

# Aqaba and Petra - Middle East Cruises

Travel to the astonishing hidden city of Petra, Jordan, looming like a mirage that melts into the red sandstone hills of the desert. Dating back to 7,000 B, Petra was the capital of a flourishing civilisation that stretched from the Mediterranean to the Red Sea. Aqaba offers internationally renowned diving and the richest marine life in the entire Red Sea.

## Excursions

Please note: The shore excursions listed are typical for this port. The full programme of shore excursions available for your cruise will be displayed on Cruise Personaliser at least 12 weeks prior to departure.

- **Aqaba City & Wadi Rum**

Get to know the historic city of Aqaba, and travel out to the stunning desert landscape of Wadi Rum for a Bedouin style luncheon.

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Visit the Aqaba Museum and Fort, built in the Mamluk era, the permanent collection here includes ceramics showing both Egyptian and Chinese influences. In the heart of the city you will find the ruins of the old city of Ayla, as well as mosques, churches and the city walls.

A little over an hour's drive from Aqaba lies a vast, timeless and hauntingly beautiful valley, called Wadi Rum, the largest and most magnificent of Jordan's desert landscapes. In this sublime place, the uniquely shaped massive mountains raise out of the rose-red desert sand. Geologists think that this protected nature reserve resulted from a great crack on the surface of the earth caused by an enormous upheaval. Some of the ridges are a thousand feet high and are topped with domes worn smooth by the desert winds, the Wadi Rum area has been inhabited since prehistoric periods. It was here that T E Lawrence lived and helped the Arabs. Wadi Rum was the backdrop for the film 'Lawrence of Arabia';.

Admire the surrounding red landscape with its soaring peaks and low valleys, en-route to the Captain's Desert Camp. You'll receive a traditional Bedouin welcome of Arabian tea and local delicacies, before making your way into a Bedouin tent for lunch.

### Tour code

AQJ\_002

### Features

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ACTIVITY LEVEL: LOW

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MEAL INCLUDED

### Duration

5 HOURS

- **The Lost City of Petra**

Famously described as 'the Rose-Red City half as old as time', this UNESCO world heritage site is a 'must see'.

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The mysterious city of the Nabateans, Petra, is so securely concealed by the craggy encircling mountains that it was once 'lost' for 1,000 years and is one of the Seven Wonders of the World. From this natural fortress, the Nabateans commanded the trade routes from Arabia and the East, until the Romans conquered them in 106 AD. On arrival, you will walk to the entrance of the Siq - a very narrow, twisting pathway between towering sandstone and rainbow-coloured cliffs. The narrow passage is an adventure in itself, for the towering walls create an artificial gloom until you suddenly emerge into the blinding light, and there before you is the Treasury, your first glimpse of the 'Rose-Red City'.

The Treasury is the most famous and outstanding of all the monuments; its Pediment, Rotunda and Corinthian pillars are all carved from the solid rock, and it is in a marvellous state of preservation. Your guide will lead you down the Outer Siq, passing the Street of the Façades before the fine Nabatean Theatre comes in to view. There are tombs everywhere because they were cut into the rock, whereas the temples and public buildings were free standing and destroyed by earthquakes.

The site is surrounded by stunning mountains and as you approach the main Colonnade Street, you will pass a series of fascinating tombs; The Urn, the Corinthian and the Palace Tomb are known collectively as the Royal Tombs. The Palace Tomb is one of the largest, a three-storey imitation of a Roman Palace. The partly restored Qasr al-Bint is the only freestanding structure in Petra and is thought to have been the main place of worship in the city.

Enjoy a buffet luncheon in a local hotel and reflect on the sights of this unforgettable day of your life.

### Tour code

AQJ\_001

### Features

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ACTIVITY LEVEL: HIGH

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MEAL INCLUDED

### Duration

10 HOURS

## • Relax on the Beach

Relax on a private beach at the luxurious Movenpick Resort, perfect for those who have visited Petra before.

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Hop onboard your coach for a short transfer to the beautiful Movenpick Resort, majestically situated overlooking the Red Sea.

Take full advantage of the 5 star facilities, including 4 swimming pools, a beach restaurant and the private Red Sea Beach. You'll find a souvenir shop and a foreign exchange service at the hotel. There is no need to bring a towel with you as you will be given one upon arrival.

### Tour code

AQJ\_003

### Features

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ACTIVITY LEVEL: LOW

### Duration

5½ HOURS

