



Petra, Jordan

Petra is an ancient city that lies in the midst of an arid desert in the south of modern-day Jordan. Often referred to as the “Rose City” due to the color of its sandstone, it was half built, half carved into the cliffs around the 4th century B.C. by the previously nomadic Nabataeans. At the time of its creation, Petra was located at an important juncture connecting the Far East with Syria, Egypt, Arabia, Greece, and Rome. Petra developed into a significant center of commerce becoming the capital of the Nabataean empire and one of the wealthiest and most unique cities in the ancient world.

What enabled a city of over 30,000 people to thrive in the middle of a desert was an impressive feat of engineering that continues to amaze archaeologists to this today. There were 36 dams built to protect the city from flash floods, and numerous canals dug to re-route water into over 100 cisterns connected by an underground network of pipes. Scientists estimate that every citizen had up to eight liters of water a day at their disposal. Recently uncovered ornamental pools, gardens, and fountains scattered throughout the city show how well the Nabataean’s water system worked. Although it may be hard to imagine, Petra was once an artificial oasis that archaeologists often compare to Las Vegas.

Although many of the city's ornamental structures are long gone, Petra's most astonishing features still survive in stone. The Nabataeans carved their tombs into the rock walls throughout Petra. Today over 500 of these tombs survive, the most important of which is the royal tomb called Al-Khazneh, or the Treasury. Known for its size, beauty and detail, The Treasury was constructed by blending of Greek, Roman, Egyptian and Syrian architecture.

Throughout its history, Petra was conquered several times. In 106 A.D. it became part of the Roman Empire, and later it fell into the hands of the Byzantines. However, the city had already lost most of its power and significance by that time. In 363 A.D. Petra was hit by an earthquake, but what archaeologists believe finally destroyed Petra was, ironically, a flood some 150 years later. The city continued for a while longer, but it never regained its former wealth and power and was eventually abandoned around the 8th century A.D. The site lay forgotten by the western world until Johann Ludwig Burckhardt “discovered” it in 1812.

Today Petra is the most visited tourist attraction in Jordan and one of the most well-known historical sites on the planet. In 1985 it was designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and since 2007 the Treasury is counted among the new Seven Wonders of the World. Every day tourists from around the world come to Petra to marvel at its 2000-year-old splendor.

Vocab Match

Name: _____

Word	Answer	Definition
1. arid	1. ____	a. adjective- moving from place to place, not having a permanent home
2. nomadic	2. ____	b. noun- achievement that requires great skill
3. juncture	3. ____	c. adjective- decorative
4. feat	4. ____	d. noun- to give a certain title or name
5. estimate	5. ____	e. adjective- strange or unexpected
6. ornamental	6. ____	f. noun- a place where things join
7. artificial	7. ____	g. adjective- extremely surprising and impressive
8. astonishing	8. ____	h. adjective- made by man, not natural
9. ironic	9. ____	i. adjective- very dry
10. designate	10. ____	j. verb- to approximately calculate a value

Discussion Topics

1. Name a historical site in your country you would like other people to visit.
2. Is there anything your hometown is famous for?
3. Do you prefer artificial or natural people, places, things?
4. Have you ever visited a place with extreme weather condition?
5. If you had a chance to visit an ancient historical site or a modern city, which would you prefer to visit and why?

Name: _____

Connect the images with their meanings:



ARTIFICIAL



ASTONISHING

WOW!

ORNAMENTAL



DEVASTATE



ARID

JUNCTURE



NOMADIC



Name: _____

Quiz

1) Where is Petra located?

a. on an island b. in a desert c. in a forest d. on a mountain

2) What is another name for Petra?

a. Rose City b. Pink City c. City of Roses d. Rock City

3) Who built Petra?

a. the Romans b. the Syrians c. the Egyptians d. the Nabataeans

4) What was Petra originally?

a. a trading post b. a port c. a farming town d. a tourist spot

5) What amazes archaeologists about Petra?

a. the beauty b. the architecture c. their water management system d. the fountains

6) How much water did the people of Petra have?

a. barely enough b. just enough c. not enough d. more than enough

7) Which famous city is Petra often compared to today?

a. Los Angeles b. Las Vegas c. New York d. Rome

8) What did the people of Petra carve into the stone?

a. water reservoirs b. tombs c. stories d. homes

9) Which style of architecture did the people of Petra use?

a. Greek b. Roman c. both d. neither

10) According to the article, what do archaeologists believe destroyed Petra?

a. a flood b. war c. drought d. a fire

Key

Matching	Quiz
1. i	1. b
2. a	2. a
3. f	3. d
4. b	4. a
5. j	5. c
6. c	6. d
7. h	7. b
8. g	8. b
9. e	9. c
10. d	10. a

PROJECT: Students research and present their findings on an artificial place, thing or food they find interesting. How, when, where, why is it made?

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Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=II_IOJJOAFM,

<https://www.memphistours.com/Jordan/Jordan-Travel-Guide/Petra-Attractions/wiki/Petra>

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/archaeology-and-history/archaeology/lost-city-petra/>