

Chapter 1 : Jordan Terrain and Landscape | Terhaal Adventures

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Khirbet al-Batrawy, for its location both in respect of the regional tracks-network through the Black Desert and the steppe towards the Arabian Peninsula, and the flourishing district of the Upper Wadi az-Zarqa, the easternmost perennial river in the Jordanian plateau and its preservation state almost without superimposition after the 3rd millennium BC, represents an extraordinary opportunity for a cantonal study of the origins, development and crisis of the Jordanian early urbanisation at the fringes of non-agricultural regions, where pastoralists and nomads interacted with this new social institution: See also Nigro ed. New discoveries in the same region, for example, at the Syrian site of Labwe5 have, moreover, indicated that this area played a relevant role also during the rise of early urbanization in the Southern Levant, in the 3rd millennium BC, when, however, the main streams of secondary urbanization developed in the Jordan Valley, on the Lebanese coast, and in inner Syria. Palumbo in and carried on systematically until Palumbo et al. The survey was then resumed in under the direction of the writer, together with systematic excavations at Khirbet al-Batrawy Nigro a: Between the Desert and the Jordan see below. During Early Bronze I a series of rural hamlets and villages was scattered along the river banks,¹⁰ while some major centres, usually flanked by dolmen fields,¹¹ grew on top-hill sites, dominating the valley, such as Jebel al-Mutawwaq, which hosted a central sanctuary. Some cup-marks identified on the Acropolis of Batrawy, near a cave, may indicate a religious frequentation of the site before the foundation of the fortified town in Early Bronze II, at the time when Jneeh was the central place in the valley. The possible presence of a sanctuary at Khirbet al-Batrawy may, thus, partly explain why the population living in the valley concentrated on the top-hill site in Early Bronze II. It seems probable that the accumulation of goods and a certain degree of social instability along the main road network made necessary to protect the community by settling the top-hill site, defending it with strong fortification works, and re-organizing the social group according to a more powerful and effective hierarchy. When the two processes "synecism and catalysis" reached their apex during Early Bronze II, the birth of the fortified town of Khirbet al-Batrawy was definitely accomplished, and the new born city apparently extended its territorial control over the whole Upper Wadi az-Zarqa from Amman to Tell el-Bireh Fig. Towards the east, Batrawy looked over the tracks arriving from south-east, east and north-east from al-Qihati and al-Azraq, being the arrival in a valley with a perennial river the easternmost at the border of the Syro-Arabic Desert of the east-west routes crossing the desert; in other words, a gate controlling the access not only to the Wadi az-Zarqa, but to the Jordan Valley itself. The role of crossroad and gate was strongly linked to two specificities of the Batrawy early urban model: Topography and Defensive Vocation The topography of the hill of Batrawy was particularly favourable to defensive purposes, and altogether functional to territorial control due to its dominant position in respect of the underlying valley Fig. The khirbet has a roughly triangular shape, with the base along its western side, where it looks towards the Wadi az-Zarqa Fig. Steep rocky cliffs protected it all around its perimeter, except at the mid of the northern side, where a shallow saddle connected it to a facing hill With the foundation of the town in Early Bronze II, natural defences were reinforced and completed by a massive fortification system, which transformed the hill in an almost unassailable citadel. Stating the Urban Status: An articulated fortification was built all around the edge of the hill by exploiting any cliff and spur during Early Bronze II, around BC. The main defensive work was a solid stone and mud-brick wall, from which at irregular intervals bastions and towers projected Between the Desert and the Jordan 3. The north-western corner Area C hosted a rectangular tower Tower C1, built directly on a rock terrace with big limestone boulders. This tower protected a strategic point, flanked by a secondary access to the city, a postern located but not yet excavated. At least two projecting towers built with large boulders set directly on the bedrock protected the defensive line on this side. A probe opened roughly at the centre of the southern fortification line in Area E demonstrated that the structure there preserved dates back from the Early Bronze II, since the later Early Bronze III reconstruction collapsed and was almost completely obliterated by erosion. Roughly 45 m west of the eastern corner, a ravine in the edge of the hill indicated the location of a

gate, which was approached through a ramp turning left from the foot of the cliff into the city. This entrance was flanked by large piers and protected by the structures built over the spur to the west of it Fig. Here, excavations reached the earliest occupational layers lying directly over the bedrock, i. It was built in separated stretches of m length,²⁵ according to a technique attested to in many Early Bronze fortified sites in Palestine and Jordan,²⁶ in order to prevent dangerous effects of earthquakes. The inner filling of the wall was made by medium-sized limestone undressed stones, displaced in layers with pebbles, limestone chops and mud mortar. Such a stone built structure reached the elevation of the gate capstone around 2. In spite of the monumentality of the city-wall, the gate was a simple opening, 1. The gate capstone was a monolith on the outer side and a wooden beam on the inner side of the passage. There is no evidence for the presence of towers adjoined to this early gate, even though the area was completely reconstructed when the gate was blocked at the beginning of the Early Bronze IIIA. The Socio-Economic Significance of the Earliest City-Wall The overall length of the city-wall, its width and elevation, allowed to approximately calculate the volume of stones and mud-bricks necessary for its construction and to infer the number of worker involved in its erection in a hypothetical time span of one 24 Nigro ed. At least workers took part into the building of the earliest Batrawy defence, which were able to extract and move more than 11, tons of limestone blocks, and to produce around 1 million mud-bricks with an enormous employ of water for mud-mortar. This work was a tremendous enterprise for a community of no more than people, in which surely non-urban groups were involved, with the aid of specialized workers and animals. The complexity of the work, and food supplies for workers, as well as raw materials straw, wood, clay, huwwara were largely employed, do imply the existence of a central ruling institution, which planned and executed the construction of the city-wall. Some structural details, such as the partition in between the various stretches of the wall, the regular displacement of block of similar size at the same elevation, the cutting of regular squared blocks testify to the strong central direction of the authority responsible for the work, and are an indirect proof of an established social hierarchy. This, however, does not necessarily mean that the city-walls were mainly erected to show with their skyline dominating on the surrounding landscape and road-network the power of this ruling institution, and to identify the city as the emerging social institution ruling over the whole valley. This, of course, was one of the basic outcomes of their erection, but perhaps their major social impact was not the ideological, but the economic one, implying a long and continuous involvement of a large part of the district population into their erection. Moreover, they testify to the urgency of a protection for the material and symbolic values accumulated by the agricultural communities of Upper Wadi az-Zarqa into the new town. Earthquake in Jordan The EB II city-gate and attached fortifications at Batrawy show undoubtedly that a violent earthquake brought to a sudden end the earliest city Batrawy II, as it was the case of other centres of the North-central Jordan Valley: The collapsed main gate was thus abandoned and blocked by a secondary wall. Such a conflagration apparently caused by an earthquake is attested to also at Megiddo Finkelstein, Ussishkin and Peersmann In the EB III reconstruction of the building, the western side of the room hosted a raised platform on which a niche was inserted; in front of the niche there were the bases of two betyls. The entrance was 1. In the court, facing the entrance, there was a round platform S. Between the Desert and the Jordan II was immediately followed by an overall reconstruction of the site defences,⁴³ which marks the passage to the Early Bronze III, the period which witnessed the major flourishing of the town. The main inner city-wall was reconstructed in elevation using stones instead of mud-bricks previously separated wall sectors were joint at the varying elevation 1 to 2 m,⁴⁴ apparently with a wooden coronation, up to a height of around 6 m. The EB II gate was blocked and a new one was opened presumably further to the west, still approached by the street⁴⁵ now running in between the inner city-wall and the newly added outer wall W. A curvilinear outwork W. Such an observation, i. The main wall was also reconstructed in its upper section, and on its inner side a staircase W. Such a staircase allows to reconstruct the overall height of the city-wall around 8 m. Building B1 had solid stone foundations; it was in use for a relatively long time span, and, eventually, destroyed by a fire. Ceramic finds from the building include jars and painted jugs and bowls,⁵³ and the so-called stoppers, perhaps to be considered counter units of a proto-bureaucratic " illiterate " system. A preliminary study of material culture also provides interesting insights into the organization of the Batrawy economy. EB III material horizon shows a strong

standardization of ceramic productions both in terms of shapes, fabric and functions, but also a drastic increase in number and variety of pattern-combed and other metallic wares, pointing to an increased income of agricultural and husbandry products mainly olive oil, goat fat, lentils, beans, and other stuff ; also specialized wares painted and red-burnished or polished wares become more widespread, indicating a horizontal diffusion of items, which initially had a more limited and socially symbolic distribution. As regards the inner organization of the Batrawy subsistence system, an exemplary case study is that of Pattern-combed Ware storage containers; a few of these pattern-combed storage jars belong to a Metallic Ware production of a high fired quite depurated fabric. The comparison of pattern-combed fragments found at the site with those from the survey in the Upper Wadi az-Zarqa demonstrated that the vast majority 50 Such a battering wall W. Between the Desert and the Jordan of Metallic and Pattern-combed jars found in Batrawy came from the countryside, especially from the hilly area west of the Zarqa river, where olive tree was largely cultivated, thus suggesting that these storage vessels contained olive oil and were sent to Batrawy from the surrounding farms under the central site administration? Moreover, faunal remains, from the one hand, demonstrate an integrated diet, a variety of tamed animals being part of the life of the inhabitants, from the other hand, show a large percentage of Equids,⁵⁴ surely the main mean of transportation at the time, thus confirming the role of the town as caravans station. The town was set on fire, and the relics of such a dramatic event were clearly visible on structures and in stratigraphy There is no evidence available for investigating who was the responsible for such a dramatic destruction, even if a natural event apparently has to be ruled out; the attack from a foreign enemy seems a possible explanation, which should also surmise the deportation of the population, since the site was deserted. The khirbet remained, in fact, abandoned and was resettled only after a certain while by sparse EB IV dwellings. On the summit of the Acropolis Area A , two separated sectors of this rural village were brought to light Fig. Each houses cluster included a couple of rectangular rooms, probably the main domestic units, flanked by stone-lined courtyards, which hosted several annexed structures, food producing and storage installations the latter usually circular in plan , such as silos, working platforms and other devices. Another area of intense occupation during Early Bronze IVB was the terrace just inside the collapsed northern EB II-III city-wall⁵⁹, where houses were linked by a series of connected walls on their rear side, along the edge of an embankment made up with the remains of earlier collapsed structures. A second more substantial house L. In the central sector of Area B South, two constructive phases were detected. A more recent phase included a wide square house L. In the underlying layer, sparse remains of an ephemeral initial occupation huts and related installations of the village were uncovered, including hearths, cists, and stone platforms. A further area of the khirbet also reoccupied in the Early Bronze IVB was the South-Western Tower Area D , where a major structure, perhaps with a somewhat defensive purpose, was erected in the core of the corner fortress of the preceding period. Also this house had platforms Fig. Between the Desert and the Jordan major site in the area was Jebel er-Reheil. In any case, at this preliminary examination, public architecture, material culture, especially pottery and flint tools, are typical of a flourishing urban centre which established successful relationship with its territory and the surrounding region. As the regional survey demonstrated,⁷⁰ at the beginning of Early Bronze II the Zarqa district witnessed a synecistic process which led Batrawy to become a major fortified town at the crossroad of Early Bronze Age main tracks of Southern Levant. Territorial control at a crucial crossroad of the trade network, as indicated by several finds, was, thus, a specificity of the Batrawy early urban experience. Architecture and Town Planning. Preliminary Results of the Archaeological Survey Report on the and Fieldwork Seasons: Between the Desert and the Jordan Castel, C. Bilan et perspectives des recherches actuelles. Halpern eds , Megiddo III. Halpern eds , Megiddo IV. The Architecture and Stratigraphy of the Tell, London. Archaeology in the Holy Land, San Diego. Nigro eds , Excavations at Jericho, Studi di Archeologia orientale dedicati a Paolo Matthiae, Roma, pp. Between the Desert and the Jordan d Khirbet al-Batrawy: Site Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development. Cardarelli a cura di , Le ragioni del cambiamento. Report on the October-November Fieldwork Season: Bienkowski eds , The Archaeology of Jordan, Sheffield, pp. Excavations at the Town Site Neither Cities nor States: Between the Desert and the Jordan Fig. The ancient territory under Batrawy control within the westwards turn of the Zarqa river.

Chapter 2 : Zarqa - Wikitravel

Nestled just over one mile away from Zarqa is Qasr Amra, arguably the most famous desert castle in Jordan. Constructed in the 8th century, Qasr Amra is a fascinating example of Islamic art. Constructed in the 8th century, Qasr Amra is a fascinating example of Islamic art.

Locals and travelers to connect with About Amman, Jordan It is the third largest river in the region by annual discharge, and its watershed encompasses the most densely populated areas east of the Jordan River. The river is heavily polluted and its restoration is one of the top priorities for the Jordanian Ministry of the Environment. Geologically, the Zarqa river is about 30 million years old. Archeological finds along the course of the river indicate the area was rich in flora and fauna in the past. The Zarqa river is well known for its amber deposits that date back to the Hauterivian of the lower Cretaceous m. A remarkable flora and fauna was reported from this amber reflecting a tropical paleoenvironmental prevailing conditions during the time of resin deposition Kaddumi, ; The modern Arabic name, Zarqa , means "the blue river". The Hebrew name Jabbok derives from the word "baqoq", which means "to flow" or "pour out". The headwaters of the Zarqa begin just northeast of Amman, rising from a spring named Ain Ghazal "Gazelle spring". The river flows to the north before heading west. Rising on the eastern side of the mountains of Gilead, it runs a course of about kilometers 65 mi in a wild and deep ravine before flowing into the Jordan River between Gennesaret and the Dead Sea, at a point 1, meters 3, ft below its origin. Near Ain Ghazal, two tributary wadis join the river, and it opens up into a shallow basin. It forms the border between the Jordanian administrative regions of Irbid and Al Balqa. The bridge is the site of a gauging station where flow measurements are continuously taken. In the city of Zarqa, several bridges, vehicular and pedestrian, cross the river. The earliest of these was built by the Chechen founders of the city. The geological origins of the Zarqa river are about 30 million years old, when the Jordan Rift Valley was formed. A ripple effect of its formation was the creation of side-wadis. The Zarqa river carved into the western edge of one of these side wadis. The earliest exposed formations in the area date from the Triassic and early Jurassic periods, and have been named Zerqa and Kurnub formations. The rock formations are marine sediments, remnants of the prehistoric Tethys Sea, which used to cover the area running roughly east - west, halfway across the present Dead Sea. Along the Zarqa, we find crystalline limestone alternating with shale. The next layer is a meter high layer of gypsum, argillaceous marly lime, shales and iron-rich stone and sandstone. This layer is rich in fossils. Archaeological finds of charcoaled remains indicate that poplar and tamarix used to grow along the banks of the Zarqa, with forests of wild oak growing on the hillsides. Today, tamarix thickets are still widespread in the floodplains, and the banks are cultivated with fruit orchards and vegetable fields. Along the course of Zarqa river, water is pumped directly and used to irrigate crops of leafy vegetables such as parsley, spinach, cabbage, cauliflower and lettuce, as well as potatoes. Tulips grow on many hillsides of the river, while in the springs area and the watercourse, water vegetation is found. Natural pine forests grow in the King Talal Dam area. Along the upstream banks, where the river runs wild, one finds the common reed, oleander and Typha species. Since the waters of the Zarqa are highly contaminated, with high levels of organic matter and various chemical compounds especially detergents and dyes , the use of Zarqa water for irrigation has significantly altered the biodiversity of the natural flora, and caused the disappearance of the majority of fresh water species. In prehistoric times, the area was rich with fauna, and 45 distinct animal species have been identified, half of them wild animals. Domesticated goats were the most common, and gazelles were the most frequently occurring wild animal species. Today, the area is still home to a diverse population of birds and mammals, and some of the breeding species found do not breed anywhere else in Jordan. The King Talal dam has created a lake which is a habitat for migratory waterfowl and various fish species. The most common are Tilapia. Migratory birds also winter in the man-made pools which make up the Kherbit Al-Samra Sewage Treatment Plant, located in a broad depression close to Wadi Dhulayl, the main tributary of the Zarqa River. As many as 6, White Storks have been spotted roosting there. The otter is considered a threatened species. It was continuously occupied for more than two thousand years, and the earliest finds date to BCE. With a population of around 3, at its height, it was also one of the largest

prehistoric population centers in the Near East, with about five times the population of neighboring Jericho. During a survey of the Zarqa valley, a number of Early Iron Age sites were discovered, concentrated along the banks of the Zarqa and its tributaries.

Chapter 3 : Zarqa Governorate - Wikipedia

Azraq (Arabic: أزرق, meaning "the blue one") is a small town in Zarqa Governorate in central-eastern Jordan, kilometres (62 mi) east of Amman. The population of Azraq was 9, in

We were 7 friends together and 2 other people that we don't know came along. Many thanks go to the people behind the team.. So young, yet so professional.. Wonderful to swim in natural pools and have showers under waterfalls. I can tell you it was a great success. Both talked about this adventure for days later and this means something. You know how hard it is to surprise and please teenagers these days! Physically, this trip is an excellent exercise but for counting it part of ecotourism it could be more informative on our nature. The more you know about something the more you learn to respect and cherish it. By pointing out important plants and animals like the birds, fish and frogs we saw or even sorts of rocks by name you can inspire especially young people to learn more and care more about our environment. I noticed the English lady asking about the rose flowering bushes in the wadi and someone told her that they were Rododendrons, which is of course wrong. These bushes are Nerium Oleander which decorate our wadis by blooming all summer. They are very poisonous though, so care should be taken that no one picks up leaves or flowers without washing their hands thoroughly afterwards. There are excellent books on Jordanian flora and fauna in the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature and the Jordan University. I congratulate you on your excellent work and wonderful team and wish you all the best Rakan. I will send you some pics of the trip and special pics for Layali as soon as I can. The attention to safety for all during the trip was seen to be of a very high standard and executed by very confident and experienced guides; particular attention to detail for safety was paramount at the rappel stages; with all of our group being able to enjoy the experience many and inclusive of my wife for the first time abseil-rappelling over some very challenging cliffs and verticals. As a former member of the British Army with some experience of this type of activities; I would have no hesitation in giving my personal recommendation in relation to this trip being a thoroughly enjoyable, challenging but safe experience. Looking forward to more trips with you! All the best to Terhaal. Thank you so much for putting in so much effort to ensure our safety and enjoyment. Terhaal Eco Adventures has some of the friendliest and the most knowledgeable guides I have ever met and can take you to some incredible places. Beyond being friendly and knowledgeable and being full of stories about Jordan, the guides clearly had safety in the forefront of their minds in whatever we did including in the selection and care of the rappelling abseiling equipment. I so appreciate your eco-consciousness and community awareness. I found the guides to be both friendly and competent and the equipment excellent. I think it will move smoother and faster if first time rappellers experience leaning back and releasing the rope before going over the ledge, as your guide demonstrated. A few seconds leaning back in a safe setting and learning to trust the rope and understand how to release it may help speed things up. Also, the wait at the final rapel was probably a little longer than necessary--for those who went first, it would have been quite long. Otherwise, a very well organized and pleasant trip. I will join you for more. Two hours waiting in the sun, is really too long. Perhaps the groups can be made smaller next time!

Chapter 4 : ISIS, Qaeda Fighters Come Home to Roost in Jordan | Al Jazeera America

The highlands of Jordan separate the Jordan Valley and its margins from the plains of the eastern desert. This region extends the entire length of the western part of the country, and hosts most of Jordan's main population centers, including Amman, Zarqa, Irbid and Karak.

The Desert Castles This is an excellent idea for a day excursion departing from Amman. Travelling to the Desert Castles requires a full day and, with a castle to be seen nearly every 10 miles, at least 2 or 3 can be visited. Advertising Drive southwards to leave Amman and take the motorway which heads towards the Queen Alia International Airport. It starts at the Syrian border and makes its way down to the town of Aqaba, wedged between the shores of the Red Sea, Israel and Saudi Arabia. Country Houses Azraq is a knot in the road, lost in the middle of this huge, flat desert that extends outwards for miles and miles to the east of Jordan. Hundreds and thousands of dilapidated, rattling trucks take the Damas to Riyadh and Amman to Baghdad roads and Azraq, an oasis surrounded by rocks, is where they cross. The drivers stop at the village the last before the border to take a break, tighten a few bolts and buy a few things from the many grocers who lay their merchandise out on the pavements. The route of the Desert Castles is not just a tourist route. It is, above all, a vital economic arterial road for these four countries. Indeed, trading has taken place in this region for a very long time. The magnificent and imposing castles which appear along the road were built in the 7th and 8th centuries by Umayyad Caliphs who, by hosting sublime parties once or twice a year, gained the loyalty of the nomad tribe-leaders. The rest of the time, a small garrison stayed there keeping watch over the interests of the Caliph who, from time to time, came to spend the weekend to hunt eland, organise horse races or practice falconry. Bedouins put up their tent in the car park. They sell postcards and a few ornaments, as well as fresh drinks and tea that you drink with them, lounging on carpets. The tea is continuously simmered over live embers and, just like their formidable but flavoursome coffee, it will stop you sleeping for a week! The fortified ground floor gives the impression of a caravanserai [a roadside inn], despite the absence of any water reserve in the surrounding area. However, the luxury of the upper floors frescoes, bas-reliefs, columns and cavettos make this theory unlikely. Was it a hunting pavilion? It remains a mystery. It was built in , by the same Al-Walid 1st who built the Umayyads mosque in Damas. In the Seven Pillars of Wisdom, Lawrence of Arabia recounts how he spent the winter in the room overlooking the Southern entrance. Silence of the Camels There are three options for the return to Amman: However, you must ensure you find time to discover, as night falls, the deserted village of Umm al-Jimal on highway 10, 10 miles to the east of Mafraq. Not much is known about this collection of town buildings destroyed in by an earthquake several guides, devoid of an explanation, even mistake its history with that of Jerash. Founded by the Nabateans who were already on the decline, occupied by the Byzantines who gave shape to it, followed by the Persian Sassanids, this agricultural village even housed the French army during the First World War. You can walk freely in the silence of its still intact alleyways, to use the same paving stones as its previous inhabitants, to sit in doorways or walk through doors into houses where shaky staircases are still standing. This deserted Umm al-Jimal is just like Jordan:

Chapter 5 : Hiking tour 7 days in Jordan

This is Jordan's major road, known as the Desert Highway (number 15 is its official name.) It starts at the Syrian border and makes its way down to the town of Aqaba, wedged between the shores of the Red Sea, Israel and Saudi Arabia.

Western Jordan has essentially a Mediterranean climate with a hot, dry summer, a cool, wet winter and two short transitional seasons. Jordan can be divided into three main geographic and climatic areas: This fissure was created 20 million years ago by shifting tectonic plates. It contains the Jordan River and extends from the northern border down to the Dead Sea. It then drains into the Dead Sea which, at meters below sea level, is the lowest point on earth. The river is between 20 and 30 meters wide near its endpoint. Its flow has been much reduced and its salinity increased because significant amounts have been diverted for irrigational uses. Several degrees warmer than the rest of the country, its year-round agricultural climate, fertile soils, higher winter rainfall and extensive summer irrigation have made the Ghor the food bowl of Jordan. It is landlocked and fed by the Jordan River and run-off from side wadis. With no outlet to the sea, intense evaporation concentrates its mineral salts and produces a hypersaline solution. This spectacular valley is kilometers long and is known for the sheer, barren sides of its mountains. Its primary economic contribution is through potash mining. The rich marine life of these reefs provides excellent opportunities for snorkeling and diving. We know that ancient peoples found the area inviting as well, since one can visit the ruins of Jerash, Karak, Madaba, Petra and other historical sites which are found in the Mountain Heights Plateau. The region, which extends from Umm Qais in the north to Ras an-Naqab in the south, is intersected by a number of valleys and riverbeds known as wadis. The Arabic word wadi means a watercourse valley which may or may not flow with water after substantial rainfall. Elevation in the highlands varies considerably, from meters to about 1, meters above sea level, with temperature and rainfall patterns varying accordingly. The northern part of the Mountain Heights Plateau, known as the northern highlands, extends southwards from Umm Qais to just north of Amman, and displays a typical Mediterranean climate and vegetation. This region was known historically as the Land of Gilead, and is characterized by higher elevations and cooler temperatures. South and east of the northern highlands are the northern steppes, which serve as a buffer between the highlands and the eastern desert. The area, which extends from Irbid through Mafraq and Madaba all the way south to Karak, was formerly covered in steppe vegetation. Much of this has been lost to desertification, however. In the south, the Sharra highlands extend from Shobak south to Ras an-Naqab. This high altitude plain receives little annual rainfall and is consequently lightly vegetated. It stretches into Syria, Iraq and Saudi Arabia, with elevations varying between and meters above sea level. Climate in the Badia varies widely between day and night, and between summer and winter. Rainfall is minimal throughout the year, averaging less than 50 millimeters annually. Although all the regions of the Badia or desert are united by their harsh desert climate, similar vegetation types and sparse concentrations of population, they vary considerably according to their underlying geology. The volcanic formations of the northern Basalt Desert extend into Syria and Saudi Arabia, and are recognizable by the black basalt boulders which cover the landscape. East of the Basalt Desert, the Rweishid Desert is an undulating limestone plateau which extends to the Iraqi border. There is some grassland in this area, and some agriculture is practiced there. Al-Jafr Basin, south of the Central Desert, is crossed by a number of broad, sparsely-vegetated wadis. Towering sandstone mesas dominate this arid area, producing one of the most fantastic desert-scapes in the world.

Chapter 6 : Zarqa Ma'in Canyon - Reviews, Photos - Tropical Desert - TripAdvisor

The Wild Jordan has about 8 lodges throughout Jordan. This one is in the eastern desert and is located on the outskirts of the town of Azraq. The accommodation was previously a British field hospital at the time of the Arab Revolt ().

Geography Jordan is a relatively small country situated at the junction of the Levantine and Arabian areas of the Middle East. The country is bordered on the north by Syria, to the east by Iraq, and by Saudi Arabia on the east and south. Jordan occupies an area of approximately 96, square kilometers including the Dead Sea, making it similar in size to Austria or Portugal. Western Jordan has essentially a Mediterranean climate with a hot, dry summer, a cool, wet winter and two short transitional seasons. Jordan can be divided into three main geographic and climatic areas: This fissure was created 20 million years ago by shifting tectonic plates. It contains the Jordan River and extends from the northern border down to the Dead Sea. It then drains into the Dead Sea which, at meters below sea level, is the lowest point on earth. The river is between 20 and 30 meters wide near its endpoint. Its flow has been much reduced and its salinity increased because significant amounts have been diverted for irrigational uses. Several degrees warmer than the rest of the country, its year-round agricultural climate, fertile soils, higher winter rainfall and extensive summer irrigation have made the Ghor the food bowl of Jordan. It is landlocked and fed by the Jordan River and run-off from side wadis. With no outlet to the sea, intense evaporation concentrates its mineral salts and produces a hypersaline solution. This spectacular valley is kilometers long and is known for the sheer, barren sides of its mountains. Its primary economic contribution is through potash mining. The rich marine life of these reefs provides excellent opportunities for snorkeling and diving. We know that ancient peoples found the area inviting as well, since one can visit the ruins of Jerash, Karak, Madaba, Petra and other historical sites which are found in the Mountain Heights Plateau. The Arabic word wadi means a watercourse valley which may or may not flow with water after substantial rainfall. Elevation in the highlands varies considerably, from meters to about 1, meters above sea level, with temperature and rainfall patterns varying accordingly. The northern part of the Mountain Heights Plateau, known as the northern highlands, extends southwards from Umm Qais to just north of Amman, and displays a typical Mediterranean climate and vegetation. This region was known historically as the Land of Gilead, and is characterized by higher elevations and cooler temperatures. South and east of the northern highlands are the northern steppes, which serve as a buffer between the highlands and the eastern desert. The area, which extends from Irbid through Mafraq and Madaba all the way south to Karak, was formerly covered in steppe vegetation. Much of this has been lost to desertification, however. In the south, the Sharra highlands extend from Shobak south to Ras an-Naqab. This high altitude plain receives little annual rainfall and is consequently lightly vegetated. It stretches into Syria, Iraq and Saudi Arabia, with elevations varying between and meters above sea level. Climate in the Badia varies widely between day and night, and between summer and winter. Rainfall is minimal throughout the year, averaging less than 50 millimeters annually. Although all the regions of the Badia or desert are united by their harsh desert climate, similar vegetation types and sparse concentrations of population, they vary considerably according to their underlying geology. The volcanic formations of the northern Basalt Desert extend into Syria and Saudi Arabia, and are recognizable by the black basalt boulders which cover the landscape. East of the Basalt Desert, the Rweishid Desert is an undulating limestone plateau which extends to the Iraqi border. There is some grassland in this area, and some agriculture is practiced there. Brightly blue lizard, Petra. Al-Jafr Basin, south of the Central Desert, is crossed by a number of broad, sparsely-vegetated wadis. South of al-Jafr and east of the Rum Desert, al-Mudawwara Desert is characterized by isolated hills and low rocky mountains separated by broad, sandy wadis. Towering sandstone mesas dominate this arid area, producing one of the most fantastic desert-scapes in the world.

Chapter 7 : AZRAQ LODGE - Updated Prices & Reviews (Jordan) - TripAdvisor

Remains of the oldest town in the area of Jordan, built in the desert in the 4th millenia BC by a group of some 2, migrants. There was built a wall and irrigation system (Jawa dam). Wadi el Jilat - Zarqa.

The aircraft being blown up in front of international press on 12 September. Unnamed passengers later recounted their days as hostages. They thought I was connected with the Israeli military, and I was held at gunpoint in front of the plane. They had dynamited the they had dynamite all over the front and the back of the plane. They brought on 20 kilos of plastic dynamite or something in Beirut. On 7 September, the hijackers held a press conference for 60 members of the media who had made their way to what was being called "Revolution Airport. Passenger Rivke Berkowitz of New York, interviewed in, recalled "the hijackers went around asking people their religion, and I said I was Jewish. Sharif claimed that the goal of the hijackings was "to gain the release of all of our political prisoners jailed in Israel in exchange for the hostages. Laird refused[citation needed] on the pretext that the weather was unfavorable, and the idea was dropped. The 82nd Airborne Division was put on alert, the Sixth Fleet was put to sea, and military aircraft were sent to Turkey in preparation for a possible military strike. This was bitterly opposed by the United States: You could imagine how bad that would look, and if it all comes out that we could have got our people out but for the obduracy of you and other people so to speak. The following day, fighting between the PFLP and Jordanian forces erupted in Amman at the Intercontinental Hotel, where the women and children were being kept by the PFLP, and the Kingdom appeared to be on the brink of full-scale civil war. According to British documents declassified under the " thirty year rule ", an anxious King Hussein asked the UK and United States to pass a request to Israel to bomb Syrian troops if they entered Jordan in support of the Palestinians. Resolution and consequences[edit] King Hussein declared martial law on 16 September and initiated the military actions later known as the Black September conflict. Hostage David Raab described the Jordanian military actions: Electricity was cut off, and again we had little food or water. Friday afternoon, we heard the metal tracks of a tank clanking on the pavement. Suddenly, the shelling stopped. Now we have not only mobilized guards on our planes, but we are developing facilities Ziv included archival footage of the events and interviewed hijackers, hostages, members of the media, and politicians.

Chapter 8 : Oasis in the desert - Review of Azraq Lodge, Azraq, Jordan - TripAdvisor

Day 1: Wadi Zarqa Main 6KM / HOURS (DEPENDING ON GROUP) This spectacular one-day hike takes you through the Wadi Zarqa Ma'in, a narrow canyon that cuts down from the desert plateau to the hot springs near the Dead Sea.

It does, however, contain significant deposits of phosphates, uranium, and oil shale, as well as some potassium, salt, natural gas, and stone. Phosphates are transported by rail from the mines to the port of Aqaba, where it is shipped overseas. Potential Jordanian sources of energy have been the focus of renewed interest in recent years. Natural gas was discovered in Jordan in 1988. Reserves are estimated at billion cubic feet. The Risha field, in the Eastern Desert near the Iraqi border, supplies a nearby power plant with nearly 30 million cubic feet of gas a day. Jordan recently signed an agreement with Royal Dutch Shell to extract and exploit shale-oil in central Jordan. Water is a serious problem: Jordan is one of the most water-scarce countries in the world. Water is needed not only for irrigation and for increasing domestic use but also for the utilization of some resources, such as oil shale, and for various other industrial activities. Jordan is presently considering building a nuclear reactor for power generation, and such a plant would require huge amounts of cooling water. Its first task was the re-establishment and protection of endangered species. The RSCN was given the right to issue hunting licenses in 1975. This was essential to its mission, which mandated that it must first tackle the problem of uncontrolled hunting, which contributed in large part to extinctions and the destruction of natural habitats. The Shaumari Reserve was founded in 1976, in order to enable the breeding of endangered species, specifically the Arabian oryx, gazelles, ostriches, and Persian onagers. In 1977, the RSCN began its survey programme, run by experienced researchers. The primary purpose of the programme was to collect the information required to create suitable and sustainable habitats for wild animals, through scientific experimentation and research. A business branch of the RSCN, tasked with running socio-economic projects, was established later. An RSCN training programme established in 1980 aims to build regional and local skills in nature conservation. The latest Jordanian nature reserve was created in Dibeen in 1981 and covers an area of 8. Nine additional nature reserves have been proposed, as well as two other sites that are possible candidates for preservation. A map of the nature reserves in Jordan in 1982 is displayed on the right of this page. The kingdom has only begun, over the past decade, to pay more attention to environmental issues and the protection of the environment. The Ministry of Environment was established in 1983 and began studies of the most prominent environmental issues the country faces and ways to deal with them. The Ministry identified environmental hot-spots, mainly polluted areas, among them the cities of Russeifa, which is polluted by phosphate mining in the nearby hills, and Zarqa, which lies in the Sayl al-Zarqa watershed. The ministry has been working over the past two years to rehabilitate the Zarqa, which has been polluted for years, and to create a community of craftspeople in the city of Russeifa. It has carried out inspections of chemical and industrial factories to ensure that they abide by environmental rules and regulations. In late 1984 the Ministry established an environmental directorate in the governorate of Ajloun to safeguard its bountiful forests. Violators are jailed for three months and fined. Beginning in the summer of 1985, the government will move chemical and medical wastes to special units to ensure that they are disposed of properly. In the past two years, the country has switched completely to unleaded petrol, which is available in 90 and octane grades, and efforts are being made to improve the quality of diesel fuel. The website grew rapidly in breadth and depth and today forms a rich and valuable source of information on 21 countries, from Morocco to Oman and from Iran to Yemen, both in Arabic and English. We currently reach six million readers annually and growing fast. In order to guarantee the impartiality of information on the Chronicle, articles are published without by-lines. This also allows correspondents to write more freely about sensitive or controversial issues in their country. All articles are fact-checked before publication to ensure that content is accurate, current and unbiased. To run such a website is very expensive. With a small donation, you can make a huge impact. And it only takes a minute.

Chapter 9 : Zarqa Governorate - Wikipedia

Explore Zarqa holidays and discover the best time and places to visit. | The third-largest city in Jordan after Amman and Irbid, Zarqa is now virtually part of the continuous urban sprawl of northern Amman.

Group of waterfalls created by hot springs. Waterfalls are adorned with travertine formations. Jabal Umm Fruth Bridge – Aqaba. Seven Pillars of Wisdom – Aqaba. Impressive, unusual mountain rising from the desert. Zarqa river amber – Zarqa and other governorates. Man made landmarks of Jordan Megaliths, stone settings Azraq geoglyphs – Zarqa. Hundreds of wheel-shaped geoglyphs made from stones. These 25 – 70 m large figures are at least 2, years old. Large group of megalithic structures, mostly circles and rectangular areas delimited by rows of standing stones. Eighth mysterious structures in different parts of Jordan – enormous rings which are made from roughly shaped, upright stones or stone ridges. These rings are very large, with a diameter from to m. These circles most likely were created in the time period between and BC. Large group of megaliths – some 60 dolmens as well as stone circles, rock-cut tombs. At least one dolmen has an impressive opening – window – in its stone wall. Very old settlement which was inhabited sometimes around – BC and was one of the largest known settlements from this period. Area of settlement reached 15 ha and here lived some 3, people – some of the first known farmers. Here have been found 32 statues of humans – some with two heads. Remnants of Neolithic settlement, inhabited since BC. One of the oldest known settlements in the world. First occupied by the people of Natufian culture in 11 millenium BC, but in the 7th millenium BC it was a fortified settlement, enclosed with a wall and with circular buildings inside. Houses had subterranean floors. Around BC destroyed by fire and rebuilt with rectangular buildings. Abandoned roughly at BC. Iraq ed-Dubb Cave of the Bear – Ajloun. Remains of Neolithic settlement at the base of cliff. Sometimes around 10 BC here was started cultivation of the first cereals. There is a cave with remnants of adobe architecture. Remains of the oldest town in the area of Jordan, built in the desert in the 4th millenia BC by a group of some 2, migrants. There was built a wall and irrigation system Jawa dam. Wadi el Jilat – Zarqa. Site of Neolithic settlement. Remnants of very old settlement, inhabited since BC. Most of the remaining structures were built in Roman, Byzantine and early Islamic times. Abandoned in AD. Very impressive are the columns of early Christian church from the 6th century AD. Gadara Antiochia – Irbid. In the town are ruins of aqueducts Aqueduct of Gadara , temples, basilica, collonaded street. Gerasa Jerash – Jerash. Comparatively well preserved ruins of ancient Greek – Roman city. Settlement here existed already in the Bronze Age, but larger city was founded by Alexander the Great or one of his generals in BC. This once important city declined since AD. Remnants include beaudiful, oval Forum, well preserved city walls and many other structures. Ruins of ancient town. Pella has been inhabited since the Neolithic times city walls from 3 BC , first mentioned in the 19th century BC. Flourished in Greek and Roman times, early refuge of Christians who fled from Jerusalem in the 1st century AD and hid in the caves here. Ancient capital city of Nabateans, established around the 6th century BC in the site of ancient sanctuary. Contains some of the most beautiful and intricate rock-cut architecture in the world, available after walking through some 1. Umm ar-Rasas – Amman. Ruins of ancient town with the remnants of Roman, Byzantine and early Islamic structures. Especially valuable is the enormous, well preserved mosaic floor in the Church of St. This mosaic was created in and overlays an older one which was made in Rions of the ancient town contain remnants of fifteen more churches and military camp. Umm el-Jimal – Mafraq. Ruins of ancient Roman, Byzantine and early Muslim town. Here are also traces of Nabatean activities before the Romans in the 1st century AD. Site contains ruins of Roman temples, Christian churches. Medieval and later cities Al Qastal – Amman. Most of the buildings are in ruins. Here is found the oldest Umayyad residential palace, one of the oldest mosques with minaret. Hill – historical center of Amman, continuously inhabited since the Neolithic. Surrounded by fortification walls. Beautiful, well preserved historical town. Although Salt flourished in the 19th and early 20th century, the history of town goes back into the times of Alexander the Great around BC. Very well preserved Roman fort on the eastern borders of Roman Empire. Fort was built in the early 4th century AD. Huge hilltop fortification, site of historical importance. This fortification is built at the Dead Sea around 90

BC. Here was beheaded John the Baptist by Herod.