

## Wonders of the world- Petra



**Petra** meaning ‘stone’ is a historical and archaeological city in the Jordanian governorate of Ma’an that is famous for its rock-cut architecture and water conduit system.

Established possibly as early as 312 BC as the capital city of the Nabataeans, it is a symbol of Jordan, as well as its most-visited tourist attraction. It lies on the slope of Mount Horn in a basin among the mountains which form the eastern flank of Arabah the large valley running from the Dead Sea to the Gulf of Aqaba. Petra has been a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1985.

The site remained unknown to the Western world until 1812, when it was introduced by Swiss explorer Johann Ludwig Burckhardt. It was described as "a rose-red city half as old as time" in a Newdigate Prize-winning poem by John William Burgon. UNESCO has described it as "one of the most precious cultural properties of man's cultural heritage". See: UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage Lists. Petra was chosen by the *Smithsonian Magazine* as one of the "28 Places to See Before You Die."