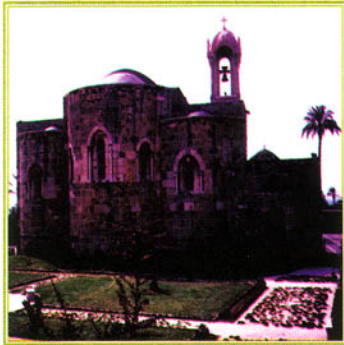


# LEBANON (9 Days / 7 Nights)



## Day 01

Depart from the USA

## Day 02

Arrive in Beirut, Lebanon Transfer to hotel.

## Day 03

Beirut (Nahr El Kalb, Caves of Jeita, Byblos) Day trip visiting Nahr El Kalb (the Dog River), where inscriptions from various conquering armies are carved into the river gorge walls. Continue to the underground Caves of Jeita, full with wonderful stalactite and stalagmite formations. Nearby Byblos (Jbail) was the third largest of Phoenician cities. It is also one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world, abound with archaeological ruins spanning approximately 6000 years.

## Day 04

Beirut (Sidon, Deir El Kamar, Beiteddine Palace) Drive to the coastal town of Sidon (Saida), also a Phoenician city. The most important site here is the picturesque Crusader Sea Castle, connected via a walking bridge with the mainland. Continue to Deir El Kamar, meaning Monastery of the Moon. Here the Phoenicians worshipped the moon. Now it is a scenic town with many well-preserved historical buildings, among them the beautifully restored silk khan (Persian for inn). Just outside of the city is the 19th century fairytale Beiteddine Palace of Bashir Shihab II, complete with marble fountains, Turkish bathrooms, a chandelier given by Napoleon, waterbased air-conditioning system and beautiful furnishings.

## Day 05

Beirut (Beqaa Valley, Baalbeck, Anjar, Zahle) Changing directions, head through the panoramic Lebanese mountains to Beqaa Valley. Many legends surround the origins of Baalbeck, where Phoenicians, then Greeks worshipped in Heliopolis (City of the Sun). The Romans built elaborate temples over the earlier ruins, creating one of the most important Roman sites in the Middle East. The Venus temple, for example, is the

most complete Roman temple in the world. Drive to Anjar where you can see partially restored ruins of a 7th and 8th century Omayyad town. Continue to the pretty town of Zahle, in Lebanon's wine growing region. Zahle, as Harissa, has a statue of the Madonna.

## Day 06

Beirut (Faqra, Harissa) Introductory tour of Beirut. Start at the Raouche district where, from the Corniche, you can see the famous sea-hallowed Pigeon Rocks. Stop in the National Archaeological Museum where treasures excavated in Byblos are on exhibit, including the limestone sarcophagus of King Ahiaram, dating to the 2nd millennium B.C., inscribed with the earliest forms of alphabetical writing. Outside of Beirut is Faqra where, carved into the mountainside, is the temple of Adonis, the "Great God". You reach Harissa either by funicular or via the winding roads above deep cliffs; your rewards are the fantastic scenery along the way, temples and churches of various denominations and the Virgin of Lebanon, a huge solid stone statue of the Madonna dating to the 19th century.

## Day 07

Beirut (Tripoli) Day trip to Tripoli, the youngest of the Phoenician cities and modern Lebanon's second

largest. It has a more noticeable Arab atmosphere than other cities. Visit the castle of St. Giles (the Citadel) dating to the 12th century. Only the foundations and some of the walls are of Crusader origin, the rest was rebuilt by the Mameluks and the Ottomans, once complete with a moat and drawbridge. Mosques, madrassahs (theological schools), hammams (baths), khans and suqs (market) are abound in Tripoli.

## Day 08

Beirut Leisure day.

## Day 09

Departure Transfer to the airport.

**IMPORTANT NOTE!** Please make sure that your passport does NOT contain Israeli border stamps or any other stamps indicating travel to Israel in the past! This includes entry or exit stamps issued at (but not limited to) borders between Jordan and Israel, or Egypt and Israel. Any stamps indicating a visit of Israel will result in denial of your entry (and possibly denial of entry for the entire group) into Lebanon.

