EGYPT UNCOVERED

Your passport to adventure

Map Image

Country(ies): Lebanon

Tour type: Small Group

Transport: A/C car/minibus/coach

Group size: Min: 2 | Max: 18

Days: 8 days

Start Location: Beirut, Lebanon

End Location: Beirut, Lebanon

Meals: Breakfasts - 7, Lunches - 1, Dinners - 0

Highlights:

Beirut, Beiteddine Palace, Tyre World Heritage Site, Sidon Souk, Baalbek temple complex, Ksara Caves wine tasting, Cedar Forest, Qadisha Valley, Baatara Gorge & Waterfall, Byblos harbour & history, Jeita Grotto, Harissa cable car

Day 1: Arrive in Beirut, transfer to hotel

Your journey begins upon your arrival at Beirut International Airport. A member of our team will greet you, and you will be escorted to your hotel. Overnight stay in Beirut.

OVERNIGHT:

Beirut hotel

MEALS:

EXTRAS:

Extra day in Beirut - pre-tour

Single Room Supplement (LBSGLE)

Day 2: Jeita Grotto, Harissa cable car & Baatara Gorge

After leaving Beirut and heading north, we'll visit the spectacular Jeita Grotto. This system of limestone caves spans almost 9 kilometres and contains one of the largest collections of stalactites and stalagmites in the world. The grotto is a symbol of Lebanon and was a finalist in the New 7 Wonders of Nature competition. Depending on the water level, you can explore the caves on foot or by boat.

Next, we visit Harissa, home to the important Christian shrine of Our Lady of Lebanon. A cable car will take us to the top of the basilica, where we can enjoy a spectacular view of Jounieh Bay, considered one of the most beautiful bays in the Middle East.

Then, we'll head inland to visit the unique Baatara Gorge Sinkhole. In the spring and during rainy periods, a 255-metre waterfall cascades into an enormous cavern. The cave is also known as the Cave of the Three Bridges due to the three natural stone arches that the waterfall drops over. This is a spectacular natural phenomenon, and we'll have time for a short hike here and to explore the nearby village of Douma. A traditional Lebanese lunch is included today.

The day finishes with a short drive to the beautiful Qadisha Valley, where we'll spend the night in the Monastery of St. Anthony. You'll stay in a separate building with simple but comfortable en-suite accommodation. If the monastery is closed or unavailable, we will use a nearby guesthouse.

OVERNIGHT:

Qadisha Valley monastery or guesthouse

MEALS:

Breakfast,Lunch

EXTRAS:

Day 3: Qadisha Valley, Cedars Ski Resort & Becharre

If you're interested, you can rise early this morning to join the monks of the monastery for morning prayers. After breakfast, we'll have time to explore the Qadisha Valley, a UNESCO World Heritage Site also known as the Holy Valley. The Holy River, Nahr Qadisha, flows through it, and its steep cliffs are home to many ancient caves used as shelters and burial sites. It's a great place for a short morning hike.

Our first stop after leaving the valley is the nearby village of Becharre, the birthplace of the iconic novelist and poet Kahlil Gibran. The village has a museum dedicated to him, featuring his paintings and manuscripts. Next, we'll stop at the Cedars of God, an area that holds the last remaining groves of the ancient cedar forests of Lebanon. The famous Cedarus Libani trees are mentioned in the Old Testament and are the national symbol of the country.

Later today we'll arrive in Byblos, an ancient Phoenician city that is another UNESCO World Heritage Site. Locally known as Jbeil, it is thought to have been inhabited for up to 7,000 years. The city is full of significant historical and archaeological sites and also features a lovely Phoenician harbour.

OVERNIGHT:

Byblos hotel

MEALS:

Breakfast

EXTRAS:

Day 4: Morning in Byblos, Ksara Winery

We dedicated this morning to discovering the harbour area and the key attractions of Byblos. Our journey today will take us to the village of Zahle, but we’ll first make a stop at the Ksara Winery, reputedly the oldest in Lebanon. The winery's caves and tunnels stretch for about 2 miles and have served as wine cellars for many generations. You’ll be given a guided tour of the caves and winery before enjoying a wine tasting session, where you can sample the produce and purchase any you may like.

OVERNIGHT:

Zahle guesthouse

MEALS:

Breakfast

EXTRAS:

Day 5: Baalbeck & Anjar

Today we head to Baalbek, a definite highlight of any visit to Lebanon. Known to the Romans and Greeks as "Heliopolis" or "City of the Sun," it is home to a superbly well-preserved temple complex. This complex is one of the finest examples of Roman architecture at its peak, built as a sanctuary to worship the Heliopolitan triad of Jupiter, Venus, and Mercury. Pilgrims would flock here in their thousands, and the largely intact temples still hold outstanding artistic and historical value.

We then visit the Umayyad city of Anjar, located in the Bekaa Valley. Founded in the 8th century by Caliph Walid, this city provides evidence of excellent town planning. It features mosques, palaces, and baths, as well as the ruins of 600 shops, which show that it was once an important commercial centre.

In the afternoon, we'll return to Beirut.

OVERNIGHT:

Beirut hotel

MEALS:

Breakfast

EXTRAS:

Day 6: Deir al Qamar, Beiteddine & Beirut City Tour

After breakfast, we leave Beirut and drive to the Chouf Mountains to visit the village of Deir al Qamar. Its name means "Monastery of the Moon", and it served as Lebanon's capital in the 17th century. This quaint and charming UNESCO World Heritage Site is known for its stone houses and winding streets.

We then continue to the beautiful Beiteddine Palace. Constructed in the 19th century by Emir Bashir, the palace is exceptionally well-preserved and stands as a testament to the opulence of its era.

Finally, we return to Beirut in the afternoon for a city tour. As one of the world's oldest cities, Lebanon's capital has a turbulent history, both ancient and modern. This is visible in the mix of modern high-rises, charming old houses, and historical buildings, some of which still bear the marks of the 1970s civil war. Highlights of our tour include the Beirut Souks, the Corniche, and the city's downtown area. We'll also see the famous Pigeon Grotto, also known as the Rock of Raouché, a striking natural formation in the sea.

OVERNIGHT:

Beirut hotel

MEALS:

Breakfast

EXTRAS:

Day 7: Tyre & Sidon

Today we'll tour southern Lebanon, beginning with a visit to Tyre, also known as Sour. More than 4,000 years old, this once-great Phoenician city is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site filled with important historical landmarks.

Our next destination is Sidon, or Saida, another ancient Phoenician city, and possibly the oldest. The city grew wealthy from its production of glass and a valuable purple dye extracted from murex shellfish. Today, it's a fast-growing and important administrative and commercial centre.

In Sidon, we'll visit the Crusader Sea Castle, the Great Mosque, and Khan el Franj, among other interesting sites. You'll also have the chance to stroll through the old souks. We'll then return to Beirut for the night.

OVERNIGHT:

Beirut hotel

MEALS:

Breakfast

EXTRAS:

Day 8: Beirut free time. Departure airport transfer

Today is the last day of the tour and your time is free to explore Beirut some more until you are transferred to the airport for your departing flight home.

OVERNIGHT:

N/A

MEALS:

Breakfast

EXTRAS:

Extra day in Beirut - post-tour

Included:

- 5 nights in 3 to 4-star hotels in Beirut and Byblos
- 1 night in a guesthouse or hotel in Zahle
- 1 night in a monastery accommodation in Qadisha Valley
- 24-hour airport pick-up and drop-off transfer service
- All transport and transfers in air-conditioned vehicles
- Entrance fees for all visited sites
- All sightseeing tours as outlined in the itinerary
- Wine tasting at Ksara Caves
- English-speaking guide for all tours
- Meals as specified in the itinerary (7 breakfasts, 1 lunch)

Excluded:

- International flights (available on request)
- Visa fees (free on arrival for most nationalities)
- Travel insurance (compulsory, get a quote here)
- Meals not indicated in the itinerary
- Hotel gala dinner supplements if applied on Christmas & New Year's Eve
- Drinks, snacks and other personal expenses (e.g. laundry)
- Tips
- Any other items not mentioned above

Options

Our tours are designed to include all that you need to enjoy a really special time in the destination you???re visiting. However, we do also offer some extra options to complement the tour and add some additional sightseeing or activities, or some extra time at either end of the tour.

Single Room Supplement (LBSGLE)

Single Room Supplement (LBSGLE)

From $500.00

Min numbers:

*Based on person/s

This tour is based on twin-share accommodation. This option guarantees a single room in all accommodations throughout the tour for solo travellers.

If you're happy to share a room with another traveller of the same sex, please let us know and we'll do our best to find a suitable roommate for you. If a room share isn't possible at the time of booking, the single room supplement will be added to your booking and will be payable with your balance payment. However, if we are able to arrange a room share for you before your balance is due, this supplement will be removed from your invoice. If a room share becomes available after you've paid the supplement, we will refund it to you. Room shares are allocated in order of booking.

Please note: Single-room supplement prices may vary seasonally.

1. Accommodation

This tour uses a mix of accommodation including good quality 4-star hotels in Beirut and Byblos, a comfortable guesthouse Zahle and rooms in a separate new block at Monastery of St. Anthony in Qozhaya. Rooms at the monastery are simple but comfortable and en-suite and you may join the monks for their morning prayers.

Accommodation is based on twin or double en-suite rooms with air conditioning. Please visit the accommodation tab of this tour for examples of the hotels normally used on this tour. These are subject to change to alternative properties of a similar standard. If you have any specific accommodation requests please let us know and we'll be happy to provide you with a customised quotation for a private tour.

Please check the Single Room Supplement option for details on room sharing options and charges for solo travellers on this tour

2. Winter & Summer Route Changes

Winter route adjustment:
During the winter months (normally from December until sometime in May), many mountain roads in Lebanon are closed due to snow. During this period the tour will be adjusted to avoid the drive from Becharre to Zahle across the Col des Cedres. All the same places will be visited and the same activities included, but the itinerary will run as follows...

Days 1-2 - As in summer
Day 3 - Morning Beirut City Tour, then head to the Baatara Gorge to see the sinkhole, before finishing at the Qadisha Valley. Lunch included, and overnight at the Monastery or nearby guesthouse.
Day 4 - Morning hike in the Qadisha Valley, visit Becharre and the Cedars, then return to Byblos for overnight.
Day 5 - Explore Byblos, then drive to Zahle via Beirut, with stops on the way to discover Harissa by cable car, and to explore the Jeita Grotto. Overnight in Zahle
Days 6-8 - as in summer

3. Dates & Prices

Small-group departure dates run regularly all year round, starting on Saturdays. The tour is also available privately on any other dates if our group tour dates don't work for you or if you would prefer to travel in just your own party. Please contact us for more information and prices to fit your preferred dates and number of travellers.

4. Voltage - Lebanon

Electrical Sockets and Adapters

- The sockets in use are round with two prongs and a 220-volt supply (Type C).
- You can find universal adaptors at most airport shops if you don’t already have one.
- Standard European adapters generally work, though they may fit a bit loosely in the sockets at times.
- All hotel rooms are equipped with electrical sockets for charging devices such as cameras and phones.
- Hair dryers are usually available upon request from hotel reception if one isn’t already provided in your room.
- If you are travelling with US appliances (110 volts), you will need both a voltage converter and a plug adapter.

5. Time

The time zone for Egypt, Jordan, Israel, and Lebanon is GMT plus 2 hours, while in the UAE, it is GMT plus 3 hours. Daylight saving time has been implemented in some years but not consistently. Currently, it seems that Egypt will not be observing daylight saving time from 2016 onwards, though this could change unexpectedly, potentially affecting flight schedules and timings. In Jordan and Israel, daylight saving time, which advances the clock by one hour, is typically observed from the end of March to the end of October, shifting the time to GMT plus 3 hours. The specific dates for these changes vary annually, and there are occasions when the adjustments may be cancelled altogether.

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6. Money - Lebanon

The official currency in Lebanon is the Lebanese Pound (also known as the Lira). There is no need to bring Lebanese currency with you as exchange services are available at international airports, and in most hotels, banks, and exchange offices in major cities. It is advisable to carry small denominations of notes or coins during your tour, as these will be handy for things like public toilets, tipping, and minor purchases. ATMs are commonly found in larger towns, and many local stores accept payment by VISA, Mastercard, or Amex, although extra charges may apply – so it's best to check before making a purchase. Travellers' cheques are not recommended as they are no longer widely accepted and often incur high exchange fees.

Given the significant recent devaluation of the Lebanese pound, if you withdraw money from an ATM or use your credit card, you will be charged at the official exchange rate, which is much higher than the local market rate. For this reason, we suggest bringing sufficient US Dollars or Euros in cash to cover your expenses during your trip and avoiding reliance on credit cards in Lebanon. You can exchange your foreign currency to Lebanese Pounds at current rates while in the country – your guide can assist you in finding suitable exchange locations.

While in Lebanon, you should have enough funds to cover meals not included in your itinerary, as well as drinks, snacks, souvenirs, and personal expenses such as laundry. Most of these can be paid for in local currency, but tips for your guides and drivers may be given in hard currency (GBP, USD, EUR).

It’s difficult to suggest a precise amount of personal spending money, as it will vary depending on individual preferences. However, a general guideline would be to budget around USD 25-35 per person per day. If you plan to do a lot of shopping or purchase alcohol frequently, it’s a good idea to bring a bit more.

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7. Transfers

Your airport transfers are included only on the first and last day of the scheduled tour, as well as on any extra days if you book your accommodation through us. If you organise your own accommodation at the start or end of the tour, you will need to arrange your own transfers for these days.

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8. Transport

Our tours include a variety of transport options to ensure you experience the country you’re visiting up close, while also allowing you to relax and recharge for the next leg of your journey. In Lebanon, due to the relatively short distances, we use private vehicles throughout the tour. The vehicles chosen will be spacious and comfortable, tailored to the size of the group.

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9. Tipping

Tipping is a common custom in Lebanon as a way to show appreciation for services received. As such, you may choose to tip your guide and driver at the end of the tour. There is no set amount you are required to give, and it's important to consider your own budget when deciding. We are frequently asked for guidance on tipping amounts, and we would suggest around GBP 5 / USD 8 per person, per day, as a suitable amount.

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10. International Flights

We aim to provide you with as much flexibility as possible when it comes to booking your holiday with us. To cater to those with different travel preferences, we do not include international flights in the main tour price. However, we are more than happy to recommend flights that pair well with your tour. Simply get in touch with us, share your preferred travel dates and departure airport, and we will offer you a selection of airlines, schedules, and prices to choose from.

Your arrival and departure transfers are included on the first and last days of your tour. Most of our Lebanese tours begin and end at Beirut airport (BEY).

Occasionally, we offer flight-inclusive packages from selected airports. When these are available on our website, the prices shown are accurate at the time of quoting but are subject to the continued availability of the fares. Prices will be confirmed at the time of booking, along with flight details, including times and the airline, before tickets are issued.

Flight-inclusive prices are based on the most economical Economy class tickets, which are usually non-refundable and non-changeable, unless the flight is cancelled for reasons like Covid-19, in which case airlines tend to be more flexible. For those looking for more flexibility, we also offer Premium Economy and Business Class tickets for an additional cost. Any changes to flight-inclusive bookings will be subject to the airline’s terms and conditions.

Flight CO2 Emissions:

Flying is a fantastic way to discover new places, but it also contributes to carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions that affect the environment. By considering the CO2 emissions of your flight, you can help reduce your travel footprint.

We encourage you to think about the environmental impact of your flight when selecting an airline and international flight. Many airlines and flight search websites (such as Google Flights and Skyscanner) provide CO2 emission data, allowing you to compare your options and make a more informed choice. Many airlines are working to improve their sustainability efforts, and by opting for a greener flight, you can help make a positive contribution to the planet while still enjoying your journey.

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11. Passports and Visas - Lebanon

Passports must remain valid for at least six months after your departure from the country. Avoid bringing a nearly full or soon-to-expire passport. It is the traveller's responsibility to arrange their visa, and the requirements may change at any time according to local authorities.

For many nationalities, a visa on arrival is available at Beirut International Airport. This applies to most countries within the Commonwealth, European Union, Russia, Japan, and the United States. Even if you qualify for a visa on arrival, it’s advisable to verify the latest requirements with your local Lebanese consulate.

Other nationalities may need to arrange their visa before travelling. To obtain one in advance, contact your nearest Lebanese embassy, consulate, or a visa agency for further information.

IMPORTANT: The Lebanese Government prohibits entry to individuals holding Israeli passports, Israeli visas (whether valid or expired), or those with any evidence of travel to Israel in their passport.

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12. What to take

Luggage: You can bring suitcases, rucksacks, or fabric holdalls to Lebanon. It's also advisable to carry a small daypack or bag for use during the day. Your main luggage will usually stay at the hotel while you're out sightseeing, so you won’t have to carry it far, and hotel porters are typically available to assist.

Luggage Restrictions: There are no specific luggage limits for this trip. However, most airlines have restrictions on hold luggage, typically between 20kg and 25kg, and on hand luggage, usually between 5kg and 10kg. We

recommend you confirm the limits with your airline before heading to the airport.

Clothing: Lebanon's weather varies, with hot summer days and cold, wintry conditions in the winter. Temperatures, especially in the mountains, can drop significantly at night, so be sure to pack for cooler and possibly wet conditions. Formal attire, such as suits and ties, is not necessary. In some regions, modest dress is highly valued, particularly for women. To respect the local culture, we suggest wearing loose-fitting, non-revealing clothing. While shorts (not hot-pants) and T-shirts are acceptable at tourist sites, it's best to avoid exposing too much skin (we recommend covering your shoulders). When visiting mosques, both legs and arms should be covered. Bikinis and swimwear are common at some beaches.

Other Items: We recommend packing a sun hat, sunscreen, sunglasses, a basic first aid kit, toiletries, a money belt, a small torch, a camera, and a charger.

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13. Health and Vaccinations

It is essential to ensure that you have comprehensive medical insurance, covering emergency medical situations, including evacuation and repatriation.

Vaccinations and other health protection measures differ depending on your destination and where you're travelling from. We recommend you consult your GP or a travel health clinic for the latest advice on required vaccinations for your trip. You should also make sure your routine vaccinations and boosters, which are recommended for your general health at home, are up to date. This includes vaccines related to your occupation, lifestyle risks, and any existing medical conditions.

Additional vaccinations and boosters often advised for the countries in this region include:

- **Egypt**: Tetanus, Typhoid, Hepatitis A
- **Jordan**: Tetanus, Hepatitis A
- **Israel**: Hepatitis A, Poliomyelitis
- **Lebanon**: Diphtheria, Hepatitis A

Malaria is not typically found in the region, unless contracted elsewhere, so malaria prophylaxis is generally unnecessary.

For more details, you can find further information here: Egypt, Jordan, Israel, Lebanon

Note: We are aware that some locations in Egypt use 'black henna' instead of traditional brown henna. Black henna contains a chemical dye called PPD (paraphenylenediamine), which can cause severe allergic reactions and scarring. To avoid potential risks, it is advisable to refrain from getting henna tattoos in Egypt unless you are certain the henna is pure brown henna.

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14. Group Size/Tour Leaders/Guides

Our small-group tours in Lebanon operate with a minimum of 2 and a maximum of 18 participants per group.

Tailor-made tours are costed for two people travelling with a driver and guide for the sightseeing activities. If you're travelling as a family or in a larger group, we'll offer discounts and customised quotes.

In Lebanon, all sightseeing tours are led by fully trained, local English-speaking guides. At Egypt Uncovered, we prioritise working with local guides and representatives, as we believe this provides a more authentic and enriching experience of the country and its landmarks.

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15. Airport Transfers

This tour includes a meet-and-greet service and airport transfer on the first day. Our representative will be waiting with an Egypt Uncovered signboard or your name clearly displayed for easy identification. If you are unable to

locate our representative, emergency contact numbers will be provided on your tour confirmation voucher.

A transfer to the airport is also included at the end of the tour. Please review the tour itinerary and your flight times carefully. Most international flights departing from Khartoum are scheduled in the early hours of the morning. If you have upgraded to a 4 or 5-star hotel in Khartoum, only a day-use room is typically included for your final day. A full night's stay is provided at the standard 3-star hotel. If you require a full night’s accommodation in an upgraded hotel, an additional charge may apply.

Refunds are not available for missed transfers or parts of your trip due to incorrect flight details or delayed arrivals. Any additional expenses incurred to join the group will be your responsibility.

If your flights are scheduled to arrive before the tour starts or depart after the tour ends, we can arrange extra accommodation and airport transfers. We will strive to book these at the same hotel as the main tour, subject to availability (upgraded hotels can also be arranged upon request). Please note that if you do not book additional accommodation through us, arrival and departure transfer services will not be included, and you will need to organise your own transport.

Arrival Procedure

Be prepared for potential delays at immigration, especially if you are obtaining a “visa on arrival” (refer to the Passports and Visas section). After passport control, proceed to baggage reclaim, where further waiting times are common. Once you collect your luggage, you will need to show your baggage receipts (typically attached to your boarding pass), and your bags may be manually inspected by airport staff. This is standard procedure to ensure no prohibited items, such as alcohol or inappropriate materials, are brought into Sudan. Be aware that some magazines with certain images might also be considered inappropriate and could be confiscated without return.

After completing these formalities, you will find our representative waiting just outside the glass doors with an Egypt Uncovered signboard or your name clearly displayed.

original

jarred

correct