

# Topdeck

## DELVE DEEP: JORDAN & ISRAEL



TRIP CODE:

TJIAT3

## TOPDECKER, meet Middle East & North Africa (TD)

TRIP VIBE = iconic sights and in-depth adventures with a local Trip Leader. Fiery desert landscapes to world-class wreck diving. Ancient sandstone cities to ultra-modern metropolises. Floating weightlessly on the surface of the Dead Sea to partying like a local in lively Tel Aviv... it's hard to know what to expect from these two incredibly diverse countries except the fact that they EXCEEDED expectations in every. single. way. Ready to see why?

### WORTH NOTING...

Heads up! On Day 7, our awesome Topdeck Trip Leader and driver will say their goodbyes in Jordan and a local Israeli guide will accompany us for the remainder of the trip.

### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



Delve Deep



Nights



Download app



Meals

# Thanks for choosing to holiday with Topdeck

Ready for the time of your LIFE?

The countdown's on...

## ABOUT YOUR TRIP NOTES

These Trip Notes contain everything you need to know before your trip departs – from where to meet your Topdeck fam to what we suggest you bring.

Read them on the train, in the supermarket queue or on the loo – we don't mind, just look through them carefully so you know what to expect on your trip. We recommend you download this document so it's with you when you travel (and give a copy to your MVPs so they know what you're up to).

**IMPORTANT:** please refresh this doc as close to your departure as possible. This means you'll have the most up-to-date info available.

### INCLUDED EXPERIENCES

- Airport transfer
- Visit Madaba
- Visit Mt Nebo
- Visit Karak Castle
- Orientation walk of Petra with Trip Leader
- Wadi Rum 4x4 excursion
- Stay overnight in Bedouin desert camp
- Float in the Dead Sea
- Walking tour of Amman with Trip Leader
- See the Roman ruins of Jerash
- Local Israeli guide
- Walking tour of Jerusalem with local guide
- Walking tour of Bethlehem with local guide
- Local winery tour
- Walking tour of Old Jaffa with local guide

## YOUR TRIP WILL START

### PICK UP:

Amman  
Jordan

## YOUR TRIP WILL FINISH

### DROP OFF:

Tel Aviv  
Middle East & North Africa

## TRIP CURRENCIES

- Jordan - JOD
- Israel & the Palestinian Territories - ILS

# YOUR ITINERARY

## DAY 1 | AMMAN (JORDAN)

Touch down in one of the oldest cities in existence. Ready to experience the new and exotic? Thought so. Spot your Topdeck Rep at the airport (hint: they're holding a placard with your name on it). Dump your stuff at the hotel and meet your fellow explorers. We might be a mixed bunch but we're all in it together. Hungry? That's lucky – tonight's our first chance to sample some lip-smacking local eats at an included group dinner.



### MEALS:

- Dinner



### INCLUDED TODAY:

- Airport transfer

## DAY 2 | AMMAN – MADABA, MT NEBO AND KARAK – PETRA

Rise and shine! We're off to the Lost City after breakfast. But it's not just about the destination – the road to Petra is gonna be amazing. First? Madaba: the site of an ancient holy map that's so detailed it puts Google Maps to shame. Check out the vibrantly coloured and intricately detailed Byzantine-era mosaics scattered across the city before we take in allllll the views of the Promise Land from Mt Nebo. Seen Kingdom of Heaven? Channel your inner Orlando Bloom as we storm through the Crusader stronghold of Karak Castle. And to round it all off? Level up your chef skills with an optional local cooking class. Or experience Petra – by night. Opt for a goosebump-inducing walk down the dark ravine, following the sound of traditional music and the soft glow of a candle-lit desert floor. Awesome is an understatement.



### MEALS:

- Breakfast



### INCLUDED TODAY:

- Visit Madaba
- Visit Mt Nebo
- Visit Karak Castle



### OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Local cooking class: from 47 USD
- Petra by Night tour: from 24 USD

## DAY 3 | PETRA

Words can't describe how breathtaking this place is, so why would we try? Spend the whole day uncovering the magic of the Lost City and learn why people have been drawn to this place since 312 BC. With towering burning-red cliff faces and a façade made famous by Indiana Jones, this place rocks (sorry not sorry). Get your bearings on an orientation walk with our expert Trip Leader. Then: the rest of the day is yours to explore. Just be back in time for tonight's optional dinner – a delicious traditional meal of maqluba with a local family. This is as authentic as it gets.



### MEALS:

- Breakfast



### INCLUDED TODAY:

- Orientation walk of Petra with Trip Leader



### OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Dinner with a local family in Petra: from 43 USD

## DAY 4 | PETRA – WADI RUM

Back in the day, camels were the go-to way to cross the desert. But we've got a more buttock-friendly transport option today as we switch the coach for a 4X4 and venture across The Valley of the Moon to our traditional Bedouin Camp in the heart of the Jordanian desert. If you want to see if Alice really does have two humps, there's an optional ride on offer today. Or just sit back and take it all in. This is your moment. Tonight's included dinner is brought to you by one of the world's most ancient nomadic tribes – tuck in around the camp fire and learn all about Bedouin life with your trip mates. And later? Get starry-eyed with an optional stargazing experience. What. A. Day.



### MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Dinner



### INCLUDED TODAY:

- Wadi Rum 4x4 excursion
- Stay overnight in Bedouin desert camp



### OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Camel ride: from 25 USD
- Stargazing in the desert: from 30 USD

## DAY 5 | WADI RUM – AQABA

From a sea of burnt-red sand to well, the actual sea – we're making tracks to Jordan's only coastal city. Dating back to 4,000 BC, Aqaba's located smack-bang in the middle of the Red Sea, with temps rarely dropping below 20°C. Meaning? It's THE place for diving, snorkelling and Nemo-spotting. And you've got the whole afternoon to do just that. Scuba dive around sunken military tanks, transport planes and Lebanese freighters. Make friends with flashy fish, colourful coral and green turtles (maybe). Then, gather the gang for a shawarma (Jordanian kebab) and sunset on the beach. This is livin'.



### MEALS:

- Breakfast



### OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Diving in Aqaba: prices available locally
- Snorkelling in Aqaba: from 45 USD

## DAY 6 | AQABA – DEAD SEA – AMMAN

Ready to tick "bob on top of the Dead Sea" off your bucket list? Today is your day. At 427 m below sea level (the lowest point on Earth), the Dead Sea is so salty you can float weightlessly around like last night's second helping of shawarma didn't happen. Tip: avoid shaving your legs, face or other... parts before your swim. Sh\*t stings! Give yourself a free spa treatment with the mineral-laden mud. Snap a pic for mum. And pile back on the coach – we're heading back to Amman for an education in the Roman, Byzantine AND Umayyad empires that have left their mark on this place. Check out the Roman Amphitheatre, Citadel and melting pot of ancient historical sites on a walking tour with your fact-filled Trip Leader before heading downtown for a falafel feed.



### MEALS:

- Breakfast



### INCLUDED TODAY:

- Float in the Dead Sea
- Walking tour of Amman with Trip Leader



## DAY 7 | AMMAN – JERASH – JERUSALEM (ISRAEL)

Crank the history knob to 11 with a visit to Jerash – home to a bunch of Greco-Roman highlights, including a hippodrome which was used for chariot racing (and has nothing to do with hippos). Then wave goodbye to Jordan as we cross into Israel. Flash your passport and meet your local Israeli guide. After another included group dinner, we're bunking down in the heart of Jerusalem tonight. Sit back and enjoy the view at our hostel's rooftop terrace. This is what you came for.



### MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Dinner



### INCLUDED TODAY:

- See the Roman ruins of Jerash
- Local Israeli guide

## DAY 8 | JERUSALEM

Christianity, Islam and Judaism all consider Jerusalem a holy place, so it's a big deal. Get educated on a guided tour of the old town, checking out the likes of Via Dolorosa, Dome of the Rock, Gethsemane, King David's Tomb, the Western Wall and Golgotha (where Jesus was crucified). Then: the rest is up to you. Need some suggestions? Take in all the I-N-C-R-E-D-I-B-L-E views from the Mount of Olives. Visit the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, believed by some to be Jesus's final resting place (expect queues!). Then, check out Mahane Yehuda Market – a variety of local produce stores by day, buzzing bars and shisha stalls by night. You wanted free time to delve deeper – go get it!



### MEALS:

- Breakfast



### INCLUDED TODAY:

- Walking tour of Jerusalem with local guide

## DAY 9 | JERUSALEM – BETHLEHEM – TEL AVIV

Today we're rolling on to the culturally rich city of Bethlehem to see the very spot Jesus was born (according to certain sources). Wander across Manger Square and check out the Church of Nativity with your local guide, before heading over to Banksy's Walled Off Hotel for the 'worst view in the world'. Think: a hotel, museum, protest and art gallery all in one. Learn your ABCs of Israeli wine with a quick stop at a local winery, before we arrive in Tel Aviv. Discover the chilled-out seaport of Old Jaffa – ticking off the Clock Tower and St Peter's Church. Then: there's a reason they call this place 'Non-Stop City' – time to gather your trip mates and find out why.



### MEALS:

- Breakfast



### INCLUDED TODAY:

- Walking tour of Bethlehem with local guide
- Local winery tour
- Walking tour of Old Jaffa with local guide

## DAY 10 | TEL AVIV

The trip may be winding up – but the adventure sure isn't over yet! Today is 100% yours to delve deeper into this electrifying gem of a city. Sniff out some heady spices and show off your mad bartering skills (or not) at traditional Carmel Market. Make like a local and head to HaYarkon Park for a people-watching picnic. Or check out Sarona Market for alllll the world snacks under one roof (warning: Geminis and Librans will need help with decisions here). And this evening? Time for one final group dinner at a local eatery. WHAT an adventure it's been.



### MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Dinner

## DAY 11 | TEL AVIV

Down your pomegranate juice and brush away those tears – this morning it's time to say our goodbyes. Swap those Insta handles and pencil in next year's reunion trip. Sticking around? Track down Abu Hassan for hummus that will haunt your dreams (it's that good).



### MEALS:

- Breakfast

# OTHER INFORMATION

## TOPDECK APP

Feeling appy? Download the Topdeck app and get PUMPED for the adventure ahead. Best bit is: from 45 days before departure you'll be able to chat with your soon-to-be tripmates.

Plus, get your itinerary at your fingertips – so you know where you'll be going and what you'll be doing on each day of your trip. Nice!

Links:

Apple <https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/topdeck/id994727866>

Android <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.FlexiTechSolutions.TopDeck&hl=en>



## YOUR SAFETY

### NIGHTS OUT

We love a good night out – experiencing the nightlife and entertainment places have to offer is a big part of travelling. But alongside the fun it's important to be aware of your surroundings and personal safety.

When you're out late, remember to avoid walking alone – particularly through deserted areas like beaches and back streets. Always stick together, take a registered taxi where possible, and keep a note of your accommodation so you can find your way back to your fellow Topdeckers if you become separated. Make sure you have your trip mates' mobile numbers in case you need to get hold of them while out and about.

In some countries, alcoholic measures can be considerably larger than what you may be used to. Try to keep track of what you're drinking – and if you see one of your trip mates looking a little worse for wear, take them back to your accommodation. Never leave your drink unattended.

It's also important to be aware that what you might consider harmless flirting may be interpreted differently in some countries. Be yourself and have fun, but stay savvy – you don't want to find yourself in an uncomfortable situation.

### DRUG USE

Topdeck has a strict zero-tolerance drug policy. Customers should not bring any illegal substances onto the Topdeck coach or into any of the accommodation we stay in on our trips. This includes marijuana – even if it is legal in some of the states your trip passes through. If you are found in possession of drugs, you will be removed from the trip immediately. All instances of drug possession will be reported to Topdeck Head Office, who may consider alerting the relevant authorities.

**REMEMBER:** if you are found in possession of drugs, not only do you risk getting in trouble with the local police, but our Driver will also be held responsible if they are found on the Topdeck coach. Trust us, you don't want that to happen to any of our Drivers – they're awesome.

### MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Culture shock, homesickness, random periods of feeling down – these things happen and are totally normal. You can rest assured that if you're feeling low, your Topdeck crew will do their utmost to cheer you up.

Measures you can take to look after your mental health and wellbeing while on the road with us are:

- Call home. Sometimes it's nice to hear a familiar voice and have a good old-fashioned catch up with your loved ones
- Eat well. Never underestimate the power of a good, wholesome meal. Nobody feels at their best when they're hungry!

- Drink responsibly. Not only will you swerve the dreaded hangover, but by keeping an eye on what you drink you could also avoid getting into any potentially uncomfortable situations
- Talk to your Trip Leader. Don't forget, they're probably far from home too – so they're sure to know some tried- and- tested ways to beat the blues
- Integrate with your fellow Topdeckers. This one is key! The more fun you're having on your trip, the less likely you are to feel homesick (fact!)

## **TRAVEL SINCE COVID-19**

Travel looks a bit different since COVID-19. That's why we've put some new procedures in place to help keep you safe on the road.

What remains the same? Your Topdeck trip will be run hygienically, responsibly, and with your safety at the forefront of everything we do. End of.

Here's the info: <https://www.topdeck.travel/resources/travel-safely>

# **RESPECT ON THE ROAD**

## **RESPECTING FELLOW TRAVELLERS**

Our trips are for everyone. We're a family – and we want every Topdecker to have an incredible time.

What we're not about is excluding people or making them feel like they don't belong. That's why we always encourage Topdeckers to be kind and courteous to their fellow tripmates . The golden rules? Respect each other's space, be mindful of causing excessive noise in shared accommodation, and treat others how you'd wish to be treated. Easy!

## **HOW TO BE A RESPONSIBLE TRAVELLER**

Responsible travel isn't difficult to achieve. With a little conscious thought and preparation, you can have an awesome adventure AND a positive impact on the places you visit. Sweet!

Here are five things you can do to ensure you're travelling responsibly:

- Conserve water. You know the drill – reuse your room towels, take short showers and remember to turn off the tap when you're brushing your teeth
- Reduce your waste. Ditch the plastic bag, refuse unnecessary packaging, dispose of your waste responsibly and recycle as much as possible
- Go local. Hunt down locally owned and operated restaurants and bars, shop in local markets, and book tours and activities run by local guides
- Consider the wildlife. Avoid any attractions that involve closely engaging with wild animals
- Respect local people and culture. Obeying local laws is a given – but also remember to dress and behave in a manner appropriate to the community. Be polite and keep an open mind!

# **INSURANCE**

Before your trip departs, it's compulsory for all passengers to take out comprehensive travel insurance covering cancellation, medical expenses (including repatriation), loss or damage to baggage and personal belongings, money and personal liability.



Head to our FAQ for more info: <https://www.topdeck.travel/resources/faqs-0>

Got more Qs? Chat with our Customer Service team: <https://www.topdeck.travel/about-us/contact>

## PASSPORTS AND VISAS

Please make sure your passport is valid for at least six months after the last day of your trip. Some countries will refuse entry if you do not have at least six months validity remaining on your passport after your departure date. Depending on your nationality, you may require a visa to enter certain countries.

It is your responsibility to obtain visas prior to your trip's departure. To determine which visas you'll need, you can consult either your own government's website or the government websites of the countries in which you will be travelling. Check out our handy interactive map showing global visa requirements:

<https://www.topdeck.travel/resources/latest-border-restrictions>

PLEASE NOTE: some visas can take up to six weeks to acquire, so don't leave it until the last minute. Also, bear in mind that the validity of a visa often runs from its date of issue rather than the date of entry into the country. Please check with the appropriate embassy/embassies prior to departure, as requirements do change periodically.

## TIPPING

Basically: it's not necessary.

Your Trip Leader and Driver don't expect tips, and they won't ask for any either. Meaning? More dollar to spend on optional activities (and a souvenir for your nan).

## WHAT TO BRING

Based on our experience, these items are key. Everyone's different though – so if you want to bring more or less, go for it (as long as you don't exceed your 20kg allowance, that is!).

Off to Japan? Your luggage must be no bigger than 160cm in total (height x width x length). So maybe leave the hairdryer at home.

Psst: this is a packing list for Topdeck trips in general. Obv you'd look silly splashing around the Greek islands in a snowsuit.

- 1 pair of comfortable walking shoes + 1 pair of smart casual shoes
- 1 pair of thongs/jandals/flip-flops
- 2 pairs of jeans/trousers
- 2 pairs of shorts/skirts
- 4 shirts/T-shirts
- 2 sweaters/jumpers
- Smart casual evening wear
- 1 warm jacket + 1 rainproof jacket

- Underwear and socks + swimwear
- Towel
- Toiletries
- Hat and sunscreen
- Basic medical kit (including plasters, aspirin etc)
- Adaptor plug
- Reusable water bottle
- Snow gear



**THAT'S IT!**