



JORDAN'S BEST... THINGS TO DO THIS SUMMER

The summer season is now in full swing, and as temperatures rise and the nights lengthen, there's an array of activities to make the most of the sunshine

Words by Eddie Taylor

1 STROLL THROUGH A MARKET

Amman's street life has been revitalised in an attempt to get people out of their cars and on their feet. In addition to the thoroughly modern

Wakalat Street in Sweifieh, pedestrianised in 2006, the birth of **Souq Jara** off Rainbow Street a year earlier has been a key factor in both the rejuvenation of the First Circle area and the promotion of local crafts and creativity. For a perhaps more authentic Jordanian experience, peruse the street markets that snake down the alleyways

of the King Hussein Mosque in downtown Amman – with an incredible fruit market by the Nymphaeum a definite highlight. jara-jordan.com/souk.html

2 DIVE THROUGH CORAL-COVERED WRECKS

The Red Sea provides some of the best diving sites in the world, with clear waters, piercing sunlight and steep sea cliffs helping to generate the softest, most colourful coral formations outside of Australia's Great Barrier Reef – and they grow faster here than at any other dive location in the world. So, when the Lebanese container ship *The Cedar Pride* caught fire and was abandoned in 1986, King Hussein decided it

should be lowered onto the sea floor as an added attraction for divers. Some 20 years later, the corals have done their work and it now rivals the nearby Japanese Garden and the Long Swim as the principal submarine attraction in Jordan.

diveaqaba.com

3 HIKE THROUGH CANYONS

July and August may not exactly be the most appropriate time to don the hiking boots, strap on the rucksack and embark on a seven-hour scramble up the side of a hill, but the steep-sided canyons and gorges above the Dead Sea not only provide delicious shade from the midday sun, but the fast-flowing streams and effervescent waterfalls provide the ideal tonic for your exertions. **Wadi Mujib** is the most celebrated of these mini Grand Canyons, but **Wadi Hidan**, **Wadi Hasa** and the stunning **Wadi Wala** offer equally enticing hikes – and the outstanding wildlife will be yours to enjoy in almost complete isolation. terhaal.com

4 ENJOY ALFRESCO ENTERTAINMENT

The summer months will once again be dominated by the **Jordan Festival**, the country-wide celebration of music and performing arts that begins this year on July 7th. Venues throughout the country will host an array of international talent, including Jordan's own superstar Diana Karazon, who is scheduled to play at Amman's Citadel. For those with louder



tastes, Jordanian Emad Alaeddin and his rock outfit **Avowed** (pictured above) are flying in from Los Angeles to play a special one-off gig in the National Museum Park in Jebel Weibdeh on 31 July. visitjordan.com/jordan-festival & avowed.com

5 SLEEP UNDER THE STARS

It's probably not a scientific fact, but there seem to be more stars hovering over the desert sands of **Wadi Rum** than any other corner of the planet. Camping out amid the brooding cliffs and drifting dunes, which ought to be an essential component of any visit to Jordan, can be like taking a sleeping bag to a planetarium; as enjoyable as the open fire, sweet tea and grilling meat undoubtedly are, most eyes will be turned skyward as an incredible canopy of stars reveal themselves with ever-increasing clarity. For the best effect, try and avoid full moon nights – and simply bathe in the silence.

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