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*E-Newsletter*

**Jordan Tourism Board North America (JTBNA)**  
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**Experience  
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## **Petra: Lost City of Stone moves to Calvin College next month**

By: Sarah Ryan  
AMMAN — 'Petra: Lost City of Stone,' an exhibition on the ancient rose-red city and its inhabitants, will soon be moving to its final destination in the United States, Calvin College, after a sensational six-month run in New York and three months in Cincinnati.

"The response has been outstanding," said Gaylen Byker, president of Calvin College and co-chair of the Petra exhibition. "New York had some of the largest crowds for a special travelling exhibition," he added.

In preparation for the opening of the exhibition at the 4,000-student college, administrators, faculty and supporters have been visiting Petra and other historic sites in the Kingdom since March 11.

The exhibition has reached such heights of popularity in part due to Petra being known as a spectacular archaeological and architectural feature, said Byker. Furthermore, the presentation is extremely well done, he added.



*Administrators, faculty and supporters of Calvin College visit Mount Nebo (Photo courtesy Calvin College)*

The display includes the most extensive collection of artifacts from Petra outside of Jordan, video segments of the city, recreations of some of the arches and doors of Petra along with photographs of the site. Some of the highlights are the monumental head of the Nabataean god Dushara, a large bronze statue of the goddess Artemis and a portion of a monumental temple façade featuring figures from the zodiac.

The very spectacular rock cut tombs make it so fascinating to tourists," said Berg de Vries, history professor and head of the archaeology minor at Calvin College.

"Anyone can come there without knowing anything and find it very spectacular," he added. However, the site has also been central in gaining a greater understanding of Nabataean culture. The fact that the pottery found in the tombs of the site can be dated so accurately has increased archaeologists' grasp of the historical sequence Nabataean culture followed, de Vries explained. Furthermore, excavations of the hundreds of rock-cut tombs have enabled a better understanding of their history, he added.

The exhibition at Calvin College, running from April 4- Aug. 15, will contain an additional section dealing with aspects of recent Jordanian history such as traditional clothing, textiles, jewelry and foods.

"We put the exhibition in the context of the traditional culture of recent Jordan so people can appreciate the ancient Jordanian site of Petra and the Nabataeans and associate this with Jordan as it is today," said de Vries.

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This final exhibition in the US will also have more of an educational focus than the previous ones at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City and the Cincinnati Art Museum, said June Hamersma, co-chair of the exhibition. Calvin College has held workshops with 7,000 teachers in western Michigan to prepare them for the display and plans to hold weekly archaeological digs for children, she explained.

Petra emerged as a powerful city state in the 2nd century BC gaining riches due to its placement at the crossroad between the silk and spice routes. The city thrived for 400 years on trade with China, India, Greece and Rome.

The exhibition is organized by the American Museum of Natural History and the Cincinnati Art Museum, in cooperation with the Ministry of Tourism and Department of Antiquities. After the Calvin College, the exhibition will move on to Calgary and Ottawa in Canada.

For more information please call 1-877-SEEJORDAN or visit Calvin College ([www.calvin.edu/petra/](http://www.calvin.edu/petra/))

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