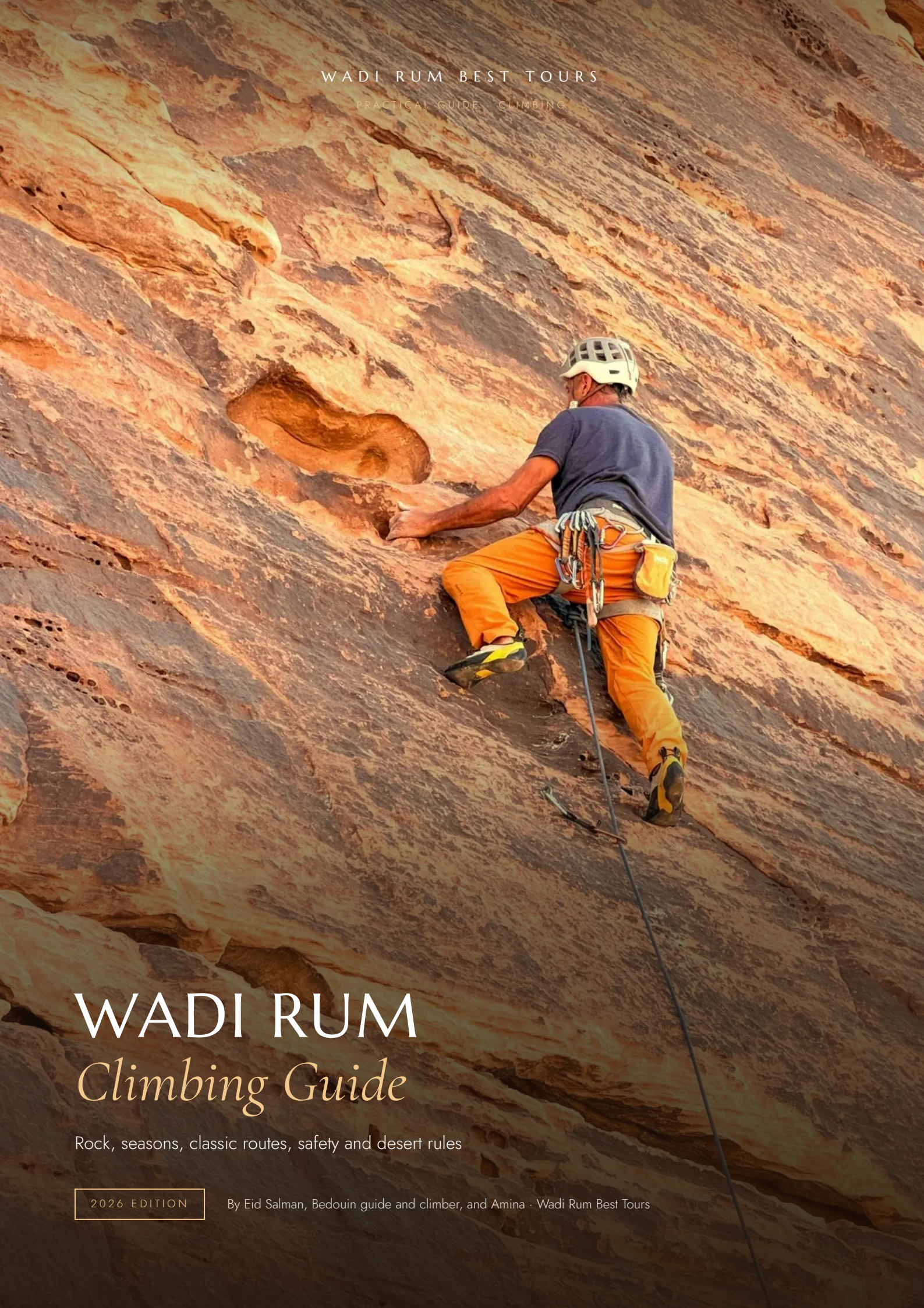
WADI RUM BEST TOURS

PRACTICAL GUIDE · CLIMBING



WADI RUM
Climbing Guide

Rock, seasons, classic routes, safety and desert rules

2026 EDITION

By Eid Salman, Bedouin guide and climber, and Amina · Wadi Rum Best Tours



WELCOME

A sandstone desert, *hunters' routes*

Wadi Rum means red sandstone mountains rising straight out of the sand, with walls several hundred metres high, perfect cracks, wind-polished domes and narrow canyons to squeeze through. The area has been protected since 1998 and listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 2011. There are several hundred routes, and plenty of lines still waiting for a first ascent.

Long before climbers arrived, the Bedouin were already reaching these summits to hunt ibex or find water in rock pools. Their ways up, marked by small cairns and sometimes by cut steps, became the famous Bedouin routes. In 1952 Sheikh Hamdan guided Europeans to the top of Jebel Rum for the first time. In 1984 British climber Tony Howard came to Rum, helped by the stories of Hamdan's son Hammad, and modern climbing began.

Today a new generation of Bedouin guides climbs here. Eid is one of them: a Bedouin guide and climber, he knows the routes, the descents and the places to avoid. This guide brings together what you need to know before you come, whether you climb with us or on your own.

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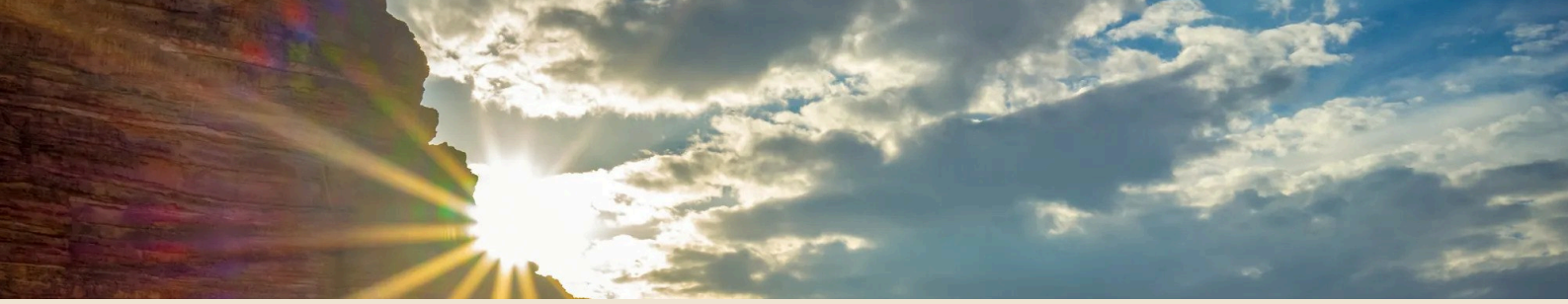
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YOUR GUIDE



Eid is a Bedouin guide and climber in Wadi Rum. He knows these mountains and their Bedouin routes by heart. With him, you climb safely and see the desert from the inside.



Climbing in Wadi Rum
at a glance

TOPIC	IN SHORT
The rock	Red sandstone, soft and sometimes sandy. Wear a helmet everywhere, at the foot of the routes as well as on the wall.
The style	Mostly traditional climbing with gear you place yourself. A few bolted routes, including the ones where beginners start.
Grades	From French 4 to 7b and beyond, plus Bedouin routes mixing hiking, scrambling and moves up to 5.
When to come	March, April, October and November. Winter works on fine days, summer only at dawn.
After rain	Wait until the sandstone is fully dry, at least 24 hours and often longer.
Entry fee	7 JOD per person, free with the Jordan Pass.
Emergencies	911 in Jordan. Eid, your guide: +962 7 9731 4177.

When to climb
in Wadi Rum?

PERIOD	DAY	NIGHT	FOR CLIMBING
December to February	14 to 16 °C	2 to 4 °C	Possible on fine days, in the sun. Short days (10 h), some rain.
March and April	20 to 25 °C	6 to 11 °C	The best time. Long days, dry rock, everything is climbable.
May	30 °C	14 °C	Good in the morning and in the shade. South faces heat up fast.
June to September	32 to 34 °C	16 to 18 °C	Too hot in the sun. Only at dawn or in the shade, short outings.
October and November	21 to 27 °C	8 to 13 °C	Excellent season, with beautiful light.

Average temperatures in Wadi Rum (about 950 m above sea level). It is cooler and often windy on the summits: keep a warm layer in your pack, even in spring.



Sandstone,
the user manual

HELMET everywhere	AFTER RAIN 24 h dry minimum
BOLTS rare	ROPES protect them

Wadi Rum sandstone has great friction, but it is soft. Some holds sound hollow, especially in honeycomb features, and flakes can break. Test your holds, load them gradually and wear a helmet, even at the foot of the wall.

Wet sandstone loses its strength and holds snap. After rain, wait until it is fully dry, at least 24 hours and often longer in winter or in the shade. For the same reason, never climb in damp or sandy shoes: wipe them before every pitch.

Most routes are protected with cams and nuts. Original anchors are often slings around blocks or threads, baked by the sun: check them and back them up with your own cord. Sandstone wears ropes quickly: avoid running them over edges and take care on abseils.

Descents are part of the adventure. They often involve several abseils and long down-climbs on the domes, with few obvious cairns. Allow time, carry a headlamp and study the descent in the topo before you set off.



ROCK CARVINGS IN KHAZALI CANYON

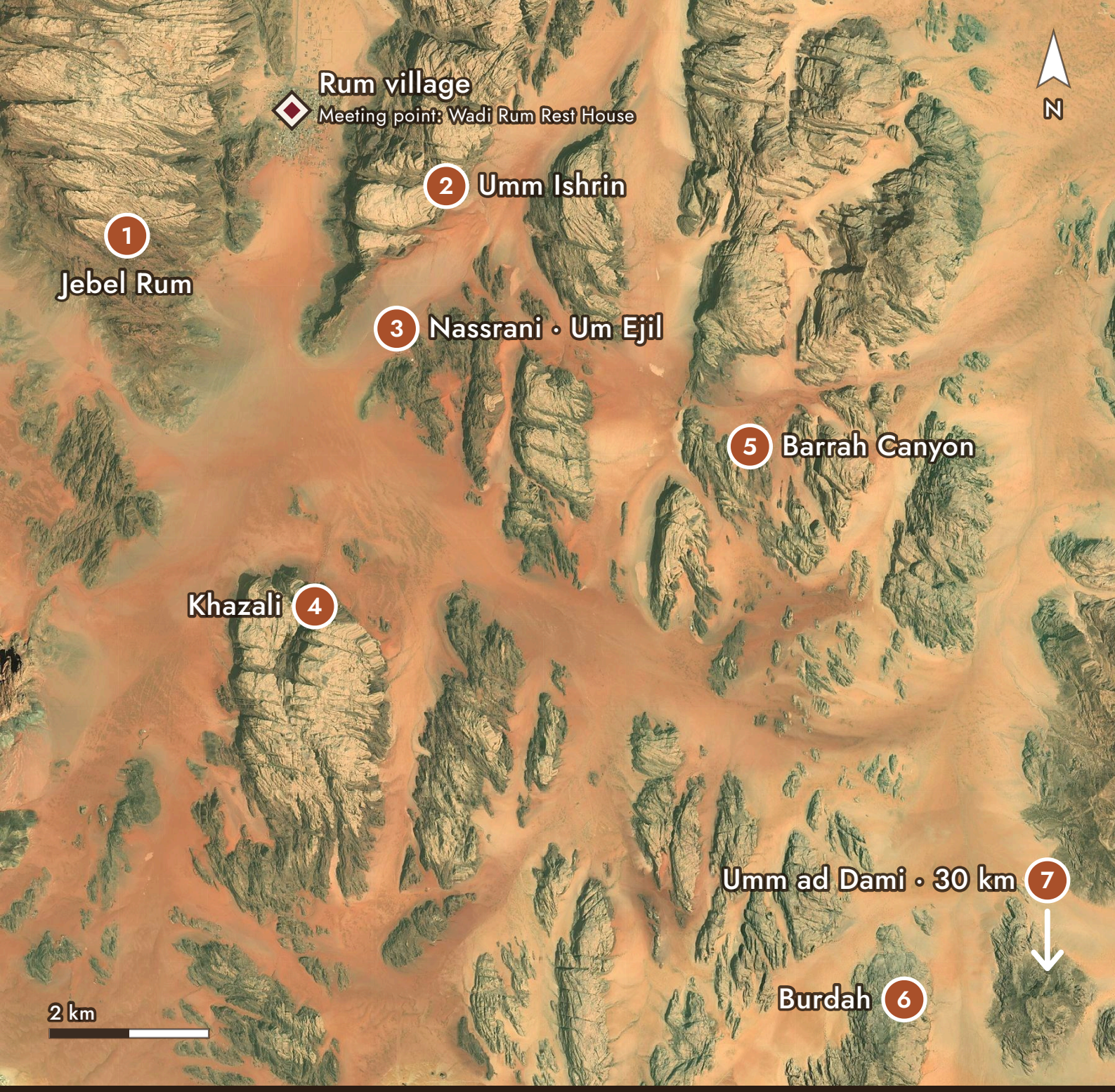
The *Bedouin routes*

DIFFICULTY	TIME	MARKERS	ROPE
moves up to 5	often a full day	small cairns	essential

Bedouin routes follow the ways hunters used to reach the summits. They mix hiking, scrambling and a few climbing moves, and demand real route-finding skills. The best known climb Jebel Rum: Sheikh Hamdan's Route and Hammad's Route, often combined into a traverse, and the shorter Rijm Assaf.

Do not be fooled by their modest grades. The terrain is complex, the summits are mazes of domes where it is easy to get lost, and the descent takes as long as the ascent. Start early, take a rope for exposed moves and abseils, and carry water for the whole day.

If you do not know the way, go with a Bedouin guide: it is the safest way to do them, and a wonderful way to hear the story of these mountains.



REAL SATELLITE VIEW

The main *climbing areas*

1. Jebel Rum
2. Umm Ishrin
3. Nassrani · Um Ejil
4. Khazali
5. Barrah Canyon
6. Burdah
7. Umm ad Dami

Apart from Jebel Rum, every area is reached by 4×4. Visitors are not allowed to drive alone in the protected area: a Bedouin guide takes you there.

Imagery © Esri, Maxar, Earthstar Geographics. Area positions are indicative.

The areas
in detail

1 Jebel Rum

The giant above the village, over 1,700 m. Big routes on the east face, the Bedouin routes of Sheikh Hamdan and Hammad, and Lawrence's Spring at its foot. Reached on foot from the village.

2 Umm Ishrin

The long wall facing Jebel Rum across the valley. Committing multi-pitch routes in a wild setting.

3 Nassrani and Um Ejil

Towers and domes south of the village, with classics such as The Beauty and bolted lines such as La Guerre Sainte.

4 Khazali

Famous for its narrow canyon with ancient inscriptions. Climbing and scrambling up the cracks.

5 Barrah Canyon

A long sandy corridor between two sandstone walls, with classics such as Merlin's Wand and The Star of Abu Judaidah.

6 Burdah

The most remote area, with its famous high rock bridge and Orange Sunshine, a fine mid-grade multi-pitch.

7 Umm ad Dami

Jordan's highest point, 1,854 m, about 30 km south. A steep hike rather than a climb, with views into Saudi Arabia.



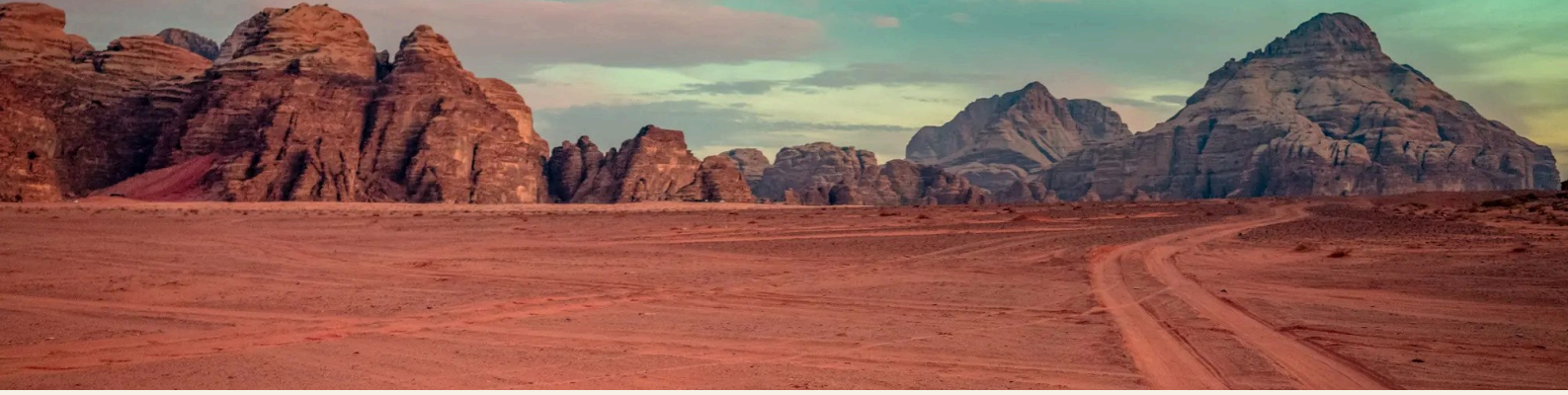
JEBEL RUM



KHAZALI



BURDAH



A few *classic routes*

ROUTE	AREA	GRADE	HEIGHT	STYLE
Crazy Camel	Jebel M'zeygeh	6a+ to 6b+	≈ 100 m	Bolted, 4 pitches
Black Magic	Jebel Rum	6a	≈ 300 m	Trad
Pillar of Wisdom	Jebel Rum	6a to 6b	≈ 350 m	Trad
Lionheart	Jebel Rum	6b	≈ 350 m	Trad
The Beauty	Um Ejil · Nassrani	6a to 6b	≈ 200 m	Trad
La Guerre Sainte	Nassrani	7b	12 pitches	Bolted
Merlin's Wand	Barrah Canyon	6a+	5 pitches	Trad
The Star of Abu Judaidah	Barrah Canyon	6b to 6c	≈ 250 m	Trad
Orange Sunshine	Burdah	5+ to 6a	≈ 300 m	Trad

French grades given as a guide: they vary between sources. Always check a recent topo before you go and ask a local guide.

Topos *and resources*

Treks & Climbs in Wadi Rum, Jordan

Tony Howard's reference guidebook (Cicerone). Out of print but still the best source for the Bedouin routes.

Rock Around the World

Thierry Souchard's collection, with a selection of big routes in Wadi Rum.

Mountain Project, theCrag, UKClimbing

Recent route pages with grades and climbers' comments.

Eid, on the spot

The best living topo: he knows the state of the anchors, the descents and what is in condition.

Camptocamp

Useful for some big routes and their descents.

What *to bring*

For a day out with us

- [ ] Climbing shoes if you have them (we can lend you some)
- [ ] Approach shoes with a good sole
- [ ] Layers, a windproof jacket, a warm hat for the evening
- [ ] Sun hat, sunglasses, sunscreen
- [ ] A 20 to 30 litre pack for water and lunch
- [ ] Helmet, harness, ropes and quickdraws: provided

If you climb on your own

- [ ] Two 60 m half ropes, plus a spare
- [ ] Double set of cams, from small to large sizes
- [ ] A full set of nuts
- [ ] Long slings, cord and maillons to back up anchors
- [ ] Helmet, headlamp, first aid kit
- [ ] 3 to 4 litres of water per person per day
- [ ] Offline map and a power bank

There is no climbing shop in Wadi Rum: bring everything. Your old ropes and shoes will make young climbers in the village very happy.

Protected area *rules*

1. Pay the entry fee at the Visitor Center (7 JOD, or the Jordan Pass) and keep your ticket.
2. Visitors do not drive alone in the desert: travel with a Bedouin guide and stay on the tracks.
3. No new bolts and no power drills: local ethics favour removable protection. Do not retro-bolt existing routes.
4. Do not leave old slings or abandoned gear. If you back up an anchor, take the old material away.
5. Use little chalk and brush off tick marks. Never mark the rock or build cairns.
6. Do not disturb wildlife: Nubian ibex and Verreaux's eagles live here. Some areas close to protect them.
7. Camp and light fires only in camps. Take all your rubbish home.
8. Respect the Bedouin: dress modestly in the village and ask before photographing someone.



Safety
and rescue

There is no official mountain rescue team in Wadi Rum. After an accident, the village's Bedouin guides are usually first on the scene, with the tourist police, civil defence and, if needed, an army helicopter. It can take time: climb with a good safety margin.

Before you leave, give your route and expected return time to your camp or the Visitor Center, and check in when you are back. Phones work well around the village but often not deep in the canyons or behind the mountains.

Make sure your travel insurance covers climbing and helicopter evacuation. Carry a first aid kit, plenty of water and a warm layer, even for a short outing. In winter, never enter a canyon when storms are around: flash floods are sudden and dangerous.

In an emergency

EMERGENCIES (JORDAN)
911

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Notes

Climb
with Eid







Price per person for a group of 3 to 4. Included: Eid, 4×4, climbing gear, meal and water. Cash payment on site, no deposit.

Sport climbing
Bolted routes · 5a to 6b+ · 3-4 h or full day

from 30 JOD

Crazy Camel
Multi-pitch · 4 pitches · half day

from 40 JOD

Burdah Rock Bridge
Scramble and hike · night included

from 70 JOD

Jebel Khazali
Scrambling · 5-7 h · night included

from 50 JOD

Umm ad Dami
Jordan's highest peak · night included

from 80 JOD

Jebel Rum
Bedouin route · 6-8 h · night included

from 110 JOD

Orange Sunshine
Burdah · 5+ to 6a · multi-pitch trad

price on request

2026 prices, to be confirmed when booking. Meeting point: Wadi Rum Rest House, Rum village.

Book or ask a question

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