



A Small Piece Of Jordan

By Rebecca Saxton-Fox Photography by Mohammad Husani



"Take Home a Piece of Jordan," says the box holding hand-made jewellery featuring stones harvested from around Jordan. Each stone is hand picked by Brenda de Jager (48), a Swedish national living in Jordan, and strung together to create a piece of jewellery with a unique history.

Natural beauty

Brenda has been living in Jordan for eight years and coming here for nearly 20. She and her husband Tudor, originally from Europe, fell in love with the country – the people, the places, the history – and now call it home. "We love the natural beauty here," Brenda says. The couple lives next to the Dead Sea and makes frequent trips to Wadi Rum, preferring Jordan's majestic scenery to the hustle and bustle of Amman.

A journalist by training, Brenda was looking to do something with her hands after years of interviewing and writing. "I just started to fiddle around with different things," she remembers. "And then I found stones!" Through a series of trial and error, Brenda began experimenting with making the stones

into jewellery and a passion was born. Rather than seeing them as pebbles to kick around or an insignificant part of the landscape, Brenda sees stones as things of beauty that represent different parts of Jordan. The stones she works with are estimated to be up to 200 million years old, smoothed over millions of years by the desert wind and water in the region.

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Stone of ages

I'm beginning to identify where different stones come from," says Brenda, who travels the country

from Wadi Mujib to Wadi Rum and everywhere in between looking for stones. She picks up a necklace strung with smooth, translucent pink stones. She has named these stones, "desert pearls" due to their beauty and their place of origin – Wadi Rum.

"We are a bit obsessed with Wadi Rum," Tudor chimes in. Indeed, their monthly visits have made them desert regulars. Tudor's work brings him to Wadi Rum to promote responsible tourism and sustainable development – just another example of the couple's dedication to promoting a positive image of Jordan to outsiders.

A global connection

Brenda began working with the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN) in 1998 and now her necklaces

A Dip Into The Life Of

are on display at Wild Jordan. A portion of proceeds from the sales goes back to RSCN to preserve Jordan's natural beauty. "Jordan is nature," Brenda says, expressing her pride in being able to support the conservation efforts of RSCN.

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“I want people to be able to take this small piece of Jordan and connect it to the world,” she says. “When you walk into a room with the stones around your neck, inevitably the conversation will move to Jordan and all it has to offer!”

