

The enchanting, historical and unspoiled beauties of Jordan

After a short wait at the southern border between Israel and Jordan, I reached Aqaba, a small city on the Red Sea. A lady in a tourism office kindly showed me where the minibuses for Petra left. At first sight, this city made a good impression upon me.

While travelling in foreign countries, I try to use local buses for reaching different places, as it allows me to better learn the customs and traditions of the population. On these buses, you can often meet kind people who are happy to speak with you about their country.

Luckily, I found a minibus which left soon for Petra. The trip was fine. A rocky and mounting landscape accompanied my journey. People on the bus spoke with me in Arabic about their country and life. While I talked with them in Arabic their eyes lit up. Local people are happy when a foreigner speaks their language. You can sense that they feel that you respect their culture and appreciate their traditions. At 05:00 PM, I reached Petra where I stayed three nights. I met some Asian girls with whom I had a dinner in a typical Jordanian restaurant. The food was tasty and well prepared.

I feel that Petra is one of the most beautiful places in the world. It takes at least two full days for visiting the historical and archeological sites of this magical, ancient, and enchanting place. At sunset, the monuments change their color while the sun goes down, conferring upon you a unique sensation. After crossing the Siq (the main entrance), one finds the Treasury, the most amazing and enchanting monument of Petra, a mausoleum well preserved, decorated with sculptures of mythological characters and bucolic representations. It was built according to the architecture of the ancient Mediterranean cities. The architecture and decorations of this monument show the cultural wealth of the Nabateans. At first sight one becomes astonished before this wonder. Three evenings a week, outside of the Treasury, is staged an interesting representation called "*Petra by Night*". If one has time, it is worth to attend this performance.

Petra should be visited without haste. It is advisable to stop for a while in many different places and admire the beauty and charm of the monuments and the landscape around. After 1.3 km of hiking, I reached the Monastery, a monument as charming as the Treasury, whose shape recalls the Hellenistic architecture. At the top of the hill, close to the Monastery, a lady with her daughter offered me a cup of tea. I rested there around 30 minutes, talking with her about enchanting Petra and life in Jordan. From the top of the hill, I could admire the beautiful landscape surrounding me. I left Petra early in the morning for Wadi Rum. While I was on the minibus, amazing memories were slowly flowing in my mind. Walking through ancient Petra is akin to being in a fantastic world and going back more than 2000 years ago.

Fine red sand, wild camels, sky full of stars, small dunes, rocks: this is Wadi Rum. Before entering the desert, I crossed a village of small low houses, built following the local customs. While walking and resting in the desert, time seems to stand still. The peace of this place and the wild camels, which move slowly through the desert, transport you to a different world. The color of the fine sand, the rocks, and the blue sky create a charming landscape. The sand slightly changes color while the sun is setting. At night, the sky transforms into a carpet of stars. The night here is not as dark as in other places thanks to the countless stars which lighten the desert.

At the camp, in the middle of the desert, I was served a delicious dinner consisting of plenty of local tasty dishes, while someone sang traditional Arabic songs to the sound of a traditional instrument. While sleeping in the camp, in the middle of the desert, one is surrounded by an enchanting and magical atmosphere.

The following day, I left Jordan after spending beautiful days and nights there, and seeing amazing places that still preserve and keep intact their natural and old-fashioned charm.