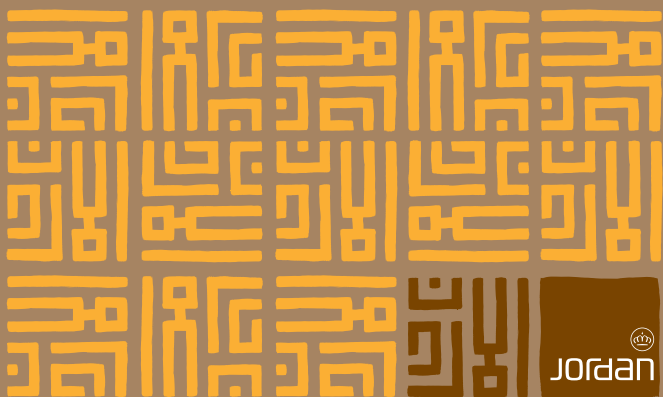
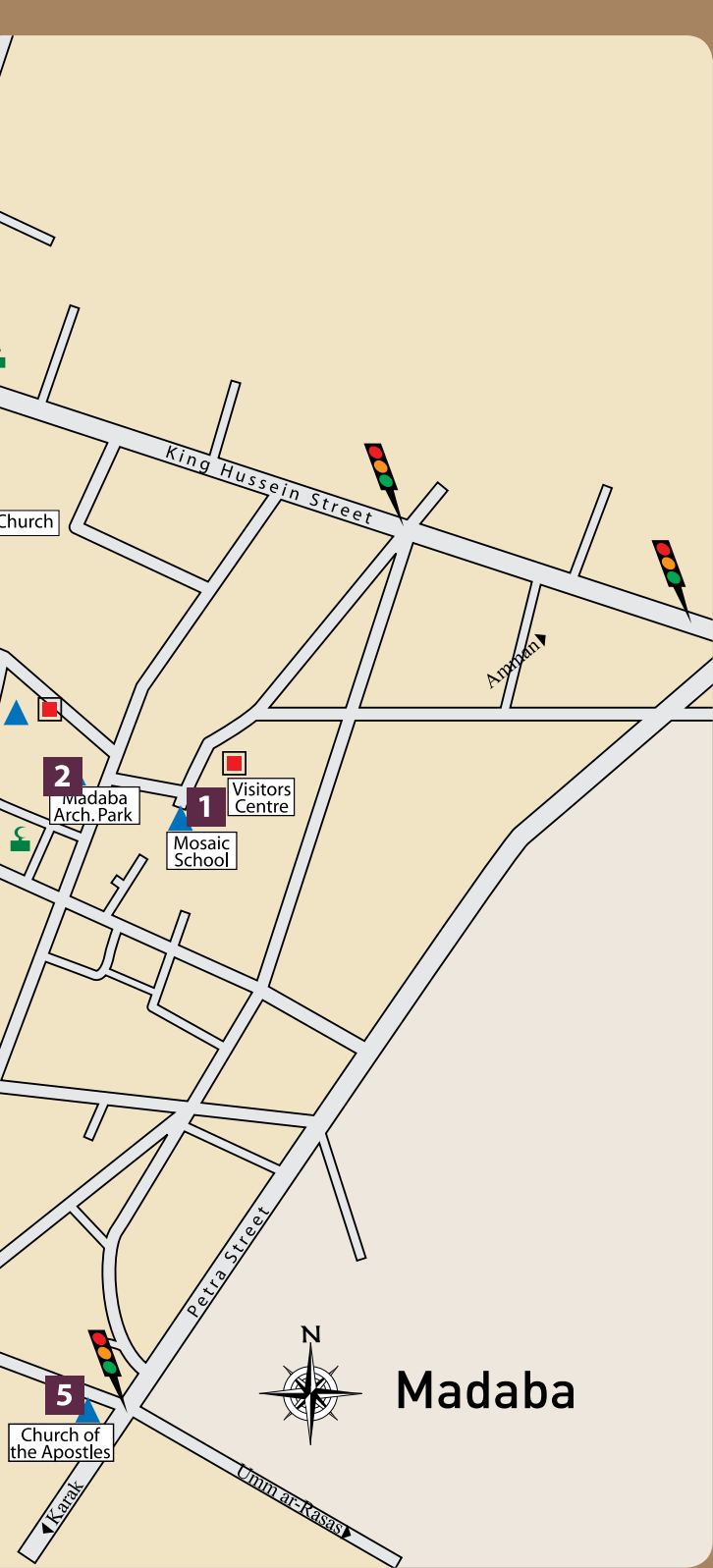




Madaba



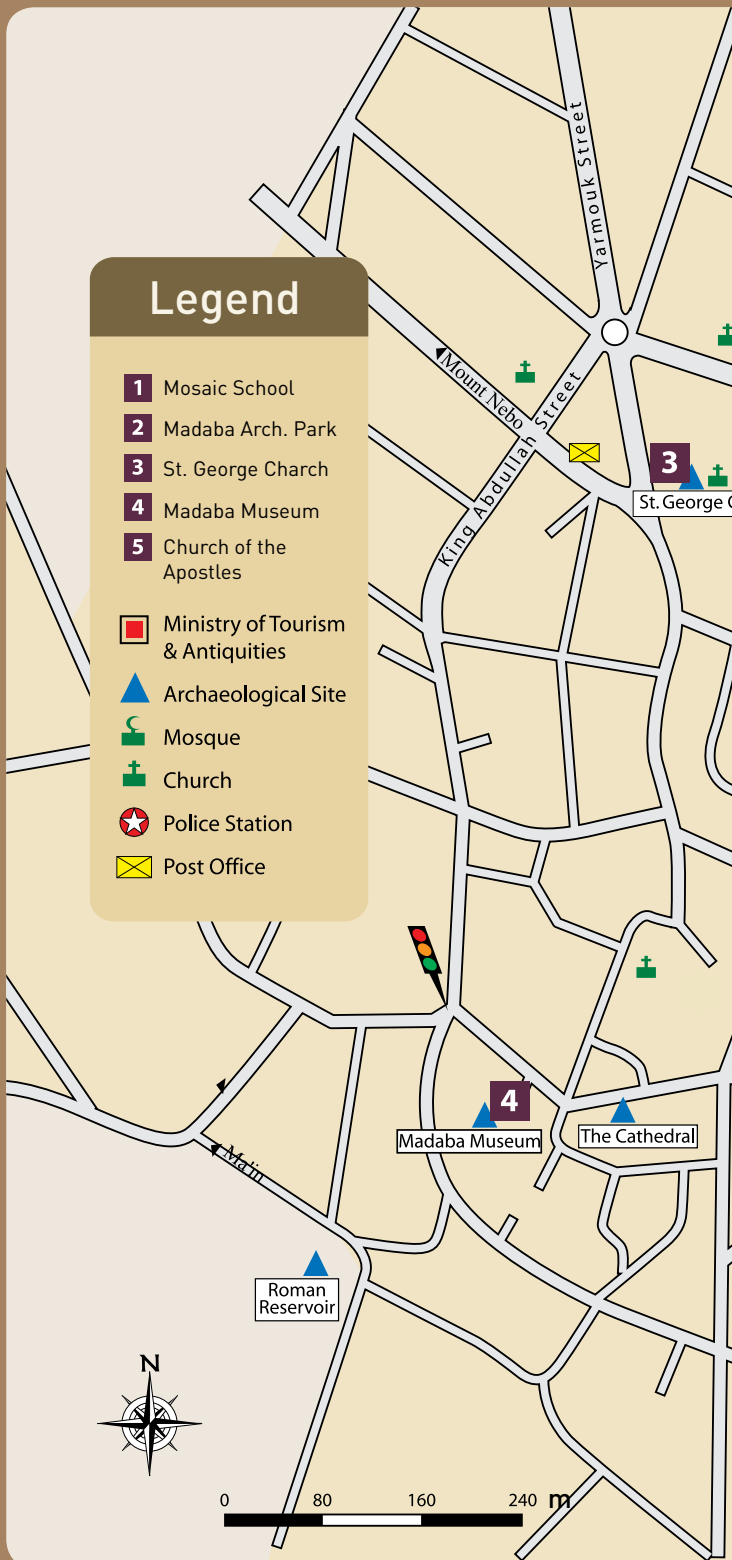


Legend

- 1** Mosaic School
- 2** Madaba Arch. Park
- 3** St. George Church
- 4** Madaba Museum
- 5** Church of the Apostles
-  Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities
-  Archaeological Site
-  Mosque
-  Church
-  Police Station
-  Post Office



0 80 160 240 m





west of Madaba. A very steep and winding road, offering spectacular views of the Dead Sea area, leads to the site. For centuries, people were attracted to Hammamat Ma'in with its warm therapeutic waters and lavish scenery. It was probably made famous in the past by figures like Herod the Great, who reportedly built his palace in Machaerus just to be near this site. Hammamat Ma'in offers some wonderful scenery, including a 25 meter high waterfall and lovely hot pools. The site is serviced by a luxury hotel with a swimming pool and spa facilities.

9 Dead Sea Panorama

Inaugurated in 2006, the **Dead Sea Panorama** ideally sits high in the rocky hills offering breathtaking views of the Dead Sea, as well as Jericho and Jerusalem. The Panorama blends beautifully with its rocky surroundings. It contains a museum that presents the history of the Dead Sea, as well as a display of splendid rock formations from the area. It also contains a restaurant that offers a selection of traditional Arabic food. From the Panorama, a walking/hiking trail was set, tracing along the nearby ridge and offering fantastic views of the natural landscape.





7 Umm Ar-Rasas

A very ancient site located around 25 km southeast of Madaba, Umm Ar-Rasas (ancient Kastom Mefaa) offers visitors a landscape of astounding old edifices, buildings and churches. Though mostly in ruins, Umm Ar-Rasas, which dates back to the 5th and 6th centuries AD, still includes a rectangular walled city, fourteen churches, several buildings with staircases, a wonderful array of stone arches, and of



course some of the most impressive floor mosaics ever found in Jordan. The most interesting attraction by far lies outside the walled city within the Church of St. Stephen, which contains the largest, perfectly preserved Byzantine mosaic floor dating back to the 8th century AD during the Abbasid era. The tapestry includes images and depictions of around 25 cities from the east and west of the River Jordan as well as Egypt.

Less than 2 km north of the ancient site of Umm Ar-Rasas, a 15 meter high square tower stands alone, looming in the horizon. The tower, believed to be the highest standing tower of ancient times in Jordan, has no door or staircase, and has often made onlookers wonder as to its purpose. The tower was used as a retreat for hermit monks.

8 Hammamat Ma'in

The natural thermal springs of **Hammamat Ma'in** are located around 35 km south-





6 Machaerus

On a hilltop nearly 32 km southwest of Madaba, known today as Makawir, the ruins of Herod the Great's fortress Machaerus lie 720 meters high, commanding a stunning view of the Dead Sea .

History tells of a fortress that was first built here in the 1st century BC in defense against the expansion of the Nabataeans, and it was destroyed by the Romans in 63 BC. The fortress was later restored by Herod the Great and handed down to his son, Herod Antipas. According



to historical narrations, Herod Antipas came to fear the increasing popularity of John the Baptist, who criticised his second marriage to Herodias. John the Baptist was imprisoned at Machaerus and later beheaded upon the request of Herodias' daughter, Salome, who danced for Herod and demanded John the Baptist's head on a platter. The site was ultimately destroyed by the Romans in AD 73.

This ancient site can be reached on foot up a steep hill path. Although little remains, several elements of the once extravagant Herodian palace, as well as the remnants of the fortress wall and towers, can still be seen. The earliest mosaics discovered in Jordan were found here: floor fragments from the 1st century BC.



rebuilt in AD 597 following damage caused by the major earthquake of that year. The monastery was partially constructed on the foundations of the early church.



It is said to have been erected by monks from Egypt, and some of the most magnificent Byzantine mosaics are housed within its walls. Moreover, six tombs created from natural rock were uncovered from beneath the mosaic floor of the church. The serpentine cross sculpture (the Brazen Serpent Monument) that stands outside the church overlooking the Jordan Valley, was designed by Italian artist Giovanni Fantoni as a symbol of Moses' creation of the bronze serpent in the wilderness and the cross upon which Jesus was crucified. The church holds one of the finest mosaic pieces recovered from Byzantine times; a tapestry in a room on the north side, which was the deacon's hall of the ancient church. It was discovered in 1976 and depicts pastoral and hunting scenes. According to two inscriptions, the mosaic was completed in AD 531.

Mount Nebo has been under the management of Franciscan Monks for decades. They have restored and preserved the mosaics and the original altars on site. The site has been excavated and restored partly to maintain its ancient role as a church, but also to serve as a museum for some of the most wonderful mosaic pieces found in Byzantine churches throughout Jordan. The church as it stands today is still in use. In 2000, the late Pope John Paul II visited Mount Nebo as part of his pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Mount Nebo was then declared as an official Christian site of pilgrimage.



Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities

Tel: +962 6 460 33 60

Fax: +962 6 464 84 60

www.mota.gov.jo



Jordan Tourism Board

Tel: +962 6 567 84 44

Fax: +962 6 567 82 95

www.visitjordan.com



Tourist Police Department

Call free: 196 ext. 4661 / 4650

Direct contact: +962 6 569 0384



what is thought to be the tomb of the Prophet Moses and the place where he was shown the land of Canaan, which he was never to see (Deuteronomy 32). Discovered in 1864 by the Duc de Luynes and excavated since 1932 by the Franciscan Fathers, the Mt. Nebo complex has served as a holy site of pilgrimage and a church since the 4th century AD.

Mount Nebo, or Siyagha as it is commonly known in Arabic, is a vast complex of churches, a monastery, tombs and an array of impeccable mosaic floor coverings. As you enter the site on foot you'll have a



wonderful opportunity to explore the many ruins of ancient buildings before reaching the main church at the top of the plateau.

At Mount Nebo, the remains of a church and monastery were originally discovered in 1933. A small Byzantine church was first constructed here by early Christians in the second half of the 4th century AD in honor of Moses' final resting place. The church itself was expanded into a larger basilica in the 5th century AD and was again



floor mosaic, which lies in the center of the church, and which depicts the Greek Goddess of the Sea, Thalassa, within a circle of dolphins.



The impressive mosaic dates to AD 578, as can be seen by an inscription and signature of the master mosaicist, Salamaino. The church itself is believed to have been erected at that time in honor of Jesus Christ's 12 apostles.

In the Vicinity of Madaba

Not far from Madaba, 10 km to the west on a windswept plateau 817 meters above sea level, **Mount Nebo** stands as one of the most revered holy sites in Jordan. It offers spectacular views overlooking the Jordan Valley, the Dead Sea, the West Bank and Jerusalem.

It is the reputed site of





East. Established in 1992 as a school, it was designed to provide vocational training to young Jordanians with the aim of preserving and restoring the numerous beautiful and precious mosaics excavated throughout Jordan, and more specifically in Madaba. It later became an institute and also offers classes to people interested in learning the art of making, as well as restoring mo-

saics. Visitors can observe first-hand how mosaics are made and how ancient pieces are restored, and may even try their hand at this ancient art form.

4 Madaba Museum

The Jordanian Ministry of Tourism purchased several houses built on Byzantine mosaic floors to form the core of the Madaba Museum in 1967. The museum was erected to house large mosaics that would otherwise be difficult to protect and maintain in their original locations. The museum is near the Madaba Archaeological Park, and here you can feast your eyes on some impressive mosaics which come from the areas surrounding Madaba. There are also collections of pottery and glass from the Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine and Islamic periods.



5 Church of the Apostles

Next, you can head on to the southern part of Madaba, where you see the impressive 6th century Church of the Apostles. This church houses a large medallion-shaped



1991 through a project led by Father Michele Piccirillo, director of the Franciscan Archaeological Institute in Jordan. The Park includes a cluster of ancient edifices, traditional Arab houses and an

interesting and well-preserved stretch of the old paved Roman colonnaded street, as well as some of the finest mosaics discovered in Jordan. The Park hosts in its vicinity three Byzantine churches: the Church of the Virgin Mary, the wonderful Hypolitus Hall, and the Basilica of the Prophet Elijah and Elianus' crypt. Indeed, one of the finest mosaics discovered in Madaba covers the floor of the Hypolitus Hall, which can be seen while you are at the Madaba Archaeological Park in the center of the city. The Hypolitus Hall is believed to have been a court or a council chamber or even a mansion in the 6th century AD. The mosaics include a series of mythological scenes in three central panels. One of the panels recounts the myth of Phaedra and Hypolitus, while another portrays Aphrodite on a throne next to Adonis and surrounded by a winged Cupid, Eros and cherubs.

3 Madaba Mosaic Institute

Located near the Madaba Archaeological Park and the Church of the Virgin Mary in the center of Madaba, you'll come across the Madaba Institute of Mosaic Art and Restoration, a unique institute dedicated to the teaching of mosaic art restoration and conservation. In fact, it is the only project of its kind in the Middle





its surrounding areas from Jordan and Palestine in the north of the delta in Egypt. The map is deemed to be the best topographic representation created before modern cartography. It offers a fascinating portrayal of about 157 towns and villages, all labeled and identified, from the period AD 542-570, including images of the Dead Sea and the Jordan River with fish swimming in it. The most astounding depiction however is that of the Old City of Jerusalem in the center of the map.

The image clearly reflects the structure of the Old City in Byzantine times with portrayals of the city's old wall, the Damascus Gate, the Lions Gate, the Golden Gate, the Zion Gate, the Church of the Holy Sepulcher and the Tower of David. The map is believed to have provided orientation for pilgrims in the Holy Land.

Once inside, walk to the center. You will see the mosaic map almost immediately. It is usually covered up to protect it from the elements of the environment, but a Church priest stands by to uncover the exceptional work of art for you and to give you a background of the map, using a long stick to pinpoint items of interest on it.

2 Madaba Archaeological Park

After seeing the map, you can head over to the Madaba Archaeological Park, located in the heart of the city and not far from the Church of St. George. It was launched in



abandoned and forgotten for centuries until a group of 90 Arab Christian families from Kerak in the south of Jordan, led by two Italian priests from the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, moved to Madaba and resettled there in 1880. It was then that Madaba's rich past and colorful mosaics came into the limelight, as its new inhabitants began to make the dusty ancient town their home, all the while uncovering the wonderful works of mosaic art on the floors, walls and ceilings of the historical buildings. These precious findings led to the rediscovery of this amazing ancient town and the launch of numerous archaeological research efforts and excavations, and Madaba was ultimately catapulted towards global recognition.

1 Church of St. George

Often described as the oldest map in existence, the well-preserved remains of this 6th century AD mosaic still sit in its original place on the floor of the Greek Orthodox Church of St. George, located in the northwest of the center of Madaba. The church itself was built in AD 1897 by the new inhabitants of Madaba over the remains of a much earlier 6th century Byzantine church, at which time the map was discovered. The mosaic



map is believed to originally have been around 15.7x5.6 meters, but only a quarter of it survived. Nevertheless, the well-preserved surviving portions of the mosaic map portray an ornate and vivid depiction of the Holy Land and



before that by the Nabataeans in the 1st century AD.

In the 2nd century AD, the Roman Emperor Trajan ousted the Nabateans from Madaba, and the city gradually developed into a flourishing Roman provincial town as part of the Province of Arabia, with temples and colonnaded streets and a strong wall that surrounded and protected it. Under the Byzantine Empire, and specifically

around the 6th century AD, Madaba entered its most affluent era. In fact, Madaba was an important town at the beginning of the Christian Byzantine era, becoming the seat of the Christian bishopric and had its own bishop who attended the Council of Chalcedon. Imposing churches were built here, including the Church of the Apostles, the Church of the Virgin and, of course, the Church of St. George (more familiarly known as the “Church of the Map”). All these churches. These, as well as public and private buildings, were lavishly decorated with mosaics



depicting scenes from everyday life, such as harvesting, hunting, fishing or simple pastoral or mythological themes.

In 614 AD Madaba fell to ruins as a result of a Persian attack. The city's devastation was completed by the major earthquake of AD 747. After that, the city was



MADABA

Welcome to Jordan's 'City of Mosaics'. You are about to embark on a journey through time and history in the ancient Christian center of Jordan and in one of the most richly decorative cities in the country. Madaba is situated 30 km south of Amman and is perched at the core of the country's most fertile land.

History

Madaba dates back to before 1300 BC. It was first mentioned in the Bible as Medeba (Numbers 21:30 and Joshua 13:9), as well as on the Mesha Stele or the Moabite Stone, which is a black basalt stone discovered in 1868 that records the achievements and victories of Mesha, the King of Moab, against his enemy Israelites in the mid-9th century BC. Madaba's history spans from the mid-Bronze Age, to pagan Roman times, through the Christian Byzantine period, to the Muslim Umayyad and Abbasid eras. Today it is a major city. The mosaics and various architectural monuments uncovered in the city are an example of its smooth cultural transition from one period to another.

The ancient city of Madaba was ruled by the Romans and the Byzantines from the 2nd to the 7th centuries AD, and