

Lost City of Wonder

Explore ancient rose-red Petra – and marvel at its magnificent rock-cliff monuments

玫瑰色的失落文明

一座失落的古城，一棟棟雕琢在山崖之上的精美建築，孤獨高貴的於大漠夕陽下，閃爍著玫瑰色的光彩，滿懷期待地靜候著下一次輝煌的到來。

Chinese Text by Zhao Wen English Text by Janice and George Mucalov

凝視著面前的佩特拉古城遺蹟，雙腳陷入了柔軟而又充滿傳奇色彩的紅色沙土之中。納巴泰人留下的，那於岩石上雕琢出的龐大建築群落，至今帶給我們深深的震撼。在約旦茫茫的沙漠中的紅色岩石上，當年的墓穴、神廟、住宅至今清晰地凸顯著，這裏曾經是怎樣一處繁華鼎盛的所在。如今，精美的雕像和花紋早已在漫漫風沙中斑駁凋零，留給我們的是「世界新七大奇蹟」之一。

想要進入入佩特拉古城，西克峽谷是必經之路。騎馬走在長度為1.2公里的亂石路上，這條最窄處僅有2米左右的狹窄通道，被兩旁高達80米的石崖小心翼翼地呵護著。沿著迤邐幽暗的小路前行，兩旁石壁上的雕像如列隊的衛兵一樣守護著我們。沿著導遊手指的方向，一條陶製的管道曾經將水源引入這座城市。那些造型精美優雅石灰岩柱似乎將我們帶回了古羅馬時代，他們曾經是這座古城的統治者之一。

驀然間，一座嵌在岩石山中的龐大建築出現在眼前，這便是佩特拉舉世聞名的建築——「寶庫」（Treasury）。陽光落在這座上下兩層，高度超過40米的恢宏建築之上，精美的石柱、門楣，矗立在石柱間的神像，歷經千年時光，你仍可以輕易想像出當年的壯麗輝煌。很難相信這樣一座龐大的建築居然完全由人工在岩石上一刀一斧地鑿刻出來。

然而，這還不是奇蹟的全部，當我們左轉向下走，在沙漠山谷間的一片開闊地帶，數百處建築物依山壁雕鑿而成，歷代國王的墓葬、神殿、巨大的神廟，以及民宅不知於何時便隱藏在這裏，甚至還有一座依山坡而建的古羅馬式戲院。

Gazing up at Petra’s monuments – feet sinking into soft red sand and dust swirling about – you can’t help but be amazed by the genius of its ancient Nabatean builders. Wealthy traders and masterful sculptors, they chiseled a vast city of beautifully carved royal tombs, sacred halls, mammoth temples and cave houses out of rose-and-peach rock in the Jordanian desert. A UNESCO World Heritage Site, Petra today ranks alongside the Great Wall of China as one of the “New Seven Wonders of the World.”

To reach Petra, a horse carries you along a stony track to the “*Siq*,” the narrow 1.2-kilometre canyon snaking through one of the mountains guarding the metropolis. Sandstone cliffs soar 80 metres on either side as you walk the Siq’s twists. Stone idols line the passage, and guides point out clay pipes that fed water into the city. Limestone slabs you’re walking on date back to Roman times.

Suddenly, the Treasury, carved into a sheer rock wall, comes into view. Sunlight glows on this monument’s façade: double rows of 12 Corinthian columns, crowned by a giant stone urn. Left, down a colonnaded street, hundreds of royal tombs, sacred halls, cave houses and even an amphitheatre sprawl before you in a desert valley.

The Nabateans started building Petra around the 5th century B.C. While they likely chose its site for easy

佩特拉最大的一處山峰，著名的「修道院」修建在這裏，俯瞰著整座城市。當落日的餘暉照進這座修道院時，一個石獅雕像頭部的影子會投射至對面的岩石上，而獅子是納巴泰文明中的神聖動物。

The largest monument at Petra, the “Monastery” rests high above the city. When the sun sets, a shadow of a lion’s head (the sacred animal of the Nabateans’ goddess) is recreated on the rocks opposite.



在穿越了狹窄的西克峽谷之後，壯麗精美的，雕鑿在岩石之內的「寶庫」會躍入您的眼簾。這處據說曾經埋藏有寶物的墓葬，被認為是佩特拉最舉世聞名的建築。

After passing through the city's narrow entryway, the intricately carved "Treasury" suddenly bursts into view. It's believed the stone urn crowning Petra's most famous monument once hid treasure.

另一處讓現代人感到驚奇的建築是修道院 (Monastery)，當落日的餘暉照進這座修道院時，一個石獅雕像頭部的影子會投射至對面的岩石上，而獅子是納巴泰文明中的神聖動物。不過，想要探訪這處神奇的修道院並非易事，在氣喘吁吁地爬上850個花崗岩石階之後，你可以在頂端享用一杯貝多因人的特色茶飲。

據推測，佩特拉古城是由納巴泰人興建於公元前六世紀之後，當初選擇此處建築城市的主要原因是易守難攻，入口處的西克峽谷是天然的屏障，真可謂一夫當關，萬夫莫開。在公元前一世紀前後，佩特拉曾做為連接死海和阿卡巴海峽的東西方商路而盛極一時。載滿香料、絲綢和黃金的駱駝商隊，會向納巴泰人繳納通關費，確保商隊安全通過西克峽谷。

至公元後三世紀，隨著新的海上和路上商道的興起，佩特拉古城逐步走向衰落。至七世紀，當阿拉伯人來到這裏時，已是空城一座。此後，直到1812年，在瑞士探險家 J.L.伯爾克哈特 (Johann Ludwig Burckhardt) 重新發現這裏之後，佩特拉古城才再次走入了歐洲人的視線。到目前為止，佩特拉僅有60%的遺址被發掘出來，關於這座失落古城的傳奇必將在今後不斷延續。

defence, the stronghold stood at the crossroads of ancient trade routes linking East and West. Travellers on caravans of camels loaded with spices, incense, silks and gold were taxed by the Nabateans when they made safe passage through Petra's corridors.

Researchers have discovered the Nabateans sculpted their monuments to capture key celestial events and create images with sunlight. The setting sun etches a sacred lion's head near the Monastery.

Petra's grandest edifice, the Monastery, perches atop 850 sandstone stairs that twist through even more other-worldly canyons. Enjoy a respite inside its awe-inspiring architecture, take in polychrome views and enjoy a refreshing tea from a simple Bedouin shack up top.

Petra at its height was a glory of the ancient world, only fading away in the 4th century A.D. when the Nabateans left. Perhaps earthquakes or shifting trade routes led to its decline; no one knows for sure. Lost to the modern world until a Swiss explorer rediscovered it in 1812, only 60% of the city has been unearthed again. Who knows what other secrets this ancient kingdom may yet reveal?



Photo by Janice Mucalov

進入佩特拉的唯一路徑，是狹窄曲折的西克峽谷，道路兩旁高達80米的玫瑰色岩石巍然矗立。

The only access into Petra is through a wondrous, long, narrow gorge with rose-coloured sandstone walls soaring 80 metres high on both sides.

旅行路線

可跟團前往。海上遊輪途經中東地區時也會在佩特拉古城停靠。自助遊請僱有資質的導遊來安排行程（可到佩特拉遊客中心預約）。65英畝的古城區最好安排兩天行程，費用約55約旦幣（約85美金）。其中包括騎馬穿過西克峽谷的費用，乘馬車遊覽需另付費。參觀修道院時，可雇頭毛驢代步。

住在哪裏

Movenpick Resort Petra是距離佩特拉最近的五星級酒店。

最佳時間

春天的三月至四月，秋天的九月至十一月是最佳時節，天氣溫和舒適。避開酷熱的夏季。

健康安全

盡量喝瓶裝水，在推薦的地點吃飯。佩特拉是砂石地，所以一雙舒適的鞋子必不可少，遮陽帽和太陽鏡也是必備物品。

How to visit

Package tours to Jordan and Middle Eastern cruises offer Petra excursions. Independent travelers, hire a licensed tour guide to maximize your visit (book at the Petra Visitor Centre). Allow two days to take in the 65-acre site. Two-day 55 JD (about \$85 CAN) admittance fees include a horseback ride to the Siq entrance. A horse-drawn carriage to the Treasury costs extra as does a donkey ride up the 850 steps to see the Monastery. www.visitpetra.jo

Where to stay

Petra's closet hotel is the luxurious Movenpick Resort Petra, with 183 newly renovated rooms, seven dining venues, and gorgeous Middle Eastern interior design. moevenpick-hotels.com

Best time to go

Pleasantly warm Spring (March to May) and Autumn (September to November) are the best times to visit. Avoid Summer's scorching heat.

Health and safety

Jordan is safe to visit (but check Canadian government travel advisories before you go). Minimize health risks by drinking bottled water and eating at recommended places. Petra is hot and sandy; wear comfortable walking shoes (not sandals); carry bottled water, a hat and sunscreen.