



### **The Trip to Lebanon**

Lebanon is a tiny Mediterranean country with 7000 years of history. It lies sandwiched between Syria, Israel & the Sea.

The situation for gay men in Lebanon has improved significantly over the past few years. Gay bars, clubs, restaurants and saunas operate freely, and an LGBT centre caters to all the needs of the community.

Lebanon is a fast changing country that can face up to any challenge. Each time you visit this vibrant place, you will discover new experiences – it can sometimes feel almost as if you're in a new country.

You can enjoy yourself all year round in Lebanon – you will never run out of things to do. You can even ski on some of the best, softest snow in the world, then go to the beach and party all night long – all in the same day.

Lebanese men are born of a unique historical ethnic mix of European, Mediterranean, Middle Eastern and the whole spectrum in between. They are known for their varied and attractive range of looks.

Beirut is the place to be if you wish to see the fascinating outcome of East meets West.

Beirut is many cities in one: it only takes a moment to find what you like. It is the largest and most liberal urban centre in the country, the final European oasis before the desert!

### **Itinerary:**

#### **Saturday May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010 – Berytus, the eternal city**

- You will be welcomed by our representative at Beirut Rafic Hariri International Airport
- Transport to your hotel in Beirut
- An introduction to the touring program from our guide.
- A 4-hour tour of Beirut, Lebanon's capital city. With its million-plus inhabitants, it buzzes with life and energy. Known as both the "Paris of the East" and "the city that would not die" – the Lebanese capital is an exciting Middle Eastern metropolis.
- A light dinner at one of downtown Beirut's renowned restaurants, followed by a chance to enjoy the night life.
- Overnight stay in Beirut.

#### **Sunday May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2010 – When in Baalbeck, Do like Romans Do**

- Breakfast at the hotel
- A visit to the stunning Roman ruins of Baalbek in the Bekaa valley. Baalbeck is the location of one of the largest and best preserved body of Roman architecture ever found. In the Jupiter Temple, six of the 54 giant columns that originally surrounded the sanctuary still survive. Our route will allow us to visit the Ksara caves. Built during the Roman period and covered by sand for centuries, the caves were chanced upon in 1898 by Jesuits who were hunting down a wolf that was eating their chickens. Ksara is now home to a world famous winery.
- Overnight stay in Beirut



### **Monday May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2010 – The Phoenix Rise Again... in Byblos**

- Breakfast at the hotel
- A visit to the northern seaside town of Byblos. According to Phoenician tradition, it was founded by the god El, making it one of the top contenders for the “oldest continuously inhabited city” title. It was there that the first linear alphabet, the predecessor of all modern alphabets, was born. The sarcophagus of Byblos’ King Ahiiram, now in the national museum, bears the oldest known Phoenician inscription. Byblos was also the center of the Adonis cult, the god of vegetation who dies in the winter and is renewed each spring. Next, we will visit the beautiful town of Jounieh, with its glorious beaches and red roofs. On to Harissa, located 600 meters from the coast and 26km from Beirut, with its wonderful panoramic view of the Bay of Jounieh. The Statue of the Virgin Mary, erected in 1908, has in its base a chapel with an external spiral staircase which leads to the top. There is also a cable car service from the bay to the mountain of Harissa. We will then visit one of the world’s most beautiful underground caverns, Jeita. We will descend by elevator to the underground river and board a boat to sail the 623 meter long subterranean lake. From there we will head back to Beirut.
- A chance to once again enjoy Beirut’s night life in one of the most vibrant clubs in town.
- Overnight stay in Beirut

### **Tuesday May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2010 – Farewell and Ma’al Saleme**

- Breakfast at the hotel
- Transport from your hotel back to Rafiq Hariri Airport for your return flight.
- Those who would like to continue to Syria will join the Pullman to continue toward Damascus.



### **The Trip to Syria**

Syria! Along with Lebanon & Iraq, considered to be the cradle of civilization. A small country packed with monuments, ancient antiquities, archaeological sites, mosques, churches, synagogues, and the famous dead cities in the north that call out the glorious history of ancient nations. Syria has been a meeting point between eastern and western civilizations. Seacoasts, forests, mountains, valleys – all easily reachable. To the good luck of the tourist, Syria is still one of those well kept secrets with an abundance of beautiful and fascinating sites. Foreign visitors are treated with warm hospitality and friendliness.



## **Itinerary:**

### **Tuesday May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2010 – On the Omayyad's Steps**

- After a short drive, we arrive to the Lebanese-Syrian border crossing. Following the border formalities we switch to our Syrian bus to continue to Damascus.
- Check into our hotel
- Visit one of the world's oldest cities where many civilizations, such as the Armenians, Greeks, Romans, Byzantines and Arabs, have left their marks over the centuries. Some of the most popular sites to visit are: The Umayyad Mosque, Al-Azem Palace, the Chapel of St. Ananias, St. Paul's Window, Saladin Mausoleum and the legendary Straight Street of Damascus.
- Dinner at a local restaurant
- Overnight: Damascus, Syria

### **Wednesday May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2010 – Following the Caravans... to the Desert**

- Very early check out, to take the road toward Palmyra
- One of the major attractions in Syria, the high lights of Syria queen Zenobia city .the great trade center through the first centuries.
- We will visit: The museum, the temple of Bel (built in 32 A.D 40 000 square meters); the great colonnade and the valley of tombs, the Amphitheater, the Agora, the Baalshamine temple etc
- Dinner by the ruins
- Overnight: Palmyra, Syria

### **Thursday May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2010 – Joining the Knights, for a lifetime journey.....**

- Morning check out, and take the road toward the sea side
- On our way, we will stop by the Krak Des Chevaliers, one of the Crusades jewel in the region. (the most well preserved castle from 1110 A.D the castle which is considered the mother castle of all medieval European castles)
- After a short drive, we will arrive in the afternoon to Tartous, where we will visit the city and take a short ride by boat to the Arwad Island, one of the last refuges of the Crusades during the Crusado-Arab wars during the medieval times.
- Overnight: Tartous, Syria

### **Friday May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2010 – Farewell & Ma'al Salameh**

- Continue south toward Lebanon.
- Arrival to the Areda borders
- Syrian and Lebanese border formalities
- Meet with our driver for your transfer to Beirut international airport.
- Transfer to either Beirut for extension overnights or to Hariri International airport for your flight home



### **Included in this price are the following services:**

- Transfer from Beirut Rafic Hariri International Airport to your hotel in Beirut
- Touring with licensed professional English speaking guide as per program
- All entrance fees to sites on program
- Accommodations as following 4 stars hotel in Lebanon and a 3stars hotel in Syria
- Breakfasts daily
- Meals as indicated on program
- Transfer from Damascus to your hotel.

### **Not included in this price**

- Meals not mentioned in program
- Gratuities to guide and drivers
- Beverages
- Lebanese, Syrian and Jordanian departure taxes (payable directly at the borders)
- Visa to Lebanon, Syria and Jordan (see below)

### **RE: VISA TO SYRIA**

- All tourists need a visa to Syria. UK and USA citizens must obtain this visa from the Syrian embassy in London/Washington D.C. The visa must be stamped inside your passport prior to your arrival to Beirut. When applying for this visa, only mention that you are visiting Lebanon, Syria and Jordan. European citizens can purchase a Syrian visa at the Lebanese-Syrian border. The price is as per your nationality. If there is any indication in your passport that you have visited Israel, you will not be permitted to enter Syria.