

## TREASURES OF LEBANON



## TRIP OVERVIEW

Historic and beautiful, Lebanon is home to majestic mountains, vast cedar forests, ancient settlements and incredible cuisine. From glamorous Beirut and traditional villages to UNESCO listed Baalbeck and Tyre, this is a country with five thousand years of culture and breathtaking natural panoramas.

## ITINERARY &amp; DETAILS

This document aims to give you all the information that you require for a smooth and comfortable trip to Lebanon. Please take the time to read this dossier to familiarise yourself with all the aspects of our tour. It includes important information such as flight details, visa requirements and travel insurance.

## Your included meal guide:

B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner

## DAY 1: UK to Beirut D

Depart from London on your scheduled flight to Beirut. Upon arrival your guide will meet and transfer you to your hotel in Beirut for a welcome dinner.

## DAY 2: Beirut B/L/D

Today depart for Jeita and discover the beautiful natural wonders of the finest caverns in the Middle East. Transfer by cable car to the caverns which consist of two parts – the lower and upper galleries. The lower galleries are visited via boat ride, while the upper caverns are accessible on foot. Whilst visiting the caverns, enjoy the refreshing temperature and the sound of rushing water, as well as the stunning columns and sculptures that have been formed by water over time; there's also an effective lighting system allowing visitors a glimpse to the uppermost roofs. Next, head to Faqra, a Roman and Byzantine archaeological site in Kfardebian. Located on the slopes of Mount Sannine and at an altitude of 1,500 metres, it is one of the most important sites of the UNESCO-listed Nahr al-Kalb Valley. From here travel downtown to see an impressive reconstruction project which has unveiled ancient remains from Canaanite, Phoenician, Persian and Roman cultures, revealing that Lebanon's capital city was built on an ancient settlement dating back over 5,000 years. Proceed to Corniche road for a short walk along the favourite promenade of the locals. Further along, the road climbs steeply to a cliff edge, which is the headland of Beirut; there's an array of cliff-top restaurants and cafés to peruse, plus a phenomenal view of the bay and the famous Pigeon's Rock. Departing from the clifftop, the road leads down to a beautiful sandy beach and you find yourself amongst the prestigious residential area of Ramlet El-Baida. End your city tour at the National Museum, an archaeological treasure trove and testament to Lebanon's rich and varied ancient past. After the city tour, you'll continue your journey and visit Beit Mery and the convent of Deir el Qalaa.

## DAY 3: Beirut to Byblos B/L/D

Drive along the coastal highway towards Chekka and then ascend east through some of the most beautiful mountain landscapes in Lebanon, continually gaining altitude and witnessing spectacular views of peaks and gorges in Qadisha Valley. When you reach Bcharri, visit the museum of the international writer and poet, Gobran Khalil Gobran, before heading to Qadisha Valley which is filled with caves and rock shelters inhabited from around 3,000 B.C. to the Roman period. Witness cave chapels and monasteries cut from rock, before continuing to Byblos. This charming town has plenty of personality with numerous historic sites, a fisherman's harbour, the Church of St. John the Baptist and souks.

## DAY 4: Byblos to Chtaura B/L/D

Begin today's tour of Byblos by exploring the souks and later take a visit to the east of the Crusader Castle - from a Roman pathway you'll see emerging columns dating to the 3rd Millennium B.C. that bring into view a large skylight between two ancient stone walls. The sign of fire on it is a remain of the Amorite invasion that took place in 1500 – 2500 B.C. Travel along the coastal road to Jounieh and take the Telepherique up the outstretched arms of the Virgin of Lebanon in Harissa – a breath-taking view of the bay, before continuing to your hotel in Chtaura for dinner.

## DAY 5: Chtaura to Beirut B/L/D

Return to Beirut for three nights. Depart on a journey across the Mount Lebanon range and drive through Beqaa plain towards Baalbeck, a significant pilgrimage site, considered one of the Wonders of the Ancient World. Visit Lebanon's greatest Roman treasures and architectural mysteries, where a collection of impeccably preserved temples stand majestically in this former ancient civilisation. Marvel at the spellbinding magnitude of the Temple of Jupiter, whose 54 surrounding columns, towering 23 metres overhead, are believed to be some of the largest in the world and have perplexed generations of archaeologists, who continue to speculate as to how these structures could have been so delicately carved in the 2nd century CE. Wander through this UNESCO World Heritage Site's assortment of various ancient ruins, encompassing visits to Venus, the Great Court and the Hexagonal Forecourt, and from here, drive to Ksara Caves to sample some local wines. Finally, stop off in Anjar to visit the fortified city ruins of Umayyad, used in ancient times as a centralised commercial site, serving as a crossroad of two established trading routes.

## DAY 6: Beirut B/L/D

Travel to Beiteddine via the charming town of Deir el-Qamar; this old town has maintained its architectural properties of the 17th and 18th Centuries. From here, continue to the imposing palace of Beiteddine which is the best example of early 19th Century Lebanese architecture, built over a 30-year period by Emir Bashir. Enjoy the palace complex and its museums as well as its fine collection of well-preserved Byzantine mosaics.

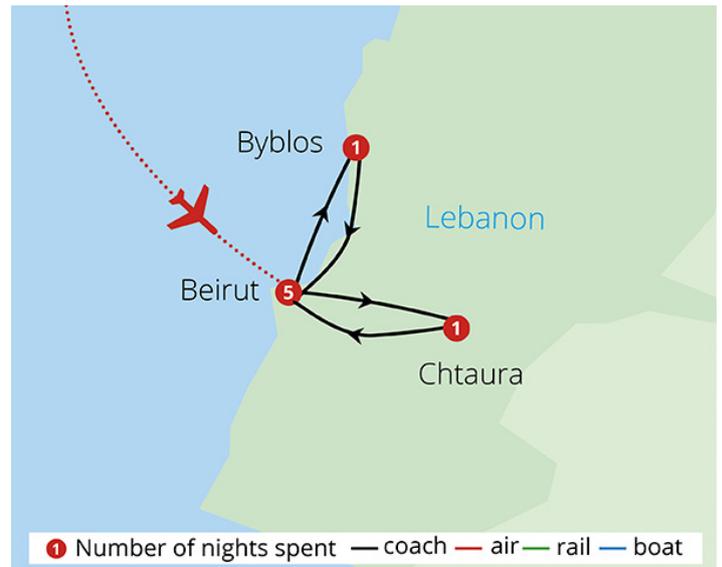
## DAY 7: Beirut B/L/D

Depart for UNESCO listed Tyre with excavated ruins that consist of three parts: the south side of the old Phoenician island-city, the northern site ruins, and the third area on the landward side on the east, that consists of the most impressive archaeological remains such as the Roman necropolis and hippodrome. From here, drive back along the coastal road to another important Phoenician town, Sidon, with its Sea Castle and old covered souks. On the city's northern gate, the Phoenician Temple complex of Echmoun will be visited before returning to Beirut for your final evening meal.

## DAY 8: Beirut to the UK B

Transfer to Beirut International Airport for departure back to the UK.

ACCOMMODATION DETAILS & MAP



**Accommodation**

Your accommodation is selected for convenience, location, comfort or character, and can range from business hotels to boutique hotels. Hotel accommodation is generally rated as local three to four-star standard, but please note there is no international classification system for hotels, and differences in facilities and quality do exist between the UK and Lebanon. All group tours hotels have private bathroom facilities and air-conditioning, where needed. Rest assured that all accommodation used by Mercury Holidays is regularly inspected by our staff and partners to ensure that standards meet your needs.

Please note the hotels listed on our website and brochure are provided for guidance only and final confirmation of your accommodation will be sent in a document, along with your final flight information, approximately 10 days before you travel.

**Meals**

Breakfast is always western style and served in the hotel each morning. Lunch and dinner will be taken in the hotels. A variety of restaurants are visited giving you the chance to experience a range of dishes and flavours.

ON YOUR ARRIVAL

On your arrival in Beirut you will be met by a representative from our local agent, **Rida International**, holding a sign displaying: "Mercury Holidays". The Mercury Holidays/ **Rida International** representative will show you to your transfer vehicle. Your national guide will be on hand 24 hours a day should you have any queries, however if you need to contact your representative during your stay the details are:

**Rida International**

Telephone number: 00961-4718790  
Email: Nada@ridaint.com.lb

**Emergency contact information**

Please find below the emergency contact details for **Rida International**  
24-hour Contact Number: Airport Operations: 00968-99424265 /00968-99277075  
24 hour contact number: 00961-3-236993

WHAT YOU NEED FOR YOUR TOUR

**Visas**

A visa is required for your trip to Lebanon and will be issued upon your arrival at Beirut International Airport. Further advice should be sought from the applicable tourist authority for other nationalities and for general queries. We strongly advise you check your destinations' Tourist Board or Embassy for the most up-to-date guidelines regarding passport validity.

**Insurance**

We strongly recommend that you and all members of your party are suitably insured as soon as you book your holiday. It is a condition of booking that you must have suitable travel insurance. It is important that you purchase travel insurance that suitably covers your participation in whatever activities you may undertake at the time that you make your booking. To assist you with this, we have arranged travel insurance in partnership with Holiday Extras. To arrange your travel insurance with Holiday Extras, please call 0800 781 4237 and quote 'WK830' for preferential rates. Please ensure you provide us with the name of your insurer, policy number and their 24-hour emergency contact number as soon as possible. Mercury Holidays will not be liable for any costs incurred by you due to your failure to take out suitable travel insurance from the date of booking.

**Health and Vaccinations**

It is your responsibility to check any health and vaccination requirements applicable to your booked arrangements. We can only provide general information about this. Health and hygiene facilities and disease risks vary from country to country. You should take health advice about your own needs as early as possible and in good time before your departure. Sources of information include; www.fco.gov.uk, www.travelhealthpro.org.uk, www.hpa.org.uk, your General Practitioner or a specialist clinic.

**Tour Guides - National Guides**

This is a fully escorted tour, meaning that you will be met on arrival by your national guide who will remain with you for the duration of your trip. You will also be joined by a local guide in each of the cities which you visit, ensuring that you always have first-hand knowledge.

**Tipping**

It is at your discretion to tip both your driver and guide. We would recommend to tip approximately \$3 per guide per day and \$2 per driver per day. This is a total of \$40 per person to budget for tips on your trip. As tipping is at your discretion, please tip as and when you feel appropriate too. Tips are accepted in the local currency.

**Physical Accessibility**

This tour is accessible to most people with a good level of fitness and normal mobility. It involves climbing of steep stairs and getting on and off coaches. This tour is not suitable for anyone with walking difficulties.

All our tours feature a "Tour Pace" to help find the right holiday for you. To travel on any of our tours requires unaided mobility and the ability to stroll around the sights, climb stairs and get on and off coaches and boats. Our tour paces are marked with dots out of 3, with the differences being as follows:

- 1 Dot the tour is Easy-Going
- 2 Dots the tour is Intermediate
- 3 Dots the tour is Advanced

Treasures of Lebanon is rated as 1 Dot meaning that the tour pace is Easy-Going. A reasonable level of fitness is required as you will be spending some time on your feet each day though there are no large distances to cover. You will be walking around the sights at a leisurely pace, and may be getting on and off coaches, trains and boats and climbing some steps.

**Group Size**

The minimum number of travellers in your group will be 10, and the maximum will be 40. If in the unlikely event there are less than 10 people booked on your tour date, we will endeavour to reduce any disruption to your holiday and try to operate your tour with lower passenger numbers. If we are not able to operate your departure date, then you may be asked to change to a different date and a full refund will be made available to you should this alternative not be suitable.

**Currency Exchange**

The currency in Lebanon is the Lebanese Pound. We recommend that you exchange your currency before you leave the UK. It is important that you budget carefully and ensure you have the right form of currency before you arrive in the country. Cash machines will also be available throughout the tour in order to withdraw money in your local currency.

**Personal Expenses**

You will need to take money with you to cover any personal purchases such as souvenirs, laundry, any meals not included in the itinerary as well as drinks and any additional snacks. Approximately £150- £200 per person will be sufficient for the duration of the tour. It is a good idea to try and maintain a supply of small

notes and change in the local currency for tipping or small purchases.

**Credit Card Information**

As normal practice you will be asked for your credit card details on check-in at the hotel in order to cover any extras incurred during your stay. If you do not have a credit card, you may be asked for a cash deposit. American Express, Diners Club, MasterCard and Visa are widely accepted in hotels.

**Itinerary Changes**

The order of events and sightseeing may vary according to local conditions or for operational purposes. The schedules of the domestic airlines in country are subject to frequent changes. For this reason, we have indicated approximate times only. Your local guide will inform you of any schedule changes as they are informed of them. Some road construction &/or weather conditions may lengthen the driving times. Our intention is to adhere to the day-to-day itinerary as printed; however, order of events and sightseeing may vary according to local conditions.

**Passport Information**

Please note, if your passport contains an Israeli stamp you may be refused entry to Lebanon, even if you hold a valid Lebanese visa.

**WHAT TO PACK**

- Sunglasses, Sunscreen and hat in summer
- Comfortable walking shoes
- Camera and charger
- A plug adaptor - the voltage in Lebanon is 220 V
- Antibacterial hand gel
- Binoculars

- Personal first aid kit containing travel pills, rehydration powder, plasters, stomach settlers, antiseptic creams, aspirin etc
- Small day pack for excursions
- Waterproof, lightweight jacket
- Lightweight clothing
- Sweater and jacket for the cooler months

**FLIGHT INFORMATION**

Your initial flight is to Beirut Airport with British Airways, departing from London Heathrow Terminal 5.

**IMPORTANT: Please note that final flight details will be confirmed on your e-ticket and final documentation which will be sent to you approximately 10 days before departure.**

**Baggage Allowance**

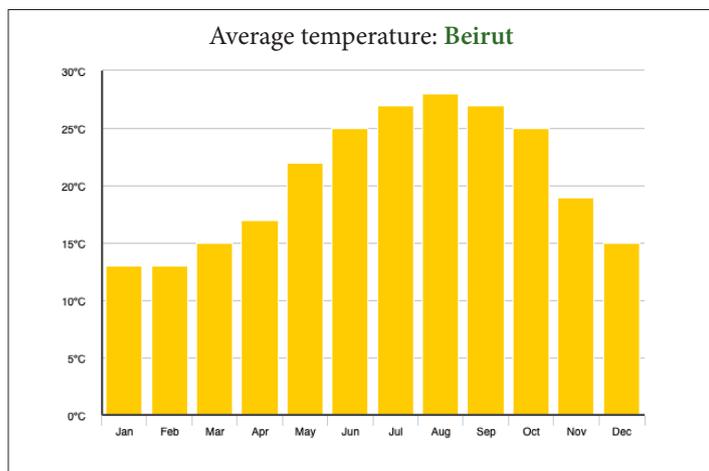
Each passenger is entitled to 23KG of hold luggage plus 1 item of hand luggage not exceeding (Max 23kg - 56cm/45cm/25cm) in size and 1 personal item such as a handbag, briefcase or laptop case. Weight restrictions will be finalized on E-ticket receipt. Should you wish to take additional luggage you will need to pay extra at check-in. Check-In should be at least 3 hours before departure.

**Airport Extras**

If you wish to arrange Airport car parking or accommodation at preferential rates, we recommend you book this in advance with Holiday Extras on 0871 360 2000, quoting HX313.

**WEATHER AND CLIMATE**

Weather can vary quite considerably throughout the year, so please familiarise yourself with the climate charts below.



# CYPRUS EXTENSION

If you have not yet booked this fabulous extension, there is still time to do so. Please contact 0843 224 0723



## TRIP OVERVIEW

Enjoy three or seven nights at leisure on the beaches of Paphos after your Escorted Tour. Stroll along the picturesque Paphos harbour as you bask in the Mediterranean Sun.

## ITINERARY & DETAILS

This document aims to give you all the information which you will require during your extension to Cyprus.

### Hotel Information

Cyprus (3 nights or 7 nights on a Half Board Basis)

Your stay in Cyprus will take place at the following hotel;

4★ Crown Resorts Horizon Hotel -

This popular 4-star hotel has established a good reputation for comfort and service. Superb guest facilities include an outdoor lagoon pool, indoor pool and fitness club making it a popular choice. Just over 300m from the sandy beach of Coral Bay near Paphos, the hotel is close to local shops, bars and restaurants.

Hotel address: Crown Resorts Horizon Hotel,  
Coral Bay Ave,  
Peyia 8068,  
Cyprus

Contact number: 00357 26 813800

Any alternative hotels or board basis, plus duration will have been confirmed at booking. Please speak to our reservations department if you are unsure.

**Final confirmation of your hotel will be sent in a document approximately two weeks before you travel.**

### Tour guides

Your stay in Cyprus is not escorted by a tour guide. Your time here will be free to do as you wish. Details of your departure transfer to your city stay will be confirmed by your guide at the end of your tour.

### Personal Expenses

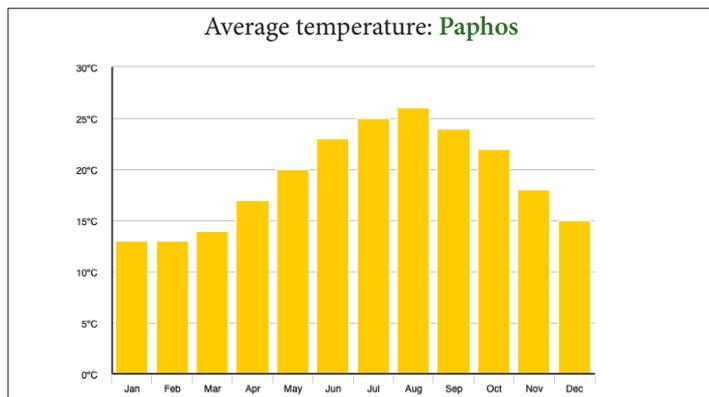
You will need to take money with you to cover any personal purchases such as souvenirs, laundry and any additional meals, snacks or drinks you may wish to have.

### Please note

This extension stay in Cyprus will take place at the end of your main tour.

## WEATHER AND CLIMATE

Weather can vary quite considerably throughout the year, so please familiarise yourself with the climate charts below.



4★ Aloe Hotel

## FLIGHT INFORMATION

Please note: Final hotel and flight details will be confirmed on your e-ticket and final documentation which will be sent to you approximately 10 days before departure.

For any further enquiries or for more information call us on 0843 224 0723