lunch of Jordanian popular dishes, offering them a chance to enjoy a feast of their own creation.

Dana fruit-drying workshop - The sun-drenched terraces of Dana village provide a perfect place for growing fruits. The women of the village harvest the fruits by hand and lay them out in the sun to dry. Afterwards, they are tuned into delicious sun-dried fruit products that make perfect snacks for all.⁵⁵

Craft

Making kohl in Dana Biosphere Reserve A local Bedouin shows visitors the process of making Kohl, the Bedouin eye makeup that is believed to strengthen eyesight, protect against eye ailment in addition to its cosmetic and aesthetic uses. They will be taken through the process from the burning of cotton and olive oil under the Saj, to collecting the Kohl and applying it.⁵⁵

Weaving goat - haired tents in Dana Biosphere Reserve - A chance to learn the full process of making a tent from goat hair; from the beating of the hair through to the weaving process. This is a seasonal activity for local families, normally done in early summer.⁵⁵

Dana Jewelry Making Workshop - Fine handcrafted copper, silver and bronze jewelry handmade by the local women in Dana. All the designs have been inspired by the flora and fauna of the area.⁵⁵

Feynan Candle Making Workshop - Candles that incorporate nature whether a flower, green vine, or a slice of orange, the design elements come from the earth. The candles are produced in a nature friendly manner as well.⁵⁵

Feynan Leather Workshop - Candle lanterns, nature boxes, and other attractive gifts crafted out of goat leather, handmade by the Bedouin women of Feynan. These natural cured goatskin products have helped to reduce the damage caused by grazing, by making each goat worth more to Bedouin herders, effectively reducing livestock without harming the Bedouins' livelihood.⁵⁵

Engagement in Rural Society

Bedouin Experiences in Feynan Ecolodge Dana - Feynan cradles an authentic Bedouin lifestyle that is becoming rare to find in Jordan today. These interactive experiences offer guests unique insight into the lives of one of the last remaining Bedouin communities in Jordan. Guests can join a local Bedouin family in their goat-hair tented home and learn about their rich culture and daily activities. They will have the rare opportunity to experience native Bedouin daily life, learn about their daily activities, traditions and way of life and learn about the sustainable lifestyle of traditional Bedouin tribes. By visiting different families in their goat-hair tents, guests will get the chance to come close to the locals and learn about their rich culture.⁵⁵

Day with a shepherd in Feynan Ecolodge Dana - One of the best ways to get to know the local culture of the area is to spend

a day with a local shepherd grazing the family's goats in the wilderness of Feynan.

Storytelling in Rummana Campsite - Bedouins have an ancient oral tradition of storytelling that exists to this day. At Rummana Campsite in Dana Biosphere Reserve, local Bedouins keep this tradition alive and entertain guests around the campfire with stories that allow a glimpse into Bedouin local culture and traditions.⁵⁵

Stargazing

Feynan Ecolodge - After night has fallen and the valley has settled into quiet, guests can ascend candle lit stairs to a rooftop terrace laden with mattresses where they can stretch out and sip hot tea as they gaze upwards at the Milky Way in its uninhibited glory. With no other sources of light, the sky becomes a vast dome of black velvet lit only by thousands of twinkling stars and planets with occasional shooting stars burning their tails into the night sky. They can even test out a powerful 10-inch Mead telescope to get incredible views of Saturn's ring, or Jupiter's moons. With the help of guides to navigate them through the dark skies as their Bedouin fathers once used the stars to navigate through the deserts.⁶⁰

60. <https://ecohotels.me/en/feynan/activities>

ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES – TAFILEH



2.2.6 AQABA

Natural Assets

Aqaba Marine Park – One of the main attractions in Aqaba is the pristine coral reef, which is all part of the well-protected Marine Park. The coral reef is a crucial habitat for various fish and aquatic organisms. Jordanian waters are home to more than 450 species of fish, and more than 127 types of coral formation. Within the shallow waters of 0.5m to 40m, there are different types of seagrass, which are a vital environment for fish.⁶¹

Wadi Rum Protected Area – Wadi Rum Protected Area is one of the world's most outstanding desert landscapes, covering 720 square kilometers of dramatic desert wilderness in the south of Jordan. Its huge mountains and broad sandy wadis are home to several Bedouin tribes and a surprising range of desert wildlife. This wildlife now includes a herd of Arabian Oryx, reintroduced by RSCN in 2002. The breathtaking scenery of Wadi Rum has made it one of the most popular tourist sites in the Kingdom.⁶²

Wadi Araba – The Wadi Araba is a valley that stretches 190km in length between Aqaba and the Dead Sea, forming part of the Great Rift System. A high proportion of stormwaters and run-off from eastern slopes (mostly bare rock) discharge into Wadi Araba. Thus the vegetation in the valley is much denser than would

be expected in such a dry region. There are also a number of springs at the foot of the escarpment which make for a pleasant natural landscape and assist in maintaining the biodiversity.⁶³

Cultural Activities

Archaeological site

Aqaba Fort – The fort was built between 1510 and 1517, as attested by the Arabic inscriptions inside the monumental gateway, and was used as a khan (travelers' inn) for pilgrims on their way to Mecca. The Ottomans occupied the castle until WWI when, in 1917, the fortress was substantially destroyed by shelling from the British Royal Navy. The Hashemite coat of arms above the main entrance commemorates the Arab Revolt that swept through Aqaba, ousting the Turks.⁶⁴

Mamluk Fort – Aqaba is home to the Mamluk Fort, which was frequented by pilgrims on their way to Mecca. The fort features various inscriptions inscribed during the latter period of the Islamic dynasty.

Islamic Ayla – The early Islamic city of Ayla is the Red Sea's oldest port and a major archaeological site in Islamic history. The site is still under excavations aiming to discover whether part of the city is now under water, and if it is, to protect it and promote it as a tourist and cultural heritage site.⁶⁵

61. <https://aqaba.jo/pages/Details/Attraction?AttractionID=11>

62. <https://www.rscn.org.jo/content/wadi-rum-protected-area>

63. <http://publication.doa.gov.jo/Publications/ViewChapterPublic/123>

64. <https://www.lonelyplanet.com/jordan/petra-and-the-south/aqaba/attractions/>

65. <https://www.jordantimes.com/news/local/underwater-search-planned-clues-early-islamic-city-ayla>

Historic Buildings

Sharif Hussein Bin Ali House – This house is where the great grandfather of His Majesty King Abdullah II resided for six months after World War I. The house was built in the style of Hijaz houses. Tourists are welcome to visit and discover the history and legacy of the triumphs achieved during the Great Arab Revolution. It displays a collection of rifles, copper and silver bowls, coffee pots and mills, Mansaf trays (to display Jordan's traditional mutton and rice dish) and other typical items of the period.⁶⁶

Museums

Aqaba Archaeological Museum – Housed in the Residence of the Sherif Hussein bin 'Ali, the leader of the Great Arab Revolt. The museum is home to collections from the Islamic site of Ayla, with items dating back to the Rashidun, Umayyad, Abbasid, and Fatimid periods.⁶⁷

Marine Science Station – The Marine Science Station (MSS) was founded in the mid 1970s as an inter-university research institute (the University of Jordan and Yarmouk University). It was created to serve as a marine research facility for scientists and post graduate students, especially scientists coming from abroad, who are interested in studying the tropical-subtropical marine ecosystem.⁶⁸

Aqaba Aquarium – As part of the Marine Science Station Complex, the Aquarium offers a chance to dive without getting

wet and watch the aquatic life inside the Red Sea

Aqaba Underwater Military Museum – The world's first underwater military museum. Boasting a total of 19 pieces of hardware all in "battle formation" including tanks of different sizes, an ambulance, a military crane, a troop carrier, anti aircraft guns and a combat helicopter. ⁶³

Religious Sites

Ayla Ancient Church – Down by the old port in the ancient city of Ayla, the remains of this ancient mud-brick complex represent the oldest purpose-built church in the world. The foundations date back to the late 3rd or early 4th century, and the church was probably in use for about a century before an earthquake devastated the region. Layers of sand have helped preserve the walls, some of which are more than two meters high.⁶⁹

Sharif Hussein bin Ali Mosque – The mosque was named after Hussein bin Ali who was the Sharif and Emir of Mecca from 1908 until 1917. Known as the initiator of the Arab Revolt. With its pristine white structure, intricate glass windows and soaring minarets, Al Hussein Bin Ali mosque is a beacon of Islamic architecture and a moving sight among the hustle and bustle of city life. It also boasts the largest dome among Jordan's mosques and is considered a main mosque for Aqaba's citizens.⁶³

66. https://aqaba.jo/Pages/Details/Attraction/3/Al_Sharif_Hussein_Bin_Ali_House

67. <http://international.visitjordan.com/Wheretogo/Aqaba.aspx?tabId=141#at>

68. <http://aqaba.ju.edu.jo/Lists/AtAQUJ/DispForm.aspx?ID=1>

69. <https://www.lonelyplanet.com/jordan/petra-and-the-south/aqaba/attractions/ancient-church-at-ayla/>

UNESCO World Heritage

Wadi Rum Protected Area – Wadi Rum is a mixed natural and cultural UNESCO World Heritage Site. It is situated in the south of Jordan and is a 74000-hectare property. The site shows the evolution of agricultural, pastoral and urban activity in the region over the past 12000 years of human occupation. More than 20,000 rock carvings and inscriptions trace the evolution of rational thought as well as the early development of the alphabet.⁷⁰

Note; Marine conservationists are currently rallying support to list the coral reefs in the Gulf of Aqaba as a UNESCO world heritage site.

Adventure Activities

Hiking

Wadi Rum Hiking Trails

Makharas Canyon Hike – This worthwhile canyon hike includes open vistas, canyon hiking and grand dune views. It begins at the visitor centre. It's a moderate, unguided hike that should take about 2½ hours return.

Jebel Rum Round Trip – This route offers stunning 'big country' scenery and begins at Rum village. Pass Lawrence's Spring and Ain Abu Aineh and circumambulate the southern half of Jebel Rum. It's a strenuous hike that will take about eight hours; a guide is recommended.

Jabal Umm Ad Dami Ascent – This route scales Jabal Umm Ad Dami (1832m), Jordan's highest peak on the rarely visited southern border with Saudi Arabia. It starts at Wadi Saabet, a 45-minute 4WD trip from the visitor centre. It should take about two hours return and is moderately difficult. A guide is needed.

Climbing/Mountaineering

Wadi Rum – Wadi Rum offers some challenging rock climbing (up to Grade 8 in the French Climbing Scale). Although the Bedouin have been climbing in the area for centuries, climbing as a modern sport is still relatively undeveloped. Guides often suggest Jebel Rum for less experienced climbers: minimal gear is needed and it's close to the Rest House. Another popular climbing location is Jebel Barrah. 33

Bird Watching

Aqaba Bird Observatory – Aqaba is home to a bird observatory where you can get up close and personal with some of the 390 species of birds which reside in Jordan, or use it as an annual migratory stop. Because of its location, it receives flocks of birds coming from Europe, Asia and Africa every migration season. The flocks fly towards the observatory, which consists of an exceptional diversity of habitats critical for attracting birds; shallow and deep waters, herbal plants, trees and green surfaces. These habitats integrate with each other to form a vibrant bird hub, especially for the waders.

70. <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1377>

71. <https://www.lonelyplanet.com/jordan/wadi-rum/in-location/activities>

72. https://aqaba.jo/Pages/Details/Attraction/1/Aqaba_Bird_Observatory

Horseback Riding

Wadi Rum – An alternative and memorable mode of four-legged transport through Wadi Rum and surrounding areas is by horse. These trips are for people who have riding experience – novices should not underestimate the challenge of riding high-spirited Arab horses in open country.³³

Camel Trekking

Wadi Rum – Travelling around Wadi Rum by camel is highly recommended. Apart from being ecologically sound, it enables guests to experience Wadi Rum as the Bedouin have for centuries and to appreciate the silent gravitas of the desert.³³

4X4 Exploration

Wadi Rum – The easiest way to see the largest number of sights in the least amount of time is to arrange a 4WD trip. This is easily done on arrival at the excursion office at the visitor centre.³³

Quad Biking

Wadi Rum – Some of the accommodations in Wadi Rum rent out quad bikes (ATVs), along with maps of possible routes in the dry mudflats north of the camp and outside the Wadi Rum Protected Area.

Snorkeling and Scuba Diving⁷³

Snorkeling in Aqaba – For both first time and seasoned snorkelers Aqaba is an instantly attractive destination. Some of

the world's best diving and snorkeling is packed along the 20km or so of coastline between Aqaba and the Saudi border. With the reef shelving gently directly from the beach, cutting out the need for boat entries. Beginners can go down accompanied by an instructor at any of the many sites.

Cedar Pride Dive Site in Aqaba – The Cedar Pride was scuttled for divers on November 16th 1985. The ship now lies on her port side across two reefs; the soft coral growth on the masts is fantastic. Those with experience can explore its interior.

Japanese Garden Dive Site in Aqaba – This dive site has amazing flora and fauna and all at shallow depths! It's very popular with snorkelers and is known as one of the prettiest areas in Aqaba. It is a good dive for all, as it has Hawksbill Turtles, shoaling Barracuda, shoals of sergeant majors and fusiliers plus wonderful coral formations.

C-130 Dive Site in Aqaba – The Marine Park's latest attraction was scuttled on 16th of November 2017 and has already become the divers' favorite. The aircraft's final resting place lies close to several popular dive sites.

73. <http://international.visitjordan.com/Wheretogo/Aqaba.aspx?tabId=141&experienceId=2#at>

SUP

Aqaba - The SUP (stand up paddleboard) is a great sport when there is little wind and waves as tends to be the case in Aqaba . There are a lot of corals and sea life to see. It's easy to learn and it's great for people of all ages.

Aerosports⁷⁴

Hot Air Balloon in Wadi Rum - Run by the Royal Aero Sports Club visitors can take a bird's eye view of the beautiful scenery of the majestic mountains in Wadi Rum by climbing into a hot air balloon.

Microlight in Wadi Rum - RASCJ allows visitors to return to the roots of aviation with the microlight; a small and versatile open aircraft. They can fly above the beautiful rock formations of Wadi Rum with an experienced pilot.

Craft ⁷⁵

Bottled Sand Art in Aqaba - This art practice is one of the oldest in the world. The first to discover it were the Nabataeans after their invention of the hourglass. The city of Aqaba is home to this unique art, and since the early 1930s it has housed dozens of shops for visitors to purchase the colorful creation, or even make their own.

Sea Glass Jewelry Making in Aqaba - Sea glass is a physically and chemically weathered glass found on beaches along bodies of saltwater. These weathering processes produce natural frosted glass. "Genuine sea glass" can be collected as

a hobby and is used for decoration, most commonly in jewelry. Sea glass can be found here in Aqaba, where it is collected to craft unique pieces of jewelry.

Henna and Kohl Drawings - Henna has been used and known since ancient times, and it has a special role in many cultures. Henna is widely used in cosmetics, thanks to its ability to dye hair and skin with a long-lasting pigment. Kohl is considered one of the oldest types of cosmetics, and it was used by a number of ancient cultures to emphasize the beauty of the eyes of both men and women.

Colorful Dot Art - This type of decorative art entered Arab culture recently and is similar to

stippling or pointillism. Colorful patterns or images are created by placing small dots or points of color together, rather than using solid lines or brush strokes. This technique can be used to decorate books, stones, or home furniture.

Philography Islamic Ottoman Art - Philography is an old Islamic Ottoman art moved from Turkey to Jordan through the Ottoman era in the region. The Ottomans left behind many of the types of the arts that their descendants still seek to preserve from extinction and keep for generations after generation. Guided by a local artisan, tourists will have the chance to revive this tradition and create a colorful Philography product.

74. <http://www.rascj.com/>

75. <http://www.aqabawi.com/>

Mosaic Art - Mosaics have a long history, starting in Mesopotamia in the 3rd millennium BC. Pebble mosaics were made in Tiryns in Mycenaean Greece; mosaics with patterns and pictures became widespread in classical times, both in Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome. Learn how to stack and set up the mosaic stones together, guided by a local mosaic artist, to compose and finish a piece of art.

Eco-tourism⁷¹

Snorkeling for a Clean Sea - The Aqaba coastline is 27 km long and characterized by beautiful beaches that host many different touristic activities. Unfortunately, many of these activities expose the sea and marine life to the dangers of pollution. The Snorkeling for a Clean Sea experience involves swimming with colored fish and exploring the waters of the Red Sea, all while protecting this environment and its inhabitants by picking up waste that has accumulated among the coral reefs.

Culinary⁷¹

Local Cooking in Aqaba - Guided by a local chef, visitors can learn how to make Sayadia and Bokhar; two of the most famous local food dishes in Aqaba and are made up of many different spices. The people of Aqaba typically make these dishes on official occasions and events.

Hooh Sweets Making in Aqaba - Aqaba's traditional sweet dish, called Hooh, consists of several layers of dough interspersed with nuts, butter, honey, condensed milk, molasses, and cream. Guided by a local chef, tourists will learn how to make this creamy dessert.

Date Molasses Making in Aqaba - Date molasses is another term for date syrup, which is frequently called molasses since it has the dark color and thick consistency of sugar molasses. It is frequently used as a sweetener in Middle Eastern recipes. Visitors join a local chef to prepare the date molasses from beginning to end, then enjoy the treat alongside some herbal tea.

Aqabawi cookie baking - Arabic holiday cookies are one of the most important recipes in all of the countries of the Arab world. There is barely a celebration of the holidays without fresh local cookies. Some of these treats are made with flour, and others with semolina, while the filling may vary between dates, cinnamon, and chopped pistachios. A local chef will guide and lead the process of making the local cookies for the participants step by step.

Sesame bars with honey & roasting dates cores coffee in Aqaba - Sesame bars are one of the easiest ancient Arabic recipes, and one that is still eaten by Arabs all over the world. The seeds of the coffee berry, also known as coffee beans, contain high levels of nutrients and antioxidants. Arab cultures were the first to roast these seeds and use them to make a warm, caffeinated beverage. Today, Bedouin tribes still have their own methods for roasting coffee beans, producing a coffee drink with a distinctive taste. With guidance from a local chef participants will learn to make Arab Sesame bars that are served in many local events and how to roast the Bedouin coffee like a Bedouin.

Stargazing

Wadi Rum – Wadi Rum is a beautiful masterpiece of nature. At night in the desert, far away from civilization, visitors will witness millions of stars shining in a dark velvet sky. Informative star gazing activity can be arranged through desert camps.⁷⁶

Agri-tourism and Engagement in Rural Society

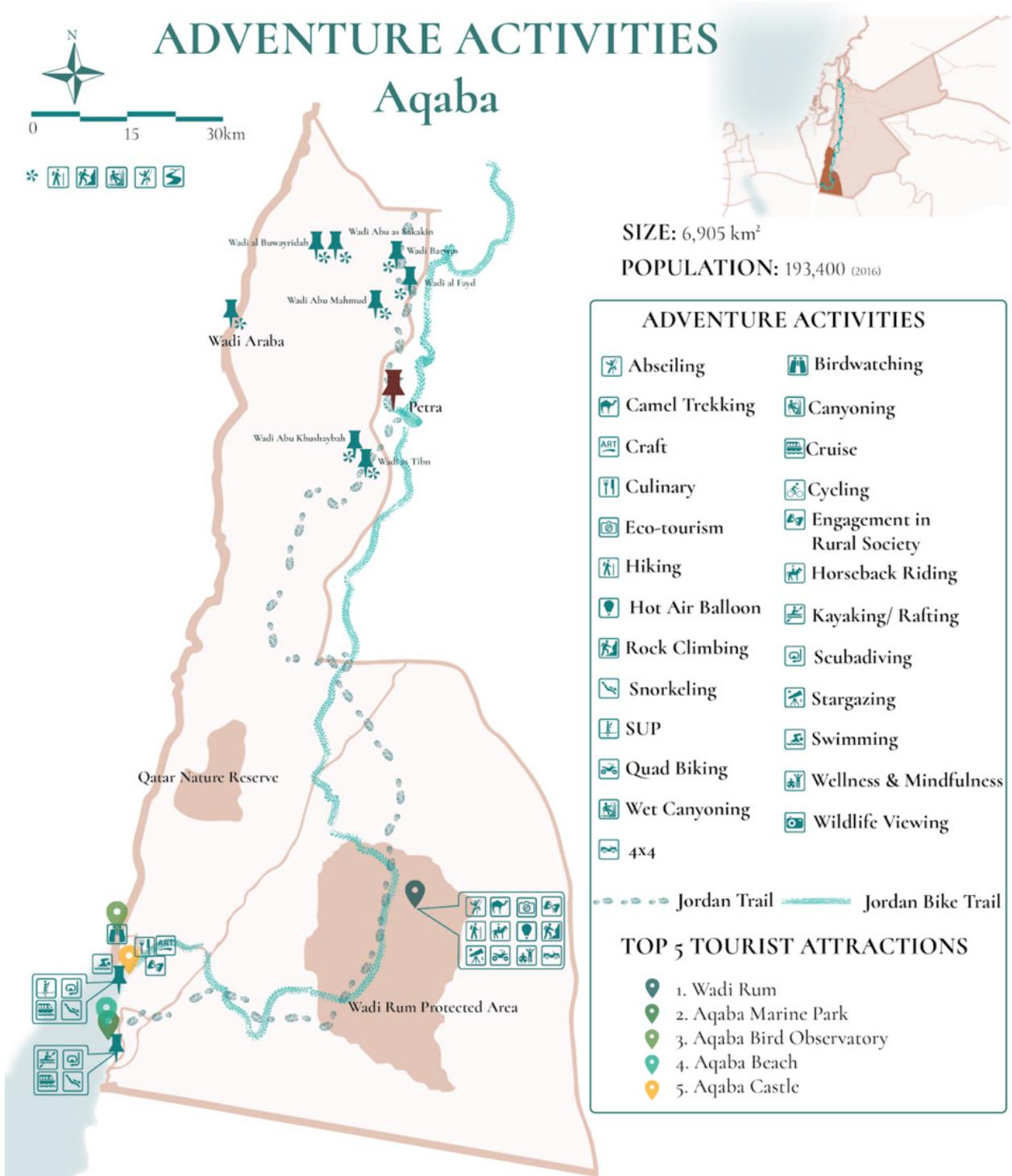
Spend a day with a Bedouin in Wadi Rum – The Bedouin have inhabited Wadi Rum for thousands of years, their lifestyle perfectly adapted to the semi-arid environment. Bedouin life has always been about surviving in the desert. While being in Wadi Rum visitors can experience Bedouin life themselves. They will learn about Bedouins way of life and culture. Bake Arbood or Shrak Bread with the locals, rub their palms with Ajram–the Bedouin soap, wear Kohl to protect their eyes against sand and sun or try the Henna, taste the spicy tingle of a Bedouin’s coffee and spend a night in an authentic goat-hair Bedouin tent.⁷⁷

Spend a day with an Aqabawi – The locals are a unique mixture of Hijazi, Bedouin, and Egyptian and Levantine blood. As a people they are known for their extreme chivalry and hospitality. Aqabawis would be pleased to share a story or two over some coffee.⁷⁸

76. https://www.aqaba.jo/Pages/Details/ThingsToDo/115/Star_Gazing

77. https://www.aqaba.jo/Pages/Details/ThingsToDo/83/Spend_a_Day_with_a_Bedouin

78. https://www.aqaba.jo/Pages/Details/ThingsToDo/39/Spend_a_Day_with_an_Aqbawi





3. ADVENTURE TOURISM ECOSYSTEM



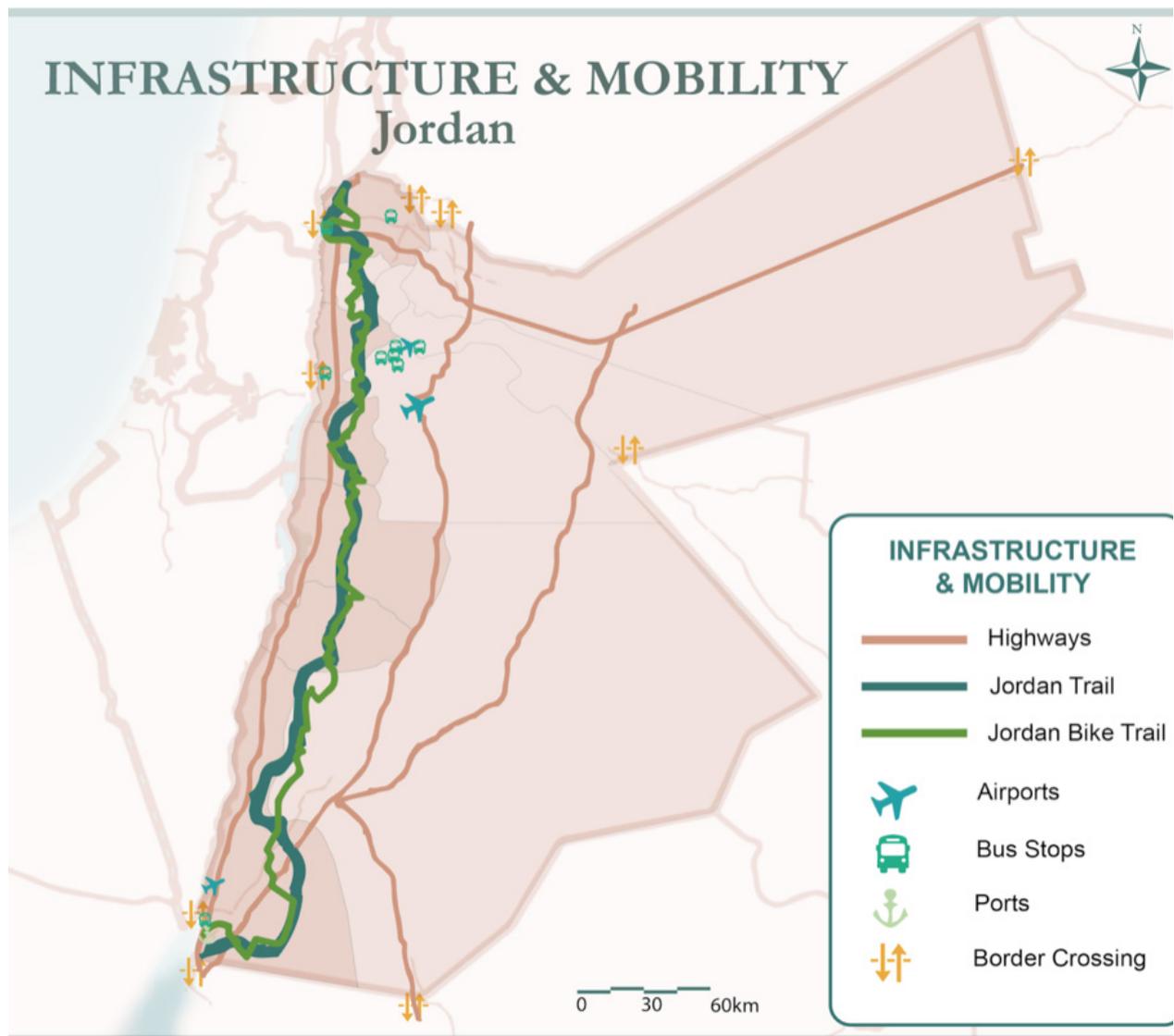
3.1 Infrastructure and Mobility

3.1.1 Arriving in Jordan

For most of the international travelers, arrival into Jordan will be by air into Amman or Aqaba.

Other options include arriving by cruise ship to Aqaba or by land West Bank Syria and the Gulf.

INFRASTRUCTURE & MOBILITY JORDAN



A one-month tourist visa for 40 Jordanian Dinar can be purchased upon arrival depending on whether the nationality requires a visa. The Visit Jordan website gives more details. (<http://international.visitjordan.com/>)

There is also the option of the Jordan pass which provides free entry to over 40 attractions in Jordan, free downloadable digital brochures, and waives tourist entry visa fees if purchased before arrival to Jordan for a stay of a minimum of three nights (4 days). It is valid for use within 12 months following the date of purchase but it will automatically expire after 2 weeks of the first time it is scanned in the first touristic attraction. It comes in 3 categories, Jordan Wanderer (1 day visit to Petra), Explorer (2 day visit to Petra) and Expert (3 day visit to Petra).

Arriving by Air

Queen Alia International Airport

International travelers commonly arrive into Queen Alia International Airport. An optional way to get from Queen Alia International Airport to Amman is by shuttles which are operated by Royal Jordanian, linking the airport to its city terminal in Amman at a very small cost. Airport Taxi is also readily available and can take passengers to any location in Jordan. Rental cars offices are also readily available at the airport terminal for immediate or advance renting. Private transportation from the airport is also

arranged via tour operators for individual and group travelers using specialized tourism transport.

Airport Express Busses

Royal Jordanian Airlines provide bus services to Amman from 6.00 a.m. until midnight each day. The journey itself takes between 45 and 60 minutes.⁷⁹

Amman Airport Taxi

Airport taxi service is also available from Queen Alia International Airport. These fares are fixed and are available 24 hours a day. The cost of a taxi ride to a hotel in Amman city centre is around \$30, and taxis can be taken to any other city in Jordan. Prices are displayed on taxi boards at the airport.

Local Busses

Amman operates local buses that run between the city centre and the airport. The buses are cheap but are not as reliable as the airport busses because they wait for the buses to become full before departing.

Car Rental

There are many car rental companies based in Amman offering a wide choice. Visitors should expect to pay around 25-30JD (35-40 USD) per day for a new model with air conditioning and insurance. Visitors to Amman Queen Alia Airport can book a car via the website.

79. Transportation to/from Amman Airport – Royal Jordanian

Air Taxi

The Golden Eagle Aviation Academy also offers Air Taxi services, which is based out of Amman but can cover destinations upon request.

King Hussein Airport

There has been a recent influx of flights arriving into King Hussein Airport in Aqaba. King Hussein Airport is located just 9.7 kilometers from Aqaba city center and the journey into Aqaba takes just under 15 minutes by car.

Aqaba Airport Shuttle

Airport shuttles from Aqaba Airport to Aqaba City Center Hotels including hotel pickup/dropoff these shuttles offer the best value way to get to and from Aqaba Airport with door-to-door service to Aqaba. More information can be found at Jordan Shuttle.

Taxi

A taxi from the airport to Aqaba City Center can be found outside the airport.

Car Rental

Car rental in Jordan is one of the most convenient ways to explore this country and all it has to offer. Visitors can collect their pre-arranged car rental from Aqaba Airport.⁸⁰

Arriving by Land

Jordan is accessible by Land to bordering countries such as Syria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Israel/ West Bank.

Syria - Tourists coming in from Syria can cross in at Jaber or Ramtha crossing. Both of which are open 24/7 throughout the year. Jaber is 80km away from Amman and is most commonly used by visitors, while Ramtha is 90km away and is mainly for cargo.

Iraq - Visitors can travel to Jordan by road from Iraq through Al-Karamah Border Crossing, which is 331km away from Amman and is open 24/7 throughout the year.

West Bank/ Israel - There are three border crossings between Israel/West Bank and Jordan.

- **The Allenby/King Hussein Bridge**, 57km away from Amman, is located in the southern Jordan Valley.
- **Sheikh Hussein crossing /Northern Border** is 90km away from Amman. It is located in the north, close to Lake Tiberias (Sea of Galilee).
- **Wadi Araba Crossing/South Border**, located in the south, 324km away from Amman, connecting the two Red Sea resorts of Eilat and Aqaba.

Saudi Arabia - There are three border crossings with Saudi Arabia from the east.

- **Al-Omari Border Crossing** 155km away from Amman and open 24/7 throughout the year.

⁸⁰ <https://www.touristjordan.com/aqaba-airport-guide/>

- **Mudawara Border Crossing** 322km away from Amman and open 24/7 throughout the year.
- **Durra Border Crossing**, located in southern Jordan , 349km away from Amman and open 24/7 throughout the year.

Arriving by Cruise Ship

Upon arrival at Aqaba port, cruise ship passengers are granted the visa-free of charge unless their nationality is restricted. In this case, they have to obtain a visa in advance.

3.1.2 Getting Around

Transportation

Cars are available through rental agents and tour operators. Taking a taxi or an Uber car are also options for getting around. Motorbikes too would use the same roads as the cars, noting that off-road motorbikes could also use off-road tracks if permitted in the relevant area.

There is no public bus service that connects all the areas in the pilot area. In some parts of the pilot areas, there may be a limited bus service. This is mainly for the local population in order to have some mobility within their city. There are very few linkages or connections in terms of public transportation serving the pilot areas.

There is no railway network, nor a principal river or sea to sail across to link areas. The Dead Sea is not suitable for boats, and therefore it cannot be used for transportation purposes whether by vessel or by swimming.

Mobility through adventure travel activities

Within the pilot areas, there are various options for modes of transportation through adventure activities. Naturally, the activity of hiking can get you all the places described in principle, which would naturally be very time-consuming. The infrastructure for hiking is both on hard surfaces and trails and paths. However, all areas are connected in principle across the wadis, the hills, and the land in between. As highlighted, the Jordan Trail traverses Jordan from north to south and connects all the pilot areas on the way, thus being the main vein for hikers to link areas and locations along their way.

The Jordan Bike Trail also spans the length of the Kingdom and therefore, in principle, this activity could be used to get from one place to another within and between the pilot areas.

Camels are 'the ships of the desert' and are an excellent means of transportation within the vast Wadi Rum protected area, but 4x4 is also a popular choice to cut across the sand dunes and between the majestic limestone cliffs. Horse riding also is a good choice for exploring Wadi Rum. There is also the option of moving location by hot air balloon or by microlight or indeed by motorised desert buggies. In addition to the newly established air taxis.

The pilot areas all have paved roads that run through them to a greater or lesser extent. A principal road connects Umm Qais in the North to Aqaba in the South and runs along the full length of the Jordan Valley. From this main road,

which is by no means a motorway, there are regular turn-offs that allow for access to the tops of the mountains that rise up from the valley. Steep and windy roads take travelers to the main cities perched on the mountain range overlooking the rift valley. Those cities and smaller villages to the south are connected by the King's Highway. This ancient trade route was of significant importance, not only for trade but also for Christian pilgrims making their way to Mount Nebo as well as Muslims on their way to Hajj. Hence travelers can tread in these historic footsteps.

Today the modern routes that mirror the ancient routes are Highway 35 and Highway 15.

The pilot areas can all be explored well by car too in order to reach one's destination.

For the climb up from the valley, a 4x4 is preferred but not strictly necessary if the roads are followed. For off-road tracks, a 4x4 is needed.

Single or twin-engine aircraft or helicopters are potential options for transportation in certain cases depending on the destination and the terrain. They are highly expensive and may need licenses and other formal procedures to be in place.

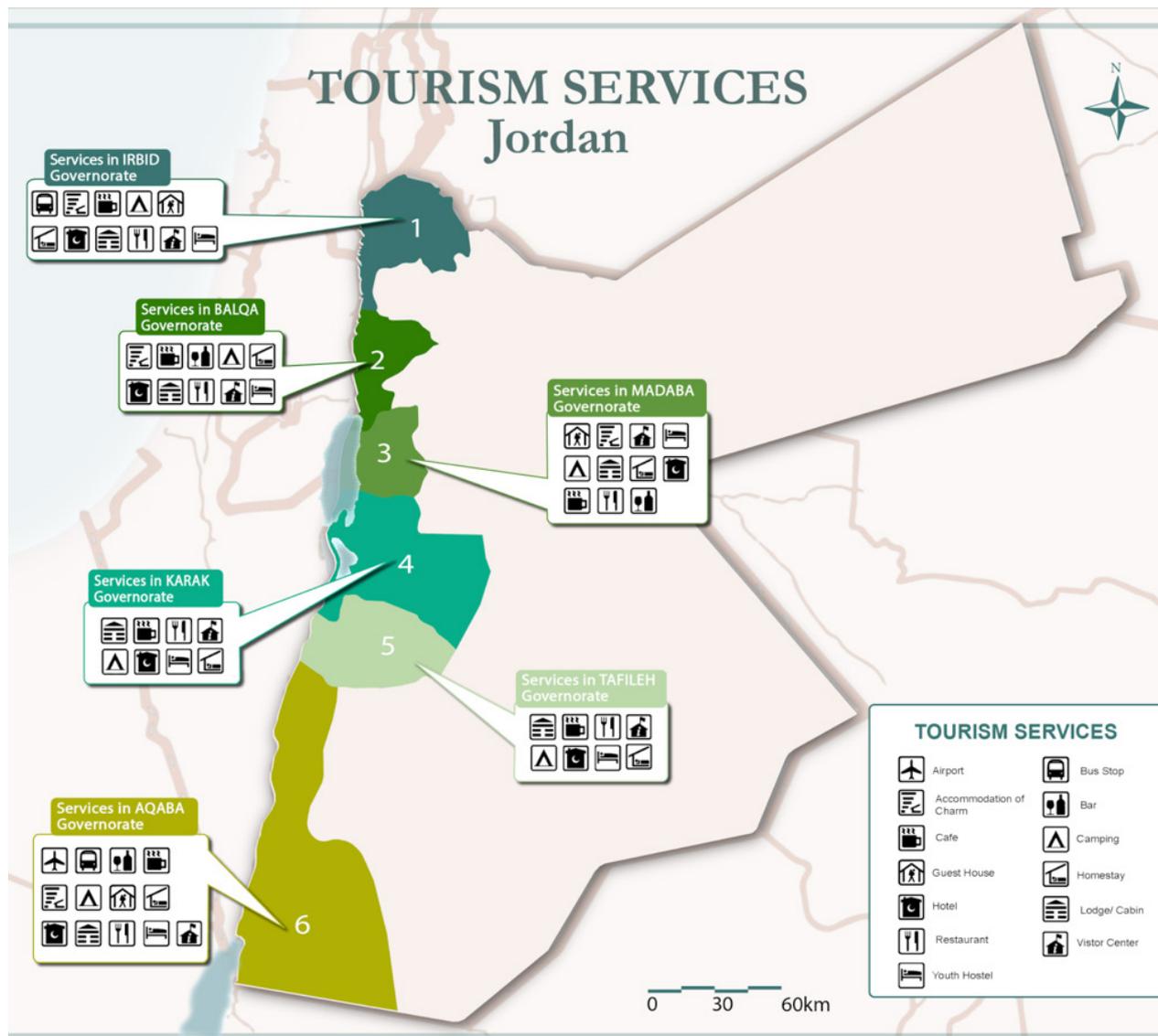
Note: Jordan is not at all easily accessible for people with physical disabilities of any kind. Therefore, from an accessibility and mobility perspective, Jordan is not well equipped to accommodate visitors with impairments, especially in the often challenging terrain of the pilot areas.

3.2 Service offered to visitors

For adventure travellers wishing to come to Jordan, there are extensive services in place. From the planning stages, during the trip, and post-trip stages,

relevant services from accommodations, transportation and gastronomic experiences are on offer.

TOURISM SERVICES - JORDAN



During the pre-travel stages, travelers have access to online information, user-generated content on the destination and can be informed and advised whether online, in person or via a travel agent or

tour operator communication.

Inbound and outbound transportation is mainly through the two main airports, Queen Alia International airport in

Amman and King Hussein International airport in Aqaba. A wide variety of transportation services are available including bus transportation, private car rental, chauffeur driven cars, Uber-, Careem and taxi services. A wide choice in accommodation can be accessed, including 1- 5-star hotels, apartments, AirBnB, camping and glamping options as well as home-stays. Travelers have the choice of a wide array of activities and experiences as well as cultural attractions. Restaurants, bars and culinary experiences can be enjoyed widely, with a broad spectrum of both Jordanian, Levant and international food on offer.

Travelers are able to enjoy festivals and shopping experiences, including handicraft shopping and workshops. Travelers have easy access to financial services, including banks and ATMs during their stay. Inbound operators, travel agents, hotel concierge, booking platforms, airlines and OTAs all offer programmes to facilitate securing business from the traveller and optimising their experience whilst in Jordan. Not all operators, however, focus on or specialise in adventure travel. There is a growing number of providers that are stepping into the adventure tourism space along with other well-established travel tourism product providers.

Post-trip there are surveys, follow up communication, social media groups, and other types of tools and means to complete the value cycle from the inception of the trip to returning back from Jordan.

3.3 Destination Management and Marketing Entities

The official Destination Marketing Organisation is the Jordan Tourism Board (JTB). Officially established in 1997, the JTB is a partnership between the public and private sector. JTB creates and executes marketing strategies and promotes Jordan across the globe, with a focus on specific relevant markets. JTB represents Jordan through trade fairs, exhibitions, workshops, PR, educational trips, online promotion and advertising, social media and through other marketing and distribution channels.

The Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority (ASEZA) is a partial DMO focusing on developing and promoting Aqaba and Wadi Rum tourism products, as part of the Golden Tourism Triangle, which encompasses Aqaba, Wadi Rum and Petra.

While the Petra Development and Tourism Regional Authority (PDTRA) is responsible for development, management and marketing of the Petra Archaeological park and its surroundings.

The Salt Development Corporation (SDC) is a pilot DMO which was set up to market As-Salt, and support this potential tourism city, which won Jordan's first "Distinctive Destinations Award" in 2018 launched by MOTA. SDC aims to ensure the quality of tourism activities and to develop both domestic and international tourism sustainably. SDC also works in close cooperation with both JTB and MOTA.⁸¹

81. <http://www.jordantimes.com/news/local/jica-supporting-eco-museum-salt-showcase-daily-life-traditions>

3.4 Stakeholders and tour operators involved in Adventure Tourism

There are just several tour operators in Jordan that can be considered as adventure specialized, however the majority of those who offer adventure related programs, also have other streams, and adventure makes up just one part of their operation. Most of those who work in adventure have been offering

programs for several years now and have connections with specialized adventure operators in Europe and the US. There remains plenty of room for adventure specialization by tour operators and more capacity building is required to bring more sector players into adventure tourism.



4. CONCLUSION



Jordan is a country of great beauty and biodiversity, and has great potential to develop adventure tourism. The country was ranked 48th safest country globally by Global Finance Magazine and 6th among Arab nations. Jordanians are known for their hospitality and have a rich history in receiving visitors from different cultures and backgrounds. The climate is an asset, as it typically features dry, bright weather, without humidity. With a rich tourism past, there are experienced suppliers of great repute, including RSCN, The Jordan Trail, The Jordan Bike Trail and various private sector operators.

In recent years air access has improved significantly with the arrival of additional flights, including Low Cost Carriers. Although the impact of COVID-19 has paralyzed access for tourists, the hope is that when the tourism activity picks up again, that the flights will follow suit.

Despite the strengths Jordan has as a tourism destination, there remain certain factors that hinder effective development of Jordan as an adventure tourism destination. A weak regulatory framework, and insufficient enforcement of set standards due to the involvement of multiple bodies leaves fault in the system and will probably affect the sector's future development. Therefore, a greater in-depth study is needed of the legal ecosystem as it pertains to adventure tourism as is evident from the preliminary findings in this report.

While there are a good number of private sector operators who are able to offer high quality adventure tourism services and experiences, they may not be formally

qualified or certified. There is no tailored certification for adventure tourism guides either, nor one for community-based guides. The operating licenses for adventure tourism groups required by tour operators are quite complicated, and are spread among several government entities thus reducing efficiency and increasing frustration of the operators. Administrative challenges have been raised as one of the most crippling factors from an operator's perspective.

The business enabling environment that supports investors and business owners from both the private and public sectors is not adequate. Cumbersome procedures and lack of investments negatively impact the ability to develop and upgrade adventure tourism products.

Community engagement is of great importance in the quest to develop adventure travel tourism. More work is needed to optimize integration of host communities in areas where the adventure tourism product may be developed or where it exists, to be upgraded. On the topic of adventure tourism product development, there is no cohesive investment map for (adventure) tourism in Jordan. Multiple governing bodies related to the tourism sector including vocational training and education, investment and regulatory bodies are fragmented and work in SILOs. There is no data collection system and (adventure) tourism strategy as a result, cannot be informed by reliable data.

Apart from administrative weaknesses, there are additional factors that require significant focus and resolution in order

to further progress the adventure tourism product. The country suffers from the results of littering, and even though the government is raising awareness to combat littering, by arranging clean up crusades, go green campaigns have seen little if any long-lasting results. A paradigm shift is needed in this regard through the enforcement of anti-littering laws and regulations and school activities to educate the new generations on the importance of natural assets and their protection.

Within the RSCN's protected areas, rangers manage littering effectively, in a controlled and informed environment. However, in unprotected areas, littering is rife. Furthermore, adherence to the set standards for safety and hygiene needs to be enforced to enhance service quality amongst host communities. In the post-COVID-19 period, travelers will attribute significant importance to health, hygiene and cleanliness in all aspects, and therefore it is essential that private sector as well as public sector entities approach all protocols with utmost seriousness.

One of the external threats to the development of Jordan's adventure tourism sector is the COVID-19 induced economic decline. With the anticipated ongoing repercussions resulting from the ongoing Covid-19 onslaught on global economies in general and the adventure tourism sector in particular, levels of adventure tourism are likely to be hampered over the foreseeable future. Having said that, and if other factors can be addressed, the adventure traveler is likely one of the first to return to travel, and Jordan has the potential to work towards placing itself amongst new top ranked adventure tourism destinations in the region as well as the world.

INTERNAL FACTORS

DETRIMENTAL TO ACHIEVING THE GOAL	STRENGTHS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural assets and diversity • Safe and secure within region of turmoil • Renowned hospitality • Increased air access (pre COVID-19) • Strong tourism history and suppliers • Key stakeholders with extensive adventure tourism experience including RSCN, JREDS, the Jordan Trail 	WEAKNESSES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of regulatory framework, enforcement and standards • Lack of business enabling environment • Lack of qualified / certified adventure tourism providers • Lack of Foreign / Local Direct Investment • Lack of cleanliness and hygiene • Lack of community engagement • Lack of resilience and government support • Fragmented procedures and disconnected bodies • Lack of data collection informing strategy

EXTERNAL FACTORS

DETRIMENTAL TO ACHIEVING THE GOAL	OPPORTUNITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capitalize on global growth trend in adventure tourism • Collaborate with MEDUSA Southern Med Partners • Adopt best practices from experienced countries • Position Jordan as a new adventure tourism destination with outdoor and sparsely populated experiences 	THREATS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global economic depression • Prolonged COVID-19 impact on (adventure) tourism sector • Decreased air access in the foreseeable future • Strong regional competition in adventure tourism (KSA, Oman, UAE...etc.) • Jordan is considered an expensive (adventure) tourism destination • Regional political situation

4.1 Final Recommendations

For Jordan, adventure tourism is a newly identified market, requiring robust research and development. Focus and expertise are needed, as well as investment and marketing efforts in order to grow this potentially lucrative tourism niche product. The development of this product and its design-needs will require professional, informed and careful handling. Through various industry consultations and informed research, the following actions are recommended to further develop adventure tourism in Jordan:

1. Enabling Environment

- Institutionalize adventure tourism governance map with clear roles and responsibility of the various stakeholders to support sector strategy and development.
- Set up a reliable data collection system for adventure tourism that is easily accessible and supports informed strategic and business planning.
- Increase government support of the adventure tourism sector.
- Encourage collaborative sustainable development among various DMOs and other stakeholders.
- Conduct a thorough legal review and address the gaps that pertain to Adventure Tourism including but not limited to Adventure Tourism definition, guides licensing and adventure operators licensing.

- Explore ways to legalise informal activities including adventure guides licensing.
- Enhance and simplify licensing and certification processes and design effective solutions to speed up efficiencies.
- Set up an effective dedicated monitoring and evaluation system, to address illegal outings and excursions by unqualified and certified operators and enforce the law to halt practices.
- Enforce environmental protections laws and regulations including littering which highly affects adventure and other locations.
- Integrate public-private and private-private Partnerships and enforce mechanisms to attract and facilitate investment.

2. Product Development and Local Community Engagement

- Map potential adventure tourism sites and experience and develop sites and activities classification systems.
- Develop standards for sites, equipment and itineraries that are built on international best practices.
- Map essential infrastructure needs in order to develop the product sustainably. Include; facilities, accommodation, access routes, signage and other considerations and aspects.
- Introduce advanced adventure activities like bungee jumping, Tec diving, paragliding ...etc.

- Consult local communities at destinations and involve them during development planning stages in the areas related to those local communities to foster collaboration and cooperation.
- Build on RSCN experience and development methodology to replicate in other destinations outside the natural reserves.
- Map development requirements in local community areas and develop investment maps identifying needs of communities in terms of business opportunities, training and financing.
- Plan and ensure for active engagement of local communities within adventure activities ensuring their financial and social benefit.
- Develop crisis mitigation strategies as well as a search and rescue mechanism.
- Integrate sustainable practices at all levels and at all touch points as they relate to adventure tourism.

3. Capacity Building and Human Resources Related to Adventure Tourism

- Raise awareness and train relevant government bodies on adventure tourism requirements and specifics.
- Build the capacity of relevant bodies on search and rescue procedures in relation to adventure tourism.
- Build the capacity of rangers to implement site protection measures.
- Build the capacity of local communities to engage in the adventure tourism

sector.

- Raise awareness on environmental protection measures including ways to reduce waste, water and energy consumption.
- Enhance understanding and implementation of United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as they pertain to tourism.
- Develop and implement training programs for specialized adventure guides.

4. Marketing Efforts

- Stakeholders should align marketing efforts with the JTB adventure tourism strategy and promotion plan.
- Stronger promotion and awareness on adventure tourism dos and don'ts for the domestic market.

5. Crisis Management / Resilience

- Select, train and engage a Tourism Crisis Management and Resilience Team.
- Work on one-stop-shop to share concise and relevant information including Standard Operating Procedures and crisis measures.
- Optimize timely communications with stakeholders and align with international bodies and stakeholders to operate in line with global needs.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Tourism and COVID-19

The world's tourism sector could lose at least \$1.2 trillion, or 1.5% of the global gross domestic product (GDP), having been placed at a standstill for nearly four months due to the coronavirus pandemic, UNCTAD said in a report published on 1st July 2020.

The tourism sector accounts for almost 14% of national income in Jordan. According to the World Bank, the sector will be impacted in two ways as a result of COVID-19. The first is the pull factor, corresponding to prevailing travel bans and lockdowns, and the second is the push factor, pertaining to the growing global economic slowdown⁸².

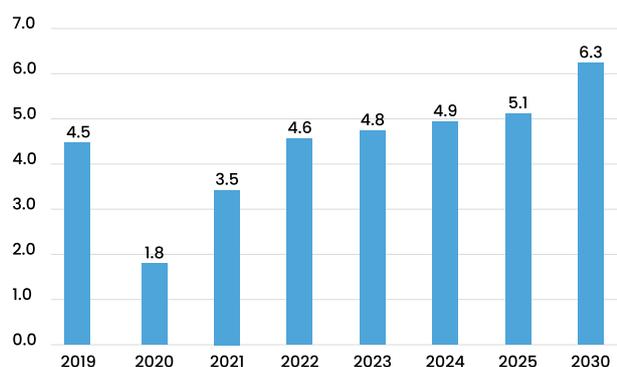
USAID/BEST Report of June 2020, titled: Providing Industry with Tourism Data to Support Tourism Resilience: Recovery Planning from COVID-19 includes the following information; With borders closed around the world, airlines grounding

aircraft, and serious outbreaks of the virus in many of the key international tourist source markets, the tourism sector in Jordan is facing significant difficulties.

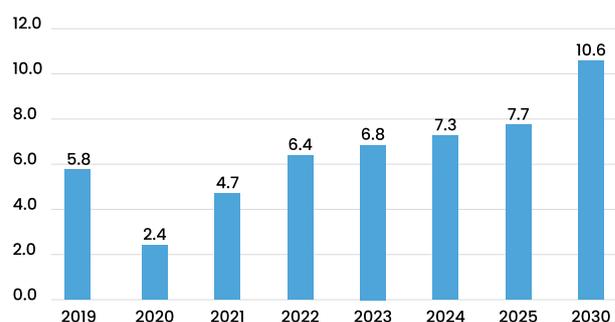
There were 4.5 million international tourist arrivals to Jordan 2019. However, these are projected to decline to 1.8 million in 2020, before bouncing back to 3.5 million in 2021. Unlike global tourism arrivals, which will recover slower, it is anticipated that Jordan will exceed the number of arrivals that travelled to the country in 2019 by 2022.

The report goes on to say that inbound tourists spent US\$5.8 billion in Jordan in 2019; however, an expected US\$2.4 billion is projected in 2020, a fall of just over 58%. 94% growth is expected in 2021, generating a projected US\$4.7 billion. The model estimates that expenditure will exceed 2019 levels by 2022.

TOURIST ARRIVALS IN JORDAN (2019-2030)



TOURIST EXPENDITURE IN JORDAN (2019-2030)

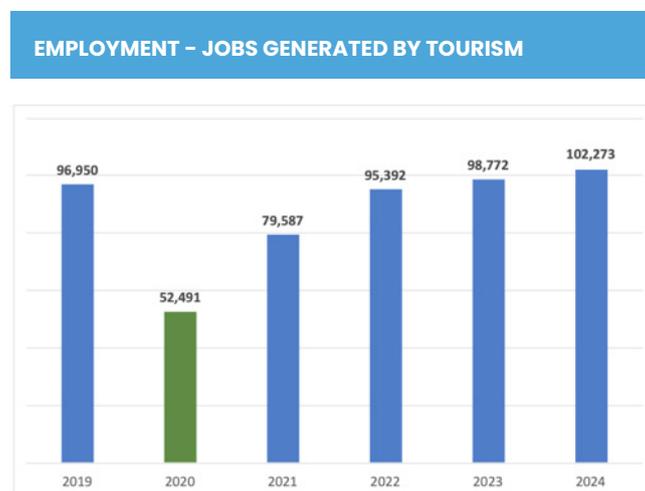


82. <https://leadersinternational.org/tourism-resilience-in-the-face-of-covid-19-in-jordan>

Whilst jobs created by tourism in Jordan were estimated to be almost 97,000 in 2019, these are projected to fall to around 52,500 in 2020, down 46% or around 44,500 fewer jobs required. Of course, the actual change in employment may not be this high due to job retention schemes and other policies put in place by businesses to retain staff over what is expected to be a relatively short term drop in demand.

These figures are based on the expected case scenario; however, the four other

(better and worse case) scenarios have been tested using the Jordan Forecaster Model. These indicate that the best case could mean that Jordan experiences 2.5 million tourist arrivals in 2020, spending US\$3.3 billion, generating TDGVA of US\$1.6 billion, and requiring almost 61,000 jobs. The worst-case scenario could mean that there would be only 0.9 million arrivals, spending US\$1.1 billion, generating TDGVA of US\$0.5 billion, and requiring just over 40,000 jobs.



As of June 2020, Jordan still has a curfew in place, from midnight until 6 a.m. Transportation is fully operational with 50% capacity for public transport. Mobility within governorates and between the regions is permitted. Social gatherings allow for numbers of up to 20. Social distancing, hygiene directives and the wearing of masks in public are common practice and requirements.

Similar to other countries, the Government of Jordan is focused on supporting the tourism sector through the provision of loan support through the Central Bank

and Social Security Corporation. In June the government announced a number of measures to support the livelihood of tourism institutions including facilities worth JOD 150 million. The 16% sales tax is now down to 8% in Amman and other areas whilst the taxes in Aqaba will remain at 7%. Service tax has been reduced from 10% to 5%.⁸³ Loans guaranteed to tour guides and handicraft producers through the Jordan Tourism Board with up to 3 million JD, with the exemption of rental fees and other fees related to licensing to name some. Funds primarily aim at supporting

83. <https://www.jordantimes.com/news/local/govt-announces-new-measures-revive-virus-hit-tourism-sector>

operating expenses and salaries.

Countries will recover at variable speeds, and as long as the virus persists, even in isolated geographical pockets, caution will play a significant role in the choice of destinations people visit, the type of tourism products they buy, and the experiences they participate in. Those destinations which are able to provide the greatest levels of confidence amongst potential travelers are the ones that will recover the fastest.⁸⁴

In addition, destination safety and resilience will play a key role in attracting post-COVID travelers. Those destinations that are well placed to present remote areas, space, natural pursuits, adventure and slow tourism options may be favoured over densely populated destinations, which may work to Jordan's favour. Adventure Tourism is certainly one of the first tourism products expected to return.

COVID-19 also appears to have shaken the world and has been a wake-up call to pay more attention to a more balanced approach to tourism. The engagement in meaningful experiences, which are sustainable and just, green and inclusive, will likely see faster growth than before the pandemic. The Social Development Goals as they pertain to tourism and a social enterprise stance towards tourism will have an effect on the pure commercial role that tourism plays for some. Bottom line is no longer simply profit and contribution towards GDP. Whilst profit matters fundamentally,

People and Planet will see more genuine attention and consideration in tourism going forward.

As of early July 2020, The World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) has recognised Jordan as a safe destination. Jordan was awarded the country a "Safe Travels" stamp that validates the stringent hygiene and safety protocols that the country has put in place, as it prepares to welcome tourists soon. The "Safe Travels" stamp is a global initiative that gives travelers the opportunity to identify destinations that have implemented the highest standards of safety in line with international protocols and best practices designed to safeguard travelers amid the unprecedented pandemic.⁸⁵

For now, Queen Alia International Airport remains restricted to repatriation and cargo flights, as well as authorized flights from various destinations for Jordanians residing abroad. The government has announced relaxing of restrictions for medical tourism as of early June, however airport opening for "green countries" has been postponed several times. Though new airport procedures have been clearly communicated, opening dates remain unclear, to the dismay of the stakeholders and operators in the tourism sector.

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted the world tourism situation globally and the tourism sector in Jordan, in particular, continues to be affected by change on a daily basis. New findings and realities will continue to impact the way both the world

84. <https://www.jordantimes.com/news/local/govt-announces-new-measures-activate-virus-hit-tourism-sector>

85. Providing Industry with Tourism Data to Support Tourism Resilience: Recovery Planning from COVID-19 – Report USAID/BEST Jordan June 2020

and Jordan will emerge. Recovery and resilience strategies to deal with crises are imperative for the tourism sector to regain strength and flourish once again.

The Adventure Travel Trade Association (ATTA) outlined five strategic goals that Adventure Travel companies should undertake within their operations which relate to COVID-19 risk management with safety as a priority, driven by guiding principles.⁸⁶

1. Create Transmission Barriers

1.1. Social and Physical Distancing - Reduce the number of people in a group whenever possible. Set social distancing parameters. Adapt operations and practices to allow appropriate social distancing and mitigate risks in other ways if social distancing is not possible.

1.2. Surface Contact - Reduce touchpoints or surface contact areas where possible

2. Enhance Sanitation

2.1. Identification of High Touch Surfaces - Define cleaning and disinfecting procedures and following manufacturers instructions for use of approved products. Identify cleaning frequency.

2.2. Hand Washing - Regular opportunities to wash and sanitize hands.

2.3. Cleaning/Sanitation Measures - Rigorous cleaning measures in all areas

within your control. Review of suppliers and providers for adherence to internal / national / international policies.

3. Promote Health Screening

3.1. Preventative - Who should be allowed to travel? Are there moral or ethical considerations (e.g. vulnerable populations, ability of the destination to receive these travelers and attend medical needs without stressing local resources)?

3.2. Potential - Inform staff and guests to stay at home if they have symptoms however mild, or are in a household where someone has symptoms.

4. Prompt Responses

4.1. Actual/Reactive - If staff or customers test positive or have symptoms for COVID-19.

4.2. Evacuations- How will customers or staff be removed/evacuated from activity or trip.

4.3. Emergencies - Local EMS and medical chain assessment. Emergency Response Plan updated.

4.4. Cancellations and Unused Services - Address in Terms and Conditions and liability waiver. Valid travel and medical insurance policies. Consider having a flexible cancellations policy.

5. Project Communities

5.1. Group Size and Type - Impact of group and trip on the community and

86. <https://www.rscn.org.jo/what-we-do>

medical resources.

5.2. Moral/Ethical decisions conducting trip - Chance of being a vector / bringing in the disease.

5.3. Vulnerable Places - Poor EMS / Medical chain of care. Low cases with high risk / vulnerable local communities.

Annex 2: General Revision of Adventure Tourism Legal Framework in Jordan

Background

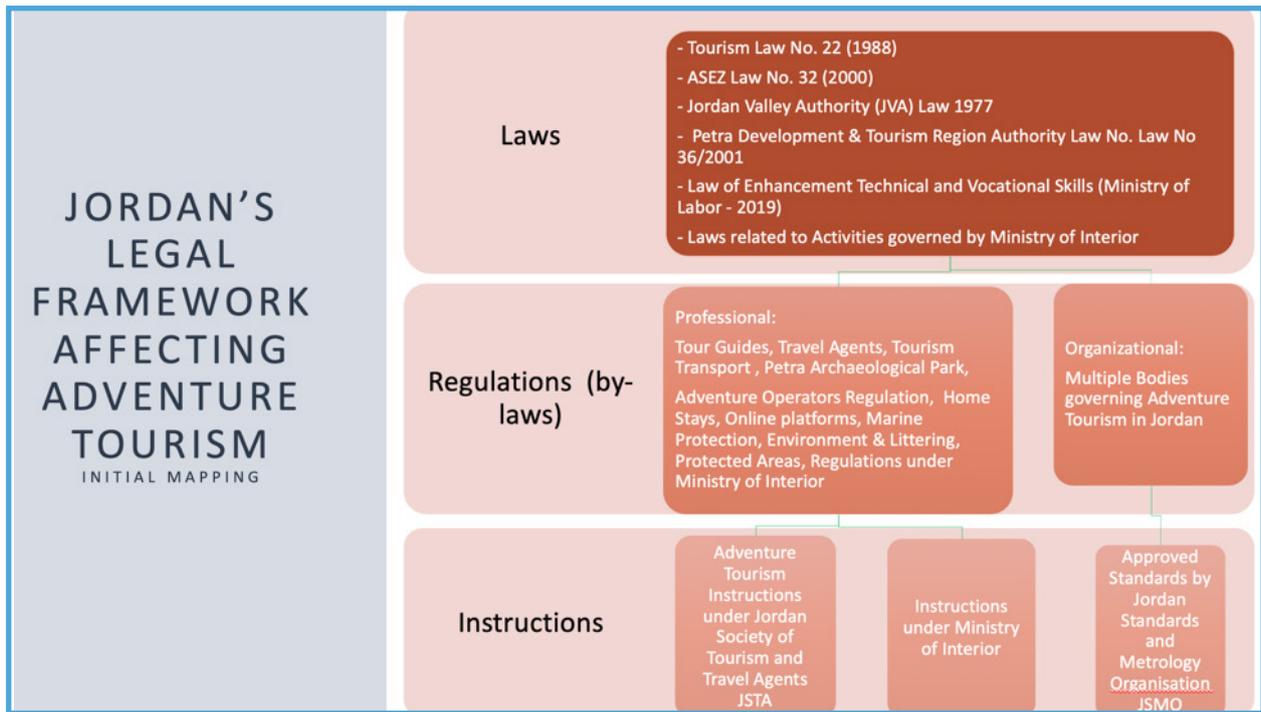
On the 9th of January 1988, the Jordanian Government issued a new tourism law replacing its previous version, and the Tourism Law (#20, 1988) was approved. This law governs MOTA's responsibilities and identifies its various roles concerning tourism and heritage. The law also sets the base for the setup and governance of sector associations, licensing of tourism establishments and mitigation rules.

The law sets provision for numerous regulations and instructions that govern tourism operations in the Kingdom. It is necessary to note that, in order of importance, the law presides over regulations first and then instructions. Whether law, regulations or instructions, if in draft form, they are not of consequence until they have been incorporated officially.

In regards to adventure tourism, there is no separate law in force, and the sector is in essence governed by the generic Tourism Law. In addition a few regulations

and instructions were issued pertaining to Adventure Tourism per se, yet there remain some gaps in this legal set up.

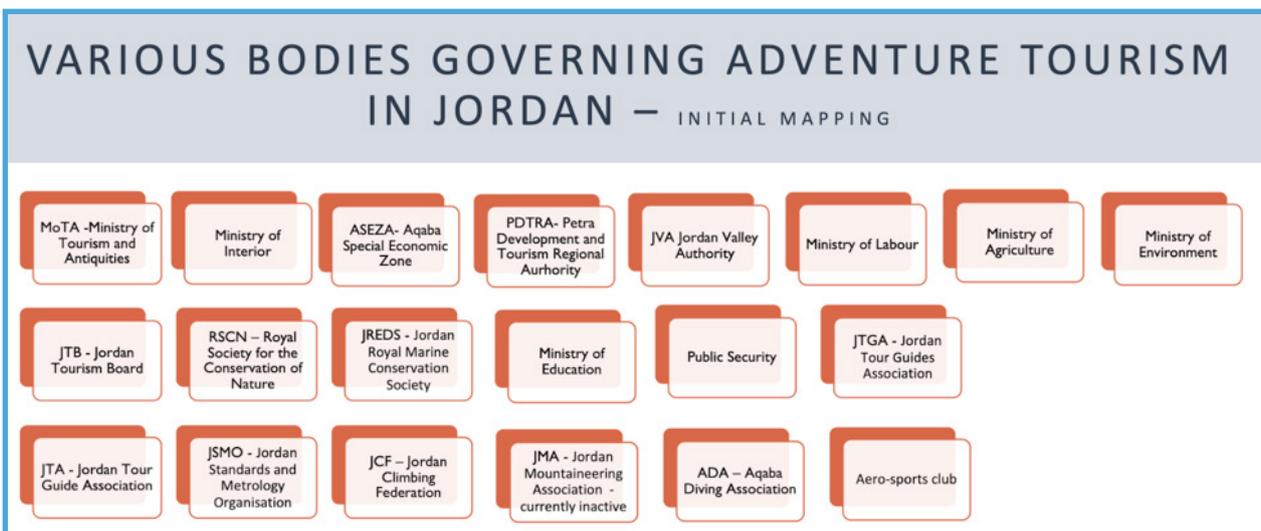
Therefore, as part of the MEDUSA project analysis of the Adventure sector, a general review of the governing laws, regulations and instructions have been mapped, to identify widespread gaps which followed several discussions with various sector representatives. The below chart maps the legal framework governing adventure tourism in Jordan as well as the governing bodies overseeing sector development, promotion, and regulations. As is clear from the graph, the tourism industry is governed by various public bodies, with varying remits. Some work on a national level, while others work in specific geographic areas.



Governing Bodies

MOTA is the chief representative of the Tourism Sector in Jordan. However, the legal landscape is fragmented and encompasses various self-governing bodies and authorities with their laws, regulations and instructions that govern the Adventure Tourism Sector.

The following bodies were identified as those governing/affecting adventure tourism in Jordan in various forms.



MOTA – Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities

Article #3 of the Tourism Law (#20,1988) sets out MoTA’s responsibilities as follows:

1. The protection of tourist sites
2. The licensing of various tourist activities and professions, and the classifications thereof (such as travel agencies, tourist transportation companies, hotels, campsites, tour-guides, handicrafts, traditional works, tourist restaurants, as well as amusement and recreational centres)
3. Facilitating tourism-related administrative procedures
4. Conducting promotional campaigns
5. Encouraging domestic tourism
6. Supporting business investments in the sector
7. Providing tourism activities supported by qualified staff, who have the abilities and skills required
8. To perform studies to ascertain needs and improvements impacting the sector performance

NTC – The National Tourism Council (led by MOTA)

Under Article number 5 and 6, the Tourism Law called for the establishment of a Higher Council of Tourism Committee (HCTC). The HCTC, since 2017, has been referred to as the National Tourism Council (NTC) . The reference to HCTC in the Tourism Law, and the use of the term NTC as yet have not appeared to have been formally aligned with each other. The NTC is composed of the Minister of

Tourism (as head of the Council), the Minister of Interior, the Minister of Industry and Trade, the Minister of Health, Minister of Planning, Minister of Culture, the Chairperson of Royal Jordanian Airlines, the Chairperson of ASEZA, the Chairperson of the Social Security Corporation, the Secretary-General of MoTA and three representatives from the private sector, selected by the Minister of Tourism to be members of the Council.

The National Tourism Council is responsible for setting general policies that impact the tourism sector. The Council presents proposals and drafts for tourism laws and finalises international agreements with other countries and international institutions. The Council works on establishing vocational tourism centres for training and capacity building. Additionally, the Council sets criteria for obtaining a variety of licenses within the tourism professions and has sign-off for various promotional campaigns.

It is important to note that Adventure Tourism is built on the laws and by-laws of tourism, meaning that any adventure tourism inclusions will require review and sign off by the NTC.

While the Tourism Law and its amendments (#20, 1988) gives the Council the right to the above, it is unclear to what extent the NTC is currently active and productive. At present, the Committee does not appear to be conducting meetings, though this will require more insight.

Note: In the amended Tour Guides Regulations (2020), NTC (HCTC) is referred to as a 'Board'. However, in the description of the law, the 'Board' is referred to as 'Committee'. The use of the word 'Board' in the regulation is, therefore, incorrect and not aligned. As a result of wrongly referring to the Committee rather than 'the Board', the Tour Guides Regulations are not compatible with the law and therefore may be considered unlawful.

As Adventure Tourism falls within the same legal scope as tourism, Adventure Tourism too will suffer the same consequences of misaligned legal references.

ASEZA – Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority

The Government of Jordan established ASEZA, issuing Law No.32/2000, in which ASEZA has become the successor of the Aqaba Region Authority and Aqaba Municipality. The Aqaba Special Economic Zone (ASEZ), which includes Wadi Rum, has been very oriented towards tourism, encouraging considerable investments in hotels, tourism services and facilities. Under the ASEZ regulations, there are many differences with the rest of the country, including the levy of taxes, foreign labor, community inclusion, the proper use of environmental resources and others. The law also gives ASEZA, as the governing body in the Zone, the right to lead tourism planning, development and promotion in the Zone.

PDTRA – Petra Development & Tourism Region Authority

In 1995 the PDTRA was established as a public body that concerns itself with the city and improvement projects in the Petra region. At that time, PDTRA was linked with MoTA. However, in 2001 it was made

an autonomous public body associated with the Prime Minister. The PDTRA Law No 36/2001, states in article #4 that the PDTRA is an autonomous public body. It is both financially and administratively independent. In 2005, a new law for PDTRA was issued (No.15/2005). Under article 5 the law stipulates that the law aims to drive economic and social development by adopting strategies and plans that are related to multiple angles including developing the tourism sector, classifying various sites according to their potential for tourism, protecting archaeological sites and others.

JVA - Jordan Valley Authority

The JVA was established in 1973, and the law of authority was issued in 1977. The boundaries of JVA were determined by issuing the Law of Jordan Valley Development No.19/1988. The area extends from the northern Jordanian border to the village of Qatar in the south, in Wadi Araba. The area is pretty much all the western land along the Jordan River, the Ghor areas and Wadi Araba including the Dead Sea (paragraph B of Article no 2 of JVA Law) .

The tasks of JVA include the development of the tourism environment in the Jordan Valley, pinpointing the sites that are suitable for tourist activities (under paragraph d of article 3). The JVA is associated with the Ministry of Water and Irrigation and is directed by them, not by MOTA. The fact that JVA reports to the mentioned Ministry and not MOTA is due to the vital importance of the Jordan Valley in terms of water management, including overseeing the Dead Sea and dams.

Many Adventure Tourism Sites are located in the JVA area. However one of the main issues is that geographical areas have not yet been pinpointed in terms of suitability, level of risk and other relevant categorization for adventure tourism use

Ministry of Interior

The Ministry of Interior was established in 1921, coinciding with the establishment of Trans Jordan. The Ministry is responsible for preserving security and public order as well as providing the best service to citizens in urban, rural and Bedouin areas and is tasked with keeping up the national public policy of encouraging investment in tourism.

In 1958, law number 29 was passed, separating Public security from the Army. In 1965 the Law for Public Security (number 38) was passed. The law specified, amongst others, the duties of the force to preserve order and security and implement laws and regulations, judicial and legitimate orders and assisting public authorities in executing their functions according to stipulated laws and carrying out other duties of enforcing the law.

The Ministry of Interior has the right to close any area which is considered a dangerous area as was the case after the tragic events relating to loss of life at the Dead Sea.

From an Adventure Travel perspective this is highly relevant. The Ministry of Interior is the body that licenses any group activities, including biking groups. The Ministry of Interior has the right to issue or revoke any license.

Vocational and Technical Skills Development Commission (under Ministry of Labour)

The Vocational and Technical Skills Development Commission is a legal entity formed under the Act of 2019 under the Ministry of Labour. The role of the Commission is to be the legal and technical body for the vocational and technical training. The new law gives the authority to replace all other vocational education institutions to rehabilitate vocational schools and institutes, under the Law of Enhancement (2019). The Law of Enhancement hence supersedes MoTA's position to take on these authorities and responsibilities as it pertains to the (adventure) tourism sector⁸⁷.

Ministry of Education

The Ministry of Education authorises groups of school children to venture out to tourism and archaeological sites, including into adventure tourism areas. The regulations for these trips require permissions from MoED and the Ministry of Interior. If the areas are any areas controlled by independent bodies, like the RSCN or the Army for example, then this body also has to give permission to allow the trip to take place. No permission from MoTA is required.

87. <https://www.jordantimes.com/news/local/new-commission-formed-organise-vocational-training>

Ministry of Youth

The Ministry of Youth has recently announced that its revised law (approved in 2019) specifies its role as the sole provider of training programs for adventure trainers, guides and rescue specialists. As such the ministry is working closely with MOTA to ensure that all related tourism parties are involved and that any program developed by the Ministry of Youth fulfills the goals and requirements of the adventure tourism sector in Jordan.

Adventure Tourism and Conservation

There are several bodies in Jordan that are tasked with conservation efforts. In recent years, these entities started introducing tourism activities into the protected areas and connecting these activities with local communities to increase employment and support their livelihoods. Adventure tourism in particular is therefore touched by two of these organizations.

RSCN – The Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature

RSCN is an independent organization. It is committed to setting up and managing a number of designated protected areas covering some of the most beautiful natural landscapes in Jordan in order to safeguard Jordan's natural environment and biodiversity. RSCN is committed to enforcing the Wildlife Protection Act through a special mandate from the Ministry of Agriculture, and works closely with law enforcement agencies, including the Rangers (environmental police), to protect biodiversity.

RSCN is also designated as the management and enforcement authority for CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora).

RSCN provides capacity building and training, to environmental institutions and practitioners throughout Jordan and the Middle East. The aim is to share their expertise and empower others to join in the protection of nature. RSCN also promotes public action for environmental protection through campaigns and activities run by an advocacy committee.⁸⁸

Through its Wild Jordan brand, the RSCN is developing and promoting tourism activities within the reserves and providing eco accommodation options, camping, guided hikes, bird watching programs, horseback riding, zip line and cultural programs linking the reserves to communities around them. As such most of the activities offered by RSCN fall under the Adventure Tourism categories.

JREDS – The Royal Marine Conservation Society of Jordan

The Royal Marine Conservation Society of Jordan (JREDS) was founded in 1993. JREDS officially became the first specialised Jordanian non-profit, non-governmental organisation dedicated to the conservation of the marine environment in 1995. JREDS focuses on Marine Conservation, Outreach and Advocacy and Sustainable Development and to foster a culture of marine conservation in Jordan. JREDS

88. <https://www.rscn.org.jo/what-we-do>

also promotes environmentally sound initiatives and advocates for penalties for polluters and the enforcement of the law and regulations to maintain a healthy marine environment.⁸⁹ JREDS works closely with ASEZA to maintain focus on marine environment issues, and as such is considered an important partner in regulating the diving sector in Aqaba.

Adventure Tourism Regulations and Instructions

Any reference or relevance to Adventure Tourism will be subject to prevailing tourism laws, noting that regulations and instructions for Adventure Tourism will, in essence, be governed by the published underlying law to which they refer.

Regulations that were issued under the umbrella of Tourism Law (#20,1988) and antiquities Law (#21/1998) include; Tour Guide Regulations No.34/1998, Travel Agency Regulation No.11/2005, Hotel and Tourist Facility Regulation No.7/1997, Tourist Transport Regulation No.7/1995, Jordan Tourism Board Regulation No 62/1997 and Petra Archaeological Park Regulation No.78/2007 amongst others.

The areas where Adventure Tourism takes place, in particular, the six pilot areas as set out under the MEDUSA project, include the Jordan Valley as well as Wadi Rum and Aqaba. These are the areas that have specific laws. MoTA is not the leading authority in these areas. However, the Jordan Valley, Aqaba and Wadi Rum are of crucial importance in developing

Adventure Tourism in Jordan.

Even if MoTA were to sign MoUs with the various authorities like ASEZA, PDTRA and others to foster collaboration and alignment, the prevailing laws would supersede such MoUs.

Further mapping needs to be done to dive deeper into collaboration and cooperation between MoTA and independent authorities to develop Adventure Tourism in a legal, aligned and sustainable manner.

On the matter of obtaining approvals, licensing and certification for (Adventure) Tourism stakeholders a variety of parties and government bodies have been identified and are set out in the graph below.

Note that the Ministry of Industry and Trade is the ministry that is responsible for all commercial activities in Jordan, which includes (Adventure) Tourism activities.

⁸⁹. <http://www.jreds.org/en-us/Programs>

CURRENT OPERATIONAL APPROVALS/ LICENSES/CERTIFICATIONS REQUIRED FOR ADVENTURE TOURISM – INITIAL MAPPING

Adventure Tour Operator	Adventure Tours	Adventure Tour Guides	Online Adventure Promotion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Tourism • Ministry of Industry & Trade • JSTA – Jordan Society of Tourism and Travel Agents • Ministry of Youth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Tourism • Ministry of Interior & Public Security • Ministry of Agriculture • Ministry of Environment • Ministry of Education (for schools) • RSCN and Protected Areas Laws 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Tourism • Technical and Vocational Skills Requirements under Ministry of Labor • JTGA – Jordan Tour Guides Association • Ministry of Youth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Industry & Trade

Critical Gaps and General Recommendations

Through the reading of the various legal tourism documents, as well as through the discussions with the various tourism stakeholders, the following primary issues

have been identified as affecting the future development of Adventure Tourism in Jordan and that need to be addressed in a more focused approach.

Definition

GAPS:

- The legal definition of Adventure Tourism and missing elements, as mentioned above, must be addressed and clarified.
- The legal definition of adventure tour operators and the operational requirements need to be revised in the context of the amended description.
- Without a definition of Adventure Tourism, it is not possible to classify guides, camps, tour operators or relate insurance requirements and design insurance products.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Define Adventure Tourism in clear terms – offering suggested definition for review and adaptation
- Engage with MoTA / JVA / PDTRA / ASEZA / Baptism Site/ RSCN / Jordan Trail / Civil and Governmental Society organisations related to (adventure tourism) for holistic stakeholder engagement

Legal Structure & Law Enforcement

GAPS:

- Lack of a clear hierarchy of regulations governing adventure tourism and operations. There is vagueness in the responsibilities of various stakeholders as well as unregistered, unqualified, uncertified, unclassified operators and service providers.
- Lack of clarity regarding the role of MOTTA and other official stakeholders in the overall context of adventure tourism governance (e.g. school trips approvals to be shared between MOTTA and MoED) & (civil defence and rescue plans)
- Lack of awareness on The Law of Enhancement and the manner in which all vocational training must be authorised in order to ensure legal certifications
- Lack of awareness, exposure and understanding of the laws by the private sector. The laws are not published or compiled in one place for ease of access.
- Lack of enforcement of the relevant law (whether Tourism, Enhancement, Environment or other)
- Lack of cooperation between MOTTA and other relevant Ministries and Authorities to ensure effective governance (within the tourism sector and across supporting industries)

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Conduct an in-depth study on Tourism Law in general and its pertaining regulations and their effect in Adventure Tourism in particular
- Gain buy-in and commitment to collaboration from relevant stakeholders before completing and issuing any new legal document related to adventure tourism
- Review draft instructions for adventure tourism and recommend more effective guidelines in line with requirements as set out.
- Map the disconformity of the various legislations governing adventure tourism
- Ascertain where the 'Law of Negligence' is most prevalent and expose the level of risk and therefore priority to address and resolve
- Ensure close cooperation with independent authorities, including ASEZA, PDTRA, JVA and seek better collaboration and engagement. All of them will be instrumental in adventure tourism development within their local authorities.
- Assess international best practices, make it relevant to Jordan and embed. Noting that best practices cannot be legally enforced yet are an excellent addition providing laws, regulations and instructions are sound and aligned. The USAID-LENS project developed recommendations for best practices for adventure tourism, which were discussed and approved at the time by a variety of stakeholders. These could be revised and adopted for the best use of resources.
- Engage in legal awareness with regards to Adventure Tourism for stakeholders in the Adventure Tourism Value Chain through capacity building workshops and accessible online material
- Build awareness of operators, adventure guides, community engagement guides and others to understand classifications, activities and requirements
- Start with the law, not with the regulations – and build up from there to avoid future misfits and legal disconnects.
- Ensure a neutral body to monitor, evaluate and enforce the law
- Review activities, rules and regulations every six months and adjust and update where required as Adventure Tourism evolves
- Effectively work across Ministries and governing bodies and align forces and responsibilities.
- Create a central, easily accessible data source for all stakeholders to find details on laws, regulations, instructions and best practices as they pertain to adventure tourism

Classification & Certification

GAPS:

- Lack of classification for adventure locations and activities per complexity and its nature, which could be classified into High Risk, Medium Risk and Low risk (this also should include the adventure camps and villages)
- Activities are not comprehensively listed, and events including air and water-based activities are missing and as a result, can not be classified
- Lack of clarity on Certification of Adventure Tourism Guides as well as Community Engagement Guides
- Lack of consensus on adventure guides training standards
- Tour Operators certification is missing, and many operators are not registered
- Lack of rescue training for Civil Defense concerning adventure tourism, with only 15 people currently trained

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Define and classify all activities, across all terrains and on land, in the sky or on, in or underwater as an introduction, intermediate or advanced levels including activities not yet mentioned or relevant adventure tourism product development
- Address the age groups limitations in different categories and possibly link them to the classification of high, medium and low-risk activities and locations. Make a logical sense of requirements in line with risk, physical ability and other relevant factors. Age requirements are confusing. A 13-year-old is allowed to ride a horse but can only hike when aged 18 and over, thus destroying family impacting leisurely outdoor family activities that are low risk.
- Define group sizes per activity, guide requirements, age restrictions
- Map the Adventure Tourism Value Chain conduct needs analysis as it pertains to certification, vocational training, community engagement and other
- Delve into the Safety Management Systems and requirements and regulations, including Search and Rescue
- Facilitate and encourage operator and service provider registration
- Train and certify rescue trained human resources ensuring the correct legal pathway to do so
- Set, agree and approve training standards and requirements and implement to ensure practical and valid training for Adventure Guides and Community Engagement Guides

Classification & Certification

GAPS:

- Lack of operational committees and commissions that will help set the guidelines and approve new activities. Workarounds are being found which poses a safety risk to the whole adventure sector
- Lack of insurance for domestic adventure tourists and exposure of a threat to international travel insurance claims due to lack of having an aligned legal system in place
- Lack of equipment standards according to terrain, activity and risk factor and skills as well as equipment certification [Currently under process through JSMO Adventure Committee]
- Lack of approved rules and guidelines for various activities [Currently under process through JSMO Adventure Committee]
- Lack of efficiency through bureaucratic complexities. Absence of one-stop-shop
- Lack of governing bodies alignment. Complex number of stakeholders in a hard to navigate landscape impacting reduced efficiency and effectiveness
- Prevalence of subjective agendas driving adventure tourism. Cutting corners or ignoring the bigger legal picture to push forward is occurring
- Lack of expertise and professional interest in developing adventure tourism found among governing bodies that inform, regulate and promote adventure tourism
- Apparent absence and lack of effective monitoring and evaluation of sector operation and law enforcement

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Assess best practices as implemented by RSCN and make use of their existing expertise within the reserves to be applied where possible outside the reserves.
- Review existing laws and regulations specific to ASEZA, PDTRA, JVA and embed best practices. For example; Wadi Rum, Regulation No24/2001 stressed the protection of heritage and environmental aspects, highlighting the importance of taking care of all components in the ecosystem to guarantee the sustainability of resources including endangered and rare wildlife and species on the verge of extinction. The regulation has highlighted efforts to reduce pollution (article no.3). It serves as an example of how regulatory measures can help both to support the ecosystem and align with the needs and requirements of Adventure Travelers in that context.
- Engage and embed adventure tourism experts and aficionados within MoTA and JTB and other relevant bodies and authorities
- Ensure that all adventure tourism operators are licensed. The entity that has been registered and insured should conduct the activity or should subcontract a registered and authorised party who is also protected.
- Explore insurance for the sector (for a client, operator, guide) and include minimal compulsory requirements according to international best practices
- Create an online one-stop-shop for all matters relating to Adventure tourism including laws, licensing, qualifications, standards, certifications, regulations, best practices, awareness, safety management systems and other for human resources, equipment and all aspects of the adventure travel value chain
- Ensure Monitoring and Evaluation of sector operation and stringent law enforcement

Mapping

GAPS:

- Lack of clearly mapped structure of responsible bodies as related to the tourism sector and how they interact including which authority has higher legal power in the hierarchy
- Lack of comprehensively mapping and listing in detail the activities public use. A guide is currently in the making in this regard, but unless it is comprehensive for all parties and is well promoted then it will be of little use
- Lack of geographical mapping locations have not been mapped defined nor categorised for professional or public use
- Lack of clarity on whether an 'association' or 'federation' sport (climbing, mountaineering) should be mapped and covered under Adventure Tourism regulations

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Map the adventure tourism terrain
- Publish detailed mapping and listing in detail and build awareness with stakeholders and beneficiaries
- Specify locations and geography and examine intensity and risk levels according to international standards and understanding
- Align specific activities to specific, named and defined locations and areas and their boundaries
- Take seasonal patterns into account – especially rainfall and flooding risks and embed in a regulatory context.
- Review and map legal structures, committees and commissions addressing issues, gaps, risk and opportunities supported by private and public sectors
- Review Associations and Federations that engage in activities that are related to adventure tourism and qualify and classify according to needs and requirements if relevant

Conclusion

The Adventure Tourism sector has immense potential for Jordan. On the other hand, if the legal framework is a misaligned legal system, the consequences are likely to negatively impact Jordan's opportunity to build up in this sector.

As stated in article 2.56 from the civil law: Any harm coming to anyone through 'negligence' will require compensation by

the party who is deemed negligent. In the current circumstances, the full spectrum of factors that have not yet been defined nor determined, are all risks that can be addressed and will need to be put in place.

A full legal study is urgently needed to assess, map and recommend measures to be taken to better build a strategic, sustainable and resilient Adventure Tourism sector in Jordan.

5. RESOURCES

"3 Natural Spots in Jordan with Medicinal Healing Powers." Accessed September 26, 2020. [/news/13336/2018-01-28](#).

AllEvents.in. "A Day in Madaba (Olive Picking, Campfire, & More)." Accessed August 10, 2020. <https://allevents.in/amman/a-day-in-madaba-olive-picking-campfire-and-more/200018344037944>.

Abinader, Edward G., Dawod S. Sharif, and Ehud Goldhammer. "Effects of Low Altitude on Exercise Performance in Patients with Congestive Heart Failure after Healing of Acute Myocardial Infarction." *American Journal of Cardiology* 83, no. 3 (February 1, 1999): 383–87. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0002-9149\(98\)00873-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0002-9149(98)00873-X).

EcoHotels. "Activities." Text. Accessed September 26, 2020. <https://ecohotels.me/en/feynan/activities>.

"Adventure Tourism Market Size and Demand | Industry Analysis, 2026." Accessed July 1, 2020. <https://www.alliedmarketresearch.com/adventure-tourism-market>.

"ALLSPOTS: Country Riding Center of Jordan    .

Accessed September 25, 2020. <https://www.allspots.com/jo/directory/-Jordan+Country+Side+Center->

Lonely Planet. "Al-Salt: Harmony Trail and Al-Maidan Street Guided Walking Tour from Dead Sea | Amman, Jordan Activities." Accessed September 6, 2020. <https://www.lonelyplanet.com/jordan/amman/activities/al-salt-harmony-trail-and-al-maidan-street-guided-walking-tour-from-dead-sea/a/pa-act/v-2268P163/361068>.

"Amman Health and Wellness - Ma'in Hot Springs - Dead Sea Mud Bath." Accessed September 12, 2020. https://www.ammanlimo.com/health_spa_wellness_tour.html.

Lonely Planet. "Ancient Church at Ayla | Aqaba, Jordan Attractions." Accessed September 26, 2020. <https://www.lonelyplanet.com/jordan/petra-and-the-south/aqaba/attractions/ancient-church-at-ayla/a/poi-sig/1452394/361080>.

"Aqaba." Accessed September 26, 2020. <https://aqaba.jo/>.

"Aqaba." Accessed September 26, 2020. <https://aqaba.jo/>.

"Aqaba Bird Observatory - Aqaba." Accessed August 10, 2020. https://aqaba.jo/Pages/Details/Attraction/1/Aqaba_Bird_Observatory.

"Aqabawi.Com." Accessed August 10, 2020. <http://www.aqabawi.com/>.

"AtAQUJ - Marine Science Station." Accessed September 26, 2020. <http://aqaba.ju.edu.jo/Lists/AtAQUJ/DispForm.aspx?ID=1>.

"Bani Hamidah Weaving Project in Jordan." Accessed September 23, 2020. http://www.alhakaya.net/product.php?id_product=49.

"Baptism Site 'Bethany Beyond the Jordan' (Al-Maghtas) - UNESCO World Heritage Centre." Accessed August 10, 2020. <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1446>.

Baraka Destinations. "Baraka Home." Accessed August 10, 2020. <https://barakadestinations.com/>.

"Beit Shuwayhat Heritage House." Accessed September 6, 2020. <https://beit-shuwayhat-heritage-house.business.site>.

Bikai, Patricia M., and Virginia Egan. "Archaeology in Jordan." *American Journal of Archaeology* 101, no. 3 (1997): 493-535. Accessed October 7, 2020. doi:10.2307/507108.

Paths of Jordan. "Birdwatching in Jordan." Accessed September 26, 2020. <https://www.pathsofjordan.net/birdwatching-in-jordan>.

"Bookagri.Com." Accessed August 10, 2020. <http://bookagri.com/en>.

"Border Crossing." Accessed August 10, 2020. <http://international.visitjordan.com/page/21/border>.

Centre, UNESCO World Heritage. "Jordan." UNESCO World Heritage Centre. Accessed September 25, 2020. <https://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/jo>.

"Wadi Rum Protected Area." UNESCO World Heritage Centre. Accessed August 10, 2020. <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1377/>.

"Climate and Average Weather in Jordan." Accessed July 1, 2020. <https://weather-and-climate.com/average-monthly-Rainfall-Temperature-Sunshine-in-Jordan>.

"Climbing Jordan - News." Accessed August 10, 2020. <https://climbingjordan.com/>.

"Dana Biosphere Reserve | Wild Jordan." Accessed September 26, 2020. <https://www.wildjordan.com/destinations/dana-biosphere-reserve>.

"Dana Biosphere Reserve | Wild Jordan." Accessed September 7, 2020. <https://www.wildjordan.com/content/dana-biosphere-reserve-1>.

"Dar Al Saraya Hotel and Restaurant, King Talal Street, Madaba (2020)." Accessed October 7, 2020. <http://www.findglocal.com/JO/Madaba/337479690244621/Dar-Al-Saraya-Hotel-and-Restaurant>.

Lonely Planet. "Dead Sea Museum | Jordan Attractions." Accessed September 6, 2020. <https://www.lonelyplanet.com/jordan/the-dead-sea-and-around/attractions/dead-sea-museum/a/poi-sig/1443028/361083>.

DeadSea.com. "Dead Sea Water Temperature Throughout the Year," January 22, 2019. <https://www.deadsea.com/articles-tips/dead-sea-water-temperature/>.

Esfandiari, Sahar. "The Best Museums to Visit in Jordan." Culture Trip. Accessed August 10, 2020. <https://theculturetrip.com/middle-east/jordan/articles/the-best-museums-to-visit-in-jordan/>.

"Geographic Multidimensional Vulnerability Analysis." Accessed July 1, 2020. <https://www.unicef.org/jordan/Geographic-Multidimensional-Vulnerability-Analysis>.

"Geophysicist Turns Cave Discovery into Restaurant in Madaba | Jordan Times." Accessed October 7, 2020. <http://www.jordantimes.com/news/local/geophysicist-turns-cave-discovery-restaurant-madaba>.

Gharaibeh, Sinan S. "A Local Getaway: Rummana." Taste of Jordan, May 22, 2017. <https://tasteofjordan.me/2017/05/22/a-local-getaway-rummana/>.

"Global Adventure Tourism Market – Market Reports World." Accessed October 6, 2020. <https://www.marketreportsworld.com/global-adventure-tourism-market-14316948>.

"Golden Eagle Aviation Academy." Accessed July 30, 2020. <http://geaacademy.com/>.

Jordan Times. "Gov't Approves Establishment of Burqu, Dahek Nature Reserves," December 19, 2018. <http://jordantimes.com/news/local/govt-approves-establishment-burqu-dahek-nature-reserves>.

Gregory, Catrina. "The Best Places to Cycle in Jordan." Culture Trip. Accessed September 6, 2020. <https://theculturetrip.com/middle-east/jordan/articles/spectacular-places-to-cycle-in-jordan/>.

"Haret Jdoudna – Our Story." Accessed September 23, 2020. <http://www.haretjdoudna.com/index.html>.

"Heritage Houses in Karak in Need of Renovation." Accessed September 23, 2020. </news/16534/2019-01-27>.

Encyclopedia Britannica. "Hiking | Definition, Types, & Facts." Accessed September 26, 2020. <https://www.britannica.com/sports/hiking>.

Al Hakaya. "Home." Accessed September 6, 2020. <https://www.alhakaya.com/>.

"HSNES: News." Accessed September 6, 2020. http://www.hsn.es.org/news_item002.htm.

"Ibn Hammad | RSCN." Accessed September 6, 2020. <https://www.rscn.org.jo/content/ibn-hammad-0>.

Jordan Times. "JICA Supporting 'eco-Museum' in Salt to Showcase Daily Life, Traditions," March 7, 2016. <http://www.jordantimes.com/news/local/jica-supporting-eco-museum-salt-showcase-daily-life-traditions>.

"Jordan - Geography and Environment - Geography." Accessed September 6, 2020. http://www.kinghussein.gov.jo/geo_env1.html.

"Jordan - Topography." Accessed September 6, 2020. <http://countrystudies.us/jordan/26.htm>.

"Jordan - UNESCO World Heritage Centre." Accessed July 1, 2020. <https://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/jo>.

"Jordan Bike Trail | Cycle from Um Qais to Aqaba." Accessed August 10, 2020. <https://jordanbiketrial.com/>.

"Jordan Climate: Average Weather, Temperature, Precipitation, Best Time." Accessed July 1, 2020. <https://www.climatestotravel.com/climate/jordan>.

"Jordan Eco Park." Accessed August 10, 2020. <http://jordanequipark.com/activities/27/hiking-trails><http://jordanequipark.com/activities/27/hiking-trails>.

"Jordan GDP | 1965-2019 Data | 2020-2022 Forecast | Historical | Chart | News." Accessed July 1, 2020. <https://tradingeconomics.com/jordan/gdp>.

Knoema. "Jordan GINI Index, 2017-2019 - Knoema.Com." Accessed July 1, 2020. <https://knoema.com//atlas/Jordan/GINI-index>.

"Jordan Population (2020) - Worldometer." Accessed July 1, 2020. <https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/jordan-population/>.

"Jordan Population 2020 (Demographics, Maps, Graphs)." Accessed July 1, 2020. <https://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/jordan-population/>.

Jordan Trail. "Jordan Trail." Accessed August 10, 2020. <https://jordantrail.org/>.

Jordan Trail. "Jordan Trail." Accessed July 1, 2020. <https://jordantrail.org/>.

"Jordan Unemployment Rate | 2005-2020 Data | 2021-2022 Forecast | Calendar | Historical." Accessed July 1, 2020. <https://tradingeconomics.com/jordan/unemployment-rate>.

"JREDS - Programs." Accessed August 11, 2020. <http://www.jreds.org/en-us/Programs>.

Tourist Jordan. "King Hussein International Airport Aqaba," October 20, 2017. <https://www.touristjordan.com/aqaba-airport-guide/>.

"Leisure & Wellness." Accessed September 25, 2020. <http://international.visitjordan.com/whattodo/LeisureWellness.aspx>.

Lonely Planet. "Lot's Cave | Jordan Attractions." Accessed September 6, 2020. <https://www.lonelyplanet.com/jordan/lisan-peninsula/attractions/lot-s-cave/a/poi-sig/1105926/1332384>.

AW. "'Meditation Tourism' a New Trend in Jordan | Roufan Nahhas." Accessed September 12, 2020. <https://thearabweekly.com/meditation-tourism-new-trend-jordan>.

"Middle East :: Jordan – The World Factbook – Central Intelligence Agency." Accessed July 1, 2020. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jo.html>.

"Mimar." Accessed September 6, 2020. <http://www.mimarjordan.org/>.

Jordan Times. "New Commission Formed to Organise Vocational Training," October 13, 2019. <http://www.jordantimes.com/news/local/new-commission-formed-organise-vocational-training>.

"Outdoor Activities | Mountain Breeze Country Club Jordan." Accessed August 10, 2020. <https://mountainbreeze.jo/activities/>.

Planet, Lonely. "Activities in Jordan." Lonely Planet. Accessed August 10, 2020. <https://www.lonelyplanet.com/jordan/wadi-rum/in-location/activities/a/nar/c344efc8-53ed-4b65-ac56-7b488d96c397/361082>.

"Roman Aqueducts: Gadara (Jordan)." Accessed August 10, 2020. <http://www.romanaqueducts.info/aquasite/gadara/index.html>.

"SAFI CRAFTS STORY – Safi Crafts." Accessed September 7, 2020. <https://www.saficrafts.org/safi-crafts-story/>.

Sluga, Lena. "10 Things to Do in the Village of Salt in Jordan on a Day Out." In2Jordan, November 12, 2017. <https://in2jordan.com/10-things-to-do-in-salt/>.

"The Dead Sea." Accessed August 10, 2020. <http://international.visitjordan.com/Wheretogo/TheDeadSea.aspx>.

"The Official Website of The Jordan Tourism Board." Accessed August 10, 2020. <http://www.visitjordan.com/>.

rascj.com. "The Royal Aero Sports Club of Jordan." Accessed September 6, 2020. <http://www.rascj.com>.

"Tourism Sector – JIC." Accessed July 1, 2020. <https://www.jic.gov.jo/en/tourism-sector-3/>.

"Tourism Statistical Newsletter 2019." Accessed July 1, 2020. <http://www.mota.gov.jo/Contents/stat2019Ar.aspx>.

"Transportation to/from Amman Airport – Royal Jordanian – Royal Jordanian." Accessed September 3, 2020. <https://www.rj.com/en/info-and-tips/our-hub-and-beyond/to-from-qaiq>.

Tropical Desert. "Tropical Desert Tropical Desert Trips Wadi Hidan Jordan Wadi Hidan Tropical Desert Wadi Hidan Tropical Desert Trips Wadi Hidan Hiking Wadi Hidan Spelunking." Accessed August 10, 2020. <https://tropicaldesert.me/wadi-hidan>.

Jordan Times. "Underwater Search Planned for Clues to Early Islamic City of Ayla," May 5, 2017. <http://www.jordantimes.com/news/local/underwater-search-planned-clues-early-islamic-city-ayla>.

"Volunteering – Peace Wadi." Accessed August 10, 2020. <https://peacewadi.com/volunteering/>.

Wikiloc | Trails of the World. "Wadi Attun." Accessed August 10, 2020. <https://www.wikiloc.com/hiking-trails/wadi-attun-13131043>.

AllTrails.com. "Wadi Khashabah."
Accessed August 10, 2020. <https://www.alltrails.com/trail/jordan/madaba/wadi-khashabah>.

"Wadi Rum Protected Area | RSCN."
Accessed September 26, 2020. <https://www.rscn.org.jo/content/wadi-rum-protected-area>.

"Wadi-Hidan - Best Adventure Travel Agency in Jordan." Accessed September 23, 2020. <https://www.experiencejordan.com/trek-walk/wadi-hidan/>.

"Waste-to-Energy Outlook for Jordan | EcoMENA." Accessed July 1, 2020. <https://www.ecomena.org/waste-energy-jordan/>.

"Welcome to RSCN | RSCN." Accessed August 10, 2020. <https://www.rscn.org.jo/>.

"Wellness Tourism | MedXJordan."
Accessed September 12, 2020. <https://www.medxjordan.com/wellness/>.

"Mrah Salameh, Hisham Iben Abdalmalik 20, Madaba (2020)." Accessed September 23, 2020.

<http://www.findglocal.com/JO/Madaba/367120423458534/%D9%85%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%AD-3%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%85%D9%87-Mrah-Salameh>.

Accessed September 7, 2020. <https://www.jordanpass.jo/>.

Accessed August 10, 2020. <http://www.visitas-salt.com/en/Experiences>.

Accessed August 10, 2020. <http://megajordan.org/>.

Accessed July 1, 2020. <http://international.visitjordan.com/>.

ACRONYMS

ATTA	Adventure Travel and Trade Association
ASEZA	Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority
DMO	Destination Management Organization
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
JD	Jordanian Dinar
JIC	Jordan Investment Commission
JITOA	Jordan Inbound Tour Operators Association
JTA	Jordan Trail Association
JTB	Jordan Tourism Board
JREDS	The Royal Marine Conservation Society of Jordan
JVA	Jordan Valley Authority
MoEN	Ministry of Environment
MOTA	Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities
PDTRA	Petra Development & Tourism Region Authority
RASCJ	The Royal Aero Sports Club of Jordan
RSCN	The Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature
SDGs	United Nations Sustainable Development Goals
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WTTC	World Travel & Tourism Council