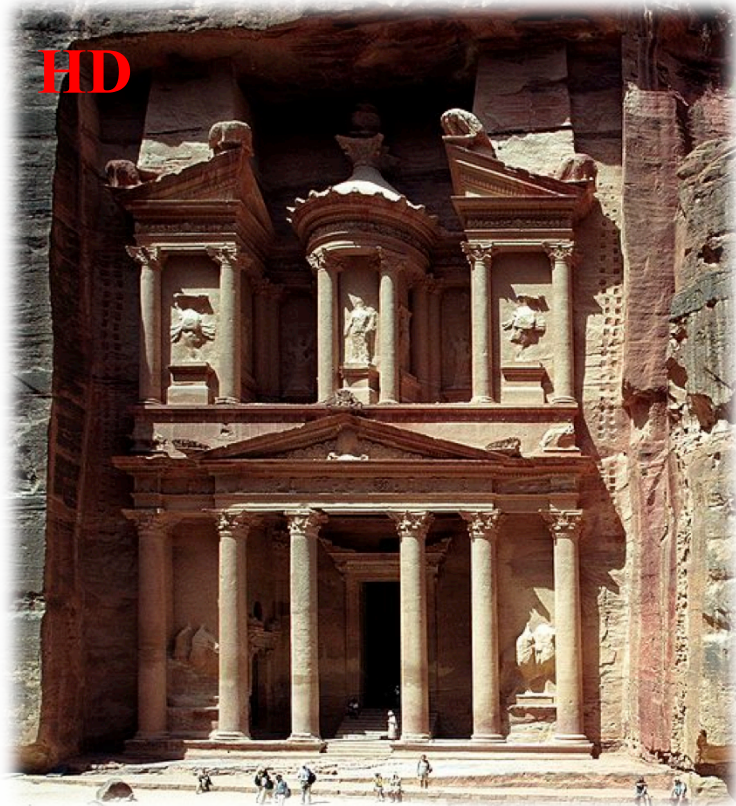


Lost Civilizations: Jordan, Petra and the Nabateans



Petra, located in a valley bordered by mountains, was occupied around the 6th century BC by the Nabataeans.

They made it prosper thanks to its ideal trading location, on the caravan trails transporting incense, spices and other luxury products between Egypt, Syria, Southern Arabia and the Mediterranean. In the 4th century BC, the town spread over 10 kilometres.

Al-Siq, the long, narrow and sinuous natural passageway, is the entrance to the antique city. Its largest breadth is only a few metres, and is tens of metres in height, making it a strategic defence point.

The Al Khazneh, also called the Treasury, is one of the most well-known constructions of Petra, as the Bedouin living in this area believed the funerary urn at its top contained a precious treasure.

With its imposing carved sandstone face, influenced by Alexandria's architectural art, it is believed to be the tomb of king Arétas the IVth (deceased in the year 40). The Ad Deir, "the monastery", is another well-known and imposing construction of Petra.

Its face seems to symbolise a funerary ritual, probably that of Nabataean king Obodas the 1st, who was deified and ascended to the throne in the year 96. An imposing funerary urn is perched in its summit. The building was then used by the Christians as a monastery, giving it its current name.

A most unusual street can be found in Petra. Inspired by the Greek, the Facades' street is lined with numerous tombs carved into the walls. They are layered on several levels, displaying different styles ranging from Greek to Oriental architecture.

Among the most impressive tombs, the seventeen grave tomb stands out. The royal tombs are the most monumental among the hundreds of stone-carved graves. Some tombs are particularly eye-catching, as the Urn Tomb, built upon stone vaults or the Corinthian Tomb, which resembles the treasure.

Directed by Jacques VICHET

A documentary of 52'

French Version
English Version

High Definition
HD Cam & Digital Betacam 16/9