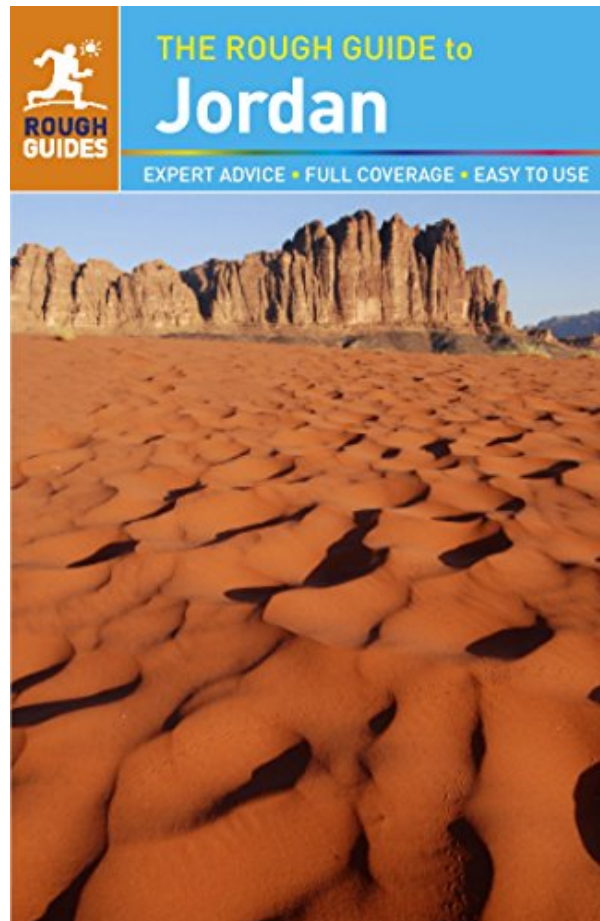
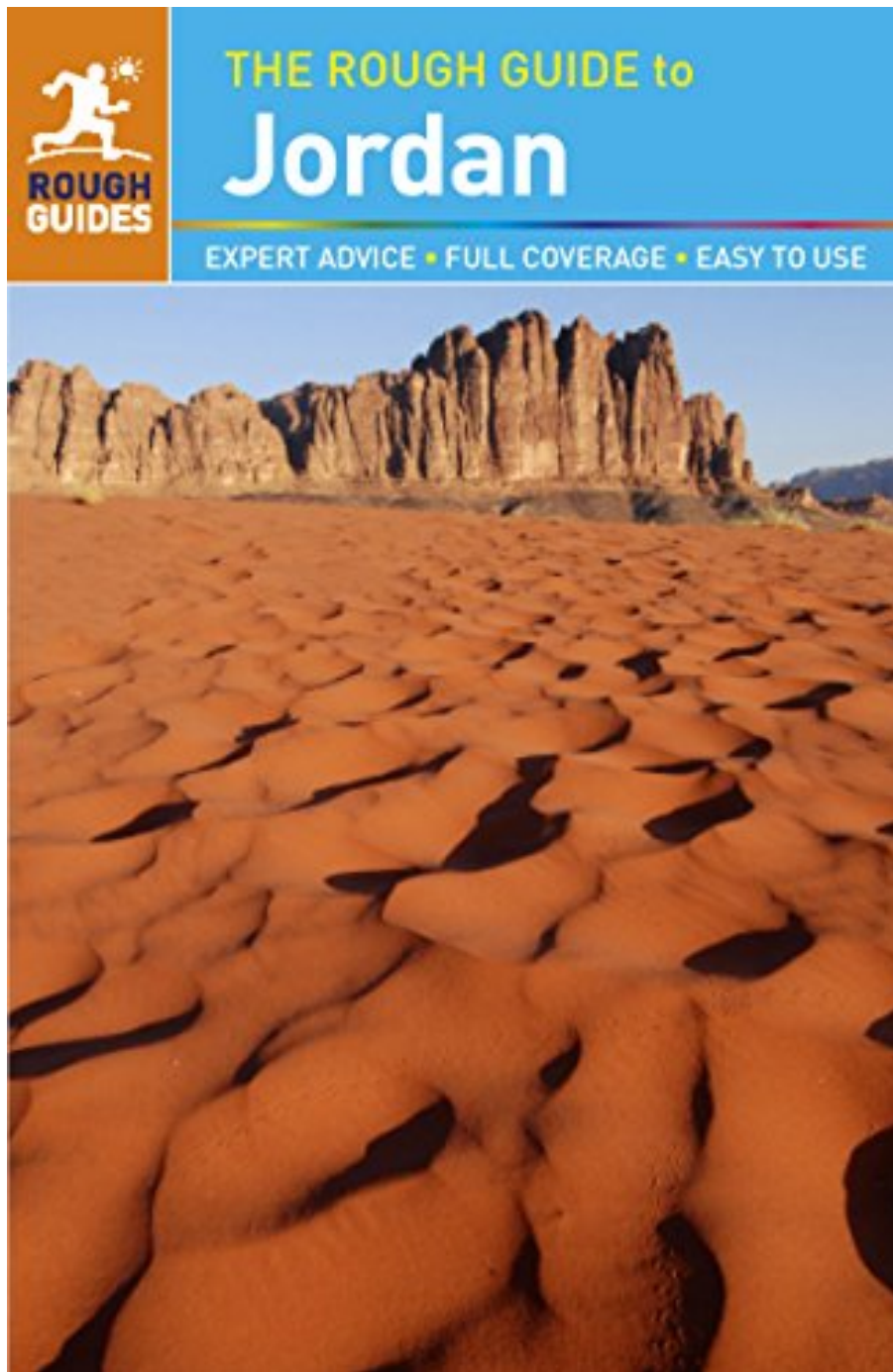


THE ROUGH GUIDE TO JORDAN BY MATTHEW TELLER



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Review

Reliable, readable Rough Guides Conde Nast Traveller

About the Author

Matthew Teller is an experienced and accomplished travel writer who has lived in Amman and speaks Arabic. He is also the author of the Rough Guide to Switzerland.

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This is a comprehensive guide to Jordan, the up-and-coming Middle East tourist destination, with practical guidance on exploring ancient monuments and sites, as well as up-to-the-minute reviews of restaurants and accommodation.

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Most helpful customer reviews

69 of 69 people found the following review helpful.

the best guide to Jordan

By Kabo

For a recent trip to Jordan I bought all the guidebooks I could find in bookstores, and this one is, by far, the best. Not only does it provide all the necessary, utilitarian information, but it provides great background reading on the history and culture of the country. Much better than the other available books, especially the Lonely Planet.

There was very little we saw that wasn't extensively and well covered. The author has clearly spent a great deal of time living and travelling through Jordan.

The recommendations for Amman and the most notorious tourist destinations (Petra, Wadi Rum, Dead Sea, Jerash) are uniformly accurate, clear, and useful, but the book also offers plenty of information about less obvious destinations - e.g. small towns along the main roads, always suggesting a good place to stop and have a snack and giving interesting historical details.

This is not only a practical and useful guidebook, but also an essential reference on Jordan for those willing to read or explore more. Very highly recommended.

62 of 62 people found the following review helpful.

Indispensable

By Ian Hutchison

This book is practical and well organized and has tons of great maps in it. Jordan was my favorite travel experience out of the 12 countries I've visited.

I just got back from a nine day trip in Jordan. My friend and I went to Petra, Wadi Rum, the Dead Sea, Amman, Madaba, Umm Qais, Jerash, and Ajlun. This guidebook is so accurate and thorough - it made the trip a breeze. The section on language was a blessing, including the great section on foods and drinks in Jordan. All the cultural tips were helpful and accurate (girls AND guys - cover your legs and arms like the locals!), and the extensive sections on the history of Jordan and Petra were insightful. Many prices have increased since this was published. For example, entry visa is now JD20 instead of JD10 (about \$28). But overall, travel in Jordan is cheaper than travel in America, and much cheaper than travel Europe. There's also info in here for booking a tour with a company, probably a lot easier than connecting the dots yourself like we did.

I would add a few tips that I didn't see in the book: be aware that many vendors won't have change for large bills, so always have some 1s and 5s with you. Also, in the book, some of the information about buses was misleading; we got stuck at the dead sea at 4pm on a Saturday with no buses in sight, contrary to the impression we got from the guidebook. However, EVERYONE in Jordan is so helpful, and we were able to hitch a ride back to West Amman with a tour group, and then the tour guide drove in his own car us back to our hotel in downtown Amman. If you're going to be taking buses, check with the staff at your hotel to confirm what the guidebook recommends. Every other bus we took was fine though. In Amman, we took private taxis to the bus stations instead of the white, shared cabs. It was not very expensive, and was less stressful than trying to figure out the stops/routes of the shared cabs. In general, buses run more in the morning than in the afternoon or evening.

My friend and I are active hikers from Colorado, and we loved Petra and Wadi Rum most of all. The stars at night in Wadi Rum made the whole trip for me - breathtaking. In both these places, the more you can walk in a day, the more you'll see, so make sure you're in shape before you go, and bring good shoes and thick socks. I'd say ideally you need three days in Petra; we had two FULL days of hiking and didn't see it all. We did the night tour of Petra, which honestly I wouldn't do again (search google images for "petra night" and you'll get the idea). After a full day of hiking, walking all the way back into Petra in the cold night wasn't fun, and when the group arrived at the treasury, everyone's camera flashes really killed the vibe. Petra is filled with vendors who sell trinkets VERY aggressively, so brace yourself for constant offers of donkey and camel rides and cheap jewelry.

Traveling in the Middle East takes more preparation than Europe. If you're thinking about going to Jordan, get this guide book and read it months before you go; you'll be glad you did. I'd also recommend getting some free Arabic podcasts off itunes. My favorite was a small series by the Peace Corps for volunteers in Jordan. It had all the important phrases, and with Jordanian dialect and accent. Watch out for Arabic podcasts geared towards Morocco; the language is very different there. I also read the books "Married to a Bedouin" and "Live from Jordan" before I went. Both great books that informed my view of the country and it's people.

A tip: from downtown Amman, you can hike up the hill (stairs between houses) to the Citadel and sneak in without paying at the entrance. The views at the top are killer, and it's fun to see the ancient ruins juxtaposed with the bustling city. Also, locals hang out up there in the evening (it's probably the only parkland/open-space in that part of town). We ended up there at sunset and all around us were locals, kids playing soccer,

women picnicking, families taking photos. We felt so special to be up there; we were the only tourists around.

I cannot say enough how kind people were to us. Everywhere we went people offered us tea. I got a haircut one day in Madaba, and they insisted I not pay and brought us tea and gave us bread and nuts and we hung out - such a memory. One of our favorite drinks was "lemon juice" with mint mixed in. So good! Many menus were in English, and most service industry folks knew enough english to help us out.

My personal recommendations, in order: Petra, Wadi Rum, Dead Sea, Jerash. I'd say plan a few days for Petra and a few for Wadi Rum. Plan on half a day for the Dead Sea, most of a day for Jerash (eat at the Lebanese house! So good!). Amman is a hectic city. My friend and I loved it, but many casual travelers hate it. The guidebook suggests basing yourself in Madaba if you want a more mellow time. besides, it's closer to the airport than Amman.

The three hotels we stayed at, which I recommend: Burj al Arab in Amman, Cleopetra in Wadi Musa (Petra), Mariam in Madaba. Our guide in Wadi Rum was Mzied Atieg; he was awesome.

Another great thing about our trip: we met many wonderful travelers from Europe and America. Being in such a special place, travelers were very open to spending time with us and talking about their travels. We met such wonderful folks, and we compared notes about where we'd stayed, what we'd done, what else we were going to do on our trip.

In conclusion, if you're thinking about traveling to Jordan, get this book!

I would add; check current news in Jordan before committing to visit. Two protestors died in Amman the day we left. Sobering and scary. However, in our travels we encountered no troubles or tension, and everyone was kind to us, and they continued to be kind to us after we told them we were from America. Most Jordanians don't like American foreign policy, but they like Americans just fine.

50 of 52 people found the following review helpful.

Excellent!!

By James

This is more my style of guide book!! Excellent background information on archeological sites around Jordan with (considering it's a guide book) great info on Petra! Everything from the King's Highway to Wadi Rum is covered in thoughtful detail by an author who obviously did his homework. This book really sparks your interest in going to Jordan, and introduces the Bedouin and mainstream Jordanian culture to the reader well. Border crossings, visas, food, health, transportation... it's all in here. LP and Let's Go guides should learn a thing or two from this guide! It doesn't bog itself down with useless information like some other guide books do. Going to Jordan? Get this first!

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