

## Petra – the hidden “rose-red city half as old as time”

Written by Administrator

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**Petra** in Jordan is a spectacular, ancient Arabian city of the **Nabataeans** (nomadic Arabs) carved into rose colored rock faces, surrounded by mountains and gorges. It is considered as one of the **‘New 7**

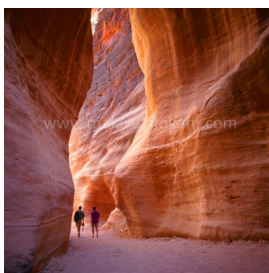
### **Wonders of the world’**

. This historic city is greatly esteemed for its unique, **grand architecture and water conduit system.**

While there were settlements around Petra as early as 1500 B.C, Petra as the capital city of the industrious nomads and traders, Nabateans, was probably established around 300 B.C., major land marks such as the Al-Khazneh was built around 1st Century A.D. What primarily led to the importance and build up of the city was its location and in-depth knowledge of the Nabataeans on the water resources and conservation in and around Petra.

Petra was probably the most important commercial hub in the region at its peak, for silks, spices, incense and precious stones. It was a junction of sorts, of **trade routes to Arabia, Egypt, China and India**

Petra could sustain itself as a major trading city because of the ingenious water management know-how of its inhabitants. Interconnected water channels, dams, reservoirs, rain and flood harvesting techniques bear testimony to the water engineering skills of the Nabataeans . The city’s reservoirs could withstand droughts.



The architecture displayed in the monuments of Petra are varied, an amalgamation of Greek (Hellenistic), Roman, Egyptian and Syrian. The most recognized monument of the city of Petra is **Al-Khazneh** (The Treasury) which has starred in many movies, including the cult classic – Indiana Jones and The Last Crusade. Cut into the red-rose sand stone cliff, its architecture has a predominant Greek influence. The main entrance to the city of Petra (Eastern entrance) is through the narrow gorge called **Siq**, roughly 1 KM in length and flanked by 100 Mtr high cliffs, at places as narrow as 5 Mtrs, giving the city of Petra an elusive, hidden character. The journey through the Siq on foot or horseback itself is a breath taking experience. Once through the Siq you reach the spell binding Al-Khazneh.

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~~http://www.petra.jordan.gov.jo/eng/AboutPetra/PetraHistory/PetraHistory.aspx~~