



Madaba & the King's Highway

مأدبا & الطريق الملوكي

Includes ➔

Madaba	123
Mt Nebo	134
Around Mt Nebo	136
Mukawir (Machaerus)	137
Umm ar-Rasas	139
Wadi Mujib	140
Karak	141
Tafila	147
Dana Biosphere Reserve	147
Shobak	152

Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Black Iris Hotel (p128)
- ➔ Mariam Hotel (p130)
- ➔ Al-Nawatef Camp (p150)
- ➔ Dana Guest House (p151)
- ➔ Feynan Ecolodge (p152)

Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Haret Jdoudna Complex & Cafe (p131)
- ➔ Adonis Restaurant (p131)
- ➔ Nebo Restaurant & Terrace (p135)
- ➔ Feynan Ecolodge (p152)

Why Go?

Occupying the central highlands and interrupted by the mighty Wadi Mujib, Madaba and the points of interest that punctuate the King's Highway lie at the heart of ancient Jordan. With prehistoric dolmens in rolling pastureland, panoramic sites of biblical importance, exquisite Roman mosaics and well-preserved Crusader castles, there is something fascinating to see along the entire length of this central region.

That doesn't mean to say that the region is only of interest to history buffs or religious pilgrims. As home to diverse communities, including Jordan's Christian minority, and encompassing dramatic and highly varied landscapes, this is quintessential Jordan. With good accommodation, traditional Jordanian dining and opportunities for hiking and canyoning, it's easy to engage with both town and country in a region that is still surprisingly off the beaten track for most visitors.

When to Go

➔ Enjoyable year-round, the higher altitude towns along the King's Highway often experience snow in winter providing a spectacular backdrop to Crusader castles. The cold air brings cut-glass clarity to the region's sweeping panoramas by day, and chilly nights inspire huddles around wood fires in true Arab tradition.

➔ For hiking, the season extends from March (when trail-side flowers are at their best) until 30th October. While Jordan's lowlands shrivel in the heat, this region's uplands offer relative cool, grapes and figs in abundance, raptor migration and grand sunsets.

Madaba & the King's Highway Highlights

- 1 Piece together early Christian history in the mosaics of **Madaba** (p123).
- 2 Take shade under an ancient stone dolmen in **Wadi Jadid** (p137).
- 3 Survey the Promised Land from Moses' memorial at **Mt Nebo** (p134).
- 4 Splash through permanent pools of water in one of the regions many **canyons** (p130).
- 5 Dance in Salome's footsteps at **Mukawir**, where Herod allegedly beheaded John the Baptist (p137).
- 6 Watch the ladies at **Bani Hamida** (p138) weave their past into a prosperous future.
- 7 Enjoy the eagle-eye vista of **Wadi Mujib** (p140) from the viewpoint.
- 8 Listen to the thunder of ghostly hooves at **Karak Castle** (p143) and **Shobak Castle** (p153), Jordan's most impressive Crusader remains.
- 9 Hike from the temperate uplands to the scorching desert floor of Wadi Araba in **Dana Biosphere Reserve** (p147).

