

## LEBANON

"The land of the cedars" boasts many World Cultural Heritage Sites, a world-famous cuisine, stunning mountain landscapes, sophisticated skiing areas, beach clubs, and wineries— as well as vibrant nightlife. At the same time, Lebanon is still marked by the devastating civil war that raged from 1975 to 1990, and crushing poverty in refugee camps and rural areas.



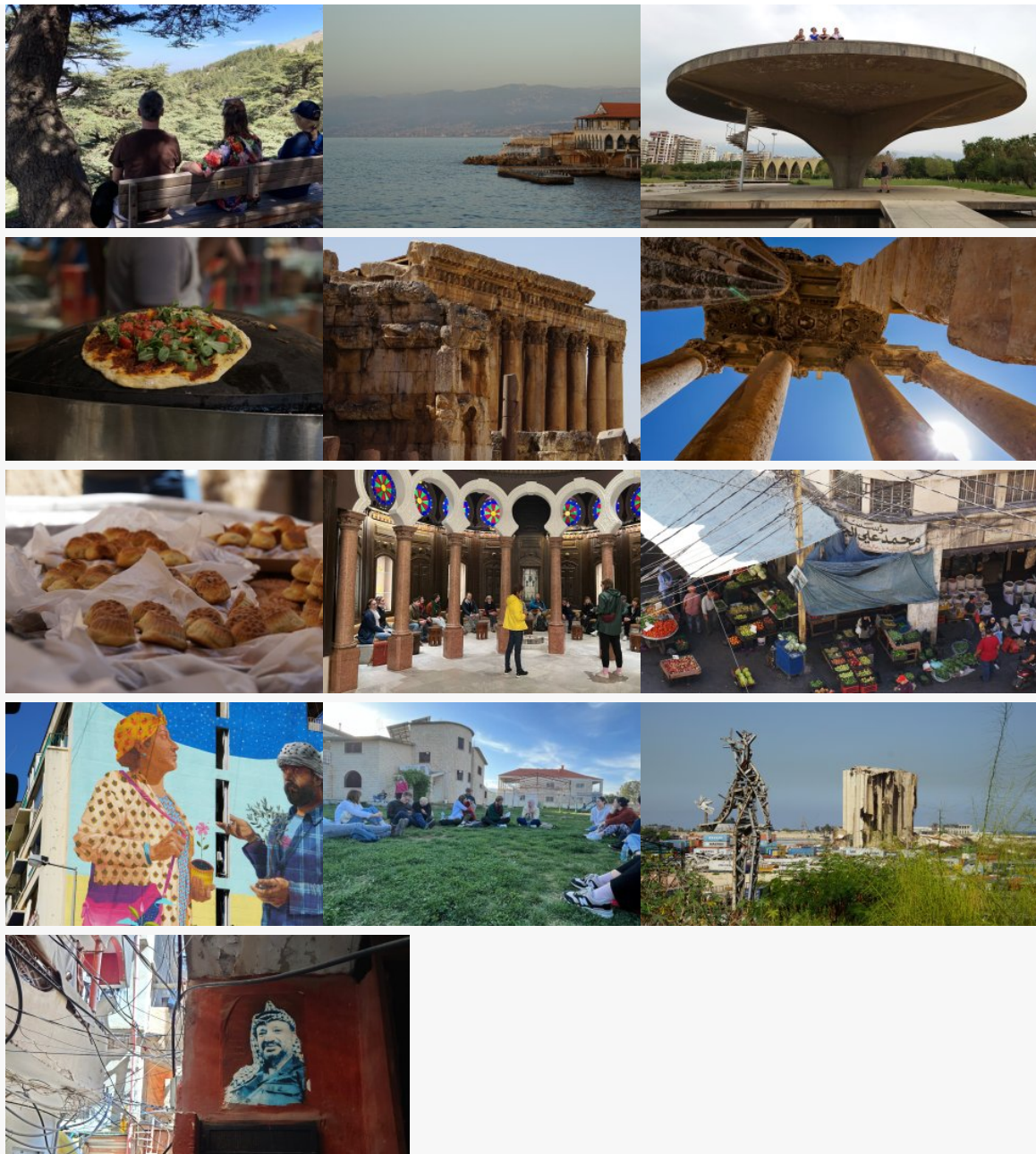
Few countries besides Lebanon have so many different facets—all packed into an area half the size of Wales. Travelers interested in culture and politics relish the fascinating contradictions of this bridgehead between the Arab world and Europe, which at one and the same time is liberal, fun-loving, conservative, and enigmatic.

These facets make Lebanon an ideal destination for both newbies and Middle East experts. Regional events such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the Iranian Revolution, and the war in Syria deeply affect this small land. Lebanon itself has repeatedly fought its neighbors. At the same time, Lebanon's cultural giants have long inspired the Arab world, with man of letters Amin Maalouf,

film director Nadine Labaki, and the legendary singer Fairuz all famous far from Beirut.







## Unsere Highlights

### Beirut

Lebanon's capital and most important city, Beirut exhibits traces of its Ottoman and French past. Although we see signs of the civil war that divided the city into East and West, we sense the hope unleashed by the 2005 "Cedar Revolution." In Beirut, the here-and-now is exciting. Civil society actors tell us how they view their country's future. In a Palestinian refugee camp, we witness the fallout of the decades-old Israeli-Arab conflict and the war in Syria.

### Southern Lebanon

We roam through the old market of the Phoenician city of Sidon and visit Roman ruins in the port city of Tyre. We also visit Beaufort Castle, built by the Crusaders, which in modern times served as headquarters for the Israeli Army. We discuss Israel's 22-year occupation of southern Lebanon, the 2006 Israel-Lebanon War, and the role of Hezbollah.

### The Chouf Mountains

In the Chouf Mountains southeast of Beirut, we hike through forests of huge, thousand-year-old cedars and learn about the local Druze community.

### The Bekaa Valley

The fertile plain between the Mount Lebanon range and Syria, which enjoys more than 300 days of sunshine each year, is not just known for its vegetables and delicious wines: It also hosts a Lebanese orphanage and many camps for Syrian refugees. In Baalbek, we visit the largest temple of the Roman Empire and a Shia pilgrimage site.

### Bcharré and Wadi Qadisha

In the birthplace of artist, poet, and writer Khalil Gibran, we concern ourselves with the Maronites, Lebanon's largest Christian denomination, and hike through the "Holy Valley."

### The north coast

The security situation permitting, we will travel to Tripoli, Lebanon's second largest city and the heartland of its Sunni Muslim community. Halfway to Tripoli from Beirut is Byblos, one of the world's oldest continuously inhabited cities, where we can visit picturesque archeological excavations by the Mediterranean.

## Useful country-specific information

### Health & vaccination

No special vaccinations are needed for a stay in Lebanon. Medical facilities in Lebanon have an excellent standard, and due to the proximity of Beirut from anywhere in the country, assured at any time. In order to prevent cases of diarrhea, however, we recommend to avoid drinking tap water.

When it comes to the **Corona virus** (COVID-19), we follow the recommendations made by the [German Federal Foreign Office](#) as well as the local authorities and the German Embassy on site. In case of any change of the health situation, the tour might be subject to according changes we will inform you about as soon as possible.

### Language

The official language in Lebanon is Arabic. The Lebanese dialect is close to the Syrian and Palestinian ones. All young Lebanese speak at least either English or French, both lingua franca in the country.

### Local currency

There are two official currencies in Lebanon, which are bound to each other, the Lebanese Lira/Pound (LBP), and the US Dollar (USD). You can officially pay with either currency throughout the country. It might happen that after paying in once currency, change will be given in form of the other. Oftentimes, the currencies are even getting mixed. One USD currently amount to 1.5000 Lebanese Lira.

It is very easy to exchange money (Euros or US Dollars) anywhere in the country or to withdraw cash with a debit or credit card, as the banks have numerous branches. We recommend to take a part of the money in cash, and take a debit or credit card with you as well. Withdrawal fees might vary according to the regulations of your home bank.

### Security

The issue of security plays a big role in Lebanon.

In planning out tours, we follow the recommendations and statements issued by the German Federal Foreign Office. Our route only leads us through areas deemed safe by the Office. While doing so, we keep close contact with the German Embassy and local authorities on the ground. In case of any change of the security situation, the tour route might be subject to according changes.

### Visa

Visa are provided upon arrival at the airport in Beirut. It is thus not necessary to apply for a visa at the Lebanese Embassy in Germany. To receive a visa upon arrival, you need a passport with a minimum six months validity at the time of travel. The visa is free of charge.

Visa regulations might change at any time. If so, we will inform you in time before the tour start. Please let us know as soon as possible if you have any Israeli stamps in your passport, and/or do not wish to travel with your German passport.

For general information on our tours please click [here](#)

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