

# Lebanon Traveler

A publication of Hospitality Services in a joint venture with Beyond Beirut - Issue 7 June - September 2013



Lebanon 8,000 LBP

**120+  
HIKES  
TO TEST**

**Diving in the  
Mediterranean**

**Wicker chairs  
& modern  
design**

**10 MUST VISITS  
IN BATROUN**

**Guide to  
summer  
festivals**

**60 PAGES  
of people  
places  
& products**



# The Roof

FOUR SEASONS HOTEL BEIRUT

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SUMMER  
NIGHTS  
ARE BACK •  
AT THE •  
HIGHEST  
LOUNGE  
IN THE CITY

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# Lebanon Traveler

## unveils Lebanon's hidden treasures

Over the past two years, Lebanon Traveler has been truthful to its mission, that of revealing the richness and diversity of Lebanon's cultural, environmental, historical and social surroundings.



Lebanon Traveler took you for walks all over Lebanon's territory, highlighted the traditions of rural life from north to south, brought traditional crafts to the forefront, uncovered amazingly beautiful landscapes and stopped for chats with people who work on making a difference in their areas.

No region was spared from our forever curious gaze. This will continue to be the rule.

Our small country has accumulated, over centuries of rich history, jewels that will never cease to amaze us and that constitute the inspirational tank from which Lebanese art connects to, to create.



The magazine has recently highlighted young designers who perpetuate and further carry an identity that is dear to us all.

Lebanon Traveler is inviting you to remember the past while looking at the horizon.

We remain open to your suggestions and your ideas. Your feedback and support are essential to Lebanon Traveler's continuity.



*The Lebanon Traveler team*

*Your feedback as a reader and user of this information is very important to us in reporting on quality sustainable tourism in Lebanon. Enjoy and share your experience on [info@lebanontraveler.com](mailto:info@lebanontraveler.com)*

# Lebanon Traveler

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

Group Editor **Nouhad Dammous**

Managing Director **Joumana Dammous-Salamé**

Consultative Director **Nell Abou Ghazale**

Editor **Leena Saidi**

Deputy Editor **Sandra Khalil**

Publication Administrative Manager **Carole Chebli**

Sub Editor **Annie Dilsizian**

Contributors **Pascal Abdallah, Derek Issacs, Juliana Khalaf, Barbara Massaad & Elsa J. Sattout**

Special thanks to **Myriam Shuman**

From Hospitality Services **Randa Dammous-Pharaon, Maha Khoury-Hasbani, Michel Ajoub, Josette Hikri-Nohra & Roxane Fersane**

Circulation team **Mirna Maroun, Karl Hitti and Houayda Haddad-Roumman**

Senior Graphic Designer **Cynthia Nehmé**

Production and Printing **Arab Printing Press**

We welcome views on any relevant subject but request that letters be short and to the point. The editor reserves the right to select and edit letters. Please e-mail your comments to [info@lebanontraveler.com](mailto:info@lebanontraveler.com) addressed to the editor or fax them to + 961 | 482876.

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# NEWS

## Healthy solutions for a sound environment

In its second annual conference that took place in Beirut during May, Boecker®, a leading company in pest management, food safety and biosecurity, invited mayors alongside health and environment committee members from all Lebanese regions, to share its vision regarding healthy solutions for a sound environment. Boecker's CEO, Michel Bayoud, highlighted modern practices for health and environmental security procedures that should be applied by municipalities. He also emphasized the municipal authorities' role in providing a healthy environment for their citizens. Bayoud called for wider cooperation between concerned parties to create a healthier environment for all.



## Sustainable development and local tourism

A forum on sustainable development and local tourism organized by ONAY and PRODES took place in Jbeil during May. On the first day, the debates and talks highlighted the importance of sustainable tourism and the specific role women can play in tourism. They also touched on the sustainable developments initiated by the municipalities, as well as sustainable tourism projects. The second day was all about the job of tourism accompaniment in Lebanon organized by the Syndicate of Tourism Guides. The attendees were also treated to an exhibition space showcasing tourism projects, products and services.

## Half-year anniversary for British Airways!

Celebrating its successful six month return to Lebanon, British Airways held a ceremony hosted by the British Ambassador to Lebanon, Tom Fletcher, Lebanon's Minister of Tourism, Fadi Abboud, and British Airways' area commercial manager for the Middle East and Central Asia, Paolo De Renzis, in addition to



airways executives, members of the media and British Airways' partners and customers, attended the event. "Having British Airways expanding their presence in Beirut is good for Britain and good for Lebanon. It brings two of history's greatest trading hubs closer together, and unleashes potential for more dynamic and innovative partnership," declared Fletcher. "We are delighted to be back in the Lebanese market after a long absence. We are also very excited by the strong growth we have been seeing on the route. In fact, in order to better serve our customers and respond to their demands, we recently increased our Beirut flights from seven per week to 10 for our summer schedule," said De Renzis.

## Fresh ideas from rural tourism workshop

On Tuesday, June 11, 2013 at The Cosmopolitan Hotel in Dekwaneh, Lebanon Traveler magazine took the first step towards a long-term collateral and bi-lateral cooperation with rural tourism stakeholders by taking part in the Lebanon Industry Value Chain Development (LIVCD) workshop, organized by DAI, a USAID contractor. This vital information gathering initiative included participants from all tourism sectors and governmental institutions. After six months of assessment, the project is in its starting implementation phase with eight "Value Chains" that will be considered for development: "pomme" fruit (apples and pears), stone fruit (avocados and cherries), processed foods, rural tourism and handicrafts, small scale set (thyme, honey, free range eggs, pine nuts), floriculture, grapes, and olive oil. The LIVCD project funded by USAID is scheduled for completion in 2017.



## Promoting Lebanon through technology

Karim El Khazen, Hadi El Khoury and Lamice are Lebanese expatriates who used their passion for technology to promote their country. These tech savvy people have created, in their spare time, innovative and self-funded projects that proudly support their Lebanese origin. Their projects are not only available on major download platforms such as iTunes and Google Play, but have also found a wide audience. Their app, "100 Lebanese Recipes" has more than 15,000 users and allows you to bring the richness of Lebanese cuisine to your home. The "Keefak" app has more than 10,000 users and helps you learn the Lebanese dialect. "Lamice", which has gathered more than 46,000 fans over the social networks, promotes e-musical artists. Here's where you can find them: [lebguide.com/app](http://lebguide.com/app), [keefaktheapp.com](http://keefaktheapp.com) and [lamice.com](http://lamice.com)



## Women take the 10K marathon challenge

Specially designed for women, the Women's Marathon took place in May. Organized by the Beirut Marathon Association, the aim of the event was to empower women through running. Lebanon's First Lady Wafaa Sleiman joined the cause and ran with participants through Beirut's beautiful streets. Not to leave the men out, a social media competition was launched asking men to upload a picture on Instagram using #pinkpeace hashtag or to share the picture on the Beirut Marathon Facebook Page to take part in the "Pink Revolution", which supports all Lebanese women. This great event was also an occasion to get ready for the much awaited 2013 Beirut Marathon set to take place on November 10 of this year.

## Medical school addicted to green

In May, 15 USJ medical students teamed up to help the environment and inform their fellow students about sustainable tourism. With the help of Mada (a non profit development agency), they invited the women from Women's Association of Deir Al Ahmar (WADA) to attend. While the women displayed their homemade products, the students explained how sustainable tourism contributes to the development of villages and rural communities. This thoughtful initiative, in collaboration with USJ and Mada, made everyone aware of the environmental challenges the future may bring.



# Beirut and Byblos: top two favorite cities in the Middle East

Condé Nast Traveller magazine's Readers' Choice Award for 2012 ranked Beirut and Byblos in first and second place, respectively, on its list of the top five cities in the Middle East. The results were based on the answers of 46,476 readers from around the world who participated in the magazine's Internet-based survey. The readers voted on six factors including the city's atmosphere and ambience, the friendliness of its residents, lodging, restaurants, culture and sites, and its shopping environment.

Beirut received an overall score of 75.9 points on a scale of 100, while Byblos had an overall score of 74.6. Byblos ranked in second place behind Jerusalem on the atmosphere and ambience factor, while Beirut came in third place. Byblos and Beirut tied in first place at 79.4 on the friendliness of residents factor.



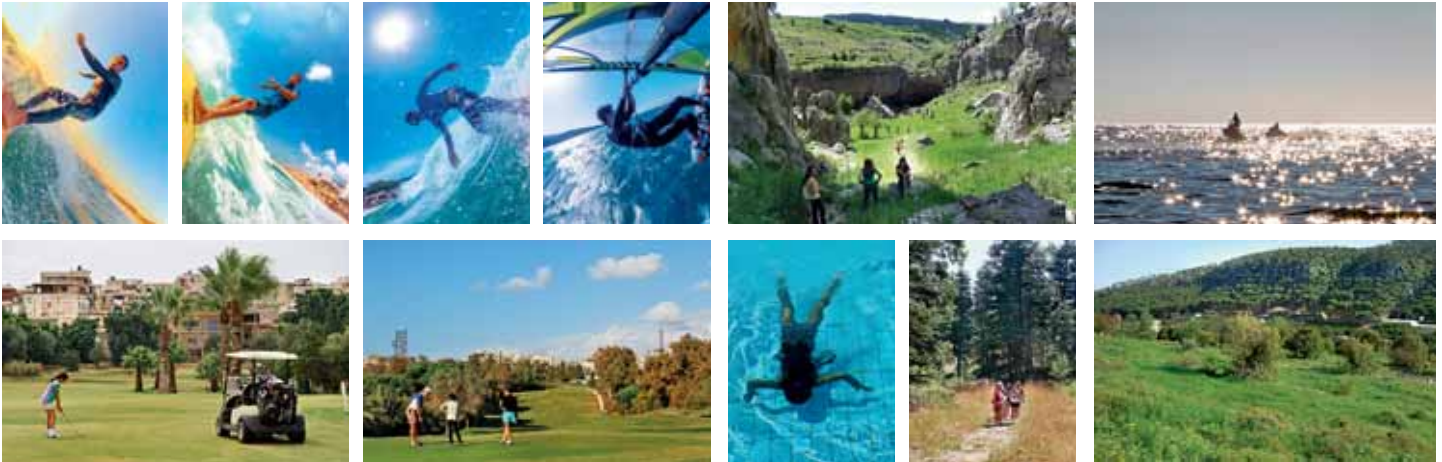
## Fossil insects, arthropods and amber in the spotlight

Amber, a warm and shimmering material with the color of the sun and gold, has seduced humans for centuries. It has long been praised for its beauty and gemological qualities. About 400 outcrops have been recently discovered in Lebanon by Professor Dany Azar and his team. During the 6th International Congress on Fossil Insects, Arthropods, and Amber in Lebanon, jointly organized by the Lebanese University and the Municipality of Byblos, in April, under the patronage of the President of the Republic, Michel Sleiman, the archeological sites of Byblos and the caves of Jeita were visited as a field trip. Included in the visit were lower cretaceous amber sites of Roum-Aazour-Homsiyyeh, Jouar Ess-Souss (Bkassine) and Hammana (in Southern and Central Lebanon); the Jurassic amber site of Aintourine and the natural reserve of Ehden forest (Northern Lebanon). For Azar, it was an occasion to raise awareness of this wonderful Lebanese treasure.



# Get your photo published

Lebanon Traveler's photo competition to choose the cover of its magazine for this issue has been postponed. However for our "Autumn" issue, talented photographers from all over the country may submit their entries online to [info@lebanontraveler.com](mailto:info@lebanontraveler.com) in order to be considered. In the meantime, here is a selection of "Summer Activities" entries for this issue.



To know more about our upcoming competitions follow us on  
Facebook: [facebook.com/LebanonTraveler](https://facebook.com/LebanonTraveler)  
Twitter: [@LebanonTraveler](https://twitter.com/LebanonTraveler)

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*At the heart of the image*







**Douma, one of Lebanon's most beautiful villages**

Last Sunday, I visited Douma for the first time. I stood in awe at the side of the road looking down at this beautiful village sitting peacefully in a valley, surrounded by mountains.

Douma is a Lebanese village located at an altitude of 1,000 m above sea level and 80 km from Beirut. It is a part of the Batroun district and borders Tannourine from the east, Bsha'leh from the south, St. Jacob convent from the west and Kfour El-Arabi, Hardeen, Neha and Kferlahed from the north. Douma has 450 old houses, an ancient market made of 110 shops and five gateways to Batroun, Jbeil, Hermel, Baalbeck, Tripoli and Akkar.

Douma's strategic location turned the town into a compass that guided convoys through what was known as "Al Sham road" connecting Syria to Douma via Baalbek and Hermel, towards the coastline. The movement of convoys was accompanied by the opening of a market called "El Bendr" that had a significant role in strengthening the town's economy. Douma witnessed a remarkable social, industrial and economic rise between 1881 and 1914 known as its golden age. Douma's geographic location made the town a passageway for the transport of tree trunks to the coast, where the Phoenicians used them to build ships.

During the Greek and Roman eras, it witnessed a prosperous period accompanied by the construction of many places of worship. One of these is the Asclapeo temple, stones of which were later used in building a church named after St Dumyat. The lantern of the temple's priest, Asclapeos, is at the entrance of the old market. Legend has it that "Jawar Al Khayl" (the neighborhood of horses) was named following an incident when a Turkish envoy and his forty soldiers, who came to collect taxes, were poisoned during a dinner banquet and buried in that area with their horses after the envoy insisted on taking the Sheikh of Douma's daughter as his wife.

As you can see in the pictures I took, almost all its houses are made of red brick. It enjoys a unique temperate climate praised by physicians as the ultimate place of medical refuge. Its ground is rich and welcomes all sorts of plants and has an abundance of olive trees, vines and apple trees. The moment I arrived, I was inspired. I grabbed my camera and took a walk in the old souks and between houses. People were so welcoming, smiling back and inviting us to take more pictures. They are used to seeing cameras, as celebrities and directors have used this breathtaking village in movies, ads and video clips.

Nadine Labaki stayed here for five weeks during the shooting of her movie "Where do we go now?" Douma's inhabitants are strong supporters of cinema and an old movie theater was restored last summer with the support of the Ministry of Culture.

**Blog:** <http://countlesslittlethings.wordpress.com/>  
**Twitter:** @MarieNakhle



**Origin of the name**

The name Douma is of Greek origin meaning house, palace or castle. Douma also comes from the Latin word "Doman" used to designate a queen; (Julia Domna) famous for her beauty and intelligence. Born in Aleppo in 170 BC, the daughter of a priest of the sun god worshipped by Aleppo's population, she married the Roman Caesar Septimius Severus who built a palace for her in a village that later took on her name. Douma is also known as "Douma El Hadid" (Douma of Iron) due to the abundance of iron found in its soil and the superior craftsmanship of its blacksmiths.

**Where to eat and stay**

Esclapio +961 3 520082  
 Hotel Douma +961 6 520202

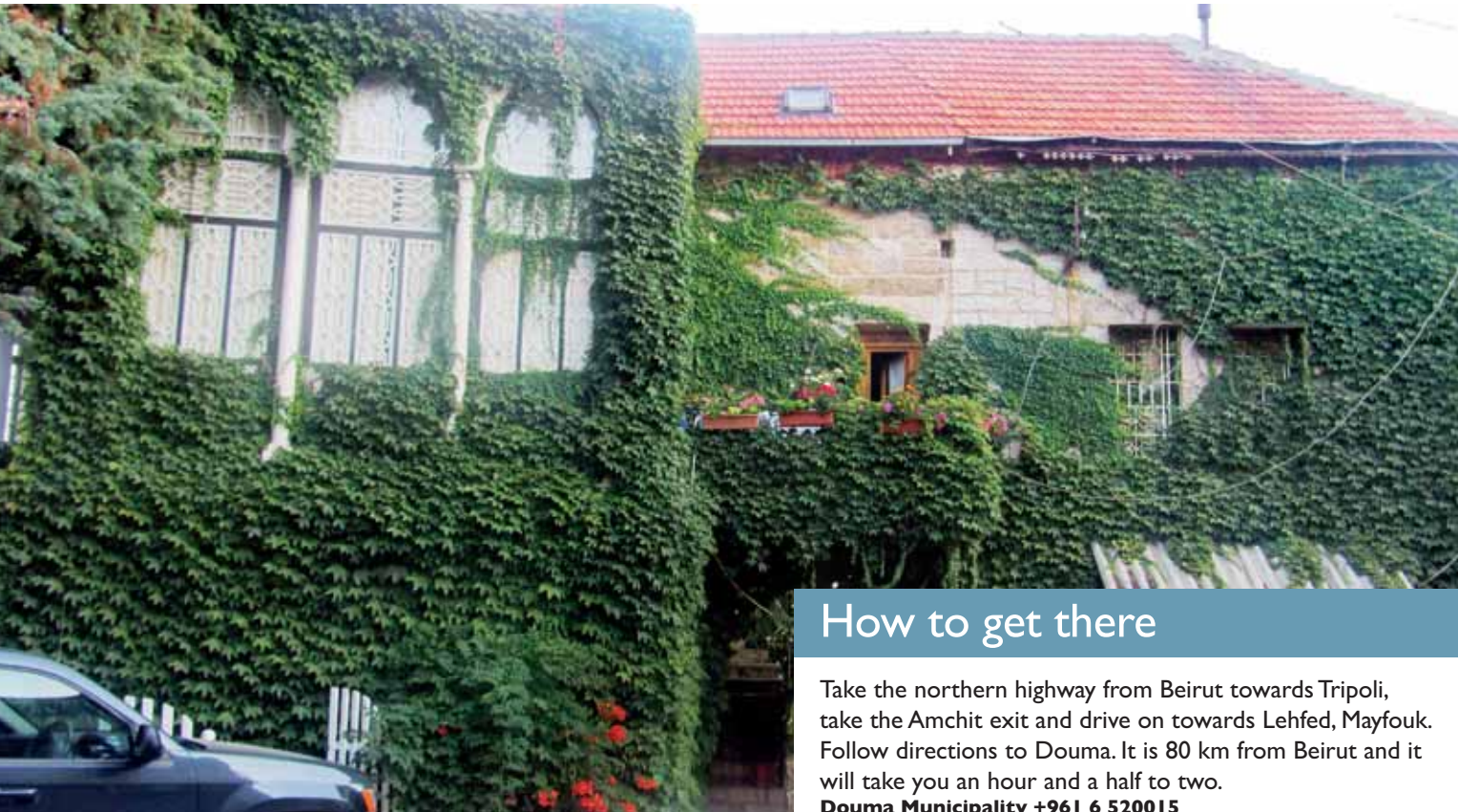
**What to buy**

Olive oil and homemade jams are a speciality of Douma. However, if you want to buy a gift, checkout Jihad Samya's hand carved olive and cedarwood souvenirs.  
 +961 6 520896





" I grabbed my camera and took a walk in the old souks and between houses "



### How to get there

Take the northern highway from Beirut towards Tripoli, take the Amchit exit and drive on towards Lehfed, Mayfouk. Follow directions to Douma. It is 80 km from Beirut and it will take you an hour and a half to two.  
**Douma Municipality +961 6 520015**



# Visiting the eco-friendly way



**In this summer issue of Lebanon Traveler, Pascal Abdallah takes us on a dream-like journey to the azure blue beaches of the Tyre Coast Nature Reserve, and tells us about the World Tourism Awards**

For your summer responsible tourism destination, I propose that you visit the Tyre Coast Nature Reserve.

Apart from the Palm Island Nature Reserve, it is the only governmental regulated marine nature reserve in Lebanon. Other protected areas along the Lebanese coast are the locally managed Hima El-Qleyle and the privately owned Al-Mansoury, both in South Lebanon.

In an effort to sustainably manage the coast, the Tyre Coast Nature Reserve is divided into three main zones from north to south:

1. The Integrated Touristic Zone
2. The Conservation Zone
3. The Integrated Agriculture Zone

Your day starts at the Park House, where the Nature Reserve's director, Hassan Hamzi, welcomes and introduces the nature reserve to you.

A short walk on the sandy beach of the touristic zone leads you to the conservation zone, where you learn about the flora of the typical sand dunes and bird-watch from inside the specially installed observation kiosk, overlooking the natural fresh water pond. Some of you might like to spend time relaxing and looking at the clear blue sea while waiting for the marine crabs to pop out of their holes.

Continue your visit with a short car transfer to the southern part of the nature reserve, the agriculture zone. Here one can discover the historical Ras El-Ain fresh water ponds and learn how the Phoenicians used to manage water resources in a very efficient way. There are many activities you can participate in to appreciate the local marine and agricultural environment: green bean or watermelon harvesting with local farmers or discovering the fauna of the artificial pond (fresh water crabs, fresh water turtles, ducks, water snakes, etc...)







**" The individuals, organizations and destinations working innovatively with local cultures, communities and biodiversity "**



End your day by having a snack on the wooden stand overlooking the pond or continue into Tyre city and have lunch in one of its many quaint restaurants around the old port. For those wanting to swim, Hamzi will lead you to the touristic zone where you can rest and have lunch in one of the seasonal contractual kiosks.

The best season for visiting the Tyre Coast Beach Resort is spring and fall for walking and biodiversity activities, and summer for short discovery and swimming activities.

## Where to stay

Local guesthouse Al-Fanar in old Tyre  
Walid Salha +961 3 665016.

## Who to contact

Hassan Hamzi +961 3 876837  
Responsible Mobilities +961 3 451113





" The best season for visiting the Tyre Coast Beach Resort is spring and fall for walking and biodiversity activities, and summer for short discovery and swimming activities "



## Tyre Coast Nature Reserve zones at a glance

AREA	DESCRIPTION	MANAGEMENT	ACTIVITY
<b>Touristic Zone</b>	Sandy shores. Open to the public for summer swimming activity. Parking lot and entrance kiosk to the reserve near the park house at the main entrance.	Managed by the municipality in close coordination with the management team of the reserve. Possibility of kiosk rental by the local small business investors for tourism services supply.	Swimming. Restaurants in the seasonal kiosks. Boat rides (organized by the reserve team with departure from Tyre old port).
<b>Conservation Zone</b>	Sandy shores and rare sand dunes. Typical vegetation of Mediterranean sandy shores. Natural fresh water ponds near salt marine waters.	Nature reserve management team.	Scientific discovery or research, hiking, flora study, bird watching at the observation kiosk.
<b>Agriculture Zone</b>	Integrated agriculture. Historical cultural sites of Ras El-Ain water ponds. Artificial fresh water pond.	Nature reserve management team in coordination with local farmers.	Flora and fauna exploring at the artificial pond, hiking and agro-tourism at the agriculture zone, cultural discovery of the Ras El-Ain historical ponds.



## Celebrating responsible tourism stars

The World Responsible Tourism Awards were founded in 2004 to celebrate and inspire change in the tourism industry. The Awards rest on a simple principle – that all types of tourism, from niche to mainstream, can and should be organized in a way that preserves, respects and benefits destinations and local people.

On its website, the founders stated, “We want to celebrate the shining stars of responsible tourism – the individuals, organizations and destinations working innovatively with local cultures, communities and biodiversity. But, more than that, we want their examples to inspire others. That’s why we’ve got the most rigorous judging process around, and work with the best partners in the industry to help us get the word out – to ensure that their stories provide an example to the industry”.

Since their founding, the awards have attracted over 12,000 nominations from members of the public, leading to 201 unique organizations, awarded from 51 countries. This is the 10th World Responsible Tourism Awards and the headline sponsor this year is the Sultanate of Oman’s Ministry of Tourism, which is committed to developing a range of quality tourism products that not only promote cultural integrity and environmental protection, but also lead to a diverse and sustainable tourism industry both in the Sultanate and overseas.

### How do the awards work?

Rather than handpick nominees, the organization relies on travelers and the industry to nominate those tourism ventures with exciting stories to share. This makes the Awards unique – the winners are not pre-decided. Every year the Awards platform teams up with media partners to invite the public to make their nominations, and every year this process yields hundreds of unique nominees.

“The companies recognized in the awards are those who are able to document the difference they are making in people’s lives and their cultures and natural environment... The Awards go beyond certification – we get to see what companies and destinations are actually doing.” Professor Harold Goodwin (ICRT)

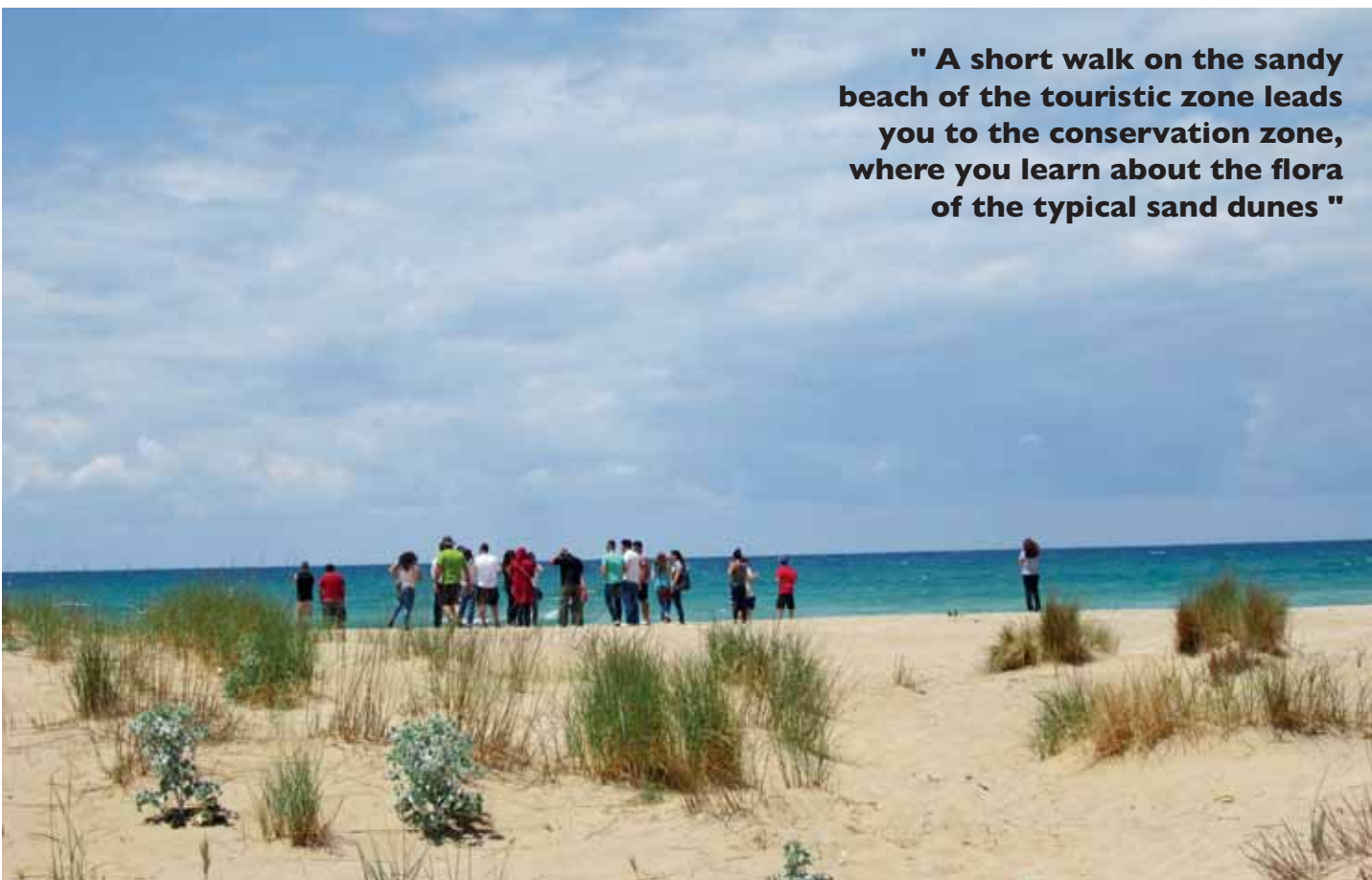
### World Responsible Tourism Awards 2013

Organizers: [responsibletravel.com](http://responsibletravel.com)

Organizing partners: World Travel Market (WTM) and International Center for Responsible Travel (ICRT)

### The award’s major categories

- Economic Responsible Tourism: Impact of the local economy
- Environmental Responsible Tourism: Water conservation
- Social Responsible Tourism: Child protection
- Responsible tourism campaigning
- Best Responsible Tourism Destination
- Best Wildlife Responsible Tourism
- Creative contribution to Responsible Tourism in photography
- People’s choice in responsible tourism



**" A short walk on the sandy beach of the touristic zone leads you to the conservation zone, where you learn about the flora of the typical sand dunes "**

# 10 things to do in Batroun

Batroun is the ideal leisure destination with the most satisfying simple pleasures that the region has to offer. Located 50 km north of Beirut, vacationers flock to these crystal blue waters for water sports, relaxation and just plain fun







## 1. Take in the history

Batroun is a treasure trove of Phoenician, Roman and Byzantine history. Its existence can be traced all the way back to pre-historic times, with early tools retrieved within caves along the Nahr el Jawz river. Nearby, is the fairytale castle of Mseilha, a medieval fort built by Emir Fakhreddine II in the 17th century to guard the route from Tripoli to Beirut. Perched high above a narrow limestone rock, the citadel and surrounding landscape was recently renovated to make it more accessible to visitors. The natural sea wall adjacent to the old harbor, reinforced by the Phoenicians, is the current site of the annual Batroun Festival. To the north is the Roman theater with its nine remaining steps and the old souks, a charming cobblestoned market with vaulted sandstone archways. End your day at the ruins of Makaad el Mir (Prince's Rock Seat) with a tall glass of Batroun's famous lemonade.  
**Batroun Municipality +961 6 642170, +961 6 642032**

## 2. Revel in the outdoors

Batroun's distinct topography allows you to enjoy both sea and mountains all in the span of a few minutes. Heading up 11 kilometers from the city is one of the most beautiful trails along the el Jawz river. Lined with walnut trees near the river's edge, the trek is fairly easy and picturesque. For experienced hikers, begin at the village of Rashkida continuing until Beksmayya Bridge and then head uphill to Kfarhay where the monastery of St. Maroun is located. Don't miss the Kfar Halda water source, the Daleh, El Ghawawit and El Toufah Springs. You can also tour the prominent sites near the port by bike or skip the car ride to Batroun altogether and bike it from Beirut.



## 3. Relax on the beach

The crystal clear waters of Batroun can be enjoyed from a number of beach resorts, including the trendy Bonita Bay, Pearl Beach and White Beach – a stretch of tiny white-pebbled waterfront with the best windsurfing in the area. At Pierre & Friends, "laid back" is a way of life. Watch the waves crash on the rocky shore with a bottle of beer, until you're in the middle of a full-blown beach party.

**Bonita Bay +961 76 744 844 | Pearl Beach +961 6 743941  
Pierre and Friends +961 3 352930 | White Beach +961 6 74240**

Photo courtesy of White Beach



Photo Courtesy of IXSIR



## 4. Tour the wineries

Follow La Route des Vins du Nord, a wine trail that passes by the northern Lebanese wineries Batroun Mountains, IXSIR, Adyar, Aurora, Coteaux de Botrys, Domaine S. Najm and Chateau Sanctus. IXSIR's winery, Seigniorial House, located in the hills of Batroun, won the CNN Green award for its completely sustainable facility.

**Adyar +961 9 926950**

**Aurora +961 3 295458**

**Batroun Mountains +963 3 928299**

**Chateau Sanctus +961 3 661699**

**Coteaux de Botrys +961 6 721300**

**Domaine S. Najm +961 3 524425**

**IXSIR +961 9 210023**

## 5. Sail, surf, float, dive

Batroun is infamous for its gangs of surfers aptly called "Pirate" and "Hurricane" who access the area's prime surfing spot through Blue Bay. This area is also great for windsurfing and body boarding. For formal instruction, White Beach offers windsurfing lessons with Samer Abi Saab and Batroun Water Sports has the Quicksilver Surf School. Divers can explore the deep blue sea with Pure Tech Diving Facility at the San Stephano resort. Most Batrounis can sail before they can walk and the Lebanese Yacht Club and Sailing School caters to everyone from novice to professional sailors of all ages. If you're there in mid-July, don't miss the Laser Sailing Championship.

**Samer Abi Saab +961 70 090048**

**Batroun Water Sports +961 3 156402**

**Lebanese Yacht Club +961 6 741841**

**Pure Tech Diving Facility +961 3 688666**

Photo Courtesy of Samer Abi Saab





## 6. Taste the food

Batroun is famous for its lemonade so a tall glass is a must from Chez Hilmi Café or Limonade Tony Daou. One of Batroun's unofficial landmarks is Chez Maguy's next to the Makaad el Mir site. You probably need to ask a local for directions since the walkway getting there literally ends up in Maguy's makeshift house. Le Marin's seafood and views are unbeatable, but the true taste of Batroun can be found at Batrouniyat – an old stone house turned into a restaurant/pantry house with homemade preserves, olive oil and regional specialties.

**Batrouniyat +961 6 744510**

**Chez Hilmi Café +961 6 740068**

**Chez Maguy +961 3 439147**

**Le Marin +961 6 744016**

**Limonade Tony Daou +961 6 741564**

## 7. Party till dawn

Batroun by night is giving Beirut a run for its money. Its main street is lined with plenty of pubs and nightclubs to choose from. Landmark clubs include Taiga and the new Taiga Sky on the rooftop of San Stephano, as well as Pierre and Friends. Centro, Castello and X-Ray are all local favorites, but if you're lucky enough to visit in July, you'll get a taste of Batroun's Open Air Party – an explosion of nightlife where clubs close indoors and party in the street.

**Castello +961 3 694877**

**Centro +961 3 431122**

**Taiga +961 3 499408**

**X-Ray +961 76 466664**





## 8. Stay a while

Why not turn your day trip into a weekend getaway at one of Batroun's beach resorts. Aqualand and San Stephano Resort are in the old town and have plenty of activities to choose from. For a more luxurious stay, bask in the sunlight in Batroun Village Club's infinity pool or stay in a quaint cave room – an old house transformed through modern amenities. Nestled in a little valley overlooking the Mediterranean, Beit Al Batroun Bed & Breakfast is a haven of peace, a countryside retreat on the Lebanese sea coast.

**Aqualand +961 6 642201**

**Batroun Village Club +961 6 642366**

**San Stephano +961 6 642366**

**Beit Al Batroun, B&B 03 270049**



## 9. Tour the churches

On the north end of Batroun overlooking the old harbor is the Maronite cathedral of St. Stephan (Mar Stefan). The 13th century Greek Orthodox St. George Church (Mar Gerges) is nearby with its impressive dome and the tiny chapel known as Our Lady of the Sea (Sadiyat al-Bahr), which overlooks Batroun's sea wall. A short drive to the region of Kfarhay to visit the Monastery of St. Maroun is well worth the trip. Father John Maron, who many believe is the founder of the Maronite community in Lebanon, built the monastery to enshrine the relics of the saint including his actual skull and books dating back to the 15th century.





## 10. Live art

Through the winding mountain roads of Rashana, a scenic drive slowly transforms into an unlikely home for art. Deemed the “International Capital of Sculpture in Open Air” by UNESCO, the work on display and the subsequent notoriety is due to the famed Basbous family - brothers Michel, Joseph, Alfred and Michel's son Anashar. Streets lined with limestone, steel, aluminum, bronze, wood, cement and stone sculptures emerge from the ground, surrounded by wild daffodils. Drive past the villas with creative gates to the open-air museum, where you'll find 60 years of artwork as well as Michel's one-story home, constructed entirely without any right angles. His widow Therese explains that the house was created so that he could “live inside a sculpture.”

**Alfred Basbous Museum & Exhibition +961 6 720903**

**Michel and Youssef Basbous Atelier & Exhibition +961 6 720310**





## Three favorite celebrity Batroun secrets

We visit this idyllic village with some of Batroun's staunchest advocates, who spend a lot of their time both creating and relaxing in its incredible atmosphere



*"Batroun is the perfect fishing village that is still very authentic...The ideal way to spend a summer day is to get up early and go for a swim in one of the coves. Then partake of an excellent manouche and glass of lemonade at the 'garage' in front of the St. Stephan Church. Take a stroll through the old souks and buy fresh fish and vegetables from Stephan Elias for lunch. If you don't want to cook, then during the week lunch at Jammal, as the weekend can be too crowded, and have another swim. After a siesta stroll to Chez Maguy for a sunset drink followed by a dinner. Do not miss her roasted Coquille St. Jacques! If you have the energy to go dancing, then Taiga is a must!"*

**Rabih Kayrouz, Lebanese fashion designer, creator and founder of the fashion house Maison Rabih Kayrouz and co-founder of the Starch Foundation that helps young Lebanese designers launch and promote their debut collection**

*"You don't go to Batroun...it comes to you. When stars align, when you are ready, Batroun will call and whisper its promise of a sweeter life in your ear. Most Beirutis are quenched with White, Bonita Bay and Pierre & Friend's beaches, but it gets better 5 km ahead. Dolce-Vita dawns at Joining Beach, passes through The Lady of the Sea and sunsets at Chez Maguy. Batroun's 'peace and love' people turn down most jobs in crazy Beirut, and their dreamy smile will taunt the tourist... But unless you are worthy, their secrets will be hushed and they'll only share a sunset beer from "RAY" at the "Bahssa" and that's already breathtaking!"*

**Ana Larriu, interior designer**



*"Batroun is total 'unwind' and 'let go' place for me. It is very much being in the cocoon of my garden and my house - or facing the sea breeze and the sunset, on a rock over the water at Chez Maguy!"*

**Kamal Mouzawak, food artisan, culinary activist and founder of Souk el Tayeb, Beirut's first farmer's market**

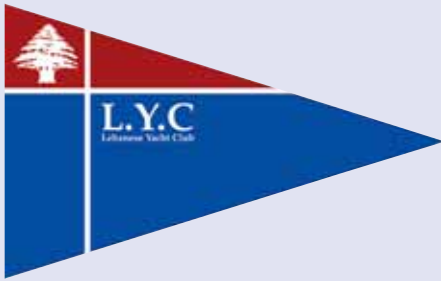


# Chez Maguy

Batroun, Al-Bahsa street,  
next to Makaad Al Mir rock

For info or reservation  
please contact us on  
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Photo courtesy of Loryne Atoui



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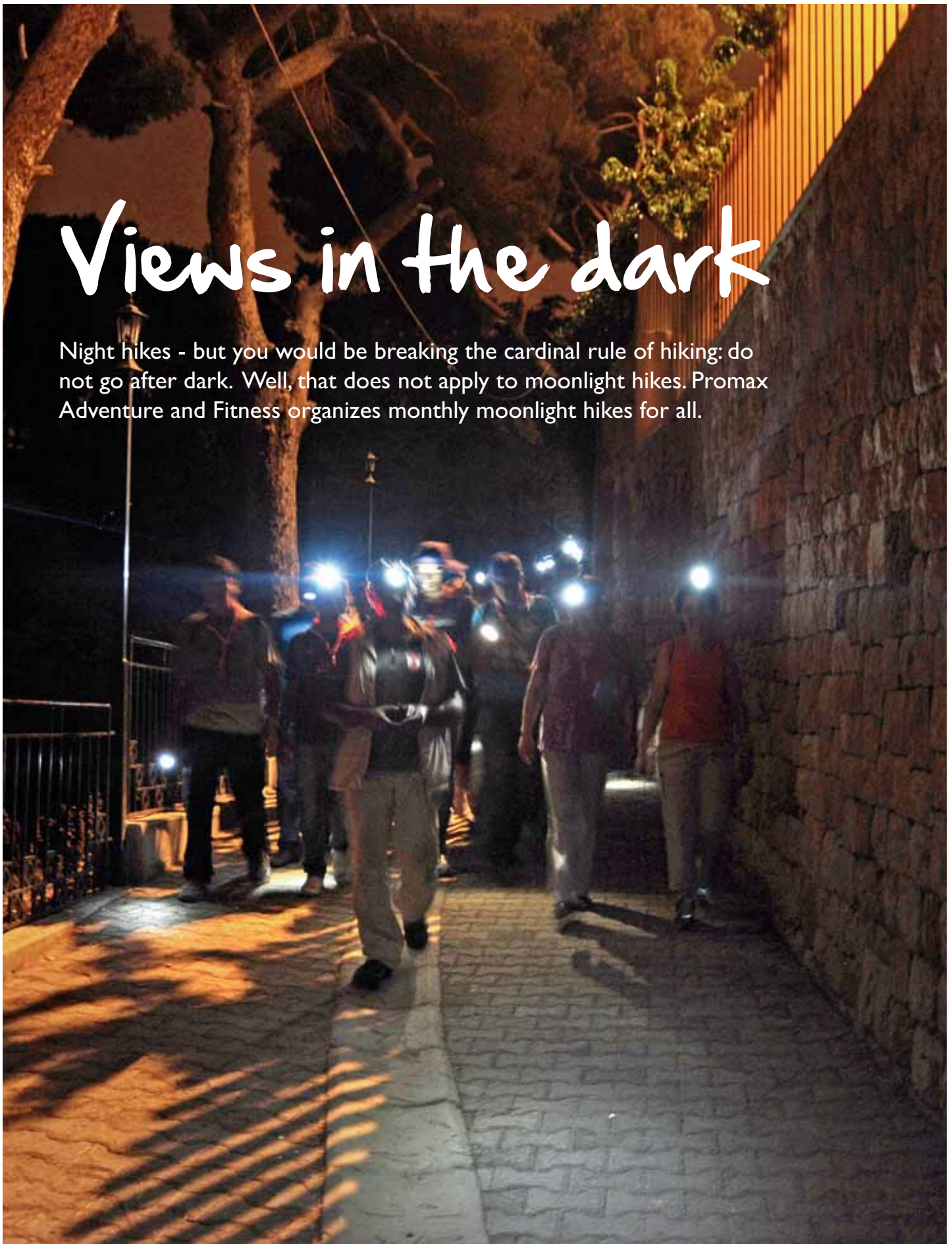
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# Views in the dark

Night hikes - but you would be breaking the cardinal rule of hiking: do not go after dark. Well, that does not apply to moonlight hikes. Promax Adventure and Fitness organizes monthly moonlight hikes for all.





With the season in full swing, night hikes are an excellent solution for enjoying the outdoors while avoiding summer's scorching heat.

Night hikes take place in areas that offer beautiful views of the city. Since you cannot enjoy the greenery, you can always enjoy the lights from afar. And, if there are no lights around, you are illuminated by the moonlight, which is usually intense enough to guide you through the pathways of the forest. There is no need for headlights.

### How does it work?

After safety instructions are given, the hike begins with a stretching session so as to avoid muscle cramps and insure a good cardio workout. Though the walk is not too difficult, it remains a good exercise session for the whole body. The hike takes about 2 to 3 hours, and they usually happen on weekdays. Depending on the size of the group, which sometimes reaches up to 100 participants of all ages, the guides will lead you into the night and help you experience nature in a completely different way than you would have in daylight. Nature never sleeps and is alive night and day, however the inhabitants differ and perhaps you will hear the owl hooting or see a bat hunting. Once the hike is over, there is another stretching session.

### Night Hikes Advantages

- **Engage your other senses** With your vision reduced, your senses of smell and hearing will take on a bigger role and you'll experience the outdoors in a different way.
- **See the night sky** Dark skies are nearly impossible to find in most urban areas. By getting out into open space, you'll have a chance to get away from light pollution in cities.
- **Hike all year** Hiking on hot days, can be lethal. Then, when days are shorter during late autumn and winter, it can be tough to go out for a hike after work. Night hikes give you the chance to get out on the trail on days when you might otherwise stay home.

### Preparing for a night hike

- Wear hiking shoes
- Wear pants rather than shorts to avoid insect bites
- Make sure to pack a light jacket, preferably a wind breaker
- Bring a headlight that will only be used for emergencies

### Stargazing

Summer is the season for meteor showers. The AUB astronomy club organizes hikes that include stargazing sessions. This is a perfect opportunity to exercise and learn all about the sky! Along with other astronomy groups, like the Lebanese Astronomy Group that connects sky lovers from all over the country, they organize star gazing trips where you sit, watch the sky and learn all about constellations. Though not exactly hiking, it is nonetheless another way to relax and discover Lebanon from a different angle.

Facebook group - Lebanese Astronomy Group

## Experience

Camille Attiyeh, fitness consultant and event coordinator for Promax Adventure and Fitness, reveals how great night hikes really are.

“Night hikes are a unique way to experience nature. With only the moon as a guiding light, our eyesight capacity is lowered and hence we have to rely on other senses to discover our surroundings. We do not see the colors, but can guess shapes, feel textures, hear special sounds. Of course, night hikes are an excellent way to relax after a hectic and stressful day in the city, with all its noise and visual pollution. It is a perfect way to get away from it all and recuperate, all the while doing a healthy activity.”

**Promax Adventure and Fitness**  
**+961 3 955642**







## One step at a time

Every year, the Broummana Hiking Group organizes a unique hike that highlights the beauty and character of the village, under the patronage of the Municipality of Broummana. For a few hours, locals will guide you through the many stairs of the area where you'll discover the ins and outs of this picturesque village.

The visit includes 13 stairways with seven upwards and six downwards. All in all, you will be going up 355 steps, down 306 totaling 661 steps for this hike. But, do not let the numbers fool you. This is a very enjoyable walk where you will have fun learning all about the village history and local anecdotes.

One of the stairways on the program will lead you to Mar Chaaya, the oldest church in Broummana. The most interesting feature of this church is that it was built on an Ethronite fortress dating back to 333 BC. The Ethronites were a group of Arab pirates who were famous for attacking Phoenician ships during the Roman era. They slowly gained power and took advantage of the interior problems of the Roman Empire to rule over most of eastern and southern Lebanon. To keep safe they built, among other things, a fortress in Broummana that the Greek Orthodox Christians turned into the Mar Chaaya Church in 1560.

Another of the stairways is known as the cat stairway. Mariam, whose house was on these stairs, was a cook at a hotel. When she left work, she would pack all the leftovers and as she would walk all the way to her house, feeding the cats along the way. Naturally all the cats would follow her to her house, where a feast would be waiting for them. It is said that any villager who could not find their cat, was sure to find it on these steps... it was their favorite hangout.

After the hike, participants and locals gather at the Broummana Stadium, where they are greeted by the head of the municipality of Broummana and offered traditional food and drinks. The evening continues with dances, songs and flowing arak, in true Broummana spirit.

**Broummana Hiking Group**  
**+961 78811891**



The next event will take place on 27 June at 7 pm for free. The group is happy to organize visits and hikes in the village, at no cost, just give them a call and they will accommodate you.

**" This is a very enjoyable walk where you will have fun learning all about the village history and local anecdotes "**



# A day at WaterGate



Mum & Dad



Lunch at the Lagoon



Me in the wave pool



The best burger ever

Lots more to do...

- Henna Tattoo
- Foot Fish therapy
- DJ music
- Kids' entertainment
- Water games
- And much more



Yummyyyy !!!



Slide funnn

Yesterday I went to the Watergate Aqua Park with my family. We ate the most delicious pizza, then I played all day long and didn't bother Mom & Dad at all. 😊 It was really the best day ever! My birthday this summer is gonna be at WaterGate.... yeahhhh :)

  
**Le ROYAL**  
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# Going back to our roots

## La Maison de la Forêt: A unique ecotourism concept nestled within Bkassine's glorious pine forest

La Maison de la Forêt is the coming together of outdoor activities, wooden cottages and tents, located deep within one of Lebanon's largest pine forests in the southern region of Jezzine.

A stay over in one of the rustic lodgings, under towering pine trees with an eatery that offers delicious local delicacies to satisfy the palate, is a real must. And, to work up an appetite, there is a wide range of activities on offer. Families can choose moderate hiking trails, an adventure park, donkey rides and a bike park for activities to do together. For companies that want to strengthen work dynamics, there are meeting spaces for retreats and conferences, and team building adventure activities.

La Maison de la Forêt is a communal endeavor, created through a private public partnership (PPP), aimed at developing and encouraging responsible tourism in the Jezzine region. The concept is within the Union of Jezzine Municipalities' long-term vision to develop ecotourism. Khalil Harfouch, UJM president, recognizes its value as a tool to protect and enhance natural resources in the region and as a lever for the local economy to involve its citizens within the responsible tourism sector.



"Sharing the same vision for the region made the public private partnership between the UJM and La Maison de la Forêt a success," says Tania Nader, owner, La Maison de la Forêt. "It's engrained at the heart of our region, the Jezzine district, and based on common interests: boosting the region's economy

through well planned responsible tourism infrastructure and activities."

La Maison de la Forêt also aims to be an information portal for all the available activities in the Jezzine caza, which includes 45 villages. "Our motives are simple, but abundantly rewarding. Introducing a novel touristic experience while providing job opportunities to the people in the region and restoring the national pride in them.

One of our most valued objectives is to preserve and shed light on the biodiversity and heritage of the region," says Nader. Visitors can also buy local products, such as preserves and crafts, on site, which will boost the local economy. Many passageways and the main activities on site are also safe for persons with physical disabilities.



"We are conscious and aware of how beautiful our region is and our main goal is to preserve nature and increase awareness amongst our guests, while offering them the chance to experience southern hospitality. And finally, to provide the inhabitants with better socioeconomic conditions," says Nader. "Every step we take goes towards making Jezzine, the ultimate ecotourism destination in the region.

## Good to know

The Union of Municipalities of Jezzine covers 250 km<sup>2</sup> including 45 villages. It is located in South Lebanon 60km from Beirut and 30km from Saida at an altitude ranging from 200 to 1,800m.

## How to get there

Drive southbound from Beirut to Sidon. From there, head straight east towards Jezzine. You will pass through towns such as Kfarjarra, Aabra, Kfarfalous and Roum before you reach Bkassine village.

## Who to contact

+961 7 801888 +961 78 828252  
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BEST







# A breezy house

Hidden between the walled gardens in the old town of El Mina, Tripoli, lies a guest house of historic proportions. What was once the private home of a beloved physician is now an unlikely sanctuary



Beit El Nessim is the pet project of yoga guru, Nabil Najjar. Inspired by the design and location of a landmark home in the pedestrian area of the city, he decided to transform the space into an urban retreat.

The house itself, locally known as beit el hakim, belonged to two generations of doctors known for their empathy when it came to treating patients. Dr. Yacoub al Labban was so highly regarded in the community that when he died, a statue was erected in the town square in his honor.

The good doctor's karma is a lingering presence in Beit El Nessim and one of the main reasons why Najjar chose that particular location, in 2007.





Its narrow walkway leading up to the entrance, lush greenery and minimal congestion, remind you of a country estate with features such as a charming rooftop terrace and an interior courtyard. Visitors will notice a conscious effort to preserve the unique style and architectural details of the building, while integrating modern amenities with style, elegance and integrity to the original design.

The interior is an eclectic mix of local antiques, Egyptian textiles and furniture from India. "The feel of the place is very important," said Nabil. "When you see the light bouncing off the polished marble of the main salon, you get a sense of serenity and happiness.

It was designed by Nabil himself using a lot of recycled materials like old wood, doors and headboards from antique shops in Tripoli, with touches of eastern flare. Each of the six rooms with names like Samsarra, Bindu and Shanti offer a warm and inviting setting, designed for you to linger with family, friends or colleagues.

Yoga enthusiasts can look forward to special events and weekend retreats that take place in the main hall, as well as a café/lounge scheduled to open in the near future.

"Our goal is to make you feel at home," he said, in a peaceful oasis away from everyday life, where harmony is brought to both heart and mind.

**Labban Street, El Mina, Tripoli**  
**Telephone +961 6 308156, +961 6 200983**  
**beitelnessim.com**



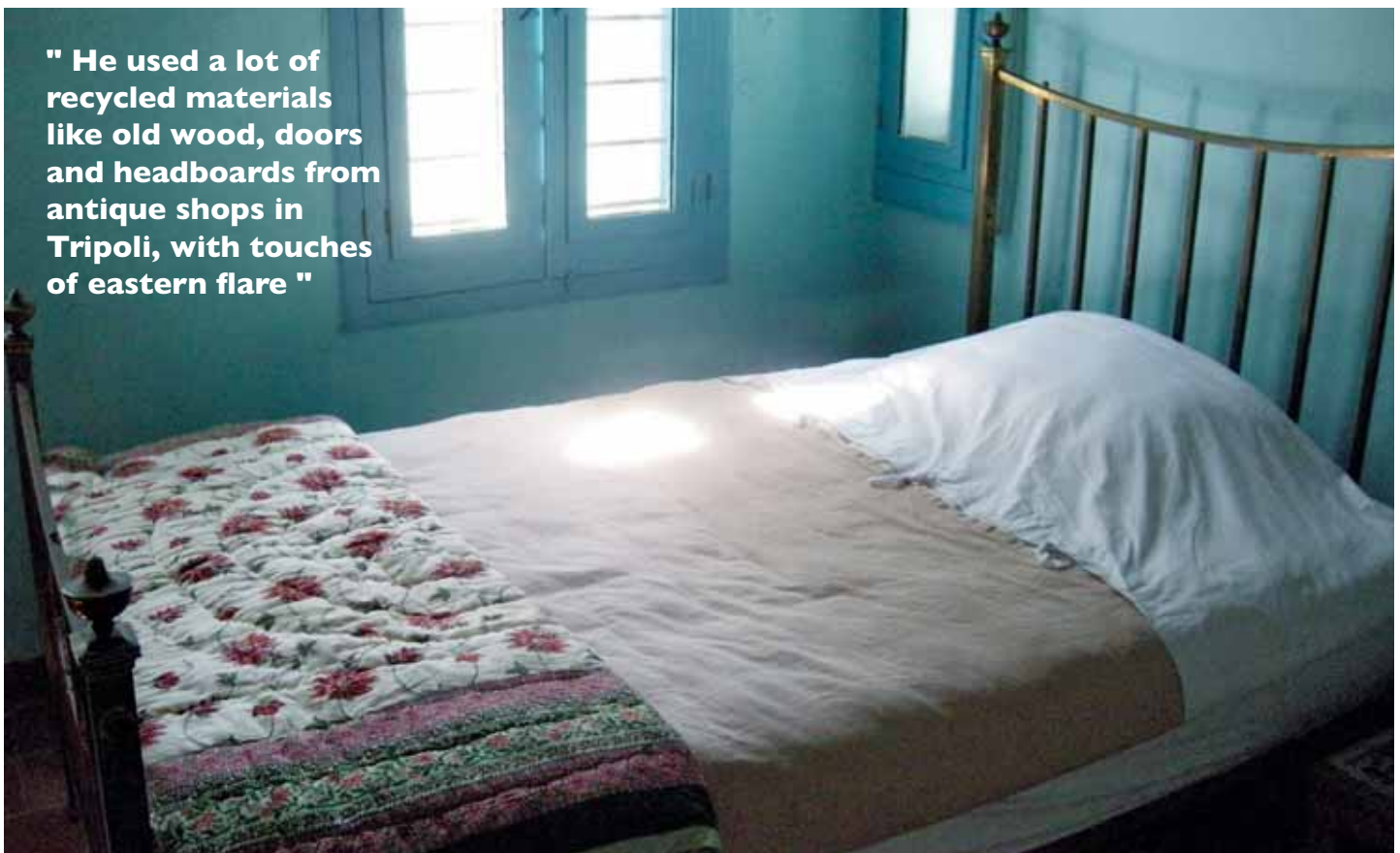
## Where to eat

Silver Shore traditional Lebanese cuisine - Al Mina  
+961 6 601384

Al Mustafa fish restaurant and Lebanese cuisine - Al Mina  
+961 6 205821

Cava and Mike's for drinks

**" He used a lot of recycled materials like old wood, doors and headboards from antique shops in Tripoli, with touches of eastern flare "**





# Diving the pearl

We're surrounded by it day in and day out, but how many of us have actually explored the deep blue sea





Since Jacques Cousteau developed the Self-Contained Underwater Breathing Apparatus (SCUBA) in 1943, diving enthusiasts have explored a wondrous world of nature and wildlife from coast to coast. Lebanon is teeming with dive sites from French submarines to a stingray reef. Here's what you need to know about scuba diving before heading out to open waters.

## Training

Scuba diving requires proper training and a certificate from a reputable organization. Luckily Lebanon is considered an international diving spot with several accredited centers. Certified instructors, who teach theory and practical application both in a pool and open water, conduct courses.

If you are a fair swimmer and feel comfortable swimming underwater, you should be able to take the course. Divers must be in good physical health or have written permission from their doctor. The minimum age requirement is 12 if you are seeking an international certificate: PADI (Professional Association of Diving Instructors), NAUI (National Association of Underwater Instructors), TDI (Technical Diving International) and IANTD (International Association of Nitrox & Technical Diving), but some centers accommodate young divers with specialized lessons.

The Open Water Scuba Diver course from the National Institute for Scuba Diving is an IANTD program that offers three theory sessions and seven dives with a maximum diving depth of 18 meters. Included in the course are: complementary book, log book and wall certificate, all scuba equipment during pool and sea sessions, beach entrance, international license as well as insurance coverage throughout the course. With your certificate in hand, Lebanon's coast will have twice as much to offer:

## Essential Equipment

For first time divers eager to get back into the water after earning their license and wanting to purchase their own gear instead of renting, do make sure everything fits properly and is comfortable so you can focus on your dive and not the equipment.

Here's what you need and what's cool to have:

- **Wetsuit** It will keep you warm especially when diving in cooler waters. You can add a weight system, either a weight belt or an integrated belt to help you sink
- **Mask** Your window to the underwater world – make sure it's a perfect fit
- **Fins** Allow you to swim faster and easier underwater – there's a wide variety, so choose one that works for you
- **BCD** (Buoyancy Control Device) The jacket that allows you to float and control your depth
- **Cylinder** The tank that carries the air
- **Regulator** What you use to breathe the air from the tank
- **SPG** (Submersible Pressure Gauge) Measures how much air is left in your tank
- **Depth gauge** Tells you how deep you are
- **Compass** Comes in handy when you need to know where you are and where to go

## Diving Centers

National Institute for Scuba Diving Beirut Marina

+961 3 204422

Atlantis Diving College Bel Azur, Jounieh

+961 70 195231

Abyss La Marina JK, Dbayeh

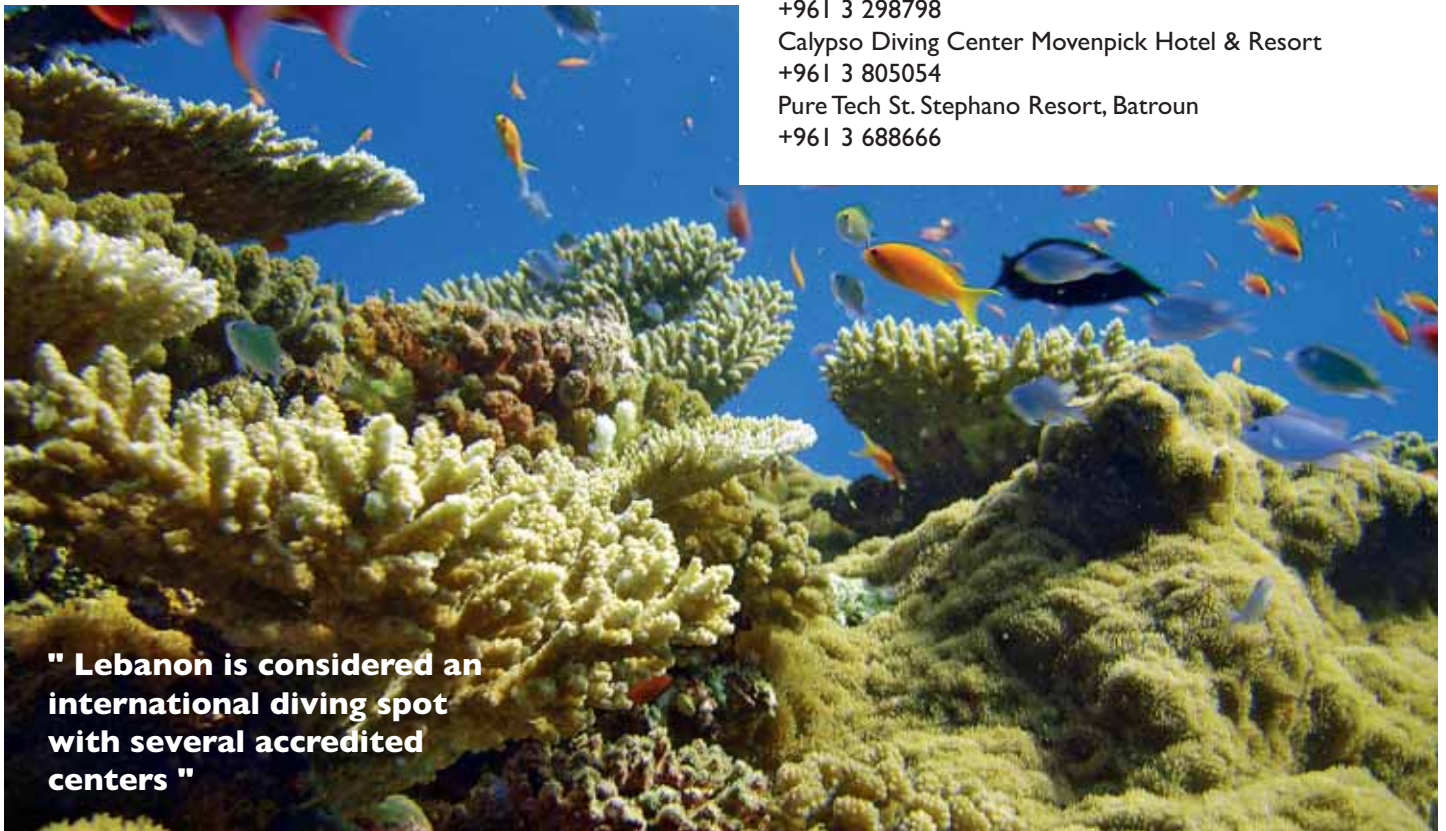
+961 3 298798

Calypso Diving Center Movenpick Hotel & Resort

+961 3 805054

Pure Tech St. Stephano Resort, Batroun

+961 3 688666



**" Lebanon is considered an international diving spot with several accredited centers "**



# Dive sites in Lebanon

Here is an essential guide for divers of all levels of experience compiled by Walid Noshie, owner of Water Nation and the National Institute of Scuba Diving

## AUB Canyon

AUB Canyon was one of the best diving spots known in the 60's. It used to be called the Sharks hole since fishermen used to catch sharks from the deep end of the canyon. Nowadays, sharks are almost nonexistent on that spot. The walls on this reef are steep, beautiful, full of small caves and fishermen's nets, with a huge old anchor lying at 43m.

**Location** Facing American University Beach

**Condition** Rocky but easy entry, rocky bottom. Some wind and waves possible, watch out for sea urchins on entry

**Depth of dives** Rocky sea bottom starts at 5m, drop-offs down to more than 300m

**Level** Beginner to technical

**Quality of marine life** Diverse; moray eels, octopus and groupers; lobsters in April

**Visibility** 6-20m, rain and river run-off affect visibility. Excellent spot for night diving when visibility is good, all marine life out of the rocks feeding, including flute fish, stingrays and Spanish dancers.

## Shark Point

Shark point is an area composed of 5 reefs, which includes some plateau sections and a deep canyon running along every reef towards the east. Crossing one reef to the other towards the north are sand beds in between, making the passages look like huge corridors. At the third reef, divers will admire a statue of a Lebanese saint praying above a small cave in which stingrays take refuge. At the 4th reef is a vertical wall with a rugged profile full of fissures, inlets and crevices to explore. The 5th reef towards the East is where most sharks are observed.

**Location** 1.5km southwest of Rouache

**Condition** Strong wind, waves and currents are possible

**Depth of dives** Rocky bottom starts at 28m, drops to 50m

**Level** Experienced and advanced

**Quality of marine life** Diverse and rich. Best in the whole country especially between April and September. Moray eels, stingrays in groups, eagle rays, groupers but best of all are the sharks - the small Tooth Sand Tiger and the Gray Nurse sharks - which will start showing up in July and disappear again in October

**Visibility** 10-25m, good all year round although affected by currents and plankton blooms

## The "Souffleur"

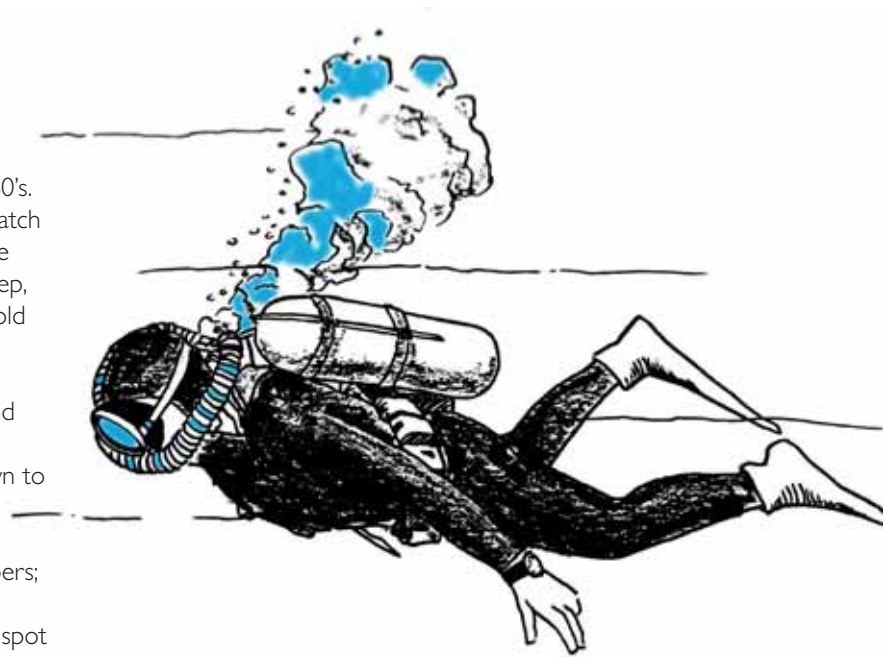
The "Souffleur" can be ranked among one of the best WWII wrecks in the world. It is a French submarine, which sank in battle, badly damaged and cut in two, but virtually intact. Divers will find plenty of open holes from fishermen dynamiting the site for fish. They look very tempting to discover, but beware of narrow passages and silt that will immediately cover your trace, making entry extremely hazardous.

**Location** 12km south of Ras-Beirut

**Condition** Current, waves and wind can be considerable

**Depth of dive** Average 34m to a maximum of 38m

**Level** Experienced and advanced



**Quality of marine life** Diverse. Stingrays, moray eels and eagle rays

**Visibility** 6-25m year-round affected by currents and plankton blooms.

## The "Macedonia"

The "Macedonia" was a cargo ship sailing regularly between Egypt and Lebanon in the early 1960's. On a stormy night, sailing too close to shore, the Macedonia hit the shallow reef off Raoushe making a huge hole in its entire front lower hull. The wreck split in two, one part on the sandy side of the reef and the other on the rocks. It is fairly well colonized by different species of fish, including groupers and lobsters in the spring

**Location** 500m northwest of Raouche

**Condition** Currents can be considerable

**Depth of dive** Average 12m to a maximum of 17m

**Level** Beginner to technical

**Quality of marine life** Good density and diversity of schools of fish, moray eels and octopus

**Visibility** 8-20m, best in April and May

## The Tunnels

The Tunnels are a crack in the rocks towards the west, 7m wide and 100m in length, which make it look like a passage between two walls. Marine life is pleasant with a reef fish population that seems concentrated on this small spot due to favorable conditions.

**Location** northwest of Raouche, 100m west of the wreck "Macedonia"

**Condition** Currents and waves can be considerable

**Depth of dive** Average 15m to a maximum of 20m

**Level** Beginner to technical

**Quality of marine life** Diverse. Moray eels, octopus, groupers as well as turtles

**Visibility** 6-20m north wind will reduce visibility and produce strong currents



## Stingray Reef

The dive site encompasses a wide, oval sloping patchy reef that extends to the west of the circular reef top. The reef composition is quite varied, with patchy sections in sand beds. Fish life is not great, but in June and July, the sand beds and reef bottom crevices will surprise you throughout the haul dive. It is not unusual for divers to encounter as many as 10 rays in a single dive. From stingrays to electric rays to Thornback rays and even Eagle Rays. The reef slope is suitable for relatively inexperienced divers while more experienced divers will enjoy the incredible experience of seeing such a diversity of rays.

**Location** 500m northwest from the military beach of Beirut

**Condition** Possibility of wind and waves on the surface

**Depth of dive** Average 22m to a maximum of 31m

**Level** Experienced and advanced

**Quality of marine life** Diversity of fish and rays

**Visibility** 5-20m year round affected by currents.

## The "Alice B"

Alice B is not an old site but on a good visibility dive, it is very interesting and exceptionally photogenic for underwater photography divers. The ship is resting on the flat bottom, 38m from the surface. Starting at the main control room, the area is wide and accessible by most divers. It is advisable that divers be specialized in wreck penetration before attempting entry into the interior:

**Location** 1 km northwest of ATCL in Jounieh

**Condition** Well protected, mild underwater current possible

**Depth of dive** Average 34m to a maximum of 38m

**Level** Advanced

**Best time to dive** Year round in calm weather

**Quality of marine life** Schools of tuna, groupers and lobster

**Visibility** 4m to 25m best on a very mild north wind

## Torpedo Carrier Boat

The name of this wreck remains a mystery. This ship was used as a Torpedo Carrier supplying the Vichy submarines with torpedoes in the open sea. The ship was sunk after receiving a direct hit either from an allied ship canon or bombed from an airplane. On a good

visibility dive, it is very interesting and exceptionally photogenic for underwater photography divers with about 10 submarine torpedoes lying on the deck. The ship is resting on the flat bottom, 60m from the surface.

**Location** Tripoli, 4km facing the Fishing Port

**Condition** Current, waves and wind can be considerable

**Depth of dive** Average 60m to a maximum of 62m

**Level** Experienced to technical

**Quality of marine life** Diverse marine life

**Visibility** 15 to 30m year-round affected by currents and plankton blooms.

## HMS Victoria

The HMS Victoria was the flagship in the Mediterranean of Admiral Sir George Tryon. Part of the Victoria Class turret ship of the Royal Navy, the HMS Victoria was rammed and sunk by HMS Camperdown on the 22nd of June 1893. Admiral Tryon intended the maneuvers and the anchoring to be an impressive sight to the entire British Navy fleet, but unfortunately, the two battleships met halfway. Camperdown struck the Victoria on the flagship's starboard side, opening up an enormous hole at and below the waterline. Victoria's bow went down and the stern rose with the propellers still turning. Today, the HMS Victoria is resting at the bottom in a vertical position with the stern upwards starting at 75 meters.

**Location** Tripoli, 16km northwest

**Condition** Current, waves and wind can be considerable

**Depth of dive** From 75m to 146m

**Level** Experienced to technical

**Quality of marine life** Diverse marine life

**Visibility** 15 to 30m year-round affected by currents and plankton blooms.



**" If you are a fair swimmer and feel comfortable swimming underwater, you should be able to take the course "**





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**Ministry of Tourism**





## Diving expert Walid Noshie recounts his close encounter with a shark

The year was 1981. I was on a normal dive with my brother in an area I had just discovered a few days earlier. We were moving on the higher plateau wanting to extend our dive time, depth was 27m.

A few minutes later, I realized that in order to see more marine life, we had to drop to 34m to be able to see the lower part of the wall. The visibility was not excellent that day.

Moving towards the bottom, the seabed came in sight. With it came a huge shark moving straight towards me. There was no place for fear since that huge animal was only 2 m away from me.

My brother, until then, had seen nothing since he was still on the plateau getting ready to follow me. I grabbed the wall and started climbing back upside-down until I reached my brother and I warned him of what's below. He moved cautiously to the limit of the wall and here was the shark passing at a speed of 4 km per/hr looking towards us as curious as we were.

We thought that this was a one-time encounter yet every year, we saw the sharks again and sometimes as many as five sharks around us. After a few hundred dives on that site, we concluded that these animals would come to that same spot every year, stay around 2 months and leave again.

Start the dive 20 m away from that spot and you won't see any sharks at all. That's where the name, Shark Point, came from.

## 10 UNDERWATER HAND SIGNALS



**1. STOP** Hand raised, fingers pointed up and palm to receiver.



**2. GO DOWN or GOING DOWN** Thumb extended downward from clenched fist.



**3. GO UP or GOING UP** Thumb extended upward from clenched fist.



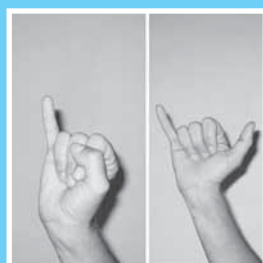
**4. OK! or OK!** Thumb and forefinger making a circle with 3 remaining fingers extended.



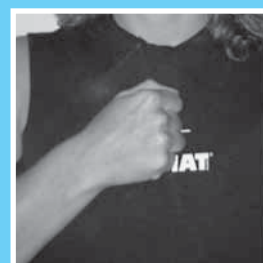
**5. STAY TOGETHER** Placing two index fingers side-by-side.



**6. SAFETY STOP** Holding a flat hand over three raised fingers.



**7. DECOMPRESSION** An extended pinky or an extended pinky and thumb.



**8. LOW ON AIR** Fist pounding on chest.



**9. OUT OF AIR** Hand slashing or chopping throat.



**10. QUESTION** Raising a crooked index finger to approximate a question mark.



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لا  
بناشيه

# BNASH'I LAKE

Photo courtesy of Hatem Haffar



# Artsy Lebanon



For some, getting to know a country involves getting familiar with its art. Though Lebanon has many high-end galleries that showcase the wonderful talent of Lebanese creativity, Lebanon Traveler has selected four special venues that blend art and promenade.

## **Rachana**

The Basbous brothers Michel, Alfred, and Youssef, who were all highly talented artists, took it upon themselves to spread their sculptures throughout their native village, transforming it into an open air museum. According to Anachar Basbous, son of Alfred, whose name is Rachana spelt backwards, the three brothers introduced a new vision of sculpture to Lebanon. At that time, all Middle Eastern sculptures consisted of classical portraits. The Basbous family “created something abstract and modern, different from what was usually seen.”

In 1994, the brothers hosted the “International Sculptor Atelier” in Rachana, through which a number of sculptors of different nationalities left their works in the village.

A stroll through this village is quite a unique one. More than 40 marble and granite sculptures are exhibited outside the Basbous free form house and workshop, with a section dedicated to the brothers and their progeny, and another of the work of the various guest sculptors. There is also an indoor museum housing smaller sculptures in granite, bronze and wood along with a selection of charcoal drawings.

## **Getting there**

From Byblos, north of Beirut, drive past Amchit some 17km where a north-east turn-off will lead you directly to Rachana.





### **Saifi Village**

A village within the city, Saifi Village is the place for art and design lovers. As you stroll down its streets, you will admire its harmonious facades and its model architectural restoration and preservation. Replicating oriental art or art deco, its buildings host a variety of shops by Beirut's most prominent designers and art galleries that showcase the best of Beirut's artistic flair and taste.

Check out Alwane's latest exhibition or treat yourself to a high-end leather bag from Johnny Farah. If it is tradition you are looking for, Assila will treat you to some very special local artisanat. Y knot will knit anything you desire while Bokja will offer you a twist on traditional designs. Nada Debs gives furniture an oriental modern twist while Starch houses the best in the country's young upcoming fashion and jewelry designers.

Whether you walk outside or you step inside the shops you are sure to feel the art all around. Feeling hungry? Saifi Village is home to many food outlets. Balima's terrace is a perfect place for a bite and a sip of wine. Walk a little further down and you will catch La Posta Gourmet where you can find the best homemade limoncello in town not to mention Fiona for Italian cooking like mama makes. For a bit of glitz there is always Burgundy and the new kid on the block, Gilt.

### **Getting there**

Saifi Village is located in the heart of the Beirut Central District, facing Martyr's Square.





### **The Trinity Square aka La Martine Tree**

Cedar trees are the pride of Lebanon. What was once the most prominent and prolific tree in Lebanon is now a mere minority in a reserve. The town of Bcharri, famous for being the birthplace of Gibran Khalil Gibran is also home to a cedar reserve. Over the years, natural disaster and disease hit the trees and many died. Rudy Rahme, poet, sculptor, painter and also a native of Bcharri, proposed a natural museum in the forest. Supported and assisted by the Committee of the Cedars Forest, Rahme began working on a 39-meter high natural sculpture that tells the story of humanity and its creation. The tree, which later won the title of "largest natural sculpture in the world" in the Guinness Book of World Records, took seven long years to complete. Seventy sculptured bodies were carved using the direct-sculpture method, which means no pre-models were used.

#### **Getting there**

From Bcharre, you drive up to a plateau surrounded by the Cedar Mountains (Al Arz in Arabic). Passing a ski school along the way, you will eventually arrive at a small forest of cedar trees. Enter (a small donation is required) and walk to the top of the trail. You will not miss the Trinity Square.





### **Nehna Wel Amar Wel Jiran**

Created by Collectif Kahraba in 2010, Nehna Wel Amar Wel Jiran (Us, the moon and the neighbors) is a very special artistic performance that takes place on the Vendome stairs in Mar Mikhael. For 3 days, local artists, who believe that art should be enjoyed for free, will treat you to puppet shows, hakawati performances, music sessions, film projections and short plays.

What distinguishes this event from others is that the neighbors join in and help out. During your visit to the neighborhood, you will be guided to the roofs of local houses where you will attend an artistic performance that reflects the spirit of the home and its inhabitants. Once this animation is over, you will move on to another location for yet another performance.

You will be able to see the women of the house preparing loubiyeh for dinner; the old man in his shorts and undershirt sipping whisky, some even help out and offer food and drinks to visitors for a nominal fee. You may even be treated to homemade tabbouleh, a saj manoucheh or some carrots to go with your drinks. After the visits, there are several performances usually scheduled in varying locations that you can watch and the program varies every day.

Nehna, wel Amer wel Jiran is a wonderful opportunity to discover art and experience daily Lebanese life. An event not to be missed! The 2013 edition is scheduled for the 6 - 8 September. For more information, please check the Collectif Kahraba Facebook page.



### **Getting There**

Pass the Electricité du Liban building in Gemayzeh, and go straight toward Sin El Fil. Vendome stairs are the stairs right before Enab restaurant.



# *The blushing fruit*



Author, photographer, food consultant and TV host, Barbara Abdeni Massaad follows the sun-dried apricot jam trail

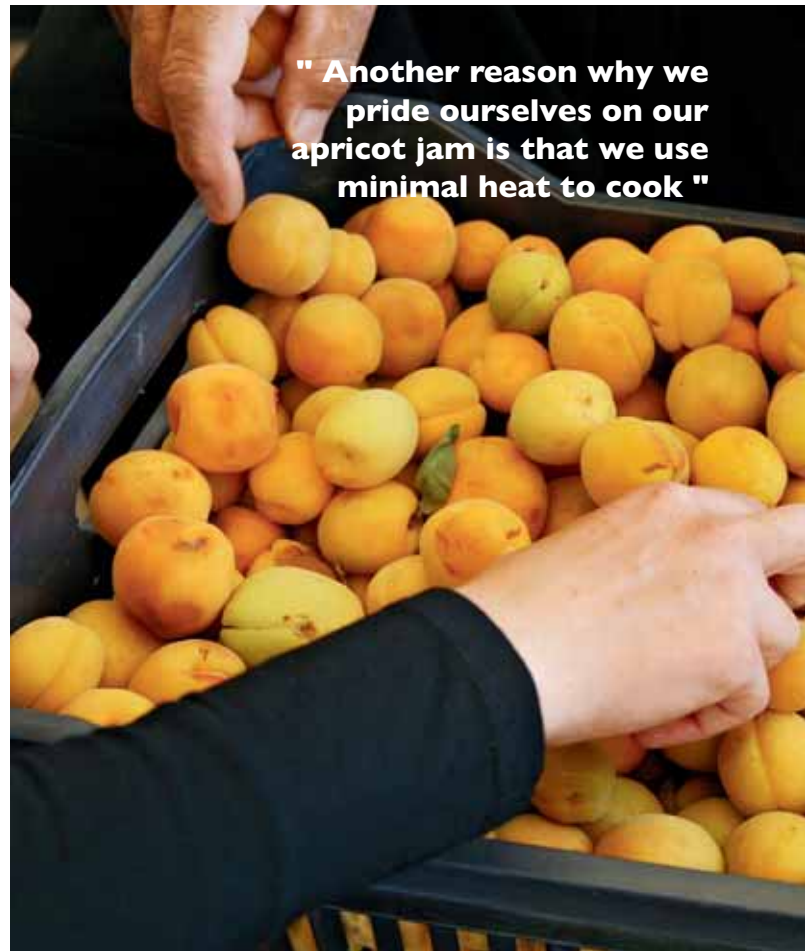


Harvesting fruit and vegetables in abundance during summertime is typical in Lebanon. The air is dry, the temperature rises, and fruit trees are full of nature's gifts.

A favorite fruit, very much appreciated throughout the country, is the apricot. It is versatile, ranging from golden to orange in color, often with a red blush. It may be consumed raw or cooked. Because of its high pectin level, apricots are easily made into jams, preserved in sugar syrup, dried in the sun and made into roll-ups. They can also be made into a cordial, a concentrate, which when dissolved in cold water becomes a cool refreshing drink for those warm summer days. Farmers grow apricot trees in areas where winters are moderate to avoid the danger of spring frost. They recommend that the fruit should be kept on the tree for as long as possible to retain its natural pectin.

Lebanon's apricot jam is special because of a local variety of apricots called "Oumm Hussein". They burst with flavor and are extremely sweet. Another reason why we pride ourselves on our apricot jam is that we use minimal heat to cook it and leave it to Mother Nature to do the rest. The cooked jam is left to continue its natural cooking process in the hot summer sun. The jam is left for a week to ten days to soak up summer rays giving the jam its particular flavor. The amount of time depends on weather conditions. At night, the jam is brought inside to avoid night moisture.

Nothing is wasted in Lebanon's food culture. The stone of the apricot is broken apart. The kernel inside is blanched and added to the jam, to give it a better taste.



**" Another reason why we pride ourselves on our apricot jam is that we use minimal heat to cook "**



## Where to buy sustainable products

- A New Earth** ABC Dbayeh and Achrafieh +961 | 219920
- Al Marj** Achrafieh +961 | 210211
- Beit el Afia** Hamra +961 | 755447
- Beit el Soha** Achrafieh +961 | 398366
- Calories & Co** Kousba +961 6 511835
- Carla's Good Food** Corniche El Mazra +961 | 317008
- Fleur de Lait** Patri +961 3 240357
- Fleuron de Fadel** All Branches +961 4 981447
- Healthy Basket** Hamra +961 3 794438
- Le Carpaccio** Naccache +961 4 418396 - +961 4 525419
- Live Organic** Naccache +961 4 444886
- Macrolette** Achrafieh +961 | 613016
- Malbanet Deyr Taanayel** Deyr Taanayel and Achrafieh +961 3 277676 +961 3 814441
- Musée de la Soie** Bsous +961 5 940767
- Naturalia** Hazmieh +961 | 397488
- Nowara** Bir Hasan +961 | 821300
- Organic** Jounieh +961 9 933116
- Organically** Jal El Dib +961 4 716765
- The Natural Shop** Mazraat Yacho3 +961 70 441776

List compiled by Fady Daw, Adonis Valley Products



" Nothing is wasted in  
Lebanon's food culture "

## Apricot jam, the Lebanese way

### Ingredients

1 kg apricots (organic)  
700g sugar  
½ freshly squeezed lemon

### Preparation

Wash the apricots under cold running water. Dry with a kitchen towel. Remove the kernel from the apricots. To stone apricots, take a sharp knife and cut the fruit in half lengthways following the natural line. Firmly grasp the two halves and twist them in opposite directions. Pull them apart and remove the stone.

Layer the sugar and apricots in a large glass bowl, starting and finishing with a layer of sugar. Cover with a clean cloth and leave to stand overnight. The next day, pour the apricots into a

large non-reactive pan. Add the lemon juice. Bring slowly to a boil.

Boil for at least 20 minutes. Thoroughly skim the froth from the surface.

Ladle the hot jam in a clean and wide recipient. Place in the sun during the day for at least a week. Ladle into clean jars. Place lid and twist cap tightly. Boil the jars for 10 minutes starting from the moment the water comes back to the boil. Remove the jars from boiling water and turn upside down. This will prevent air pockets from forming. Let the jars cool until the next day. Wipe the jars with a damp kitchen towel. Label the jars and store in a cool dark place, if not for immediate consumption. Refrigerate after opening. Shelf life: 1 year.



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Jiyeh, Old Manne Street near Jiyeh Municipality  
P.O. Box 97 - Saida, Lebanon

Telephone : +961 7 996736 Fax +961 7 996736

info@goldentulipjiyehmarina.com; www.goldentulipjiyehmarina.com



# *Dabke, the village dance!*



One of the greatest traditional dances in Lebanon, the dabke, is also one that has stood the test of time and remains very popular, practiced by Lebanese of all ages. For many, a party is not a party without a dabke!

## **A need for synchronization**

In the past, the roofs of houses in Lebanon were made of tree branches topped with mud. With changing weather conditions, especially during the rainy season, the mud would crack and start to leak. Fixing it meant the mud had to be stomped on in a forceful and steady manner. While the roofs were not an especially large surface, stomping on them was hardly a one-man job.

This is why the house owner would call upon his neighbors for help and they would stand side by side in a single line and begin stomping in a synchronized manner, while walking on the roof to adjust the mud. This was known as "al-awneh", which literally meant "help." In order to maximize their synchronization, the men would improvise a pattern for stomping that they would all follow. Just for fun, some of these stomping sessions were accompanied by music mainly from the "mejjwiz", a double flute, and hence the dabke was born.

Later, with the introduction of the "mahdaleh" a stone roller, there was no longer a need for stomping, but in order to keep the tradition alive, the neighbors would gather on the front porch of the house and dance the dabke to celebrate the end of the work on the roof.

With the introduction of music, the "al-awneh" was referred to as "daloonah", which included some songs to accompany the rhythm of the traditional instruments. Since day one, the dabke

has been a symbol of fraternity, solidarity and virility because of the way it was danced. Today, dabke is an essential part of any Lebanese celebration. Whenever family and friends gather around a traditional mezze and a drink of arak, music will certainly fill the air as someone takes out his derbakeh (drums) to accompany everybody in the dabke!

## **The rules of dabke**

Dabke should be danced in a line, where dancers hold hands and align their shoulders. Shoulders should not separate during the performance. When they dance, the line moves counter clockwise. Dabke is for both men and women. The more people to stomp, the quicker the roof would be done, so anybody was welcome. Heading the line was the owner of the house, or the person being celebrated. In some villages, the eldest takes the lead. Today, it is the person that dances best, as a lot is required from the leader:

The leader is the one who has all the moves, who jumps up and down and can raise both his hands while dancing, a move that is not allowed for other dancers except the one at the other end of the line, who can only raise his left arm.

Those who are at both ends of the dabke line usually have worry beads or a cane, which they wave while dancing. Traditionally it was a handkerchief meant to wipe the sweat off the stompers' faces as they worked on the roof.



## Dabke variations

If you thought there was only one kind, think again. The variations come with the differing regions

- **Dalouna** is the most common type of dabke danced all over Mount Lebanon. It is in six beats and is usually accompanied by a minjeira (flute) or mizmar (copper flute) and tabel (drum). Clapping sounds add joy to the combination.
- **Ra'sit el Aarja** (the limping dance) is the traditional dabke of Baalbek. It is slower than the common dabke and is divided into 12 beats. The music is usually a combination of a minjeira or mijwiz or rabehbeh (violin like instrument) and drum. Each combination may be accompanied by clapping.
- **Metalteh**, traditional to Barja in the south, is composed of 16 beats and its music is also a mix of minjeira and tabel.

## The dabke challenge

Dancers can challenge each other while dancing. The two who are leading can show off their moves, jumping up and down until one of them stumbles. This mistake will take them to the end of the line and the second couple in line will have to take up the challenge and so on till the evening ends. Usually, in this dance everybody is a winner and a good time is enjoyed by one and all.

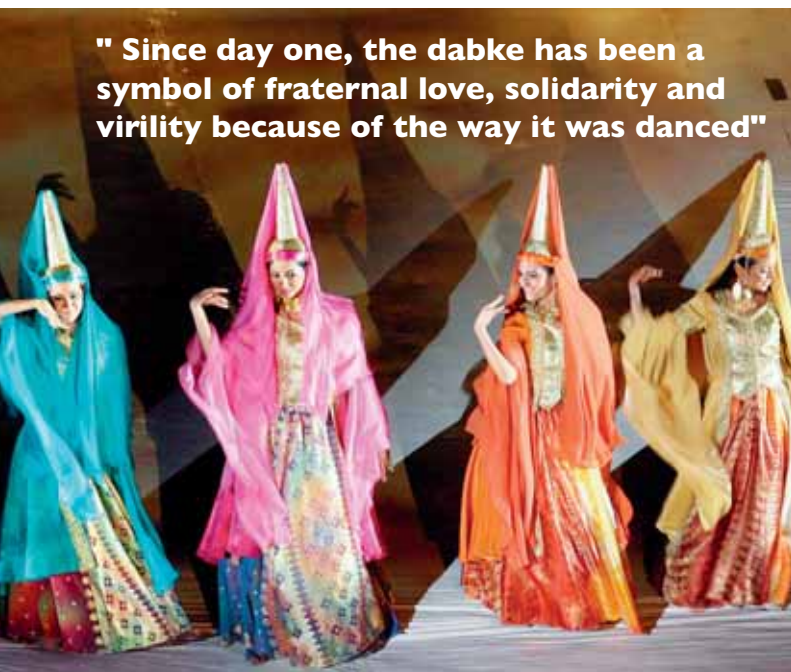
## The many songs of dabke

The dabke has many traditional songs each adapting to a certain speed and style. The most famous are the dalouna, which is a very popular format that many use to improvise on. There is also the howara, another popular and fast beat format, often improvised to fit the situation. Additional popular songs include the Aal maneh, ya bou el hiba, among others.

## Dabke holds a record!

In August 2011, a group in the Lebanese village of Dhour El Choueir set a new world record. Organized by the Dhour El Choueir Summer Festival, a human chain of 5,050 was made and currently holds the world record in the Guinness Book of World Records.

**" Since day one, the dabke has been a symbol of fraternal love, solidarity and virility because of the way it was danced"**



## Excellent Cardio!

Sandra Khalil, editorial contributor at Lebanon Traveler, reminisces about a village dance she will never forget. "I remember attending the Mar Mema celebrations in my grandmother's village when I was younger. Aside from the usual mouneh, saj and song, people mostly looked forward to the dabke. I had seen people dance dabke before, but it was never like this. The festivities took place at the village's school. Everybody gathered in the courtyard and held hands. As soon as the dalouna began they all synchronized their steps. And on and on and on it went... The line grew longer and longer and soon formed a double and even triple circle. Seen from the stairs, the line looked like a giant snail. It kept growing till dawn as the villagers kept dancing. One of the most enthusiastic dancers was a friend of my uncle. On the day of the festival, he had just gotten the results of his cholesterol test and it was through the roof. He wore a jacket (though it was in mid-September) and was the first on the dance floor and the last to leave. The next day he went to take the cholesterol test again, and what do you know, it was down to normal! Dabke was a miracle cure!

## Where to learn

### In Schools

Studio Caracalla +961 | 499904  
Nameless Dance Academy +961 252525  
Diva Ballet and Arts +961 5 807391  
M. Robert +961 3 925440

### On YouTube

Several tutorials are available on YouTube. Join the Tollabtube Channel, where you will find a pretty interesting instructional video for dabke.

### At the village festivals

During the sunny seasons, the villages all around the country organize festivals, where there is bound to be a dabke. Ask some locals and they will be glad to help!

## Where to see

Where there is a celebration, there's a dabke, be it at a wedding, christening, birthday or a simple gathering of friends. In summer, several local plays and performances will take place during which dance troops like Caracalla or the Rahbani productions take dabke to a new level! Rahbani movies are full of dabke. These include Bayaa' Al Khawatim (Ring's Salesman), Safar Barlik (The Exile) and Bint El Haris (The Daughter of the Watchman). Director Phillippe Aractinji in his acclaimed movie Al Bosta, starring Nadine Labaki, showcased the traditional dabke, modernized it and created the Techno Dabke.

*Special thanks to Dr. Khodor Terro, founder of Barja Dance Group*



# A craft and an art



Kassem Abu Ressler has been working with wicker his whole life. His specialty? Chairs. We go back to the source to discover this dying handcraft that is slowly being replaced by mass production.





"I was poor and I needed something to do to make money. Working with wicker and rattan was the first opportunity given to me. However, as I was learning, I discovered not a passion for the craft but rather that I had what it takes to understand it... I had the talent for it," Abu Ressleran tells us as he sits in his workshop at Corniche el Mazraa.

"The best thing about rattan and wicker is that you can shape them any way you like... it is not hard to bend the material to make it fit the designer's imagination," he continued.

If the design has evolved, the technique itself is still the same. Building a chair begins by creating its main frame using the thick rattan canes. Bending the canes is quite an easy process - just heat and shape. "One of our most valuable tools is our knees," says Abu Ressleran laughing, "and when the knee is not enough, we use the bending tool." The rattan bends easily to the heat and does not need much time to cool off.

Once the main frame is done, the craftsman proceeds to add the wicker canes that will be used as a weaving frame. Later he will weave in the wicker using a specific pattern. To complete a chair, one will need about two and a half days. "Learning the craft is not difficult, but the work is tedious. If the craftsman has a vision, he can do anything with it... from baskets and beds to chairs, tables and so much more."

Another use of wicker and rattan are for chair seats. Some traditional chairs are made of wood and only their seat is made of weaved straw. Here again, the technique has not changed since it began. To make the seat, a chair weaver uses something called an "Indian rope" to weave around the chair frame.

Of course, no matter how well crafted the seats are, they could come apart, mainly due to the pressure put on the chair by sitting



Photos taken at The Garden Show & Spring Festival 2013



## Where to buy

Kassem Abu Ressleran, by commission only  
**+ 961 70 223251**

The Lebanese School for the Blind and the Deaf  
 The school has a showroom where you can view and purchase several products. Some need to be commissioned.  
**+961 5 920601 +961 5 921024**

They are adding their touch to the traditional craft. Some are using the same weaving techniques with different materials to create colorful seats, while others have taken it upon themselves to create accessories that complement the traditional chair.

Tout en Couleurs (Saida)  
**+ 961 70 86 16 80 +961 70 39 58 58**

or standing on it. Back in the day, a chair weaver would roam the village every now and then to pick up broken chairs and repair them. They would carry the chairs with them calling for those in need of repair to hand in their broken seats. The craftsman would return the repaired chairs a few days later, and, apparently the walking repairmen were always blind.

In this sense, the tradition is still alive. Schools for the blind continue to teach the craft of weaving as a means of income for the visually impaired. In fact, it is Abu Ressleran's morning job to do so.

"I believe that this craft is like painting and sculpting. . . You are only limited by your imagination. But, the craft will die as its professionals die, if no one learns it anymore."



MADE IN LEBANON

# *Traditionally suave*







## Working as an interior architect for several years has helped Lebanese designer Nayef Francis to develop an insider's view on furniture and interiors

At his charming Mar Mikhael boutique, Francis now offers a furniture line, which draws on local traditions and crafts while adopting sleek forms. A faceted lamp is made of rattan straw, usually used for traditional chairs, while a Turkish coffee cup is stripped of its usual ornaments and made from neutral or brightly hued copper.

When asked what his style and approach to design was, Francis replied basic, nostalgic and spontaneous. Not being keen on labels, he likes to define his style as universal and versatile. "I design functional and aesthetically pleasing objects, designs you would associate with and that put you at ease, as opposed to intimidating designs. In my design, there is always a new button somewhere, a twist and/or added value," explains Francis.

With no preferred design field, design for Francis comes into play when a solution is needed. Anything that requires a solution, that challenges or can improve lifestyle is of interest to him. Function comes first, then aesthetics. "The aesthetics and form are defined by the functionality and the purpose of the item. An efficient design that lasts must have both," he stresses.

Francis works on his ideas anywhere, in his travels, while walking, listening to music or reading. For him the natural evolution of an idea is born of things we use, we see, we feel and admire.

The designer also creates custom pieces, reflecting the taste and needs of his clients. The customer, Francis believes, should be involved and it is the duty of the designer to meet the specific needs of the latter. This is what ultimately gives life to the product. After all, it is an interactive process. The client suggests guidelines, which he accepts.

"Witnessing the maturation of a product from its initial stage to its final identity is extremely rewarding," says Francis. Discussing his work with his team, as well as his friends, is very important to him. This he believes exposes options and gives way to new opportunities and innovations.

**FB nayef francis design studio**  
Tel +961 | 444711



## Our Favorites!

**The Chafe Bowl** A collection of small, medium and large food-safe bowls made from a polished interior and painted exterior and inspired by the look and feel of the traditional "chafe" cup, which is a Lebanese version of the "shot" glass for coffee drinkers.



**The Weaved Lamp** This lamp brightens up any room with its ambient light and its unexpected style. A combination of beech wood and wicker, this handmade piece is available in three sizes.



**Side Up Stool** Sit on it, serve on it, display on it - the Side Up Stool can be anything you like. Made from four folded aluminum sheets, it can be used both indoors and outdoors.



**The Facet Mirror** With its beveled mirrors on a wooden base, you and your entire surroundings are reflected through the Facet Mirror. Make your own mirror wall design by placing several together.



**Standing Library** A smaller version of the Table Library, the Standing Library, made of solid oak and metal, sits on a tripod base giving personality to a simple reading corner.





### *Do-It-Yourself*

Inspired by the shelving at “mana’esh” bakeries, this original shelving unit allows the separate shelves to be moved and manipulated according to the circumstances and size of the displayed objects.

(page 52)



### *Carpenter's Table*

A practical workspace, the Carpenter's Table is made of suede press strips fixed on a plank. In place of drawers, exposed storage areas make it easy to find papers and stationery.



*Jigsaw Chair & Bench* With their low seat and minimalist attitude, the Jigsaw Chair & Bench are playful and relaxed, ideal for any outdoor environment. A furniture puzzle - made from plywood and colored formica - the seats, backs and arms, can be detached and reattached.



*Grid* The Grid's simple metal tubes blend into the wall making your books the focus without the use of bookends. Additional accessories let you play with the design by adding plants and other items.



*Nail It* Hanging clothes from a sharp point can stretch out the material. Nail It's wide surface allows clothing to be spread across, minimizing damage. The items can be placed in a variety of different configurations to form an interesting installation.



*Karma Light* The Karma Light makes use of a maximum amount of space by locating the light source above the attached marble-top table. The frame can be customized in steel or brass.



# Armenian legacy



Curator and museum specialist, Juliana

Khalaf, celebrates a rich culture, language, church and a tragic page in history that come together to reaffirm the survival of a nation





The Armenian presence in Lebanon resulted from a series of immigration waves during the nineteenth century, reaching its peak with the 1915 Armenian genocide by the Ottomans. Today the Armenian Lebanese community has integrated itself successfully into the economic, social, and political fabric of Lebanon, yet little is known of their cultural and spiritual heritage. Thanks to a group of monks from the Monastery of Sis in Cilicia (modern day Turkey) one can marvel on and learn from a collection that was safeguarded from the genocide and is now located in the Catholicosate of Cilicia in Antelias, Lebanon. Today it stands as evidence of the important and historical inheritance of an almost lost diaspora.

Among a cathedral and a library, lies in the rear courtyard, the Cilicia Museum. It is said to house the most extensive collection of Armenian artifacts in the world outside Armenia. The first floor is dedicated to their religious history demonstrated through exquisitely handcrafted antique silver chalices, gold altar pieces, reliquaries, embroideries and liturgical garments. The second floor holds relics of the Armenian kingdom dating from the 6th century B.C. to the 16th century A.D., including a large collection of ancient coins and works of clay, beautifully illuminated manuscripts and rare books. Finally, on the top floor, a significant collection of modern and contemporary Armenian pieces attest to the ongoing efforts towards preserving a legacy through art.

Factor in about an hour to visit the exquisite collection at the museum and another 20 minutes to examine the annexed buildings built in the traditional Armenian architecture.



## Good to know

No Entrance Fee

Opening hours: Tuesday - Friday, 10am - 5pm  
Saturday - Sunday, 8am - 12 noon

Library opening hours: Monday to Friday 9am - 4pm  
Saturday 9am - 12 noon

### What not to miss

The first print edition of the Armenian Holy Bible published in 1666.

## Location & contact

Antelias +961 4 410001

[museum@armenianorthodoxchurch.org](mailto:museum@armenianorthodoxchurch.org)

[armenianorthodoxchurch.org](http://armenianorthodoxchurch.org)







# Beirut

## SUN, SAND AND SEA

In Beirut, you don't have to go far to take a dip in the Mediterranean. The capital is privileged to have access to the sea, and several hotels and resorts will make your stay an unforgettable one.

### **Coral Beach**

Not only a wonderful place to stay on the marvelous Lebanese Mediterranean coast, but also a great place to tan overlooking the sea. With its swimming pools and access to the sea itself, the Coral Beach Hotel is an ideal no fuss no frills place to relax.

+961 | 859000

### **La Plage**

Get a tan while you rest on one of their comfortable beds, enjoy a poolside rosé and the company of a sophisticated few... La Plage also has one of the best restaurants in Beirut with its own harbor where jetsetters anchor their yachts to grab a bite.

+961 | 366222

### **Ramlet el Bayda**

In one of the most expensive areas in the city, lays one of the very few public beaches in the city. On this beautiful sandy shore, you

can enjoy a simple beach experience, where you bring your own chair, towel and food.

### **Riviera Beach Lounge**

Bask in the luxury of Beach Lounge at Riviera Hotel and daydream the hours away. With a stylish main pool with its own in-water bar; a loved family pool area, a floating island and cocoon like bungalows, the Riviera Beach Lounge is sure to lead you through a luxuriously memorable experience.

+961 | 373210

### **Saint Georges**

A must visit for locals and tourists alike. Just like in Beirut's glory days, Saint Georges is the place to see and be seen, where you will meet the trendiest people in the city and enjoy a breathtaking view of the Mediterranean.

+961 | 365065

### **Sporting**

This private beach club offers a beautiful relaxing experience on the shores of the Mediterranean. Those who do not like the sea can take a dip in the pool, while kids can splash around in their own pool. It is a favorite spot for the locals! Ask about their night scene with weekly beach parties.

+961 | 742481



## ROOFTOP BARS

Nothing says summer like the re-opening of the rooftop bars. And, there are plenty of choices to fit all jetsetters and party-goers. Rooftop bars are the perfect solution for an urban party in the outdoors, with breathtaking views of the city. Take your pick from the list below and have a blast! Make sure to reserve your spot!

**Cherry on the Rooftop** Le Gray Hotel +961 | 972000

**Coop D'Etat** Saifi Urban Gardens +961 71 134173

**Fly** Opera Building +961 | 999777 +961 3 030340

**Iris** An Nahar Building +961 3 090936

**Le Capitole** Asseily Building +961 | 999339 +961 70 302402

**Pier 7** Seaside Road +961 70 697777

**Sky Bar** Biel +961 3 939191

**Square** Movenpick Hotel & Resort Beirut +961 | 799501

**Sun7** Palm Beach Hotel + 961 79 100606

**The Roof** Four Seasons Hotel +961 | 761000 +961 | 761555

**White Beirut** Seaside Road +961 3 060090



Photo courtesy of Four Seasons

## LIVE MUSIC

And as far as live music is concerned, Beirut knows it all too well! Scattered around the capital, cafés and nightclubs offer a unique blend of live performances to suit all tastes and moods.

### Al Mandaloun

What seems to have started it all in the trendy Mar Mikhael district, Al Mandaloun's impressive design and first-rate lineup of performers has redefined the nightlife experience in the area. Located inside an old theater that now resembles a modern train station, it is ideal for a fabulous night out with friends that will probably go until the wee hours of the morning.

+961 | 565333 +961 3 434333

### Blue Note Café

A classic place for Beiruties, Blue Note Café has hosted talents from Lebanon and the world. With old school charm and food made the traditional way, Blue Note Café is the place to go for a good bite, good drinks and excellent music.

+961 3 743857

### DRM

The Democratic Republic of Music (DRM) is a concert lounge in the heart of the Hamra district of Beirut. It is the destination of choice in Lebanon for musicians from the Middle East and for touring musicians on the international scene.

+961 | 752202 +961 70 030032

### Metro Madina

A café-bar with a subway station flare, DJ Booth and a hall, where all the varied concerts and cultural events happen, Metro Madina is two places in one. With its own Cabaret Show and various live performances, you will see Beirut under a new light at Metro Madina.

+961 | 753021 +961 76 309363

### Music Hall

A staple in the Lebanese nightlife, Music Hall will offer you a night like no other. Acts of various musical genres follow each other on its impressive stage, while the DJ raises the roof during intermission. One thing's for sure, you will never stop dancing!

Open Thursday to Saturday.

+961 | 361236 +961 3 807555

### Razz Jazz

Jazz lovers, this is the place for you. All week, Razz Jazz on Clemenceau street hosts the local and international jazz talents for all to enjoy. Whether you are into classic, electronic or oriental jazz, you are sure to find your fix at Razz Jazz.

+961 | 366246 +961 | 366247 +961 70 530007

### Walimat Warde

A quaint little café in Hamra, Walimat Warde is the place where you can discover new local talents in various styles. And the food is good too, prepared by Warde herself!

+961 | 752 320 +961 | 343 128 +961 3 944 957



# Take a trip

Take a break for the weekend. We have selected three locations in Lebanon where you can go away for a couple of days and come back rejuvenated

## Fun with family and friends *Tyre*

**Snorkel** and discover underwater ruins  
**Enjoy** the turtles laying their eggs at the **Orange House**, a national geographic moment!  
**Checkout** the boat builder at the old fishing harbor  
**Visit** the **Roman Hippodrome**, one of the largest in the world, and picture yourself as Ben Hur  
**Take** a dip in the big blue sea and bask in the sun at the **Tyr Beach Nature Reserve**  
**Drive** to Qana and see where Christ performed his first miracle  
**Eat** fish at **Le Phenicien** +961 7740564, southern specialties like frake at Salinas +961 7 343077 or hummus, foul and fatte at **Baroud** +961 3 949652  
**Stay at** the **Rest House** +961 7 740667, **Yara Palace** +961 7 346622, **Auberge Al Fanar** +961 7 741111 or **Al Yasmine Guest House** +961 3 372888



## Rural escape *Jahchouch*

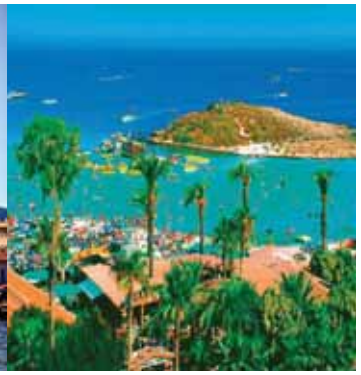
**Take** a dip in the Nahr Ibrahim River  
**Hike** its trail and have a picnic in **Jabal Moussa**  
**Visit** its eight Maronite churches  
**Camp** out in the forest  
**Attend** a concert or a workshop at the Forestronika Festival (June 4 -7)  
**Eat** Lebanese food at **Melhem Khalil** +961 3 788040 or **Casino Assaf** in Ghazir +961 9 920500  
**Stay at** the **Sun Hills Suite Hotel** +961 9 850021 or **El Rancho** +961 9 741188 +961 70 899201

## City break *Baalbeck*

**Attend** one of the various festival concerts and performances of the Baalbeck International Festival from 30 June – 30 August  
**Spend** the afternoon visiting the magnificent roman ruins  
**Learn** to dance dabke with the locals  
**Relax** at Ras Al Ain Spring  
**Drive** to the Hermel Pyramid  
**Try** the traditional local sfiha (meat pie)  
**Eat** Lebanese at **Al Ajami** restaurant +961 8 370051, potato pizza at **Boucherie El Sayed** +961 70 189676 or the specialty chicken at **Chez Raymond** +961 3 327458  
**Stay at** the **Palmyra Hotel** +961 8 370001, **Al Shams Hotel** +961 8 373284 or **Hotel Shouman** +961 3 796007







**Antalya**  
5 Days - \$ 875

**Bodrum**  
4 Days - \$ 715

**Marmaris**  
4 Days - \$ 730

**Aya Napa**  
4 Days - \$ 550



**Paphos**  
8 Days - \$ 720

**Mykonos**  
8 Days - \$ 1220

**Rhodos**  
8 Days - \$ 820

**Santorini**  
8 Days - \$ 990



**Athens**  
4 Days - \$ 745

**Sharm El Sheikh**  
5 Days - \$ 710

**Dubai**  
4 Days - \$ 910

**Rome**  
6 Days - \$ 2060

# SUMMER HOLIDAYS PACKAGES

Saida , Eastern Boulevard - Noura Center 07 729 111

Beirut , Downtown - Azarieh Bldg. 01 972 111

Email : [tours@barakat.travel](mailto:tours@barakat.travel)

Website : [www.barakat.travel](http://www.barakat.travel)

Facebook : Barakat travel & Holidays - Travel Agency



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# Your festival calendar

## June

Friday 21

**Fete de la Musique Beirut**  
+961 | 420200

Friday 21 & Saturday 22 - BE

Director **Alain Weber's**  
"On the Steps of Marco Polo, A Musical Journey on the Silk Road".

Friday 21 - J

**Opening celebration** with firework & special boat events.

Sunday 23 - J

Bicycle, rollerblade, Segway, skateboard or walk in Jounieh on "**Green Day**".

Monday 24 until 27 - J

Special entertainment and **shows for kids** in Jounieh's old town.

Wednesday 26 until 29 - BE

Performance by The **China National Acrobatic Troupe** titled "Splendid".

Wednesday 26 until 30

**Afkart Beirut**  
+961 | 566707

Friday 28 - J

**"Jounieh Summer Fever"** in the streets.

Saturday 29 - J

**Michel Sardou** performing "Les Grands Moments."

Sunday 30 - J

Lebanese superstar **Ragheb Alama** takes the stage.

Sunday 30 - BY

**Yanni** the superstar composer accompanied by a full orchestra and vocalists plays his greatest hits.

## July

Tuesday 2 - J

**Mika** singing his hits from "The Origin of Love."

Thursday 4 - BY

**Nightwish** from Finland brings its unique sound.

Thursday 4 & Friday 5 - BE

"The Caesar of Arabic Music"  
**Kadim Al Sahir** entertains with song and poetry.

Friday 5 - BAA

**Open Air Party** will transform the streets of Batroun to an all-night celebration.

Monday 8 - BY

**Ceelo Green** the master of psychedelic R&B and soul.

Tuesday 9 - J

The Voice Tour with **Anthony Touma**.

Wednesday 10 - BY

**Lana Del Rey** graces the stage for the first time in Lebanon.

Sunday 13 - BY

Legends of pop, the **Pet Shop Boys** sing their Top 20 hits.

Wednesday 17 - BE

**Dee Dee Bridgewater** and pianist **Ramsey Lewis** perform jazz.

Wednesday 17 & Thursday 18 - BY

**Paco de Lucía** - the most innovative and influential flamenco guitarist.

Friday 19 - BE

Syrian performers **Kinan Amzeh** - clarinetist and vocalists **Ibrahim Keivo** and **Rasha Rizk** take the stage.

Monday 22 - BY

The **Rahbani Summer Night** presents the best of the Rahbani works in two acts.

Wednesday 24 - BY

**Samar Salamé** in Crazy Opera that combines classical & oriental orchestras and chorus.

Friday 26 - BE

Dance of the Utopia by **Maria Pagés Compañía** - a complete Flamenco ballet.

Friday 26 & Saturday 27 - BY

The **Scorpions** are back for two concerts!

## August

Thursday 1 - BE

French ballet troupe **Preljocaj** will stage "Les Nuits" inspired by "1001 Nights."

Friday 9 - BAA

A musical and theatrical performance by **Assi El Hallani** accompanied by an orchestra, choir and dancers.

Saturday 10 - BE

**Patricia Kaas** with an homage to Edith Piaf.

Saturday 10- BA

**Mike Massi** - a unique fusion of Andalusia, baroque harmonies, and jazz rhythms.

Saturday 17 - BAA

**Marianne Faithfull** - an icon of rock history performs songs from her latest album.

Saturday 17 - BA

British pop phenomenon **Engelbert** sings his hits.

Friday 23 - BAA

**Eliane Elias** takes Jazz music and gives it a Brazilian twist.

Saturday 24 until

September 1

**Sunfields Festival Meghdouche**  
+961 3 079103

Saturday 24 - BA

Lebanese soprano **Majida Al Roumi** graces the stage.

Saturday 24 & Sunday 25  
BAA

**Marcel Khalife** and his oud take the stage in two unforgettable solo performances.

Friday 30 - BAA

**Puz/zle** contemporary dance with special guest Fadia Tomb el Hage take you on a unique journey of self-discovery.

## September

Friday 20 until 22

**Bkassine Festival**

Samer Harfouch  
+961 3 237812

September

**Freykeh Festival**

+961 4 921664

\* correct at time of publication

Baalbeck International Festival (BAA)

[baalbeck.org.lb](http://baalbeck.org.lb)

Batroun International Festival (BA)

[baalbeck.org.lb](http://baalbeck.org.lb)

Beiteddine International Festival (BE)

[beiteddine.org](http://beiteddine.org)

Byblos International Festival (BY)

[byblosfestival.org](http://byblosfestival.org)

Jounieh International Festival (J)

[jouniehinternationalfestival.com](http://jouniehinternationalfestival.com)





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\*THE WINE ADVOCATE



# Take a hike...

## June

### Saturday 15

#### **Weekend in Al Jazzar Donnieh**

Baldati and Vamos Tados

#### **Archeology Tour in Ain Horsha**

Great Escape

### Sunday 16

#### **Discover Deir Al Ahmar**

Cyclamen

#### **Hiking in Aamiq**

ProMax

#### **Al Sfire Hiking Trip**

Baldati and Vamos Tados

#### **Hammana Festival and Cherry Picking**

Neos Kids

#### **Hiking in Hardine**

Great Escape

### Monday 17

#### **Spend Some Time in Batroun & Jbeil**

Liban Trek (every Monday)

### Tuesday 18

#### **Explore the Souks of Saida and Jezzine**

Liban Trek (every Tuesday)

### Wednesday 19

#### **Koura and Zawayeh**

Hike through Naous Roman temples, Level 3  
Liban Trek (every Wednesday)

### Thursday 20

#### **Metn and Kesrouan**

Hike through the temples of Faqra & Jeita grotto, Level 3  
Liban Trek (every Thursday)

### Friday 21

#### **Bakich Night Hike**

Baldati and Vamos Tados

#### **Chouf and Bekaa**

Hike through Beiteddine palace, Anjar & Taanayel, Level 3  
Liban Trek (every Friday)

### Saturday 22

#### **Fossil Picking**

Neos Kids

#### **Discover Bekaa and Jobbeh**

Liban Trek (every Saturday)

#### **Full Moon Hike to the top of the Mzaar Summit**

Great Escape

### Sunday 23

#### **Hike in Ehden Reserve**

Cyclamen

#### **Bsetine al Ossi**

Baldati and Vamos Tados

#### **Hiking in the Chouf Cedar Forest Reserve/ Ain Zhalta**

ProMax

#### **Hiking from Arz to Hasroun**

Byblos & Beyond

#### **Hike through the Druze Sanctuary in Niha**

Pinewood, Levels 4 & 6  
Liban Trek

#### **Explore Janneh Chouwen**

Great Escape

#### **Discover Nature in Chouf Reserve**

Saad Tours

### Saturday 29 – Sunday 30

#### **Fitness Retreat in Maaser el Shouf**

ProMax

### Saturday 29

#### **Rappelling and Climbing**

Baldati and Vamos Tados

### Sunday 30

#### **Explore Tannourine/Ain er Raha**

Great Escape

#### **Hike through Arz to Bkaa Kafra**

Cyclamen

#### **Discover Akoura Village**

Byblos & Beyond

#### **Tour the Cedar Forest in Tannourine**

Levels 3, 5 & 7  
Liban Trek

#### **Sannine Hiking Trip**

Baldati and Vamos Tados

#### **Grape Picking & Arak Distillation in Niha**

Saad Tours

#### **Get to Know the Qadisha Valley and the Cedars**

Liban Trek (every Sunday)

## July

### Saturday 6

#### **Anfeh Sunset Hike**

Baldati and Vamos Tados

#### **A Night Hike in Hrajel**

Liban Trek

#### **Early Evening Stroll in the Cedars Forest Reserve, Overnight in Bcharreh**

Great Escape

### Sunday 7

#### **Bike from Mar Moussa Monastery to Mtein**

Cyclamen

#### **Hiking in Wadi Qannoubine**

ProMax

#### **Arz Jej**

Baldati and Vamos Tados

#### **Discover Nature in Chouf Reserve**

Saad Tours

#### **Explore Qornet Es-Saouda**

Great Escape

#### **Roam the Roman Temples in Ain Hircha**

Levels 2 & 5  
Liban Trek

### Saturday 13

#### **Palm Island**

Baldati and Vamos Tados





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## Discover the Mokhtara Valley

Great Escape

## Laqlouq Lakes by Night

Liban Trek

Sunday 14

## Hiking at Tannourine-Balaa sinkhole

ProMax

## Ammouaa

Baldati and Vamos Tados

## Hiking Mtein – Falougha

Byblos & Beyond

## Hike through the Chouf from Ain Zhalta to Barouk

Cyclamen

## Biodiversity trek in Ehden

Levels 3, 5 & 7

Liban Trek

## Grapes Picking & Arak Distillation in Niha Beqaa

Saad Tours

## Trek from Mokhtara to Wadi Bisri

Great Escape

Saturday 20

## Zaarour's Panoramic Plateau by Night

Liban Trek

## Saturday 20 – Sunday 21 Weekend in Tyre

Baldati and Vamos Tados

Sunday 21

## Hike through the Tannourine reserve

Cyclamen

## Discover Nature in the Chouf Reserve

Saad Tours

## Discover Qartaba – Mashnaka and Old mills

Byblos & Beyond



## Raspberry Picking in front of Qaraou'n Lake

And a lunch facing the lake

NEOS Kids

## Discover the Water Springs in Chabrouh

Levels 4 & 6

Liban Trek

## Hiking in Ehden Forest Reserve

ProMax

Thursday 25

## Cars, Mini-Cars and Stories of Crazy Races with Billy Karam!

NEOS Kids

Friday 26

## Laqlouq Night Hike

Baldati and Vamos Tados

Saturday 27

## Discovering the Stone Age

Small trek in the nature for the picking of real flint tools. Prehistoric Lunch in front of Fakra temples. Afternoon visit of Dino City in Ajaltoun. NEOS Kids

## A Night Hike in Hrajel

Liban Trek

Sunday 28

## Biking in Metn

Cyclamen

## Andket Akkar

Baldati and Vamos Tados

## Grape Picking & Arak Distillation in Niha

Saad Tours

## Hike through Ammiq

Levels 2, 5 & 7

Liban Trek

## Hiking from Hadath El Jebbeh – Tannourine

Byblos & Beyond

## August

Saturday 3 - Sunday 4

## Rafting Weekend

Baldati and Vamos Tados

Saturday 3

## Laqlouq Lakes by Night

Liban Trek

Sunday 4

## Rafting Al Assi

Byblos & Beyond

## Hike in the Chouf Reserve

Cyclamen

## Ryak Planes and Trains:

Visit of the military airline base and the helicopter and plane museum, lunch then visit the train station. NEOS Kids

## Reach the Summit at the Cedars

Levels 3, 5 & 8

Liban Trek

## Grape Picking & Arak Distillation in Niha

Saad Tours

Thursday 8

## Arz Karm Al Mohr

Vamos Tados

Friday 9 – Saturday 10

## Cultural Excursion

Beirut, Batroun, Cedars, Bekaa with an overnight in Jeita Liban Trek

Saturday 10

## Zaarour's Panoramic Plateau by Night

Liban Trek

Saturday 10 – Sunday 11

## Weekend in Lehfed, Mayfouk, Ehmej and Wheat Harvesting

Byblos & Beyond

Sunday 11

## Hike in Ehden Reserve Plus Zip Lining

Cyclamen

## Al Diman

Baldati and Vamos Tados

## Discover Nature in Chouf Reserve

Saad Tours



## Look Below in Laqlouq at Fantastic Sinkholes

Levels 4 & 7  
Liban Trek

### Thursday 15 – Sunday 17

## Overnight Trek Tannourine to Ehden

Levels 6 & 7  
Liban Trek

### Thursday 15

## Saydet Al Kalaa

Baldati and Vamos Tados

### Saturday 17

## A Night Hike in Hrajel

Liban Trek

### Sunday 18

## Arz Al Haddad

Baldati and Vamos Tados

## Hike through an Oak Forest

Bchennata, Levels 2 & 8  
Liban Trek

## Baskinta Hike from Bakiche to Chakhroute

Cyclamen

## Palm's Island/Jaziret El Araneb

Byblos & Beyond

## Grape Picking & Arak Distillation in Niha Beqaa

Saad Tours

### Tuesday 20

## Discovering Planets and Stars through a Summer Sky

From the mountains with a professional astronomer. Telescope experience and power point presentation.  
Neos Kids

### Friday 23

## Maaser Barouk Night Hike

Baldati and Vamos Tados

### Saturday 24

## Laqlouq Lakes by Night

Liban Trek

## Barouke Baadarane by Bike

Cyclamen

## Discover Nature in Chouf reserve

Saad Tours

### Sunday 25

## Wine Tasting

Visiting the caves of "Kouroum" and discovering the techniques of picking grapes and the different vineyards.  
Neos Kids

## Discover Mount Sannine

Levels 3, 5 & 8 Liban Trek

## Qornet Es Sawda Ascension

Byblos & Beyond

## Qornet Sawda

Baldati and Vamos Tados

### Thursday 29

## Corn Party in Damour!

Corn picking & corn barbecue

### Friday 30

## Karke Tree House

Baldati and Vamos Tados

### Saturday 31

## Zaarour's Panoramic Plateau by Night

Liban Trek

# September

### Sunday 1

## Discover Bsheeli, Kfarhelda and Douma

Byblos & Beyond

## Hike in Bkassine

Cyclamen

## Discover Chouf Reserve

Saad Tours

## Find the Hidden Oak Forest in Saghbine

Levels 2 & 6  
Liban Trek

### Sunday 8

## Qadisha Hiking Freydis

Byblos & Beyond

## Arz to Bkaakafra

Baldati and Vamos Tados

## Grape Picking & Arak Distillation in Niha

Beqaa

Saad Tours

## Qadisha Valley hike and Visit to the Monasteries

Cyclamen

### Sunday 15

## Hike in Baskinta

Cyclamen

## Discover the Fir Forests in Qammoua

Levels 4 & 7  
Liban Trek

## Arz Baraa

Baldati and Vamos Tados

## Discover Nature in Chouf Reserve

Saad Tours

## 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](http://exittonature.com)  
+961 3 559992

## Address book

Byblos & Beyond  
[byblosandbeyond.com](http://byblosandbeyond.com)  
+961 9 540857

Cyclamen  
[tib-destinations.com](http://tib-destinations.com)  
+961 4 419848

Great Escape  
[greatescape.com.lb](http://greatescape.com.lb)  
+961 5 456121

Kurban Travel\*  
[kurbantravel.com](http://kurbantravel.com)  
+961 1 614914

Liban Trek  
[libantrek.com](http://libantrek.com)  
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Mawassem by Saad Tours  
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+961 1 393100

R. Rida International\*  
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Vamos Todos  
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+961 3 561174

Wild Discovery\*  
[wilddiscovery.com.lb](http://wilddiscovery.com.lb)  
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## 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](http://beirutairport.gov.lb)

### Banks

Bank cashiers are normally open between 8 a.m. and 2 p.m. from Monday to Friday, and until noon on Saturday. Most banks open longer hours for non-cash transactions.

### Bus Routes

#### Inside Beirut

##### Bus 1

##### **Hamra to Khalde**

Begins on Sadat St. 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 St 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 the Cola intersection 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 Hreik, 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 also known as LBP. 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 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 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 Intersection

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

+961 3 828141 Beyond Beirut  
[beyondbeirut.com](http://beyondbeirut.com)  
+961 | 340940 Ministry of Tourism  
[lebanon-tourism.gov.lb](http://lebanon-tourism.gov.lb)  
+961 International Code  
112/999 Internal Security  
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BOUTIQUE HOTEL & RESORT

Take the rays this summer at Lebanon's hottest beach resort. Overlooking the Mediterranean Sea, VEER's timeless metal structure concept offers beach connoisseurs an exceptional experience through its different offerings. Enjoy the summer in style from its pools, restaurant and bars, beach rooms with its private rooms or the famous villas with its Jacuzzi and glass pool.

VEER's food and beverage journey will take its passenger into various different moods and food selection. Starting with the Seafood Restaurant and Bar serving a distinctive European seafood menu with view overlooking the pool and the sea, the Sunset bar and pool bar offering unique signature drinks and special designed food menu, to its Champagne lounge, the ideal place to meet with friends over a refreshing drink, opens all day and into the night serving light snacks and attractive drinks and cocktails.

With the summer being a season for fun, music and entertainment, VEER's line-up of events throughout the year is designed to appeal to different guests - from family members to beach clubbers.

For reservation or further information visit [www.veer.com.lb](http://www.veer.com.lb) or call +961 70 441444, log in to VEER's Facebook page [www.facebook.com/VeerLebanon](http://www.facebook.com/VeerLebanon) or follow us on twitter @VEER\_Lebanon.



VEER BOUTIQUE HOTEL & RESORT  
P.O. Box 90 -1185 / Kaslik, Beach Road, Keserwan Lebanon / m. 70 44 14 44  
/ t. +961 9 222 623 / f. +961 9 225 623 / e. info@veer.com.lb /veer.com.lb

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