



*The famous image of Petra: the "treasury"*

Petra lies in southern Jordan near the eastern rim of the Jordan Valley rift. Near the edge of the rift, the Upper Cretaceous limestone of the high plateau of the Sharah mountains gives way to silvers of Paleozoic fluvial sandstones dated to the Cambrian and Ordovician periods. The hard nature of the sandstone led to the formation of a rugged terrain in which steep slopes and narrow valleys could form, providing a perfect setting for a city such as Petra. Despite the general image of Petra being carved into stone facades, a considerable portion of the ancient Nabatean city was actually built with locally derived sandstone. The intimate relationship between the nature of the city and stone used and the quarries from which it was extracted makes these quarries an integral part of the story of Petra. Until now, this story is poorly presented and the importance of the quarries has been marginalized. While the quarries are protected by default because they are located in the Petra national reserve, it is important to tell this story to reveal another interesting aspect of the history of this magnificent city.

*(Nizar Abu-Jaber)*



*Tool marks from iron picks on the quarry face.*



*Sandstone carved out of steep and tall cliffs characterizes Petra*

*Rock-carved tombs in the rugged, sandstone landscape*

