

Lebanon Traveler

A publication of Hospitality Services in a joint venture with Beyond Beirut - Issue 6 March - June 2013

Lebanon 8,000 LBP

120+
HIKES
TO TEST

Lebanese
artisans
& jewelry
designers

Enjoy
horse riding
& riverside walks

10 MUST VISIT IN
Brummana & Beit Mery

60 PAGES
of people
places
& products



sohat[®]

Haute Source 1710 m - Falouha Liban

L'eau les yeux fermés



Lebanon Traveler

unveils Lebanon's hidden treasures



Spring has sprung!

Yes indeed... the sun is shining and we are no longer wearing our heavy coats! It is time to go out and enjoy the outdoors!

River walks and horseback riding are on our menu this season with a peripheral visit to Anjar and its beautiful wilderness. If you are in the mood for lesser-traveled paths you can get a taste of the southern Farid Serhal Castle or the Beirut Bibliopolis featured in our hidden gem section.



Celebrating the return of sunshine we carry you (just like the bride) into the world of the zalghouta and take you on a journey to learn more about our beloved kebbeh, a dish that is delicious no matter how you cook it!

With 10 things to do in Beit Mery, Broumana and Baabdat you will spend a lovely day in the Metn, discovering one of the most delightful villages in the country. If not, you can always take of for the weekend with our choice of getaways in Batroun, Tripoli or Deir Al Amar.



In the mood for shopping? Look no further! Taree abayas and unique jewelry from Dehab gallery will satisfy your retail itch and have your style stand out from the rest.

As for the city dweller in you, our Beirut Pleasures new section will have you entertained all week long, in various moods and diverse activities. Finally a full calendar of hikes all around the country will have you exercising in the beautiful Lebanese outdoors.

Spring is time to rejuvenate and with Lebanon's traveler choice of activities you are sure to get an optimal rebirth from the rainy season.



Have a wonderful spring!

The Lebanon Traveler team

Your feedback as a reader and as a user of this information is very important for us to develop quality sustainable tourism in Lebanon. Enjoy and share your experience on info@lebanontraveler.com

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A publication of Hospitality Services in a joint venture with Beyond Beirut

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The cover photo taken by Lina Hassoun won the "Spring Time" competition +961 70 057738

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It is an awakening of the self, a transformation of one's state of mind and an exploration into one's strengths and weaknesses...



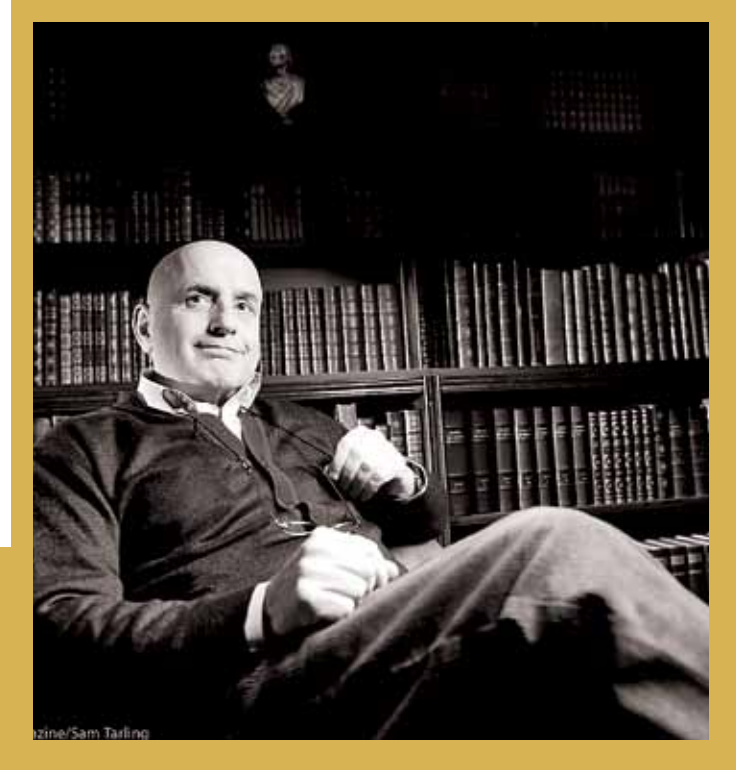
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Although you must have an appointment, the chance to explore his fabulous collection is definitely worth the effort...



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What most of us probably don't know is that kebbeh is produced and cooked differently across the country...



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Discovering a unique embroidery technique that has been a secret within a community...

NEWS



Tourism contribution to increase

The World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) estimated that the travel and tourism industries' direct contribution to the Lebanese economy would reach USD 4.1 billion in 2013, up by 1.8% from 2012. When measured against the nominal GDP, it accounted for 9.3% of the economy's size in 2012, a share that would slightly drop to 9% in 2013, as per WTTC. It added that direct employment in the tourism industry activities would reach 117,500, representing 8.7% of total employment in Lebanon this year, down by 2.1% from 120,000 jobs (9% of total employment) in 2012. The total contribution of travel and tourism to Lebanon's GDP, including wider effects from investment, the supply chain and induced income impacts was at USD 11.1 billion in 2012 (25.1 percent of GDP) and is expected to grow by 2.3 percent to USD 11.4 billion in 2013.

Abboud launches blue prints for religious tourism

Minister of Tourism Fady Abboud launched a general plan to develop religious tourism in Lebanon, declaring that such an endeavor will "enhance the dialogue among the various religions in Lebanon." Religious tourism in Lebanon has great features that need to be highlighted. "What makes Lebanon unique in that matter is that it is one of the rare countries that has sites pertaining to more than one religion," continues Abboud. The plan includes building and managing a database that will retain all information regarding religious sites and places, as well as creating a marketing plan to develop religious tourism and pilgrimage in Lebanon. "We do not want Lebanon to be known solely for its night tourism as Lebanon has great potential for the development of religious, historic and cultural tourism," concluded Abboud.



4th Beirut Water Week Summit

Notre Dame University (NDU) hosted the 4th Beirut Water Week Summit from 20 to 22 February 2013. The Ministry of Energy and Water along with more than 20 experts and policy planners from different organizations, worked together for three days on the Technological Tools and Financing Mechanisms for Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM): Complementing Hydro-diplomacy and Climate Change Adaptation Efforts. Among the topics that were dealt with were Technological Tools in Water Planning and Management, Climate Change Adaptation: New Water Mass, Risk Management; Financing Water infrastructures: Role of the private Public Partnership and Water Transfer, Water, Energy and Food, Challenges of the 21st Century, Control.



MEA receives green award

Environment Minister, Nazem El Khoury, presented Middle East Airlines (MEA) the National Green Award because while it strived to increase its fleet, it kept the environment and specifically CO2 emissions in mind. The newly ordered 10 A320 neo-aircrafts will save up to 15% in fuel and thus, an estimated emission reduction of 36,000 tons of CO2 per year. The Ministry of Environment in collaboration with the United Nations Development Program and Beyond magazine, held the National Green Awards Ceremony at a dinner at the Phoenicia Hotel. Green Awards were granted to pioneers of environmentally friendly initiatives. "The objective of granting these awards is to motivate citizens, institutions, governmental and non-governmental organizations to be concerned, as environmental damage equally affects the polluter and the receiver," said the Minister.

Bike4Peace

Organized by the Bikeathon Association Lebanon and baldati.com, this event aims to promote cycling as an exciting form of exercise, while creating awareness of alternative transportation methods for solving the city's congestion problem. Like-minded pressure groups will try to influence policy and decision makers to design a friendly cycling road to aid commuters. Bike4Peace will take place on Sunday, April 14, 2013.

The 40 million forest tree initiative

Lebanon's unique landscape holds diversified but unique types of forests with valuable environmental attributes. Although different from other Middle Eastern ecosystems, these cover 13% of the country surface, while the other wooded lands represent 11% of this area. The rapid loss in the Lebanese green areas during the last decade has prompted the public and civil society to various reforestation and afforestation initiatives. The Ministry of Agriculture's National Reforestation Program (NRP) is designed to increase the total surface of forests from 13% to 20% in a 20-year period, while maintaining their resilience against numerous hazards (urban encroachment, fire risks, climate change effects, etc...) protect the biodiversity of the national forests against climate change, overexploitation and erosion, as well as to enhance and develop the forest economical, environmental, social and cultural functions. In compliance with the NRP objectives, the ministry is launching a national initiative to plant 40 million trees for recovering the percentage lost in the last decade.



LEBANON MINISTRY OF TOURISM



One-stop-shop

A one-stop-shop has recently been inaugurated at the headquarters of the Ministry of Tourism. Its aim is to ease all transactions related to permits for hotels, restaurants, swimming pools, car rentals, etc, by facilitating a means to provide information to simplify the process of requests and operations regarding the permits. With the latest in equipment, the office is able to provide the quickest and best services. Citizens can also follow up the course of their requests and transactions through this new office.



BOOKS

Lebanon: Beauty Beyond Belief

Published Turning Point

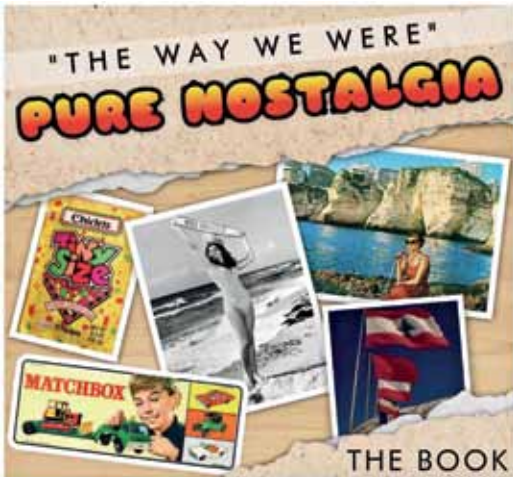
The captivating visual journey of discovery reveals the diverse beauty of Lebanon's natural landscapes, cherished traditions, rich culture and vibrant lifestyle. Through the lens of renowned Lebanese photographer, Jamal Saidi and his son, Ayman, Karah Byrns narrates this journey, providing valuable context for the vivid, colorful images. Divided into four thematic chapters: Nature, Tradition, Culture and Lifestyle, each explores the wonders that make Lebanon such a remarkable country,



Pure Nostalgia

By Imad Kozem

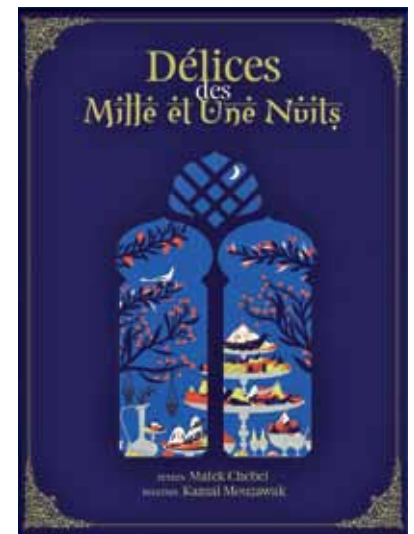
Compiled and published by Imad Kozem, Pure Nostalgia will take you back to the golden era of Beirut, through its unique collection of photographs and memories. This 500 page coffee table book is a time capsule that reveals the Beirut of the late 60's and 70's, when the "it" crowd danced at La Cave des Rois, when jetsetters took a dip at St. Georges and when intellectuals met at the Modca and Horseshoe to discuss philosophy. Gathering photos from private collections, AnNahar and AsSafir archives, public libraries and other sources, it took 3 years for Pure Nostalgia to be completed. With Pure Nostalgia, you will be a tourist of great times!



Delices des Mille et Une Nuits

Grund Editions

Designed around A Thousand and One Nights, the story begins with an invitation to travel back in time to rediscover rich tastes and flavors. Kamal Mouzawak's contributes a special collection of fifty recipes, each conjuring up visions of the famed Baghdad court. Malek Chebel, a famed psychoanalyst, anthropologist and historian, who works on Islam and the Arab culture, describes the sophistication of life in Baghdad, while Anne-Lise Boutin's palette of navy, black, reds, pistachio green and ochre creates a fantasy-like world to get lost in.



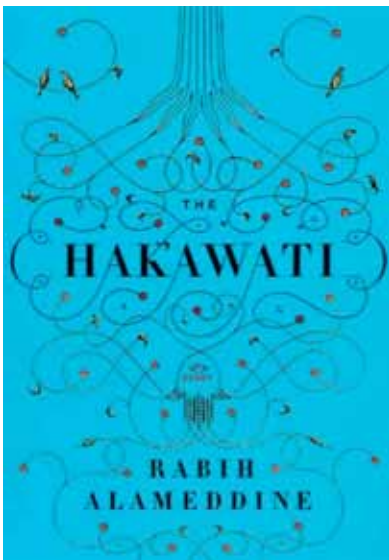
Editor's choice

Apart from the latest titles, we have chosen a not so new book that represents the spirit of Lebanon for you to read while you travel the country

The Hakawati

By Rabih Alameddine

Though not a novelty on the shelves, Alameddine's Hakawati shows us a unique side of Lebanese life; one of family, survival and love. In 2003, Osama al-Kharrat returns to Beirut after many years in America to stand vigil at his father's deathbed. The city is a shell of the Beirut Osama remembers, but he and his friends and family take solace in the things that have always sustained them: gossip, laughter, and, above all, stories. Osama's grandfather was a hakawati, or storyteller, and his bewitching stories - of his arrival in Lebanon, an orphan of the Turkish wars, and of how he earned the name al-Kharrat, the fibster - are interwoven with classic tales of the Middle East, stunningly reimagined. Like a true hakawati, Rabih Alameddine has given us an Arabian Nights for this century - a funny, captivating novel that enchants and dazzles from its very first lines: "Listen. Let me take you on a journey beyond imagining. Let me tell you a story."



Get your photo published

Lebanon Traveler is holding a photo competition, to choose the cover of its magazine. Talented photographers from all over the country may submit their entries online to info@lebanontraveler.com in order to be considered. Here are our top "Spring time" entries for this issue including the cover and the "Take Me There" photo. Follow us on Facebook to know more about the upcoming competition.



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At the heart of the image

D5200

I AM THE BEAUTY OF LIFE



I AM THE NIKON D5200. I am your creative eye. With a vari-angle monitor, Full HD movie function and wireless connectivity with smart devices. Experience superior image quality thanks to a 24.1 megapixel image sensor, an ISO up to 6400 & 39 focus points. I am turning your imagination into images.

At the heart of the image



Elsa J. Sattout

March 2013



A leap through time: the Cedar forest

Cedar forests conserve a unique environment, embedding the cultural and historical values of the many civilizations that have crossed the eastern Mediterranean. Praised by missionaries and poets alike, they were also etched by orientalists. Even now, exploring the Lebanese Cedar forests will inspire and arouse your senses.

"The Cedars of God" forests, embodying the country's biological and cultural legacy, are cited more than 70 times in the Holy Bible. Be prepared for a long journey and demanding hikes when visiting the "Cedar of God" forest in Bsharre. That the journey will be both physically and mentally demanding, is known for those that mountaineering is a passion. For them, it is an awakening of the self, a transformation of one's state of mind and an exploration into one's strengths and weaknesses.

On our journey, we metaphorically carried big bundles of wood on our backs as we made our way up, collecting additional weight till the point where fatigue took our breath away and we had to stop to lie on the snowy tapestry, wondering if there was an end in sight. Sleepy, tired and anxious - the mixture of feelings put more pressure on our bodies and minds.

But thoughts of the majestic Cedar forest got us on our feet again and we continued the hike refreshed in an inquisitive, as well as eager state of mind, keen to discover more of its historical wealth.

At the end of the journey, once we reached the forest, the day turned into a moment of meditation. We focused on the harmony between man and nature and how we could mend this bond, as the snowy rain trickled down and the soft winds blew through the forest!

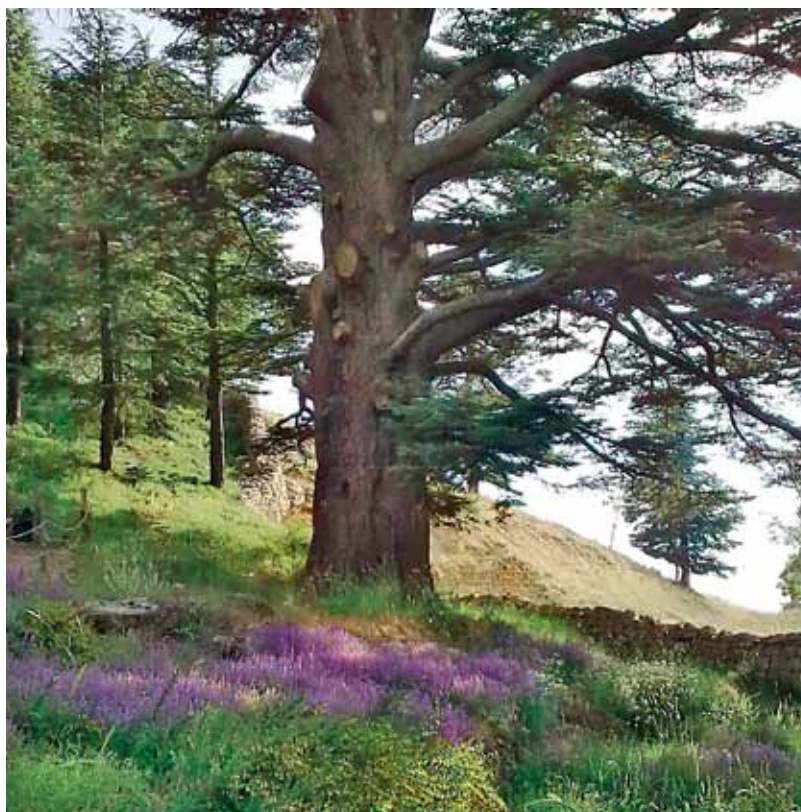
I have visited many forests around the Mediterranean, but there are none as majestic as the Lebanese Cedar forests. Could it be the feeling of belonging? But, even as a foreigner, you cannot help but be attached to this land, which tells the story of a country and of a region that is recognized as the cradle of many civilizations.

Should you return to Lebanon, plan for an extended stay to explore the remaining eleven Cedar forests and their villages in Sweisse, Karm Chbat, Qammoua, Ehden, Tannourine, Jaje, Ain Zhalta, Barouk, Maaser el Shouf and Niha. In these forests you will not only be enchanted by the stillness of nature, which can tell you more about the history of a country, a region and the many civilizations that traversed it. A single day trip is like a quantum leap, and is guaranteed to increase your thirst for more.

Elsa J. Sattout is an Assistant Professor in Biodiversity Conservation & Sustainable Management at NDU



If you come in spring or summer, it is possible to plant a baby cedar on the reserve. Just locate one of the groundskeepers, who will provide tree, shovel and water and help you select a suitable spot.



How to get there

Take the northern highway from Beirut and to Jounieh, Byblos, Amchit and Chekka. From Chekka take the road leading to Koura, Kosba, Hadeth El Jobbe, Hasroun, Bsharre and Arz (Cedar). It is 160 km from the city and it will take you 2 hours.

Bcharre Municipality +961 6 671068



" At the end of the journey,
once we reached the forest,
the day turned into a
moment of meditation "



Wild Allium sp. plant courtesy of Elsa Sattout

Hikes

For an easy hike just follow the footpath remembering how ever far you go, you need to factor in the return journey.

For a moderate hike on a dirt road start from Hadeth el Jobe, pass by Beka'kafra and then make a loop ending in the Cedar of God forest.

For a difficult hike on a mix of footpath, dirt and asphalt roads start from Ouadi Qadisha, pass by Ouadi Qannoubine and then Hasroun and end a loop in the Cedar of God forest.

For a difficult hike on a dirt road start from Oyoun Orgosh, Dahr el Qadib and then go down on the slopes to reach the Cedar of God forest.

What to watch out for

- During spring, you can look for endemic and other plant species such as *Tulipa alepensis* Regel, *Romulea nivalis* (Boiss & Ky) Klatt, *Orchis romana* ssp. *libanotica* Mt, *Berberis libanotica* Ehrenb, *Aubrietia libanotica* Boiss, *Acantholimon libanoticum* Boiss, *Origanum libanoticum* Boiss, *Rubia aucheri* Boiss, *Asperula libanotica* Boiss, *Galium libanoticum* Ehren, *Ornithogalum libanoticum* Boiss, *Puschkinia scilloides* Adams and *Cyclamen coum* Hildebr.

- Bird species of global importance Greater Spotted Eagle, Imperial Eagle, Lesser Kestrel, Jay, Great Tit and Hoopoe and many other bird species.

The fountain of life

In this Spring issue, Pascal Abdallah of Responsible Mobilities talks about water

Today nearly 1 billion people don't have access to clean and safe water. The United Nations has designated 2013 as the International Year of Water Cooperation. A success story in eradicating this issue is the ongoing Whole World Water campaign designed to unite the hospitality and tourism industries on a non-competitive platform. Recently, The Water Equity in Tourism - A Human Right, A Global Responsibility report tackling water issues was published and Lebanon held the 4th Beirut Water Week Summit.

All these activities have the same objective: conservation of natural and cultural wealth. So let's discover the excitement together.

Water cooperation worldwide

The fulfillment of basic human needs, our environment, socio-economic development and poverty reduction are all heavily dependent on water. Good management of water is especially challenging due to some of its unique characteristics. It is unevenly distributed in time and space, the hydrological cycle is highly complex and perturbations have multiple effects.

Rapid urbanization, pollution and climate change threaten the resource, while demands for water are increasing in order to satisfy the needs of a growing world population, now at over seven billion, for food production, energy, industrial and domestic uses. Water is a shared resource and its management needs to take into account a wide variety of conflicting interests. This provides opportunities for cooperation among users.

In designating 2013 as the UN International Year of Water Cooperation, the UN General Assembly recognizes that cooperation is essential to strike a balance between the different

needs and priorities and share this precious resource equitably, using water as an instrument of peace. Promoting water cooperation implies an interdisciplinary approach bringing in cultural, educational and scientific factors, as well as religious, ethical, social, political, legal, institutional and economic dimensions.

2005 to 2015 UN Intl Decade for Action "Water for Life"
2013 The UN International Year of Water Cooperation
22 March 2013 The UN World Water Day

Highlights from water equity report

A report on water equity in tourism by Tourism Concern has revealed the stark inequities of water access and consumption between tourist resorts and local people in developing countries. Featuring research from Bali, The Gambia and Zanzibar, as well as Goa and Kerala in South India, the report finds that the unsustainable appropriation, depletion and pollution of water by poorly regulated tourism are threatening the environment, while undermining living standards, livelihoods and development opportunities of impoverished local communities.

These communities often remain excluded from the benefits of tourism, but also include small businesses trying to earn a living from the sector in a context where government policies tend to favor international hotels and tour operators over local entrepreneurs. This scenario is leading to social conflict and resentment, while threatening the sustainability of the tourism sector itself.

In Zanzibar Luxury hotels consume up to 3,195 liters of water per room per day while the average household consumption is 93.2 liters of water per day. Guards patrol hotel pipelines to prevent vandalism by angry locals. A power cut led to a cholera outbreak in which at least four villagers died after consuming well water thought to have become contaminated with sewage from nearby hotels.



"The right to water constitutes one of the most fundamental human rights. However, for many communities, particularly those living in the global South, this right is being compromised by tourism development"

In Goa In India, one five-star resort consumes some 1785 liters of water per guest per day, while a neighboring resident consumes just 14 liters of water per day. Community wells are being abandoned due to contamination and declining water tables.

In the Gambia Women rise at 4 am to queue for hours at water standpipes. Most hotels have private boreholes and pumps to ensure a constant water supply, but fail to pay for what they consume, despite the desperate need to finance improvements to public water infrastructure.

What the report advises

The principles of water equity in tourism aim to capture the essential points of the recommendations of the report *Water Equity in Tourism - A Human Right, A Global Responsibility* by Tourism Concern. The principles are underpinned by the notion of water as a human right.

With respect to governments

- The right to water and sanitation should not be compromised by tourism
- Governments should implement clear regulations for sustainable and equitable water and tourism management
- Land use and tourism planning should be based on assessments of water resources

With respect to the industry

- Tourism businesses should implement their business responsibility to respect the right to water
- Tourism businesses should abide by the law
- Tourism businesses should reduce their water consumption

With respect to all

- Land use, tourism and water planning should be undertaken participatively
- Governments and tourism businesses should be accountable to local communities
- Cooperation to further water equity should be pursued by all stakeholders

News

Whole World Water Campaign

This campaign is designed to eradicate the lack of clean and safe water by uniting the hospitality and tourism industries on a non-competitive program. But it is much more than a fundraising initiative. It is a revolutionary way of thinking, a new way to do business designed to balance environmental, health and economic issues and is set to launch on World Water Day, 22 March 2013.



Leveraging the potential of the hospitality and tourism industry to spur global change, the model encourages spas, hotels, resorts and restaurants to filter, bottle and sell their own water, and contribute 10% of the proceeds to the Whole World Water Fund, a fund benefiting clean and safe water programs around the world. An exclusive bottle created by world-renowned product designer Yves Behar and fuseproject will serve as the recognizable icon for the campaign, while ClimateCare, pioneers in climate and development projects and results based financing, will manage the Fund.

“Since 2008, Soneva Resorts, Residences and Spas have banned imported water in favor of bottling its own filtered water,” said Sonu Shivdasani, founding member of the campaign. “Revenues were contributed to clean drinking water initiatives whose work has meant water access for over 600,000 people previously denied. Our resorts have proved that this solution works.”

Industry leaders Soneva, Virgin Limited Edition, Virgin Hotels, Banyan Tree, Auberge du Soleil, Tao Restaurant Group, The Ritz-Carlton Charlotte, The Ritz-Carlton Lake Tahoe, Oberoi Hotels and Resorts, Dusit Hotels and Resorts, JetWing Hotels, and The Ranch at Live Oak Malibu have joined the campaign.

How the campaign works



“This model reduces shipping pollution, financial and environmental costs, and it’s good for business,” said Sir Richard Branson, founder at Virgin Group.

“We estimate that with scale, the hospitality and tourism industry can contribute USD 1 billion per year or more to help eradicate this global issue,” said Karena Albers, co-founder of the campaign, which is currently accepting new members to join its existing group of industry leaders.
wholeworldwater.co

Water theme tour in Lebanon

One of the most significant water theme tours is the “Water Life Cycle” that Responsible Mobilities (RM) operates in the region of Kesrewan. It stretches from the snowy heights of Ouyoun El Siman to the Nahr El Kalb river mouth, passing by Nabaa El Laban’s water source and the stone bridge, the Chabrouh water dam and Jeita grotto.

If you are a keen tourist and want to discover this beautiful region in a responsible way, while meeting with the local population to understand how water management and contribution tourism can add towards this natural resource, you should follow the RM tour companion.

First day

Stage 1 Start your journey with a snowshoeing tour from Qanat Bakish to Ouyoun El Siman. Your local guide Nassib Aakiby will lead you through the snow-covered hills and reveal the tracks of foxes and hares that have adapted to the winter climate.

Stage 2 See how the slow melting snow fills the underground water cisterns and gushes forth in the form of water sources.

Stage 3 After completing the snowshoeing trek, continue to Nabaa El Laban water source, which is a great example of the hydrogeological system, and take a photo (without climbing on top) of the nearby huge natural bridge, known locally as the Stone Bridge, which is fine example of the effect of water erosion.

Stage 4 Then, listen to a member of the Kfardebian municipality talk about the advantages of such a natural resource in their region, water issues and future projects. Part of the water goes to irrigation, another is directed to the Chabrouh water dam to supply the villages and the remaining continues its journey to the sea flowing in the riverbed.

Stage 5 Another must-see spot in the neighborhood is the archeological site of Kalaat Faqra that overlooks the valleys of Keserwan towards the west. A quick outside visit in wintertime is sufficient to understand the importance of water management to the ancient civilizations.

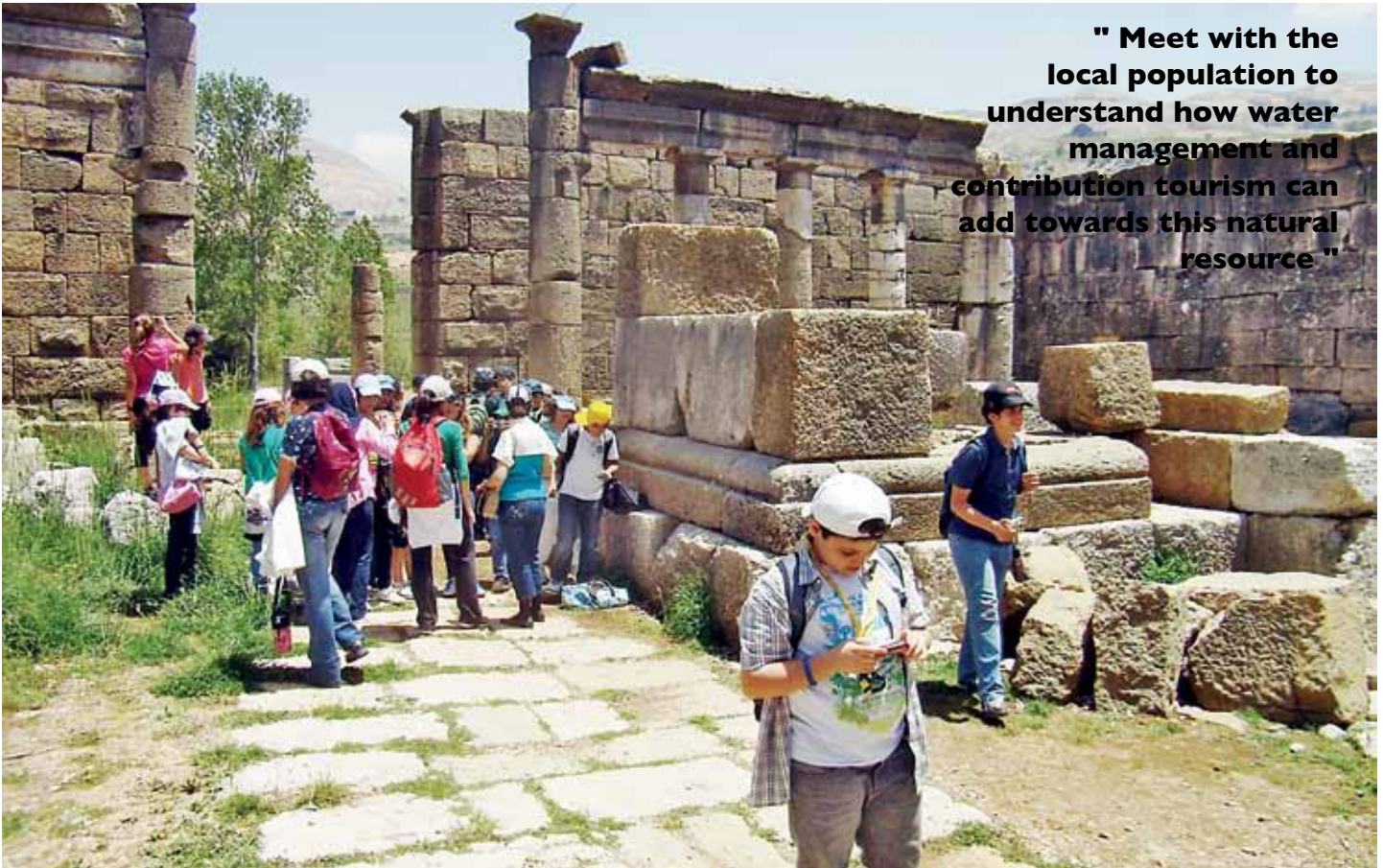
Stage 6 On the way to Chabrouh water dam, you can stop and drink fresh water at Nabaa El Aassal. At the dam you will find an enormous but peaceful manmade water reservoir and indoor water filtration tanks.

Stage 7 End your day at Auberge Beity in the town of Kfardebian with a hot lentil soup prepared by Josephine Zgheib, the owner of the youth hostel and member of Hostelling International and DHIAFEE.

Second day

Stage 1 Start the day on a hiking trek with your local guide in Wadi EsSaleeb and follow the ancient Roman stairway to the valley below. You will reach the bridge and the water mill built two centuries ago by the riverside. The hike continues on the cleared trail near the river, leading to St John’s refurbished church and three vernacular houses. St John symbolizes the element of water because he baptized Jesus Christ in the Jordan River.



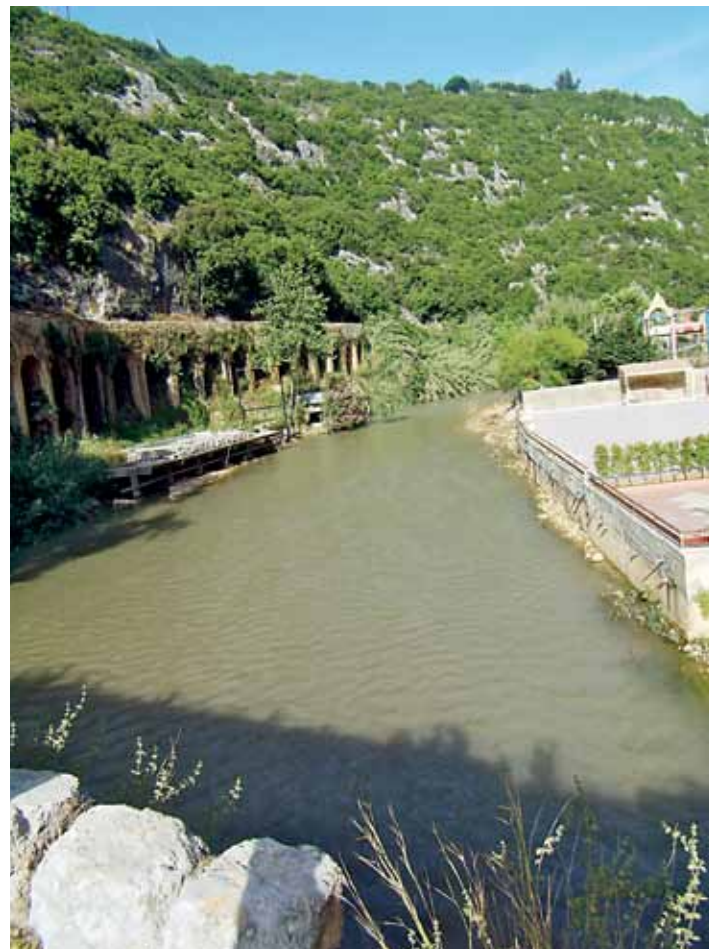


" Meet with the local population to understand how water management and contribution tourism can add towards this natural resource "

Stage 2 A picnic lunch prepared by the local community may be taken on site.

Stage 3 Proceed to the spectacular Jeita Grotto to understand not only the beauty of nature but also the karst system and underground waters. Tourism is criticized in such fragile ecosystems unless it is well managed, as is the case by Jeita Grotto team.

Stage 4 To complete the Water Life Cycle tour, end your visit at the mouth of Nahr El Kalb river by the seacoast and enjoy the historical steles and the Ottoman period bridge. immortalize your passage with a group photo on the arched bridge.



Where to stay

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Josephine Zogheib + 961 3 214871

Get a guide

Ouyoun El Siman, Kfardebian and Wadi EsSaleeb local guides

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• Naaim Mhanna + 961 70 941573

Wadi EsSaleeb and Daraya local guide

• Charbel Sfeir + 961 3 473718

Contact

Responsible Mobilities + 961 3 451113

Tour date 6 - 7 April 2013

10 things to do in Metn

You've been to Jeitta Grotto, visited the National Museum and explored the Roman ruins in Baalbeck. These are all must-see attractions, but for a little variety, Lebanon Traveler has picked 10 places in Beit Mery, Brummana and Baabdat that even some locals don't know about



1. Aqueduct of Zubaida

Heading up towards Beit Mery, in the secluded river valley between Mansourieh and Hazmieh, you will find the remains of a Roman aqueduct that was built to convey water across the Beirut River onwards to the city. Built in 273 AD during the reign of Roman emperor Aurelian, the arched bridge-like structure over the aqueduct is known today as "Qanater es-Sett Zubaida" or the Arches of Mistress Zubaida.

2. Beit Mery

The three hills, which make up this town, have been home to summer vacationers since the times of the Phoenicians and Romans. Its pleasant weather and lush pine forests overlooking Lebanon's valleys and sea make it a favorite resort spot for those trying to beat the heat. Beit Mery (derived from the Aramaic term for "the house of my lord or master") has two prehistoric archaeological sites where flint industries have been found by Jesuit archaeologists. One is on the right bank of the Beirut River, south southwest of the town, the other is east of the road from Beit Mery to Deir el Kalaa, on a sloping plateau facing the junction of the Nahr Meten and Nahr Jamani

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Restaurant Ain Al Khasfeh + 961 4 870912

Tiger restaurant + 961 4 870564

3. Deir el Kalaa

This Maronite Monastery of Saint John the Baptist, and its ancient Roman and Byzantine ruins, rests on three levels. At the top are the ruins of a Roman temple dedicated to the god "baal marqod" over which a church dedicated to Saint John was constructed in 1750. The old church is incorporated into the present early 20th century structure. A short walk down the hill leads to a small second century AD temple to the goddess June. Of particular note is the mosaic floor of a 6th century Byzantine church with one of the reused temple columns in place. Nearby is a remarkably well-preserved public bath. Once a Roman-Byzantine settlement, the entire site is littered with remains of more temples, a second bath and a colonnaded street.

+961 4 870080





4. Al Bustan Hotel

A local landmark in Beit Mery and the site of an annual festival of music and art, Al Bustan or “the orchard” in Arabic is a five-star hotel with a commanding view over Beirut and the Mediterranean. Founded by Emile Bustani and his wife Laura in 1962, it houses a growing collection of art, sculpture, and antiquities in its 117-room facility.

+961 4 972980



Printania Palace Hotel Garden

5. Brummana

The House of Rammana the god of air, storm and thunder, doesn't seem like where you would find thousands of tourists eager to escape the summer heat, but despite its namesake, Brummana has a relatively cool climate all year long. The town's 6km long main street is lined with shops, restaurants, bars and café's that come alive after dark. If you're in the mood for French cuisine, Le Gargotier is a quaint spot that's especially romantic in the brisk winter months and for traditional Lebanese fare, Brummana has some of the best restaurants in the country. Their old-world charm and spectacular views of the city, offer guests a one-of-kind experience. If you'd like to spend the weekend in town, there are numerous hotels to choose from including the charming Printania Palace Hotel, the iconic Grand Hills Hotel & Spa, or for the budget conscious, Hotel Le Crillon.

Printania Palace Hotel +961 4 862000

Grand Hills Hotel & Spa +961 4 868888

Hotel Le Crillon +961 4 8655555

Le Gargotier +961 4 960562

Burj El Hamam +961 4 862211

Mounir +961 4 873900

Kasr Fakhreddine +961 4 960407

Photo courtesy of Myriam Shuman





6. Bits and pieces

For those that like bric a brac, look out for Raja Raad's collection of old pieces from Lebanese houses that you can buy, anything from an old window to a marble slab.
+961 3 450936

7. Ayn Asalaam

Brummana wouldn't be what it is today without the Swiss missionary Theophilus Waldmeier and the Quakers. In 1873, he climbed the steep mountain on horseback with his eight children and purchased a vast stretch of land called "Berket al-Ghanem" (the Pool of the Conqueror) which was later changed to "Ayn al-Salam", (the Fountain of Peace). He did this with the help of the Society of Friends in England who gave him the funds with the intent that he would build a school for the local girls and boys. The isolated mountain area quickly flourished and was even the location of the first tennis court in the Middle East. Brummana High School (BHS) continues to operate under the same principles of peace and goodwill till this day. It hosts numerous cultural and educational events throughout the year including the May festival, a summer retreat for children and an international tennis tournament.
BHS +961 4 960430/1/2



8. Deir Mar Chaaya

In 1700 the Antonin Maronite Order was founded in the Monastery of Mar Chaya by Patriarch Gabriel of Blaouza. The modern day structure is surrounded by several community based activities and meeting areas. Before you reach the valley, the main road heading down is a popular walking track especially in summer. As you head uphill, you'll find a small chapel on your right hand side, as well as an organic market with fresh produce and a small zoo. All of the products sold in the store are grown and cultivated on the grounds, including a selection of wine from locally grown grapes. Dairy products are sourced from the numerous cows on the property and farm fresh eggs are always a treat to find each morning. The kids will love watching the animals prance around, and when the weather gets warmer they can even go on a pony ride.
+961 4 862813



Photo courtesy of Christina Nehma Gaspar

10. Baabdat

Since the opening of the highway a few years ago, this mainly summer resort town has blossomed into a full-fledged community, with residents living all year round. The name Baabdat is derived from the Aramaic words "beit abdutha" meaning the home of adoration. Famous locals include the former president of Lebanon, Emile Lahoud, film director Carmen Labaki, director/actress Nadine Labaki and Maxime Chaya – the first Lebanese to climb Everest. The views from Baabdat are stunning. It has numerous historic churches like Saint Mamas Church built in the 16th century. For those that like exploring it also has many springs. Before heading down to Beirut, stop by Azrak for an ice cream cone in Chamees and make the ride back, a refreshing one.

Municipality +961 4 820097

Azrak Pastry & Ice Cream +961 3 633022

Eat at Le Tournant Restaurant +961 3 459523

Stay at Colibri Hotel +961 4 820269

9. Seven Churches

On the Thursday before Easter known as Maundy or Holy Thursday, the washing of the feet is a traditional component of the celebration (symbolizing Jesus washing the Apostles' feet) followed by an informal visit to seven churches. Those who follow tradition today usually need a car to embark on such a journey, but if you're in the area of Brummana, you can do it by foot. Starting from Printania Palace Hotel, head straight through Brummana's old town and the first church is Mar Gerius of the Greek Orthodox faith, followed by Mar Chaaya Maronite church. Continue walking to Mar Charbel church and you'll see two very old chapels, both named Mar Gerius across the street. Your last stop here will be the Azarieh church located on the grounds of a school belonging to the Azarieh nun's order. A short hop to the main street is the location of the seventh and final church, Mar Elias in front of Farrouj el Achkar, where you'll find the best chicken sandwiches in town.

Also see the Church of the Prophet Isaiah – the oldest structure in Brummana dating back to 333 B.C.

Municipality +961 4 860860

Try Farrouj el Achkar +961 4 862443



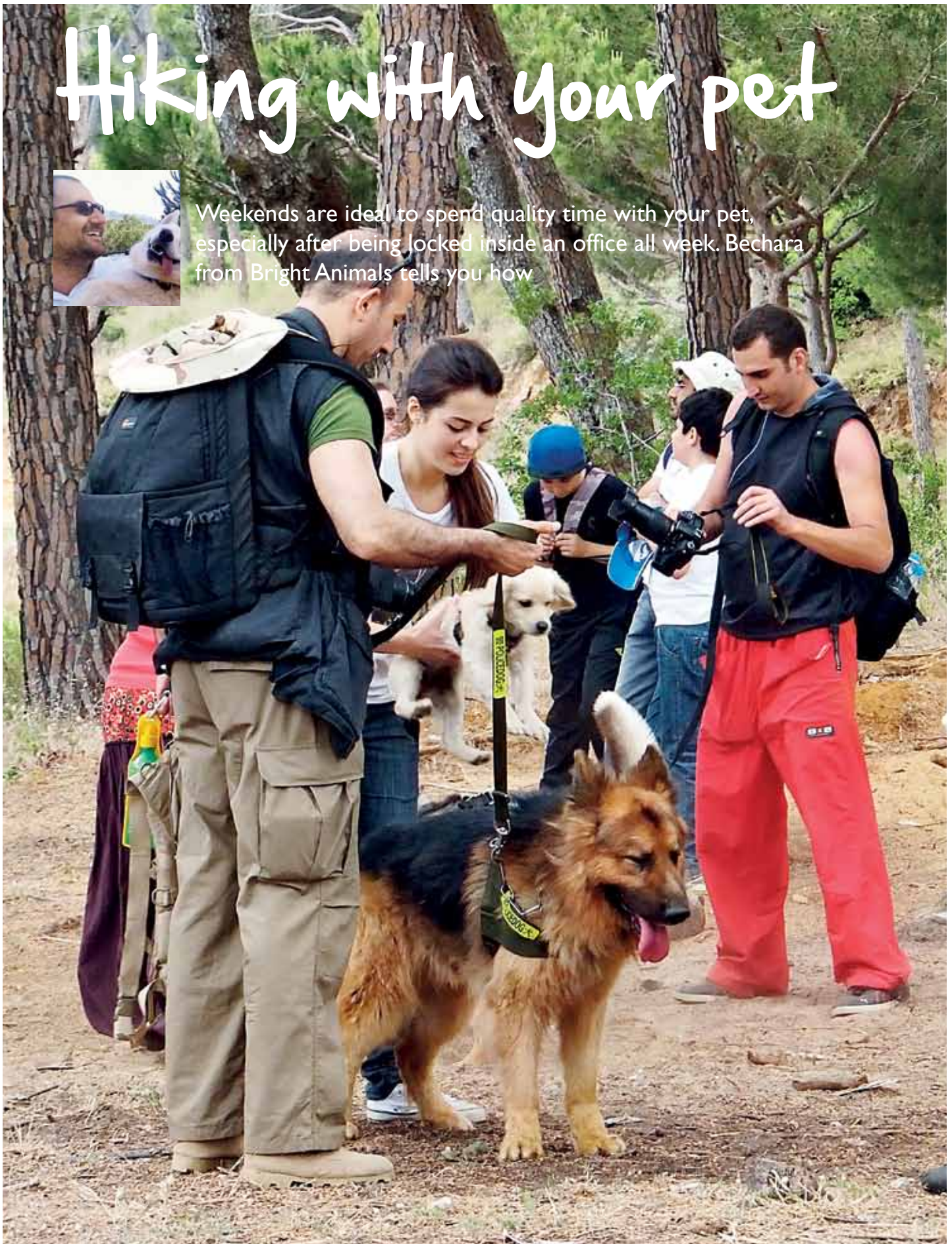
Getting there

The easiest way to get to this area of Metn (the mountains) is to take the Emile Lahoud highway from Nahr el Mot and get off on the Baabdat exit. If you are near Sin el Fil, Beit Mery is easily accessible from the Mkalles roundabout. Get on the road heading east. You will drive through Mansourieh and Ain Saadeh before you reach Beit Mery on the mountain-top. Follow the road to Brummana and Baabdeth, where you can take the highway heading back towards Beirut. The scenic road is even better on your way down with beautiful panoramic sea views.

Hiking with your pet



Weekends are ideal to spend quality time with your pet, especially after being locked inside an office all week. Bechara from Bright Animals tells you how



A pet can be your best friend and a treasured companion. Having them around makes you feel happy and secure. Bright Animals offers you an outing with your pet that will allow both of you the chance to get outdoors and socialize.

On most weekends, you can head to the meeting point designated by Bright Animals for a hike with your whole family. There, you will meet similar minded people who appreciate pets and value their presence... just make sure your dog is on a leash and off you go!

Tested ahead of time, the hike is usually easy and will not be more than 3 hours. Should small children who cannot complete the entire trip accompany, a guide will escort you through a shortcut to the final destination, which is where your group will have lunch that you would have chosen ahead of time from a varied menu.

"Sometimes we get groups as big as 80 people with over 40 dogs and it is fantastic to see all of them gathered together," said Bechara Hitti, trainer of Bright Animals.

Safety is of utmost importance for the Bright Animals crew, who make sure to be with you at all times to avoid any incidents. This is

also the reason for dogs to remain on leashes in order to prevent unnecessary confusion.

The walks are easy and fun, however if the team leader notices any behavior that that could be corrected, they offer tips on positive reinforcement that could be useful when training dogs.

"To insure a peaceful walk, we try to screen the participants. Aggressive dogs are not included as they might pose a threat to the other pets. Loud radios and guns are also banned. It is all about communing with nature and bonding with your pet so nothing should distract you from that," says Hitti.

The hikes usually take place in the mountainous Metn area. "Unfortunately there aren't many dog friendly places in Lebanon, so we have to be further away from civilization. The Metn is still quite green, has many interesting and easy trails and is a central location, making it close to all.

If you feel like spending some time with your beloved pet and meeting other dog lovers in your area, join the animal lovers for a one of a kind outing!



Good to know

In spring and fall when the weather is fair, Bright Animals organizes monthly hikes in various area

facebook.com/brightanimals for update on events
Contact Bechara Hitti +961 3 427487

Writer and editor, Derek Issacs reveals walks where dogs are more than welcome

Anyone who lives in Lebanon and owns a dog would have noticed the lack of available walking space in the city. Yet, there is no reason why your dog cannot enjoy a ramble away from the hustle and bustle of city life and have a jolly good romp in the countryside. Owning a dog in Lebanon is no easy task. Those who do will know how difficult it is to walk a dog among a society, which fundamentally is unaccustomed to reacting appropriately. After all, I should know. I own four – Austin, Foxy Lady, Lucy and Sunday.



I've lost count how many times I have bundled my furry friends into the back of my car and headed to the mountains or coast. One such trip was to the Metn area close to Hamana, famous for its abundance of cherries and miles of woodland. Upon arriving to the area, all one has to do is turn off the main road and onto the quiet back roads. I guarantee that you will soon stumble across a wooded area or open field where it is safe to unleash your dogs and go for a long walk.

One of my favourite haunts to visit with my dogs is the beach. Of course, luxury beach resorts are unlikely to allow you in with your dog, but all is not lost. Lebanon is teeming with public beaches, many of which are fairly quiet all summer long. If you don't wish to travel too far out of Beirut then Ramlet el Baida's sandy beach may suffice. Personally, I prefer to go further afield and head north to Batroun. Along the same coast where White Beach is situated are a number of public beaches. Although not sandy, the clear blue waters are simply beyond belief. There is even a public beach in Batroun town center. Memories of my dogs and I splashing in and out of the water last summer will make sure that we will return again this year.

'Oh, but I don't have a car' I hear you say. Well don't give up just because you lack your own transportation. Use the bus. Last year, after my car broke down, I rode with Austin, my eldest dog, on a bus all the way to Batroun. It is worth remembering that not all bus drivers will let you ride with your dog. But never give up. Try the next bus that comes along. The key is to smile and be friendly.

If riding a bus with your dog is not your thing, a number of hiking companies will allow your dog to accompany you on a hiking tour and at no extra cost. It doesn't hurt to call the hiking companies and ask. Of course, the dog in question will have to be on his or her best behaviour and be good with people.

Derek A Issacs has lived in Lebanon for 11 years and is the Executive Editor of Adam Levant, a magazine 'For the Man of the Middle East'. He also runs a successful copy writing company called Wordclinic.
wordclinic.net



The lack of dog friendly places

Some irresponsible dog owners are giving dogs a bad name. They let them do their business anywhere and never pick up after them, which is why very few places allow dogs. It is very important that each pet owner applies the "they poop, you scoop" policy, which will help open doors to more dog-friendly places.



An overriding passion

Over the years Joseph Matar, a poet and artist, became very close friends with Farid Serhal, a Member of Parliament for Jezzine, and witnessed Serhal building his dream palace

In 1956, Matar used to visit the Anatomy Hall of the French Medical Faculty in Beirut, which was under the direction of Professor Farid Serhal. He studied and made drawings of the morphology of human bodies, forms and proportions. Serhal took an interest in his work.

One day, he told him that on the southeast side of Jezzine, he owned a vast stretch of land with vineyards and fields, and a little house with a cellar for wine and arak. Serhal invited him over one day, suggesting that Matar should paint a fresco on the wall of a room that came out onto a terrace. Matar thought of painting a dance of Bacchus, the Roman god of wine and intoxication, or a dance of fairies under the vines.

In 1964, on a trip back to Lebanon from Madrid and Paris where Matar was studying, Serhal told him that his cellars and his house had been demolished and that in their place, a "great palace" had risen. During this time Serhal had collected hundreds of books on Greek and Roman sculpture and on all kinds of art, whether Byzantine, Arab, Italian Renaissance, French or Spanish. There were the most beautiful castles and palaces of Paris, the river Loire, London, Persia, Ancient Egypt and Russia of the Czars.

He also collected carpets with the signatures of known artisans, antiques, old furniture, mosaics, opaline, sculptures, bronze and paintings.

A score of stonemasons labored at the site every day, reproducing capitals, details, structures, reliefs, moldings and projections to a tee. This castle was a reflection of the dreams, vision, fantasies and imagination of Serhal. It was truly a colossal undertaking. The palace was his life, his sole subject of conversation, his passion, his folly. The façade, pediment and entrance as Heliopolis, were all on the grandest scale.

The monument had become simply a wing - one wing of a construction project, now attached to another wing by a magnificent central portal, so now the whole edifice had doubled in area. Serhal went around the antique dealers of Damascus, Aleppo, Turkey, Iran and Iraq collecting for the palace in order to fill it. Then, in 1975 the disturbances began. Work slowed down, and came to a dead halt a few years later, as a result of the general situation and the passing away of Serhal himself. Serhal Palace is now open to the sightseeing public just like Heliopolis, Beiteddine, Byblos and other touristic sites, the difference being it is by appointment only.

Opening times

By appointment only Joe Harfouch on +961 3 353293

Where to eat and stay

Any of the restaurants around the waterfalls

Iris Flower Hotel +961 7 781999

Bouhaira Hotel +961 7 810840

L'Etoile du Loup +961 7 781425

What not to miss

- Firebird Cutlery:
Abdelnour +961 3 719602 - Abo Rashed +961 7 780082
Aoun +961 7 781099 - Haddad + 961 3 683369
- Karam Winery +961 7 367139
- Bkassine Pine Forest +961 7 800580

Getting there

Follow the Saïda - Hlayiyye - Majdelyun - Salhiyye - Lebea - Roum - Homsiyé road. The village is located on the slopes of Tumat Niha and is surrounded by pine forests.



For him, the cover, the illustrations and the binding of the book were just as important as the text itself. He wanted to hold the book, to feel it and see it on his shelves, a far cry from the current state of e-book technology.

Arabic, French, Syriac, Hebrew, Latin and Geez (an ancient Ethiopian language) are only a sampling of the languages found inside, what can only be described as Aladdin's cave of literary treasures. Although some items, such as an Ottoman "perpetual calendar" and a papal decree from 1690 are kept under glass, Abi-Heila readily handles the other books carefully.

He opens his books on an ornate wooden stand and points out that when opening and holding a book, you should never open it wide because it could break the spine. As a book preservation advisor, married to a book restorer, he should know.

Inside Bibliopolis is the workshop where the Abi-Heilas carry out book and manuscript preservation and restoration. Unlike art restoration, book restoration doesn't have to be invisible. It can be evident but discreet. It is also important that a restoration be reversible so that a future restorer, in years to come, can remove for instance the acid-free tape used to repair the book without any damage to it.

Abi-Heila's wife Rita is the expert book-restorer of the two. She studied restoration for four years in France. The two now work together on major restorations, which he emphasizes are mainly for serious collectors or museum pieces, as they can be quite expensive.

A highlight of Abi-Heila's collection was what he says is the first printed book to mention Beirut and Tripoli, written by Luduvico di Varthema (1470-1517), a traveler and friend of Christopher Columbus. The book, *Itinerario de Luduvico de Varthema Bolognese*, was printed in 1515.

According to Abi-Heila, there are only two other known existing copies, one at The British Museum and the other at The Bavarian State Library. Written in German, Varthema's book is best known as the first description of the pilgrimage to Mecca by a non-Muslim.

When asked about the shoes, he explained that the leather sandals were from when he was in Paris during what he called his revolutionary Trotskyite period, the gentlemanly brogues represented his bourgeoisie period, the high-class slippers his academic phase, etc... Which shoes will represent his Bibliopolis years we wondered?



Address

Nagib Trad Str, Saint Nicolas, Achrafieh
Telephone +961 3 812318

Opening hours

Open by appointment only, Monday to Saturday, 10am - 7pm



Let's go horseback riding

Horses have played an important role throughout human history, both in warfare and in peaceful pursuits. Man and horse have shared a long relationship together and still do in sport

This faithful companion, used as a working animal to pull carriages or plow the land, was also a warhorse in the cavalry. And though the use of horses has become obsolete, horseback riding remains to date, a very distinguished sport.

Types of sports

Sports that use horses are quite varied and each one requires a unique set of skills to master. Apart from the normal trekking and cross-country rides, there are competitive sports that take perseverance and training. Let's take a look at a few of them:

Show Jumping

This requires navigating a course of jumps set up inside a stadium designed for equestrian events. In a show jumping event, the stamina, speed and flexibility of the horse are tested, along with the relationship that the horse has with its rider. Winners are determined depending on the least number of faults accumulated and the overall speed with which the course is completed. Faults are mainly awarded when parts of the fence jumped fall or when a horse refuses to jump a fence.

Dressage

Defined by the International Equestrian Federation as "the highest expression of horse training" where "horse and rider are expected

to perform from memory a series of predetermined movements", dressage is a beloved competitive sport. Its main purpose is to develop, through standardized progressive training methods, the horse's natural athletic ability and willingness to perform, thereby maximizing its potential as a riding horse.

Beirut Hippodrome

The Beirut Hippodrome hosts horse racing every Sunday. Though we do not condone betting, a visit to the hippodrome can be an interesting outing. Horse races have their own community and culture and although you will not see the elegant hats of the international opens, you will certainly meet interesting individuals who will give you some unique pointers. Races take place every Sunday at 1.30pm. There are usually 7 races scheduled.

Getting there

After passing National Museum, take a left on the highway and turn back after the first U turn. The entrance of the Hippodrome will be on your right.

+961 1 632515
beiruthorseracing.com

Polo

Polo is a team sport played on horseback in which the objective is to score goals against an opposing team. Players score by driving a small white plastic or wooden ball into the opposing team's goal using a long-handled mallet. The traditional sport of polo is played at speed on a large grass field and each polo team consists of four riders and their mounts. Polo is also known as the "Sport of Kings". Surely you have seen a picture or two of princes William and Harry playing polo.

Rodeo

Rodeo, the ultimate cowboy's sport, is divided into several activities that include bareback riding and saddle bronc riding. Bareback riding produces some of the wildest action in the sport. Throughout the eight seconds ride, the cowboy must grasp the rigging (a handhold made of leather and rawhide) with only one hand and hold on to his ride till the end. The rider is judged on his control during the ride and on his spurring technique. Saddle bronc riding is the rodeo's "classic" event. Participants compete to see who can display the best style while riding untrained horses. Each rider must begin his ride with his feet over the bronc's shoulder to give the horse the advantage. A rider who synchronizes his spurring action with the animal's bucking efforts will receive a high score.

Advantages of horseback riding

Riding a horse can be beneficial to your health and well being, as it involves a lot of discipline, exercise, the outdoors and being in sync with another creature.

Physical benefits

Horseback riding improves respiration and blood circulation as all exercises do. What makes it different is that the activity involves having good posture on the back of the horse for an extended period of time, which translates to better posture overall for the rider. It promotes balance and coordination during the movement of the horse and the motor functions of the rider improves as a result. A seasoned horseback rider will also develop great sensory integration with their surroundings, developing alertness and the ability to perceive and handle emergency situations better.

Emotional benefits

Apart from the obvious health benefits of horse riding, the emotional aspect of it should not be taken lightly. Countless folks who have taken up horseback riding report the enjoyment they experience during the ride. The sense of enjoyment is derived from both the joy of riding and feeling connected with the great outdoors. The heartfelt satisfaction leads to lower stress levels and optimism in their daily lives.

Psychological benefits

A horse is a large animal. In order to ride a horse properly, a rider needs to exert control and master the skills required to make the horse respond to your commands. Achieving control over a large animal instills enormous self-esteem and confidence that are beneficial in facing everyday challenges.

10 tips for beginners

Riding horses can be great fun, but as a beginner, there are some important things to keep in mind:

1. Wear the right clothes

Wearing the right clothes is important. Helmets can either be purchased or borrowed from the riding school. Boots are the preferred footwear with a 1-2cm heel, as small heels prevent slippage from the stirrups.

2. Be careful when approaching a horse

Approaching a horse cannot be done from any direction. There is a special technique involved. The horse needs to be approached from the side near the shoulder. Coming straight at a horse means it cannot see you because of its blind spots.

3. Use a mounting block

Mounting a horse from the ground, especially for beginners, is not recommended as it puts a strain on the rider's back, physical pressure on the horse and also dislodges the saddle.

4. Keep your heels down

When mounted, a beginner needs to keep the heels in the down position in the stirrups so as to be prepared for an occasion when the horse stops suddenly. This is to avoid the possibility of the rider flying over the horse's head when unprepared.

5. Keep your shoulders back

Maintaining posture where the shoulders roll back and not forward helps to keep the rider's back straight and avoid the horse pulling the rider forward.

6. Hold the reins properly

For better control over the horse, the rider's hands need to be still to maintain continuous contact with the reins. The right way to hold the reins is to take one in each hand and hold them between the little finger and the third finger. Keep thumbs on top, facing upward with fingers gently curled around the reins.

7. Don't look down

When the 'eyes up' rule is followed, the rider can plot the course and steer around obstacles better.

8. Work on your balance

Maintaining proper balance on a horse comes with practice and needs to be developed over time. Balance is related to correct posture.

9. Dismount carefully

The rider begins to dismount by first removing feet from the stirrups. Holding the reins with the left hand, the rider leans forward, raises the right leg high to clear the horse's haunches and the saddle, and pushing forward jumps to the ground.

10. Thank your horse

Always give your horse a pat or a treat after dismounting as a thank you. In many cases you are encouraged to brush down your mount so as to form a stronger bond.



Lebanon



Design www.hibamikdash.com

Pleasantly Surprising

www.destinationlebanon.gov.lb



Ministry of Tourism



Learn it ... enjoy it!

Many clubs in Lebanon offer horseback riding classes as well as unique rides in the outdoors. Take your pick from and make sure to reserve your place before you head out.

The Lebanese Equestrian Club

(Club Hippique Libanais)

The club offers riding classes and obstacle jumping starting from the age of six. For more experienced riders, the main arena is lit specifically for nighttime riding. Private stables are available for horse owners.

Cecile El Solh +961 3 217736

Mechref Club

Mechref club offers classes in horseback riding and obstacle jumping starting from the age of 5. For those who fancy a ride in the village, trail tours are available and these last about an hour or two. Make sure to book ahead of time.

USD 30/40 minute class - USD 30/hour of trail tour

Mohammad Al Dana +961 3 505505

Zeghrine Club (Metn)

Zeghrine Club is a professional school that trains beginners in jumping and dressage. The pony club receives children as young as two years old for training. For those who wish to explore the beautiful wilderness of the Metn, the club offers two-hour rides in the forest for more experienced riders.

USD 30/session - USD 100/2hour nature ride

Georges Sassi +961 3 632433

Valley Club Aintoura

The Pony Club at Valley Club Aintoura will teach your kids horseback riding, jumping and dressage starting from the age of seven. For those who wish to try out riding, guided tours are available as well as private stables and classes.

USD 30/session

Mona Daher +961 3 522822

Faqra Club

Learn horseback riding, jumping and dressage in the beautiful Keserwan area. The pony club trains kids from the age of 4 to 18. Private stables and private classes are also available.

+ 961 9 300500

Watching competitions

The Lebanese Equestrian Federation monitors the sport in the country, organizes competitions and takes riders abroad. Though jumping obstacles has been practiced for a long time in Lebanon, dressage has recently been introduced. As a matter of fact, last year the Lebanese delegation won the bronze medal at the Qatar Arab Competition. For those interested in watching horseback riding competitions and performances, the LEF organizes an event every Sunday at various clubs in Lebanon, from horse shows to jumping and dressage competitions. Check out the program at equileb.com or chl-lebanon.com



Aley Equi Club

Aley Equi Club offers horseback riding and obstacle jumping classes, as well as a unique ride in the forest that lasts seven hours. However, the club ensures your riding skills before you embark on this long journey.

17 USD/30 mint - 24 USD/50 mint - 75 USD nature ride

+961 5 558112

River Ranch Riding School

This professional riding school offers beginner and advanced classes in horseback riding and obstacle jumping from the age of six. River Ranch's unique experience is a ride in the river and on the shore. While in the river, the water is sometimes so deep that the horse is immersed in it. On the beach you will enjoy riding over golden sands and crashing waves. These outings however are reserved for advanced riders.

Andre +961 3 811411 or +961 70 118818

Bzebdine Hidden Valley

Bzebdine Hidden Valley takes kids from the age of six to introduce and train them in horseback riding. Nature trails are available for those who wish to ride in the surrounding pine forest.

25 USD/session - 15 USD/half session - Trail rides 25 USD/50 mint

Tony Germany +961 3 466662

El Rancho

A variety of horseback riding options are offered at El Rancho. You can begin by learning the basics of good riding, enjoy a ride in the forest or if you are a member of the club, you can learn and practice the art of the rodeo!

33 USD/lesson - 40 USD/ride in the forest

Jose Daoud +961 3 777086 or +961 1 392880

Spring Hills Country Club

This professional riding school's main focus is your little ones. They will learn to ride, jump obstacles and dressage techniques with the help of a well-trained staff. Being in the outdoors and bonding with a horse will be highly beneficial for your little tots.

125 USD/10 sessions - 800 USD/30 sessions.

+961 1 681242

Crazy Rafting

Located in Hermel, Crazy Rafting offers the joys of horseback riding for all those who come to their club, seeking adventure and high adrenaline activities. After spending the day, you can take advantage of the riding facilities for free.

+961 3 743051

Essential Equipment

Joella Kattouah Tabet, owner of Equisystem, sheds light on the most important piece of equipment you can buy for yourself and for the horse.

1. The Helmet

This essential piece of equipment should be the first thing you buy for yourself once you start practicing the sport regularly. Make sure it is light, well aerated, comfortable and fashionable to ensure you will wear it. You should never go horseback riding without your helmet.

2. The Saddle

This is the most expensive piece of equipment you will ever buy for horseback riding. The saddle should be comfortable for you and for the horse. It is usually double sided to fit these requirements. A quality saddle can be passed on from generation to generation, making it a very sound investment!

Where to buy

Decathlon

Le Mall Dbaye +961 4 526101

Equisystem

Zouk Mosbeh (next to Dream Park) +961 9 233758



Equisystem - La Sellerie du Liban is not just a place to get a pair of boots and a helmet.

It is a whole environment revolving around horses. You will find qualities and choices for all budgets, whether you are a novice horseback rider or an already confirmed professional.

At Equisystem, you will find standard items as well as horse clipper machines, horseshoes & nails, European dust-free vacuum packed wood bedding, stable equipment, etc... Moreover, you can order personalized embroidered saddle pads with matching colors, made-to-measure superior quality boots, personalized helmet with colors and accessories you like, assorted everyday gifts, etc...



+961-3-809103 | +961-9-223758

Zouk Mosbeh, Main Road | 2273 Jounieh - Lebanon

kattouah@equisystem.info | equisystem.info

Facebook: Equisystem – La Sellerie du Liban

TAKE ME THERE





AMIQ

Photo courtesy of Roland Younes



Take a walk down by the river

Spring is here, but perhaps it isn't warm enough for a dip in the sea quite yet. Instead, discover some of Lebanon's rivers and go for a walk on the wild side with Lebanon Traveler

Greater Beirut

Ideal for those who don't want to venture too far, three rivers are virtually on the doorstep of Beirut city center. While the mouth of each river doesn't leave much to be desired, heading inland a few kilometers reveals some great springtime surprises.

Beirut River

According to local legend, St George slew the dragon at the mouth of this river. Today we recommend that you head further inland to see the river at its best. Nestled in a valley between the Beirut suburbs of Mansourieh and Hazmieh, the river flows under a Roman aqueduct, aptly named the Aqueducts of Zenobia. Restored and maintained by the Ministry of Tourism, there are ample pathways along the river that take strollers among all manner of plant life and wild orchards. To reach the area, head towards Mansourieh and turn right, down to BelleVue Medical Center.

Antelias River

Antelias Upper River is amazing after heavy rain. Gigantic water pools form jets from holes deep underground. The scene is best viewed at the 100-year-old Casino Fawar, where water springs emerge from beneath the restaurant. It's an ideal stop over for breakfast or lunch as the river gushes by, before heading onwards and upwards to a prehistoric cave situated to the left side of a quarry. Ancient skulls gathered from the cave are now on view at Beirut Museum.

Nahr el-Kalb

Just north of Beirut, the peaceful waters of this short river flow from a spring in Jeita along a 31km course, through a scenic valley to the Mediterranean Sea. The mouth of the 'Dog River' has been the site of a series of monuments erected by past conquerors and generals, such as the graceful bridge built by Sultan Selim in 1914. The best walk is along the inside river bank on the opposite side to the road. Stroll along the pedestrian only path and discover wild orchards and traditional Lebanese houses. If you are lucky, you may even be invited in to share lunch with a family. If not, there are numerous riverside eateries to choose from.



The North

Nahr Ibrahim

Popular with picnickers, the valley of the Ibrahim River is a wild and beautiful area famed for both its historical and religious significance. Mythology locates the river as the scene of the tragic love story of Venus and Adonis. A Roman aqueduct can be seen where the valley forks as well as the Roman temples of Yanuh, Aqoura and Afqa. Upstream, there are a number of riverside cafés that make for a pleasant stopover.

Al Assi River

Known as the 'rebel' or 'disobedient one', the Al Assi River flows from its source in the Bekaa northwards into Syria and onwards to Turkey. Lebanon's foremost river is perhaps not the best for genteel walks. But, all is not lost. Flowing a rocky course, the Assi is ideal for those seeking white-knuckle thrills. Rafting is the sport of choice here with (according to the International Scale of River Rafting) class I to III difficulty at certain parts near Hermil. The website boats.com offers day long rafting courses for beginners including lunch or two-day rafting and camping trips.

The South

Litani River

The Litani River, flowing at 140km entirely within Lebanon, is the longest river in the country. Initially flowing parallel to the Syrian border, it bends westwards near the Hisbani River at Qasimiyeh. A good place to walk is by the Latini Dam at Qaraoun, where there is a 1,350m long artificial lake lined with a few small hotels and restaurants serving fresh trout. At Nahr Abou Assouad, just 10 km north of Tyre, a great landmark is the Leontes Bridge, with a segmental arch structure that dates back to the ancient Roman era.



Lebanon's Rivers

Mythology

In mythology, Nahr-Ibrahim is known as the river of the god Adonis (the god of fertility). Adonis was said to have been gravely injured as a result of falling prey to a wild hog and when his beloved, the goddess Astrate, ran to save his life, his blood mixed with the waters of the river.

Facts

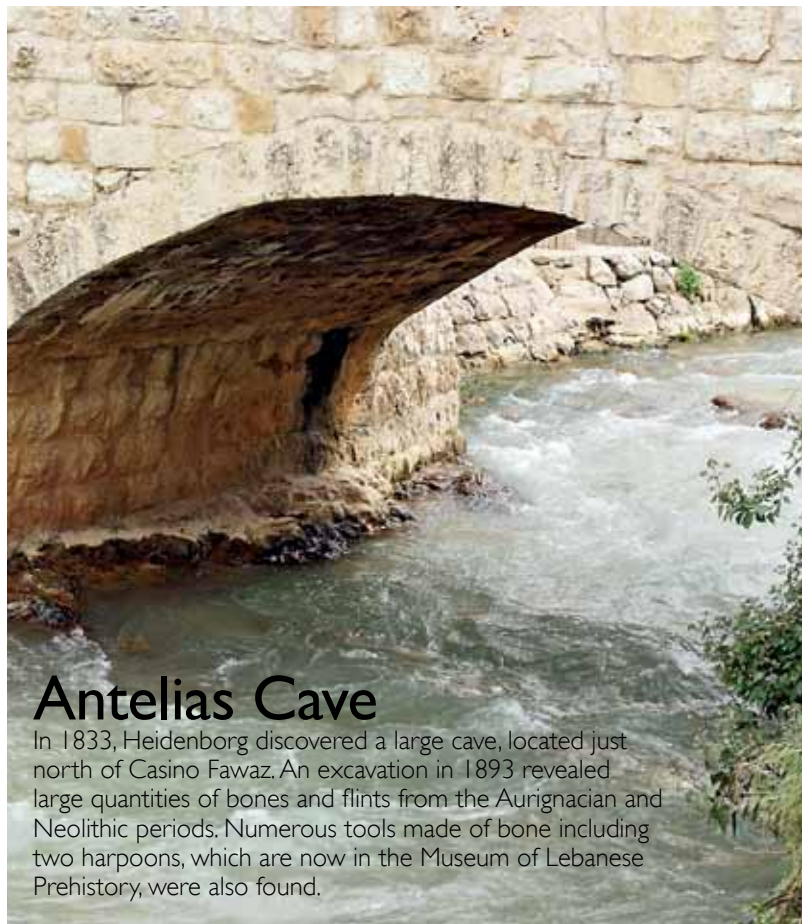
None of Lebanon's rivers are navigable. The Al Assi River is the only river in Lebanon to flow from the south to the north. The Litani River irrigates one of the largest irrigated areas in the nation, consisting of 32.64 km²

Names

Al-Jawz River (Nahr Abu Ali), Antelias River, Arqa River, Assi River, Astoun River, Awali River, Beirut River, Damour River, Hisbani River, Kadisha River, Litani, Nahr al-bared, Nahr al-Kabir al Janoubi, Nahr al-Kalb, Siniq River and Zahrani River

Wildlife

Migratory birds use Lebanon's waterways as stopping points on their journey to Africa and Europe. Numerous bats can be found in many of the riverside caves and wild boar and hyenas often go to the water's edge for a drink.



Antelias Cave

In 1833, Heidenborg discovered a large cave, located just north of Casino Fawaz. An excavation in 1893 revealed large quantities of bones and flints from the Aurignacian and Neolithic periods. Numerous tools made of bone including two harpoons, which are now in the Museum of Lebanese Prehistory, were also found.



Traditional Anjar

Not only is Anjar the sole Umayyad site in Lebanon, the area is also known for its Armenian cultural influences and rich biodiversity

Located 58km from Beirut and just a short distance from the Litani River, Anjar, which was a safe zone for Armenian refugees who fled Turkey and the “Great Calamity” genocide in 1915, is now a pleasant and quiet destination for a relaxing weekend.

The Umayyad ruins

Commissioned by Umayyad Caliph Al Walid in the early 8th C, the site prospered as a trading city due to its strategic location at the crossroads of the north-south and east-west trade routes.

The site’s discovery was purely accidental. To their great surprise, in the late 1940’s, archeologists hoping to uncover the ancient city of Chalcis from 1000 BC discovered a walled town with a Roman layout that dated from the first centuries of Islam. Though many Islamic sites around the world were well preserved, those from the Umayyad era seem to have been all but destroyed. Anjar was thus a pleasant discovery with great historical significance, especially since the Umayyad reign lasted a mere 50 years. It is understandable why the area quickly became a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1984.

The city is 1,300 years old and has evidence of Greek, Roman and Byzantine architecture, mainly in the columns and capitals of

the colonnades lining in the main streets. Walls extending 370m from north to south and 310m from east to west surround this 114,000m² city. Umayyad inscriptions can be found throughout the enclosure. Two main colonnaded streets divide the city into four sections where around 600 shops once stood.

The main structures at the site are two palaces, a mosque and a public bath. The public bath is separated into three sections, a place to change, the bathing area consisting of chambers with cold, warm and hot water and a relaxation area. Make sure to see the faded but intact mosaics to the left of the bathing area entrance.

Anjar’s most impressive construction is the great palace, located in the southwest quadrant of the settlement. In the little palace located north, you can explore Greek stone carvings. Also to the north, remains of a mosque are visible. One of the palace exits, facing the mosque’s entrance, is thought to have been the caliph’s private entrance. The two other entrances were for the public.

Eco-tourism

Aside from its unique historical significance and cultural aspects, Anjar is a perfect ecological environment where fauna and flora are well protected.

The Society for the Protection of Nature in Lebanon (SPNL), as a national partner for Bird Life International, has been active in the assessment and management of Important Bird Areas (IBAs) and Key Biodiversity Areas of Lebanon. Through SPNL's scientific assessments, Anjar - Kfar Zabad Wetlands were announced as an IBA in 2005. The area is a major habitat for the globally endangered bird species, Syrian Serin. It is also a bottleneck for African Eurasian Water Birds.

SPNL has been working on the sustainable management of the wetlands, through the Human Integrated Management Approach (HIMA) since 2005. Accordingly, management plans for sustaining biodiversity and empowering livelihoods was developed for the site. Eco-tourism has been promoted as a means to empower local communities and highlight the esthetic, biodiversity and cultural values of this area. Several ecotourism facilities have developed in the HIMA including a visitor's center, picnic area, camp-site and natural hiking trails.

The Village Tour

This takes you into the Old Armenian Village of Anjar itself. An old map of the first eagle-shaped settlement shows the layout of the village with its municipality, houses and gardens, water points, church, shops, public garden and craftsmen.

The Archeological Site

Visitors will experience the history of the Umayyads through the Old World Heritage Umayyad City (after the village tour, the loop ends at the archeological site, crossing the souvenir shops street).

The Water Course

This tour includes a long hike from the Anjar and Chamsine Spring to the wetlands of the Anjar - Kfar Zabad HIMA. Hiking and biking tours are offered.

Make sure to reserve ahead of time by calling Dalia Jawhary, SPNL
+961 8 344814



Where to eat

Shams Restaurant

A favorite in the area, the restaurant offers fresh fish in addition to the traditional mezze and grills. Make sure to ask for their patented potato balloons, which are a unique feast for the eyes and taste buds.
+961 8 620567

Furn Koch Anjar

Established in 1950, this small bakery continues to prepare its food the traditional way. Their specialty - the chanklish manZouche! Koch Street (no contact information)

Where to sleep

Challalt Anjar Hotel

Fair prices, a decent restaurant and live entertainment daily on summer nights at the only hotel in the area - Challalt Anjar - the place to be!
+961 8 620753



Getting there

From Zahle head towards the south or Syrian border and follow the signs to Anjar. To get to the site, take the fork by the petrol station and the "Welcome to Anjar" sign. Drive about 2km from the highway to the site. Finally, you will see a Shams restaurant sign on your right, after which you should take the first left, and that will lead you to the site entrance.

Lebanon slow food snail trails



Author, photographer, food consultant
and TV host, Barbara Abdeni Massaad
follows the Kebbeh trail



Kebbeh is considered one of our most cherished national dishes. We are all accustomed to eating kebbeh in all its forms - vegetarian varieties included for those who can't eat meat or abstain from eating it during certain periods of the year. But what is Kebbeh? Kebbeh is simply seasoned ground meat or mashed vegetables mixed together with burghul. That's all!

What most of us probably don't know is that kebbeh is produced and cooked differently across the country. From the north to the south of Lebanon, there is a whole range of regional varieties. Its diversity is derived from local traditions in a given region, especially the availability of certain ingredients on hand. Kebbeh is served raw, boiled, baked, grilled or fried.

In the north of Lebanon, goats herd on high mountains therefore raw kebbeh is made mostly with goat meat. In Zghorta, they pride themselves on their kebbeh. Who hasn't heard of the kebbeh Zghorteweh? This kebbeh, stuffed with animal fat, garlic and dry mint, is usually cooked on a barbecue. Alternatively, a mixture of sautéed onion and minced meat is used as stuffing. Fresh raw meat, which has been cooled, is also made with tender loving care by pounding it in a huge mortar with a large pestle. It takes a lot of strength to pound the meat and most women who do this exercise develop muscles in their arms.

On the coast in Tripoli, where fish is abundant, kebbeh is made with ground fish instead of meat, mixed with burghul. White pepper is added to the mix with the salt. The mixture, which is almost dough-like, is made into oval balls or spread to cover the bottom of a round baking tray. It's stuffing is vegetarian and in the case of the tray, another layer of kebbeh is used as a cover. The quality and freshness of the fish is important to ensure good results.

Kebbeh balls are used in cooking and make up an important ingredient in local soups and stews. Kebbeh drenched in yogurt (laban) is a family favorite eaten throughout the country. This recipe may have been derived from the Bekaa Valley where cow milk is abundant. A piece of awarma, a meat preserve made of lamb conserved in fat, is also added to the yogurt in the Chouf to make the dish heartier. In the high mountains, goat milk is used instead, giving the stew a pungent, tangier taste. The benefit of cooking with goat milk is that it doesn't curdle. Therefore adding an egg and/or cornstarch to the yogurt is not necessary.

Another way to serve kebbeh balls is in a sauce made with tahini diluted in citrus juice, made mostly of bitter Seville oranges. This may be served with chunks of slow-cooked meat, beef or lamb. In the Kesserwan, kebbeh balls are served in a kishk soup. Kishk is

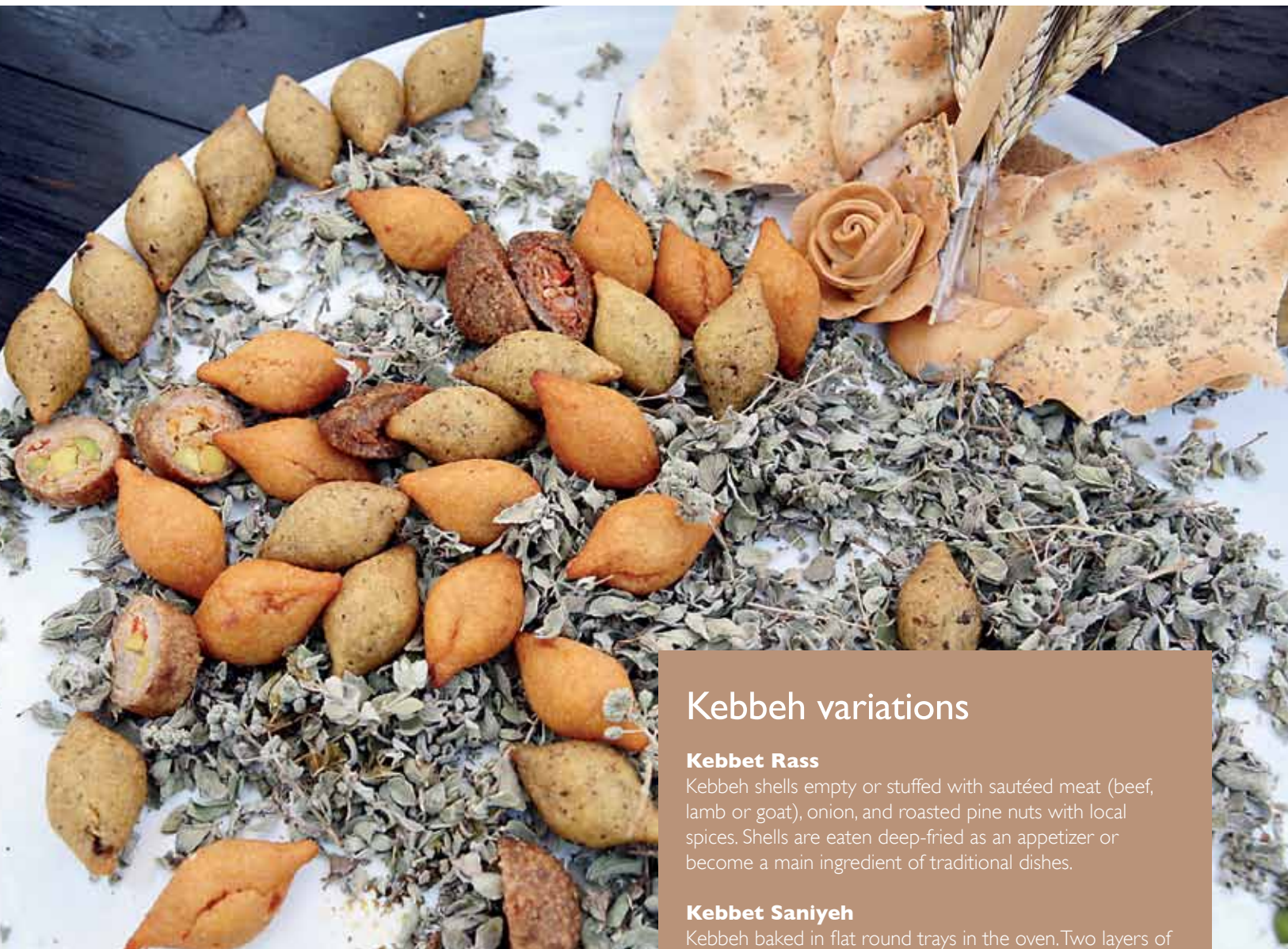


Suzanne Doueihey



" Take a journey to discover the richness of one of our most important national dishes, kebbeh "

Georgina Bayeh



Kebbeh variations

Kebbet Rass

Kebbeh shells empty or stuffed with sautéed meat (beef, lamb or goat), onion, and roasted pine nuts with local spices. Shells are eaten deep-fried as an appetizer or become a main ingredient of traditional dishes.

Kebbet Saniyeh

Kebbeh baked in flat round trays in the oven. Two layers of meat mixed with burghul with stuffing in between. Stuffing is made of sautéed meat, onion, roasted pine nuts and local spices.

Kebbet Sajiyeh

Large round stuffed shells grilled on a barbecue.

Raw Kebbeh

Kebbeh made with raw minced meat with burghul served fresh.

Fish Kebbeh

Kebbeh made with fish.

Vegetarian Kebbeh

Kebbeh shells made with mashed pumpkin, potato, rice or chickpeas instead of meat.

And recently chicken kebbeh balls have made their way into the numerous varieties!

yogurt with burghul that has been fermented for a few days then dried in the sun and finally ground into a fine powder. Awarma is added too for peasants who need extra strength.

In the South of Lebanon, mostly in Sidon, kebbeh balls are stuffed with butter mixed with walnuts and hot red pepper paste. This type of stuffing is also found typically in Syria and the red pepper paste that is used is also imported from there. We call it "shattah". Variations of red pepper paste exist ranging from mild to spicy hot. Cooks tend to agree on a milder paste. In Nabatieh, raw kebbeh is pounded on a marble slab called "blata" and mixed with a special local spice called "kamouneh". It is made mostly of cumin and a mixture of fresh and dried herbs. Dried rose petals (Jurri) are also added to the spice. This type of kebbeh is called "Frakeh".

It is worthwhile to take a journey to discover the richness of one of our most important national dishes, kebbeh. You will find similarities in different regions, but mostly you will enjoy its diversity whether in the use of ingredients, method of preparation or, finally, in the way it is cooked. Happy trails!



Where to eat

Beirut Tawlet +961 1 448129

Chouf Salim Achkar Guesthouse +961 3 354558

Bekaa Casino Mhanna +961 8 800634

North Ras El Nabeh restaurant +961 6 590118

South Abdel Wahab +961 7 751966



Zalghouta

For the happier times in life, to be celebrated with family and friends, Lebanon revels with the traditional zalghouta - a unique way to express and share joy!

Also known as the act of ululating, the zalghouta is practiced all the over the Middle East and in some parts of Africa. An ululation is a high-pitched tongue trill, a physical skill that involves the throat and tongue. It is a distinct ability and not many people can hit such high notes.

Women, who mainly use this loud expression to celebrate a joyful event, for instance the end of bachelorhood, solely practice the art of zalghouta. Other uses include welcoming an important guest or getting a degree.

Now, what makes the Lebanese zalghouta different from the others is that it is not limited to the act of ululating. Instead, there are a few verses before the loud cry. These verses usually compliment the bride and groom, highlighting their beauty, family and good manners.

How do you learn the zalghouta?

You don't! Zalghouta is improvised and tailored to the specific occasion it is celebrating. Just like zajal (cf Lebanon Traveler issue 5), it requires wittiness and inventiveness. In the past, weddings included a contest between the bride and groom's parties, each showing off their many oratory skills.

Zalghouta today

Today, there are very few who still practice the art of zalghouta as there once was. However, women have recorded and memorized verses that would fit any occasion and recite them during weddings. The ululation that follows the verse is of course still practiced and can be heard whether recorded or live. Ululation can also be used ironically, for instance when you finally receive something you have been waiting for. It is the Lebanese equivalent to the hallelujah.



From Baalbeck with love

Lace, embroidery, cross-stitching and other forms of delicate handwork have been passed down through the centuries and recognized by all. However, in Baalbek, a unique embroidery technique known as taree remains a secret within the community



Taree is the silver thread embroidery on scarves and muslin dresses. The fabric that is traditionally black, beige or brown is stretched over a small embroidery hoop and a 2mm thin flat thread is passed through the material using a triangular shaped needle. A stitch is formed by a quick stroke, almost like hitting the material (this is known as a tarka). It is then closed and jiggling the thread cuts it. The seamstress repeats the work so that the stand-alone stitches form a variety of motifs.

It is women that predominantly practice taree and the art is passed on from generation to generation. As soon a baby girl is born, her mother begins working on a taree scarf and dress that she will wear on her wedding day.

Traditionally, the bride wears the black dress first made by her mother and later wears the white dress. A taree dress and scarf were an essential part of a girl's trousseau.

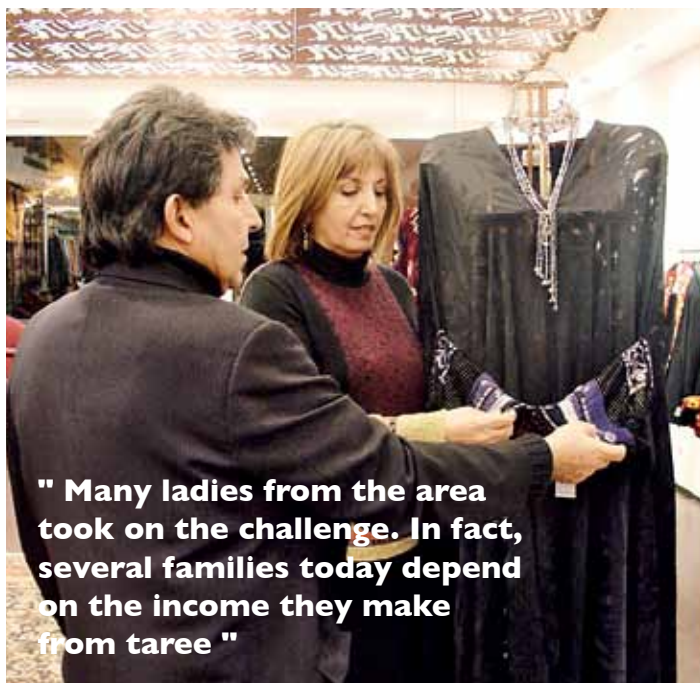
Old taree pieces were made on "voile" like fabric to allow both needle and thread to pass without tearing. It was usually made with fabric from camel wool.

As for the designs, there were about 8 to 9 different ones that are used, mainly in the form of geometric patterns, as it is quite difficult to create rounded shapes with such a heavy needle and stiff thread. A delicate and well-executed piece is time consuming and requires months of work depending on the difficulty.

The taree tradition is not well known in Lebanon, as it is a unique craft to Baalbek. In fact, very few Lebanese are aware of taree, unless they are from the area, and just like any traditional craft, it is slowly becoming a lost art.

Assyla: Reviving a lost tradition

El Hareth Haidar and his partner Najwa Sinno, both natives of Baalback, created "Assyla" (from the roots) to revive the lost art



" Many ladies from the area took on the challenge. In fact, several families today depend on the income they make from taree "



of the taree. They went around the area looking for ladies who were still practicing the craft and encouraged them to teach it to the younger generation. Due to the uniqueness of the craft, they were sure to find a market and sell the work. Many ladies from the area took on the challenge. In fact, several families today depend on the income they make from taree. Most of the ladies work from home. The work is then gathered and assembled into garments at the Assyla workshop.

The dynamic duo did not stop there. They took the craft a step further, using it on new fabric, integrating colors, as well as new working techniques so that workers were able to create more circular shapes.

Today taree is integrated into various clothing types, from scarves to dresses, jackets or unique bracelets and abayas. Considering the time needed to make the garment, the price is not exactly cheap, but you are sure to find something to fit your budget.

Taree is only available in silver and gold since these are the only colors of thread. And, just like any craft, you will find taree made of lesser quality for a cheaper price. Buyers beware!

If you'd like to learn more about the art of taree, Assyla offers live demonstrations by one of their artisans. Please make sure to call ahead of time.

Learn more about Najwa Sinno +961 3 331718
Buy Assyla Saifi Village +961 1 970333

Dehab Gallery

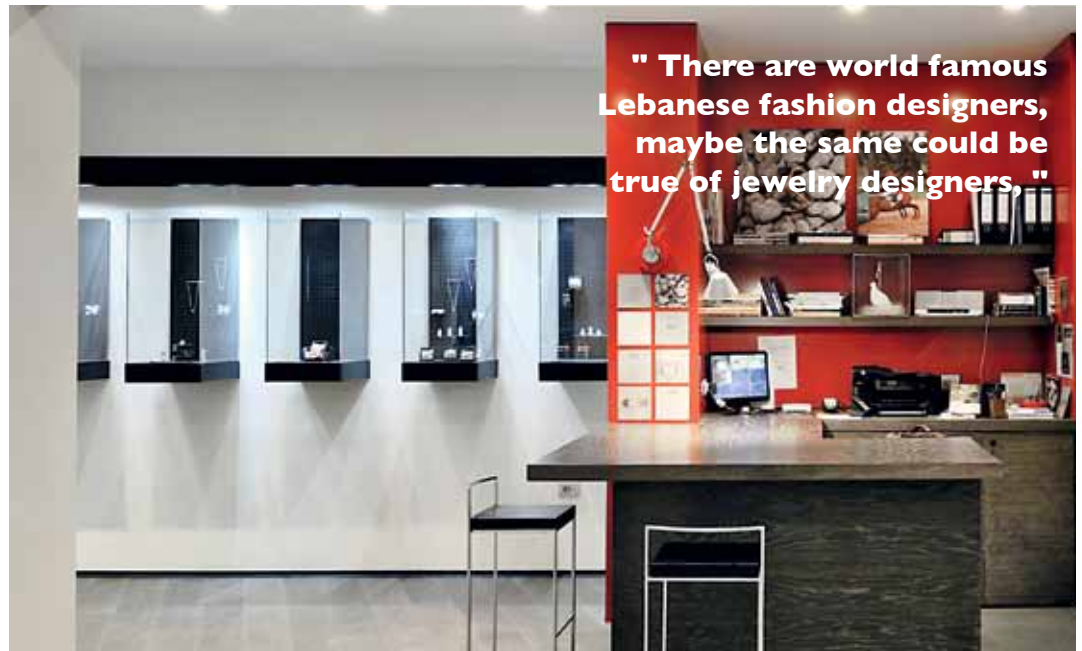


Jewelry is one of Lebanon's foremost industries with artisans that are both gifted and skilled. But, as many young jewelry designers know, there aren't many outlets to promote their creativity. The concept behind Dehab gallery says Simone Kosremelli was to create a permanent space to do so



Cube with diamond

An art gallery with a distinct architectural design, Dehab is located in Beirut's trendy Gemmayzeh district. Simone Kosremelli, the gallery's art director, is a jewelry designer herself, though she trained as an architect. Her designs form a permanent part of the gallery's exhibition. "In Lebanon, we have very fine workmanship but the production is totally commercial. I wanted to create a body of Lebanese designers with a place where they can display publicly," says Kosremelli. "We have the workmanship, we have the designers - so I thought, let's try to do something different."



" There are world famous Lebanese fashion designers, maybe the same could be true of jewelry designers, "

The response to the gallery has been positive. People like the idea of treating jewelry as art. "Historically it was like this," she points out, "if you go into the tombs of the pharaohs you would find beautiful jewelry that are regarded as pieces of art, and I believe we are going back to that." Solo, as well as group shows with specific themes are launched every five or six weeks.

While group exhibitions showcase the work of young designers who are just starting out, solo exhibitions will feature more prominent ones. Dina Kamal, Nayla Arida and Raissa Traboulsi, Wafa and Sonia Twal, Georges Doche and Kosremelli have exhibited at the gallery, which takes its name from the Arabic word for gold. Dina Kamal's first jewelry collection, The PNKYRNG Collection, re-defined the shape of the signet ring through a contemporary and architecturally informed aesthetic. The two young designers, Nayla Arida and Raissa Traboulsi, showcased their handmade Animalism Collection, expressing a multitude of emotions with an intuitive sense of detail and a love of colors. Jordanian jewelry

designers, Wafa and Sonia Twal, incorporated mosaic art into their design, intended for both men and women. Georges Doche, a Lebanese artist, created jewelry in the same vein as his paintings, a fusion of gold and colors.

Kosremelli's latest collection, Forget-Me-Not, is a series of blue agate pendants, each of which has a space on the back to put a picture so that the wearer can carry it close to their heart. Her collection also includes her trademark cubic rings with a hole through each of the six sides so that they can be worn any way around. Some of her pieces are one-of-a-kind, designed around an individual stone while others, such as the cube rings, are limited edition with only five available in each metal.

"There are world famous Lebanese fashion designers, maybe the same could be true of jewelry designers," she says.

Address:
Gemmayzeh, Pasteur St,
Antonios Bldg., Ground Flr.
Opening hours:
Mon - Sat 11:00am - 6:30pm
+961 | 563236
dehabjewellery.com



Rana Salam, Tie clip, created for "Just for men" exhibition, exclusively made for Dehab



Tear pendant



Arabesque pendant



Dina Kamal, Pinky rings

Saving the nation's treasures



Curator and museum specialist, Juliana Khalaf, takes a trip down memory lane and talks about the preservation of the nation's artifacts





" Begin your tour on the second floor where the exhibition of enthralling objects follows the ancient history of Lebanon from the Early Stone Age leading up to the Islamic Period "

The National Museum of Beirut, better known as 'the Mathaf' (Arabic for Museum) was inaugurated in 1942, its mission being to house and preserve artifacts found through excavations on Lebanese soil.

The building, which stands on what was called the demarcation or green line created between enemy forces during the 1975 civil war, was turned into barracks and a sniper station. Most objects in the collection were fortunately safeguarded by concrete cases until the war ended in 1995.

After extensive renovation and a state-of-the-art refurbishment of displays, the museum reopened in 2000.

The collection

Nearly all exhibits are labeled in English, Arabic and French, however it is advisable to purchase a museum guide from the gift shop (located by the reception) before you enter the museum.

Begin your tour on the second floor where the exhibition of enthralling objects follows the ancient history of Lebanon from the Early Stone Age (1 m - 3000 B.C.) leading up to the Islamic Period (7 - 13th c. A.D.). The collection includes prehistoric hunting tools, terracotta pots and jars utilized for domestic purposes, bronze figurines servicing religious ceremonies, gold jewelry recovered from tombs, coins, ivory sculptures, ceramics and even make-up boxes.

In the pursuit to uncover the history of the Phoenicians, the Sarcophagus of Ahirom, King of Byblos (1000 B.C.), (located in the main exhibition hall) is an important source of information representing early "Lebanese" art, writing and history - most notably their transmission of the alphabet to the world and their strength in trade with the West through the Mediterranean Sea and the East through the mountains.



The Hellenistic marble sculptures are evidence of the Greek conquest (333 B.C.) when Greek became the spoken and written language in Lebanon. The Roman Empire (64 B.C.) saw the development of silversmith, glass, textile and ceramic industries in Tyre, Sidon and Byblos. When Christianity became the state religion in 392 A.D., the Byzantines built basilicas with floors covered in rich mosaics of which the museum holds exceptional pieces.

Finally, with the advent of Islam in the 7th century A.D., Arabic became the language of the administration and a large number of civil and religious buildings: mosques, madrasas, khans and hammams were erected in Tyre and Beirut- their existence immortalized by remains in the museum's collection.

One should consider dedicating at least two hours to tour the entire collection and another 15 minutes to visit the gift shop, where you can find creations by famous local designers made exclusively for the Museum.

Good to know

Entrance fee: 5,000 LL (regular admission)
1,000 LL (students and children under 18)

Opening hours: Tuesday to Sunday 9am – 5pm
Closed on Mondays and public holidays

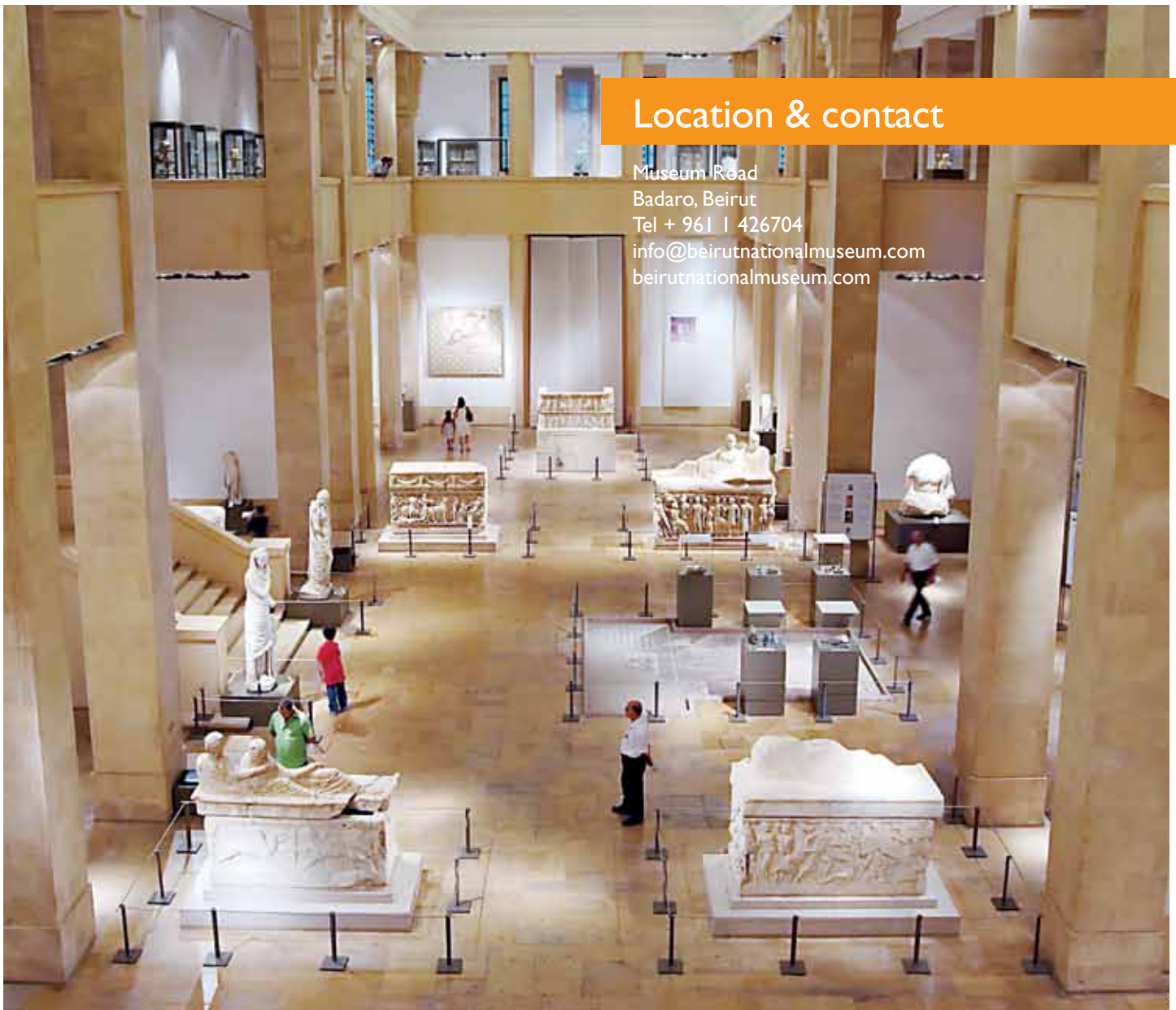
Gift shop: Open Tuesday through Sunday 10am - 5pm

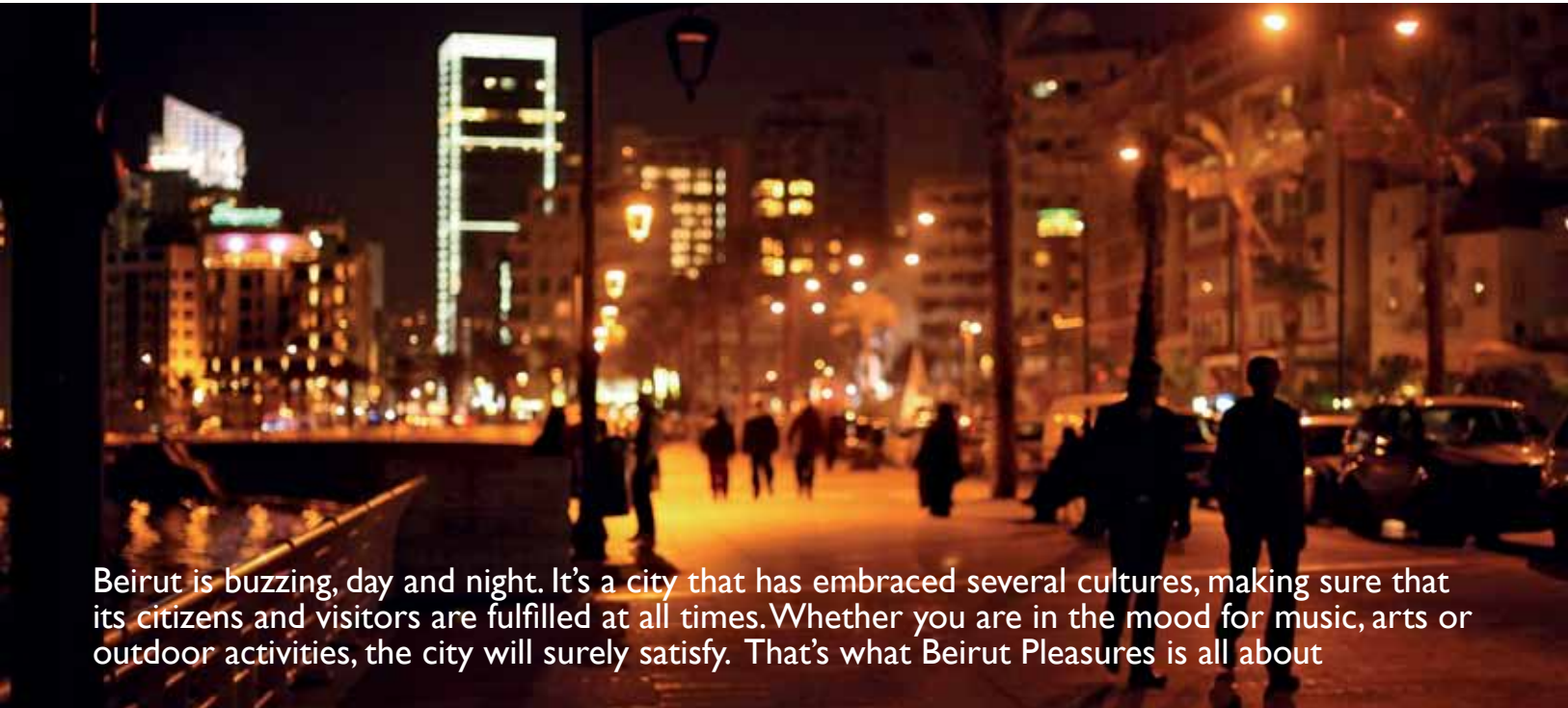
What not to miss

- Every hour, between 9am and 4pm, the museum screens 'Revival,' a short documentary on how the collection was protected from the destruction of the civil war and the renovation efforts made on the building (first floor - audiovisual room)
- Sarcophagus of Ahirom, King of Byblos (first floor)

Location & contact

Museum Road
Badaro, Beirut
Tel + 961 | 426704
info@beirutnationalmuseum.com
beirutnationalmuseum.com





Beirut is buzzing, day and night. It's a city that has embraced several cultures, making sure that its citizens and visitors are fulfilled at all times. Whether you are in the mood for music, arts or outdoor activities, the city will surely satisfy. That's what Beirut Pleasures is all about

Beirut pleasures

Are you in the mood for jazz? How about hitting the dance floor to salsa or singing along to the tunes of your favorite French songs? These regular weekly happenings will set the mood for a Beirut night. Keep this listing safe as you will need it time and time again!

TUESDAYS

Mardi Gras at the souks

Live jazz band, creole food and New Orleans flavor. Stack those beads and enjoy a one of a kind evening!

Momo's at the souks - Downtown +961 | 999767

Il Tenore Eliya Francis Live

Beautiful songs performed by operatic singer Eliya Francis for a romantic evening and more. Band Charge 9 USD/Person

La Piazza - Monot +961 | 339449

90's night

Favorites from the 90's will have you grooving again on the dance floor!

Palais by Crystal - Monot +961 | 3 854455

3as3us

Enjoy a unique comedy duo, Shant Kabakian and Anthony Hamawi, as you laugh out loud to songs and stand up comedy!

Cappucino - Ashrafiyeh +961 70 771616

WEDNESDAYS

Latino Night

Dance the night away and embrace the Latino heat with delicious food and drinks that are muy caliente!

El Gardel - Gemmayzeh +961 | 448447

French Night

Sing and dance à la Française... A wonderful night of song and dance for all you Frenchy lovers!

Clé - Hamra +961 71 200712

Live Jazz

The Arthur Satyan acoustic ensemble will enchant you with tunes by Charlie Parker, Wayne Shorter and more.

Razz'zz - Clemenceau +961 | 366246

Stand Up Comics

Ziyad Sahab, Junaid Zeinddine, Hicham Haddad, Fouad Yammine - names you've heard before - now listen to their comedic rantings about life, love and whatever else they're in to.

Playroom - Nahr El Mot +961 70 757500

THURSDAYS

All that Soul

Original RNB and Soul music from the 60's and 70's

Rococo - Monot +961 70 881771

80's and 90's night

Dance to the tunes from your childhood or your parent's childhood... Just have a great time!

Clé - Hamra +961 71 200712

AGENDA

80's night

The one that launched the trend in Lebanon, BO18's 80's night is the country's favorite themed night, not to be missed!

BO18 - Katrantina +961 3 800018

JLP live

The JLP five-piece band will entertain you with the best music from the past 3 decades with songs ranging from Pink Floyd to Nickel Back.

Dany's - Hamra +961 740231

Salsa Latino Party

Let your Latino alter ego out and dance the night away to the greatest salsa rhythms of all time!

Inn-Tuition - Gemmayzeh +961 3 109179

Tango Night

Join in and have a go at it or watch others dance the passionate tango – the dance of seduction.

Walimat Warde - Hamra +961 | 752320

FRIDAYS

Salsa Picante

Hit the dance floor and move to the live sounds of Tabasco. To make sure you know the steps, come early for a free salsa class with Flako!

DRM - Hamra +961 | 752201

RNB Night

Best of the best of RNB to shake your booty and enjoy the start

of the weekend!

Palais by Crystal - Monot +961 3 854455

Moukhadi3oun

The live band will revive your love for oriental music.

Walimat Warde - Hamra +961 | 752320

SATURDAYS

Alecco's Night

A full show will have you grooving to English, French and Arabic songs, a Brazilian percussionists, salsa dancers, great singers and VJs.

DRM - Hamra +961 | 752201

Rayan Haber featuring Farah

The oriental band will sing your favorite tunes from past to present.

Walimat Warde - Hamra +961 | 752320

Midnight Dance Party

The name says it all! It's all about dancing. Just make sure you're not with Cinderella because the party will heat up after midnight!

EM Chill - Mar Mikhael +961 | 565313

SUNDAYS

Amy Smack Daddy Live

A blend of Rock, Alternative and Funk, Amy Smack Daddy is a five-piece band that revives your favorite tunes with a unique twist.

Zinc - Sodeco +961 3 873333

Mondays are left blank to plan for the rest of the week!





Beirut outdoors

Sunshine, bright colors and fair weather... Spring is here. After rainy days, it's time to get out and catch up on your vitamin D! Just don't miss out on a few key events before unpacking your bathing suits.

Arab Film Festival 2013

Ayam Beirut Al Cinema'iya
15 – 22 March from 3 to 12 pm
Metropolis Empire Sofil - Ashrafieh +961 | 204080

Arabnet Beirut 2013

20 – 22 March from 9 am to 4 pm
Registration is required
Hilton Beirut Habtoor Grand Hotel +961 | 751180/1/2

Beirut Unisport Festival 2013

Panathlon Student Tournament
21 – 25 March
9 am – 10 pm
Universite Saint Joseph +961 | 322744

Bikeathon 2013

Bike 4 Peace
14 April
USD 10 per person
Downtown, next to Beirut By Bike - bikathon.me

Beirut Bloom

Contemporary Art Fair
17 – 27 April
Artheum - Corniche El Naher +961 71 781783

Beirut International Tango Festival 2013

25 – 28 April from 12 to 8 pm
Registration is required
AUB - St Georges Yacht Club +961 3 011782

Beirut Art Book Fair

8 – 11 May
Artheum - Corniche El Naher +961 71 781783

Beirut Boat 2013

9th International Boat and SuperYacht Show
15 - 19 May from 4 to 10 pm
Port of Beirut Pier | +961 5 959111

Cabriolet Film Festival

24 – 26 May from 8 to 11 pm
Saint Nicolas Stairs - Gemmayze +961 | 322744

Garden Show and Spring Festival

28 May – 1 June from 4 to 10 pm
Beirut Hippodrome +961 | 480081

Getaways

Take a break for the weekend. We have selected 3 locations throughout Lebanon where you can go away for a couple of days and return rejuvenated

Fun with family & friends **Batroun**

Enjoy the live performance by Majd Mousally at **Taiga** every Friday and Saturday evening +961 3 171111

Take a dip in the sea and try out the many water sports available

Walk around the old town and check out the small **Roman Amphitheater**

Drive to **Deir Saydeit el Nourieh** for breathtaking views over the Mediterranean

Have a drink and mingle with locals and tourists and watch the waves crash on the shore at **Pierre and Friends** +961 3 352930

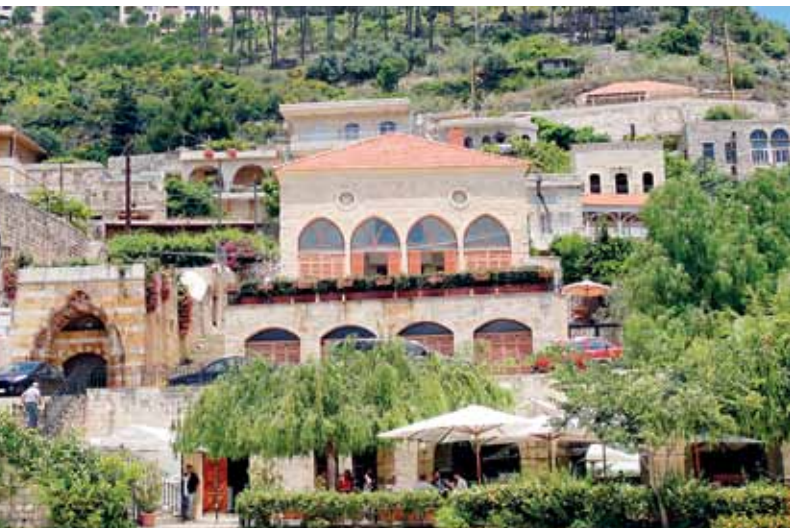
Lounge in the sun at **White Beach** +961 6 742404

Stay on the coast at **San Stephano** +961 6 740366

Eat traditional at **Batrouniyat** +961 6 744510 or manouche at **Furn Mershak** +961 6 740050

Fish at **Chez Maguy** +961 3 439147

Buy lemonade made the old fashioned way and take some home from **Limonade Tony Daou** +961 6 741564



Rural escape **Deir El Qamar**

Visit Marie Baz Wax Museum for some photo opportunities with Georges Bush Senior or Jumblatt +961 5 511666

Take a stroll through the village for a lesson in 17th and 18th century provincial architecture.

Participate in the Jabal Marathon taking place on April 14.

Stay at **Mir Amine Hotel** +961 5 501315 or **La Bastide** +961 5 505320

Eat sandwiches and salads at **Al Midane** +961 5 763768 or mezza at **Rawbi el Amir** +961 3 208022

Check out the work of one man at **Moussa Castle**. Open 7 days a week, May - October 8am to 8pm, November - April 8am to 6pm.

Visit the silk khan that now houses the **Centre Culturel Francais** +961 5 510016

Buy tamriyyeh - Deir el Qamar's typical pastry

City break **Tripoli**

Visit the old souks and discover the various crafts of the region

Take a walk at the Mina and enjoy local dishes and desserts

Relax with yoga at **Beit el Nessim** every Saturday +961 3 308156

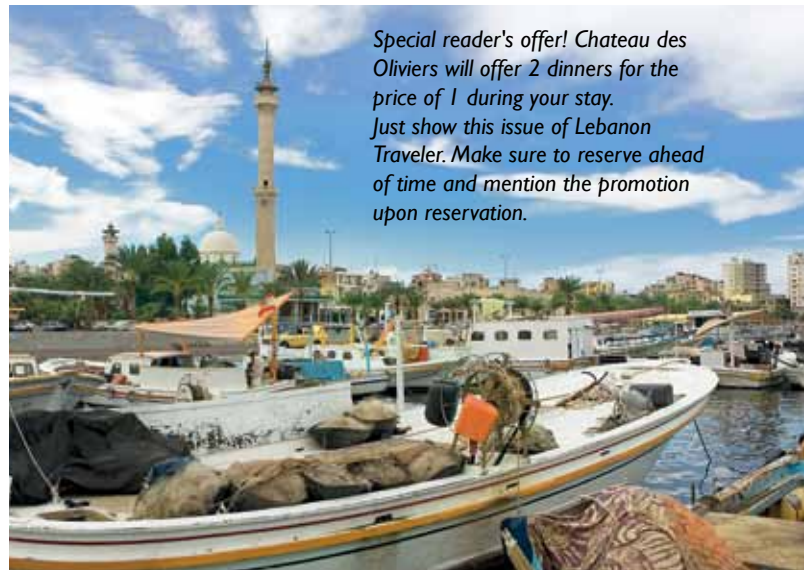
Embrace muslim and christian religions touring the **Great Mosque**, **Church Street**, **Muallaq Mosque** and **Cathedral St Georges**.

Go for a boat trip to the **Palm Island Reserve**

Stay at **Hotel Koura** +961 6 425451 or **Chateau des Oliviers** +961 6 411170/90 +961 3 228432

Eat vegetarian moghrabiyyeh sandwich at **Dabboussi** +961 6 447668, samkeh harra at **Silver Shore** +961 6 601384 or fowl, fetteh and hommos at **Dannoun** +961 6 433987

Buy Soaps from **Khan El Saboun** +961 6 874483



Special reader's offer! Chateau des Oliviers will offer 2 dinners for the price of 1 during your stay. Just show this issue of Lebanon Traveler. Make sure to reserve ahead of time and mention the promotion upon reservation.

Take a hike...

March

Saturday 23 – Sunday 24

Spend the weekend

Qadicha Valley
Vamos Todos

Saturday 23

Visit Qadisha

Medieval monasteries
Liban Trek

Cultural in Sidon/Tyr

Byblos and Beyond

Bird Migration Festival

Anjar
Great Escape

Sunday 24

Take a heritage hike

Wadi as-Slib levels 3 & 6
Liban Trek

Antonios Kozhaya hiking trip

Vamos Todos

Hike Ain Zhalta to Barouk

Cyclamen

Monday 25

Follow Jbeil's Saints Trail

Liban Trek

Tuesday 26

Discover Saida's Souk

Liban Trek

Wednesday 27

Rachana's sculptures

Liban Trek

Thursday 28

Beiteddine palace

Liban Trek

Friday 29

Tour Roman tombs and temples in the Bekaa

Liban Trek

Take a hike in Smar Jbeil Jrabta Sghar

Vamos Todos

Saturday 30

Visit Gebran's museum

Liban Trek

Sunday 31

Nahr ej-Joz trek

Batroun levels 2 & 4
Liban Trek

Biking in Baskinta

Cyclamen

April

Monday 1

Cultural trip to Tyre

Liban Trek

Checkout the paintings in Jbeil's crusader chapel

Liban Trek

Hike through Karm al Mohr Daraya

Vamos Todos

Tuesday 2

Discover Jezzine

Liban Trek

Wednesday 3

Visit the Smar Jbeil citadel

Liban Trek

Thursday 4

Admire Baakline's mansions

Liban Trek

Friday 5

Take part in wine tasting in the Bekaa

Liban Trek

Saturday 6

Walk through old Cedar groves

Liban Trek

Sunday 7

Trek in Ehmej

Byblos and Beyond

Hike in Bisri, Wadi Jezzine

Great Escape

Wadi Boutrayich riverside ramble

Jbeil levels 2 & 5
Liban Trek

Hike along Nahr Joz

Vamos Todos

Discover nature in the Chouf Reserve

Mawassem by Saad Tours

Bekaa wine tasting

Kefraya, Clos Saint Thomas and Ksara
Cyclamen

Monday 8

Discover Phoenician rock carvings in Jbeil

Liban Trek

Tuesday 9

Tour Jezzine's palace & waterfall

Liban Trek

Wednesday 10

Take a look at Crusader chapels in Batroun

Liban Trek

Thursday 11

Admire Deir el-Qamar

Liban Trek

Friday 12

Find out Ottoman bridge in the Bekaa

Liban Trek

Saturday 13

Explore Qadisha's medieval monasteries

Liban Trek

Take a night hike

Great Escape

Take your wheels and bike in Faraya

Vamos Todos

Sunday 14

Go on a cultural trip of Ghosta

Byblos and Beyond

Walk among the cherry blossom

Niha (Zahleh) level 3 & 7
Liban Trek

Rahbe hiking trip

Vamos Todos

Discover nature in the Chouf Reserve

Mawassem by Saad Tours



AGENDA

Hike from the Arz to Bkaa Kafra

Cyclamen

Monday 15

Discover Jbeil's Annaya pilgrimage

Liban Trek

Tuesday 16

Phoenician temples in the south

Liban Trek

Wednesday 17

Take a look at Batroun's wonderful coast

Liban Trek

Thursday 18

Explore the Chouf

Liban Trek

Friday 19

Tour the Bekaa

Liban Trek

Saturday 20

Know more about the Qadisha Valley

Liban Trek

An archeological trek

In north Lebanon

Great Escape

Mountain climbing in Baloua Balaa

Vamos Todos

Sunday 21

Follow Baskinta's literary trail

Byblos and Beyond

Take a hike in a wooded gorge

Wadi Jhannam Dunnyeh

level 4 & 6

Liban Trek

Hike through Anjar and Kfar Zabad

Vamos Todos

Discover nature in the Chouf Reserve

Mawassem by Saad Tours



Zip-lining and a hike in Ehden Reserve

Cyclamen

Monday 22

Explore Jbeil's Saints trail

Liban Trek

Tuesday 23

Spend a day in the south

Liban Trek

Wednesday 24

Art and hiking in Batroun

Liban Trek

Thursday 25

Mix history with a trek in the Chouf

Liban Trek

Friday 26

Take a tour of the Bekaa

Liban Trek

A night hike in Msaylha

Vamos Todos

Saturday 27

Get to know the ancient Cedars

Liban Trek

Go night animal watching

Great Escape

Sunday 28

Take a family trip to discover Assia pottery

Byblos and Beyond

Walk through the Chouf

Mukhtara level 3 & 7

Liban Trek

Mazrat Teffeh ramble

Vamos Todos

Rose Water & Arak Distillation in Niha

Mawassem by Saad Tours

Qadisha Valley Hike

Cyclamen

Monday 30

Know more about Jbeil

Liban Trek

Tuesday 31

Take a day in the south

Liban Trek

May

Wednesday 1

Spend some time in Batroun

Liban Trek

Be part of a cultural trip to Metn

Liban Trek

Take a trek in Bisri

Vamos Todos

Wednesday 1 – Friday 3

Holiday trek Chouf, Jezzine, Bekaa

3days/2nights with level 7 hike

Liban Trek

Thursday 2

Chouf ramble

Liban Trek

Thursday 2 – Friday 3

Cultural trip Akkar overnight in Beino

Liban Trek

Friday 3

Get to know the Bekaa

Liban Trek

Ammik hiking trip

Vamos Todos

Saturday 4

Know more about Khalil Gebran

Liban Trek

Sunday 5

Visit Amiq

Bekaa valley

Byblos and Beyond

Trek through the Wadi Qadisha

Bsharreh levels 2, 4 & 6

Liban Trek

Machmouche Attine hiking trip

Vamos Todos



Lamartine Valley hike
Cyclamen

Monday 6
Appreciate Jbeil
Liban Trek

Trek through Baskenta
Vamos Todos

Tuesday 7
Explore Jezzine
Liban Trek

Wednesday 8
Take in the Batroun
Liban Trek

Thursday 9
Discover the Chouf
Liban Trek

Friday 10
Visit the Bekaa
Liban Trek

Saturday 11 – Sunday 12
Weekend in Baalbeck
Vamos Todos

Saturday 11
Explore the Cedars
Liban Trek

Sunday 12
Discover orchids
Byblos and Beyond

Hike through Falougha
Liban Trek

Ramble through Yammoune
Vamos Todos

Rose Water & Arak Distillation in Niha
Mawassem by Saad Tours

Biking from Mar Moussa monastery to Mtein
Cyclamen

Monday 13
A day in Jbeil
Liban Trek

Tuesday 14
Explore the south
Liban Trek

Wednesday 15
See Batroun, up close and personal
Liban Trek

Thursday 16
Admire the Chouf
Liban Trek

Friday 17
Know more about the Bekaa
Liban Trek

Saturday 18
Take in Qadisha Valley and the Cedars
Liban Trek

Wine Tour
Vamos Todos

Sunday 19
Explore Qadisha Valley
Byblos and Beyond

Walk through Jabal Moussa (Ftough)
Levels 4 & 7
Liban Trek

Ramble along the Al Wazzani
Vamos Todos

Rose Water & Arak Distillation in Bekaa
Mawassem by Saad Tours

Jezzine to Niha hike
Cyclamen

Monday 20
Ramble through Jbeil
Liban Trek

Tuesday 21
Take in Saida
Liban Trek

Wednesday 22
All about Batroun
Liban Trek

Thursday 23
Admire the Chouf
Liban Trek

Friday 24
Get to know the Bekaa
Level 3
Liban Trek

Annoubine hiking trip
Vamos Todos

Saturday 25
Find peace in Qadisha
With a level 3 ramble
Liban Trek

Saturday 25 – Sunday 26
Weekend Trek
Tannourine to Ehden
2days/2nights levels 5 & 7
Liban Trek

Checkout Batroun & Koura's sanctuaries
Overnight in Hardine
Liban Trek

Sunday 26
Visit Ehden's Biodiversity forest
(Zawiyeh) levels 2, 4 & 7
Liban Trek

Jabal Moussa hike
Vamos Todos

Hike in Baskinta LMT literary section
Cyclamen

Friday 31
A night hike in Harissa
Vamos Todos

And more activities upon request

Outdoor Activities
Trekking, rock climbing, caving, mountain biking, paragliding, abseiling and 4x4

Cultural Excursions
Hiking to cultural sites and nature reserves

White Adventure
Snowboarding, igloo building and cross-country skiing

Paragliding Tandems
Briefing, gearing-up and flight time amount to approximately 1 hour. Reservation is required 48 hours prior to the requested date of flight.

exittonature.com
+961 3 559992

Address book

Byblos & Beyond
byblosandbeyond.com
+961 9 540857

Cyclamen
tlb-destinations.com
+961 4 419848

Great Escape
greatescape.com.lb
+961 5 456121

Kurban Travel*
kurbantravel.com
+961 1 614914

Liban Trek
libantrek.com
+961 1 329975

Mawassem by Saad Tours
saadtours.com
+961 1 393100

R. Rida International*
+961 4 718790

Vamos Todos
vamos-todos.com
+961 3 561174

Wild Discovery*
wilddiscovery.com.lb
+961 1 565646

* Call for regular daily trips to all areas of Lebanon

USEFUL CONTACTS

Airport

**Rafic Hariri
International Airport**
+961 | 628000

The only international airport in the country, its website is extremely well organized and is updated every 10 minutes with the latest arrival and departure times, delays and cancellations. Certified airport taxis (with the airport logo on the side) are available for a fixed rate. However, you can bargain with other taxi drivers for a lower rate. You should be at the airport 2 hours prior to your flight.

beirutairport.gov.lb

Banks

Bank cashiers are normally open between 8am and 2pm from Monday to Friday, and until noon on Saturday. Most banks open longer hours for transactions that are not cash.

Bus Routes

Inside Beirut

Bus 1

Hamra to Khalde

Begins on Sadat Str and passes by Emile Edde Str (better known as Lion), the Bristol Hotel, Verdun, Cola, the airport and Kafaat before reaching its final destination in Khalde.

Bus 2

Hamra to Antelias

Begins by the gas station next to Barbar on Emile Edde Str and passes by Radio Lebanon, Sassine Square, Mar Mikhael, Borj Hammoud and Dora before finally arriving in Antelias.

Bus 5

Ain El Mreisseh to Hay As-Saloum

Begins in Manara on General De Gaulle Ave, and continues south, passing through

Verdun, Tariq Al Jdideh, Bourj al Barajneh and the Airport before finally ending in Hay As-Saloum.

Bus 6

Cola to Byblos

Begins in Wata at Cola and continues northeast passing through Dora, Antelias, Zalka, Kaslik, Jounieh and finally ending in Jbeil (Byblos).

Bus 7

Badaro to Bharssaf

Beginning near the National Museum (Matahaf) in Badaro, this bus travels east through Beit Mery, Broumana, and Baabdat before finally arriving in Bharssaf.

Bus 8

Hamra to Ain Saadeh

Begins at AUH and then passes through Mar Elias, Becharra el Khoury, Sassine Square, Karam el Zeitoun, Bourj Hammoud, and Jdeideh before finally ending in Ain Saadeh.

Bus 9

Barbir to Nahr el Mot

Begins in Barbir and continues through Furn el Chebbak, Sin el Fil, Habtoor, Salloumeh, Dekwaneh, Sabtieh and Mar Taklah before finally ending at Nahr el Mot.

Bus 12

Burj Al Barajneh to Hamra

Begins in Burj Al Barajneh and continues through Haret Harek, Ghobeiri, Chiah, Sabra & Chatila, Cola, Salim Salam Str and by the Bristol Hotel before finally ending in Hamra at AUH.

Bus 15

Cola to Aley

Begins at Cola and continues through Bir Hassan, Mar Mikhael Church and Hazmieh, before finally ending in Aley.

Currency

The national currency is the Lebanese Lira. One US dollar is equivalent to approximately LL 1,500. The US dollar is accepted almost everywhere. International bankcards are accepted in most places; look out for signs. Foreign currency is easily exchanged. Banks, ATMs and exchange bureaus can be found in main cities and towns.

Driving

It is easy to rent a car if you have a valid Lebanese or international driving license

Parking

Public parking lots are available around the city and either charge a set fee or by the hour; at rates that typically range from LL2,000 to LL5,000. Another option, is to take advantage of valet services available at almost every bar and restaurant in the city, which usually cost around LL5,000 or LL7,000 if you're parking at a hotel.

Regulations

You should have a fire extinguisher in the car; wear your seatbelt at all times and always carry your mandatory government insurance, car insurance, car registration and driver's license with you at all times when driving.

Electricity

The two-pin rectangular plug system is used and adapters are easy to find. Most areas have, at least, a three hour power cut per day; more in areas outside the capital. Almost all establishments have generators automatically set to operate when the power cuts.

Tipping

Gratuities are usually in the region of 10 - 15%. As a rule, taxi drivers do not expect a tip. Tip porters USD 1.00 per piece of luggage and restaurants 10% of the bill.

Transport

Outside Beirut Charles Helou

Buses leaving from here will take you to destinations north of Beirut. You can also catch a taxi or service to Damascus from here. Be prepared to wait for the bus or service to fill up before they depart.

Cola

Packed with buses, taxis and services that will take you to destinations south of Beirut.

Dora

An intersection for services to the north, buses stop here too. You can get to Dora by service or van from the beginning of the highway by the port.

Services (taxis that go along certain routes and take up to 5 people, LL2,000 each), street taxis (LL10,000 - 12,000), vans (LL1,000) and private buses (LL1,000).

Prices are correct at time of going to press.

Useful numbers

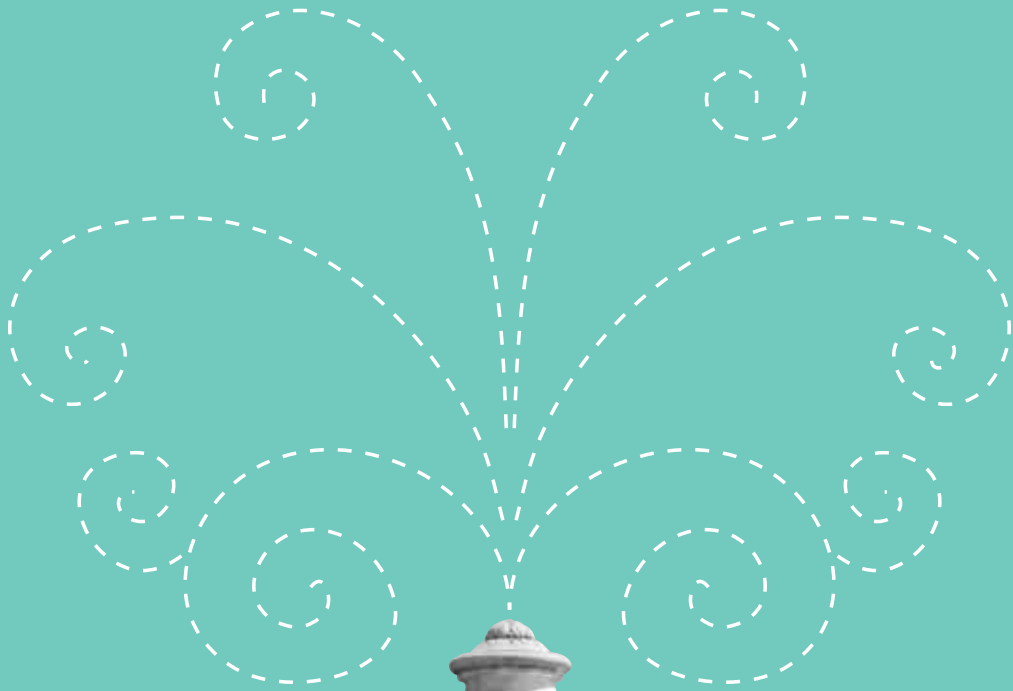
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beyondbeirut.com
+961 | 340940 Ministry of Tourism
lebanon-tourism.gov.lb
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120 Directory
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Beirut Hippodrome
From 4 to 10 pm



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