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E-Newsletter

Jordan Tourism Board North America (JTBNA)
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October 15, 2004

Volume 9, Number 1

**Experience
Jordan
Now!**

MTV Comes to Jordan

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In response to an invitation extended by the Jordan Tourism Board, MTV Europe sent their Benelux affiliate to cover a unique event set to propel Jordanian pop culture into the 21st century. Distant Heat 2, Voyage into Rum was the focal point of their visit. A rave party conceived and executed by Julian Noursi and Zaid Goussous of Romero Events in Amman with the Valley of the Moon in the desert of Rum as its backdrop, the event itself was intriguing enough to compel MTV to venture into the Middle East. But it was MTV's introduction to the wonders of Jordan that became the subject of an hour long summer special concentrating on a relatively unknown country and its culture.

With a 3-day itinerary highlighting the sights and sounds of the Hashemite Kingdom, the MTV crew, consisting of VJ / Presenter Barbara Karel, Director Henry Peemen and Cameraman Flip Van der Kuil, began their journey into Rum via the Four Seasons in Amman. Believing the stereotypical images of Middle Eastern countries, they expected to be camping out in the desert from day one, but instead were astounded by the luxurious accommodations. The day continued with a tour of Amman conducted by Basel Ahman, an expert on all things "antiquity," and Nofa Nasser, the Jordan Tourism Board's resident archeological and cultural heritage expert. With over 25,000 registered archeological sites, the country of Jordan is often referred to as an "open-air museum." Given the environment, archeology is not new to Jordanian students, but was presented as a novel career choice for MTV viewers in Europe who may have never considered it.

Day two included a tour of the ancient city of Petra. From atop camels, stereotypical but a necessary experience for tourists and MTV crews alike, they explored one of Jordan's national treasures. Next on the agenda was a visit to Aqaba where the sea is red, but oh so blue. VJ Barbara, an avid diver, couldn't resist testing the waters, so, it was off to the Royal Diving Center for snorkeling gear and some underwater film footage.

Having never been to the Middle East before, the first glimpse of Wadi Rum on day three was awe inspiring to the MTV crew. They stopped the van and jumped out to capture some landscape shots. After filming what seemed like every grain of sand in the area, they headed to Bait Ali Camp for a sunset tour of the Valley of the Moon. Accompanied by Bedouin tour guides, the valley proved true to its name. Even before the sun set, a full moon hung in the sky ready to illuminate the evening's long awaited event.

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With the darkening sky came the anticipation of Distant Heat. Driving into Hilawi Camp, the final destination of the voyage, proved to be an absolutely mesmerizing experience. The MTV crew was speechless...but only for a moment. VJ Barbara then said, "We go to a lot of concerts and festivals all over Europe, but we have never seen anything like this." The evening progressed and the vibe grew to a fever pitch with the MTV crew finally abandoning their equipment and joining the masses on the dance floor.

With their mission accomplished and the Voyage into Rum complete, Julian Noursi expressed her delight in the exposure MTV was giving to Jordan, "We have so much to offer, it's a rare opportunity to showcase our country in a way that will attract a younger audience," she said.

As part of progressive strategy of showcasing similar events in Jordan, it serves as a means to convey the image of a peaceful and thriving country, enticing to tourists and MTV camera crews alike.

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