

## TAKE A WALK THROUGH HISTORY

A walk through Jerash is a journey in time. Enter the city as its Roman inhabitants did: through the monumental South Gate, into the imposing Oval Plaza. Make your way down the *Cardo*, or "street of columns", and as you step over the tracks of chariot wheels still visible in the paving stones, imagine a group of well-off people window-shopping beneath a covered sidewalk.



The map highlights all major sights in the Jerash ruins, and suggests a walking route that takes them all in. Depending on your pace, allow between 1 1/2 and 2 1/2 hours for the complete tour.

Staff of the Jerash Visitors Centre at the South Gate are at your service to answer questions or provide assistance. Opening hours, daily, 7:30 - 19:00 in winter, 7:30 - 20:30 in summer. Tel. 962 2 6351272.



### 1- Hadrian's Arch

Built to commemorate the visit of the Emperor Hadrian to Gerasa in 129 AD, this splendid triumphal arch was intended to become the main southern gate to the city; however, the expansion plans were never completed.



### 2- Hippodrome

The massive arena, 245m long and 52m wide (*only part of which has been restored*) could seat 15,000 spectators to watch chariot races and other sports. The exact date of its construction is unclear, between the mid-second and third Centuries.



### 3- City Walls & South Gate

Approaching the city from the Visitor's Centre, you see the impressive city walls, built at the beginning of the 4th Century, most probably by Emperor Diocletian, and repeatedly expanded afterwards. The present walls are Byzantine and had a total length of 3,456m. The South Gate, through which you enter Jerash, Dates from 130 AD and has a characteristic carved acanthus-leaf decoration. The open area inside the gate was used as a marketplace, and a 2nd Century olive press is visible behind a wooden screen.



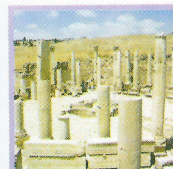
### 4- Oval Plaza

The spacious plaza measures 90x80 m and is surrounded by a broad sidewalk and a colonnade of 1st Century Ionic columns. There are two altars in the middle, and a fountain was added in the 7th Century AD. This square structure now supports a central column, which was recently erected to carry the Jerash Festival flame.



### 5- Colonnaded Street

Still paved with the original stones - the ruts worn by chariot wheels still visible - the 800m *Cardo* was the architectural spine and focal point of Gerasa. The colonnaded street was remodeled in the late 2nd century AD, probably after 170 AD. The ionic columns were replaced by more elaborate Corinthian columns. On either side was a broad sidewalk with shops, which can still be clearly seen. An underground sewage system ran the full length of the *Cardo*, and the regular holes at the sides of the street drained rainwater into the sewers.



### 6- Macellum

Halfway up the *Cardo*, the Colonnade becomes larger and taller, marking the entrance to the Macellum or market place, a building to the left of the colonnaded street. The inscription on the adjacent lion's head fountain is dated 211 AD.



### 7- South Tetrapylon

The intersection of the *Cardo* with the first cross street, the South Decumanus, was marked by four pedestals, (*still visible*), which supported columns and probably a pyramidal structure.



### 8- South Bridge

To the right, the south Decumanus runs east to a 73-m bridge which led to the town wall and residential quarter of Gerasa. Most of this is now buried under modern Jerash, with the exception of the East Baths, which can be seen across the modern road to the left of the mosque.

### 9- Ummayyad Houses

At the western end of the South Decumanus is an Early Islamic Ummayyad housing quarter inhabited from 660 to 800 AD. The south bridge led to the residential quarter and to the eastern gate.



### 10- Cathedral

Further up the *Cardo* on the left is the monumental and richly carved gateway of a 2nd Century Roman Temple of Dionysus. In the 4th Century the temple was rebuilt as a Byzantine church, now called the Cathedral (*although there is no evidence it was more important than any other church*). At the top of the stairs, against an outer east wall of the Cathedral, is the shrine of St. Mary, with a painted inscription to Mary and the archangels Michael and Gabriel.



### 11- Church of Saint Theodore

Lying above and behind the Cathedral, this large church was built in 496 AD. In between St. Theodore's and the West Side of the Cathedral entrance is a small paved plaza with a fountain in the centre; this Fountain Court was originally the Cathedral atrium. The course of the underground lead pipe which fed the fountain can be seen as a line of obliquely laid stones northeast of the fountain.





### 12- Nymphaeum

This ornamental fountain was constructed in 191 AD, and dedicated to the Nymphs. Such fountains were common in Roman cities, and provided a refreshing focal point for the city. This fine example was originally embellished with marble facings on the lower level and

painted plaster on the upper level, topped with a half-dome roof. Water cascaded through seven carved lion's heads into small basins on the sidewalk (the large red granite basin is a Byzantine addition) and overflowed from there through drains into the underground sewer system.

*On the left, you can see the ornate Propylaeum, the entrance to the Processional way leading up to the Temple of Artemis. Rather than walk up the steps now, proceed first further along the colonnaded street.*



### 13-Propylaeum

The procession to the Temple of Artemis originally started across the river in the part of Gerasa now covered by modern Jerash. Crossing the Cardo, worshippers approached the impressive entrance to the processional way leading up to the Temple of Artemis. Its massive columns and a carved portico

(the stones of which are now lying on the ground on the other side of the Cardo) were flanked by two - story shops.

### 14- Temple Esplanade

The monumental staircase, originally enclosed by high walls, leads up to a U-shaped terrace where an open-air altar was built, the foundations of which are still visible. A second staircase leads through a colonnade of 22 Corinthian columns and into the Temenos. This sacred precinct, 162x121m, was defined by Corinthian columns on all four sides.

### 15- Propylaeum Church

Opposite the Propylaeum, this Byzantine church was built in the 6th Century on the site of a colonnaded courtyard which formed part of the processional way. The columns were used as part of the church.

### 16- Ummayyad Mosque

On the right, behind four standing Corinthian columns is Jerash's only known Ummayyad mosque. This was built in the 7th or 8th Century, using materials from the colonnaded atrium of a Roman house that stood there.

### 17- West Baths

The massive West baths, on the right, covered an area of 50x70 m and now lie where they fell after the earthquake of January 749 AD. Typical of the 2nd Century, the Baths were an imposing complex of hot and cold rooms and other facilities.

### 18- North Tetrastylon

The second Tetrastylon, located where the North Decumanus or cross street intersects the Cardo, was built during Jerash's redesign, probably as a monumental entrance to the North Theatre. At a later date, it was dedicated to Julia Domna, the Syrian wife of emperor Septimius Severus, and probably had a domed roof, elaborate carved decoration, arches and four sides to allow traffic to pass through.

### 19- North Colonnaded Street

Beyond the North Tetrastylon is a stretch of the Cardo that was never widened, and retains its simple Ionic columns.

### 20- North Gate

At the end of the Cardo, the North Gate was built in 115 AD. Its odd wedge shape was probably necessary to align the gate on the inside with the Cardo, and on the outside with the Roman road, which led north to the Decapolis city of Pella.

*One can now turn back down the North Colonnaded Street, and follow the North Decumanus cross -street which turns off to the right.*



### 21- North Theatre

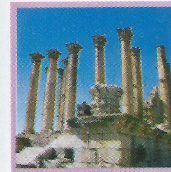
Just off the North Decumanus, the North Theatre was built in 165 AD. In front is a colonnaded plaza where a staircase led up to the entrance. The theatre originally had only 14 rows of seats, and was used for performances, as well as for city council meetings; the names of the tribes represented in the council are inscribed in Greek on some of the seats, along with those of several gods.

In 235AD, the theatre was doubled in size to its present capacity of 1,600. Two vaulted passages formed the entrance to the orchestra, and spectators entered through passages between the upper rows of seats. The theatre fell into disuse in the 5th Century, and in later centuries, many of its stones were taken for use in other buildings.

### 22- Church of Bishop Isaiiah

Built in 559 AD, this Byzantine church was used until the earthquake of 749 AD.

*For the most impressive approach to the Temple of Artemis, return to the Cardo and walk back down to the propylaeum. Alternatively, follow the path from the North Theatre directly across to the Temple of Artemis.*



### 23- Temple of Artemis

Artemis, daughter of Zeus and sister of Apollo, was the patron goddess of Gerasa. Although small, the temple's Corinthian columns soar impressively from the hilltop site; 11 of the 12 front columns are still standing. The temple's inner chamber was originally clad with marble slabs and housed a shrine which probably contained a statue of the goddess.

### 24- Three Churches

At least 15 Byzantine churches have been found in Jerash, and more are thought to remain buried. Three of the finest are grouped together round a shared atrium. At the north, the Church of St. Cosmos and St. Damian - twin brother doctors who were martyred in the 4th Century - has the most splendid floor mosaics to be seen in Jerash. An inscription dates the mosaic to 553 AD, and the images include the church warden Theodore with his wife Georgia, praying with widespread arms.



In the centre, the church of St. John the Baptist dates from 531 AD. Its mosaic floor, now damaged, included images of the four seasons, plants and animals, and the cities of Alexandria and Memphis in Egypt.



The church of St. George, at the south, was built in 530 AD, and continued to be used after the earthquake of 749 AD. Its mosaics were therefore destroyed when the 8th Century Christian iconoclastic movement banned the representation of humans and animals.

*Follow the path down the hill towards the Oval Plaza, but bear right to the South Theatre.*

### 25- Church of St. Genesis

The floor mosaic of this church dates back to its dedication in 611 AD, just three years before the Persian invasion.



### 26- South Theatre

Built during the reign of Emperor Domitian, between 90-92 AD, the South theatre seats more than 3000 spectators. The first level of the ornate stage, originally two-stories has been reconstructed and is still used today. The remarkable acoustics allows a speaker at the centre of the orchestra floor to be heard by the entire auditorium without raising his voice. Two vaulted passages lead into the orchestra, and four passages at the back of the theatre give access to the upper rows of seats. Some seats could be reserved and the Greek letters which designate them can still be seen.

*For those who wish to climb more steps, the top row of seats affords an excellent view of the Jerash ruins!!*



### 27-Temple of Zeus

Built in 162 AD, this temple stands on ruins of earlier sacred sites. From the Oval Plaza, a staircase leads up to an esplanade (*in front of the temple*), which was a temenos, or sacred precinct. Originally, a rock in the esplanade served as a high place, and was enclosed into a shrine (*naos*) in 100-80 BC. This shrine was modified in 69-70 AD and in the 2nd Century AD, probably under Emperor Hadrian. From there, another staircase led to the temple, which was originally surrounded by 15m high Corinthian columns.

### 28-Museum

Not to be missed when you visit Jerash is the Archaeological Museum, which houses a fascinating collection of artifacts found at the site. These include gold jewellery, coins, glass and - perhaps the most unusual - pottery theatre tickets.

#### Opening hours:

8:30- 17:00 in winter,

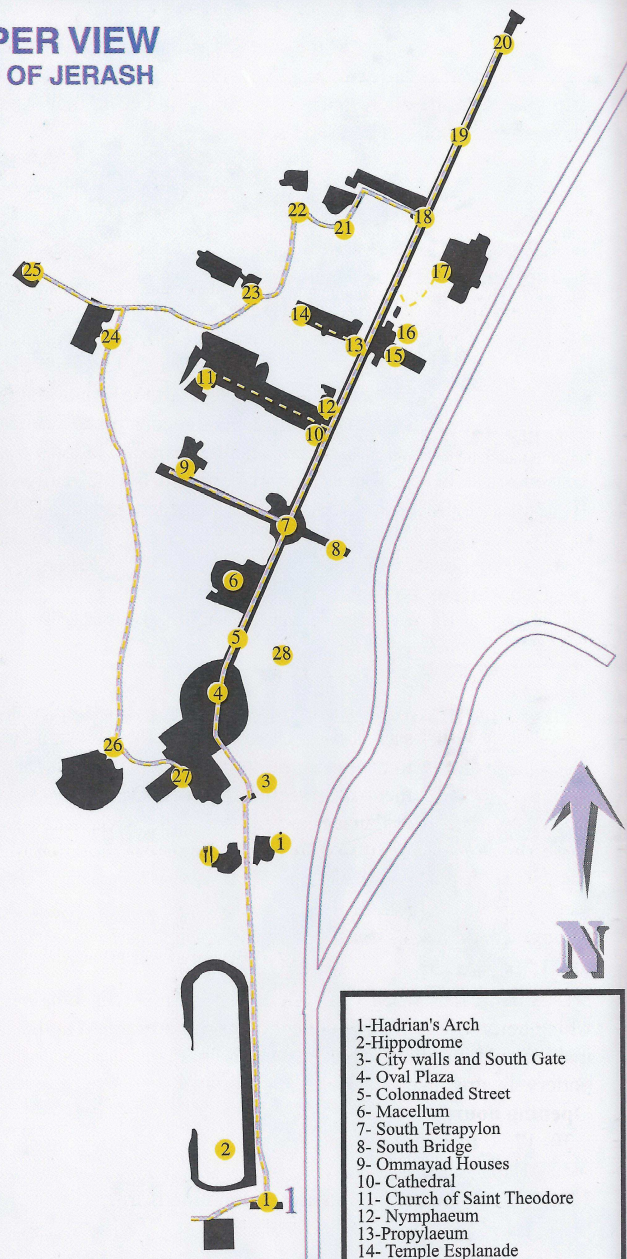
8:30 - 18:00 in summer,

10:00 - 16:00 on official holidays. Admission is free.

### WHERE TO EAT:

	Phone (02)
Abu Ahmad	6352520
Green Valley	6350299
Jarash Rest House	6351437
The Lebanese House	6351301
Ya Hala	6351289
Lo'Lo'at Al-Rawda	6351052

## UPPER VIEW MAP OF JERASH



- 1-Hadrian's Arch
- 2-Hippodrome
- 3- City walls and South Gate
- 4- Oval Plaza
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- 6- Macellum
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- 9- Ommayyad Houses
- 10- Cathedral
- 11- Church of Saint Theodore
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- 13-Propylaeum
- 14- Temple Esplanade
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