

25/25 Beirut Lebanon

Beirut has always stood its ground as a kind of playground for Arabs and Europeans in search of oriental frisson. With a return to political stability and new hotels such as the Four Seasons and the renovated souks nearing completion, Beirut is back on the tourist map (though no one knows for how long). Add to that legendary hospitality, a famed party scene and layers of history, and you have a city with a unique patina that visitors and locals cannot seem to get enough of.

Essentials

- 01 Make sure your passport is free of Israeli stamps.
- 02 Visas can be obtained at the airport.
- 03 Arrange pickup to avoid being overcharged by airport taxis.
- 04 Don't sweat the Arabic, the answer will invariably come in English or French.
- 05 Addresses can be approximate. Agree on price and jump in a "taxi service".

Guide/Info

Hotels

Affordable and well located

Palm Beach Hotel
Sea Road, Aïn Mreisseh
+ 961 1 372 000
palmbeachbeirut.com

Dependable and stylish

Albergo
(Relais & Chateaux)
137 Abdel Wahab el Inglizi St, Ashrafieh
+ 961 1 339 797
albergobeirut.com

Premium

Four Seasons
1418 Prof. Wafic Sinno Avenue, Minet el Hosn
+ 961 1 761 000
fourseasons/beirut

Dining

Fast Lebanese breakfast

Zaatar w Zeit
Bliss Street
+ 961 1 365 778
zaatarwzeit.net

Leisurely breakfast

Café Paul
581 George Haddad Avenue, Gemmayzeh
+ 961 1 570 170

Mid-morning coffee

Rawda
Seaside Manara
(next to Luna Park)
+ 961 1 743 348

Lunch with friends

Tawlet Souk el Tayeb
Nahr Street, Chalhoub Bldg (facing Spoiler Center), Mar Mikhael
+ 961 1 448 129
tawlet.com

Lunch on your own

Boubouffe
(serves shwarma and Lebanese mezze)
Saint-Louis St, Mar Mitr
+ 961 1 200 408

Fish Restaurant

Chez Sami
Old Seaside Road, Jounieh
(Beirut suburb)
+ 961 9 646 064

Afternoon tea/drink

Balima
Saifi Square
+ 961 1 985 295

Dinner with friends

Casablanca
Deir Aïn Mreisseh Street,
Aïn Mreisseh
+ 961 1 369 334

Big dinner with friends

Centrale
Mar Maroun Street,
Gemmayzeh
+ 961 1 575 858

Dinner for two

Bread
Gouraud Street,
(Dragonfly bldg),
Geymmayzeh
+ 961 1 566 506

Late drinks

Torino Express
7 Gouraud Street,
Gemmayzeh
+ 961 3 611 101

Midnight snacks

Barbar
(open 24 hours)
Spears Street, Hamra;
every taxi driver knows it
+ 961 1 379 778

Reading

Newsstand

Papercup
Pharaoh Street, Agopian
Bldg, + 961 1 443 083
papercupstore.com

Books

El Bourj
Martyr's Square, at the
back of An Nahar Building
+ 961 1 973 797

Basics

Pharmacie Le Gabriel
Independence Avenue,
Ashrafieh
+ 961 1 324 686

Shopping

Something you can't get anywhere else

Fashion and crafts at
les Artisans du Liban
et d'Orient
Aïn Mreisseh or Mreissé
(opposite Palm Beach
Hotel)
+ 961 1 362 610

Lost luggage – where to buy shirts, socks and underwear

ABC Mall
Ashrafieh
+ 961 1 212 888

Something for the kids

"I Love Beirut" bibs from
Sunflower Mkhallassiyé,
Saifi Village
+ 961 1 999 393

Something for someone you love

Bowls and platters by
Karen Chekerdjian
at Orient 499
499 Omar Daouk Street,
Aïn Mreisseh
+ 961 1 269 499
orient499.com

Two-hour tour

- 01 Walk in Downtown Beirut
The city centre, a no-man's land during the war, is now gleaming and stylish.
- 02 Beirut National Museum
Meet the Phoenicians, the mysterious civilisation that created the alphabet.
beirutnationalmuseum.com

Limousine/taxi

Charlie Taxi
Can arrange for chauffeur service and taxi cabs.
+ 961 1 285 710
charlietaxi.com

Transport

Buses

There are both government and privately owned bus services that operate a hail-and-ride system.

Fitness

Good gym

Fitness Dome
Crown Plaza Hotel,
Hamra
+ 961 1 739 042
\$25 for daily pass

