

# Lebanon

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



**Beirut**  
MARATHON  
Association





Nestled along the Mediterranean coastline, **Lebanon** is a captivating country that boasts a blend of ancient history, vibrant culture, and stunning natural landscapes. From its rich historical sites to its lively cities and breathtaking mountain ranges, **Lebanon** offers an unforgettable experience that deserves a spot on your travel bucket list.

**Lebanon's** history stretches back millennia, leaving behind a remarkable tapestry of civilizations that have shaped its landscape. The ancient city of Byblos, believed to be one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world, showcases well-preserved ruins and a charming harbor. The awe-inspiring Roman temples of Baalbek, with their colossal pillars, stand as a testament to the grandeur of the past.

**Lebanon's** compact size is matched only by its diverse landscapes. The picturesque Mediterranean coastline offers inviting beaches and a vibrant nightlife scene in cities like Beirut. Heading inland, the fertile Bekaa Valley is dotted with vineyards and offers a chance to savor local wines. The highlight, however, is the Lebanon Mountains range, where the iconic Cedar Forests of **Lebanon** stand proudly, symbolizing the nation's resilience.



**Lebanon** is a melting pot of cultures and religions, resulting in a rich tapestry of traditions. Beirut, the cosmopolitan capital, seamlessly blends the old and the new with its historic architecture and modern high-rises. The city's dynamic arts scene, boutique shopping, and diverse culinary offerings make it a hub of creativity and cultural exchange.

Lebanese people are famous for their hospitality and warmth. Visitors often find themselves welcomed as friends, and the local population's friendliness enhances the travel experience. Engaging with the locals offers insights into the culture, traditions, and daily life that textbooks can't convey.

**Thrifty Tip:** Take some time to read up on the complex history of Lebanon. Knowing a little about this before you go will help you appreciate the people and country more and help you get the most out of your trip.





Nature enthusiasts and adventure seekers will find plenty to explore in **Lebanon**. The Qadisha Valley, a UNESCO World Heritage site, offers captivating hiking trails, while the Jeita Grotto presents an underground wonderland of stunning rock formations. In the winter, you can even hit the slopes in the Lebanese mountains for a ski adventure.



In summary, **Lebanon's** beauty lies in its ability to offer a rich tapestry of experiences within a relatively small geographical area. From ancient ruins to modern marvels, from serene coastline to majestic mountains, this country's diversity is truly remarkable. Adding **Lebanon** to your travel bucket list ensures a journey that encompasses history, culture, nature, and the warm embrace of its people.





Start with Zeitounay Bay, where you will be close to the harbor, with lots of restaurants close by, the Souk, and fun neighborhoods to walk in. Take a ride from your hotel to the Raouche Rocks and then go for a walk along the boardwalk next to the Mediterranean.

Notice all of the beach clubs along the coast. The boardwalk is a popular spot for locals to run or speed walk throughout the day. Veer off the boardwalk to wander in the Hamra neighborhood and stop at a coffee shop and give Lebanese coffee a try (it is thick as mud!) or stop at a cocktail bar for happy hour.

There is a lot to see in Downtown Beirut including Zaitunay Bay. Sit at a fancy local restaurant and marvel at all of the yachts.

Stop by Martyr's Square. It's a bullet-ridden statue now but has a long and important history for the city. Snap a photo of the beautiful Mohammed Al-Amin Mosque behind it.



# GEMMAYZE STREET

Described as the "Greenwich Village" or "Soho" of Beirut, Gemmayze is a residential neighborhood that has emerged as one of Beirut's trendiest districts.

It is bordered by Saifi Village/Downtown Beirut to the west and Achrafieh to the south and its main thoroughfare, rue Gouraud, contains many popular restaurants and bars.

The district has some beautiful traditional as well French-mandate architecture and is charming day and buzzing by night.

The street leads to the Saint Nicolas Stairs, also known as Escalier de l'Art, where art festivals are held every year. The stairs also lead to Rue Sursock. The street is also walking distance from Rue Monot and Saifi Village



# TAKE A DAY TRIP TO BYBLOS

Beirut is the perfect start for a day trip to **Byblos**, believed to be the longest inhabited city in the world. Have your hotel concierge call a local taxi company and schedule a driver. Uber is another cheap option to get you to **Byblos**. Have your driver drop you off in **Byblos** Old Town at the entrance of the Byblos Castle.

After exploring the Castle, Museum, and ruins, head down the hill to explore the small harbor or head up the hill through the old souks and wander through the old town. There are quaint streets, with lots of bars and restaurants where you can spend a relaxing afternoon. On your way back to Beirut, stop at the Jeita Grotto – a system of interconnected crystalized limestone caves that's considered one of the must-visit sites of the Middle East.

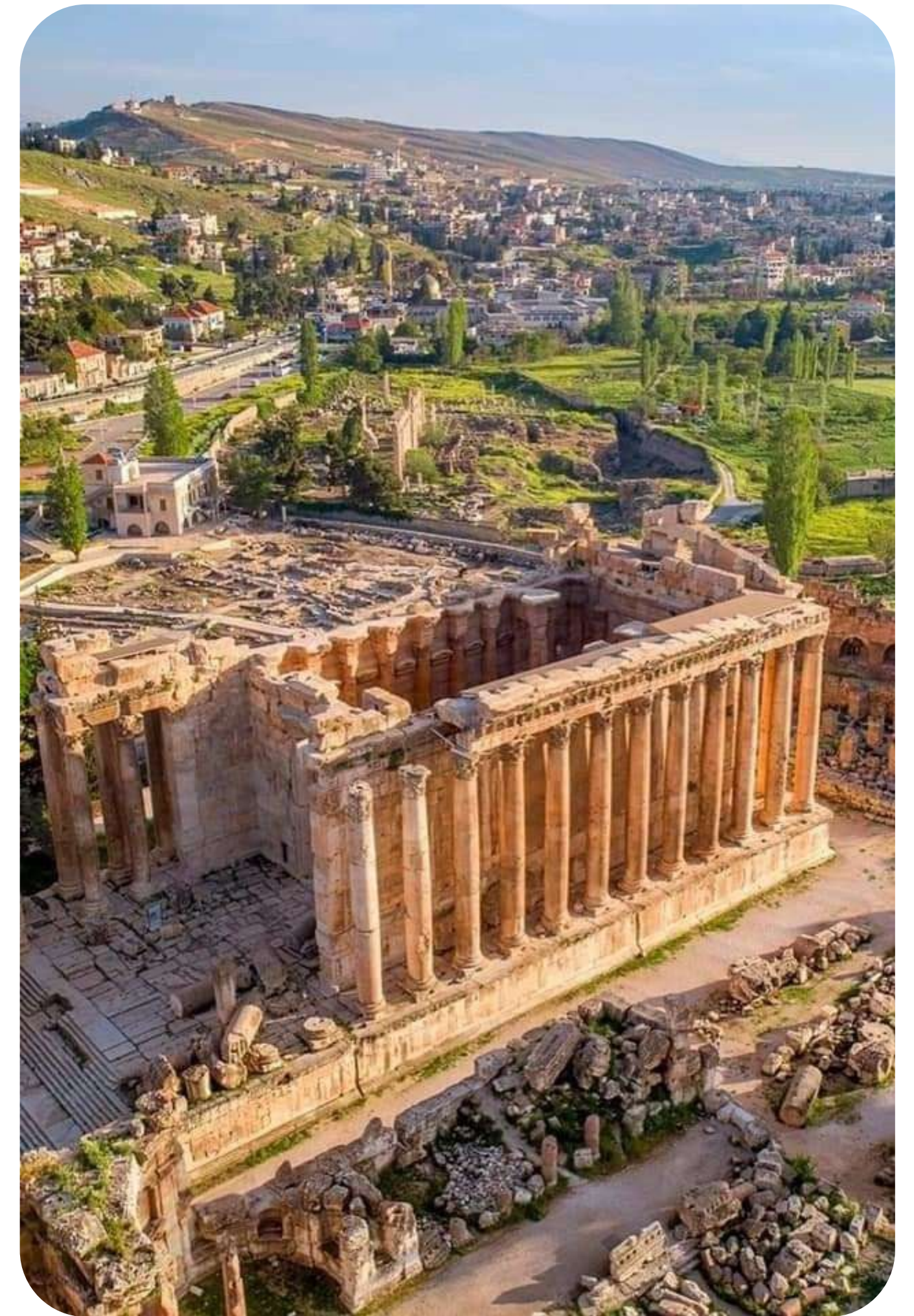




# BAALBECK RUINS

Byblos might be the oldest town, but if you're looking for picturesque ruins, you want to go to **Baalbek**. The Temples at **Baalbek** are the largest and most well-preserved Roman ruins in the world. The magnitude of this site is overwhelming and if you like history (even a little bit), you need to go here! **Baalbeck** is a city in Lebanon that needs no introduction. One of Lebanon's most popular tourist destinations, its astounding Temple of Bacchus is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and attracts thousands of tourists every year.

There are several restaurants just outside the **Baalbeck** Archaeological Site that offer great mezze and will sustain you for the rest of the day. One thing's for sure, though: one cannot go to Baalbeck and not try their famous sfiha Baalbackieh. Have your hotel concierge call a local taxi company and schedule a driver. Uber will not take you to **Baalbeck** since it's a 2hr drive from Beirut.



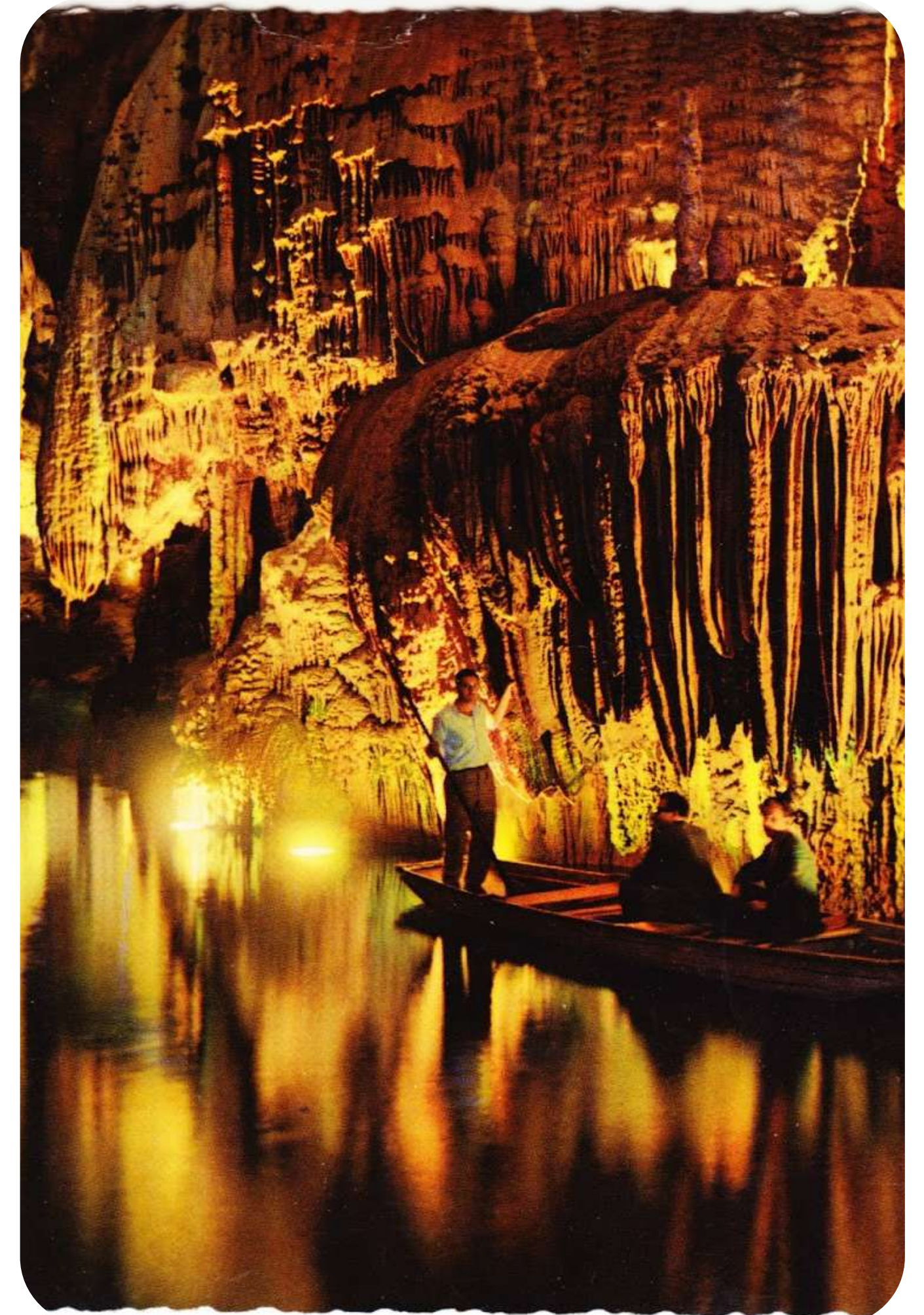


# JEITA GROTTO

**Jeita Grotto** is natural wonder formed over thousands of years. It is made up of two interconnected caves with karstic limestone walls that spread over an area of nine kilometers.

The grotto is split into two parts; the upper with a breathtaking view of extraordinary stone that forms curtains, columns, draperies and mushrooms at a distance of some 750m explored for 2200m, and the latter of 400m explored for almost 7800m, where you can marvel at the majestic forms of otherworldly concretions.

A boat ride is offered at the lower grotto. Have your hotel concierge call a local taxi company and schedule a driver. Uber is also an option and its around 35min ride from Beirut City Center.





# LEBANESE WINERIES

When you think wine, you probably think of California, France, and Italy. Add Lebanon to that list.

Lebanon is home to one of the oldest wine-growing regions in the world. There is evidence wine has been produced here since 750 B.C.

Today, there are over 40 wineries that produce 6 million bottles annually. Many of these wineries are easy to visit and are the main tourist attraction. Some of the larger ones like **Ksara**, founded in 1857, have a tasting room you can just show up to. Others, like the inimitable **Chateau Musar**, require an appointment. Book a tour that includes a winery or book one to take you to multiple wineries in one day. the **IXSIR winery** was named by CNN as one of the greenest building in the world. It has also won the international Architizer A+ Award, the Good Green Design award and the Green Mind MENA Award







## WHAT TO EAT AND DRINK

Say it with us: **mezze and meat**. Lebanese meals generally follow that formula. You'll start with a mezze, a menu of small plates meant for sharing. But the word “small” is relative, and the portions at Lebanese most restaurants can be shared with many people. Order **Hummus** and **Babaghanoush** (mashed eggplant with spices), and a **tabouleh** salad (parsley, herbs, and tomatoes) to go with **Za'tar** (Middle Eastern spice) bread. But please, wait to order your meat course. You might not even need it after the mezze. Order a glass of local wine or two to wash down all of the food and finish your meal with some **Arrak**, a local anise-flavored spirit that is served watered down on ice. It's the perfect way to end your meal.



# A FEW THINGS TO KNOW IF YOU GO

First things first: Your cell phone will work here. To use data & internet, you will need to buy an ALFA or Touch prepaid cards from any phone store on the streets / mall.

You will be asked to present your ID/Passport to purchase a sim card.

Free WiFi is available in certain public places in Beirut and other major cities in Lebanon. If you won't have cell service, pre-arrange a taxi from the airport through your hotel or ALLO TAXI.

Uber is also available in Lebanon through their app.





# OMT BEIRUT MARATHON OFFICIAL HOTEL

To enhance your experience and ensure your stay in Beirut is nothing short of exceptional, we have partnered with – **Hilton Beirut Habtoor Grand & Hilton Beirut Metropolitan Palace** - a premier accommodation provider known for its impeccable service and comfort.

To take advantage of the exclusive runner's package and secure your accommodation, feel free to reach out to the dedicated reservation team and they will be more than happy to assist you and answer any questions you may have

**THE HOTEL WILL SUPPLY EARLY 04.00 AM BREAKFAST ON RACE DAY FOR ALL GUESTS**

**MR ALAIN HOBEIKA - DIRECTOR OF SALES**

**ALAIN.HOBEIKA@HILTON.COM - T: +961 1 500 666**





# OFFICIAL TAXI PARTNER

As the city gears up for one of its most anticipated sporting event, **ALLO TAXI** is thrilled to be a part of this exhilarating celebration of athleticism and community spirit. **ALLO TAXI** is here to ensure that your journey to the starting line, or from the finish line, is as smooth and convenient as possible. As a token of appreciation for your dedication and enthusiasm, **ALLO TAXI** is offering a generous 20% discount on any ride using the special promo code: **AM20**

- Download the **ALLO TAXI** app from the app store or Google Play.
- Enter your pick-up and drop-off locations.
- Apply the promo code **AM20** before confirming your booking.
- Enjoy a seamless ride to your destination with a 20% discount!

You may also redeem your promo code by calling ALLO TAXI on 1213 or via WhatsApp message on 78 – 88 12 13





# OFFICIAL CAR RENTAL PARTNER

Get ready to race into amazing savings!

From November 8th to November 15th, **AVIS & BUDGET** are offering an Exclusive 15% Discount to all OMT Beirut Marathon runners. on car rentals during Marathon week.

Whether you're gearing up for the marathon, supporting a loved one, or exploring the beautiful city during this exhilarating event, we're here to make your journey seamless and affordable.

To avail of this special offer, simply visit their websites and book your rental using the below promo codes.

It's time to hit the road with top-notch vehicles that match your pace and style.

**AVIS Promo-Code: (AWD): D068600**

[avis.com.lb](https://avis.com.lb)

**Budget Rent a Car Promo Code: (BCD): B046300**

[budget.com.lb](https://budget.com.lb)





# DRESS CODE

Lebanon is a fairly straightforward country when it comes to dress code. With a religiously diverse population and topographic makeup.

The weather and the temperature can vary greatly from one place to another so it's good to take this into account when you pack for your trip.

You are likely to see a diversity of dress during a visit to Lebanon, especially in Beirut. Depending on where you are and what you are doing in the city. Men usually wear Western-style clothing—trousers, shorts, tee-shirts or button-downs.

In general, women who visit Lebanon typically wear the same Western-style clothing they would wear in most parts of Europe or North America





# WEATHER

The climate in Lebanon in November ranges from perfect to good depending on the region and city.

In November, the weather is perfect in Lebanon, but only in a few cities: in Batroun, Tripoli (Lebanon) and Beirut. In these cities, these perfect weather conditions will allow you to enjoy 100% your travel: the sun is guaranteed, it rains very little and the humidity is endurable.

It is therefore the ideal month to go to these cities! However, the weather is good in the cities of Baalbek, Tyr, Jounieh, Ksara and Byblos.

In these cities, temperatures are still suitable and allow you to visit - and why not do a bit of sunbathing in the sun!





# CURRENCY & EXCHANGING RATES

In 2019, Lebanon witnessed a revolution that lasted almost a year which resulted in the collapse of the banking system and its national currency to lose 98% of its value. The Lebanese pound, is currently trading at a new low of more than 90,000 to the dollar. It had traded at 1,500 before the economy was crushed by a mountain of debt in 2019.

## HOW TO EXCHANGE MONEY UPON ARRIVING TO LEBANON

- Bring only USD or EURO (cash) when travelling to Lebanon.
- All hotels & restaurants accept cash payments in USD and Lebanese Pounds, few locations will accept Int'l Credit / Debit Cards.
- Exchanging Money is NOT AVAILABLE at the airport upon arrival or departure.
- You can exchange money at any OMT Branch around the country (1,320 branches available)
- The daily exchange rate varies by the minute, to stay up to date, please download an app **LIRA EXCHANGE** so you are aware of the rates upon exchanging.





# CREDIT CARDS

Credit Cards (Local and Int'l) are processed in many places and sometimes through ATM Machines. However, its best to keep cash on you at all times as some outlets only trade in cash;

- You cannot withdraw money out of all ATM machine if you carry an int'l card.
- Hotels accept int'l credit cards
- Taxis accept CASH only.
- Major restaurants accept USD or/and LBP Cash Payments and some will take cards as well.
- Small restaurants accept both USD and/or LBP cash payments
- Malls / Shops / Outlets may vary from one place to another. So have both currencies on you in case they accept one or the other.
- Hospitals accept USD mainly





# TOP RESTAURANTS TO TRY

Beirut is Lebanon's tourist hub, and Downtown Beirut is a fashionable neighborhood in this cosmopolitan city. But what do you do if you've been walking around all day and don't know where to eat?

Here's a guide to the best restaurants in the heart of Beirut.

- Babel Restaurant – Lebanese Cuisine
- Em Sherif - Lebanese Cuisine
- Mayrig – Armenian Cuisine
- Bavaglino – Italian Cuisine
- PAUL – French Café and Breakfast Joint
- Abdel Wahab – Lebanese Cuisine
- Babel Bahr – Seafood Cuisine
- Divvy – Int'l Cuisine
- Santana - Mexican Restaurant and Bar
- Pacifico - Mexican Restaurant and Bar
- Loris Restaurant – Lebanese Cuisine
- Mounir – Lebanese Cuisine
- Lisa – Lebanese Cuisine
- BarTartine - Int'l Cuisine & Breakfast Joint





# FUN FACTS ABOUT LEBANON

Lebanon is populated by a very open and highly educated people. They are known for their love of life, generosity and wild spirit. They tend to neglect regulation and insist on respecting all others.

Located on the continent of Asia, Lebanon is bordered by Syria to the north and east and Palestine to the south and 10,452 Square Kilometers

**Population:** 6 Million

Official Airline is **Middle East Airlines**





# FUN FACTS ABOUT LEBANON

Lebanon's capital is Beirut; and spans an area of 7.7 square miles (20 square kilometers) and has a population of 2.5 million

Located on the continent of Asia, Lebanon is bordered by Syria to the north and east and Palestine to the south and 10,452 Square Kilometers

Arabic is the official language but French, German, English and Armenian is also spoken here.

Want to call friends or family here? You'll need to use the international dialing code +961





# FUN FACTS ABOUT LEBANON

Byblos is considered one of the oldest continuously occupied cities in the world – people have been living there since 5,000BC! In fact, the first alphabet was created in Byblos

The national dish of Lebanon is kibbeh (or kibbe). It's a ground lamb and cracked wheat paste dish, quite similar to pate.

Official currency in Lebanon is Lebanese Lira / Pounds.

Lebanon has 18 religions which are recognized in Parliament







# VISA

## **DO YOU NEED A VISA WHEN ENTERING LEBANON?**

In order to visit Lebanon, most people will have to get a Lebanon visa. Only Lebanese nationals and citizens of GCC countries are exempt from visa requirements. Fortunately, the Lebanon visa is fairly easy to obtain for a large number of people, as it can be obtained on arrival. Those who are not eligible for a Lebanon visa on arrival will have to get one in advance at the nearest embassy.





Please visit the below link to know more about the visa process and if you are eligible for visa upon arrival.

**<https://visaguide.world/asia/lebanon-visa>**





**IMPORTANT NUMBERS TO KEEP  
HANDY DURING YOUR VISIT**

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
|  | POLICE DEPARTMENT                                     | <b>112</b>                                     |
|  | LEBANESE RED CROSS                                    | <b>140</b>                                     |
|  | HOTEL DIEU DE FRANCE (HOSPITAL)<br>ST GEORGE HOSPITAL | <b>+961 1 615 400</b><br><b>+961 1 441 000</b> |
|  | OMT BEIRUT MARATHON 2023<br>HOTLINE NUMBER            | <b>+961 70 898 151</b>                         |





**SEE YOU AT  
THE START LINE**

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A s s o c i a t i o n**



**beirutmarathon.org**



**registration@beirutmarathon.org**



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