



UMAYYAD DESERT CASTLES IN JORDAN

minimal cost (less than 10\$)

This tour covers Ahl Al-Kahf, Al-Muwaqqar, Qasr Al-Harraneh (Kharraneh), Qusair Amra, Azraq Fort, Azraq Lodge, Hammam As-Sarah and Qasr Al-Hallabat. A very rewarding visit that initiates the tourist to Umayyad desert architecture, water management and the only Islamic garden in the region. Lunch boxes are recommended.

Amman	- Departure at 7:30 am
Ahl Al-Kahf	- Arrival at 8:00 am to the Cave of Seven Sleepers (Ahl Al-Kahf)
Al-Muwaqqar	- Arrival at 8:00 am - Departure to Al-Muwaqqar at 8:30 am
Qasr Al-Harraneh	- Arrival at 9:00 am - Departure at 9:30 am to Qasr Al-Harraneh
Qusair Amra	- Arrival at 10:15 - Departure at 11:00 to Amra
Azraq Fort	- Arrival at 11:15 - Departure at 12:30 to Azraq Fort
Azraq Lodge	- Arrival at 12:45 - Departure at 13:00 to Azraq Lodge
Hammam As-Sarah	- Arrival at 13:15 / Lunch - Departure at 14:45 to Hammam As-Sarah
Qasr Al-Hallabat	- Arrival at 16:00 - Departure at 16:30 to Qasr Al-Hallabat
Amman or Madaba	- Arrival at 16:40 - Departure to Amman - Arrival at 19:00 - Arrival at 19:30

* In winter it might be necessary to skip Al-Muwaqqar and Hammam As-Sarah (or Ahl Al-Kahf) to allow for earlier darkness.





Ahl Al-Kahf

Ahl Al-Kahf was Mentioned in the Holy Qur'an in a Sura named Al-Kahf (the Cave). Persecuted by despotic rule of Trajan for monotheism, a group of pious youths took refuge in this cave. To preserve them, Allah put them to sleep, and they revived 300 years later.

Al-Muwaqqar

Al Muwaqqar once stood on an elevated mound surveying the desert, and the cultivated lands of the west. The ruins are located about 2 km north of Highway 40. Muwaqqar was situated so as to link communication with Qastal and Mushatta to the west and Kharraneh to the east, and it is actually visible there at dusk on a clear day.

Qasr Al-Harraneh

Qasr Al-Harraneh is the earliest to be built in the eastern Jordanian desert. Its location was chosen for monitoring a wadi (Wadi Daba'a), which is an outlet from Wadi Sirhan via Wadi Ghadaf. It is also in the line-of-sight of communication with Muwaqqar, to the east, and Qusayr Amra's watchtower to the northeast.

Qusair Amra

Located on the edge of Wadi Al-Butum a desert oasis, approximately 85 km east of Amman. Qusayr Amra (712-715 AD) is a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1985. It is considered one of the most important and rare examples of early Islamic bath art (fresco painting) and architecture. Architecturally, Qusayr Amra's most impressive characteristic is its vaulting system, specifically in the use of pointed transverse arches.

Qasr Al-Azraq

Azraq occupies what once was a large oasis, located on the north edge of Wadi Sirhan, a great black desert, or Harra trade route enabling connection with Arabia and the Persian Gulf, second only to the one at Palmyra. The need to control and protect Azraq has been paramount since the time of the Romans if not earlier. Judging from Latin and Greek inscriptions from the 3rd and 4th centuries referencing Diocletian, the Romans built a fortress there.

Qasr Al-Hallabat

The complex occupies an area of 50 acres with numerous springs and water sources, with the Qasr located on the top of the mound, dominating the site. Here you can imagine well-organised Umayyad park that illuminate and disseminate the nature and density of Umayyad early Islamic occupation in Jordan. The history of the castle goes back to the Nabatean period when it was a station on the trade routes.

Hamam As-Sarah

A bath complex (10.7m x 11.80m), two kilometers to the east of Al-Hallabat similar to Qusayr Amra. It was once decorated with marble, mosaics and fresco.

