



## Fact Sheet

### Destination Jordan

Population:	5.8 million
Language:	Arabic
Time:	GMT/UTC + 2
Electricity:	230V, 50Hz
Dialing Code:	962
Currency:	Jordanian Dinar = 1000 fils

#### General

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan shares borders with Israel, Syria, Iraq and Saudi Arabia. The Dead Sea is to the northwest and the Red Sea to the southwest. The east of the country is mainly desert. Most of Jordan has a desert climate with little or no rainfall, summer temperatures soaring especially during July and August, the hottest and driest months of the year. Amman and the Jordan Valley have more pleasant weather during spring and autumn, when days are sunny and temperatures moderate. During winter the weather can be extremely cold, especially in Amman, accompanied by snow, rain and wind. The desert region is as you would expect, scorching in the summer and freezing during the winter.

#### History

Jordan has one of the oldest civilizations, with archaeological finds dating it as far back as 9000 BC. It has been inhabited for millenniums by the Canaanites, Amorites, Sumerians, Nabatteans, Bedouins, Umayyads and the Romans amongst many others. Over run during the years of the Christian Crusades, it was returned to Islam by Salah ad – Din (Saladin) and the Mamluks who finally expelled the Crusaders. 'Lawrence of Arabia' plays a large part in Jordan's history, launching the Arab Revolt in 1916, and with the British, drove the Turks from the region. The years following were turbulent but with the diplomacy of the much loved King Hussein and now his son, King Abdullah, a young global strategist, Jordan is enjoying a modern democracy, a growing economy balanced against its ancient culture and traditions.

#### Visa Requirements

Please note that visas are the responsibility of the traveller. The visa requirements vary depending on where you are from and where you are going. We keep the following information as up to date as possible, but rules do change. It is important that you check for yourself.

Any non-Arab visitor to Jordan, whether for business or tourism, needs an entry visa. The required fee for a visa in addition to the granted stay duration depends on the visitor's nationality. Although entrance visas are obtainable at the airport for visitors arriving by airplane, those arriving by land must get a visa prior to arrival. These are obtainable from any Jordanian diplomatic mission abroad, where they generally take a day to be received. Visas obtained in Jordanian consulates are valid for 3-4 months from the date of issue, and can be issued for multiple entries. Tourist visas allow a stay of up to one month initially.

Please ensure that your passport has at least a further 6 months validity and spare pages for any visa stamps.

## Travel Insurance

It is mandatory for you to organise travel insurance prior to your departure and we will ask for details of your insurer and the emergency contact details before you leave home.

## Health and Medical

Inoculations are not required unless you are travelling from an infected location. If you come from a country where diseases such as cholera and yellow fever are prevalent, you will have to show a certificate of inoculation at your point of entry into Jordan. Although not required, it is preferable to have preventative shots against polio, tetanus and typhoid. We strongly advise you to consult your own medical practitioner for specific personal advice. Jordan is one of the cleanest and safest countries, but it is nonetheless advisable to take some precautions until your digestive system adjusts. Bottled water is recommended. All fruit and vegetables should be washed thoroughly, and salads and cold meats which have been sitting out for a long time should be avoided, especially during summer months. All Jordanian dairy products are pasteurized and safe. Medical services are well developed throughout Jordan, with a medical centre or clinic in every town and village. There are hospitals throughout Jordan and many of the doctors have been trained overseas and speak English. Antibiotics and other drugs normally sold on prescription in the West are often available over-the-counter in Jordan. You should carry prescriptions of any medications you may need, making sure you have the generic name as your specific brand may not be available. If you wear glasses, bring a spare pair and a copy of the prescription as well.

## Safety and Security

Jordan is a very safe country to visit and travel around. There is very little crime or anti-Western sentiment. After all tourism is their economy. You can expect security checks as we travel around and certainly at the hotels your luggage is put through x-ray machines prior to entry to the hotel. Of course like anywhere else you need to be aware of your surroundings and ensure the safety of your personal belongings.

## Telecommunications

As long as you have global roaming on your mobile telephone you will have no problem connecting to the providers in Jordan. Email devices such as Blackberry are a bit more hit and miss but we have found that 3G devices may be more successful than the older models. All the large hotels have internet access and there are internet cafes in the towns which charge around JD1 for 1 hour.

## Useful Travel Information

**Currency:** The Jordanian Dinar (JD) is divided into 1,000 fils (or piasters) The dinar is fixed to the US dollar at the rate of JD1 = US\$1.41, the other currency fluctuates but as an idea the GBP is approximately JD1 = GBP 0.83. The best place to change money is at the banks where the official exchange rate is usually honored. Most of the major town centres have at least one or two ATMs

In Jordan, cash is king. Preferred currency is the JD and US\$ will be sometimes be accepted.

The JD is not always available outside Jordan, however, ordering from your bank before you leave may be successful. You can withdraw local currency at ATM's upon arrival at the airport, or as needed.

**Credit Cards:** Credit cards are easily used in the larger cities and in the hotels although beware of the credit card fee of up to 4%. Small shops, restaurants and of course markets and stalls only take cash. Traveler's cheques are not readily accepted. Visa Card is more widely accepted than MasterCard. NB: Don't plan to buy drinks or small souvenirs with credit. There are ATMs in the larger cities dispensing local currency.

## Religion and Culture

Jordan is a moderate Muslim country and respect must be given to this. You will see few women in the streets by themselves, usually escorted by a male and/or a female relative. Young women in Amman are quite westernized and often wear tight jeans and t-shirts. However we discourage tight and revealing clothing for both men and women. Experience shows that paying due respect to the culture you are in equates to a more friendly and hospitable experience and amiable conversation and engagement with the locals which more often than not is the most rewarding aspect of our travel. We suggest that ladies avoid clingy, tight or suggestive attire. The Dead Sea is the exception where a bikini within the resort is most acceptable.

We suggest loose cotton clothing, longer sleeved shirts and pants (also useful to keep the sun out) and for men short sleeves, T-shirts and longer pants are acceptable.

We will be doing a lot of walking and we suggest that you bring some comfortable and well worn shoes that will take you through the sand and steps at Petra.

## Electrical

Electricity supply is 220v and sockets are mostly of the European two pronged variety, although some places have English style plugs. We suggest you bring a universal adaptor.



European circular plug with two metal pins



British plug with two flat blades and flat grounding blade

## Alcohol

While the majority of Moslems do not drink, you will find many restaurants serving the local Amstel brewed beer and the locally produced wines. All the hotels have bars serving a variety of wine, beer and cocktails.

## Cuisine

Arab cuisine is one of the most elaborate and sophisticated in the world. Food is also an important part of the culture and is used to express hospitality and generosity. Jordanians are exceptionally hospitable and often you will be invited to share a meal at home. The local cuisine includes fabulous mezze – hoummous, salads, bread etc, glorious sweets soaked in honey and pistachios and of course the traditional mansaf, a dish of lamb, yoghurt and rice – Yumm!

## What To Bring



Important Items to Include:

- Local Currency – Jordanian Dinars (JD) & USA\$ for exchange – remember you will need a lot of small notes for tips
- Your passport
- Travel Insurance Policy
- Copies of your documentation e.g. passport, credit cards etc
- Sunscreen
- Camera (a large zoom can be valuable addition)
- Wide brim hat
- Torch/Pen light
- Waterproof jacket
- Binoculars
- Insect repellent
- Waterproof shoes/sandals (essential on the stony shores of the Dead Sea)
- Hiking boots or comfortable well worn sturdy shoes
- Luggage locks
- Medicines and prescriptions
- Glasses, sunglasses and items of a personal nature
- Swimmers
- First aid kit

Things to Consider

- Pack light - Leave empty space in your suitcase to buy souvenirs.
- Consider a small backpack to carry water and personal items so your hands are free
- Ensure you have mobile telephone global roaming agreement
- Some email devices may not work. Check with your provider

Notes

- Check your airline's policy on luggage allowance and what is allowable in the cabin and what must go into your hold baggage. Many airlines will not allow duty free over the amount of 100 ml on board so check this before stocking up.
- Ladies should be aware that not all feminine hygiene products may be available and are advised to bring a supply with them.
- Travelling with a group will provide you with the pleasure of new friendships and perhaps some frustrations. Your fellow travellers may be from around the world, differing cultures and likely a range of age groups. We ask you to be understanding and patient with your fellow travellers for the benefit of everyone's travel experience. Remember too that you have responsibilities to the group. If you are requested to be at a place at a certain time, ensure that you don't keep the rest of the group waiting.

