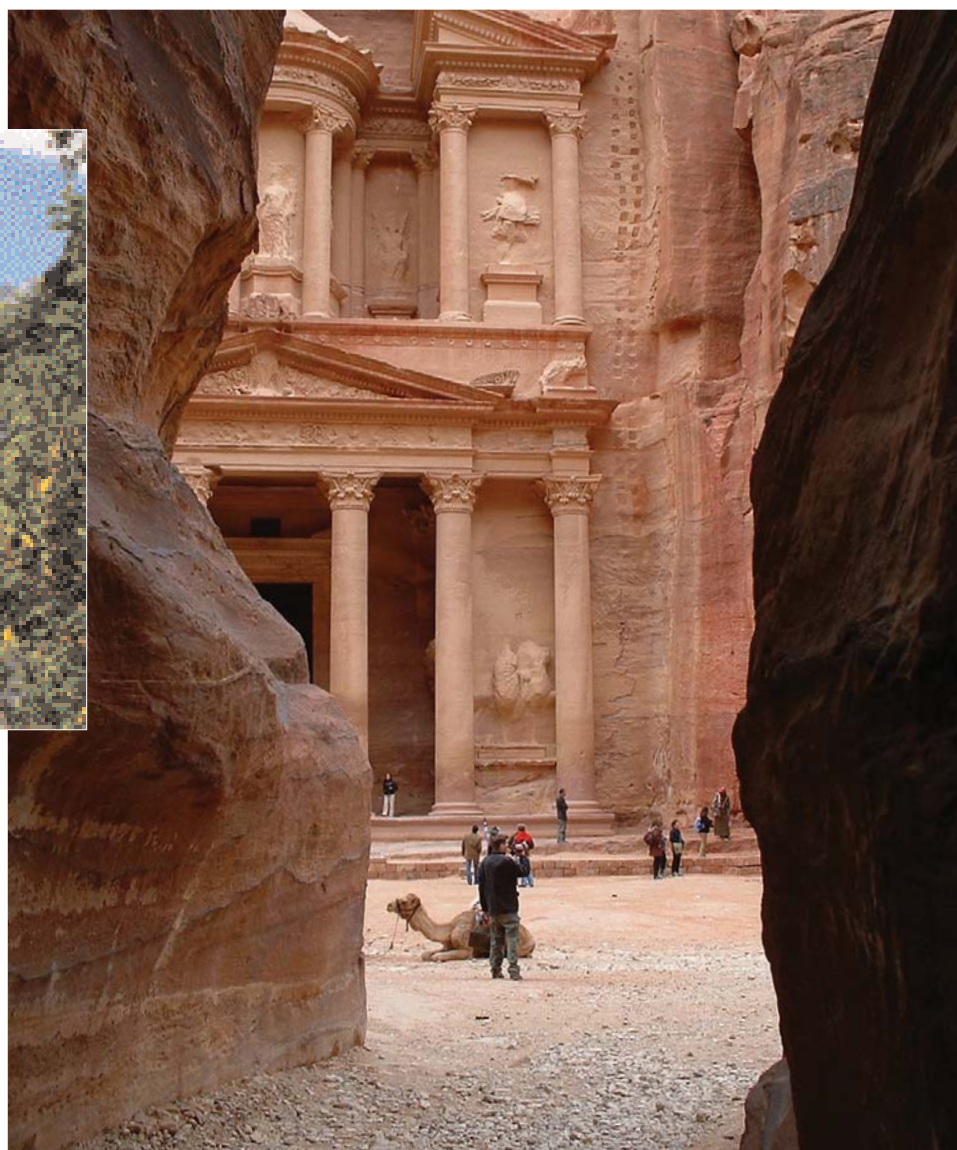




# ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE

From the spectacular scenery of New Zealand to the pulsing centre of New York, movies can transport us almost anywhere without leaving our seats. Here, we take a tour around some of the most iconic locations seen on the silver screen

Words by Christian Rose-Day



Above: Milford Sound, New Zealand – the location for much of *The Lord Of The Rings* trilogy  
 Left: Rio De Janeiro, Brazil  
 Right: The hidden city of Petra, Jordan

**H**ave you ever sat motionless during a movie, engrossed by the sheer majesty of cinema, engaged by the inspirational acting, mesmerised by the heart-pounding action, spellbound by the amazing sets and locations? Those far, far away galaxies; those urban streets filled with epic car chases; those gladiatorial battles in dusty deserts; those epic, transcontinental journeys through mother nature's lush creations. It's possible to travel the world without ever leaving the comfort of your armchair.

During the latter part of the 20th century the rise of cinema and its popular sister, television, helped to enlighten us about the world we live in. They showed us distant lands we were barely aware of. The world of cinema is dotted with countless awe-inspiring landscapes and, for every iconic scene in a movie, there's an equally iconic travel destination somewhere on earth.

A location often plays such a significant part in a movie that it almost claims the starring role. Where would *The Godfather* be without New York? Could the *City Of God* be the city of God without Rio de Janeiro? And where would *Lawrence Of Arabia* be without the desert landscape of Jordan's Wadi Rum?

You've seen the movie, now visit the location...

Often, these brief yet impressive scenes of earth, as seen through the lens of a

movie, can become tremendously beneficial for the local tourist economy. Look how well New Zealand fared after being portrayed as Middle Earth in *The Lord Of The Rings* trilogy. See also Cambodia following Lara Croft's trek to the religious monument, Angkor Wat; or the white sands of India's west coast after Matt Damon ventured there in *The Bourne Supremacy* (although, much like James Bond, Jason Bourne tends to pop up almost anywhere); and Australia's tourism will no doubt fare very well from the release of Baz Luhrman's recent epic.

But not all movies originate from the destination that they represent. *Casablanca*, for example, was filmed in the US, not Africa. Movie producers play tricks on the viewers' eye. Locations get disfigured and transformed. This trend is particularly prevalent in war-related movies. Ben Stiller's Vietnam in *Tropic Thunder* was actually Hawaii. Francis Ford Coppola's vision of Vietnam for *Apocalypse Now* was the island of Luzon in the Philippines. And the soldiers in Stanley Kubrick's *Full Metal Jacket* were not patrolling war-torn Vietnam, but a disused gas works in Beckton, East London. *Bridge Over The River Kwai*, surely filmed in Thailand? No, that was Sri Lanka. And 'that' opening scene in *Saving Private Ryan* wasn't France at all, but Curracloe Beach in the Republic of Ireland. ►

**Josh Hartnett on New Zealand**  
 'I almost bought a home there because I loved it so much.'

**Jennifer Aniston on Chicago**  
 'I loved filming there. It has a lot of wonderful culture, great museums and great restaurants. The lake is beautiful and there's a lot to do.'

### JORDAN

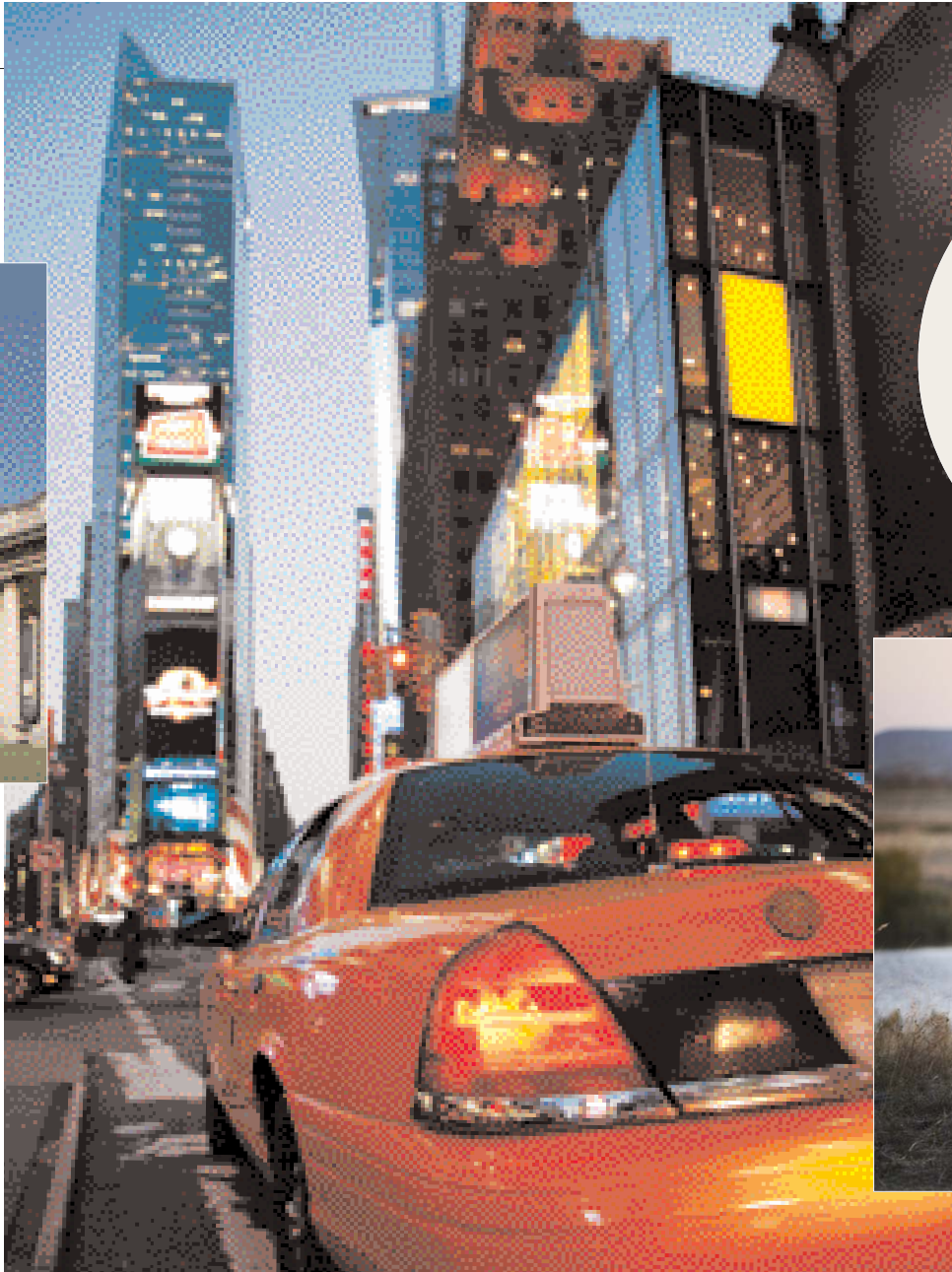
'Location decisions are driven by production requirements and budget, for the most part. Jordan is full of such nuggets.' This is the opinion of Hazim Bitar, of The Royal Film Commission in Jordan. The popular historical sites of Petra (pictured above), Wadi Rum and the Dead Sea have featured in many a movie and Jordan is well known as the backdrop for *The Mummy Returns*, *Redacted*, and most famously, *Indiana Jones And The Last Crusade*, where the fictitious 'Canyon of the Crescent Moon' was, in actual fact, Al Khazneh.

And what of the yet-undiscovered exciting locations to watch out for on our movie screens? Hanif Surani of California's All Pictures Media believes we should be looking again to the Middle East, 'Dubai is becoming a very exciting destination for filming in the future; desert and modern all in one!'





Above: The Old Royal Naval College, London, England  
 Right: Times Square, New York City, US  
 Far right: A still from the recent cinematic release *Australia*, starring Nicole Kidman and Hugh Jackman



**Dame Judi Dench on Italy and France**  
 'I enjoyed shooting *Chocolat* and *Tea With Mussolini*, not only because of the excellent cast and scripts, but because of the beautiful locations, in France and Italy respectively. Plus the food was glorious – it's important to keep actors well fed.'



**Renée Zellweger on the Lake District, England**  
 'It's fantastic and so beautifully preserved. It was a lovely experience.'

However, not all Hollywood stars find enjoyment in their filming. **Keira Knightley** hated shooting the third *Pirates Of The Caribbean* in 2006. 'I prefer big cities,' she said, 'I'm a city girl so I tend to get island fever.' Surprisingly, **Sarah Jessica Parker** claimed that New York – her hometown and the backdrop of her hugely successful *Sex In The City* film and TV series – 'is a really hard city, and very expensive. It's not what it used to be.'

**TOP TOWNS**

'The most popular locations are exteriors. It's difficult to fake exteriors in a studio,' says Kieran Hennessy, a manager for Irish Film Locations, whose recent short film, *New Boy*, at the time of going to press, had been nominated for an Oscar. Indeed, a cursory investigation through the substantial database of movie information, IMDB, provides enough evidence of those city exteriors that play the most regular roles at the movies. For example, of the destinations on the Royal Jordanian route, it's easy to see the cinematic importance of certain cities. While Bangkok, Delhi, Hong Kong, Chicago and Paris all fare well, the top two destinations for movie shoots are London and New York.

London's historically rich streets and buildings have played host to a variety of movies. From the lovesick comedies of *Sliding Doors*, *Notting Hill* and *Love Actually* to the sobering drama of *The Da Vinci Code*, *V For Vendetta* and *28 Days Later*. One of London's most popular settings is the Old Royal Naval College on the banks of the Thames. This collection of impressive structures has, in the past, welcomed *The Mummy*, *Patriot Games*, *The Golden Compass* and *Four Weddings And A Funeral*, to name but a few.

New York, on the other hand, basks in the realms of fantasy. *Superman*, *Spiderman*, *Batman*, *Ghostbusters* and *King Kong* were all staged in Manhattan, along with almost any action movie starring Will Smith (*I Am Legend*, *Hancock*, *Men In Black*, *Independence Day*). The iconic heart of New York is undoubtedly Times Square, owing as much to its pulsing bright neon and giant media screens as it does to a history steeped in symbolism, glamour and celebration. Literally hundreds of movies have been shot in the square, including *Shaft*, *Taxi Driver* and *Vanilla Sky* (who can forget the image of Tom Cruise running through the deserted city at dawn?). Indeed, as Mark 'Scoutman' McKennon of The Location Station in New York states, 'Few people are not amazed by [Times Square], even if they've seen it a thousand times' ●



**THE GLAMOUR OF BOND**  
 The top 10 James Bond 007 movie locations

Tuscany, Italy	<b>Quantum Of Solace</b>
James Bond Island, Thailand	<b>The Man With The Golden Gun</b>
Cadiz, Spain	<b>Die Another Day</b>
Crab Key, Jamaica	<b>Dr No</b>
Piz Gloria, Switzerland	<b>On Her Majesty's Secret Service</b>
New Orleans, USA	<b>Live And Let Die</b>
Monte Carlo, Monaco	<b>Goldeneye</b>
Udaipur, India	<b>Octopussy</b>
Zagreb, Croatia	<b>From Russia With Love</b>
Outer Space	<b>Moonraker</b>

**Australia and Quantum Of Solace are both playing on selected RJ flights**