



The Land of Saints 07 Nights



Summary

Lebanon is fascinating nexus point of the Middle East and the West; of Christianity and Islam; of tradition and modernity. It's a place where culture, family and religion are all-important. With this tour, you will discover Lebanon most famous Christian sites, the beautifully restored downtown and the most iconic of all Lebanese trees, the Cedars forest.

Wild Discovery Advantages

- A proven expertise in organizing successful holidays
- Experienced and knowledgeable staff
- High quality service & strong commitment to customer satisfaction
- Permanent assistance from Wild Discovery Head Office at any moment
- Attention to details that make the difference

Overview

Interest: couple — family — group

Level of Comfort: 4/5

Minimum # of passengers: 2

Maximum # of passengers: 20

Information about the destination

- **Currency:** Lebanese pound
- **Language:** Arabic, French & English
- **Dialing Code:** +961
- **Transportation:** private car or bus
- **Recommended vaccine :** None
- **Banks & currency exchange:** Currency can be exchanged at major banks, exchanged offices or authorized hotels,

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Day 1: Beirut (Arrival) – Byblos

Meet & greet at the airport by our representative. Transfer to the hotel in Byblos. Check in. Overnight at the hotel.

Day 2: Byblos (visit) – Annaya – Kfifane – Jrehta – Byblos

Breakfast at the hotel. Visit Byblos, the oldest continuously inhabited town built upon multiple layers of ruins. Byblos has extensive archaeological ruins which have been designated as a UNESCO World Heritage site. Visit St John the Baptist church and explore the old souqs (markets) & the medieval ramparts. Then proceed to Annaya, where the remains of Lebanon's Saint Charbel are entombed. The Monastery of Mar Maroun at Annaya is a simple building where a statue of Saint Charbel stands in the courtyard, arms raised to heaven. His tiny church is always filled with the prayers and the voices of believers, while nearby a small museum displays the frugal objects that belonged to the Saint.

Lunch in a local restaurant. In the afternoon, proceed to the Monastery of Saint Cyprien and Justinian in Kfifane village near Batroun. Proceed to visit the Convent of St. Joseph at Jrehta – Batroun (The blessed Rafka), this convent was built in 1897; it belongs to the order of the Lebanese nuns. The Blessed Rafka was one of the six nuns who marked the beginning of the cloistered life in this convent, on the 3rd of November 1897. She lived there until she died on the 23rd of March 1914, confined to her bed by great sufferings. On the 27th of November 1985, His Holiness the Pope John-Paul II declared the Beatification of Rafka. Return to Byblos. Overnight at the hotel in Byblos.

Day 3: Byblos – Deir el Nourieh – Jeita – Harissa – Bkerke – Byblos

Breakfast at the hotel. Departure to visit Saydet el Nourieh or Our Lady of Light – Chekka. It is said that two sailors were in peril on a stormy sea when the Virgin appeared to them as a light and guided them gently to the shore. In return, they carved a cave in the cliff and dedicated it to the Virgin Mary. Continue to Jeita grottoes. In these caves and galleries, known to man since Paleolithic times, raindrops of more than hundreds thousands years have worked a magic wonder in the limestone of the Mount Lebanon range near the Dog River (Nahr El-Kalb) beneath the wooded hills of Mount Lebanon forming one of the world's most beautiful and astonishing caverns. Lunch in a local restaurant. On the way to Bkerke, visit "Our Lady of Lebanon" in Harissa, an immense immaculate statue overlooking the bay of Jounieh. A panoramic view is guaranteed at the top of the statue. Then visit the residence of the Maronite Patriarch "Bkerke". Return to Byblos.

Overnight at the hotel in Byblos.

Day 4: Byblos – Balamand – Cedars – Qadisha – Beirut

Breakfast at the hotel. Departure to the North region. Visit the Balamand Monastery situated 80 km north of Beirut on a plateau overlooking the blue Mediterranean, where over ten centuries of endeavor to learn and teach have flourished. It is on this ancient site that the Cistercian monks built Balamand Abbey in 1157 A.D. on existing Byzantine ruins after the end of the second crusade. Proceed to the Cedars forest. The reserve constitutes what remains of Lebanon's once vast cedar forest mentioned in the Old Testament.

lunch en route. Then visit the Qadisha Valley, one of the deepest and most beautiful valleys in Lebanon. At the bottom of this wild, steep-sided gorge runs the Qadisha River, whose source is in the Qadisha Grotto at the foot of the Cedars. The Qadisha Valley houses some of the most important early Christian monastic settlements in the world. Rock-cut chapels, grottoes, and hermitages, many painted with frescoes dating back to the 12th and 13th centuries, are tucked into the steep walls. Among the notable monasteries located in the valley are the Monastery of Mar Antonios Qozhaya, & the Monastery of Mar Lishaa. Transfer to Beirut and overnight at the hotel.

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Day 5: Beirut (visit) – Beiteddine – Deir el Qamar – Beirut

Breakfast at the hotel. Visit the capital of Beirut, home of the first law school in the world, dating back to the Phoenician Era. Have a photo stop at Pigeon Rock and take the Corniche to reach the Downtown. The trendy Solidere area of downtown Beirut has been beautifully restored. Solidere is also home to several Roman ruins sites that have been uncovered and preserved, several notable mosques and churches, and the National Parliament Building. Have a walk around “La Place de l’Etoile” and Clock Tower. Visit the Cathedral of St. George, dedicated to the patron saint of the city. This cathedral is considered the oldest functioning church in Beirut. It was built in the 17th century. Visit as well St Louis Capuchin Church. The Capuchin missionaries built this church in 1864. Departure to the Chouf Region. Lunch in a local restaurant. Then visit the Beiteddine Palace (meaning “house of faith”). Beiteddine is a palace built at the beginning of the 19th century, by Emir Bechir Chehab II, on a rocky spur dominating a steep, precipitous valley. A perfect example of classic Lebanese architecture of the time, it has decorated ceilings, colorful marble mosaic floors, luxurious Turkish Baths and harem suites, in a setting of beautifully groomed gardens, a guest house in which the French Poet "Lamartine" once dwelt, water jets and colonnades. On the way back, stop at Deir el Qamar, which means “Monastery of the Moon”. The village is famous for its palaces which display the ancient Lebanese style in architecture. Visit “Our Lady of the Hill” church (Saydet et talleh). Built on the site of a Phoenician temple to the goddess Astarte, the church is believed to have been originally constructed in 451 A.D. Destroyed by an earthquake, the church was then rebuilt and enlarged by Fakhreddine. The Maronite Monastery is located next door to the church.
Return to Beirut.
Overnight at the hotel.

Day 6: Beirut – Baalbeck – Ksara – Tanail – Beirut

Breakfast at the hotel. Departure to the Beqaa valley. Visit Baalbeck, Lebanon's greatest Roman treasure, can be counted among the wonders of the ancient world. The largest and most noble Roman temples ever built, they are also among the best preserved. Towering high above the Beqaa plain, their monumental proportions proclaimed the power and wealth of Imperial Rome. Lunch in a local restaurant. Proceed to Ksara. In the ancient vine production tradition, Lebanon owes its existence to Christian's communities that kept some vineyards in this area. Chateau Ksara acquired by the Jesuits Fathers in 1857, perpetuated the tradition of winemaking. Continue to visit Deir Tanail. Return to Beirut.
Overnight at the hotel.

Day 7: Beirut – Qana – Tyre – Maghdouche – Beirut

Breakfast at the hotel. Departure to the South region. Visit the village of Qana, where it is believed Jesus performed the miracle of turning water into wine. Continue to Tyre the beautiful town on the shore of the Mediterranean Sea. It is located at the meeting point of three continents and, as such, has been the crossroads of many civilizations whose traces may still be seen today. Lunch in a local restaurant. In the afternoon, visit Maghdouche, the town of the big statue of the Holy Maria. The story tells that in the cave (today a church) Maria was waiting overlooking the beach to look for Jesus and his followers. Today you will have a splendid view of the whole area from the statue. Return to Beirut
Overnight at the hotel.

Day 8: Beirut (Departure)

Breakfast at the hotel. Transfer to the airport for departure.

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NOTES:

- The Beiteddine Palace is closed on Mondays & National Holidays
- The Jeita Grottoes are closed on Mondays Except July & August.
The Ksara Caves are closed on National Holidays
- During New Year, a supplement may occur for the Gala Dinner (on Dec. 31st). The cost will be advised upon request
- Holidays: Fitr Holiday; El Adha; Christmas & New Year

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